



Hunter Area Early Childhood Intervention Service Directory 2011



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FORWARD

This is the latest edition of the **Hunter Area Early Childhood Intervention Service Directory**. This directory was previously printed in 2004, 2007 and 2009; it is an ongoing project of the Early Childhood Intervention Coordination Program (**ECICP**) Hunter Area.

The directory is designed for those working with families who have young children (birth to school entry age) with a disability, developmental delay or additional needs. It provides information on a range of early intervention services available in the Hunter Area, including: information, education, medical, allied health, respite and family support services.

Any suggestions on other appropriate services to be included in the directory or feedback on the content, etc. are welcome. Please forward these to the Administration Assistant, ECICP Hunter Area via email to ecicp@hnehealth.nsw.gov.au or fax to 4925 7955. **Alterations/corrections to the directory should be forwarded to this email or fax address also.**

The Early Childhood Intervention Coordination Program (ECICP) is a Families NSW interagency project with Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC) as lead agency, to coordinate early childhood intervention for children with a disability or developmental delay and their families. The ECICP involves the following NSW Government agencies:

- Ageing, Disability and Home Care, Department of Family and Community NSW (lead);
- Community Services, Department of Family and Community NSW;
- Housing NSW, Department of Family and Community NSW;
- Department of Education and Communities;
- NSW Health

The ECICP operates through a network of area and local committees across NSW. Locally this is done by the ECICP Hunter Area Committee and the ECICP Greater Newcastle and Hunter Valley Sub Committee. The membership of these committees includes representatives of the government agencies listed above plus non-government and community organisations. The Area Committee has a parent representative.

The program aims to coordinate planning and delivery of early childhood intervention services for families who have a child with a disability or developmental delay. ECICP works through a network of committees, which facilitate communication between families, service providers and policy makers to enable coordination of early childhood intervention services.

The purpose of the ECICP is to provide a coordinated early childhood intervention service by involving people from health, therapy, education and support services working together with families.

A coordinated approach means:

- Early identification of children and families who need support
- Families are given information and choices about available services
- Services and families plan and work together to meet the needs of the child and family
- Quality services are provided

Enquiries relating to the directory, including requests for an electronic copy, should be directed to the Administration Assistant, ECICP Hunter Area.

Email: ecicp@hnehealth.nsw.gov.au

Phone: 4925 7847

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Entries have been presented in a simple format to allow for photocopying and distribution.

**A regularly updated version of this directory can be found and downloaded at
www.ecicphunter.com.au**

*The Hunter Area Early Childhood Intervention Service Directory project
is funded for ECICP Hunter Area by Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC),
Department of Family and Community NSW.*

(E. & O.E)

INFORMATION

There are many specific services for members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (ATSI) community and for people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds. For services within Hunter New England Local Health District contact:

Aboriginal Hospital Liaison Officers

<i>Maitland Hospital</i>	<i>4939 2504</i>
<i>Muswellbrook Hospital</i>	<i>6542 2065</i>
<i>John Hunter Hospital</i>	<i>4922 3190</i>

Multicultural Health Unit

Health Care Interpreter Service – Hunter

4924 6285/6
4924 6285/6 Bus. hrs
4921 3000 After hrs

NSW Rural Health Care Interpreter Service

1800 674 994 (24 hours)

Multicultural Health Liaison Officer Program

<i>Child, Youth and Family / Kaleidoscope</i>	<i>4924 6283</i>
<i>Community Health and Aged Care</i>	<i>4016 4747</i>
<i>Obstetrics, Gynaecology and Acute Care</i>	<i>4921 4497</i>
<i>John Hunter Hospital</i>	<i>4921 4497</i>
<i>Maitland Hospital, Upper and Lower Hunter</i>	<i>4939 2406</i>
<i>Mater Calvary Hospital</i>	<i>4924 6285</i>

Refugee Health Clinic

4924 6412

All government departments have designated staff that support families from ATSI and CALD backgrounds. When contacting government departments, be sure to ask to speak to specific liaison officers if appropriate.

PARENT LINE and EARLY CHILDHOOD INTERVENTION INFOLINE **1300 1300 52**

www.parentline.org.au

Parent Line is a telephone counselling, information and referral service for parents of children 0 to 18 years who live in NSW. The service includes the Early Childhood Intervention Infoline. Parents, grandparents and carers anywhere in NSW can call Parent Line for no more than the cost of a local call. They are available 24 hours every day including public holidays.

healthdirect Australia

1800 022 222

www.healthdirect.org.au

healthdirect Australia is a free 24 hour telephone health advice line staffed by Registered Nurses to provide expert health advice. * charges may apply to calls from mobile phones.*

Disability Advocacy NSW (DA)

1300 365 085 or 4927 0111

www.da.org.au

Disability Advocacy NSW can help people of all ages with any type of disability or mental illness get fair treatment.

Early Childhood Information Team

Kaleidoscope, The Children's Health Network

Overview of service:

The Early Childhood Information Team (ECIT) is a community organisation funded by Ageing, Disability and Home Care and managed by Hunter New England Local Health District. ECIT provides support to families who have a young child (birth to school entry age) with a developmental delay or disability.

Contact details, etc.:

Location: Level 1, 621 Hunter Street, Newcastle West 2302
Postal address: PO Box 2563, Dangar 2309
Phone: 4925 7847
Fax: 4925 7955
Email: ecit@hnehealth.nsw.gov.au
Website: No
Hours: Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm
Fees: No

People we provide a service to:

ECIT supports families living in Newcastle, Lake Macquarie and Port Stephens Local Government Areas who have a young child (birth to school entry age) with a developmental delay or disability. The target client group includes children with difficulties in any of the following areas: Global Developmental Delay, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Severe Language Delay/Disorder, Significant Behaviour Issues, Neurological Disorder, Genetic Condition or Syndrome, Physical Disability, Vision or Hearing Impairment.

Referral and entry process:

ECIT accepts referrals from anyone (including parents) who has concerns in regards to a child's development. If the referral is initiated by someone other than the child's parent/carer, they must have consent from the child's parent/carer to contact ECIT with their details. Referrals can be made by phone, fax or email.

Service description:

ECIT aims to empower families to obtain fair access to available early intervention services. Families are provided with the information and support they need to make informed choices about the services they use.

ECIT's Interim Support Program aims to: support families whilst they are awaiting entry into existing community based services; help families develop their skills and confidence in supporting their own child during this waiting time; and ensure children have timely access to appropriate support.

Services we provide:

Information Support: Families are provided information about local services which may be able to offer early intervention education, allied health, therapy, respite, transport and family support services.

Coordination Support: Families are assisted to plan, organise and keep track of the services their child receives. ECIT can initiate referrals. This support is targeted at families who do not have enough information about their child's disability to know what type of support is appropriate.

Interim Support Program: Families are provided with interim (short term) support for their child whilst they are on a waiting list for permanent early intervention of some sort. Interim support may include placement in an ECIT Interim Early Intervention Playgroup, Home Program Support, Assessment/Therapy Support and limited Transport Support.

Newcastle Family Referral Service

Benevolent Society

Overview of service:

The Family Referral Service provides a voluntary and integrated service to children, young people and families in need of support, as well as to professionals supporting vulnerable families.

Contact details, etc.:

Location: Rutherford – Lot 10 New England Highway, Rutherford 2320
Newcastle – Carrington Community Centre,
Corner Young and Hargrave Streets, Carrington 2294
Muswellbrook – 180-182 Bridge Street, Muswellbrook 2333
Watanobbi – 4 De Lisle Drive, Watanobbi 2259

Postal address: As above

Phone: 1300 006 480

Fax: No

Email: familyreferral@bensoc.org.au

Website: www.bensoc.org.au
Family Referral Service is under “find a service”

Hours: Monday to Friday, 8am to 6pm

Fees: No

People we provide a service to:

The Family Referral Service (FRS) is an early intervention service initiative funded by the NSW Government as part of the Keep Them Safe Action Plan. The Newcastle FRS is part of The Benevolent Society and provides services to families in the Central Coast and Hunter Regions. The service is provided within the following Local Government areas: Newcastle, Maitland, Port Stephens, Gloucester, Dungog, Cessnock, Muswellbrook, Upper Hunter Shire, Singleton, Wyong, Gosford and Lake Macquarie.

Referral and entry process:

The FRS team will receive referrals by phone, email or in person. Straightforward referrals are managed by the telephone service based at Rutherford. More complex referrals (for example, where there are complex or multiple support needs, or a family has entered and exited services multiple times) are followed up by FRS outreach workers. FRS outreach workers are based in Wyong, Muswellbrook and Newcastle, and provide face to face support to families in their local community. They work closely with families, providing case coordination and supporting them in accessing services for up to six weeks.

Service description:

The role of the FRS is to assist vulnerable children, young people and families who do not meet the statutory threshold of “risk of significant harm” to access specific and appropriate support services in their local area. The intent is to prevent a difficult situation that a family, young person or child may be experiencing from escalating to a crisis requiring a statutory response from the child protection system.

Services we provide:

- Conduct an initial, strength based needs identification and assessment of underlying risk to the child or young person.
- Facilitate and improve access to appropriated local services by providing appropriate information, referrals and advocacy support.
- Provide telephone and face to face case coordination and support to families in community locations and in their home.
- Provide referrals to indigenous-specific service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families where appropriate and possible.
- Provide feedback pathways for callers and services as part of quality improvement processes at both a service and system level.
- Work towards developing a stronger local and regional network of non-government and government and individual service providers to increase the safety and well-being of children and young people.

Early Links

Overview of service:

Early Links offers early intervention to children and their families, provided inclusively as an outreach service in local early childhood settings. Early Links is staffed by a service manager, early childhood teachers, a paediatric speech pathologist and a paediatric occupational therapist.

Contact details, etc.:

Location: 19 Galway Bay Drive, Ashtonfield 2323
Postal address: As above
Phone: 4934 3773
Fax: 4934 3703
Email: earlylinks@bigpond.com
Website: under construction
Hours: Monday to Friday, 9am to 4.30pm
Fees: No

People we provide a service to:

Early Links offers early intervention support to children (2 – 6 years) who are experiencing significant difficulties in two or more developmental areas, and who may or may not have a diagnosis. These areas include cognitive, communication, physical, self-help, sensory, social, behavioural or emotional development.

Support is provided to children who are attending Preschool, Long Day Care and Family Day Care in the Cessnock, Maitland, Dungog, Singleton, Muswellbrook and Scone Local Government Areas. Early Links also assist children/families in their home setting while they are waiting to access an early childhood service.

Referral and entry process:

If there are concerns about a child's development a referral can be made to Early Links by parents/carers or other professionals (with parental/carer permission). Referrals can be made by phone, fax or mail using a Request for Service form which details the areas of concern for the child. These forms are available from the Early Links office and at most early childhood settings or professional paediatric/therapy services. All new referrals are reviewed, assessed and (if eligible) placed on a waiting list until a position within the service becomes available. At the initial interview, the Early Links teacher meets with the parents/carers and consults with the early childhood staff to assess the level of serviced needed for each child/family.

Service description:

Early Links believes that all children have the right to be included as valued participants in early childhood settings. The aim of the service then is to facilitate the effective inclusion and individual development of children with additional needs or disabilities. This is achieved through developmental assessment, individual programs and regular reviews; coordination of Individual Family Service Plans; the provision of information and resources to families and early childhood settings; referral to other relevant services; advocacy for families and assistance with the transition to school process.

Services we provide:

Early Links provides several types of support including:

- Assistance with individual programs
- Guidance for behaviour
- Parent/family support
- Consultation and support to early childhood centre staff
- Speech therapy for high priority children
- Occupational therapy for high priority children
- Access to developmental resources
- Transition support into other services including school

Firstchance Nyiirun Manhaliyn Program

'Walking Together'

Firstchance Incorporated

Overview of service:

To assist Aboriginal children with disabilities/developmental delay access local early childhood services and early intervention supports.

Contact details, etc.:

Location: Special Education Centre, University of Newcastle, Callaghan 2308
Postal address: PO Box 542, HRMC NSW 2310
Phone: 0401 041 456
Fax: 4921 6939
Email: firstchance@newcastle.edu.au
Website: www.firstchance.org.au
Hours: Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 4pm
Fees: No

People we provide a service to:

The Nyiirun Manhaliyn Program is targeted for Aboriginal children aged 0 – 6 years who have developmental concerns or a disability and who are not accessing a community service. Eligible children will be drawn from the wider community through family support networks, playgroups, Birra-li, Brighter Futures and other community networks.

Referral and entry process:

Referrals are made on a Nyiirun Manhaliyn Program referral form available from the Nyiirun Manhaliyn Team and faxed to the Coordinator of the Nyiirun Manhaliyn Program. See contact details above.

Service description:

There is flexibility in what can be funded by Nyiirun Manhaliyn. It is revolved around linking the need for funding back to the Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) goals and Nyiirun Manhaliyn priorities. Examples include:

- Occupational Therapy assessment
- Transport
- Staff training
- Parent education courses (eg Hanen)
- Purchase of equipment
- Fixed term support for an early childhood service
- Assistance to families to access early intervention supports
- Assistance to families to access an early childhood service

Services we provide:

The Nyiirun Manhaliyn Program Coordinator in conjunction with the Awabakal Early Childhood Specialist or another appropriate community member will:

- Identify the child's needs
- Assist the family to develop an IFSP
- Support the family to access early intervention services
- Support the family to access an early childhood service in their local community, e.g. preschool, playgroup, long day care, family day care.
- Assist the early childhood service staff in preparing for the child to attend
- Assist the child in the transition of commencing at the early childhood service
- Review the IFSP goals with the family in conjunction with the early childhood service

Firstchance EarlyStart Program

Firstchance Incorporated

Overview of service:

To assist families who are concerned about their child's learning, behaviour or development to access local early childhood services and early intervention supports.

Contact details, etc.:

Location: Special Education Centre, University of Newcastle, Callaghan 2308
Postal address: PO Box 542, Hunter Region Mail Centre 2310
Phone: 4921 6266
Fax: 4921 6939
Email: firstchance@newcastle.edu.au
Website: www.firstchance.org.au
Hours: Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 4pm
Fees: No

People we provide a service to:

Families that are living in the Newcastle, Lake Macquarie or Port Stephens local government areas who are concerned about their child's learning, behaviour or development and would like to access local early childhood services and early intervention supports.

Referral and entry process:

Referrals are made on an EarlyStart referral form available from the Firstchance website and can be faxed or mailed to the EarlyStart Coordinator. See contact details above.

Service description:

Firstchance EarlyStart Program:

- Assists families to create links to appropriate supports for their child.
- Works together with the family towards goals for the child.
- Supports participation in local early childhood services by helping staff prepare and transition the child into the service.

Services we provide:

Firstchance EarlyStart Program offers:

- Support for the family to help their child access local early childhood services and early intervention supports.
- Support on options for accessing diagnosis for a child.
- Fixed term support for early childhood services to include a child with developmental or behavioural concerns.
- A flexible, collaborative and family centred approach.

Firstchance Outreach Consultancy Program

Firstchance Incorporated

Overview of service:

Provides a free consultancy service to mainstream Pre Schools, Childcare Centres and Family Day care Centres with a focus on supporting the inclusion of children with additional needs in early childhood services.

Contact details, etc.:

Location: Special Education Centre, University of Newcastle, Callaghan 2308
Postal address: PO Box 542, Hunter Region Mail Centre 2310
Phone: 4921 6266
Fax: 4921 6939
Email: firstchance@newcastle.edu.au
Website: www.firstchance.org.au
Hours: Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 4pm
Fees: No

People we provide a service to:

The service is funded by Ageing, Disability and Home Care to support Early Childhood Services within Lake Macquarie, Newcastle and Port Stephens local government areas. The service provide consultancy for children 0 – 6 years who have an identified disability, a risk of developmental delay or a developmental concern.

Referral and entry process:

When to refer a child to the Outreach Program.

- When centre staff and or families have concerns relating to their child's development, behaviours or inclusion in the Early Childhood Service. These concerns may relate to an identified disability, a developmental concern, physical or sensory issues, behaviours which are impacting a child's inclusion in the service

Making a referral.

- A referral can be made by centre staff by filling out the referral form with the parent/carer and have them sign the form then send the form via fax, email or mail. Please download the referral form from the Firstchance website. Received referrals will be acknowledged via email and placed on the referral waiting list.

Service description:

The Outreach Consultancy Program consists of a team of early Childhood Intervention Consultants who work within the Firstchance Early Intervention Program that is based at the Special Education Centre at the University of Newcastle.

Services we provide:

- The opportunity for families and staff to discuss any concerns relating to a child's development, behaviours or inclusion in an early childhood setting.
- Objective and play based assessments for referred children and a comprehensive consultation report provided to the centre staff and families.
- Discussion and collaboration with families in identifying priorities and concerns for their child
- Collaborations with early childhood staff and families to develop an Individual Education Program (IEP) and Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) with goals, strategies and ongoing reviews if required.
- Providing resources, information and modelling of strategies to staff.
- Assisting families and centres with further service referrals and/or external funding, e.g. SCAN/ISP.
- Assisting in the facilitation of Learning Support Team meetings which would involve all services working with the child
- Working with centres to build capacity in staff, empowering them to build and sustain positive relationships with children and families

Hunter Inclusion Support Agency

KU Children's Services

Overview of service:

The Hunter Inclusion Support Agency (ISA) is part of an Australia wide program funded by the Department of Education, Employment and Work Place Relations (DEEWR). The aim of the Inclusion Support program is to remove the barriers to accessing child care that may be experienced by children with a disability, CALD background, Refugee background and Indigenous children.

Contact details, etc.:

Location: 2A Pearson Street, Lambton 2299
Postal address: As above
Phone: 4952 2788
Fax: 4952 1056
Email: ku.hunterisa@ku.com.au
Website: www.deewr.gov.au/EarlyChildhood/Programs
www.ku.com.au/inclusion-support
Hours: Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 4.30pm
Fees: No

People we provide a service to:

The ISA works with eligible Child Care Services to assist service staff to include children from the program priority groups.

Eligible Child Care Services

Child care services approved for Child Care Benefit (CCB), including;

- Long day care services
- Outside school hours care (including vacation care)
- Family day care
- In-home care services and

Child Care services under the Budget Based Funding Program, including;

- Flexible/innovative services

Referral and entry process:

Any staff member from an Eligible Child Care Service can contact the ISA for support. A service Support Request Form must be completed.

Service description:

The ISA consists of a team of Inclusion Support Facilitator's (ISF's) who work on-site with eligible services in the region. ISFs work with staff in services to provide practical advice and to facilitate access to a range of supports. These supports are designed to strengthen the services ability to create a quality environment that is inclusive of all children.

Services we provide:

ISFs assist service staff to;

- Develop Service Support Plans
- Apply for Flexible Support Funding and Inclusion Support Subsidy
- Access specialised equipment, the General Resource Library and Bicultural Support
- Identify Professional Development needs and opportunities
- Develop, implement and sustain inclusive policies and practices
- Identify policies and practices that facilitate inclusion of children with additional needs
- Link with other child care professionals, community groups and organisations
- Work in partnerships with families and local support networks
- Engage in ongoing reflective practices and continuous improvement

Supporting Children with Additional Needs (SCAN)

Samaritans Foundation

Overview of service:

The SCAN funding project is a brokerage model introduced by Community Services in 2002 to support children with additional needs in early childhood services that are solely State-funded. The Samaritans Foundation was chosen as the broker in the Hunter, Central Coast and Mid North Coast Regions to administer and distribute funds.

Contact details, etc.:

Location: 35 Gordon Avenue, Hamilton 2303
Postal address: PO Box 167, Adamstown 2289
Phone: 4014 9322
Fax: 4014 9362
Email: scan@samaritans.org.au
Website: www.samaritans.org.au
follow the links to Services then to Family & Children
Hours: Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 4.30pm
Fees: No

People we provide a service to:

Samaritans SCAN provides support to State Funded Community Based Preschools, Occasional Care Centres, Multipurpose Centres and Vacation Care Services. To support the inclusion of:

- Children with a delayed developmental or diagnosed disability
- Children with challenging behaviours
- Children with a severe chronic health condition
- Children with a moderate to severe language delay

Referral and entry process:

With consent from families, staff from eligible services make an application to SCAN for funding for individual children. Community Services stipulate that SCAN funding is seen as a contribution only towards the child's inclusion into their eligible service.

Service description:

To administer and distribute funds, support service practitioners in the application and accountability process, provide in-service training.

Services we provide:

Samaritans SCAN is able to assist eligible early childhood services with funding to enable access and inclusion of children with additional needs.

Samaritans SCAN has an extensive resource library which eligible services are able to access.

Aspect Hunter School

Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect)

Overview of service:

Aspect Hunter School provides specialised evidence-based programs for children aged from 3 years 10 months with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD), who require an autism specific program. The primary focus of Aspect schools is to equip students with the skills to become as independent as possible and enable them to transition into the wider community. Services include school based programs, satellite support classes, training, outreach and enrolment. The school operates from Adamstown, with a base school at Gateshead West and satellite classes in a variety of areas in the Hunter and Port Macquarie.

Contact details, etc.:

Location: Shop 3B Adamstown Place, 281-293 Bruncker Road, Adamstown 2289
Postal address: PO Box 236, Adamstown 2289
Phone: 4955 6266
Fax: 4955 6270
Email: hunter@autismspectrum.org.au
Website: www.autismspectrum.org.au
Hours: Monday to Friday, 9am to 3pm during school terms
Fees: Yes – contact service for details

People we provide a service to:

School based programs and Educational Outreach are provided for children aged from 3 years 10 months who have a confirmed diagnosis of an Autism Spectrum Disorder/Asperger's Disorder/PDD-NOS. Families may live in Lake Macquarie, Newcastle, Maitland, Port Stephens, Upper Hunter and Port Macquarie area.

Referral and entry process:

Anyone can refer to Aspect Hunter School. The school holds information sessions each term for parents and service providers to give details of the range of services provided by Aspect in the Hunter region. Application for enrolment to Aspect Hunter School is only available at the information sessions. This application must be accompanied by a medical diagnosis report and psychometric assessment. This committee meets once per term. If the child meets the service's eligibility criteria then the child is placed on the waiting list for placement.

Service description:

In recognition of the special needs of students with an ASD, class sizes are small and all classes include a teacher and a teacher's aide. Aspect Comprehensive Educational Approach includes a specialised curriculum for children with an ASD and a focus on skills training underpinned by individual assessment and planning. The innovative approach recognises the important role of environmental supports, structured learning and positive behaviour supports. Key elements of the approach include multi-disciplinary teams (consisting of speech pathologists, occupational therapists and family counsellors/psychologists), family involvement and staff training.

Services we provide:

These services include early intervention, school-based programs, satellite support classes, training, educational outreach and enrolment.

The school is able to provide the following services to children and families attending:

Positive Behaviour Support; Counselling; Early Childhood Programs; Parent/Carer Education in the form of regular workshops/training sessions; Integration Support; Psychological Assessment; Transition Support; Speech Therapy Support and Occupational Therapy Support.

Building Blocks Hunter

Autism Spectrum Australia (Aspect)

Overview of service:

Building Blocks Early Intervention Program for children aged 0 to 7 years.

Contact details, etc.:

Location: Elmore Vale Community Centre, 129A Croudace Road, Elmore Vale 2287
Postal address: PO Box 361, Forestville 2087
Phone: 8977 8341
Fax: 8977 8350
Email: buildingblocks@autismspectrum.org.au
Website: www.autismspectrum.org.au
Hours: Monday and Tuesday, 9.30 to 11.30am and 12.30 to 2.30pm
Fees: Yes – contact service for details

People we provide a service to:

Early intervention services are provided to children 0 – 6 years with an Autism Spectrum Disorder. Families may live in Lake Macquarie, Newcastle, Maitland and Upper Hunter areas. Autism Spectrum Australia provides outreach and phone support to people who live immediately outside these areas.

Referral and entry process:

Anyone can refer to the early intervention service. Entry to the Building Blocks service requires an application form to be completed with current medical report attached. After a referral is received, an interview is arranged with the parents and child to determine a suitable Building Blocks service for the child. If the child meets the service's eligibility criteria then the child is placed on the waiting list for placement.

Service description:

Building Blocks early intervention service focuses on developing social play skills and functional communication to prepare the child for successful integration in their next setting and generalisation of skills from one setting to another. This is achieved by focusing on the following:

- Motor skill development – fine and gross motor
- Communication – building functional communication and language development
- Pre-Academic
- Play – teaching joint attention, play and imitational skills
- Social/Emotional – teaching social interaction, relating skills and understanding of emotions
- Self Regulation – modulating sensory issues and positive behaviour support
- Advancing daily living skills
- Development of key pre-academic skills
- Generalisation of skills aught across environments
- Preparation

Services we provide:

We provide education in the form of regular workshops/training sessions; Integration Support; Transition Support; Speech Therapy Support and Occupational Therapy Support.

Our service includes:

- Building Blocks Early Intervention Centre Based – 8 sessions per term with concurrent Parent component session. (funded by ISP and parent contribution and Aspect make up the remainder of the cost)
- Building Blocks Early Intervention - At home or your child's pre-school by agreement. Available as 1 hour, 90 minute or 2 hour sessions. Minimum one term program.
- Speech and/or Occupational Therapy services - At home or your child's pre-school by agreement. Available as 1 hour, 90 minute or 2 hour sessions. Minimum one term program.
- Transition to school - at home. Includes preschool and school visits, transition to school meetings with school staff. Available as 1 hour, 90 minute or 2 hour sessions. Minimum 5 sessions over a term.
- Hanen More Than Words Program - a free full semester Centre Based Program (ADHC funded)

Firstchance Early Childhood Intervention Program

Firstchance Incorporated

Overview of service:

The early childhood intervention program aims to provide for the developmental, social and education needs of children (birth to school entry age) who have a diagnosed disability or whose development is delayed or is considered to be at risk of delay.

Contact details, etc.:

Location: Special Education Centre, University of Newcastle, Callaghan 2308
Postal address: PO Box 542, Hunter Region Mail Centre 2310
Phone: 4921 6277
Fax: 4921 6939
Email: firstchance@newcastle.edu.au
Website: www.firstchance.org.au
Hours: Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 4pm
Fees: Yes – contact service for details

People we provide a service to:

To be eligible to attend or to receive a service from Firstchance, families must live in Newcastle, Port Stephens or Lake Macquarie and have:

- a) a child aged 0 – 6 years with a disability (according to funding body guidelines). The disability must be such that the child attracts disability funding in an education setting OR
- b) a child at risk of developmental delay.

Referral and entry process:

Referrals to Firstchance are made by contacting the Program Manager. Referrals can be made by:

- Parents/carers or other family members
- Professionals connected with the child (with parental permission)

Service description:

The Early Childhood Intervention Program at Firstchance provides a holistic approach to each child and family's needs. The strengths and needs of each child are completed in collaboration with the parent/carer over a five week period. Information from this process as well as discussions with other relevant professionals and carers (e.g. child care, preschool) forms the basis of an Individual Family Service Plan which incorporates the Individual Education Program.

Services we provide:

Centre Based Services

- The Baby Program provides a 2 hour playgroup session for children from 0 – 12 months and their families. These families are able to access a weekly program at the centre and in their home.
- The Toddler Program provides morning or afternoon sessions for small groups of 8 children and their families. Each session runs for 2 hours and is designed to address the individual needs of children within a group setting.
- The Young Preschool Program provides morning or afternoon sessions for small groups of 8 children and their families. Each session runs for 2 hours and is designed to address the individual needs of children within a group setting. These sessions are provided at the Special Education Centre, Belmont, Salamander Bay and Raymond Terrace.
- The Transition Program provides 2 ½ hour sessions for children over the age of 3 years. These sessions are provided at the Special Education Centre, Belmont, Salamander Bay and Raymond Terrace. The children who attend these sessions would be encouraged to be attending a community children's services setting. The program also supports these children with the transition to school process for the following year.

All families are involved in the planning, implementation and evaluation of their child's program.

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The Home Based Program for children up to the age of 3 years provides services to families who have difficulty accessing a centre based program due to distance, family circumstances, transport or the nature of the child's disability. This program involves an early childhood intervention teach visiting the family at their home on a weekly or fortnightly basis. Therapist and family worker support is available as needed.

Parent/carer groups that provide further information, skills and support for families within the programs.

Consultation support to Firstchance teaching staff from Speech Pathologists, Occupational Therapists and Physiotherapists employed by Firstchance.

Referral to therapy services for children attending the Early Intervention Programs attached to centre based services.

Hunter Prelude Early Intervention Centre

Overview of service:

Hunter Prelude Early Intervention Centre aims to promote positive outcomes for children from birth to 6 years of age and their families by providing a range of services that are based on strength-based family-centred practices. The service focuses on prevention, early identification and early intervention.

Contact details, etc.:

Location: 131 Northcote Street, Kurri Kurri 2327
Civic Avenue, Singleton 2330

Postal address: Kurri Kurri – PO Box 191, Kurri Kurri 2327
Singleton – PO Box 3001, Singleton 2330

Phone: Kurri Kurri – 4937 4549
Singleton – 6571 4384

Fax: Kurri Kurri – 4937 5571
Singleton – 6572 4455

Email: mail@hunterprelude.org.au

Website: www.hunterprelude.com.au

Hours: Monday to Friday, 9am to 4pm
Closed school holidays, but has an "on call" service for emergencies

Fees: A voluntary tax deductible contribution applies, contact service for details

People we provide a service to:

Families of children from birth to six years of age with a diagnosed disability, development delay or are at risk of developmental delay are able to access the services through Hunter Prelude. Priority is given to families living in the Hunter Valley including: Cessnock, Maitland, Murrurundi, Scone, Dungog, Merriwa, Muswellbrook and Singleton.

Referral and entry process:

Referrals are accepted from parents or any persons concerned about the child with parental permission. Referrals may be made by phone, mail or in person.

Reports are not necessary when making a referral. Once a referral is accepted an appointment is made to meet with the family. This may be at the family home, at one of the Hunter Prelude centres or any other place that is convenient to the family. During this visit the child and the family's strengths and needs are assessed in order to determine the most appropriate program for them. The needs of each child are looked at in terms of the whole child within the environment of the family and the wider community. Hunter Prelude works with many community organisations to prepare and encourage access to the service by families from the diverse communities who live in these areas.

All attempts will be made to provide a service or link the family with other appropriate services in the area as soon after initial contact with the family. However at times families may need to be placed on a waiting list until an appropriate service becomes available. Families will be contacted when a service becomes available. However, families are also encouraged to keep in contact with the service if their child is on the waiting list. Children under two years of age are a high priority for the service.

Service description:

Families are able access either a 2 hour weekly program, a fortnightly home program or a fortnightly visit to their child's community care setting (preschool, childcare, family day care), to support their inclusion. Each family /child will have an Individual Family Service Plan and an Individual Education Program developed in collaboration with the family, and with parental permission, with other professionals/ carers involved with the child. Input from others involved in the care and development of the child is also sought for evaluating the child's program. The programs are staffed by Early Childhood teachers, Early Childhood Intervention teachers, Speech Pathologists, Occupational Therapists, Physiotherapists and Child Care Workers.

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Services we provide:

Hunter Prelude provides a range of services including:

- Supported playgroups
- Multidisciplinary early intervention groups
- Individual support at the centre and family homes
- Access to aides and equipment
- Parent/family education
- Occupational Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Speech pathology
- Inclusion support
- Transition support for entry into other early intervention services, preschool and schools
- Referral to other services

Hunter Prelude is also a provider of Helping Children with Autism under FaHCSIA funding. Families who meet the criteria to receive this funding are able to access Speech and Occupational Therapy through the service under this funding.

Lifepoints and Community Links Teams

Cerebral Palsy Alliance (formerly The Spastic Centre NSW)

Overview of service:

- Lifepoints Team provide therapy support programs for children 0 - 18 years of age including an outreach service providing information and support to childcare settings and preschools.
- Community Links Team provide social and emotional support to families accessing the service.

Contact details, etc.:

Location:	The Stuart Centre, 61 Parklea Avenue, Croudace Bay 2280
Postal address:	P O Box 3038, Valentine 2280
Phone:	4979 4333 or INTAKE 1300 888 378
Fax:	4946 9852
Email:	info@cerebralpalsy.org.au
Website:	www.cerebralpalsy.org.au
Hours:	9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday
Fees:	No

People we provide a service to:

Services are provided to children 0 - 18 years of age who have motor delay, cerebral palsy or a similar physical disability. Children with fine and gross motor skill difficulties or communication and feeding difficulties are considered a high priority. The service is available to families who live in Lake Macquarie, Newcastle, Port Stephens, Cessnock, Maitland, Gloucester, Scone, Dungog, Muswellbrook and Singleton.

Referral and entry process:

Referrals are made by the child's parents/family. Other agencies need to refer via the parents but are welcome to contact the service with any questions or requests for information. Referrals are made by phone to the PATHWAYS intake service (1300 888 378). Information is gained about family needs and a decision made as to whether the service is able to meet the needs of the client and their family. Once intake is completed, an appropriate service team is allocated. The family is offered an initial appointment to discuss their needs and service options. A service plan is developed with the family.

Service description:

The Lifepoints Team offers information, support, therapy and education programs. Parents are given practical ideas to assist their child in all areas of development, including play, mobility and daily routine activities. The service provides support to day care centres, preschools and schools. The Community Links Team provides social and emotional support to children and their families to help manage family wellbeing including social and recreational groups, mentoring, advocacy and information.

Services we provide:

- Developmental Playgroup (to meet specific client/family needs)
- Parent/Family Education (as part of therapy support for clients and families)
- Integration Support
- Transition Support into Preschool
- Transition Support into School
- Speech Pathology, Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy
- Access to Aids and Equipment Prescription
- Early Educator
- My Time Support Group
- Hey Mums Group
- Hey Dads Group
- Parent to Parent Mentoring
- Intensive Family Support Options (see separate information page)

RIDBC Hunter

Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children

Overview of service:

- Reverse Integration Preschool
- Early Learning Program
- Vision Education Advisory Service

Contact details, etc.:

Location:	160 Floraville Road, Floraville 2280
Postal address:	As above
Phone:	4942 8455
Fax:	4942 8457
Email:	hunter@ridbc.org.au
Website:	www.ridbc.org.au
Hours:	Monday to Friday, 8am to 4pm during school terms
Fees:	Yes - contact service for details

People we provide a service to:

Preschool services are provided to children who have a significant sensory disability (vision and/or hearing impairment) aged 3 years to school entry age (knowing our license allows us to enrol sensory disability children under 3, if needed). Community children enrolled as part of the Reverse Integration Model are accepted from 3 years to school entry age.

Referral and entry process:

Anyone can make an inquiry - including parents and other professionals. Referrals to the centre may be made by parents by phone, mail or in person. For admission the child must meet RIDBC criteria. Children with a hearing impairment require a copy of their latest audiogram and ENT report. Children with a visual impairment require an Ophthalmologist report.

The Director meets with the family to collect relevant information and appropriate reports. This information is considered at the RIDBC's next monthly assessment committee meeting to determine the child's eligibility for service. Each child's application is individually assessed.

Service description:

RIDBC Hunter provides innovative programs for children who have significant hearing and/or visual impairments. It is fully focused on early education and intervention with the Preschool and Early Learning Program. Children from the local community who do not have a disability may also apply for enrolment in the preschool.

Services we provide:

The RIDBC Hunter provides:

- Reverse Integration Preschool: Children 3 years of age to school age with a diagnosed sensory impairment.
- Early Learning Program: Early education service for children with significant sensory disabilities. An Early Learning Program and weekly playgroup is also delivered from St. Dominic's Centre for Hearing Impaired Children at 76 Havelock Street, Mayfield.
- Vision Education Advisory Service: Assistance to families and teachers of children with a diagnosed vision loss who are attending other community services e.g. preschools.

St. Dominic's Centre for Hearing Impaired Children

Overview of service:

St Dominic's caters for children who have a significant hearing impairment and a consequential delay in language development. The school works closely with families and therapists to develop listening, spoken language and social skills for each child.

Contact details, etc.:

Location: 76 Havelock Street, Mayfield 2304
Postal address: PO Box 269, Mayfield 2304
Phone: 4968 1295
Fax: 4968 0456
Email: admin@mayfieldsd.catholic.edu.au
Website: www.mayfieldsd.catholic.edu.au
Hours: Monday to Friday, 8.20am to 3pm
Fees: Yes - contact service for details

Referral and entry process:

Contact the Principal. A family can self-refer to the service. A current audiogram must be provided.

Service description:

St Dominic's provides transition to formal schooling and Kinder to Year 6 programs. The Centre promotes the goal of integration into mainstream classrooms and works closely with partner schools to achieve this goal.

Services we provide:

Transition to formal schooling.

Vision Australia

Overview of service:

Vision Australia provides training and resources for families to help children who are blind or have low vision to increase their choices and reach their full potential in life.

Contact details, etc.:

Location: 7-9 Beaumont Street, Hamilton 2303
Postal address: As above
Phone: 4927 3300
Fax: 4927 3333
Email: info@visionaustralia.org
Website: www.visionaustralia.org
Hours: Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm
Fees: No

People we provide a service to:

Our specialist staff work with children and their families to develop programs that are tailored to individual needs whether the child was born with blindness or low vision or their vision was affected later in life..

Referral and entry process:

Anyone can refer a child who has, or is suspected as having low vision as long as they have the parents consent. It is preferred that the child has seen an Ophthalmologist (Eye Specialist) before being referred. The referral contact number is 1300 847 466.

Service description:

Our specialist staff work with children from birth to 5 years providing a range of in-house services as well as referral points to external services. Staff also work with children of school age 5 to 18 years providing appropriate services in the area of case coordination and services relating to low vision and blindness strategies.

Services we provide:

- A variety of assessments e.g. vision, developmental, adaptive technology, lighting
- Advice and counselling.
- Coffee Club for parents to meet other families of children who are blind or have low vision.
- Advice about toys, books and equipment to suit each child's level of vision.
- Assistance with inclusion into community leisure and peer groups, childcare centres and preschools.
- Access to library service - "Felix" library".

Community Support Team – Hunter Region

Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC), Department of Family and Community NSW

Overview of service:

Case management, behaviour intervention and therapy services to people with an intellectual disability.

Contact details, etc.:

Location:	Various, see below
Postal address:	Various, see below
Phone:	Various, see below
Fax:	Various, see below
Email:	See below
Website:	www.adhc.nsw.gov.au
Hours:	Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm
Fees:	No

People we provide a service to:

Services are provided to children from 0 - 6 years of age who have a global developmental delay and to children over 6 with an intellectual disability. Children may present with other secondary problems. Families may live in the following Local Government Areas: Cessnock, Dungog, Gosford, Lake Macquarie, Maitland, Muswellbrook, Newcastle, Port Stephens, Singleton, Wyong, Merriwa, Murrurundi and Scone.

Referral and entry process:

Anyone can make a referral – including parents. Parent consent is required when making a referral. Referrals can be made by phone, fax, email or post.

All referrals need to be made to an Information, Referral and Intake Officer via the Hunter Region Reception Team. To make a referral:

Phone:	1300 205 268
Fax:	4978 6299
Email:	disabilityintake-newcastle@dhs.nsw.gov.au
Post:	PO Box 2161, Dangar 2309

For Central Coast, phone 4320 4100 and ask to be transferred to the central intake number.

Once eligibility is determined a Needs Assessment can be conducted to discuss needs in more detail. The program has a waiting list.

Service description:

The Community Support Team is a multidisciplinary community based team which provides assistant to individuals with an intellectual disability. Early intervention is just one aspect of the service with support being available to people of any age who have an intellectual disability. When working with young children the service targets children with, or at risk of developing an intellectual disability.

Services we provide:

The program provides a range of services including:

- Assessments – developmental and functional.
- Service Coordination/Case Management.
- Behaviour Intervention.
- Assistance with disability related issues.
- Assistance with seating and positional.
- Communication programs.
- Assistance with eating and drinking problems.
- Consultation.

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The Community Support Team – Hunter Region is based in four offices located across the Hunter Region. Contact details for these offices are as follows:

Service: Newcastle Community Services Centre
Location: Level 5, 670 Hunter Street, Newcastle West 2302
Postal Address: PO Box 2161, Dangar 2309
Phone: 4978 6100
Fax: 4978 6299

Service: Central Coast Community Services Centre
Location: Level 5, Gateway Building, 221 Mann Street, Gosford 2250
Postal Address: Locked Bag 37, Gosford 2250
Phone: 4320 4100
Fax: 4320 4199

Service: Newcastle Community Services Centre
Location: Level 5, 670 Hunter Street, Newcastle West 2302
Postal Address: PO Box 2161, Dangar 2309
Phone: 4978 6100
Fax: 4978 6299

Service: Maitland Community Services Centre
Location: 1/12 Ken Tubman Drive, Maitland 2320
Postal Address: PO Box 36, Maitland 2320
Phone: 4909 3000
Fax: 4909 3099

Maitland Community Services Centre has an Outreach Office at Muswellbrook which operates Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday. Contact via Maitland Office.

Service: Muswellbrook Community Services Centre
Location: Shop 6, Commercial Centre, Market Lane, Muswellbrook 2333
Postal Address: PO Box 289, Muswellbrook 2333

Early Intervention Program

NSW Department of Education and Communities

Overview of service:

- Early Intervention Sessions (Small Group)
- Resource / Outreach Support to Preschools
- Transition to school support

Contact details, etc.:

Location:	Various, see below
Postal address:	Various, see below
Phone:	Various, see below
Fax:	Various, see below
Email:	No
Website:	www.det.nsw.edu.au
Hours:	Monday to Friday during school hours (school terms only)
Fees:	No

People we provide a service to:

Services are provided to children aged 3 years to school entry age who have a disability or developmental delay. Children may present with needs in the following areas: developmental delay/disability, cognitive impairment, behaviour, communication, genetic/birth defects, physical disability or fine/gross motor difficulties, difficulties related to social development (e.g. autism), behavioural difficulties, sensory impairments, perceptual difficulties, self-help needs, or difficulties related to emotional development, feeding, or genetic / birth defects.

Referral and entry process:

Anyone can make a referral - including parents. Referrals must be made in writing and referring agencies must have parent consent to make a referral. Wherever possible, reports should be attached to the referral, as relevant professional reports confirm the child's areas of need and may avoid the need for further assessment to establish the child's eligibility for service.

Referrals should be directed to the Department's Disability Programs Consultant in the area where the family lives. Contact details are listed at the end of this entry.

Upon acceptance of a referral the Disability Programs Consultant, in consultation with the District Guidance Officer and/or District School Counsellor determines eligibility for entry. This may necessitate additional assessment by the local School Counsellor and observations of the child in their preschool by the local Early Intervention teacher. The child's case is then discussed at a Placement Panel Meeting. The purpose of the meeting is to decide the child's eligibility for entry into the program, his/her priority for placement and the suitability of the program to meet the child's needs. Parents are then informed by mail of the outcome of the meeting. If a vacancy exists in the program, and the child is eligible to enter, parents will be contacted by the School Principal or Early Intervention Teacher. If a vacancy is not available then the child goes on a waiting list to enter the program. The Department conducts a Placement Panel Meeting each Term.

Priority is shown to children with significant needs (developmental disability/cognitive impairment), children not receiving other services; children who have high support needs which can be catered for in a group context.

Service description:

The Department of Education and Communities operate Early Intervention Programs in the:

Greater Newcastle Area

- Waratah Public School
- Kotara South Public School
- Toronto Public School

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Hunter Area

- Telarah Public School

Central Coast Area

- Lake Munmorah Public School

The programs are focused on providing early support to children with special needs to maximise their opportunity to achieve their individual potential. The programs:

- provide young children with special needs with small group preschool experiences which are complementary to their preschool program.
- provide each child with an individual education program designed to maximise their potential. This program is designed, implemented and monitored by all those involved with the child e.g. teacher, family, therapists.
- prepare young children with disabilities or developmental delays for preschool and provides children / families with transition support into school.
- provide resource/outreach support to preschools and childcare centres.

Services we provide:

The program provides a range of services including:

- Early intervention sessions
- Resource / Outreach support to preschools and child care centres
- Family / parent education
- Transition support into early intervention, preschool and school

Contact details for local Disability Programs Consultants:

Lake Macquarie School Education Area, Disability Programs Consultant

Phone: 4972 3000

Postal Address: PO Box 162, Swansea 2281

Newcastle School Education Area, Disability Programs Consultant

Phone: 4904 3900

Postal Address: PO Box 82 Adamstown 2289

Maitland School Education Area, Disability Programs Consultant

Phone: 4931 3500

Postal Address: Level 1, 2 Caroline Place, Maitland 2320

Central Coast School Education Area, Disability Programs Consultant

Phone: 4348 9100

Postal Address: Level 3, 40 Mann Street, Gosford 2250

Itinerant Support Teacher: Early Intervention NSW Department of Education and Communities

Overview of service:

Early Intervention and Transition to School Support Program.

Contact details, etc.:

Location: C/- Raymond Terrace Public School, Swan Street, Raymond Terrace 2324
Postal address: See referral and entry process section
Phone: 4987 2083
Fax: 4987 4079
Email: No
Website: www.det.nsw.edu.au
Hours: Rotating roster – 3 days/week, 9am to 3pm [School terms only]
Fees: Free service

People we provide a service to:

Services are provided to children 4 - 6 years who will enter school the following year. It is for students that have been identified as having significant behaviour and/ or learning difficulties and / or a diagnosed disability. Families living in the Port Stephens area are the priority.

Referrals can be made for students with a range of developmental support needs. These may include children with developmental disabilities, communication delays, health and medical conditions, learning and behavioural issues, as well as students with a diagnosed condition. Children with sensory disabilities [hearing or vision] are referred to more appropriate services.

Referral and entry process:

Anyone can make a referral to the service for an eligible student. Referrals are made on the appropriate referral form which is available from the Disability Program Consultant 4931 3500 at Maitland Regional Office, and / or the Itinerant Support Teacher – Early Intervention 4987 2083. Services referring must have parental consent to make a referral, and while reports are not mandatory, where available, they are appreciated.

Referrals for the service should be directed to:

*Disability Programs Consultant
Maitland Regional Office Department of Education and Communities
Postal Address: Level 1, 2 Caroline Place, Maitland 2320
Phone: 4931 3500 Fax: 4931 3599*

Referrals received are presented to the regional placement panel to determine the student's eligibility for support and placement priority. Parents are informed by mail of the outcome of the meeting. If a vacancy exists in the program, and the child is eligible to enter, parents will be contacted by the Early Intervention Support Teacher and plans made to observe the student and to meet relevant services involved with the student's care and education. Priority is provided to students with significant learning or behavioural needs, and to children not receiving other services.

Service description:

The main roles of the service is to provide access to early intervention support prior to school entry, to support students who have been identified in their early childhood settings as having additional support needs, and / or to provide a service for students that will require additional support to successfully transition to school. Support is provided by a fully qualified early childhood and special education teacher, and the program provided is individualised and developed collaboratively with family, services, and the school involved.

Services we provide:

The service provides program planning support, support with managing behaviour, learning, and communication difficulties, as well education regarding integration and transition to school.

Itinerant Support Teachers: Hearing Impairment

NSW Department of Education and Communities

Overview of service:

- Pre-school Support Program
- Centre Visits Program

Contact details, etc.:

Location:	Kotara South Public School, Rae Crescent, Kotara 2289 Tenambit Public School, Edward Street, Tenambit 2323 Elmore Vale Public School, McCaffrey Drive, Elmore Vale 2287
Postal address:	As above
Phone:	Kotara South: 4956 1116 (ph/fax) Tenambit: 4933 7196 Elmore Vale: 4955 9016
Fax:	Kotara South: 4956 1116 (ph/fax) Tenambit: 4933 7999 Elmore Vale: 4950 2195
Email:	N/A
Website:	www.det.nsw.edu.au
Hours:	Monday to Friday, 9.00am to 3.30pm, during school terms only
Fees:	No

People we provide a service to:

Services are provided to children 0 – 18 years of age who have a hearing impairment. Children may also have other disabilities, with the level of support provided by the program depending on the child's main disability. Families must live in the Hunter area.

Referral and entry process:

A professional referral is required from an Educator. Referrals must be accompanied by a recent audiogram from Australian Hearing Services; E.N.T. report from Community Health Audiometrist; Nurse Audiometrist report [if child has a history of Otitis Media] or a private Audiologist report. These reports are not necessary in every circumstance.

Service description:

The service provides support to children 0 - 18 years of age with a hearing impairment and has several roles:

- To provide individual educational programs to children with hearing impairments from the time of their diagnosis. These programs address communication skills [verbal and non-verbal], speech development and listening skills.
- To prepare children for the transition to school or a support class [as appropriate].
- To provide information and skills development to families.
- To offer consultancy support to other agencies as required. The program has several teachers who work with children throughout the area on a needs basis. There are no limits to time available for individual children as long as Departmental caseload guidelines are followed.

Services we provide:

- Access to aids/equipment
- Early special education
- Family/parent education
- Integration support
- Transition support into early intervention, preschools and schools

Itinerant Support Teachers: Vision Impairment NSW Department of Education and Communities

Overview of service:

Advice and support program for children with vision impairment, including children who are blind.

Contact details, etc.:

Location: Newcastle School, Cnr. Union and Laman Streets, Cooks Hill 2300
Budgewoi Public School, Woolana Avenue, Budgewoi 2262
Cessnock West Public School, Cnr. Wollombi and Campbell Streets,
Cessnock West 2325

Postal address: As above

Phone: Newcastle: 4929 1663
Budgewoi: 4390 9166
Cessnock West: 4990 1637

Fax: Newcastle: 4929 2319
Budgewoi: 4399 1958
Cessnock West: 4991 1523

Email: N/A

Website: www.det.nsw.edu.au

Hours: Monday to Friday, 9am to 3 pm, during school terms only

Fees: No

People we provide a service to:

Services are provided to children 3 years of age and over who have vision impairment. Families must live in the Hunter Region including: Lake Macquarie, Newcastle, Port Stephens, Maitland, Cessnock, Gloucester, Dungog, Singleton and Muswellbrook.

Referral and entry process:

A professional referral is required from an Educator. Referrals must be accompanied by a medical report documenting the child's vision status. After a referral is received a consultation process occurs at the education centre. The service does not have a waiting list.

Service description:

The service provides support to children 3 - 18 years with a visual impairment and children under 3 years of age through negotiation with local support centres.

The aim of the program is to facilitate and maximise educational outcomes for children with a visual impairment.

The service provides assistance with educational programs which focus on enabling children with vision impairment to realise their full potential and to contribute to the local community in which they live. The service is also committed to promoting wider community understanding and awareness of disabilities and the needs of children with vision impairment.

Services we provide:

The types of support provided are needs based. The service provides transition support into Public Schools and may provide support to enable inclusion into preschools. Support to private centres must be negotiated at a support centre.

Child and Family Health Team

Kaleidoscope, The Children's Health Network

Overview of service:

Community Based Multidisciplinary Health Team for children 2 to 12 years of age.

Contact details, etc.:

Location: Harker Building, Wallsend Campus, Longworth Avenue, Wallsend 2287
Postal address: Locked Bag 1014, Wallsend 2287
Phone: 4924 6400 / 4924 6190
Fax: 4924 6401
Email: No
Website: No
Hours: Monday to Friday, 9am to 4.30pm
Fees: No

People we provide a service to:

The Child and Family Health Team (CAFHT) provides a range of specialist community based child and family health services to families with children up to the end of primary school with a view to optimising child health outcomes. The team operates as a secondary and tertiary diagnostic and assessment and treatment service. The team provides a comprehensive multidisciplinary service to children with complex developmental problems and/or psychosocial issues and support to their families.

The aims are:

- To provide a comprehensive assessment of children in the context of family and environment and develop appropriate recommendations for intervention.
- To provide a co-ordinated multidisciplinary approach to the assessment and management of children whose development is of concern in more than one area.
- To ensure that services are provided in a timely manner.

The team will work in collaboration with families, schools and other agencies and when appropriate CAFHT will discuss with parents/carers, the involvement of other community agencies which can provide a more suitable program. A case co-ordinator will be appointed within the team to liaise with the family and monitor services provided. CAFHT provide limited outreach services to children and their families in the Hunter region, co-therapy and case consultation to other services when requested.

Referral and entry process:

Children referred to CAFHT will be expected to have initially accessed primary care providers and now require more specialised assessment/intervention.

A written referral from providers of services to children is required. Written referrals will be accepted from a health provider, professional or agency who is involved with the child/family in relation to the issues of concern. **Referrals should be accompanied by a GP referral.**

At the time of referral, details of previous assessments, reports, current interventions and expectations are requested. For school age clients this will include school counselor assessments for developmental issues (including IQ). In the case of psychosocial referrals, the need for assessment results can be discussed at the point of intake if not supplied. However a letter of support for psychosocial issues stating observations of the concerns should be included.

An intake worker is available each day to discuss referrals. All referrals will go through an intake process to discuss and prioritise appropriate assessment and services. Referrals not accepted will be redirected to more appropriate agencies.

New clinical referrals to the **Child and Family Health Team will only be accepted for:**

- Children up to the end of primary school. (Excluding Literacy Support Program).
- Children who present with **complex developmental and/or complex psychosocial issues** requiring multidisciplinary assessment and management.

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Across Hunter New England Health, referrals and interagency partner requests will also be accepted for:

- Case consultation
- Co-therapy
- Education and training for health professionals
- Health promotion activities

Exclusion criteria - CAFHT is **NOT a crisis team** and is unable to accept urgent referrals.

- Where children are eligible for and/or are being seen by other health related services for the same issue. (ie. PANOC/ADHC/CAMHS, Learning Disorders Clinic, Whole Family Team or are eligible for FaHCSIA funding).
- Children with significant mental health issues – CAMHS criteria including suicidal concerns, self-harm, severe behaviour disturbance, mental health crisis.
- Single issue presentations – (excluding Literacy Support Program).
- Out of geographical area.
- Where referrals are deemed inappropriate for assessment by the Child and Family Health Team, options for alternate health care will be provided.

Service description:

The Child and Family Health Team is a community based specialist, multidisciplinary team for families where children are experiencing difficulties with development and/or behaviour.

Services we provide:

The team provides the following clinical services:

- Medical assessment and management
- Child & Family Therapy
- Developmental assessment and intervention
- Outreach clinics

The team's medical staff work in conjunction with Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC) for children eligible for their services. Staff consult and liaise with other community agencies, schools and preschools who may have ongoing involvement with a child and family. The service also works in conjunction with the Department of Education and Training to provide some limited integration support for children with physical problems.

First Steps Parenting Centre

Kaleidoscope, The Children's Health Network

Overview of service:

- Parenting Support/Interventions to families with children 0 to 5 years
- Social Work, Nursing, Medical and Early Childhood staff
- Intervention to special needs groups e.g. Adolescent parents, women with post-natal depression
- Individual and group programs

Contact details, etc.:

Location: Lowrey Lane, Wallsend Campus, Wallsend 2287
Postal address: PO Box 119, Wallsend 2287
Phone: 4924 6550
Fax: 4924 6555
Email: firststeps@hnehealth.nsw.gov.au
Website: No
Hours: Monday to Friday, 8.00am to 4.30pm
Fees: No

People we provide a service to:

First Steps Parenting Centre is a service for parents with children aged 0 -5 years. Families referred to the centre have multiple issues impacting on parenting or likely to adversely affect child health outcomes.

Referral and entry process:

An intake officer is available Monday to Friday on 4924 6550. Referrals are accepted from health professionals and community organisations that have seen the client within the last four weeks. We accept referrals for families with children 0 - 5 years where there are multiple issues impacting on parenting. Self referrals are not accepted.

Detailed assessment required including:

- presenting signs and symptoms
- current support systems
- other professionals involved

Referrals are discussed at team level at a weekly allocation meeting. A letter is sent to the family requesting they contact the service within a week if they wish to proceed with the referral. First Steps Parenting Centre has a waiting list, however, the longest people usually wait is around 4 – 8 weeks. Breast feeding difficulties and little babies are given priority, generally seen within 1 – 3 weeks.

Service description:

First Steps Parenting Centre is a parenting service for families with children aged 0 -5 years.

Referrals are accepted for families where there are multiple issues impacting on or likely to lead to adverse parenting outcomes. The centre provides a combination of home and centre-based activities to support families with the many issues that can impact on their parenting.

Services we provide:

First Steps Parenting Centre provides multidisciplinary interventions to family and group programs.

Groups include:

- Post-natal depression group
- Adolescent parents groups
- Music groups
- Individual services are provided to families both at the centre and in the home

Hunter Genetics Service

Hunter New England Local Health District

Overview of service:

Hunter Genetics provides a genetic diagnostic and counselling service for children with a disability or developmental delay. The main clinic is at Waratah, Newcastle with outreach clinics conducted at Muswellbrook, Taree, Port Macquarie, Coffs Harbour, Lismore and Kingscliff. Speciality services are listed below.

Contact details, etc.:

Location:	Cnr Turton and Tinonee Roads, Waratah 2298
Postal address:	PO Box 84, Waratah 2298
Phone:	4985 3100
Fax:	4985 3105
Email:	hunter.genetics@hnehealth.nsw.gov.au
Website:	No
Hours:	Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 5pm
Fees:	The service bulk bills on Medicare with appropriate referrals

People we provide a service to:

Services are provided to families that have an identified need for genetic counselling and diagnostic support and who live in the Hunter or rural areas listed above.

Referral and entry process:

A written referral from a general practitioner or health professional is required. Copies of relevant reports are preferred. Once a referral has been accepted the family is contacted by phone by a Genetic Counsellor, who obtains relevant further information and provides information about what to expect at the clinic appointment. The service does have a waiting list.

Service description:

- To assist with diagnosis of genetic conditions in children.
- To provide clients with relevant and up to date information about genetic conditions in their families.
- To provide access to support services.
- To promote research in the area of genetic conditions.

Services we provide:

General Genetics Clinics. A range of services are provided including diagnosis of genetic conditions in children with physical and / or intellectual disability, advice regarding risks in pregnancy or related to family history, genetic screening, genetic counselling and research/education.

The GOLD (Genetics Of Learning Disability) Service. State-wide service for individuals and families with fragile X syndrome and other known and unknown X-linked conditions that cause learning disabilities.

Prenatal Diagnosis Clinic. Multidisciplinary clinic in conjunction with Maternal Foetal Medicine Unit and other relevant specialities at John Hunter Hospital every Thursday morning to discuss ultrasound findings, family history and genetic counselling.

Cystic Fibrosis Clinic. Held at John Hunter Children's Hospital every Tuesday morning with genetic counsellor in attendance as required. New diagnoses of cystic fibrosis are seen along with Paediatric Respiratory Specialists, Paediatric Respiratory Nurses and Cystic Fibrosis Social Worker.

Metabolic Clinic. Outreach clinic of the Children's Hospital at Westmead, provided at Hunter Genetics three times per year for children with metabolic disorders, such as PKU, homocystinuria and galactosaemia.

Baby Hearing Clinic. A multidisciplinary clinic held at John Hunter Hospital once a month to review and investigate the cause of hearing loss in babies, identified through the Newborn Hearing Screening Program.

Paediatric Brain Injury Rehabilitation Team

Kaleidoscope, The Children's Health Network

Overview of service:

Multidisciplinary assessment and management of rehabilitation needs for children and young people with an acquired brain injury. This includes medical assessment, case management and allied health assessment and management.

Contact details, etc.:

Location:	Level 1, 621 Hunter Street, Newcastle West 2302
Postal address:	PO Box 2563, Dangar 2309
Phone:	4925 7963
Fax:	4925 7955
Email:	No
Website:	No
Hours:	Monday to Friday, 8am to 4.30pm
Fees:	No. However, if a child's rehabilitation is compensable then the relevant authority (insurance company or Life-Time Care and Support Scheme) will be billed for service

People we provide a service to:

Services are provided to children and young people who acquire a brain injury after birth. We provide services to the Newcastle and Lake Macquarie area as well as Upper and Lower Hunter and Central Coast region. We also provide consultative services to the Manning, North Coast, New England and surrounding areas.

Referral and entry process:

A referral can be made by anyone (with parental consent). Reports or documentation verifying that the child or young person has sustained a brain injury may be required. Once eligibility for service has been confirmed, services may begin.

Service description:

The role of the service is to assess, manage and support the rehabilitation needs of children and young people with an acquired brain injury. Long term support and assistance with school and leisure is also provided.

Services we provide:

- Medical Review
- Case Management
- Neuropsychology
- Physiotherapy
- Occupational Therapy
- Speech Pathology
- Social Work

Paediatric Occupational Therapy Department

Kaleidoscope, The Children's Health Network

Overview of service:

Occupational Therapy Service - Primary Therapy and Specialist Services.

Contact details, etc.:

Location: John Hunter Children's Hospital, Lookout Road, New Lambton 2305
Postal address: Locked Bag 1, Hunter Region Mail Centre 2310
Phone: 4921 3700
Fax: 4921 3599
Email: No
Website: No
Hours: Monday to Friday, 8.00 am to 4.30 pm
Fees: No

People we provide a service to:

Outpatient Occupational Therapy services are provided to children 0 - 18 years of age with a diagnosed physical disability, or a child under investigation of a physical disability, and children with early intervention needs as a result of developmental concerns referred before the end of kindergarten. Families must live in Lake Macquarie, Newcastle or Port Stephens. Note: Specialist services and referral back to local OT's are provided for children in other areas of the Hunter, Central Coast, North Coast and New England regions. Also note that children aged 0 – 12 years who are experiencing difficulties with behaviour or emotional wellbeing are serviced by the Child and Family Health Team.

Referral and entry process:

A professional referral is required to access the service. Once a referral is accepted the child's case is prioritized according to the level of urgency for treatment and the child placed on the service's waiting list as appropriate. When the child's case comes up the family is then contacted and an initial assessment organised and provided. Once these are completed services are co-ordinated and provided, or the family is referred elsewhere if appropriate. The amount and type of therapy to be provided is determined according to the child's needs. Assessment reports are circulated to the referring agency, the family and any agency to which the family is being referred. Families are also put in contact with social and educational networks available in the community including community support groups and early intervention services.

The service may have a waiting list depending on priority. Priority is shown to children with a physical disability whose safety is at risk. Children under the age of two years are shown the next priority. High priority children are given appointments immediately. It is our aim to see all children referred within 4 - 8 weeks of referral.

Service description:

The service is focused on all age groups with a disability. It is often the first referral point from a paediatrician for occupational therapy, and in such cases children are often referred on to another service e.g. ADHC, Cerebral Palsy Alliance, etc.

Services we provide:

The service aims to improve, maintain or restore the level of functional independence of children taking into account the important issues which relate to development, and their occupational roles, including: play, preschool and school. To do this we must: assess, diagnose and treat children appropriately referred; work as part of a multi-disciplinary team; educate other staff [medical, nursing, allied health] with regard to independence and occupation; and work in conjunction with ADHC therapists, community services and the Department of Education and Training.

Paediatric Outpatient Services

Kaleidoscope, The Children's Health Network

Overview of service:

Paediatric Outpatient Clinics are held at both the John Hunter Children's Hospital and Belmont Hospital.

Contact details, etc.:

Location: Belmont Hospital
John Hunter Children's Hospital

Postal address: Belmont – PO Box 2365, Gateshead 2290
JHCH – Locked Bag 1, Hunter Region Mail Centre 2310

Phone: Belmont – 4923 2030
JHCH – 4921 3750

Fax: 4922 3904 (Belmont and JHCH)

Email: jhchpaedopd@hnehealth.nsw.gov.au

Website: www.kaleidoscope.org.au

Hours: Belmont – Monday to Friday, 8am to 4.30pm
JHCH – Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 5pm

Fees: Medicare Bulk Bill

Referral and entry process:

GP or specialist should fax a referral letter to the John Hunter Children's Hospital on 4922 3904. This fax number is also used for appointments at Belmont Hospital. The child's family will be notified by phone or letter of an appointment time.

Service description:

Paediatric Outpatient Services is a very busy service that sees approximately 15,000 children per year by 40 different specialists. There are 10 clinic rooms as well as a treatment room for small procedures. Specialist doctors, nurses and allied health professionals hold clinics throughout the year. These clinics are often supported by Clinical Nurse Consultants who are specialised in a particular area of paediatrics.

Services we provide:

Belmont Hospital

General Paediatrics

John Hunter Children's Hospital

Allergy/Immunology
Allergy Testing
Asthma Education
Baby Hearing (SWIS-H)
Cardiology
Cerebral Palsy
Cleft Palate
Diabetes/Endocrine
Gastroenterology
General Paediatrics
Hip Screening
Neonatology
Nephrology
Neurology
Oncology/Haematology
Orthopaedics
Pain
Palliative Care
Plastics

Respiratory/Cystic Fibrosis
Rheumatology
Sleep Medicine/Sleep Unit
Spina Bifida
Surgery
Talipes

Paediatric Physiotherapy Department

Kaleidoscope, The Children's Health Network

Overview of service:

Paediatric Physiotherapy Service.

Contact details, etc.:

Location: John Hunter Children's Hospital, Lookout Road, New Lambton 2305
Postal address: Locked Bag 1, Hunter Region Mail Centre 2310
Phone: 4921 3700
Fax: 4985 5460
Email: No
Website: www.kaleidoscope.org.au
Hours: Monday to Friday, 8am to 4.30pm
Fees: No

People we provide a service to:

Services are provided to children 0 to 18 years of age who have needs in the following areas: orthopaedics, spina bifida, cystic fibrosis and other respiratory conditions, burns, problems related to premature birth, developmental delay/disability and various other neurological disorders. Ongoing services are not usually provided to children with moderate to severe cerebral palsy or a moderate to severe intellectual disability as other community services such as Cerebral Palsy Alliance and Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC) cater for these groups.

Referral and entry process:

A referral from a Medical Practitioner, Medical Specialist or Paediatrician, Early Childhood Clinic Nurse or therapist is required.

Once a referral is accepted, the family is contacted by letter regarding expected waiting time. The family will be contacted by phone when an appointment becomes available. Assessment and treatment will be provided as necessary for the child's condition. Families are put in contact with social and educational networks available in the community including support groups and early intervention services if required.

The service does have a waiting list. Urgent in-hospital cases are seen immediately, high priority cases within two weeks and non-urgent cases within a maximum of three months.

Service description:

The Physiotherapist works within a multidisciplinary framework – a team approach to working with children/families. The therapist works closely with other professionals involved with the child to ensure continuity in the provision of services

Services we provide:

The service provides physiotherapy assessment, therapy services and support.

Paediatric Speech Pathology Department

John Hunter Children's Hospital

Kaleidoscope, The Children's Health Network

Overview of service:

Paediatric Speech Pathology Service.

Contact details, etc.:

Location: John Hunter Children's Hospital, Lookout Rd. New Lambton 2305
Postal address: Locked Bag 1, Hunter Region Mail Centre 2310
Phone: 4921 3727
Fax: 4921 3599
Email: No
Website: No
Hours: Monday to Friday, 8.00am to 4.30pm
Fees: No

People we provide a service to:

Services are provided to children 0 - 18 years of age in the following categories:

- **Inpatient services include:** Assessment and treatment of speech, language, and swallowing disorders for children admitted to any of the Paediatric wards. Children may be referred by their managing Doctor, or by multidisciplinary team members with the Doctor's permission.
- **Outpatient services include:** Specialised services delivered to three prioritised patient groups following a referral from a medical professional or specialist, or from an allied health professional with the doctor's permission:
 1. Children with cleft lip/palate, velopharyngeal disorders.
 2. Children with acquired neurological disorders (including traumatic brain injury)
 3. Children with feeding difficulties or dysphagia who meet the following criteria:
 - a. Children with medical issues and concomitant feeding difficulties AND growth or nutrition issues requiring multidisciplinary input – prefer Paediatrician / tertiary referral. Multidisciplinary input will include speech pathologist and dietician, +/- OT or physio support if required.
 - b. Second opinion referrals from other allied health professionals on a case by case basis
 - c. Children requiring modified barium swallow examination. Doctor's referral required. Previous swallow assessment by speech pathologist requested.

Referral and entry process:

A professional referral from a Medical Specialist or Allied Health Professional is required to enter the service. Referrals are prioritised according to medical and surgical need. If the child meets the service's eligibility criteria then their management will occur at JHCH. If the child does not meet the criteria for service the family is given advice on appropriate management strategies and/or information regarding appropriate alternate speech pathology services. There is a waiting list for this service.

Reports are circulated to the referring agent, other health professionals involved in the child's care (with carer consent), and the family or carer as appropriate.

Service description:

John Hunter Children's Hospital (JHCH) is one of three Children's Hospitals in NSW. The Paediatric Speech Pathology Department at JHCH provides a service to both inpatients and outpatients, including specialist outpatient clinics.

Services we provide:

Assessment and treatment is offered, provided travel to the service is geographically viable for families. Treatment may include individual programmes, or multidisciplinary clinic management.

Paediatric Speech Pathology

Greater Newcastle Area, Community Based Services

Kaleidoscope, The Children's Health Network

Overview of service:

Paediatric Outpatient Speech Pathology.

Contact details, etc.:

Location:	Multiple sites in Greater Newcastle Area – listed below
Postal address:	As below
Phone:	As below
Fax:	As below
Email:	No
Website:	No
Hours:	Monday to Friday, 8am to 4.30pm
Fees:	No

People we provide a service to:

Services are provided to children birth to school age (up to high school), who have difficulties with speech, language, communication and/or swallowing.

Referral and entry process:

Parent referral is recommended, however, any other agency/health professional can refer a child to the service. **Referrals can be made by phoning the Referral and Information Centre on 4925 7990.**

Once a referral is received it will be directed to the appropriate Speech Pathology community health centre. There are waiting lists for Speech Pathology services which vary between sites. An estimated waiting time will be advised when a referral is made. Please contact the Referral and Information Centre for updates on waiting times.

Service description:

The service has several aims:

- To assess, diagnose and treat children referred to the service.
- To work within an interdisciplinary framework.
- To provide appropriate services to children.
- To educate families, parents and carers.
- To contribute to student clinical education.
- To disseminate clinical information to professionals in the Hunter.
- To work in conjunction with other services to establish and maintain a holistic approach to care.

Services we provide:

The service provides speech pathology management (assessment, consultation, therapy) and parent/community education.

Services are provided at the following Community Health Centres:

- Belmont Child and Family Health Centre, Croudace Bay Road, Belmont.
Ph: 4923 2229 – F: 4923 2166
- Westlakes Community Health Centre, 6 James Street, Toronto. Ph: 4935 8100 – F: 4935 8163
- Eastlakes Community Health Centre, Cnr South and Cherry Streets, Windale.
Ph: 4944 5300 – F: 4944 5310
- Western Newcastle Community Health Centre, Nash Street, Wallsend Ph: 4924 6100 – F: 4924 6101
- Raymond Terrace Community Health Centre, 59 Port Stephens Road, Raymond Terrace.
Ph: 4987 2078 – F: 4987 1660
- Nelson Bay Community Health Centre, Kerrigan Street, Nelson Bay. Ph: 4981 4935 – F: 4984 0730
- 621 Hunter Street, Newcastle West. Ph: 4925 7800 – F: 4925 7955

Paediatric Speech Pathology, Lower Hunter Cluster

Hunter New England Local Health Network

Overview of service:

Speech Pathology Service.

Contact details, etc.:

Location: Multiple sites in Lower Hunter Area – listed below
Postal address: As below
Phone: As below
Fax: As below
Email: No
Website: No
Hours: Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 5pm
Fees: No

People we provide a service to:

Services are provided to children 0 – 18 years of age in the communities of the Lower Hunter.

Referral and entry process:

Referrals are accepted from parents/caregivers only. Referrals may be made by phone, mail or in person. The service has a waiting list. Waiting times vary.

Service description:

Paediatric Speech Pathology in the Lower Hunter provides services for children in the community 0 to 18 years of age with problems of speech, language, voice, fluency or swallowing. As there is an emphasis on early intervention, the limited resources are directed to younger age groups.

Services we provide:

The service provides speech pathology assessment and therapy services for children at risk of or with delays/disorders in speech, language, voice, fluency (stuttering) or swallowing.

Paediatric Speech Pathology, Lower Hunter Cluster services are at Cessnock Hospital, Kurri Kurri Hospital, Singleton Community Health Centre, East Maitland Community Health Centre, Maitland Hospital and Dungog Hospital.

Address and contact details are as follows:

Cessnock District Hospital, View Street, Cessnock 2325
Phone: 4991 0571 – Fax: 4991 0514

Kurri Kurri District Hospital, Lang Street, Kurri Kurri 2327
Phone: 4936 3243 – Fax: 4936 3239

Singleton Community Health Centre, Boonal Street, Singleton 2330
Phone: 6571 9248 (general) 4931 2003 (referrals) – Fax: 6571 9248

East Maitland Community Health Centre, 58 Stronach Avenue, East Maitland 2323
Phone: 4931 2000 (general) 4931 2003 (referrals) – Fax: 4931 2002

Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre – Hunter

Overview of service:

- Short term and emergency respite for carers.
- Provide information on community and support services available to assist people to live independently in the community.

Contact details, etc.:

Location:	Walker Building, Wallsend Campus, Longworth Avenue, Wallsend 2287
Postal address:	PO Box 385, Wallsend 2287
Phone:	1800 052 222 - 24hrs
Fax:	4924 6098
Email:	huntercrc@hnehealth.nsw.gov.au
Website:	www.commcarelink.health.gov.au
Hours:	Monday to Friday, 8.30am to 5pm 24 hour emergency line, after hours calls handled by Nursing Agency
Fees:	Yes – contact service for details

People we provide a service to:

Respite to carers of:

- people with a terminal illness in need of palliative care
- people under 30 with severe or profound disabilities who are living at home
- people with mental illness

Referral and entry process:

Carers phone 1800 052 222. The Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre prefer to speak directly to carers in regards to the referral – telephone referrals also accepted from service providers.

Service description:

Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre – Hunter aims to provide short term and emergency respite to carers (24 hour) – after hours call 1800 052 222. They can assist carers to plan respite and provide information on community services available and how to contact them.

Services we provide:

- Commonwealth Respite and Carelink Centre use brokerage funds to provide carers with services in an emergency or for the short term in the carer's own home, or in an approved community respite facility (eg. a respite cottage).
- Information database of service providers across the Hunter Region who provide services and support to assist the client to live independently.

Host Family Care

LeapFrog ability

Overview of service:

Host Family Care provides individualised, planned respite or care in a home setting.

Contact details, etc.:

Location: 37 Fern Street, Islington 2296
Postal address: PO Box 96, Islington 2296
Phone: 4979 7777
Fax: 4940 0048
Email: admin@leapfrog.org.au
Website: www.leapfrog.org.au
Hours: Office – 8.00am to 4.30pm
Host Family Respite – On-call 24hr support
Fees: Yes – contact service for details

People we provide a service to:

People in the Hunter Region with a diagnosed disability.

Referral and entry process:

Referrals are processed in collaboration with the funding body. E.g. ADHC, self-funded.

Service description:

Host Family Care provides individualised, planned respite or care in a home setting. This can be support for one night, long periods of time or support during the day only. The emphasis is on providing the best care. Staff working in Host Family Care undergo training, police and working with children checks and are supervised closely to make sure all is being done to support each family in the best possible way.

Services we provide:

- In-home respite
- Out-of-home respite
- Day Support
- Community Access

Lower Hunter Temporary Care

Overview of service:

- Host Family Respite Care
- Flexible Respite Options

Contact details, etc.:

Location:	C/- Kurri Kurri Hospital, Lang Street, Kurri Kurri, 2327
Postal address:	As above
Phone:	4937 5502
Fax:	4937 5502
Email:	temporarycare@lhctc.org.au
Website:	www.lhctc.org.au
Hours:	Monday to Friday, 9am to 4.30pm
Fees:	Yes – contact service for details

People we provide a service to:

Host Family Respite Care targets people 0 to 64 years of age with a moderate to severe functional disability. The care is provided by volunteer caregivers in the caregiver's home for periods as short as a few hours or as long as fourteen days, by arrangement or on a regular basis. The service is available to families living in the Cessnock, Maitland and Port Stephens Local Government Areas.

Flexible Respite Options provides a range of respite support services tailored to the needs of the person with a disability and their carer. It is available to people aged 0 - 64, who have a disability with moderate to high support needs. There are limited places available in the Flexible Respite Options service, applications have to be made on an annual basis so that an assessment panel can determine the eligibility and priority of an individual to receive the service. The service is available to families living in the Cessnock, Maitland and Port Stephens Local Government Areas.

Referral and entry process:

Anyone can refer a family to the service - including families themselves.

Host Family Respite Care referrals are made through the Community Care Access Point on 1300 731 556 (for the cost of a local call).

Flexible Respite Options referrals can be made anytime throughout the year. Application forms for this service are usually made available in April each year for a position in the next financial year.

Service description:

The role of Lower Hunter Temporary Care is to provide respite care to the families/carers of individuals who have moderate to severe functional disabilities.

Services we provide:

Services vary according to which particular program the family is accessing, see above.

Newcastle Temporary Care Ltd

'Sharing the Care'

Overview of service:

- Host Family Respite Care
- Time Away Respite Care
- In-home Respite Care
- Kidzlink
- Home Support Project
- Parent Support Groups

Contact details, etc.:

Location:	Unit 3 / 33 Newton Street, Broadmeadow NSW 2292
Postal address:	As above
Phone:	4957 5008
Fax:	4957 4003
Email:	respite@newcastletempcare.com.au
Website:	www.tempcare.com.au
Hours:	Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm
Fees:	Yes – contact service for details

People we provide a service to:

Services are targeted at people with a disability from 0 to 55 years of age who live in the Newcastle and Lake Macquarie area. The service's priority group is people with a disability who have ongoing high support needs. This may include children with significant difficulties in the following areas: cognitive impairment, developmental disability, genetic or birth defects, hearing impairment, physical disability, autism, or visual impairment. It may also include children with communication difficulties, behavioural difficulties, perceptual difficulties and difficulties related to social development, if these children also have needs in one of the other areas listed. Families need to be receiving the Carers Allowance to access the service.

Referral and entry process:

A referral is not needed – families simply call the service. Once a family has made contact, they complete an application form. The application is reviewed and if the service is able to offer support then services are commenced. An eligibility criteria list exists for some programs and waiting times vary with each program.

Service description:

The service recognises that many carers of children/adults with disabilities need a rest from the constant demands and responsibilities they face. The service aims to provide respite support to those families with the greatest needs.

Services we provide:

The service operates five programs:

1. **Host Family Respite Care** - This service is provided by volunteer families in their own homes. This service is limited to four week nights or one weekend per month.
2. **Time Away Respite Care** – Care is provided in our respite home. Carers provide activities and attend to all personal care. It is a warm, friendly home-like environment. Allocations are conducted every 12 months. There is limited availability of this service.
3. **Flexible Respite Care** – Provides respite in the client's home. Allocations are conducted every 6 months. There is limited availability for this service.
4. **Kidzlink** – Kindy group – 0 to 5 years, receiving less than 3 days service elsewhere. This program also provides a range of out of school hours services, including: Saturday programs, Vacation Care and Out of Schools Hours (OOSH) programs and Teen Scene - a social and recreational program operating one Saturday per month and during the school holidays.
5. **Home Support Project** - This program provides home based physiotherapy for children 0 - 5 years who are at risk of developing physical or intellectual disabilities.

Brighter Futures Program

Benevolent Society

Overview of service:

Brighter Futures is an early intervention program designed to build the resilience of families and children that are at risk. Delivered by 14 lead agencies across NSW and Community Services caseworkers, the Brighter Futures Program helps connect families to the services they need. The Benevolent Society is the lead agency for the Upper and Lower Hunter.

Contact details, etc.:

Location: Suite 2, Lot 10 New England Highway, Rutherford 2320
Postal address: PO Box 275, East Maitland 2323
Phone: 4015 3099
Fax: 4931 9369
Email: No
Website: www.bensoc.org.au
home » what we do » children and families » early intervention
Hours: Business hours
Fees: No

People we provide a service to:

Children aged 0 – 8 years and their families.

Referral and entry process:

The Brighter Futures Program is voluntary and families may self-refer or be referred by Community Services (Department of Family and Community NSW), a community agency or individual such as a GP, childcare or community health worker. Families must consent to an entry screening by Community Services to determine their eligibility for the Brighter Futures Program.

Service description:

The core components of the program include case management, quality children's services, home visiting and parenting programs.

Services we provide:

- Case management for families to support them in identifying and reaching their goals.
- Professional home visiting to assist parents build parenting skills and develop an understanding of children's needs and behaviours.
- Access to quality children's services.
- Parenting groups and one to one parenting support.
- Practical support to help families meet basic material needs and access services and resources in the community.
- Play therapy for children to assist learning and development.
- Support to help strengthen links between the family and their community.

Brighter Futures Program

Samaritans Foundation

Overview of service:

Samaritans Brighter Futures is an early intervention program for families in the Newcastle and Lake Macquarie areas with children aged between 0 and 8 years. Brighter Futures provides support and services to promote healthy child development, and strengthen resilience in families.

Samaritans and Wandiyali ATSI Inc are the Lead Agencies in Newcastle and Lake Macquarie. Wandiyali is the Indigenous Lead Agency.

The Brighter Futures Program provides early support and services that include:

- Quality Child Care
- Home visiting
- Parenting programs
- Supported Playgroups

The goals of the program are to promote healthy development in children, promote strong, functional and well-supported families and reduce/prevent child abuse and neglect in participating families. Each family joining the program will actively identify and prioritise their goals for each family member.

Contact details, etc.:

Location: Newcastle (Hamilton) and Lake Macquarie (Toronto)
Postal address: PO Box 103, Cardiff, 2285
Phone: 4014 9300
Fax: 4014 9360
Email: brighterfutures@samaritans.org.au
Website: www.samaritans.org.au
Hours: Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm
Fees: No

People we provide a service to:

Families who have children under 9 years of age.

Referral and entry process:

Community Services Helpline / agency referral / self-referral. Further details are available by contacting the program on the phone number above.

Service description:

Brighter Futures provide early intervention case management to families who require assistance with parenting children up to 9 years of age. Two teams, located in Hamilton and Toronto. Brighter Futures staff work in partnership with six community organisations, who provide case work, parenting groups, child care and supported playgroups. Brighter Futures Case Managers work closely with staff from services such as; Education, Health, Mental Health, Disability Services, Housing, Centre Based Child Care – Pre Schools, Family Day Care and specialist services such as speech therapy, occupational therapy and paediatric specialists.

Services we provide:

- Case Management
- Intensive Home Visiting
- Case Work
- Child care
- Supported Playgroups
- Parenting Groups, e.g. discipline/nutrition

Fair Go For Kids

LeapFrog ability

Overview of service:

Fair Go For Kids is an initiative of LeapFrog ability.

Every day we hear of children with a disability in the Hunter waiting up to two years for urgent assessment, treatment, therapy and equipment. In many cases they develop secondary conditions as a result of having to wait so long.

The generous support received from the community and locally focused businesses has an immeasurable effect on the development and future wellbeing of these children .Fair Go For Kids can only help these children with the generosity of the community, businesses and organisations such as those listed in the Hunter's Kindest Companies.

Contact details, etc.:

Location: 37 Fern Street, Islington 2296
Postal address: PO Box 96, Islington 2296
Phone: 4979 7777
Fax: 4940 0048
Email: admin@leapfrog.org.au
Website: www.leapfrog.org.au
Hours: 8.30am to 5.00 pm
Fees: N/A

People we provide a service to:

Children in Newcastle and the Hunter Valley with a disability.

Referral and entry process:

LeapFrog ability Flexible Support Options application process.

Service description:

Fair Go For Kids is a charity that raises funds for children in Newcastle and the Hunter Valley who are living with a disability.

Services we provide:

Flexible support for children in Newcastle and the Hunter Valley who are living with a disability

Family InSight Inc.

Overview of service:

Family InSight provides volunteer home visiting services to families.

Contact details, etc.:

Location: 20/54 Clyde Street, Hamilton North 2303
Postal address: PO Box 194, Waratah 2298
Phone: 4961 0700
Fax: 4961 0722
Email: admin@familyinsight.org.au
Website: www.familyinsight.org.au
Hours: Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm
Fees: No

People we provide a service to:

Services are provided to families with children aged 0 – 8 years. The focus is on supporting positive and confident parenting, early childhood communication and development, and links with other services and supports in the community to help overcome isolation.

Family InSight works across the Hunter Region in Newcastle, Lake Macquarie, Cessnock, Maitland, Port Stephens, Singleton, Dungog, Muswellbrook and the Upper Hunter Local Government Areas.

We provide a Volunteer Home Visiting Service (for families of pre-school aged children only), parenting and early year's programs and operate a Family Worker Program in the Cessnock area. Family InSight is also the facilitator of the Hunter Network of Child and Family Practitioners and as such organises forums, learning and development opportunities and produces information through newsletters and bulletins.

The families we work with through our Volunteer Home Visiting Service (VHVS) are generally affected by social isolation and may have one other vulnerability. Vulnerabilities include a child or adult with a disability, single, young or multiple birth parents, families receiving support for post natal depression or other low level mental illness. Families may *only* be referred to the VHVS a health service or practitioner such as a Child and Family Health Nurse, a GP or counsellor.

The children and families we work with through our parenting, early years and family worker programs are generally be facing similar challenges although others with some more complex or multiple

Family InSight Programs are in the following regions: West Lake Macquarie, Cessnock, Maitland, Upper Hunter (Muswellbrook, Singleton, Merriwa, Murrurundi, and Scone), Raymond Terrace/Port Stephens, Aboriginal Program – Hunter Region.

Referral and entry process:

Families seeking help may be introduced to Family InSight from various helping agencies or families themselves can ask for support from Family InSight.

Once a family or referral agency has contacted our service, a Coordinator will contact them to discuss the different types of support the program offers. If families belong to the service's target group and are interested in receiving support the coordinator will meet with the family to discuss the options for working together.

Service description:

To provide volunteer home visiting services to families with at least one child under the age of 5 years. To recruit, train, appropriately link and support volunteers. We regularly review the family/volunteer link.

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Services we provide:

Family Insight aims to:

- offer support to families with children under 5 years of age.
- reassure parents that difficulties in bringing up children are normal and to emphasize the enjoyment of family life.
- bring a focus to benefiting the children of the family (with the support of the Early Childhood Coordinator).
- reduce isolation by supporting the family to build connections with the local community, e.g. community events, playgroups, relevant services, parks; engaging participation in community support networks.
- recognise the importance of the contribution made by fathers and be more inclusive of them in our practice.
- provide additional support and training to volunteers.
- gather information from families and volunteers about the service, what works well, how families are benefiting, what else could happen, collecting the “evidence”, regularly review the progress of links.
- encourage the parent’s strength and wellbeing in order that these may be transmitted to their children thus enhancing their development.
- Supplement our core business by increasing the connection for families to professional child, family and relationship specialists.

Flexible Support Options

LeapFrog ability Inc.

Overview of service:

The Flexible Support Options Program provides flexible and timely support for individuals, families and carers, with a view to enhancing the abilities of people with disability to live as independently as they are capable and to reduce the potential for breakdown of formal and informal supports.

Contact details, etc.:

Location: 37 Fern Street, Islington 2296
Postal address: PO Box 96, Islington 2296
Phone: 4979 7777
Fax: 4940 0048
Email: admin@leapfrog.org.au
Website: www.leapfrog.org.au
Hours: 8.00am to 4.30pm
Fees: No

People we provide a service to:

Individuals aged 0-64 with a disability, their families/carers, who are living in the community (excluding supported accommodation and/or group home settings).

The individual's disability must be permanent or likely to be permanent as defined by the Disability Services Act 1993.

Individuals living in the following Local Government Areas: Cessnock, Dungog, Lake Macquarie, Maitland, Muswellbrook, Newcastle, Port Stephens, Singleton and Upper Hunter.

Referral and entry process:

Anyone can make an application to the program. Applications can be downloaded from our website or by calling our office to request the application form be emailed, posted or faxed. Application forms can also be obtained from our reception desk.

Service description:

The Flexible Support Options Program works to help people living with disability to live as independently as possible and to reduce the potential for breakdown of supports such as family, friends, work and community access.

Services we provide:

We can provide support in many areas, including but not limited to:

- Transport
- Equipment/Aids
- Household Items
- Whitegoods
- Independent Living Training
- Therapy
- Personal Care
- Respite Care
- Counselling
- Vacation Care
- Community Access
- Removalist
- Training
- Domestic Assistance

Home-Start

Family Action Centre - University of Newcastle

Overview of service:

Voluntary home visiting program.

Contact details, etc.:

Location: Family Action Centre, University of Newcastle, Callaghan 2308
Postal address: As above
Phone: 4921 6842 / 4921 5758
Fax: 4921 5724
Email: Home-Start@newcastle.edu.au
Website: www.newcastle.edu.au/centre/fac/homestart
Hours: Monday to Friday, 9am to 4.30pm
Fees: No

People we provide a service to:

Services are provided to families with children less than five years of age, who may be isolated financially, geographically or socially e.g. sole parents, mothers new to the area, teenage mothers, multiple births and new mums. Families may live throughout the Newcastle and East Lake Macquarie Areas.

Referral and entry process:

Families seeking help may be introduced to Home-Start via health agencies. Once the health referral agency has contacted the centre the Coordinator talks with them about the type of support the program offers. If families belong to the service's target group and are interested in receiving support then a meeting is held to work out the family's needs and the type of support required. There may be a waiting period before which families are linked to an appropriate volunteer.

Service description:

The Home-Start program has several aims:

- To offer support, friendship and practical assistance to families with children under 5 years of age.
- To be available to families who are experiencing frustration or difficulty.
- To visit families in their own homes where the challenges exist and the individual's dignity and identity can be respected.
- To develop a one to one relationship in which flexibility of approach and understanding can be shared with the parent.
- To encourage the parent's strength and emotional wellbeing in order that these may be transmitted to their children thus enhancing their development.
- To reassure parents that the difficulties in bringing up children are not unusual and to emphasise the pleasures of family life.
- To encourage families to widen their network of relationships and to access community services effectively.

Services we provide:

A range of services are available - depending on family's needs. These include: help with appointments (transport), assistance with children and companionship.

The aim is to provide families with the support they need to build a supportive social network.

Intensive Family Support Options (IFSO)

Cerebral Palsy Alliance (formerly The Spastic Centre NSW)

Overview of service:

IFSO provides a short term, in home, intensive support service to families with a child or adolescent with a disability.

Contact details, etc.:

Location:	Stuart Centre, 61 Parklea Avenue, Croudace Bay 2280
Postal address:	PO Box 3038, Valentine 2280
Phone:	4979 4333
Fax:	4946 9852
Email:	No
Website:	www.cerebralpalsy.org.au
Hours:	Flexible to suit family needs, including after hours and weekends
Fees:	No

People we provide a service to:

The service is provided to families with at least one child under the age of 18 years with a diagnosed disability that live in the Hunter and Central Coast regions.

IFSO might be useful to families when they might not be able to stay together unless some changes are made; when relationships are under a lot of stress; when the health and wellbeing of family members has significantly changed.

Referral and entry process:

Please contact a member of the IFSO team to discuss family situation and obtain referral forms. A referring Agency is required to obtain the family's consent to refer (Form A) and then complete a referral form (Form B). This information including any supporting documentation should be forwarded to the IFSO team for discussion and presentation to the IFSO Intake Panel for determination of eligibility. The Intake Panel meets once every three months; if the referral is deemed eligible it will be allocated to a Family Therapist to be picked up during the next three month period.

The referrer is encouraged to attend the initial family visit to introduce the IFSO therapist.

Service description:

IFSO provides a short-term intensive support service to families with a child or teenager with a disability. We can work with families from any sort of cultural or language background and we can get interpreters if needed. We aim to:

- Work together with families to help them manage their situations
- Support parents to feel confident in managing their children
- Help families to get useful information
- Identify what is working well for families
- Work together with people to make sure children and teenagers are safe

Services we provide:

Family Therapists work with families to establish their goals and how they want things to be different. We explore with the family what things are already working well for them and how to expand this into other areas of their family life. IFSO can help with:

- Handling family relationship issues
- Managing stress
- Living with the effects of a child's disability
- Planning daily routines
- Linking families to other support services

MyTime

Overview of service:

MyTime groups provide support for parents, grandparents and anyone caring for a child with a disability or chronic medical condition. Each MyTime group is supported by two workers – a facilitator and a play helper.

Contact details, etc.:

Location:	Various, see below
Postal address:	N/A
Phone:	1800 889 997
Fax:	No
Email:	mytime@parentingrc.org.au
Website:	www.mytime.net.au
Hours:	N/A
Fees:	No

People we provide a service to:

Mothers, fathers and other family carers of child who are eligible to receive the Centrelink Carer Allowance (child) can join MyTime..

Referral and entry process:

To find out about a MyTime peer support group in your local area, visit the MyTime website, go to the Groups page, click on your state and find a group close to you. Contact the facilitator listed to discuss group details.

To register your interest in a group phone 1800 889 997 or email mytime@parentingrc.org.au

Service description:

The MyTime Program is coordinated nationally by the Parenting Research Centre. MyTime is a national initiative funded by the Australian Government Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA). MyTime peer support groups are set up in the community by local provider organisations which deliver services in parenting, disability, family support and raising children with additional needs.

Services we provide:

MyTime groups provide a place to socialise, to discuss, to get information and to support and be supported by other carers.

Facilitators work with group members, helping them get to know each other and learn more about the services and supports in their area. Members choose what they would like to discuss in their groups with help from the facilitator. Depending on what the group wants to do, the facilitator might guide group activities or provide resources.

Facilitators are workers from local organisations. They have qualifications and experience in disability, parenting or family support and bring to the MyTime group a good understanding of local resources and support services.

MyTime Groups operating in the Hunter Area include:

- Lake Macquarie** – Cerebral Palsy Alliance
- Mayfield** – Learning Links and Northcott Disability Services
- Muswellbrook** – Cerebral Palsy Alliance
- Toronto** – Playgroup NSW
- Woodberry** – Playgroup NSW

Northcott EarlyStart Diagnosis Support Service

Northcott Disability Services

Overview of service:

Northcott Early Start Diagnosis Support Program provides short-term support to families who have a concern about their child's development or have just received a diagnosis of a disability.

Contact details, etc.:

Location: 13 Valencia Street, Mayfield 2304
Postal address: PO Box 119, Mayfield 2304
Phone: 4935 0400
Fax: 4935 0499
Email: newcastle@northcott.com.au
Website: www.northcott.com.au
Hours: Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm
Fees: No

People we provide a service to:

Families who have a child aged 0 – 6 or up to age 9 in exceptional circumstances living in the Lake Macquarie, Newcastle, Port Stephens, Maitland and Upper Hunter. Children do not need a formal diagnosis to access this service

Referral and entry process:

Families can self-refer by either phone, email or in person. Service providers and health professionals can complete a written referral

Service description:

Northcott Disability Services was established as The NSW Society for Crippled Children in 1929. Today, Northcott is a dynamic and innovative organisation that provides support and services to more than 8000 people with disabilities, their families and carers across NSW and the ACT. Northcott's services meet an extensive range of needs; support and services are provided to the clients, as well as their carers, siblings and the entire family unit. Northcott's purpose is to build an inclusive society.

Northcott Early Start Diagnosis Support Program consists of family support workers who provide information, group programs and individual support for families to access mainstream and specialised services within their local area. Families can choose the support to occur in the home or community. They can also choose the type and level of service based on their individual need.

Services we provide:

Information and referral - Can be provided to parents and carers on an ad-hoc basis. Parents and carers can call directly and ask for information about or referral to local services in their area or more specialised services and can also be advised about how to obtain a formal referral to a service if they are not able to self-refer. Parents and carers can link in with both specialist and mainstream services, enhancing their community participation. Parents and carers develop their own skills in self-advocacy and service engagement, with support and advice from workers if requested.

Group programs - Group work programs will be developed according to expressions of interest from families, and may include: Information/seminar style groups including: Skill-development groups, Support groups for parents, Support groups for children (including siblings), Recreational groups for families. Families may participate in a group for up to two years post-diagnosis.

Family Support - Family support services are provided to families who identify a need for more intensive support than the information and referral or group programs. Family support is time-limited, up to six months, from a strengths-perspective and using a family-centred approach with a focus on empowering families to be their own advocates. Family support engages the whole family in the process, and looks at the needs and strengths of all family members.

PlayConnect Playgroups

Playgroup NSW Inc.

Overview of service:

Facilitated playgroups specifically for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or ASD like symptoms aged 0 – 6 years.

Contact details, etc.:

Location:	Various, see below
Postal address:	N/A
Phone:	1800 171 882
Fax:	9684 5613
Email:	admin@playgroupnsw.com.au
Website:	www.playgroupnsw.com.au
Hours:	N/A
Fees:	Yes – contact service for details

People we provide a service to:

PlayConnect Playgroups are facilitated playgroups specifically for children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) or ASD like symptoms aged 0-6 years. The Playgroups adopt a framework that fosters best practice while responding to the specific needs of children with ASD and their families.

PlayConnect Playgroups provide parents with a soft entry point to support services and families who might not normally access formal support services may be willing to attend a playgroup.

PlayConnect Playgroups also provide support to parents who are not able to access other ASD specific services as they are waiting on a diagnosis, or do not fully meet the criteria for diagnosis. Siblings of children with ASD are also welcome to attend PlayConnect Playgroups.

Referral and entry process:

There is no need for referral and families with children with ASD or ASD-like symptoms can join a PlayConnect Playgroup by contacting Playgroup NSW toll free on 1800 171 882 or register your interest online.

Service description:

The PlayConnect Playgroups usually meet weekly for 2 hours and are facilitated by a PlayConnect Development Worker who has experience and/or qualifications in working with families and children in community development, early childhood education and/or Playgroups. Each Playgroup has access to an ASD professional. During the session, parents, carers and children participate in a variety of play activities and experiences. The funding from the Australian Government enables the families to attend a PlayConnect Playgroup at minimal cost.

Services we provide:

It is important to note that PlayConnect is NOT a specialist therapeutic provider. However PlayConnect Development Workers can provide families with information about specialist services for children with ASD in their local area.

PlayConnect Playgroups operating in the Hunter Area include:

Anna Bay – Gan Gan Family Centre, Anna Bay Public School (**Wednesday**)

Hamilton South – Henry Park Hall, Thomas Street, Hamilton South (**Tuesday**)

Medowie – Medowie Baptist Community Church, 6 Waropara Road, Medowie (**Friday**)

Metford – Metford Community Hall, 13 Ingall Street, Metford (**Monday**)

Raymond Terrace – Irrawang Public School SACCS, Greer Street, Raymond Terrace (**Thursday**)

Toronto – Biraban Public School Community Centre (**Wednesday**)

Australian Hearing

Overview of service:

- Hearing assessment
- Advice and Counselling
- Supply and maintenance of aids and equipment

Contact details, etc.:

Location:	Suites 9 and 10, OTP House, 10 Bradford Close, Kotara 2289
Postal address:	PO Box 387, Kotara 2289
Phone:	131 797
Fax:	4962 2184
Email:	No
Website:	www.hearing.com.au follow links to Our Services then to Children
Hours:	Monday to Friday, 8.15am to 5.00pm
Fees:	No

People we provide a service to:

Services are provided to children from birth onwards who have, or are suspected of having, a hearing impairment. Families may live anywhere in the Greater Newcastle area including: Lake Macquarie, Newcastle and Port Stephens.

Referral and entry process:

For children aged under 3 an appointment will be offered. For children aged 3 years and over (with no other disabilities) hearing needs are to be screened at their local Community Health Centre and referred to us if a permanent hearing loss is detected.

Children at any age, with risk factors specific to hearing loss, can be seen directly. Once a referral is accepted an initial appointment is made with the family to complete an initial assessment. If this assessment establishes that the child has a hearing problem then a priority appointment is arranged.

Service description:

Australian Hearing is a Commonwealth Government Authority and is the largest provider of hearing services and products in Australia. The Newcastle unit is one of over 100 hearing service centres across Australia.

Australian Hearing is dedicated to helping people with hearing impairments to manage their hearing impairment to improve their quality of life. The service aims to provide families of children with hearing impairments specialist assessment, advice and counselling support.

Services we provide:

Australian Hearing provides:

- Hearing tests and assessment
- Advice and counselling
- Supply and maintenance of hearing aids and equipment
- Referral to appropriate support services

Newcastle/Lake Macquarie Physiotherapy Home-Based Support Program Newcastle Temporary Care Ltd

Overview of service:

Home-based physiotherapy support program.

Contact details, etc.:

Location:	N/A
Postal address:	PO Box 2161, Dangar 2309
Phone:	4957 5008
Fax:	4957 4003
Email:	respite@newcastletempcare.com.au
Website:	www.tempcare.com.au
Hours:	3 days per week (Monday to Wednesday)
Fees:	\$10 per year

People we provide a service to:

Services are provided to babies and children who have, or are at risk of developing, physical or intellectual disabilities. Families need to live in Newcastle or Lake Macquarie.

Referral and entry process:

Anyone can refer a family to the service including parents themselves. Referrals can be made by phone, mail, fax or in person. Once a referral is accepted the family is contacted immediately and services commence. The program currently does not have a waiting list.

Service description:

The program aims to provide home-based support for families with infants or children who have, or are at risk of developing physical or intellectual disabilities.

The program aims to support parents/carers by teaching them how to handle, play, and encourage the development of their disabled infant, and so prevent compensatory abnormal movement patterns and deformities developing.

Services we provide:

The program provides a range of services including:

- The establishment of early contact at the hospital, prior to discharge, with families of very young babies with or at risk of developing disabilities.
- Provision of home-based support to families.
- Assessment of infants and children referred to the service.
- Discussion and development of a specific physiotherapy program with the family and carers.
- Regular review of paediatric physiotherapy programs and modalities.
- Establishment and co-ordination of groups for parent/child activities.
- Provision of education for parent and carer groups.
- Physiotherapy contribution to the public education activities of allied community and health paediatric groups.
- On request, the assessment of infants with possible developmental problems can occur so that intervention can begin as indicated and/or appropriate referral made.