



## WHAT IS KIDSLINK?

For 17 years, KidsLink has been a place where many children and teens who experience difficulty fitting in with their peers, come to feel safe and learn the skills necessary to improve their social world.

## WHAT IS COVERED IN KIDSLINK SESSIONS?

Therapists facilitate sessions where, in small groups, teens and children learn to relate and communicate with their peers using the language of art, drama, games and play. The main focus of these sessions is on the socialisation process where facilitators give real-time soft skills support and guidance. We focus on friendship skills, dealing with feelings, ability to control impulses, conversation skills and successful play skills.

## DETAILS OF ATTENDANCE AND GROUP STRUCTURE

Our social skills groups run weekly throughout the school year and run 10 weeks per term. There are 9 weeks of group sessions and 1 week which is the parent feedback (30mins) session. Groups are peer matched groups, age and gender specific where developmentally appropriate to ensure that skills relating to PEERS are developed. Each weekly session is one hour in length and has a maximum of six participants and are facilitated by trained therapists.

## HOW TO GET STARTED – ATTEND A SUITABILITY ASSESSMENT

We conduct a one hour interview to meet us, see our venue and address any concerns you have. This gives us the opportunity to assess your child's needs and determine which of our groups best "fit". There is a fee for this initial interview, and parents and child should both attend the interview.

*\*\*please note that attendance at suitability assessment does not guarantee entry into the program.*

## HOW CAN YOU HELP AT HOME?

Families should focus on conversation skills, demonstrating interest in your child and encouraging their interest back to you and other family members. Skill development happens DURING group time and can be practised informally at home. We also offer fee-based parent coaching, along with support and psycho-educational assistance for siblings.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**How much does the program cost and can I use NDIS?**

KidsLink sessions cost \$900 per school term, part or all of this fee may be covered by NDIS funding. This includes 9, 1 hour group sessions and 1, 30 min parent feedback session.

**Can I use a mental health care plan?**

No, Mental Health Care Plans do not cover KidsLink sessions.

**When do I get parent feedback?**

Each term parents attend a 30 minute parent feedback session to discuss progress, get feedback from parents, and solidify goals for each child. If you require extra feedback sessions with the Therapist you will be charged a fee of \$220 per hour.

**What happens if my child doesn't settle in group?**

If your child doesn't settle in a group we will speak to you and arrange one-to-one therapy support to develop relevant social skills before re-integrating them back into the group.

**Should I give medication to my child before attending?**

If your child usually takes medication to help them focus, we would ask that you provide them with a 'top up' one hour prior to their KidsLink session in order for them to get the most value from these sessions.

**What happens if my child is sick?**

We do not offer the option to 'make up' a session in the event your child is sick. Children are allocated to the 'best' fit group and work on developing relationships within this group. Attending another session with completely different children as a 'once off' would not be beneficial to your child's social development and would also detrimentally disrupt the dynamics of the other group.

**Can I do a trial of the session?**

We are happy to offer a paid two session trial for KidsLink. Trial sessions will be charged at a pro-rata rate.

**Do all children who attend KidsLink have Autism or ADHD?** The KidsLink groups are designed to help children with social issues related to diagnosis such as, but not limited to, ADD/ADHD, Pervasive Developmental Disorder, Asperger's Syndrome, Non-Verbal Learning Disability and Sensory Integration Disorder, gifted and talented children with a discrepancy between extremely high cognitive functioning and psycho/emotional immaturity.

**Will my neurotypical child pick up unhelpful behaviours from other children?** The Therapist's main role in these sessions is supporting positive behaviour interactions between children. The Therapist discusses harmful, disruptive, destructive, negative behaviours with the group as they arise, including but not limited to; why these behaviours aren't desirable, the impacts on others and possible consequences/outcomes for the child performing these behaviours.