



The Shepherd Centre

Giving deaf children a voice



EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Giving your child the best start in life



Our world-leading Early Intervention System

We offer a system of programs and services to encompass the needs of infants, toddlers and the preschool years through:

- In person sessions
- Interactive Online Services
- Early education visits

Our holistic model includes individual and group programs to provide both you and your child the opportunity to learn in focused, individual sessions and from peers and others in social, group contexts.



Concurrent parent education programs

Providing opportunities for parents and carers to learn by watching, observing and discussing strategies and techniques to develop their child's skills.



Supporting all areas of your child's development

Music, social, participation, inclusion, school readiness and early literacy skills, parenting programs and training courses for extended family members.



Professional Education Training Courses

Professional development workshops for health and education professionals.

Our outcomes

Our focus is on ensuring the best outcomes for your child. We want your family to feel supported so your child is given the greatest start in life.

The Shepherd Centre was the first service in Australia to teach children with hearing loss to listen and speak.

We offer a complete system with service options and programs specifically tailored to your child's needs. We continue to support your child throughout school and beyond as part of The Shepherd Centre family.

The vast majority of children who graduate from our world-leading services go on to attend mainstream schools and achieve spoken language on par with their hearing peers by the time they start school.

These outstanding outcomes have confirmed The Shepherd Centre as an internationally recognised world-leader in the field.

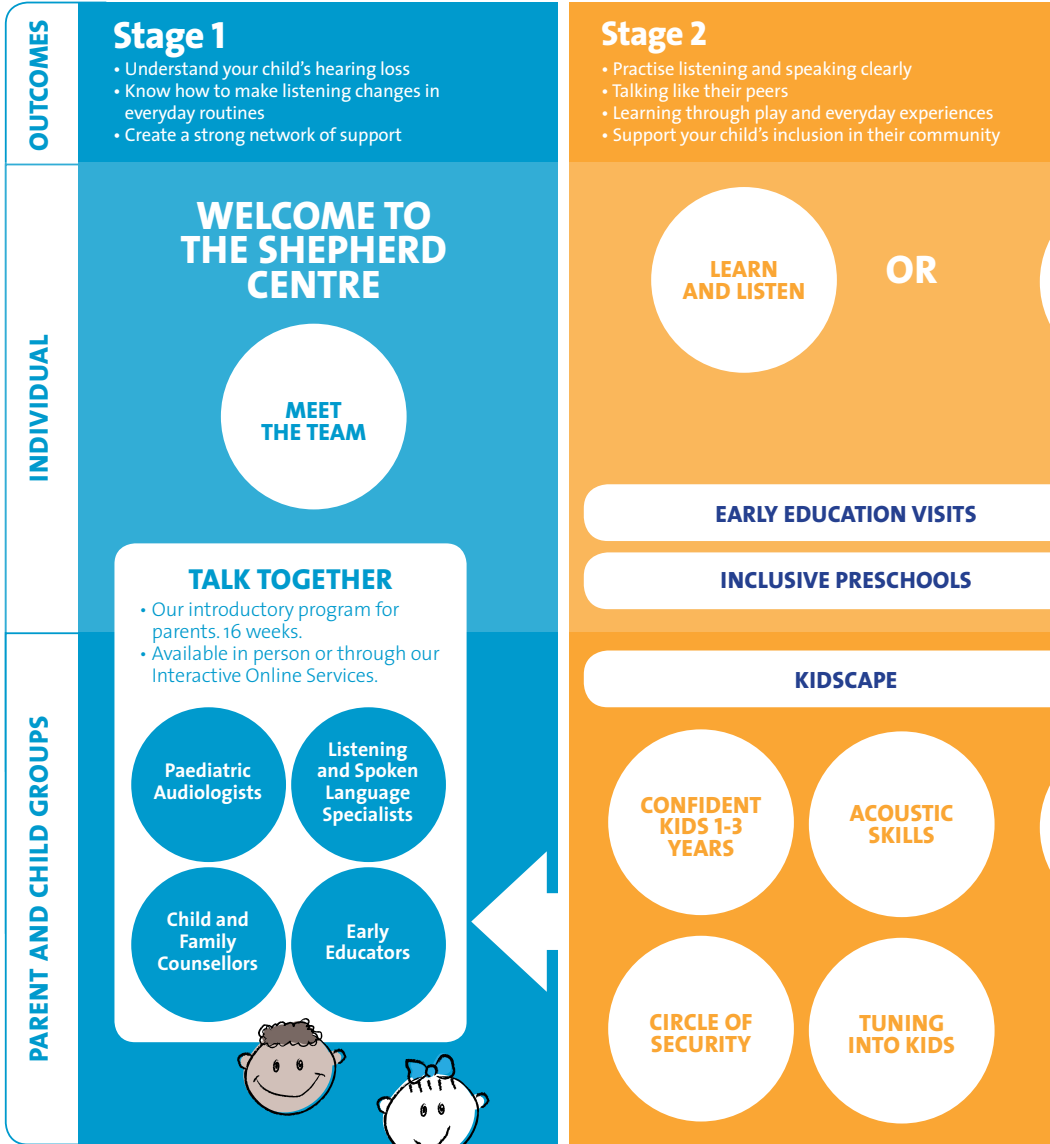


94%

of children who graduate from The Shepherd Centre attend mainstream schools

A system tailored

Our evidence based Early Intervention (EI) System



EAR NOSE & THROAT SPECIALISTS

TRAINING & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

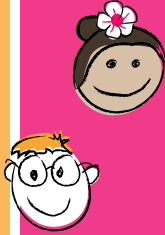
to your family

provides the best start in life for your child

Transition to School

- School-ready skills for kindergarten
- Able to talk about their hearing device
- Learn sounds and patterns for reading

SOUND
DIRECTION
PLUS



LISTEN FOR
LITERACY

School

- Reading and writing skills on track
- Use complex language structures and comprehension
- Build confidence in social interactions
- Managing their hearing devices at school

INDIVIDUAL
SESSIONS
FOR YOU
AND/OR
YOUR CHILD

Counselling
& Support

Assessments

Speech
Pathology

SCHOOL VISITS/TEACHER SUPPORT

EMPOWER
ME

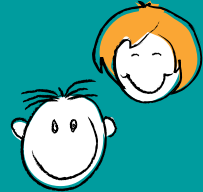
CONFIDENT
KIDS 4-5
YEARS

OFF TO
SCHOOL

CONFIDENT
KIDS 6-8
YEARS

CONFIDENT
KIDS 9-12
YEARS

SPEECH,
COGNITION
& LITERACY
GROUPS



AND FIRST SOUNDS IMPLANT PROGRAM

FOR YOUR CHILD'S TEACHERS

Accessing our world-leading Early Intervention System



The choice is yours

You have the choice of coming to any of our centres for in-person services or access all of these from the comfort of your home via our popular Interactive Online Services.

Alternatively, choose a combination of both depending on your needs. Some families choose to have one parent attend the session in person while another parent dials in from their workplace so they don't miss out on sessions.



In person

We welcome your family to attend any one of our centres in person. Siblings often come along with parents to both group and one-on-one sessions.



Interactive Online Services

Our parent portal provides you with the opportunity to access many of our programs online direct to your home, office or childcare and everyday environments. This offers the flexibility of learning at a time and place that suits you, compatible with your home devices and tablets, and for members of your family who otherwise can't attend in person sessions.

Let's get started

1



FIRST STEPS

Getting your supports in place

1

Meet your team

2

We help you access the NDIS

3

Complete Service Agreement with us

4

Start weekly Talk Together Program

5

Progress checks with your team

2

THROUGHOUT THE JOURNEY

Helping your child achieve their goals throughout the crucial early years

- Individual sessions to build the knowledge, skills and confidence of your family
 - Tailored to your child's needs
- Support so your child feels included and thrives in their community
- Group programs for your child's integrated development
- Medical advice from our ENT specialists

3

BEYOND EARLY INTERVENTION

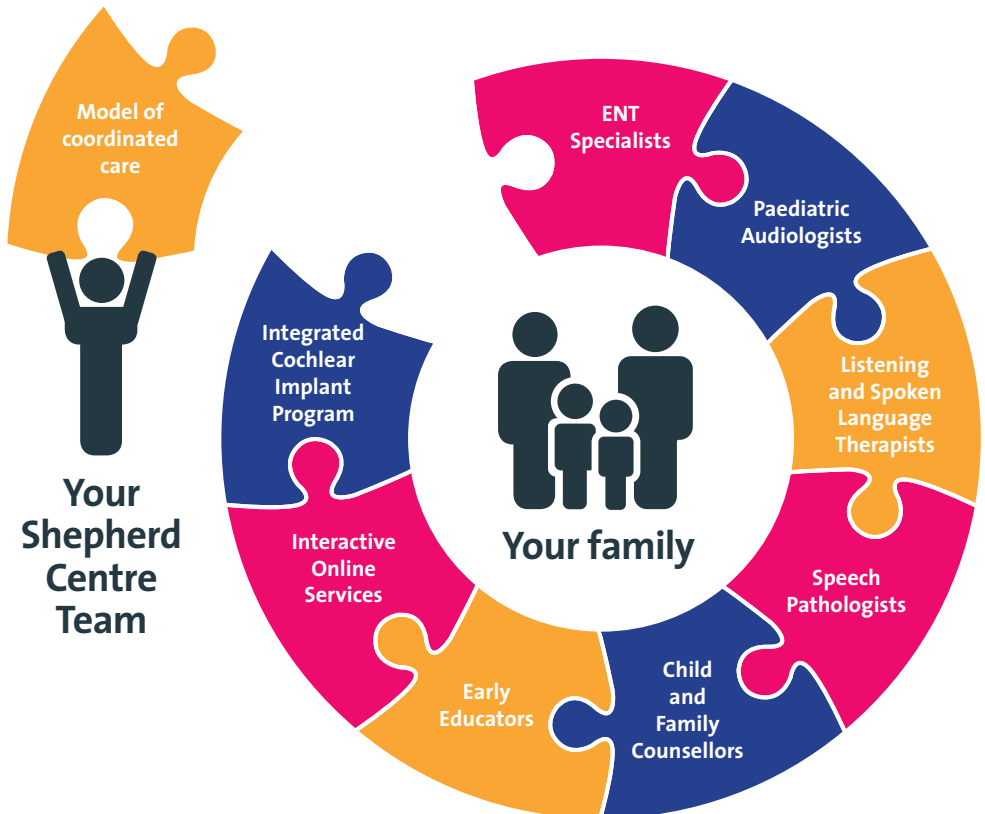
Stay supported for life

- Your child is supported throughout school
 - Training for your child's teachers
- Individual speech therapy sessions to boost your child's reading, writing and speech
- Counselling support • Audiological support
- Group programs to develop your child's confidence, resilience and self-assurance
- Stay connected through our Beyond Sound Alumni Program

Your team

A team of specialists working together for your child.

- Regularly consult with health and education professionals in your community
- Collaborate with medical specialists and your child's early education professionals
- Work with you to create a program for your child using an evidence-based early intervention model
- Coordinated family-centred care
- Partnership based on respect and trust.





Supporting you through the NDIS

We're here to help your child access the supports they need so they can reach their full potential.



1

- Your annual Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP) will often align with your pre-planning meeting
- This reviews last year's goals and identifies supports and goals for your child for the next 12 months needed for your planning meeting

2

- Your team will develop a clinical service recommendation based on pre-planning discussions and your child's needs
- You'll take this with you to your planning meeting, along with other documents that are related to your goals

3

- As the NDIA identifies areas of need, you will need to talk about challenges for you and your child
- We can help you find the right support for your meeting. This may be a person, information or other documents

4

- To ensure there are no interruptions to your supports, services during early intervention will continue
- School age services are provided on the basis of NDIS funding, so will cease once funds are used

5

- Please let your team know as soon as your plan is approved
- They will confirm with you the level and type of services appropriate and what you would like to access from us
- Our team will contact you to sign a Service Agreement

6

- We will contact you to book in a pre-planning meet and review 6-12 weeks before your plan finishes
- Notify us if you have an earlier planning meeting scheduled so we can help you prepare

Programs and Services

- 11** Talk Together
- 12** Learn & Listen
- 13** Sound Direction Plus
- 14** Listen for Literacy
- 15** Confident Kids (4-5 years)
- 16** Off to School
- 17** Acoustic Skills
- 18** Kidscape
- 19** First Sounds Fundamentals
- 20** Preschool
- 21** Circle of Security
- 22** Parent and extended family education programs
- 23** Early education visits
- 24** Professional Development and Training

Talk Together



‘We couldn’t be happier with the support.’

- PARENT QUOTE

- **Providing you with essential skills and knowledge to confidently support your child with hearing loss**
- **Group education program run by expert Child and Family Counsellors, Paediatric Audiologists and Speech Pathologists**

From your first day with us it’s all about constant tailored care. Our Child and Family Counsellors walk your family through the settling in process, introducing the team as you need them.

We equip you from the start with regular knowledge-sharing designed to build your understanding and empower you as caregivers and advocates.

Over the first six months of your journey with The Shepherd Centre, Talk Together ensures your foundation for future care is strong and our team is across your family’s unique needs from the start.

Learn & Listen



- Ongoing support from a team of experienced professionals in paediatric hearing loss
- Tailored mix of sessions to support your child
- Access to weekly Kidscape sessions for your child, their siblings and your family

Navigating many types of therapy and support can feel confusing. At The Shepherd Centre we provide constant care and guidance the whole way through your journey with us. Taking the time to get to know your child and your family means we can better provide the care you need.

Through our “package of care” approach, we work together with you to build an optimal and unique mix of support each time.

‘I value
the holistic
approach’
- PARENT QUOTE

Sound Direction Plus



‘I now feel much more confident and assured about my son’s hearing loss’
- PARENT QUOTE

- A tailored program for children with unilateral and mild levels of hearing loss
- Regular functional listening checks
- Access to current evidence and research developments for unilateral and mild hearing loss

Families and children on this program are supported by their entire team including a Paediatric Audiologist, Listening and Spoken Language Specialist, and a Child and Family Counsellor.

This program, specifically designed for children with unilateral and mild hearing loss, offers tailored support for each child with hearing loss and their family while also offering access to support and networking opportunities through our world-leading group programs.

Packed with additional opportunities to learn, this package offers the best level of support for a child with mild or unilateral hearing loss to enable them to develop their speech and language and thrive in life.

Listen for Literacy



‘My child now
loves reading and
is not afraid to try’
- PARENT QUOTE


- School-specific topics such as listening in noisy environments, developing early reading and classroom skills
- Early literacy, speech and language assessments
- Option to attend weekly Kidscape group at any of our centres with your child or just for the parent sessions

For families with children experiencing hearing loss, school doesn't just mean adjusting to a formal learning environment and a new social setting – it means tackling a new world of sound.

All support offered by The Shepherd Centre is evidence-based and born out of documented need.

Designed by early childhood teachers and speech pathologists, Listen for Literacy is a package of care that pinpoints the vital year before a child starts school. We work with your child and family to explore the soundscape of school and the challenges that come along with it.

Confident Kids (4-5 years)



‘My child is interacting more and has more confidence’

- PARENT QUOTE

- Your child will develop essential skills in confidence, assertiveness and communication
- Ground-breaking social skills program that focuses on “Theory of Mind”
- You learn important skills to be able to best support your child’s social ability in the crucial years leading in to school

Your family will learn skills to help your child manage social situations and express and cope with their own emotions. They learn to advocate for themselves and discover their own unique identity with a hearing loss.

This program of weekly sessions runs throughout one term of each year. Your child will learn to listen well to others, build on conversations of their friends, work together to problem solve and interpret social scenarios and emotions through social and language cues.

Off to School



‘After the program I could easily communicate the support needs for my child at school’

- PARENT QUOTE

- Help your child develop essential pre-literacy and pre-numeracy concepts
- Enable your child to listen in a busy classroom environment
- Teach your child to be able to talk about their hearing loss with their friends and communicate what they need in the school environment

This small group program is designed to support your child in their key transition stage from early intervention to school. Important topics to help your child be ready for school are addressed with both your child and you when you attend the concurrent parent education group.

Your child will also learn important self-advocacy skills to help them thrive at school including independent hearing device management, talking to their friends and teachers about their hearing loss and being able to articulate the help they need in the classroom.

Acoustic Skills



- Learn to listen in different conditions (e.g. loud, quiet, varying pitch, background noise)
- Improve pitch perception and sound identification to grow listening, speaking and language skills
- Learn ways to use music at home for ongoing practice and play

Acoustic Skills harnesses the therapeutic power of music and is custom-created for kids and families in our care. The group program is set over eight weekly sessions with a Music Therapist. A rich sound palette paints different sound environments for children to experience each week with their families.

‘We love coming in for music sessions and talking to other families of children with hearing loss’

- PARENT QUOTE

Kidscape



- Expert-designed purposeful play sessions focused on listening, speaking and social skills
- Supervision and facilitation by trained staff so children can play and learn together while parents attend tailored talks
- Parent and specialist-led learning sessions covering topics that empower and encourage

Kidscape is a pivotal weekly program designed to foster community and nurture learning in a fun and interactive environment.

Everyone has a place at Kidscape with children attending a supervised, therapeutic play-based program while you as the parent expand your knowledge through topical sessions hosted by experts and fellow parents who are further along on the journey.

‘Teaching us as parents about how we can best work with our child’s emotions was great’

- PARENT QUOTE

First Sounds Fundamentals



- **Tracking and celebrating progress through a tailored schedule of assessments, intervention and evaluations**
- **Family meetings with the team and guidance from Child and Family Counsellors**
- **Skill-building sessions for children who have new implants or hearing devices**

First Sounds Fundamentals is a program dedicated to providing your child with access to sound while focusing on the core needs of your family.

Not every child needs the same level or type of support. Your family may only need to access certain services here at The Shepherd Centre and we are known for our flexible and tailored approach.

We create programs that ensure all children can participate in our world-class therapy and expertise regardless of whether they are accessing one of the broader package programs.

Preschool



Rated as “Exceeding the National Quality Standards” for early childhood education

- Help children blossom through the power of creativity, music and craft activities
- Grow social, language and listening skills
- Facilitated by early childhood educators trained in language stimulation and development

Preschool-aged children who attend The Shepherd Centre have a unique opportunity to carry on their learning and tailored care through our two preschools.

Our specialised early education centres at Wollongong and Liverpool are seamlessly connected to the wider team at The Shepherd Centre. This means your child’s preschool educators are on the same page as their therapists and are across your family’s unique care plan from the start.

Each preschool offers places for 3-5 year old children from The Shepherd Centre as well as those living in the nearby community. This means our centres support children with and without hearing loss in an integrated environment.

Circle of Security



**Helping kids
become resilient,
feel safe and be
understood**

- Gain parenting skills that help your child feel safe and confident to explore the world
- Support your child's ability to successfully manage emotions and build their self esteem
- Understand your child's emotional world

Circle of Security is a parenting program that is backed by 20 years of research and development. It is a safe and compassionate space for parents to learn, reflect and share.

Hearing loss can limit communication and increase frustration. Through learning to read emotional cues and build understanding between you and your child, frustration dissipates. This helps children learn to express themselves and self-regulate their emotions, which can lead to less tantrums or frustrated behaviour.

Six weekly group sessions for parents of children aged 0-5. Childcare is available during sessions.

Parent and extended family education programs

Tuning into Kids (for parents and caregivers)

- Helps children calm and settle
- Enables your child to better understand and respond to social situations
- Teaches you fundamental skills in how to help develop your child's emotional intelligence

A significant body of evidence indicates that children with hearing loss have delayed social skills and reduced community and society participation opportunities.

This six-week group education and intervention program will equip you with the knowledge and skills to help your child understand their emotions and make decisions in a calm, effective and confident manner. The program also helps with relationships and aids in anger and conflict management for your child.

Empower Me Workshop

- Designed for carers and family members to be able to support your child
- Extended family members will learn about the impact of hearing loss

This popular workshop develops the capacity and resilience of family members through education and knowledge of the specific needs of your child and supports and empowers parents and carers in their child's every day learning potential. All parents can attend with extended family members.



Early education visits



- Our team will visit your child's place of early learning to support them in their own environment
- We consult with your child's early childhood educator and support professionals
- Your child's language development is supported through a collaborative approach

Our specialists will visit your child in their everyday environment – whether it be preschool, daycare or home.

Through observations, consultations and intervention, our team will work with your child's educators to identify strategies to develop your child's listening, speech, language and social participation skills in their everyday environment.

**Helping your
child achieve
their goals**

Professional Development and Training

We equip teachers and other professionals working with young people with hearing loss with the necessary knowledge and practical skills required to assist children with hearing loss to develop clear, age-appropriate speech, language and social skills, in a variety of educational settings.

The Shepherd Centre offers a range of Quality Teaching Council (QTC) Registered Professional Development workshops, accredited by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA), ACT Teacher Quality Institute (TQI) and internationally with the Alexander Graham Bell Academy.

These workshops are ideal for:

- Itinerant support teachers for children with hearing loss
- K-12 teachers
- Health professionals
- Early intervention specialists
- Preschool staff
- Childcare workers

Workshops can be delivered at schools around NSW, the ACT and Tasmania or onsite at any one of our centres.

Enabling education, childcare and health professionals to support your child



About us

Founded in 1970 by parents Annette and Dr Bruce Shepherd AM, The Shepherd Centre continues to offer a unique and highly successful early intervention system with a focus on the whole family.

We are a registered charity staffed by dedicated, internationally accredited experts across a broad range of disciplines. Our vision: enabling children with hearing loss to develop listening, spoken language and social skills so they may fully participate in the world and, in doing so, reach their full potential.

All programs at The Shepherd Centre are evidence-based and outcomes are published annually. Results show that the majority of our graduates go on to attend mainstream schools and universities, gain meaningful employment and participate fully in society.

Each year more than 500 families receive expert care and cutting-edge therapy through our six locations across NSW and the ACT and via our Interactive Online Services. Through the use of technology and our outreach program, we support many families in regional areas and across Tasmania. Families can choose to access our services either in person, online or a mix of both.

The breadth and quality of our service is ever expanding. Shepherd Centre research and other key findings in the field light the pathway towards unprecedented breakthroughs and unsurpassed excellence of care. With this clear direction, we provide more help than ever as we pioneer crucial new areas of support and refine existing approaches. We look forward to welcoming you to our program.

The Shepherd Centre is a Quality Innovation Performance (QIP) verified organisation in accordance with the NSW Disability Services Standards and is registered as a charity with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC).



Choosing the right provider for your family

Children with hearing loss need the right specialist support as early as possible. The following indicators from Early Childhood Intervention Australia are the recommended key best practices to look for when choosing the right service provider for your child.

Getting the right help at the outset can potentially reduce the amount of support your child needs later in life.

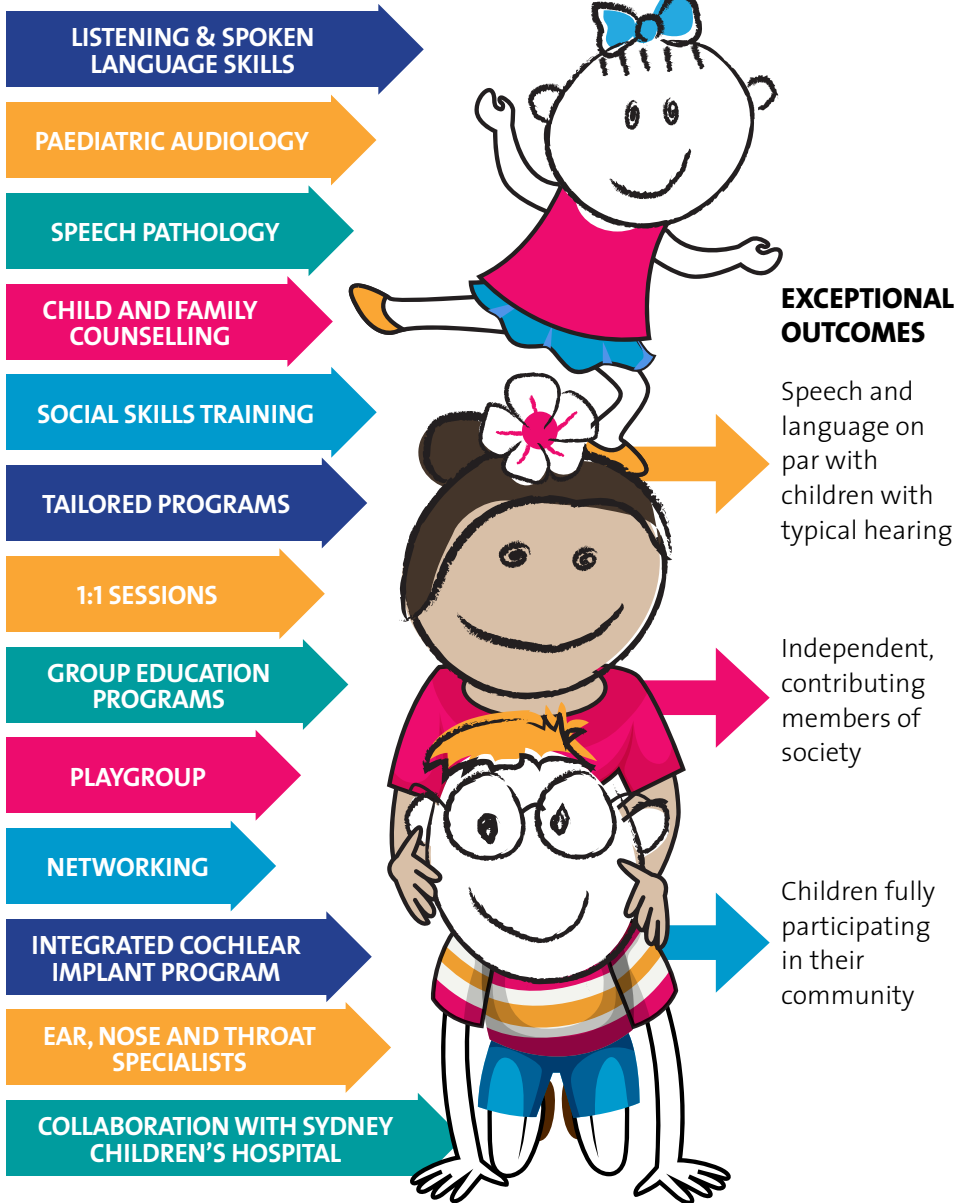
Ask if the organisation:

- is family centred
- is culturally sensitive
- is inclusive
- focuses on everyday life
- puts a team around your child
- focuses on outcomes
- is qualified and evidence based
- builds on everyone's knowledge and skills



Notes

Our approach





Newtown

Canberra

Liverpool

Macarthur

Macquarie

Wollongong



Visit www.shepherdcentre.org.au

Email enquiries@shepherdcentre.org.au **Phone** 1800 020 030