



## Information for new clients

Talking Together Speech Pathology primarily assesses and treats pre-school and early primary school aged children who are at risk of developing or who already demonstrate developmental delays and specific communication difficulties. At Talking Together Speech Pathology, we provide services at the clinic, and when required or deemed more appropriate at clients homes, kindergartens and crèches and schools.

Talking Together Speech Pathology deliver a high standard of professionalism and are committed to evidence-based practice, family centred approach and working collaboratively with other professionals who are involved with the clients/families seen.

Our commitment includes supporting and empowering families that are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island peoples, those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, those identifying as gay, (GLBTIQ). We actively promote the safety of children. At Talking Together we have a commitment to child safety by having;

- zero tolerance for child abuse
- actively work to listen to and empower children
- has systems to protect children from abuse, and will take all allegations and concerns very seriously and responds to them consistently in line with our policies and procedures
- Talking Together is committed to promoting cultural safety for Aboriginal children, cultural safety for children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, and to providing a safe environment for children with a disability.

We expect that all staff will treat each person with dignity and respect as an individual and value their unique contribution. We believe that each child and their family should be encouraged and supported to participate in their community to the fullest extent that they wish.

### Description of the service:

**Speech pathology services for children up to age 10, specialising in ASD, developmental delays, speech and language delay and disorders.**

**Talking Together provides speech pathology through early intervention services.** Early intervention is a range of services and supports designed to meet the early learning needs of children with autism, developmental delay or other diagnosed disability, between the ages of birth and 9 years of age. As we supply the speech pathology component only, liaising and working as a transdisciplinary team with a child's therapists is key in ensuring the goals of the child and family are achieved. By working together as a team, the services are designed to meet the needs of the child and promote their development and inclusion. The aim of these services is to help develop the child's:

- Communication
- Learning skills
- Self help skills
- Sensory awareness
- Social skills
- Behaviour.

**Staff:**

**Kelly Murphy, owner and Speech Pathologist**  
**Kirsten Armstrong, Speech Pathologist**  
**Jenny Biviano, Receptionist**

**Appointments:** 9 – 5pm, Monday to Friday

**Location of Practice:** 64 Sydney Pde. Geelong 3220.

**Phone number:** (03) 5229 0936

**Mobile number:** 0410 427 129

**Referrals:** Written referrals are not required for speech pathology services. If the service is for a child with developmental concern in 2 or more areas and the family GP has provided a CDMP (EPC), this will need to be provided at time on consult.

**Cancellations:** As per cancellation policy. We request at least 24 hour notice is required if you cannot attend to allow the appointment to be filled by someone on our waitlist. If your child is unwell, please let us know as soon as you can, we understand 24hrs is not always possible. Please see attached.

**Policies:** Talking Together has an extensive policy and procedures that they adhere to so that the services provided are appropriate, meet the National Code of Conduct and Speech Pathology Australia Code of Ethics. If you would like to see or discuss our policy and procedures which include privacy and consent, accessing your records, and advocate support – please do not hesitate to contact either your treating clinician, Kelly Murphy or Jenny in the office.

**Interpreting services:** If you require or feel more comfortable using an interpreter for your child's session, please let Jenny or your treating clinician know when you contact our service or before your appointment and we will ensure the appropriate service is present for your appointment.

**Access for prams/disabled:** There is a side ramp into the house. Please come up the right-hand side of the house and ring the doorbell and Jenny will open the doors for you.

**Fees:** The fee schedule overleaf lists the costs of consultations.

**Payment of fees:** Payment of fees is on the day. Full card facilities are provided. If funded by NDIS, we support participants who are self-managed or plan-managed. A service agreement will be discussed, consented and individuals or designated plan-management organisation will be billed directly.

**Rebates:** Speech pathology usually does not receive a Medicare rebate. Some children are eligible for a Medicare rebate through the Chronic Disease Management (previously known as EPC – Enhanced Primary Care) program and/or HCWA. Access to these programs is through your child's GP or Paediatrician. Information sheets are available from the clinician. Some private health insurance "extras" packages will provide a refund for speech pathology services. You will have to claim these rebates personally through Medicare or Private health funds.

**Initial Consultation:** The initial or first consultation is for two hours. This consultation allows the clinician to gain background information about the child and to screen/assess the child's current speech and language skills. Information is gathered by discussing the child's birth, developmental and medical history, as well as the parent's observations of the child's speech and language skills. How the clinician screens the child's current skills depends on the child's age. For younger children this may involve observing the child playing with his/her parent and engaging with the clinician. For older children the clinician may administer screening or standardised tests.

A one hour (initial) consultation is usually sufficient for the assessment of:

- Articulation (Speech)

**Assessment information:** The clinician will inform you if a more comprehensive assessment is required and if more sessions are required, including social skills observation at kindergarten or school. The number of assessment consultations required will vary depending on the child's age and the type of communication difficulty.

Two or three consultations are usually required for the assessment of:

- Receptive and Expressive Language Disorders
- Speech Sound Disorders
- Autism-Spectrum Disorders
- Literacy Learning Difficulties

A kinder/school visit may be required as part of the assessment process.

**Assessment report:** The assessment report is included in the initial assessment fee and will be provided 2 weeks post the assessment session(s).

### Fee Schedule

At Talking Together we have 2 streams of fees - children eligible for NDIS have been identified as complex due to presenting with 2 or more areas of delay/or diagnosed disability and children with speech/language delay only. All therapy appointments will continue be allocated 1 hour. General administration tasks will be absorbed as a part of the service provided to your child, however resources made and more detailed reports and assessment you may require such as initial assessments, school funding assessments and applications, NDIS review reports will be allocated a per hour session fee.

Fees as follows;

NDIS plans		Speech/Language delay	
2 hr initial assessment	\$387.98	1.5 - 2hr initial assessment + report	\$350.00
1 hr therapy session	\$193.99	1 hr therapy session	\$150.00
Assessment/NDIS review reports	\$193.99/hr	Kinder & School visit/mtg	\$170.00
Travel: max 60min to and from appt (at per hr cost)		Reports for pragmatic assessments	\$300.00

### Feedback:

At Talking Together, we welcome feedback and constructively take on suggestions to improve our service for you. If you are not satisfied with our service, please contact us. We take complaints seriously and aim to resolve them quickly and fairly. Please email Kelly on [kelly@talkingtogethergeelong.com](mailto:kelly@talkingtogethergeelong.com) or complete our feedback form available in the client waiting area.

If you remain dissatisfied with our response, you may contact the Health Complaints Commissioner (HCC). The HCC responds to complaints about health services and the handling of health information in Victoria. Their service is free, confidential and impartial. To lodge a complaint with the HCC:

Fill out a complaint form online at [hcc.vic.gov.au](http://hcc.vic.gov.au) or

Phone 1300 582 113 between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday to discuss your complaint.

*I live, laugh, work and play on Wathaurong land which forms part of the Kulin Nation. I pay my respects to elders past, present and emerging. Sovereignty was never ceded.*

*All children attending Talking Together have the right to feel safe. The care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people is a fundamental responsibility of all within our service. Talking Together is a culturally safe environment in which the diverse and unique identities and experiences of all children and young people are respected and valued.*