

# Royal Queensland Bush Children's Health Scheme



Bush Children's Place  
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Bush Children's is a not for profit organisation that targets children under 13 years of age who are experiencing, or are at risk of developing social, emotional, behavioural and developmental difficulties. At our BUNDABERG Centre we have a multi-disciplinary team consisting of:

Psychologist- Sandra Vannoordt

The Psychologist provides individual and group therapy for children to enhance emotional, behavioural, and social growth. Sandra offers family-centred therapy that requires active support from parents; consultation with educational and relevant medical professionals yields best results. Assessment precedes therapy and can be used to assist potential diagnoses.

Occupational Therapist- Claire Muller

The OT assists children by helping them to participate in play, school and home activities. Claire helps children develop their gross motor skills (activities to do with big movements of the body), fine motor skills (strength, endurance and dexterity of the hand), visual perceptual skills (what our eyes do with the information we see), handwriting and self care skills (e.g. dressing, shoelaces, toileting).

Speech Pathologist - Tanya Kozlova

The SLP diagnoses and treats children who are unable to communicate effectively, which means they have trouble understanding or being understood. Communication difficulties encompass a range of abilities such as speech-sound production, using and understanding language, voice, fluency (stuttering), hearing or reading and spelling. Tanya offers individual and group therapy, as well as support to parents and education staff.

Family Health Support Worker/Administration Officer- Janie Stupart

The FHSW/AO completes all administration duties for the centre and liaises between therapists, parents, schools and the wider community to ensure families access appropriate services. Janie also offers Group Triple P parenting sessions as well as running various group programs for children focused around social and emotional wellbeing.

To refer a child to Bush Children's we require a referral form to be completed and signed by a parent or guardian. The referrer can be anyone who is currently working with the child (e.g. Principal, Learning Support Teacher, Class Teacher, Medical Professional, Child Care Director, and Kindergarten Teacher).

Bush Children's is a non-profit organisation that relies on the generous support from community groups and individuals. We do not charge any fees to families who access our service, but as we are a family centred practise we do require parent involvement in sessions. Any queries can be directed to the Centre via the details at the top of this page.

# PSYCHOLOGIST

*A Psychologist's aim is to enhance family functioning, relationships and to equip children and families with improved coping strategies for challenging situations.*

Have you ever been worried for a child or student for any of the following reasons?

- ♥ Their school work is suddenly slipping;
- ♥ They seem anxious or worried;
- ♥ They have difficulty expressing their emotions;
- ♥ Their behaviour appears odd and perplexing;
- ♥ They experience difficulty adjusting to change;
- ♥ They are having difficulty with conflict in the home;
- ♥ They are repeatedly bullied and lack coping skills;
- ♥ They say negative things about themselves all the time;
- ♥ They seem to have difficulty making friends and socialising;
- ♥ They are having difficulty coping with a parent separation or divorce;
- ♥ Their personality seems to have changed dramatically (e.g. from cheerful and bubbly to quiet and withdrawn) and;
- ♥ Their mood fluctuates between happy/stable and feeling sad, angry, and irritable.



*Psychologists can help via self esteem therapy, grief counselling, providing coping skills and trialling different behaviour management strategies that are designed for home and school contexts.*

# OCCUPATIONAL THERAPIST

“Occupational Therapists aim to promote the highest level of functioning possible for a person within their daily occupations. For a child these are self-care skills, school and play.”

Difficulties in these areas may have a negative impact upon a child's learning ability, self esteem and/or behaviour at home or school.

The main skills that an Occupational Therapist assesses include the following:

**Motor Skills:** This is our ability to use the large (gross) and small (fine) muscle Groups of the body.

These skills may include the following:

- ♥ balance
- ♥ body awareness
- ♥ coordination
- ♥ scissor skills
- ♥ running/skipping
- ♥ ball skills
- ♥ strength & endurance
- ♥ writing
- ♥ threading
- ♥ motor planning
- ♥ drawing
- ♥ and lots more

**Visual Perceptual Skills:** This is our ability to interpret and make meaning of what we see. Difficulties may be seen as:

- ♥ reversals of letters and words while writing
- ♥ poor spacing between letters and words
- ♥ poor sequencing ability
- ♥ difficulties with puzzles
- ♥ poor organisation of setting out work
- ♥ difficulty with copying from the blackboard
- ♥ difficulties with spelling and/or reading
- ♥ difficulty writing between the lines

**Self Care Skills:** This is our ability to be independent in our performance of daily activities. These include the following:

- ♥ dressing skills (e.g. buttons, zippers, shoelaces etc)
- ♥ toileting skills
- ♥ eating skills (e.g. using a knife and fork)
- ♥ personal hygiene and grooming skills.



# *SPEECH LANGUAGE PATHOLOGIST*

Speech Pathologists assess, diagnose and treat children with difficulties in the areas of language, speech, voice, fluency, literacy, learning, hearing and feeding.

## WHEN SHOULD I CONTACT A SPEECH PATHOLOGIST?

Speech Pathology will assist children with difficulties in the area of:

### Speech

- ♥ Have limited speech sounds
- ♥ Are difficult to understand
- ♥ Are not easily understood by three years of age

### Language

- ♥ Are not using single words by 18 months or 2 words together by 2 years
- ♥ Use immature and short sentences or have poor story telling skills
- ♥ Have poor vocabulary
- ♥ Have difficulty following instructions

### Voice

- ♥ Have husky, hoarse or nasal voice
- ♥ Have soft or loud voice
- ♥ Have unusually high or low pitch

### Fluency

- ♥ Have disruptions to the smooth flow of speech
- ♥ Have repetitions of sounds, words or inappropriate pa

### Literacy

- ♥ Have difficulties with learning
- ♥ Have difficulty spelling and reading

### Hearing

- ♥ Have difficulties with speech/language due to hearing problems

### Feeding

- ♥ Have difficulties sucking and swallowing
- ♥ Have difficulties chewing
- ♥ Has persistent dribbling



# *FAMILY HEALTH SUPPORT WORKER/ ADMINISTRATION OFFICER*

This is a composite position involving tasks that are helpful to both the therapy team and families. Our FHSW has many years of experience working with young children aged 4 to primary school age.

The FHSW will offer the following support for families:

- ♥ Group Triple P Parenting
- ♥ Fun Friends programs for children
- ♥ PALS Social Skills programs for children
- ♥ Assistance for therapists when running group programs
- ♥ Parenting information and support
- ♥ Help accessing alternative services
- ♥ Community Liaison

The Administration Officer will support the therapy team through general administration and centre management tasks. She will coordinate referrals and centre documents and ensure the referral process runs smoothly for clients.

