

Novita Children's Services

PRE-SCHOOL AND SCHOOL



Speech Pathology

Services in Public Schools

Novita Speech Pathologists can provide assistance for clients in public schools, if the difficulty they are experiencing is due to their *physical disability* and/or the child uses an alternative augmentative communication (A.A.C.) device.

Students not eligible for Novita Speech Pathology may be eligible for services through DECS Speech Pathology.

Services in Private Schools (Catholic and Independent Schools)

Full services for those areas within which Novita speech pathologists have special training and *Consultative* Novita speech pathology services in areas where support would otherwise be provided by DECS speech pathologists.

How does a Speech Pathologist work in schools?

Speech Pathologists can assist the teacher by

- Providing ideas to increase the number of ways that a child can get his/her message across to others.
- Providing ideas for helping a child understand information given to them (eg using symbols or signing).
- Assessing and testing out children for an alternative augmentative communication (A.A.C.) device.

Providing training and support for school staff about:

- Technology, such as A.A.C. devices
- Particular skills that they can use to improve their communication with the child.
- Providing advice about oral eating and drinking, preparing care plans and training staff in how to use them.
- Providing adapted utensils for mealtimes.
- Providing advice on choking procedure.
- Providing advice on drooling.



Psychology

The Psychologist can assist in the pre-school/school by:

- Identifying learning difficulties and strategies to deal with these.
- Assessment of the child's abilities and behavioural issues.
- Providing strategies to develop friendship and social skills.
- Identify emotional issues specific to the child's experience of their disability.
- Support staff to develop positive behaviour strategies.

Family Support Services

The Family Service coordinator can assist parents and school staff by:

- Assisting families to gather information about and visit pre-schools/schools to enable them to make informed choices.
- Assisting the family with transition to pre-school/school.
- Attending relevant planning meetings to support the family.
Liaising and/or advocating as necessary with organisations to access appropriate support for the child.

The pre-school or school manages:

- The Negotiated Education Plan (NEP) in public schools
- The Action Plan in Catholic Schools
- The Student Support Plan in Independent Schools.

The Novita Family Service Coordinator is able to support the family through the transition process. The child's key worker and/or other Novita team members are happy to attend planning meetings, or provide written reports or documentation to support this process.



The Novita Team

A child registered with Novita Early Childhood Service has a team of skilled professional staff who work closely with him/her and their family. The child's needs determine who is on that team, but may include a Physiotherapist, Occupational Therapist, Speech Pathologist, Psychologist and Family Service Coordinator; one of whom will be designated as the key worker.

Some of the services these team members provide in the transition process and subsequently the pre-school/school setting are described below.

Physiotherapy

A Physiotherapist can advise on how a child:

- Maximizes their independence in moving around the pre-school / school environment.
- Accesses the environment at recess and lunchtimes, including outdoor play areas and equipment.
- Participates in sport and physical education Can be seated/positioned well to attend to and participate in the curriculum (sometimes this requires specific equipment, such as splints, wheelchairs, technology).
- Can access specific equipment i.e. prescribe and support the process to acquire the item.

Physiotherapists can advise on Occupational Health and Safety suggestions for staff in relation to assisting a child with their transfers, mobility and positioning needs and are responsible for developing a Transfer Positioning and Care Plan if required.

Occupational Therapy

An occupational therapist can help by advising on the following issues that may be experienced by a child in pre-school or school:

- Handwriting skills and the ability to keep up with written work demands
- Visual difficulties
- Fine motor skills including pre-writing and scissor skills
- Using technology to access the curriculum (eg adapted computer)
- Organization and on task behaviour
- Assessment of child's ability to access all areas of the school environment and prescription of modified equipment if required (eg: table, chairs, ramps, rails, support with building modifications)
- Toileting and change facilities
- Self care skills
- Sensory skills—processing sensory information effectively to provide calm, alert state for effective learning.

Novita Services in Pre-schools and Schools

Novita Children's Services aims to help children with physical disability be part of everyday life and works hard at supporting these children to achieve this in a variety of settings.

As part of the transition to pre-school or school process the child's key worker and other Novita team members are able to:

- Support parents/caregivers to visit preferred pre-schools or schools.
- Assess the environment to ensure the child has maximum access to the curriculum and site (eg: play equipment, toilets).
- Prescribe and support the process for the provision of equipment or modifications identified as needed (eg ramps, rails, toilet chairs, seating).
- Participate in developing curriculum and health care plan.



How Novita Staff help children in pre-schools and Schools?

Novita will provide support at the child's pre-school or school as well as at home. Novita relies on parents/caregivers and staff requesting services when help is required.

This can be done by:

- completing and faxing a Request for Services form
- contacting the child's Novita key worker.

Novita team members will provide help as discussed and agreed with the pre-school or school. The team can help the child to fully participate in pre-school/school life by:

- helping pre-school/school staff understand a child's abilities and needs.
- working out with pre-school/school staff how to facilitate the child's participation in the everyday activities required of him/her at pre-school or school.

Training pre-school/school staff in:

- Ways to lift
- How to use equipment
- Correct positioning.
- How to help with mealtimes
 - How to develop communication
 - How to promote positive behaviours.
- In negotiation with the pre-school/school staff, provide therapy for a short time to achieve a specific goal.
- Advising on special equipment or changes to the pre-school/school facilities.
- Assessing and providing advice on learning behaviour, social skills and emotional development.