

Why is it helpful for children to attend therapy programs?

While therapists can teach many skills within 1:1 sessions, engaging in a group-setting therapy program allows for practice with peers and provides opportunities to strengthen and consolidate skills through fun and interesting experiences.

How will you meet the goals of each child in the therapy program?

Each therapy program has broad goals within the communication and functional skills domains. We also incorporate specific goals for each child attending. Before a program begins, you will be asked to complete a pre-assessment to identify one goal you would like your child to focus on over the duration of the program. Your therapy team will liaise with the program leader to ensure your child's individual needs are considered within sessions. The program will be adjusted to allow for the individual focus as well as providing support for life-long skills including building confidence, engaging in quality social interactions, working with others, and trying new activities.

What's the difference between a therapy program and a hangout?

Hangouts are single sessions that last for two hours and focus on participation and making social connections. Therapy programs are multiple sessions with the same theme, targeting therapy goals including communication, social skills, fine motor skills, sensory or emotional regulation strategies.

Where will therapy program sessions and hangouts be held?

Unless stated, all therapy program sessions and hangouts take place at the main Out Loud clinic: 1 Henley Drive, Bunbury.

Will my child be allowed to attend the program if I indicate that there may be a concern in the Therapy Program Participation Agreement?

We endeavour to support children to participate in programs by establishing a safe participation plan to address any concerns raised in the Participation Agreement. For example, if your child requires assistance with toileting and the program's sessions are long or run at a time when your child is likely to need the toilet, we may ask that you toilet them before the session begins and then come in halfway to check if they need help again.

If you indicate on the Participation Agreement that your child may exhibit challenging behaviours, or that you have previously been asked to stay onsite to support your child's behaviour, the Therapy Program Coordinator will contact you to discuss and establish a safe participation plan. Some examples of how Out Loud may support your child to participate without escalation include:

- asking you to send a support worker who works in the program directly with your child
- providing the support of an AHA who can give your child sensory and self-regulation breaks as needed, within the clinic (this requires an additional cost that will be billed to your child's NDIS plan)

- asking you to remain in the waiting room to be available to provide emotional support if your child becomes anxious or distressed
- asking you to attend the program with your child to support their behaviour and participation.

If I don't have any concerns about my child participating appropriately in a therapy program, do I still need to stay while my child is in a program session or hangout?

We require a parent or caregiver to remain at the Out Loud clinic for the first session of all programs to ensure no difficulties arise with program dynamics. Your Key Worker or the Therapy Program Coordinator may discuss with you the need to stay onsite for following sessions to support your child's participation. Where appropriate, families may be able to leave their child onsite and leave the premises themselves. If you are choosing to leave your child, Out Loud must hold a current Therapy Program Participation Agreement (these are sent to you when confirming your position in our programs). If you choose to leave, you must be contactable by telephone during the program, be within a 10 minute radius during the program and arrive back 10 minutes before the program finishes, to collect your child from reception.

If a program requires parent participation or you are required to remain on site to support your child, we will discuss this with you.

What happens if my child's behaviour escalates within a program session?

Out Loud staff are not permitted to restrain or physically support a child in any way. If a child's behaviour escalates, staff will do their best to keep everyone safe and will provide time and space for your child to de-escalate without causing harm to themselves or others. You will be notified immediately by Out Loud that your child has had an escalation that resulted in a risk of harm, and you will be asked to return to the clinic to support your child. This will likely mean that you help them to de-escalate and then stay with them when returning to the program. In some cases, it may be preferred that you take them home rather than completing the session that day. We will then check in with you before the next session, to discuss and establish an escalation plan for the next session. This will likely involve you being asked to remain with your child for the future sessions, with a plan made to slowly withdraw and work towards independent participation in future therapy programs.

Where can I find the program timetable?

We have two program timetables available - programs running during school holidays and programs running during school terms. These can be accessed via the Out Loud website: <https://outlouddevelopment.com/programs>.

What program can I select for my child to attend?

Each program has a specific set of criteria to promote participation and meaningful outcomes. Please ensure you read the website details for each program before making a selection. You can also discuss relevant programs with your Key Worker within an appointment. Our programs all have a recommended age range, which is stipulated on the website.

How many programs can my child attend?

Participation in our therapy programs requires a high degree of commitment from families and their children. While you are welcome to enrol for multiple programs at once, we ask you to consider the learning and attention that programs require to avoid overloading your family.

How do I register?

To register for a therapy program or hangout, please click on the link on the website next to your preferred program and complete the Eventbrite registration. Our Therapy Program Coordinator will be in touch following the close of registrations to confirm your program attendance and send you a Therapy Program Participation Agreement to complete. Invoicing is completed separately from Eventbrite by our accounts department.

How is the cost calculated for therapy programs and hangouts?

The investment in our therapy programs is based on the NDIS guidelines and the ratio of team members to children that each program requires. Along with the time children are physically present, the costing includes your therapist's time to customise the program, individualise goals, document progress notes, report back to parents and purchase and/or prepare the resources required to complete the tasks.

If additional planning is required to support your child to attend or participate in a hangout, we will request a meeting with you that will be billed to your child's plan.

What happens if my child is unable to make all sessions of a therapy program?

Our programs are costed to account for all elements across the duration of the program, shared between all children enrolled to attend. When enrolling in a program, families are committing to all components of the program including its total cost. We are unable to offer 'makeup' sessions if a session is missed. Families are asked to consider their availability to attend all sessions when enrolling in the program as all sessions are payable even if they are not attended. In some programs, skills build each week and missing one session may make the next difficult, or the overall effectiveness of the program may be diminished. Regular non-attendance may indicate to therapists that therapy programs are not the most suitable service for your family, and this would be taken into consideration in the future when a therapy program registration is received.

How are invoices delivered?

Out Loud will provide several invoices to you throughout the duration of the program, subject to our standard payment terms. Staged invoicing is designed to capture program costs as services are delivered and allows you to withdraw from the program with two weeks' notice, as per NDIS guidelines.

Some costs associated with the program (e.g., resources and program customisation) will be added to the first invoice you receive.

If additional planning is required to support your child to attend or participate in our therapy programs, we will request a meeting with you that will be billed to your child's plan. The price of the therapy program will be adjusted and quoted in advance if your child requires 1:1 therapy attention during the sessions.

I registered my child for a hangout but need to cancel - what now?

To cancel a place in a hangout that you have reserved via Eventbrite registration, please contact our office on 0421 729 625. Hangouts can be cancelled at no cost up to a week prior to the event. Within a week, the activities of tailoring the hangout's content to your child's specific goals and creating or purchasing resources for them have already commenced. As per NDIS guidelines, cancellations with less than seven days' notice will be billed in full if Out Loud is unable to fill the position with another client. Where Out

Loud is able to fill the position with another client, only tasks specific to the client which have already been performed (e.g., discussions with parents to identify goals and time spent customising the program to those goals) will be billed.

I registered my child for a therapy program but have changed my mind - what now?

Please let us know as soon as possible if you no longer wish for a position in a therapy program as a drop in numbers may make the therapy program no longer viable to run and requires swift action on our part. Please contact our office on 0421 729 625 to discuss where in the process your registration is.

My child's therapy program has already commenced but we want to withdraw – what now?

You are entitled to withdraw from a therapy program that has already commenced so long as you provide two weeks' notice. This means that if you choose to cease attending the program immediately, you will still receive an invoice for two sessions that your child did not attend. Any outstanding invoices should be promptly settled.