Early Intervention in the 21st Century

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DOES AN INDIVIDUALISED INTERVENTION PROGRAM POST COMPLETION OF "IT TAKES TWO TO TALK® - THE HANEN PROGRAM® FOR PARENTS" MAKE A CONTINUED DIFFERENCE TO CHILD AND FAMILY INTERACTIONS AND THEIR CHILD’S COMMUNICATION DEVELOPMENT?

The positive effect of parent training to use specific language facilitation techniques in interactions with their child to develop their communication skills has been well documented. This project investigated the impact of parent participation in the It Takes Two to Talk®- Hanen Program® on the development of interaction promoting behaviours in parents, their child and any subsequent impact on their child’s vocabulary development. Parents participated in these programs over a 5 month period.

When parent training was completed participants were randomly assigned to control and experimental groups to investigate the impact of providing additional individual support to parents on maintenance of acquired interactive behaviours and vocabulary outcomes. Following parent training parent and child interactive behaviours significantly increased. All child participants continued to make gains in their vocabulary after training concluded despite some small decreases in parent and child interactive behaviours noted. The outcomes of this project have implications for clinicians in the selection of communication programs for families within Lifestart Co-operative. Possible opportunities for clinicians to promote parent learning and positive interactions with their child within an intervention setting and beyond are outlined. Further research is suggested to consider the impact of time in the ability of parents to maintain acquired skills. Future projects could identify what learning and specific opportunities are needed by families to continue to promote communication development in their child in the longer term.

MS LILLY WICKS

DR KATHY COLOGON

BIOGRAPHY

Ms Lilly Wicks works in the role of Professional Services Manager at Lifestart Co-operative Ltd. This role oversees the continuing professional development and networks of support for all staff to provide supports to families that are person/ family centred and build the capacity of families and the community to be inclusive of all individuals.

Lilly has worked in the disability sector for the past 12 years in a variety of roles including working directly with child and young people living with disability across Sydney and their families. Lilly has had experience managing teams within Lifestart, as well as a number of projects and research.

Lilly has a professional background in Speech Pathology with particular experience working with families who have children and young people with complex communication needs. She has led several Hanen Parent Programs supporting children with a range of communication needs e.g. Autism Spectrum Disorders and their families. Supporting families to identify and use specific strategies that will assist their family member to communicate successfully in daily routines and activities remains her passion today.

Dr Kathy Cologon lectures in Inclusive Early Childhood Education at the Institute of Early Childhood, Macquarie University. Kathy has a particular interest in research and practice relating to the development and support of inclusive education, with a view towards greater recognition of the rights of all children.

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