

Stepping Stones

Bendigo Community Health Services' Stepping Stones Group supports children who have a current NDIS early childhood plan. The program is available to children aged 2.5 years to school age through our Early Childhood Intervention Service.

Based on the Karen Stagnitti *Learn to Play* program, the groups provide a space for children to enjoy engaging in pretend play. The ability to engage in pretend play is linked to development in language, narrative understanding, creativity, social competence, emotional self-regulation and cognitive skills.

Children are supported to build their capacity in a variety of areas, including:

- Separation from parents/carers
- Play skills
- Completing routines
- Transitions
- Following instructions
- Social skills
- Language development
- Preparation for kindergarten
- Preparation for school
- Mealtimes
- Toileting and self-care
- Fine and gross motor skills
- Emotional regulation



Assessments and reports are completed to provide ongoing strategies and recommendations reflective of the individual child's NDIS goals and to guide future planning.

Our groups run weekly during school terms (10 weeks) for a period of two hours per session and consist of between six and eight children, with two staff. Parents are not required to stay, however, parental involvement is welcome.

With over 30 years of experience in supporting children to build confidence and capacity through play, our groups have supported hundreds of children and their families to work towards their goals.

"My eldest daughter came here non-verbal and left after two years with a greater vocabulary, school-ready, more positive within herself, able to make friends. It made home life easy, too – because she was bringing what she was learning here, home. My youngest is now doing the same. I don't think my girls would be who they are today or where they are today without the help of Robbie and Lara. I would still be struggling with that. I would highly recommend this Stepping Stones group. You will see the development each week. Being a mum is a learning curve but these ladies have been in the industry for years. Words cannot say how grateful I am." – Parent.

For further information contact Lara Hassell on 0448 661 695 or larahassell@bchs.com.au

Currently taking expressions of interest for groups commencing in February 2023