Child Development Service

Child development and behaviour

All children are unique and develop differently. They experience many social, emotional and physical changes as they grow and develop.

There are skills they should have developed by certain ages, but for some children development could be delayed or different. When this happens, secondary behaviours which are challenging to manage can also develop.

Child Development Service Sunshine Coast

We are a free service which provides a coordinated model of care to families with children between 0 and 12 years of age with complex developmental conditions.

Who’s on the team?

- team coordinator and intake liaison staff
- psychologists
- physiotherapists
- occupational therapists
- speech pathologists
- social worker
- dietitian
- paediatrician/registrar
- therapy assistant
- administrative officer.

Criteria for service

Complex developmental and/or behavioural conditions affecting two or more areas of functioning, which require the co-ordinated input of multiple therapists and/or paediatricians.

Developmental difficulties include concerns with:

- coordination and movement (e.g. crawling, walking, drawing, writing)
- communication, speech and language skills
- feeding and self-care skills
- social and emotional skills (e.g. managing feelings, relating to others)
- behaviour
- learning and attention
- sensory processing issues.
Services provided
The Child Development Service provides support through a family-centred approach and tailors services to meet the individual needs of the child and family. Since every child is different, we work in partnership with families, other carers and professionals to ensure a full understanding of the child's strengths and needs. This helps to formulate a meaningful support plan.

Services may include
• intake assessment
• developmental assessment and management planning by relevant team members, including paediatrician, for children aged 0-8 with complex conditions
• combined therapy group programs for children before school entry
• parent education and support
• information for childcare and educational settings to support the child's development
• paediatrician/registrar only clinics for assessment and management planning for children aged 8-12 years with developmental/behavioural issues in multiple domains
• liaison with other agencies to ensure a coordinated approach to shared care planning
• referral to other relevant professionals/agencies e.g. medical, educational, private therapy providers.

Referral
A written referral is required to access this service from:
• paediatricians and other medical specialists
• general practitioners
• allied health professionals from within the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service.

NB: Referrals from all other professionals involved in the child's care need to be accompanied by a G.P. referral.

We welcome supporting information from:
• allied health professionals (both public and private)
• community child health nurses
• learning support teachers/guidance officers and other professionals supporting the child's educational needs
• kindergarten and childcare directors.

Parent/carer or legal guardian must have given verbal consent before referral is made to the Child Development Service.

What happens on receipt of referral?
Our child development service intake team will contact parents to determine the next step. They may assist parents to complete required documentation and gather any additional information required to determine the most appropriate service to offer.

There may be a waiting list for some child development services. If this is the case the team will discuss with the family other options that may assist whilst they are waiting.

Please include any available professional and/or educational reports with the referral.

Please note: Children needing to see the developmental paediatrician require a named doctor's referral.

Please send referral forms to:
The Intake Officer
Child Development Service Sunshine Coast
Caloundra Health Service
West Street, Caloundra Q 4551

Phone: (07) 5436 8910
Monday to Friday
8.00am - 4.30pm

Email: child-development-service@health.qld.gov.au

Children with developmental delay resulting from the following factors are also prioritised within the service:
• other medical conditions
• children with a history of prematurity, low birth weight and or adverse event(s) in infancy
• children with adverse social/home environments.

Families must be resident in the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service area.

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