

Parent Support for Literacy Program

Presented by Stephanie Isvik

Assisting with Early Childhood Development & Learning



We provide:

- Assessments
- Play based learning & therapy sessions
- Home visits
- Playgroups, pre-school & school preparation and support
- Autism/Asperger's programs
- Individual Therapy Sessions
- Information, resources, books, DVDs and equipment
- Parent Support and Education

By Professionals:

- Occupational Therapist
- Speech Therapist
- Physiotherapist
- Special Educator
- Family Worker
- Psychologist

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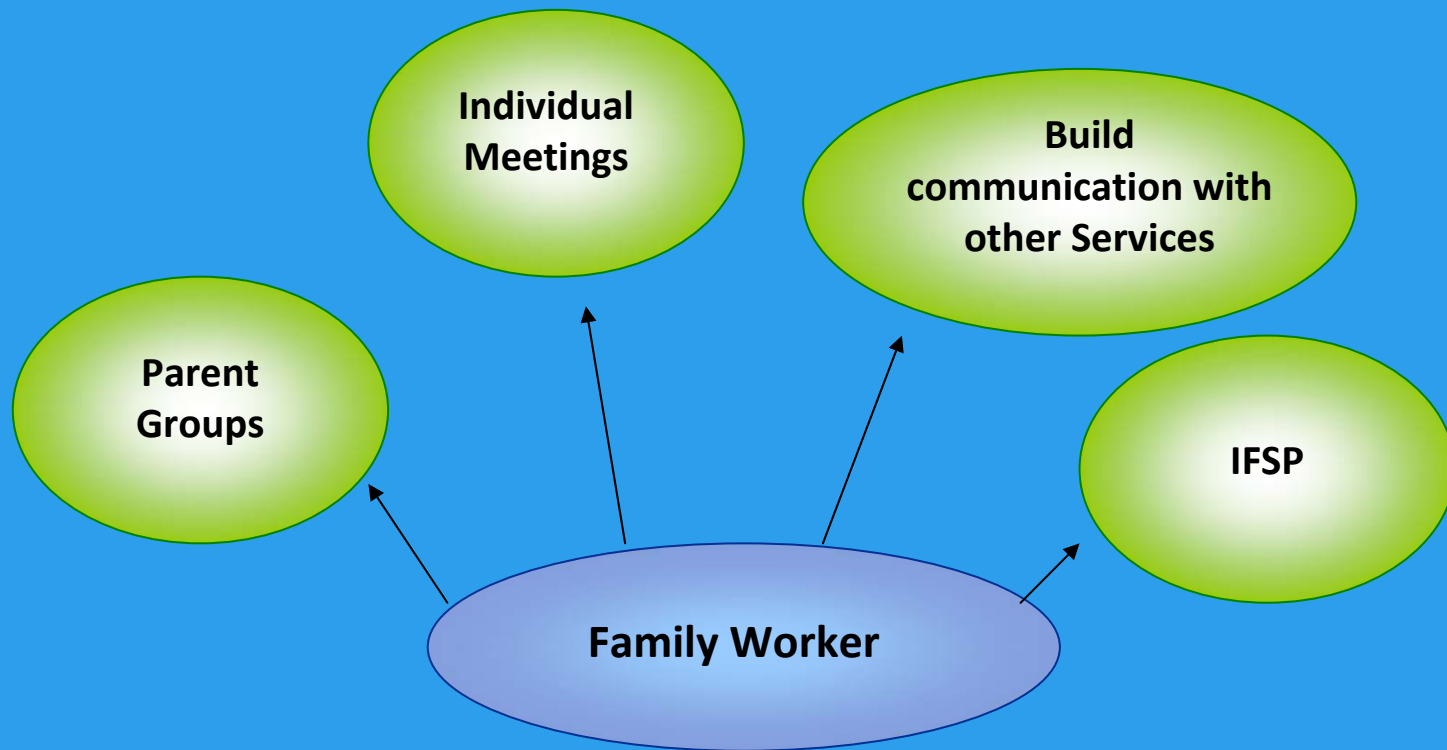


Aim:

Providing parents of children 0-6 years old with disabilities (developmental delays or additional needs) with support, education and resources to

- actively engage their child in pre-literacy skills,
- support their child with developmental tasks that will underpin literacy tasks, and
- learn advocacy skills for their child.

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Literacy in children improves when their parents:



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Parents of children with disabilities need additional support.

They deal with:

- a high degree of stress,
- less capacity to cope with day to day activities,
- less ability to engage with their child on several levels,
- challenges for the whole family including siblings,
- contributing to all the family feeling stressed and less ability to concentrate on learning, literacy and even normal play (which in very young children builds literacy skills).

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Collaborative Partnerships:

Therapists: Occupational Therapist, Speech Therapist, Early Childhood Teacher, and Physiotherapist.

Educational facilities: preschools, schools, early intervention units.

Ongoing Community Services partnerships

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Evaluation

Parent Questionnaire was given to all parents involved in the program. Feedback so far has indicated that parents have found the service invaluable to both them and their children. Parents felt more skilled to work with their children and better able to cope with the transition to school process.

Parent Quote –

“This programme has given me a deeper understanding of my child’s areas of need. It makes me feel that I am doing all I can for him and I’m on the right track.”

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Outcomes

1. Education and Skills Training

Survey example: The majority of parents felt less concern around the transition to school process.

2. Empowered parents in advocating for their children.

3. Space for parents/carers to share concerns and experiences

4. Strengths-based strategies for parents/carers in managing parenting and family issues.

5. Support network and reducing parent isolation.

Survey example: All participants reported increased knowledge of resources in the community.

6. Individual parent/carer support where necessary.

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Specific Initiatives

- **Handouts provided by therapists** (Speech Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Early Intervention Teacher) detailing skills and practice for home.
- **Parent education** around early literacy development and the range of cognitive, language and motor skills that support it.
- Providing **strategies to teach and support children** in developing skills important for learning literacy skills.
- Educating parents on their children's emotional wellbeing, and **how to connect with their child** and maximize the time spent with them.

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Sustainability

This program has so far demonstrated a real need for this program, in this community, for this target group of families.

Evidence for this program will be used to secure ongoing funding for a similar program, with improvements made with the research gathered.

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www.bridgesforlearning.org.au