

## What are Allied Health Services in Early Childhood?

### Occupational Therapy

Paediatric Occupational Therapists can help improve a child's physical, motor skills, sensory, play and self-help skills aiming to increase skill development and confidence. Occupational Therapy is most effective and enhanced when done in collaboration with parents/ carer's & Teachers and incorporated into home and learning settings.

### Dietician

Paediatric Dieticians are specialists in understanding Childhood Nutrition, with a focus on diet and disease. They can undertake assessment of dietary intake & nutritional needs required for growth and development in children. They can offer education around specialized and individualized dietary needs for families and work and collaborate with other medical professionals as needed.

### Play Therapy

Play therapist are trained play specialists. They provide a neutral space where the child is supported to freely explore, work through daily challenges, trauma, and emotions without judgement. In play therapy children are supported to play out their real-life experiences in a way that builds personal insight and capacity. Children can spend time learning to express, regulate, communicate, and practice new skills as well as emotional responses. This therapy meets children where they are at, allowing them to express themselves through their play at their own pace.

## Speech Therapy

Paediatric Speech Pathologists work with babies, toddlers, preschool & school aged children who are having difficulties in the development of their communication and/or feeding skills including: *language difficulties, speech difficulties, dysfluency or stuttering, feeding issues, assessment and therapy for children with communication difficulties, 1:1 Speech Pathology consultation, group therapy, care-giver education and coaching*. Speech Therapist work together with families and Educators to develop and work on appropriate strategies for the individual child.

## Psychology

Psychologists are university-trained health professionals who have studied human behaviour. They are experts in the way people think, feel, behave and learn. Child Psychologists provide a range of services including educational and developmental assessment, help with learning difficulties, counselling for temporary stressors arising from a traumatic experience and mental health issues. Child Psychologists will work together with a child and their main carer's working towards individualised goals. They may also consult with other medical practitioners and Educator's to best support the child.

## Physiotherapy

Paediatric Physiotherapists work with children who experience some disruption in their development. Typically, Paediatric Physiotherapists will address motor issues. They can also support around other impairments that affect cognition, language, and psychosocial issues. Generally, children will see a Physiotherapist in a clinical setting and strategies / exercises etc can be shared across other environments like day care, kindergarten & school.

