

# 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](mailto:admin@leapfrog.org.au)  
Website: [www.leapfrog.org.au](http://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](http://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](mailto:brighterfutures@samaritans.org.au)  
Website: [www.samaritans.org.au](http://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](mailto:admin@leapfrog.org.au)  
Website: [www.leapfrog.org.au](http://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.

....continued over page

## **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 emphasise 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](http://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:	<a href="http://www.cerebralpalsy.org.au">www.cerebralpalsy.org.au</a>
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](mailto:newcastle@northcott.com.au)  
Website: [www.northcott.com.au](http://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:	<a href="http://www.hearing.com.au">www.hearing.com.au</a> 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.