



Larissa Collins graduated from the *Master of Speech & Language Pathology* program at Macquarie University in 2004. Prior to this, Larissa undertook a *Bachelor of Hearing and Speech Sciences* at Macquarie University.

Larissa is a Certified Practising member of *Speech Pathology Australia (SPA)* and is involved in the association's *Professional Self Regulation Program*, which requires regular participation in professional development courses and training.

Larissa has worked as a Speech Pathologist for the past 10 ½ years and has experience working with individuals of all ages, from birth through to the elderly, who have communication and/or swallowing difficulties.

Larissa has extensive experience working with children, adolescents and adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Cerebral Palsy, Down Syndrome, Global Developmental Delay, hearing impairment, intellectual disability and other developmental delays and disabilities.

Larissa spent 5 years working for the *Department of Ageing, Disability & Home Care (DADHC)* and spent 2.5 years working with children and adults with cerebral palsy and other disabilities in her role at the *Cerebral Palsy Alliance* (formerly known as *The Spastic Centre of N.S.W.*). Larissa spent 9 months working part-time at *The Infants' Home* at Ashfield, where she provided Speech Pathology assessment and intervention services to children with speech, language, social communication and feeding delays and disorders, as well as children with developmental delays and disabilities and those from vulnerable backgrounds (e.g. families experiencing domestic violence, drug and alcohol problems, financial difficulties).

Larissa has been working in private practice for the past 7 years, working predominately with children with Autism, Down Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy, global developmental delay, hearing impairment, speech delays / disorders and language delays/disorders. Larissa is currently working full-time in her private practice, operating Monday - Saturday.

In addition to providing individual assessment and intervention, Larissa has gained considerable experience in providing group therapy. She has planned and delivered groups targeting:

- Early communication and play skills
- Parent & toddler communication skills
- Social skills for primary and high school aged students

Larissa also has experience in assessing and treating paediatric feeding difficulties. She has worked with children demonstrating difficulty with:

- Transitioning from pureed consistencies to lumpier solids
- Biting and chewing
- Tongue use during eating
- Transitioning from bottle feeding to cup drinking

Larissa Collins

Member of Speech Pathology Australia - Certified Practising Speech Pathologist

Hanen Certified Speech Pathologist, Accredited Key Word Sign Presenter, Accredited SOS Feeding Therapist

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Larissa is an accredited Key Word Sign & Gesture presenter. She is very passionate about teaching key word sign to:

- Parents
- Teachers
- Preschool staff
- Early Childhood Education TAFE and University students
- Allied Health Professionals
- Disability support workers (e.g. Group Home and Day Program staff) and other people who are interested in supporting people with communication difficulties.

Larissa is a Hanen Certified Speech and Language Pathologist. She is qualified to provide all of the Basic and Advanced parent and teacher education programs:

- *It Takes Two To Talk* - Involving parents of young children with language delays (birth to 5 years) in their child's intervention.
- *More Than Words* - Involving parents of young children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (birth to 5 years) in their child's intervention.
- *Learning Language & Loving It* – Involving Early Educators in promoting the social, language and literacy skills of young children (birth to 5 years).
- *Talk Ability* - Involving parents of young children (3 to 7 years) with High-functioning Autism and Asperger Syndrome in their child's intervention.
- *Target Word* – Involving parents of young children who are late talkers (18 to 30 months) in their child's intervention.
- *ABC & Beyond* – Helping Early Educators learn and apply practical strategies for using book reading, everyday conversations and activities to promote the six building blocks of literacy: oral language, vocabulary, story comprehension, language of learning, print knowledge, and phonological awareness.

Larissa enjoys incorporating the well researched principles and strategies of these programs in to her day-to-day clinical practice.

Larissa is passionate about teaching and implementing a range of low- and high-technology Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) systems with her clients, including visual supports, signing, chat books, social stories and electronic voice output devices.

Larissa enjoys working with primary and high school aged children, particularly those with receptive and expressive language difficulties and literacy difficulties. Larissa has had the opportunity to work closely with classroom teachers in several local schools while running language, literacy and social skills groups.

Larissa enjoys helping students meet the challenge of reading, understanding and writing a variety of different text types, preparing for subject-based assessments and learning to cope with state and nation-wide assessments such as NAPLAN.

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Larissa is an accredited *SOS (Sequential Oral motor Sensory) Feeding Therapist*. She attended both the Basic and Advanced workshops in Brisbane in August 2011. The SOS approach to feeding difficulties and disorders is concerned with teaching fussy and problematic eaters how to better cope with the sensory properties of foods (such as texture e.g. smooth, hard, crunchy, stringy, flaky; taste e.g. sweet, sour, bitter, salty; temperature e.g. hot, cold, warm, cool), as well as teaching them the oral motor skills required to eat more age appropriate food textures. Mealtimes are designed to be fun and engaging and a major goal of the program is to increase the variety of foods accepted by a child, which indirectly increases the volume of food consumed by a child. Larissa has been implementing this program with several of her clients and has enjoyed achieving positive outcomes with them so that mealtimes are no longer stressful and unpleasant for families.

Larissa is registered to provide Speech Pathology intervention services to children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder, as well as children who have been diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy, Down Syndrome, Fragile X Syndrome, Vision Impairment and Hearing Impairment as part of funding provided by the *Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA)*. This early intervention funding is available as part of the '*Helping Children with Autism*' package and the '*Better Start for Children with a Disability*' program and provides eligible children with \$12 000 towards early intervention services such as Speech Pathology.

Larissa completed the '*Introduction to PROMPT Technique*' training in January 2013. PROMPT is an acronym for *Prompts for Restructuring Oral Muscular Phonetic Targets*. The technique is a tactile-kinaesthetic approach that uses touch cues to a patient's articulators (jaw, tongue, lips) to manually guide them through a targeted word, phrase or sentence. The technique develops motor control and the development of proper oral muscular movements, while eliminating unnecessary muscle movements, such as jaw sliding and inadequate lip rounding. Therapists begin by helping patients produce certain phonemes. A phoneme is the smallest increment of sound in speech. For example, the "d" sound in the word dog is one phoneme, the "o" is another and the "g" is yet another. Each phoneme requires different muscle contractions/retractions and placement/movement of the jaw, lips, tongue, neck and chest to produce. All of these things have to happen with the proper timing and sequence to produce one phoneme correctly. The therapist attempts to "teach" the patient's muscles to produce a phoneme correctly by stimulating all of these through touch.

PROMPT therapy is appropriate for a wide range of patients with communication disorders. The most common patients have motor speech disorders, articulation problems or are non-verbal children. Many patients with aphasia, apraxia/dyspraxia, dysarthria, pervasive development disorders, cerebral palsy, acquired brain injuries and autism spectrum disorders have benefitted from PROMPT therapy. More information about the PROMPT technique can be found at www.promptinstitute.com

In addition to her private practice work with children, Larissa has been providing communication and swallowing assessment and intervention services to elderly individuals living at home and in aged care facilities. Larissa has established positive relationships with a number of aged care facilities, and particularly enjoys working with patients who have experienced stroke and other neurological conditions (e.g. Parkinson's disease, Multiple Sclerosis, Motor Neuron Disease). Larissa is a registered provider with the *Department of Veteran Affairs*.

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Professional Service Fees - Effective from the 1st of January, 2016

Swallowing - Initial Swallowing Assessment (Up to 2 hours):

\$300

Includes perusal of previous medical / allied health reports; gathering case history information; assessment of individual's swallowing function and mealtime safety across a range of environments; trial of several food and fluid consistencies to determine those that are safest for the individual; trial of safe swallowing strategies; discussion of mealtime safety recommendations; identifying and prioritising goals for intervention. Appointments that go over the 2 hour allocated timeslot will be charged at the current intervention hourly rate (i.e. \$165 per hour).

Swallowing Assessment – Review:

\$200

Communication - Initial Consultation (Up to 2 hours):

\$300

Includes perusal of previous medical / allied health reports; gathering case history information; discussion and assessment of the individual's communication needs across a range of environments and communication partners; discussion regarding the individual's communication strengths and weaknesses; functional communication assessment; assessment of a child's play skills and social skills; identifying and prioritising goals for intervention. Appointments that go over the 2 hour allocated timeslot will be charged at the current intervention hourly rate (i.e. \$170 per hour).

Intervention:

Intervention sessions focus on addressing communication and/or safe swallowing goals identified during Initial Consultation, implementing communication systems (e.g. visual supports, PECS, Key Word Sign & Gesture) and/or safe swallowing strategies, and providing training and support to parents and other carers.

30 min therapy session:

\$90

45 min therapy session:

\$145

1 hour therapy session:

\$170

Communication or Swallowing Intervention provided under a Chronic Disease Management (CDM) Plan:

The Chronic Disease Management Plan (previously referred to as the Enhanced Primary Care (EPC) Plan) entitles recipients to up to 5 sessions with a Speech Pathologist (per calendar year) that are partially covered by Medicare. A General Practitioner is responsible for determining whether an individual is eligible to receive a CDM Plan. Each of the 5 CDM sessions attract a rebate of \$52.95 from Medicare (as of November 1, 2013). An Administration fee of \$9 applies to each of the 5 sessions provided under the CDM Plan due to the need for the Speech Pathologist to liaise with and provide written documentation to your General Practitioner.

30 min therapy session:

\$99

45 min therapy session:

\$154

1 hour therapy session:

\$179

Formal / Standardized Assessments:

Standardized assessments include administration time (e.g. 1.5-2 hours minimum for language assessment) + analysis and interpretation of child's performance (2+ hours). Following assessment, a free 30 minute feedback session is provided to parents / carers to discuss results of assessment and implications for home / preschool / school.

Speech Assessment:

\$220

Language Assessment:

\$500

Speech and Language Assessment:

\$650

Reports and Written Documentation:

Comprehensive Report (e.g. for General Practitioner / Paediatrician; for School Funding Purposes): \$250

Written correspondence (e.g. lengthy written notes or lengthy email correspondence with School Teaching staff / Preschool Teaching staff in relation to your child's assessment results or therapy intervention program): \$120 per hour

Meetings:

Attendance at preschool / school / home for planning and support meetings (e.g. IFSP / IEP planning and review meetings, Transition to School meetings):

\$170 per hour

Telephone / Skype consultations with parents and support staff:

\$170 per hour

Development of visual supports (colour printing, laminating, velcro):

\$110 per hour

Development of Individual Home Programs:

\$150 per hour

Travel

From base to client (and return for long distances)

\$3.50 per kilometre

Cancellation Fees

Less than 24 hours notice

50% of service fee

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