

# Autism

## Occupational Therapy & Speech Therapy for children with autism

Autism is considered a 'social disorder' where children need additional help to develop social interaction and communication that can be used across all environments. Often this is accompanied by restricted and repetitive behaviour. All of these characteristics then impact on daily functioning in multiply environments including home and academic institutions.

Occupational Therapy & Speech Therapy provide early intervention to address the **social interaction and communication** and subsequent **functional life skills** that are required across environments.

While the actual 'therapy' occurs in the purpose designed clinic and home setting (via home program), our Occupational Therapy and Speech Therapy team works closely with parents, teachers and other care-givers to implement strategies to help skill develop in child care, kindergarten and school environments.

## What is Occupational Therapy and what can it do for my child?

Occupational Therapy focuses on maximising children's skills in life skills at home, kindy/school, social and play. Occupational Therapy helps children with Autism develop their abilities in:

- Table top skills - pencil skills, colouring, drawing, writing, scissor skills

- Whole body skills - running, jumping, hopping, skipping, table posture, ball skills
- Sensory Processing - which aids attention, behaviour and learning for social interaction and play
- Self Management - dressing, toileting, eating, sleeping, general organization and planning of self as well as of toys / learning resources.

## **What is Speech Therapy and what can it do for my child?**

Speech Therapy helps children to understand and use language for social interaction, play, reading and writing.) Speech Therapy helps children with Autism develop their abilities in:

- Play and interaction - playing with toys and people; looking; listening and attention and early interaction skills
- Receptive language - understanding what words mean; understanding concepts, sentences and grammatical rules; understanding instructions and directions; understanding how to answer questions appropriately; reading comprehension
- Expressive language - saying words; linking words together; using appropriate grammar; telling stories; using language socially; writing
- Articulation and talking - listening and hearing speech sounds; saying sounds; linking sounds together into words and sentences; fluency and smoothness of speech; voice quality; phonological awareness skills (ie. understanding of sounds and how sounds got together to make words); sounding out words and spelling).

## **How can Occupational Therapy & Speech Therapy help my child with Autism?**

It helps to improve your child's:

<b>Communication (&amp; Literacy)</b>	<b>Use of language</b>	<p>Ability to articulate words so that speech becomes clearer.</p> <p>Ability to respond appropriately to 'Wh' questions (eg. "What is this? Where are we going? Who is that? When are we going to the park?")</p> <p>Ability to sequence words in the correct order so their message is clear.</p> <p>Ability to retell events (eg. describe what they have done at kindy/school).</p>
	<b>PECS</b>	The Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) is taught to provide your child with an alternative way of functionally communicating as their language develops.
	<b>Key word signing</b>	Is used to aid your child's understanding of instructions and information and to provide your child with an alternative way of communicating while language develops.
	<b>Visual schedules</b>	Understanding routines and expectations through the use of pictures that outline what activities will be done in therapy, for use then at home as well as kindy/school where appropriate.
	<b>Social stories</b>	Understanding changes in their routine, and social expectations in certain situations, and perspective on the thoughts, emotions and behaviours of others.
	<b>Technology</b>	Guidance on appropriate ipad/iphone applications to use and the benefits these can have for the child in communication, play and social development.
	<b>Follow instructions</b>	Following instructions of increasing length and complexity with appropriate modelling, cues and structure.
	<b>Concept development</b>	Understanding different concepts such as big/little, on/in/under, behind/in front, hot/cold.
	<b>Sound awareness</b>	Literacy skills by developing Phonological (sound) Awareness skills, reading fluency, reading comprehension and spelling.

<b>Social</b>	<b>Interaction</b>	Understanding how to interact appropriately with others such as appropriate distance, volume, eye contact, staying on topic, recognising non-verbal cues (eg. boredom) and turn taking.
	<b>Requesting help</b>	Learning how to request help from others (gestural or verbal).
	<b>Problem solving</b>	Learning to problem solve independently to foster independence and prolonged task attention to allow skill mastery.
	<b>Emotional regulation</b>	Understanding and recognizing different emotions.
<b>Play</b>	<b>Independent play</b>	Learning to initiate and sustain play independently.
	<b>Play repertoire</b>	Expanding play topics/games and integration of other people into shared play.
	<b>Peer play</b>	Learning to play with others; joint play, turn taking.
<b>Self Management &amp; Skill levels</b>	<b>Self care</b>	Developing toileting, dressing, eating, sleeping to develop maximum independence
	<b>Attention / self regulation</b>	Sustaining attention to a topic/task to allow mastery of a skill/ interaction to support improved social conformity.
	<b>Sensory integration(SI)</b>	Is used to improve attention, behaviour and learning across environments by reducing sensory seeking or avoidance behaviours.
	<b>Sensory diet</b>	Is a therapist developed programs for use at home, child care, kindy and school, to enable children to 'cope' in a variety of environments.
	<b>Alert (Engine) program for self-regulation</b>	Developing control over activity and attention levels to aid appropriate behaviour and learning in different settings.

<b>Overall</b>	<b>Parent education</b>	Regular workshops provided to educate parents, educators and carers of the building blocks that therapy builds in order to develop skill. Ask your child care, kindy or school to arrange this.
	<b>SCERTS model</b>	Is used to help develop functional communication, sensory reactions and emotional expression, well-regulated emotions and ability to cope with stress.  Involves implementation of supports to help families, educators and therapists to respond to children's needs, adapt to the environment and provide tools to enhance learning.
	<b>RDI</b>	Therapists support the use of <i>Relationship Development Intervention</i> (RDI) to gradually expose children to environments and demands in order to address the building blocks of social interaction.
	<b>CBT</b>	Therapists use and support the psychological use of <i>Cognitive Behaviour Therapy</i> (CBT) to break tasks down into small and achievable pieces.
	<b>ABA</b>	Supports the family's use of <i>Applied Behaviour Analysis</i> (ABA) in pursuit of skill development through specific and repeated practice of tasks.

## Why use Kid Sense Child Development for children with ASD?

<b>Features</b>	<b>Benefits</b>
Long-established provider	Founded in 1998, Kid Sense is South Australia's longest continually owned private paediatric Occupational Therapy practice. Speech Pathology was offered from 2010.
NDIS expertise	Kid Sense was one of the earliest providers to register for the NDIS and has helped hundreds of parents navigate their way through the funding regulations.

Minimum waiting-lists	We have minimal to no waiting times for assessment and treatment. Clients are encouraged (but not required) to reserve future appointment times that best suit their busy schedule. Parents receive a complimentary SMS appointment reminder service the day before each appointment.
Scheduled appointments	NDIS clients can schedule the same appointment time for long periods (where availability exists) to ensure a consistent treatment time. Where the preferred time is not available, our team actively use the waitlist and provide alternative times to help meet clients' short term appointment needs whilst they are waiting to secure the preferred appointment time in the longer term.
Multi-disciplinary team	Kid Sense offers a 'one-stop' approach to multi-disciplinary care through an integrated team of paediatric Occupational Therapists and Speech Pathologists, as well as appropriate referral to 'best-fit' Psychologists and Physiotherapists.
Experienced staff	The Kid Sense team of paediatrics professionals has a great deal of clinical experience. All clinical staff members are full-time, registered with their professional body, have Police Clearance and First Aid Certificates.
Quality of care	A policy of 'Continuity of Care' ensures that the therapist who assesses your child is the therapist who provides your child with on-going care. A fully computerised, 'low paper' working environment with a high degree of systemisation supports the clinical staff and ensures a consistently high-quality standard of service.
Personalised reports and home programs	An Assessment Findings Report is provided after the Short (45 minute) assessment and a Comprehensive Assessment Report is provided after the Long (90 minute) assessment. Printed and personalised home program recommendations are provided after each treatment session to support a wider team approach and to encourage the consistent use of strategies at home and school, kindergarten or child care.

Team-based approach	Where parental consent is provided, the treating therapist will liaise by phone or email with the child's teacher, carer and/or other health professional(s) to encourage a team-based approach to the child's care.
Services all Medicare and FaHCSIA programs and Private Health Insurance Claims	Kid Sense is an approved provider to the FaHCSIA Helping Children with Autism program and all Medicare plans. "On the spot" processing of Private Health fund claims is facilitated through HICAPS.
Resource Provision under FaHCSIA & Better Start Funding	Clinical staff will work with parents to recommend, specify and acquire appropriate resources through the use of FaHCSIA and Better Start funding.
Large, purpose-designed Centre	Located in Unley, Kid Sense operates from South Australia's largest privately-owned, purpose-designed Child Development Centre and Sensory Clinic with 14 car parks offering safe and convenient on-site parking.
ASD family-friendly waiting lounge	A comfortable waiting lounge, with a well-equipped play room for children, is provided and offers parents and carers freshly roasted bean coffee, a selection of fine teas and freshly chilled spring water. The daily newspaper and magazines are provided. Security and safety gates at all access points maximises child safety.
Visual Cues	To support child orientation and familiarisation, all treatment rooms are colour-coded. Visual cues are used in each room as needed and staff are identified by a standard uniform.

Contact us today to make an initial enquiry or book an assessment for your child on 1800 KID SENSE (1800 543 736)

