Are we kidding ourselves or do we really make a difference?

Presenters:  Susan Fletcher – Researcher  
            Innika Lea – Speech Pathologist
Background to the program

- Victorian Department of Health 2012 report
  - Gippsland =
    - Low number of paediatric allied health services
    - Low portion of paediatric services were provided by allied health practitioners
  - Children without a specific diagnosis were having difficulties transitioning.
What does the literature say?

• 25% of children beginning school have a mild to moderate developmental delay

• Early learning disorders of attention, language and motor control frequently overlap.

• Early intervention minimises developmental disorders

• Group therapy
  – Allows children to learn with and from each other
  – Increases socialisation skills
  – Therapy seen as ‘play’
Latrobe Community Health Services: Children’s Service model

- Early intervention paediatric service
- 0-7 years of age
- Mild to Moderate developmental delays
- Interprofessional
- Play group based
- Simple equipment
- Focus on family capacity building
Screening & Referrals

- Not advertised to the public
- Most referrals from early years health professionals
- Accept referrals from parents
Assessments

- Multidisciplinary
- In 1.5 hours:
  - Parent survey
  - Assess the child across all areas of development
  - Determine areas of strength/weakness
  - Develop goals
  - Determine the most appropriate form of intervention.
# Intervention

## Theme: Body awareness & Body Parts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Goal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Songs:</strong></td>
<td>Body parts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Mouth Song”</td>
<td>Engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Head, shoulders, knees &amp; toes”</td>
<td>Following instructions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relay with balloon:</strong></td>
<td>Age appropriate gross motor skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. in front while walking forwards</td>
<td>Copying body actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. behind back</td>
<td>Following instructions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. in front while walking sideways</td>
<td>Participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Walk/stomp with balloon between legs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pasta threading:</strong></td>
<td>Fine motor skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A) Make necklace. Child to request pasta by stating if they would like a big/little, straight/curved piece etc</td>
<td>Receptive language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B) Make a circle standing up. AHP to instruct children to place necklace on different body parts eg foot, ear.</td>
<td>Following instructions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Body parts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Using descriptive words</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Intervention

Models of multi-professional working

- Multidisciplinary
  - OT
  - PT
  - ST
  - Child

- Interdisciplinary
  - OT
  - PT
  - ST
  - Child

- Interprofessional
  - OT
  - PT
  - ST
  - Child in the environment
Guiding Objectives

Has LCHS – Children’s Service helped you?

Feedback on the program will help us improve in the future.
Please tell us your experience of LCHS – Children’s Service by ticking the boxes that best describe your experience or beliefs about us.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>There has been some improvement in the things that concerned me.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>The goals of the program for my child have been achieved</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The group sessions have assisted in my child’s development.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The staff have given me information and Ideas.</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The venue has been appropriate for the service.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The time of day of the group sessions has been suitable for my child.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Overall, we have been satisfied with LCHS – Children’s Service.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before the program</th>
<th>After the program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I feel stressed and/or worried about my child’s development.

My child and I are able to join groups and visit friends and family.

I feel skilled and able to help my child with their challenges.

I can identify changes in my child’s skills.

I feel confident in my ability to help my child with their difficulties.
The Research Project

• Aim:
  – Evaluate the impact of attending the LCHS Children’s Services program
  – Provide information about outcomes useful to both the LCHS Children’s Services team, as well as, other services in their design of similar programs
Results

• Very effective in meeting the stated objectives
  – Optimising the child’s development and/or functioning

• Findings from this study highlight four themes
  – Building caregiver capacity
  – Early childhood transitions
  – Learning transfer and sustainment
  – Extended Impact
Theme One:

Building caregiver capacity

• “I didn’t have a really good understanding of how to help her, but now I do have a fair idea.”
• “I understand more about his speech delay and how to work with him.”
• Holding the pencil was not something I had thought about.”
• “I now relate to him as an individual”
• “He learns differently, I need to be more patient and use different strategies.”
Theme Two: Early childhood transitions

• “He started school this year and he is doing really well”

• “He now has the confidence to be in a group setting, whereas before he would have avoided a group”

• “The program made a huge difference. I think it helped him in all ways – to interact with other children, to understand that sometimes you have to do things”
Theme Three: Learning transfer and sustainment

• “Passed strategies onto her grandmother”
• “If something worked for us, we would tell other carers and kindergarten teachers”
• “We still use the things that we learnt there…I still use it a lot”
• “Having all the professionals in the one place at the one time, and all being part of the program”
• “I would recommend it because it gave me learning strategies. It taught me that I wasn’t the only one in the situation and it made it normal for me”
Theme Four: Extended Impact

• “It took away a bit of our frustration. It empowered us to do something. It gave us the tools”
• “I think the biggest impact was getting us involved in a positive way with J”
• “Helped me stay calm and not get frustrated”
• “She’s now making friends at Kindergarten, so it gave her confidence”
• “From being frustrated to being able to speak”
# Recommendations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendations</th>
<th>LCHS Children’s Service Today</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Further develop the service delivery model, such as a pre-prep program, community capacity building and school readiness group/s</td>
<td>Providing regular program into kindergartens and prep classes (teachers and whole class involved). We are also increasing our client range to 12 years of age.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop a package of knowledge and skills (e.g. DVD), which would assist in transference of knowledge, especially for foster carers or shared care parenting.</td>
<td>Increased and improved parent handouts ensuring that the information is easily understood.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider the availability of childcare for siblings</td>
<td>LCHS recognise that childcare is an ongoing difficulty however we have been unable to address this at this stage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Recommendations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendations</th>
<th>LCHS Children’s Service Today</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improved stratification of children into low and high need children groupings.</td>
<td>We place children into age appropriate groups and where possible we try to separate children into different groups depending on their level of functioning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide follow-up opportunity for reassessment or follow-up once children complete the program.</td>
<td>Well-developed review process now in place particularly when children transition into kinder or school. When transitioning into kinder or school we review their progress after the 1st term.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THANK YOU

Please contact us:
• Latrobe Community Health Service – Children’s Service
• Ph: 1800 242 696
• Email: PaediatricAH@lchs.com.au