

What happens during a therapy session?

Therapy sessions do not all look the same! Every family has their individual priorities so we tailor our sessions to meet your circumstances.

Sessions can happen in different places – in your home, your neighbourhood, your child’s childcare centre, preschool, school or at our centre in Marrickville. Some are one hour long, but they can be longer if that’s the best approach to meet your goals. Sessions can be weekly or fortnightly over a longer period of time or shorter, more intense block. This is what you can expect if your session happens at home or at our centre.

This is what you can expect when you work together with your Therapist/ Key Worker at Plumtree.

Play

Plumtree uses play-based strategies to make learning meaningful and fun. Play always involves some choice for the child. Research tells us that when children have some choice they are more likely to engage with the activity. Even though your Therapist may offer lots of choice, he or she is playing with a purpose. If you are not sure about this purpose, please ask. You may pick up ideas by watching our Therapist and your child playing together.

Coaching

Watching can be useful, but most of the time please join in and be part of the play! You and your Therapist can try different strategies together. Sometimes your Therapist will sit back a little, and may give you ideas as you play with your child. This coaching is designed to help you to make the most of play with your child in between sessions.

Coaching doesn’t only happen during play. Your Therapist might coach you through a routine, such as a mealtime. Or they may coach you as you support your child through a meltdown. Again, the aim is to build your skills and confidence and achieve better outcomes for your child.



Conversation

Conversation with you is an important part of almost every session. If your Therapist sees your child at school, he or she will talk to you about how best to stay in touch.

Conversation can achieve many things. Here are just a few:

- You, the parent, can help the Therapist to better understand your child and his or her everyday life.
- The Therapist can share with you their knowledge, skills and ideas.
- The two of you can develop and fine tune short-term goals, so that you move towards your long term goals in a logical and achievable way.
- You can talk about how the session went, and what you will try next time.
- You can problem solve when things don't go to plan.
- Together, you can work out how to approach everyday situations, so that your session has benefits throughout the week.
- There are times when conversation may need to be "Parent Only" time, with children elsewhere. Please see our separate flyer called *Parent Only Meetings*.

Sometimes, parents feel uncertain about time spent talking. They worry that this takes away from the child's time with the Therapist. However, some time spent talking will make your therapy time more effective, because it will have an impact both within the session and in everyday life.

Your Therapist is a resource for you, and perhaps for your child's teachers as well. The time he or she spends with your child is small fraction of the week. What makes the difference for your child is how much the sessions impact on what everyone does, all day. You will get ideas from watching your Therapist and from talking to them. You and your Therapist can help each other towards a positive outcome.

Sessions at Childcare, Preschool or School

Plumtree conducts almost all sessions in the classroom. We only withdraw children for very specific purposes, and only if this has been planned with you and with the school staff.

Talking it over

If you are not sure about the way your therapy sessions are going, you can:

- Talk to your therapist. Your feedback can lead to a better understanding for everyone concerned.
- Talk to our Client Relationships Manager, Elif.
- Talk to a Manager. You can contact the CEO at sylvana@plumtree.org.au or on 9572 8840. Sylvana or another Manager will be glad to hear from you.

Families ask to change their staff member for many different reasons. We expect it and we try to help. Your Therapist/Key Worker understands that you may ask for a change too. Please don't be shy to talk about this with us - we are here to work with you. Feel welcome to contact our customer relationships manager.

