



# L.T.T.C. NEWS

June 2009 Issue 2

Learning Tree Therapy Centre

3 Pearson Place,  
Floreat 6014  
PH:9387 8538

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**DONT  
MISS  
THIS >**

!



*Welcome to our second Learning Tree Therapy Centre newsletter. This newsletter is put together for our families and colleagues as a way of informing you about news relating to our practice. We hope you find this newsletter helpful and again welcome your enquires and feedback. Thanks for the response we had about our first newsletter. It seems the children's artwork was a real hit for many. We have included some more pictures drawn by children during our individual Occupational therapy and peer social group sessions.*



*"My First Scary Monster" by Tom aged 5*

## Perth Floortime Parent Group Meeting on 24<sup>th</sup> June

Next parent meeting will have the theme "**Building The Foundations of Communication**" and will be presented by Anne Nunn, Speech and Language Pathologist, with the help of our LTTC team. Our regular parents plus also those parents who have children on our waiting list as well as other parents who are interested are welcome!. Videoclips will be used to illustrate key points. We would love parents to share their insights and learning. The meeting will be at the Mt Claremont Community Centre, 107 Montgomery Avenue, Mt Claremont.

Please rsvp to Linda at [linda\\_payne@iinet.net.au](mailto:linda_payne@iinet.net.au) by Tuesday the 23<sup>rd</sup> June. Feel free to bring along a plate to share, Look forward to seeing everyone

## Sensory Connections News Update

By Kathy Walmsley [www.sensoryconnections.com.au](http://www.sensoryconnections.com.au)

*Yvonne, Sharon and I are all very busy as always, and are particularly looking forward to offering the Parent Training Program with SLP and OT, This will be running in Term 3 particularly for our current families but also for those who are on our waiting list. See flyer at the back of this newsletter for details.*

## SCOTS NEWS



Kathy  
Walmsley  
Occupational  
Therapist



Yvonne Buters  
Occupational  
Therapist



Sharon Campbell  
Occupational  
Therapist &  
Physiotherapist



Dinosaurs  
Fighting next to  
the volcano

By William 6

3 Pearson Place,  
Floreat 6014 WA  
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SCOTS is working towards recruiting Occupational Therapy Staff to meet the growing demands for our services. We are on the look out for dynamic OT's out there who are interested in contract employment with us, who are willing to employ on a contract on a part time basis with the aim of building up hours and range of duties over time. We offer fabulous training and professional development opportunities. Enquiries to [administration@sensoryconnections.com.au](mailto:administration@sensoryconnections.com.au)

*In late April and early May, I spent two weeks in Ireland as a result of my Irish colleague Mari Caulfield, Speech and Language Pathologist's invitation to train with her there. We presented a 2 day Introductory level training in beautiful Athlone on the Shannon River in central Ireland, and also 2 days of small group mentoring with participants ( OT, Speech therapist, Educators, Psychologist) from Ireland and various regions in the UK. I was also fortunate enough to participate in the "Look into my Eyes' Parent Day developed by Mari. This is a day where parents share their stories and key learning with other parents and this runs annually in the West of Ireland. We will be supporting our own Perth "Look Into My Eyes" Parent day for our West Australian families late in the year as Mari has given our Perth Floortime Parent Group permission to use the format she has developed so successfully. This was a special trip both work and family wise as my 82 year old father who emigrated from Ireland almost 60 years ago, took the opportunity of me traveling to Ireland to come along for the trip.*

### **DIR Institute 2009**

*Sharon and I will be heading to the USA in July for a very swift 10-day trip to attend the five day intensive DIR institute training. We will be away from the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup> July so will not be seeing clients inbetween these dates which are during the school holidays. Yvonne will be continuing to see clients during that period as she holds the fort. This year the institute venue is in California. There are a number of Australians participating this year, from a number of disciplines and states - great news for our region. Attending the institute provides such an incredibly rich experience, professionals from a range of different disciplines, work areas, and countries attend and one gets a chance to share in detail the work we are all doing with children and families. There is nothing else quite like it in terms of the opportunities for learning and networking. It has been two years since I participated and I am really looking forward to this recharge! We always come back with lots of new ideas and enthusiasm! I am delighted that Sharon will be coming with me as she participates as a DIR C candidate this year as she works towards her DIR certificate.*

### **Support Workers**

By Kathy Walmsley, OT. [kwalmsley@sensoryconnections.com.au](mailto:kwalmsley@sensoryconnections.com.au)

*Our Support Worker program is up and running with two part time staff. We have a need to train up more staff to meet the needs of families needs. On the job training is available for persons who meet the eligibility criteria and are seeking part time employment. There is an opportunity for this to grow into full time employment ( if desired ) over time. Do give me a call or email if you want further information.*

### **Job Description:**

*Support Workers provide Floortime™ to children with special needs in either home, clinic or educational settings under the supervision of our professional staff. Support Workers do not diagnose, program plan, coach or train others.*



**Joanna  
VanLeeuwen**

Therapy Support  
Worker



**Jessica  
Salamone**

Therapy Support  
Worker

*Their primary duty is to directly provide Floortime and / or semi structured therapy activities to children to provide support for parents who are implementing an intensive DIR/Floortime based home program for their child. FTSW may also work to co facilitate peer group therapy sessions with Sensory Connections OTS professional staff.*

### **Duties**

*1. Under the supervision and direction of professional staff use Floortime™ strategies to engage children in a range of activities to support development, including:*

- Spontaneous Floortime™ strategies to support functional developmental capacities for shared attention, regulation, engagement, two way communication, social problem solving and the continuous flow of interactions, creating ideas and building bridges between ideas in symbolic play and conversations*
- Semi-structured activities targeting identified goal area*
- Problem-solving approaches to develop reasoning and self-help skills*
- Supporting communication and the use of visual and augmentative strategies*
- Sensory motor activities indoors and outside to develop regulation, visual-spatial capacities, improve sensory motor and sensory integration capacities.*
- Facilitation of peer play*
- Implementing the specific recommendations of therapists and educators*

*2. Participate in regular individual and group mentoring sessions with Sensory Connections professional staff including our Director Kathy Walmsley, Occupational Therapist, and with staff of our umbrella organisation the Learning Tree Therapy Centre including multidisciplinary staff of speech and language, clinical psychology, physiotherapy, as well as occupational therapy.*

*3 .Keep records and undertake administrative and routine tasks as directed by professional staff.*

### **Eligibility:**

*Under graduate and graduate students, educational assistants, aides, and others who have a desire to work with children to support home and centre based intervention are invited to apply for work with us as a support worker . Parents of children with special needs who have used Floortime based therapy interventions are also welcome to apply.*

*Persons considering applying for this position need to be able to demonstrate that they-:*

- Enjoy children and have an ability to engage and relate to them*
- Enjoy physical activity and be physically able to engage in sensory motor play with children.*

3 Pearson Place,  
Floreat, 6014  
Ph 08 9387 8534



James age 6  
The Aquarium

## SLP SERVICES



Anne Nunn, SLP

- Enjoy working in a supportive team environment
- Accept guidance and be self reflective.
- Enjoy learning and being challenged in a supportive environment
- Have well developed organisational skills
- Have an awareness of professional standards of conduct including confidentiality standards.

## Speech Pathology Services

By Anne Nunn, Speech and Language Pathologist [anne.nunn@optusnet.au](mailto:anne.nunn@optusnet.au)

*Hello again! Just to let you know of the major things occurring in the near future with Speech Pathology:*

### VIDEO ASSESSMENT

*For those of you that received the last newsletter, you will know that we are aiming to start video assessment for those on the waiting list for Speech Pathology. The aim of this is to provide initial consultation and strategies. I am just putting on the finishing touches so this will be up and running by early Term III.*

### EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

*We are seeking to employ another Speech Pathologist very soon to meet the growing need for our services. Feel free to let others know that there is a position available - initially this will be a part time position but with the option to increase time. Supervision will be provided by within and myself our multi disciplinary team. There are excellent training and professional developmental opportunities available for the successful applicant*

### PARENT EVENING

*At our next Parent Support Group on Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> June, I will be presenting a segment on **Building the Foundations for Talking**. We hope that everyone will find a part of this particularly useful for their child. I look forward to welcoming our regular clients as well as those with children on our waiting list for services.*

### DIR Corner.... By Kathy Walmsley

One question that commonly comes up with new parents is ....

**" I have heard that Floortime is all about following the child's lead but I am not sure about what that means? "**

Let's clarify what is meant by the term " follow the child's lead", This doesn't mean simply copying the child or doing what the child is doing. This is a common mis understanding. One could do this all day long, for days and months at a time and never get anywhere!

Following the child's lead means understanding what is giving the child pleasure, what is it that they are drawn to, or are seeking , what is the game the child wants to play?. It means observing them to figure out what they are interested in and making that our first step.....



Escape from the  
Aquarium

By Matteo, age 6

3 Pearson Place,  
Floreat 6014

PH:9387 8538

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## DIR DISCUSSION CORNER

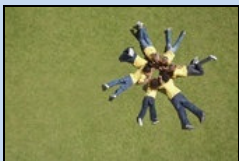
Do you want to read some parent testimonials and / or find out more about research relating to DIR ?

Please read our DIR paper which can be downloaded at

<http://www.sensoryconnections.com.au/dirmodel.php>

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## Speech Spot



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*" Higher levels of thinking builds on emotional interaction..... when we follow the child's lead we are following the child's emotions... It's no different than a spouse sitting across the table and listening to his spouse or her best friend and saying " What's really on Johnny or Sue's mind today ? ". It may not be simply the first words out of their mouth- you may have to listen for a minute or two. Similarly, with a child, as you're interacting you may have to be watching what they're doing and saying, " What is little Johnny or Susie interested in? " .....*

Stanley Greenspan, MD

It makes sense that to build and support our children's capacities to be successful communicators and thinkers that we would start with what interests and is meaningful to them

*"Every interest of the child – even aimless wandering or just opening and closing a door repetitively where we get stuck behind the door – can be turned into an interaction, and can be turned into a challenge that helps the child climb the developmental ladder"*

Stanley Greenspan, MD

*So following the child's lead is the first step, and then we build on this with challenges.... There is a very helpful webradio talk on the ICDL website that focuses on the topic of how to follow the child's lead and challenge them at the same time. In this transcript, Dr Greenspan and Serena Wieder PhD. Co founders of the DIR approach, give example of what this might look like at the different developmental stages. Here is the link:*

<http://www.icdl.com/distance/webRadio/documents/7-14-2005.pdf>

*Link to the Basic's of Floortime radio web shows*

**<http://www.icdl.com/distance/webRadio/DIRFloortime.shtml>**

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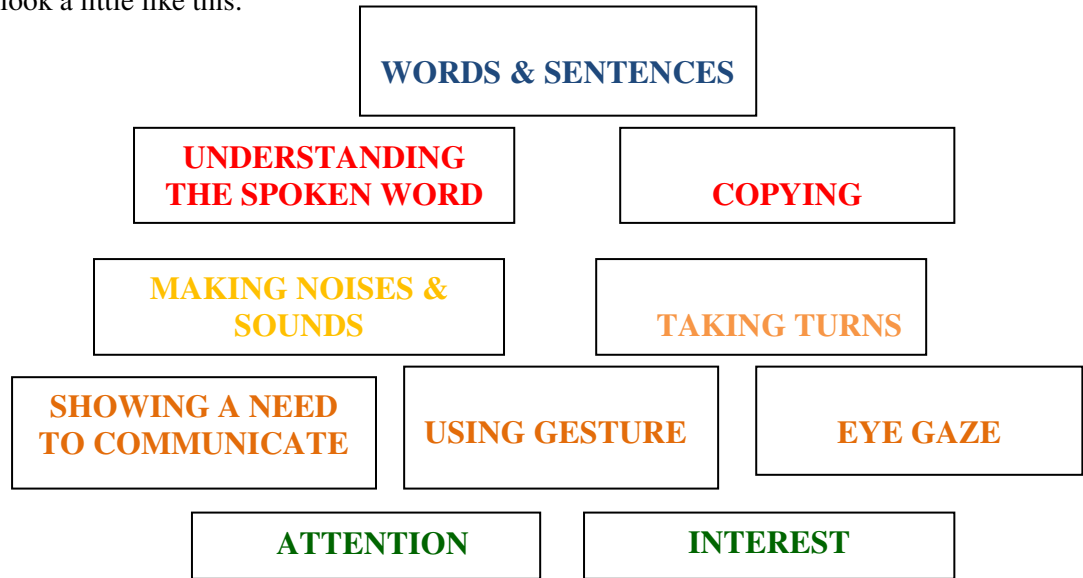
## *Building The Foundations for Talking* by Anne Nunn, SLP

Building the foundations for talking is just as important as building the foundations for your house. There is no point in having a beautiful house if it's on a base that will soon crumble. The solid base for talking ensures that your child knows how to actually communicate (not just say words) and ultimately to make sure that your child's words and sentences actually match what they are thinking and feeling.

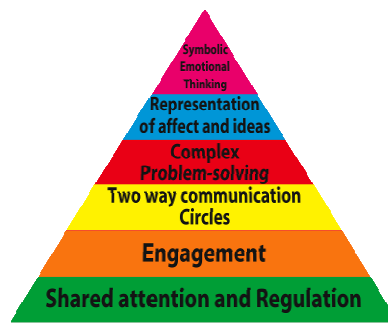


An example of this crumbling foundation is seen when a child uses "scripting" (reciting texts eg. From movies, story books, tv ads, etc.) For many this has some communicative intent but it obviously doesn't match exactly their thoughts. Some children will begin to script when they are feeling stressed by a situation. A little boy I see will begin to recite nursery rhymes when there is too much noise in his environment. Luckily his mother is very tuned in to his communication and knows to stop talking to him and use more gesture instead when this begins. It was stressful for her when he first began at kindy as she was so used to being his interpreter. How much easier it would have been if he could consistently use words that matched his thoughts and feelings - "too noisy" "don't like it", etc. Here we have a child who uses lots of words and quite complex sentences - his talking looks good but his actual communication is not very effective.

So, how do we build these strong foundations? The building blocks for language would look a little like this.



We need all of these “blocks” to be well-established to make sure each level is “well-built” so that your child can use words easily and accurately. Any block that is missing or not developed can bring the whole structure down - particularly those at the base. So, how do these building blocks relate to the **Functional Emotional Developmental Levels**.



**LEVEL 1:** Children can stay calm and pay **ATTENTION** not only to their environment but more specifically to another person

**LEVEL 2:** Children have a strong **INTEREST** in interactions and can maintain their **ATTENTION** on another person long enough to stay engaged

**LEVEL 3:** Children develop purposeful 2-way communication - they are essentially **TAKING TURNS** like we do in conversation however this is with their body language. They have a stronger **NEED TO COMMUNICATE**

**LEVEL 4:** Children are really starting to solve problems at this stage. They are starting to realise the power that they can have over their parents! A child might take a parent by the hand, pull them to the kitchen and point to the fridge. They are also beginning to learn how words fit in to the communicative system that they already have “no, more, drink, yuk, woof, etc” To be able to use **WORDS**, first they have to have **UNDERSTANDING** of the labels they want to use and then some experience at **COPYING** these words to make more sense of them.

**LEVELS 5 & 6:** Children can now let people know their ideas and can logically link these ideas. This is done by integrating all of their communicative skills together - gestures, facial expressions, eye gaze and words. This happens as a result of their experiences with other people through back and forth interactions. Many programmes begin at Level 5 - Teaching words. This is probably similar to the idea of plumbing a house that looks beautiful but is sitting on foundations that are crumbling. It may seem like a good idea to finish the house off but won’t get used properly. Similarly, the child who learns words but hasn’t had enough experiences in relating to people won’t know how to use those words as effectively. Laying the foundations that is levels 1 to 4 paves the way for your child to be able to have two way conversations.

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## Floortimers Australia List serve

This is an egroups Listserve and discussion groups for parents & professionals. The goal is to provide an opportunity for sharing information and resources about DIR/Floortime in this region. The link to this group is <http://au.groups.yahoo.com/group/floortimersaus/> Please feel free to join the group as this is a great way to find out about events and resources as well as a way for parents to seek support and advice from other parents.

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*The Developmental, Individual Difference & Relationship Based Model*

## **DIR® / Floortime™**



Sensory Connections and The Learning Tree Therapy Centre, are pleased to announce that Mari Caulfield, Speech and Language Pathologist and Kathy Walmsley, Occupational Therapist, both ICDL International Training Faculty will be presenting an Introductory level DIR® training program in Melbourne on 23, 24, & 25<sup>th</sup> September, and in Brisbane on 28, 29, & 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2009.

To download the brochure with details regarding this training opportunity see our website [www.sensoryconnections.com.au](http://www.sensoryconnections.com.au)

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## **DIR® Floortime**

### **2009 Professional Support & Mentoring Group**

This small group mentoring program, which is facilitated by Kathy and Anne will offering an environment where teachers and therapists can discuss and learn more about this approach, support their work and development in DIR®. This is designed for professionals who have undertaken introductory level DIR training and are seeking professional support in this reflective environment as they start to use the approach in their work with children and families. Learning is facilitated through case based discussions where participants will bring in their own videoclips for group discussion, reflection and collaborative problem solving. These two hour sessions will occur over six sessions on a Fridays between 12.30 to 2.30 pm. We have room for a couple more participants to join us for the remaining four sessions for 2009.



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### **Remaining Dates for 2009 :**

**Term 2: 19<sup>th</sup> June, Term 3: 7<sup>th</sup> August & 11<sup>th</sup> Sept, Term 4: 6<sup>th</sup> Nov**

**Cost: \$100/ 2 hour per person – ( plus 10% GST ) Venue: Nedlands**

.For more information please email Kathy at [kwalmsley@sensoryconnections.com.au](mailto:kwalmsley@sensoryconnections.com.au)

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## TRAINING NEWS

3 Pearson Place,  
Floreat, WA 6014

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# DIR®/Floortime<sup>™</sup> Approach for Parents

A parent training program presented by Sensory Connections and  
The Learning Tree Therapy Centre Team

Starting in Term 3 - July 2009 – Numbers strictly limited – Early registration advised

This is a training program that has the goal of assisting you as a parent, to develop the knowledge and skills to support and build your child's capacities to develop the essential foundations for development. This includes their ability to engage and relate to others, to attend & learn, communicate interactively, share attention and enjoy close relationships, interact & communicate interactively back and forth with another person, build speech and language skills, and develop thinking and reasoning abilities.

DIR gives us a way of understanding the challenges experienced by children who have special needs. It can give you as a parent practical tools that you can use to support your child's development during specific Floortime sessions, but also throughout daily routines.

The DIR®/Floortime<sup>™</sup> approach was developed by Stanley Greenspan, "D. and Serena Wieder, Ph.D. This approach is frequently applied to children on the autistic spectrum however is a useful approach to use with children with developmental challenges.

As a group we will explore approaches to promoting, supporting and solidifying developmental steps common to all children, including those with special needs. We will use a broad range of training materials including videotapes of parent—child interactions with parents and children, with siblings and peers with a range of children of varying ages and capacities, with the focus on showing progression through the range of developmental steps.

## Feedback from Parents Who Have Attended Previous Trainings

"I loved it, it was all about empowering us as parents!"

"As a parent with a child with autism, it opened up my eyes to see what is possible to achieve"

"This was really helpful, great support from everyone in the group, I would highly recommend this training"

"Understanding the neurobiology helped me understand why Floortime is helping my son progress"

The developmental stages include -:

### **Engagement, Attention, and Intimacy**

Helping a child become interested in the world and to connect with people.

### **Two-way Communication**

Helping a child communicate with gestures and expressions to enable them to be able to express themselves and read and respond to the social cues of others

### **Feelings and Ideas**

Helping a child develop and express feelings and ideas through word, language and pretend play

### **Thinking & Reasoning**

Helping a child connect ideas and develop a logical understanding of the world.

## **Dates and Location**

This 7 session workshop will be held on Wednesday evenings starting in Term 4 2009 from 8:00pm to 10:00pm

Dates: 22 & 29 July, 5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup> August, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> September 2009.

Location: Mt Claremont Community Centre  
107 Montgomery Avenue,  
Mt Claremont, WA



*Sensory Connections and LTTTC DIR Parent Training Program*  
Registration Form/Tax Invoice

Perth evening DIR /Floortime Parent Training Program Term 3, 2009

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Name & DOB : \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Home: \_\_\_\_\_ Work/Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

- My child is currently accessing services through LTTTC, SCOTS or with Anne Nunn SLP
- My child is on our Waiting list for Therapy Services
- My child is eligible for early intervention funding through the FaHSCIA Helping Children with Autism services and I would like to enquire about accessing this funding
- I wish to enquire about accessing Health insurance rebates, billed as group therapy sessions
- Other query

Please note : Primary caregiver attendees maybe eligible for Respite Assistance while attending training. Enquire from your local area Carer Respite Centre Tel. 1800 059 059

Full Payment is required to reserve your place and no refunds are available after the 15<sup>th</sup> July 2009

Cost : \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$490 / head

I am paying by:  Cheque/M.O.  EFT.  Credit Card  FaHSCIA

Website online bookings :- <http://www.sensoryconnections.com.au/events.php>

Credit Card:  VISA  MasterCard

Acct #: \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Direct Funds Transfer (EFT) to: Sensory Connections

BSB: 016141 Account #:251852996

Please include your **Name** and **Training Location** as a Reference in your EFT transfer.

Please make cheque payable to:

**Sensory Connections OTS Pty Ltd**

3 Pearson Place, Floreat, WA 6014.

(ABN: 94 108 212 915)

Please fax to 08 9387 8538 or Mail to Above Address