



### What is 'therapy'?

At Move and Play, 'therapy' is any activity that is done by one of our team that will support or contribute to supporting your child and family to work towards their goals, and ultimately to help your child to move, play, develop new skills, participate in their daily life, and thrive in their community.

At Move and Play, we adopt a **comprehensive approach to therapy**. However, the way 'therapy' looks and takes place will vary between children and families, due to the different needs, circumstances, goals and priorities of each individual child and family.

### What is a 'comprehensive approach to therapy'?

A comprehensive approach to therapy means that we will look at the 'bigger picture' of how your child's developmental needs fit into their life and will aim to ensure that your child and family can be supported across all relevant aspects of their life. This means that your child's therapy plan will take into consideration:

- *All aspects of your child's development*
  - eg: gross motor, fine motor, communication, social skills, behaviour, etc
- *All the people who play an important role in your child's life and development*
  - including parents, siblings, extended family, early childhood educators, teachers, carers, etc
- *All the environments your child currently spends time and participates in*
  - eg: home, daycare, school, community locations, sports groups, etc
- *All your child's strengths and needs*
  - Eg: harnessing the things they do well, and supporting them with the things they find more difficult
- *All your child's interests and preferred activities*
  - Eg: harnessing your child's interests to help support their development and build their sense of self-identity, as well as exploring new interests and activities

### Why do you use a comprehensive approach to therapy?

Our drive to deliver a comprehensive therapy service is informed by our understanding of child development, our experience with supporting children to develop and thrive, and is backed by current best practice standards and research evidence.

All aspects of a child's development are interconnected, and all aspects of a child's development will impact all other aspects of a child's development and functioning in life. For example, if a child has difficulty with their communication, this will have an impact on their social skills and their behaviour. If a child has difficulty with moving around, this will impact on their self-care, independence, their opportunities to explore, and their social skills. These difficulties will likely occur in all the environments in which they spend their time, and so the child will benefit from supports across all of their environments to help them to progress and thrive. The people who spend the most time with children (parents, siblings, teachers etc) are those who are going to have the most impact on a child's development, so we will support these people to provide daily ongoing strategies and supports to help the child to develop and thrive. And finally, if a child is actively engaged in their therapy because they are enjoying the activities, then this will more likely lead to better engagement in the therapy process, better carry over to real life, and therefore better outcomes for their development.



## What is the 'Therapy Iceberg'?

Delivering high quality comprehensive care for children with developmental delays and disabilities requires a combination of direct and indirect services. This is what we call the 'Therapy Iceberg'.

Like an iceberg, excellent comprehensive care for your child will involve a portion of therapy 'above the water' that you can see, and a portion of therapy 'below the water' that you do not always see.

### The visible part of therapy is the direct therapy that your child does with their therapist/s.

Examples of 'visible' therapy supports include:

- The completion of assessments with either (or both) you and your child, to determine their strengths, and the difficulties they might be experiencing. These assessments help to inform your child's supports and interventions.
- Therapy sessions with your child in our clinic to teach skills required to achieve a task or goal.
- School visits to observe skills and identify strategies that will support your child's participation and learning in the school environment and ensure consistency of strategies across home and school.
- Group sessions and holiday sessions, where your child will learn and practice skills with other children.
- Parent education, either in a 1:1 or group format, to support parents to support their child, and trial strategies and changes in the home.
- Meetings with families to discuss progress, challenges, and priorities for support.

**The less visible part of therapy that lies 'below the surface of the water' are all the other activities your therapist does behind the scenes to ensure that the supports your child receives are optimal for their needs, and give them the best chance of to achieve their goals and live their best life.**

Examples of the 'invisible therapy supports' include:

- Reviewing information from your child's file, including your child's new client paperwork, any reports from other service providers, and any documentation completed by other therapists from our team who are involved in your child's care.
- Scoring and analysing assessment results to identify areas of need, strategies for support, and priorities for support
- Researching information and treatments related to your child's condition or presentation to ensure that the supports provided are based on the best available evidence. This might include reviewing evidence available through scientific databases and journals or liaising with other professionals across the country or internationally who may have more experience in your child's condition.
- Liaising with and collaborating with other members of your child's team to ensure your child's therapy is coordinated, family-centred and effective. This liaison and collaboration may occur in a scheduled meeting, or an unscheduled conversation which can occur in person, over the phone, or via email.
- Planning your child's therapy sessions based on an analysis of your child's goals, what strategies and interventions have worked in the past, and the recent progress made.
- Planning, designing and preparing resources such as visual schedules, social stories, behaviour charts etc
- Writing home activity programs to support your child being able to practice their newly developing skills at home or in their school or community environments.



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- Creating and submitting referrals for your child (when you request or approve for this to happen) to other therapists and outside agencies. It is your right to self-refer your child to outside agencies if you would prefer.
- Provide updates and handovers to other people involved in your child's care, either in person, over the phone, or via email, to ensure consistency and continuity of your child's care.
- Assisting in checking therapy budgets and adjusting the supports we are providing to ensure we are staying within your budget.
- Communicate with your child's school about school-based services including completing applications to visit, sending documentation required for school visits, and
- Writing letters or progress reports for the NDIS or other external agencies who require updates about your child's condition and/or progress, such as paediatricians, rehabilitation specialists, and the education system. These reports will only be done with your approval.

Completing these 'invisible' tasks and the related documentation enables us to provide your child with the optimal therapy and supports they need to give them the best chance of achieving their goals. Both the 'visible' and 'invisible' aspects of therapy are required to deliver optimal therapy and to help your child to achieve their goals. We incorporate both the visible and invisible supports into all our programs of support with the children and families we work with.

### Why are setting goals or focus areas important?

Your child's goals or focus areas provide direction, clarity, meaning, and purpose to your child's therapy.

Many children we work with have multiple needs across multiple areas of their life, which can be overwhelming. Goals or focus areas provide the guide rails to help you and your child's therapist/s to design your child's therapy program, and to keep your child's program and progress on track. Ultimately, goals and focus areas also provide you (and us!) with an opportunity to measure and, more importantly, to celebrate your child's progress.

We are guided by each child's and family's individual needs and priorities and will collaborate with all children and families to set meaningful and measurable goals that will help your child and family to thrive.

### How will Move and Play work with me and my child?

One of our values is **'Treat parents as partners'**: *Parents know their children like no one else. We share our recommendations but we also listen to parents and we learn from them everyday.*

At Move and Play, we believe that parents know their children best. We also believe that parents and families are the people who are going to have the most influence on their child's development and progress. For these reasons, we always take a partnership approach with parents and families when supporting children with developmental delays and disabilities.

### What does working in partnership with parents and families look like?

- We will listen to you, and ask you to share, from your perspective, your concerns, your goals, your priorities for supports.
- We will listen to and help you with, to the best of our ability, any questions, worries or anxieties you might have about any aspect of your child's development, condition or care.
- We will ask you for information that will help us to work with you to support your child, and we expect that you will share this honestly – this will include information about your child's funding (eg: NDIS participant numbers and plan dates), your child's goals (NDIS goals or other goals), other people involved in your child's care (siblings, extended family, teachers or educators, other therapy or support services), and any progress or changes made in your child's needs or presentation.

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- We will inform you, answer any of your questions, and advise you about your options, so that you can make informed choices about your child's care.
- We will explore what your pre-existing family strengths are and utilise and build on these to support your child and family.
- Our recommendations will be flexible and individualised to reflect your child's and family's unique needs and priorities. We will work with you to develop a therapy support plan that can work towards those unique needs and priorities.
- We will encourage you to be responsible for the decisions around your child's care, and the decisions and choices you make about your child's care will be respected.
- We will ask you to actively participate in your child's therapy. For some children and parents this will mean we will ask you to actively participate in your child's therapy sessions. For other children and parents, this will mean we will provide you with regular updates about your child's progress.
- We will provide strategies for you to continue with at home, to support your child's ongoing progress after our therapy session.
- We will share clear and timely information with you about your child's condition and progress. We ask you to do the same so that we can adapt our supports accordingly.
- We will ask you to share any feedback or concerns about your child's therapy honestly and in a timely manner so that we can work with you, without judgement, to address these concerns. If we cannot help you with these concerns, we will be honest with you about this, and will support you to find an alternative solution.

### **How long will my child need therapy?**

Each child and family is unique, so each child and family's therapy journey may also look different. This includes how long a child and family might need support from a therapy service like ours. However, our aim is to help your child and family to learn the skills you need to be able to get out and live life – because life is where all the fun stuff happens. Life is where you get to spend time with family and friends, go on holidays and adventures, meet new people, explore new activities and environments, create new memories, and build a sense of identity.

So, while we know that some children may require support in an ongoing way, we will continually work towards providing you and your child with the skills, support and coaching to allow you to confidently manage without (or with less of) our ongoing involvement. Because we love it when children achieve goals, and can get out and live life – because life is the best therapy after all!

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