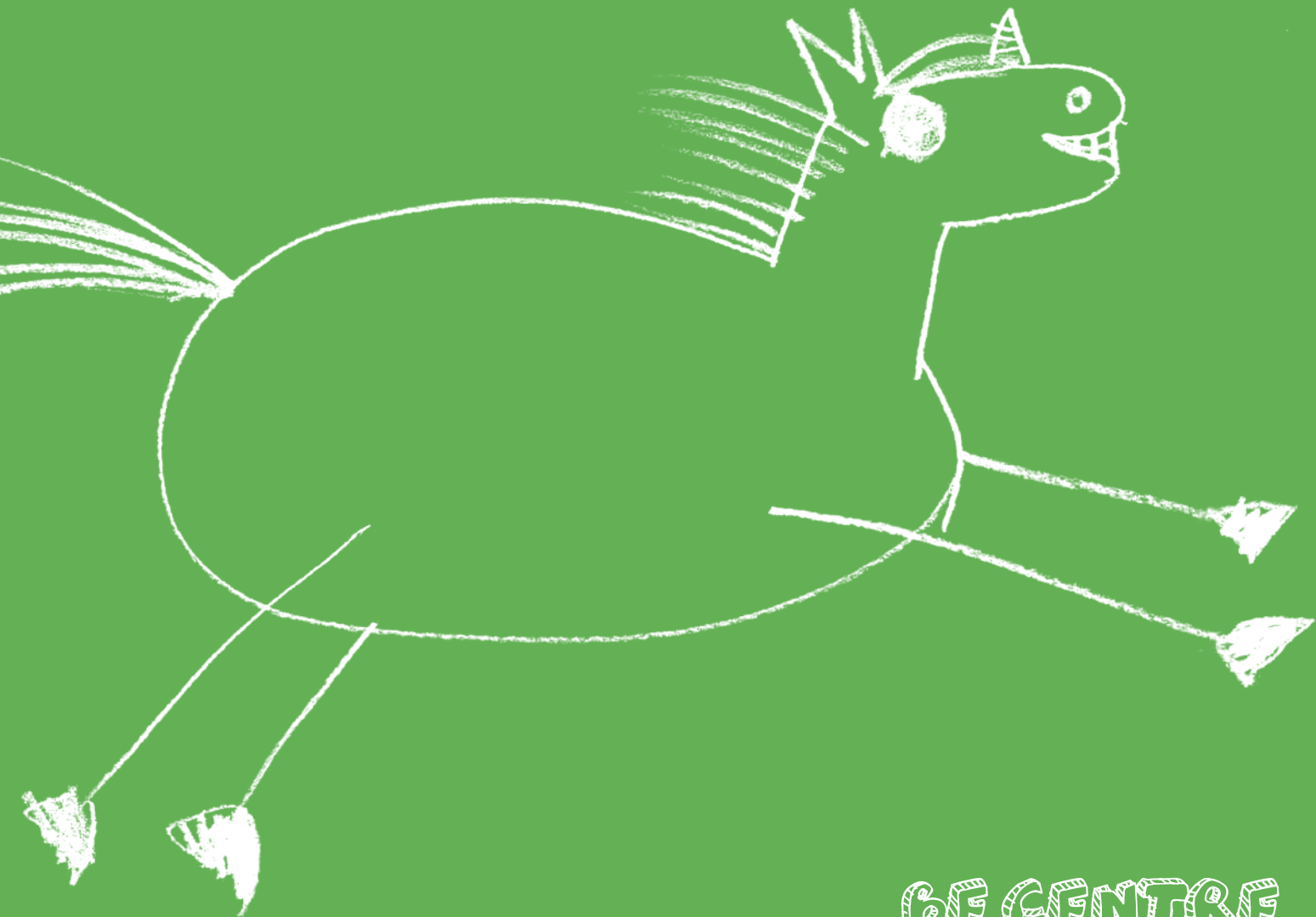


annual report

2015



6E CENTRE
healing through play therapy

“

I will be forever grateful that Be Centre provided a safe, secure and loving space for my child to grow and build his self confidence with adults and other children. It is the highlight of our sometimes very hard week.

Parent 2015

Be Centre is a leading children's mental health charity providing Play Therapy for kids aged 3–13 years. We are dedicated to early intervention, stopping cycles of harm and helping children heal from difficulties and trauma.

Play Therapy is effective for many childhood difficulties and has ongoing benefits. The vast majority of parents/carers report an improvement in their family life after therapy at Be Centre.

With one in seven children experiencing a mental health problem this year¹, there is a great need for Be Centre's services. Find out how you can get involved at www.becentre.org.au

¹ <http://www.youngandwellcrc.org.au/mentally-healthy-children-mentally-health-adults-supporting-our-future/>



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From the founder and chairman

Deborah Killelea



Be Centre's vision has always been clear – to use Play Therapy to help as many children as possible. Be Centre is still the only Australian charity focussed on providing one-to-one Play Therapy for children and we have some of Australia's most experienced Play Therapists.

This year's launch of the first Australian Master of Child Play Therapy course at Deakin University signals a heartening increase in the understanding and recognition of Play Therapy as an evidence-based, highly effective early intervention.

Be Centre receives no government funding and we are grateful for the support of our corporate partners CLSA, St George Foundation, Westpac Foundation and CBA. I would also like to thank the Sisters of Charity Foundation, Real Needs/Real Insurance, Profield Foundation, Slater and Gordon and Rodney and Judith O'Neil Foundation for their generosity.

Individual and corporate volunteers also ensure that Be Centre punches well above its weight in parent support, marketing and facilities. Thank you to all our volunteers for an amazing array of skills and enthusiasm.

I would also like to thank the Board and the Be Centre team for providing such professional, dedicated and caring support.

A recent study found that unresolved childhood trauma costs the Australian community \$9.1 billion annually.¹ Our generous supporters recognise the ongoing benefits of Play Therapy to each individual child, their family and the community. With your help we can continue to help children heal from trauma and be the best they can be.

¹ Kezelman, Cathy, Stavropoulos, Pam, Hossack, Nick, & Burley, Pip. (2015). The cost of unresolved childhood trauma and abuse in adults in Australia: A Report for Adults Surviving Child Abuse. Milsons Point, Sydney, Australia: Adults Surviving Child Abuse (ASCA) and Pegasus Economics.



From the executive director

Marisa Chilcott

Be Centre has undergone significant growth over the past 12 months and has achieved some major milestones.

With the generous support of CLSA and Profield Foundation, Be Centre's first hub at Manly was opened by Mrs Kerry Baird in May 2015.

Another highlight was the completion of Be Centre's mobile Play Therapy caravan, thanks to the Westpac Foundation and Dick Smith. The van will be used in our research partnership with Deakin University, Weave and The Glebe Tree House. The partnership is working on developing a culturally appropriate Play Therapy program for Aboriginal children. A vital part of the project was the employment of Lynda Williams, our first Aboriginal Community Connect worker, to work with Play Therapist Heather Coull. These positions have been made possible thanks to the Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation.

As a registered charity, we rely on the generous support of our donors, community and volunteers. With their ongoing assistance we have been able to realise some major achievements. However our growth does not match demand and for the first time we have a waiting list. While we are pleased to see the effectiveness of Play Therapy and Be Centre's programs being recognised, it breaks our hearts not to be able to offer immediate help to the many children who need it. With your help we will continue to work hard to meet the need.

Be Centre is a small but passionate team and I would like to thank everyone for ensuring more children than ever before have access to Play Therapy services.

I would also like to thank our Founder, Chairman and Board for their support during the year and for allowing me to be part of this exceptional organisation.





2014/15 at a glance

- 1571** Play Therapy sessions were conducted
- 180** children participated in school holiday workshops (open to the community)
- 155** hours of free counselling for parents were undertaken
- 154** children participated in Play Therapy programs
- 82%** of parents reported positive outcomes for their children and improvements in family life post-program
- 48%** of sessions were community funded scholarships for children in need
- 27%** more children assisted than previous year
 - 7** part time therapists (3.5 full-time equivalent)
 - 4** play rooms
 - 2** interns
 - 1** tween play room

Highlights

Manly Hub opened by Kerryn Baird in May 2015 thanks to CLSA

Successful intensive Play Therapy pilot program commenced with new partners Royal Far West (RFW)

Staff contributed to a Chapter on Play Therapy in the recently published PACFA book "Psychotherapy and Counselling. Reflections on Practice", published by Oxford Press

Art Therapy trialled with parents/carers and with transition to and from Play Therapy programs with children

Started our first research partnership with Deakin University, Weave and The Glebe Tree House to develop a culturally appropriate Play Therapy program for Aboriginal children

First Aboriginal Community Connect Worker appointed – Lynda Williams

Caravan purchased as mobile play room for Aboriginal pilot program thanks to Westpac Foundation and Dick Smith

Glamorous Hamptons Beach Party fundraising dinner held at Jones Bay Wharf in March 2015

New website developed

Meetings with Premier Mike Baird MP's office and NSW Government Ministers – Aboriginal Affairs, Early Childhood, Mental Health and Veteran's Affairs

Partnership in development with Veteran's Centre, Dee Why RSL to assist children of parents affected by Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

Macquarie University's Cool Kids program offered for children with anxiety and their parents/carers

Professional Sandplay training offered twice with facilitator Doreen Patenall



Goals for 2015/16

Raise \$250K to expand our premises to create a state-of-the-art facility to accommodate current and future growth and development.

Undertake fundraising to support 100 scholarship places at a cost of \$2000 each for a 12-week one-on-one Play Therapy program for disadvantaged children

Complete 2000 clinical sessions

Reduce the waiting list by establishing new clinical roles and procedures

Evaluate the Play Therapy pilot program for Aboriginal children we are working on with Deakin University, Weave and The Glebe Tree House

Continue the Intensive Play Therapy trial

Expand reach of mobile Play Therapy van

Create Development Advisory Community



Supporting children

Expanding our capacity

In many parts of the world, Play Therapy already plays a major role in assisting children with emotional, social, psychological and behavioral issues. As the understanding of Play Therapy and its effectiveness grows in Australia, demand is increasing and for the first time Be Centre has a waiting list. Not only have the number of families seeking support increased, the children presenting have more complex and higher levels of trauma, resulting in our average program expanding from 12 to 18 sessions.

To cope with this growth, Be Centre opened its first hub in Manly in the Royal Far West (RFW) building and employed additional Play Therapists. In 2016 we aim to raise \$250K to create a new state-of-the-art centre so we can meet the increasing need for our services.

Intensive Play Therapy pilot project

Our relationship with RFW led to a pilot project to evaluate the effectiveness of intensive Play Therapy. Instead of weekly sessions, daily sessions over a two week period were trialled with a child from rural NSW who was in Sydney receiving other health services as part of the RFW program. Although the trial is ongoing, the program looks promising as an option to assist more rural children in the future.

Scholarships

Be Centre offers community-funded scholarships to families in crisis who are unable to afford services, ensuring children receive the help they need.

Art Therapy

This year we trialled Art Therapy as part of a program to assist children transitioning in and out of Play Therapy. Art Therapy intern Justine Henderson also worked on a number of special projects including the intensive Play Therapy pilot project with RFW.

Holiday creative workshops

Our holiday programs are always popular, with many children participating in creative sessions including 'goop and splat' and 'spaghetti painting'. A team of experts including musician John Morrison and a ward-winning professional artist Karen Atkins ensured kids had fun, learned new skills, socialised and made new friends.

Supervision

To ensure we provide the best services to our clients, our Play Therapists receive ongoing clinical supervision from experienced therapist Doreen Patenall and Dr Jodi Mullen, an internationally renowned Play Therapist based in New York.

Ben's story

Ben* was referred by a local welfare agency after experiencing outbursts of anger along with grief and loss issues due to his parents' separation and their court case involving his custody.

Ben had experienced significant distress caused by witnessing a great deal of anger and aggression at home and being abducted by his father for several weeks. His parents had been to court many times, with the final outcome pending, and this uncertainty had been very unsettling.

Play Therapy was instrumental in helping Ben and his mother through a difficult time. Although Ben still experiences stress over his parent's ongoing court case, he has developed strategies to deal with his anger and anxiety. As a result, he is able to self-regulate more quickly and has become more calm.

"Ben is now able to handle changes and to express his needs and wants more clearly. His behaviour is better and this has really helped to improve our relationship overall."

– Ben's mother

Four siblings' story

"The family has been through a lot of trauma in recent years and the four children have been impacted. Be Centre has been an absolute blessing, giving them the opportunity to openly express their inner troubles in a safe, non judgemental environment, to people they can trust."

At school, some children are not comfortable pouring their heart out to teachers who they spend their whole day with. The weekly Play Therapy programs are integral to the wellbeing of these children."

Since attending Be Centre, the children's anxiety has decreased and they have been participating more in the day-to-day activities of school."

Play Therapy is providing the children with a tool kit of strategies to recognise their feelings and manage those tricky times. They are more able to relate to others socially and to manage their anger, frustration and stress levels."

In our view, Play Therapy is as vital as physiotherapy, speech therapy or occupational therapy."

– Assistant Principal

Amy's story

Amy* came to Be Centre with her mother after showing high levels of distress and fear. Amy's mother had recently moved interstate to Sydney with her three children, due to long-term and ongoing domestic violence perpetrated by Amy's drug-dependant father.

Amy was hypervigilant, anxious and struggling to settle into her new school and home. With ongoing therapy at Be Centre, Amy gradually built up a sense of trust and resilience and was able to begin to explore and process her feelings around her traumatic experiences.

As a single mother looking after three young children, and also struggling to cope with her own feelings and experiences, Amy's mother was grateful to be able to access Be Centre's support for her family and hopes that it will minimise the long term traumatic effects of what they have all been through.

"Amy is a much happier child because of Be Centre."

– Amy's mother

Thank you to CLSA for supporting Amy.

"My son was bullied at school but now he can speak up for himself. Play Therapy has made my son more confident."

"I have found Play Therapy to be the first thing in two years of searching to help our son understand and express his feelings. It's been fantastic for us."

"Play Therapy has made all the difference in my child's world and I am filled with gratitude that she has had the opportunity to access this service."



* Names and identifying details have been changed

Supporting parents and carers

We know that outcomes for children improve if parents also get help when they need it, so this year we implemented a range of support options for families.

Personal counselling

We were able to offer 155 hours of counselling for parents and carers thanks to the pro bono support of counsellor Michelle Mott.

'Tuning in' programs

Our popular 'Tuning in to Kids' and 'Tuning in to Teens' group sessions were run by Michelle Mott and facilitator Godelieve Hofman-Verkuyt. These programs aim to help parents and carers gain self awareness and improve relationships with their children. Michelle also adapted the six week 'Tuning in to Kids' program to create an intensive format for individuals and couples with limited time.

'Cool Kids' anxiety program

Our new 'Cool Kids' program, developed by Macquarie University and facilitated by Godelieve Hofman-Verkuyt, provided help to children with anxiety and their parents and carers.

Art therapy

Our first Art Therapy Intern, Justine Henderson, helped transition children into and out of Play Therapy, provided an option for children on the waiting list needing urgent help, assisted parents and carers to enhance bonding with their child and played a vital role in our pilot program with Royal Far West (RFW). A very special Art Therapy project was the creation of shared memories for a terminally ill mother and her child and transitioning the child to Play Therapy for future support.


Resource library

A library of reference books and therapeutic story books has been established at Be Centre so that parents and children can borrow books during the program to take home for additional support.

Helping rural families

Play Therapist Sophie Parkinson led a pilot program of intensive Play Therapy with a child receiving services from RFW. Art Therapy was used to support the parents. While still in progress, the results of the program look promising, meaning we potentially have more Play Therapy options to help country children.



A green dinosaur toy is positioned on the left side of the frame. In the foreground, two Lego figures stand on a sandy surface. The figure on the left has yellow hair and wears a black vest with a red and white graphic over a white shirt and red and black striped pants. The figure on the right has red hair and wears a blue long-sleeved shirt with a white sailboat graphic and red pants. In the background, a white toy car is visible.

“The course gave us confidence in stressful tantrum situations. This new confidence bred calmness/less anger which in turn reduced the stress and anger response from our child.”

“The Tuning in to Kids course, combined with Play Therapy, has resulted in our child no longer hitting us nor yelling negative comments. He now just says “whatever” and moves on.”

“The course helped us support our son to become far more resilient and willing not to give up when there are setbacks.”

Hours of fun at our Creative Arts Workshops including fairy gardens, messy art and LEGO®



Dee Why RSL have been a great supporter of Be Centre and our scholarship program. We were delighted when Mr Graeme Lidell, President, Ms Sheila Malone, Community Relations Manager and Mr Graham Heiser Director of Dee Why RSL visited Be Centre recently - pictured with Marisa (Executive Director)

Be Centre participated in the Blackmores Community Open Day. Our halloween craft activities were a big hit.



Sophie Parkinson, Play Therapist (centre) at our Manly rooms is paid a visit by Royal Far West staff



Ray White Narrabeen and Narraweena generously collected toys through their 'Little Ray Of Giving' Program to help brighten Christmas for Be Centre families



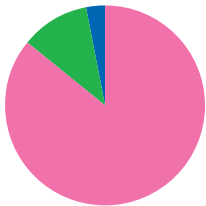
Finances

While Be Centre continues to grow, so does demand and for the past two years our resources have been stretched.

To address the increasingly complex needs of the children we see and ensure they get the help they need in a timely manner Be Centre needs to look for bigger premises and to increase our fundraising to finance the expansion. This is a major focus for the coming year.

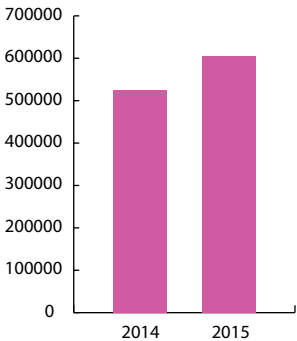
We are seeking support from individuals, organisations and corporations to assist us. If you are able to offer your help please contact Gailene Keen, Fundraising and Development Manager on 02 9986 0955 or gailene@becentre.org.au.

Income

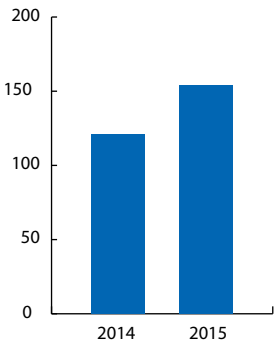


Fundraising	\$604,003.00
Clinical services	\$77,804.00
Other	\$21,459.00
TOTAL	\$703,266.00

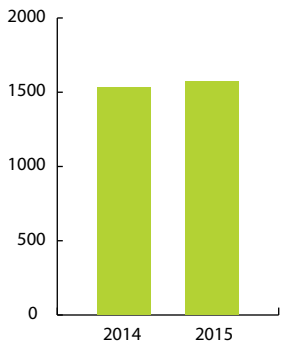
Fundraising income



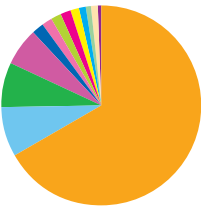
Clients



Sessions

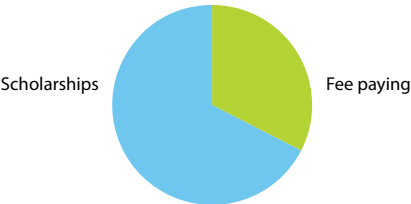


Expenses

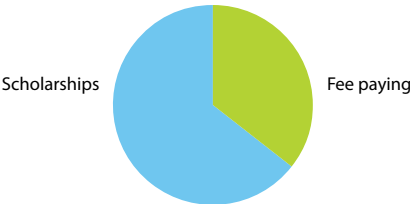


Salaries	\$468,853.00
Office costs	\$56,080.00
Events	\$51,415.00
Rent and outgoings	\$41,621.00
Cost of sales	\$14,207.00
Marketing/website	\$11,989.00
Consultants/supervision	\$11,345.00
Other	\$10,642.00
Depreciation	\$9,177.00
Training/conferences/travel	\$7,434.00
Insurance	\$7,282.00
Accounting/bank costs	\$6,823.00
Play Room costs	\$3,039.00
TOTAL	\$699,907.00

Sessions in 2014



Sessions in 2015





Thanks to the following Trusts and Foundations for sponsoring Play Therapy scholarships

St George Foundation	22 children
CLSA Chairman's Trust	20 children
Sargent's Pies	10 children
Anonymous	6 children
Sisters of Charity Foundation	6 children
The Rodney and Judith O'Neil Foundation	5 children
Real Need/Real Insurance	5 children
Profield Foundation	5 children
Dee Why RSL	4 children
Slater and Gordon	4 children
Pittwater RSL	3 children
Harbord Diggers	2 children
Manly Leagues Club	2 children

We couldn't do it without you

It has been a very busy year for the fundraising team at Be Centre. This year's fundraising was up 52 per cent from 2014. In 2015, more than \$308,000 was raised from grants, donations and events.

Major fundraising events included the Hampton Beach Party gala dinner at Jones Bay Wharf in May 2015, attended by more than 200 guests, and a fantastic Melbourne Cup celebration hosted by Mrs Kerry Baird.

CLSA Chairman's Trust also generously supported the development of our hub at Manly. This beautiful large room was brought to life by a team of volunteers to form our newest Play Therapy and training space. We were also generously supported by Un LTD through their mentoring program and other skilled volunteer support.

Be Centre is also grateful for the support of many local business and organisations, including:

Bunnings Narrabeen
Mona Vale Quality Butchers
Bakers Delight Allambie Heights
Grill'd Local Matter program
Ray White Narrabeena and Narrabeen
The staff at Integrated Research
The Rotary Club of Upper Northern Beaches
Lions Club of St Ives

Be Centre receives no government funding and relies on your support to continue to help kids in distress. We would like to thank everyone who helped Be Centre by donating, providing a gift or volunteering.

Thank you to our dedicated volunteers for their passion and commitment

Ben Richardson	Kitty Galore
Blackbaud staff	Kristina Paliokaite
CLSA Staff	Megan Hamilton
Cynthia Sinfield	Michelle Mott
Georgie Senescall	Paykel Media staff/UnLTD
Haley Blair	Phil Keen
Integrated Research staff	Robyn McDonald
Joanne Roche	Simon Harloff
Joy Cusack	Stewart Tanswell
Karen Atkins	Vikki Tanswell

Sharing a child's journey of healing

Fiona Howell, Play Therapist, Clinical team leader

Play Therapists come from various backgrounds including counselling, nursing, teaching, psychology, social work, early childhood, welfare, mental health and occupational therapy. We all share a love of working with children, a deep empathy for them and an ability to connect. We believe that if a child is accepted just as they are, without judgement, and is given space and time with an experienced, trained Play Therapist, they have an innate ability to heal.

With a background in mental health nursing, I have witnessed the far reaching consequences of children not getting the help they need. Past clients have told me that if Play Therapy had been available when they were children they would not have ended up with the difficulties they faced in adulthood. These stories are part of why I feel so passionate about Play Therapy and about assisting as many children as possible to heal emotional wounds so these do not impact their futures.

Play Therapy is appropriate for many childhood difficulties and the Play Therapy relationship is unique. Children are not miniature adults and so they need a therapy that utilises their natural language of play. Developmentally, children are simply not able to process and conceptualise issues the way adults can.

The joy of being a Play Therapist is being part of a child's journey of self discovery and healing. By playing out traumas, worries, confusion and grief, children heal from the inside out. I am privileged to witness children solving difficulties, beginning to move forward in life and growing in confidence and resilience in the process.

Play Therapy facilitates deep healing. I have seen children whose anxiety was so great they could not speak, become able to communicate and enjoy new experiences. I have seen children who have experienced abuse, develop a stronger sense of self and stronger boundaries to protect themselves in future relationships. I have seen children who were full of anger and confusion, become calmer and more able to express themselves. Every child is unique. Play Therapy honours that uniqueness and allows it to flourish.

Play Therapy is distinct in its ability to reach a child and help them through their deepest challenges. Be Centre's therapists provide a safe space for children to make sense of their difficult experiences at their own pace. At Be Centre we are able to continue the journey with children who require longer term therapy, particularly those who have experienced ongoing trauma. Through the generous support of sponsors, children who would not otherwise have been able to access such support are able to do so. Be Centre is unique in its dedication to continue to work with a child until they have completed the healing they need to.

My hope for the future of Play Therapy at Be Centre is that we will continue to grow in a purpose-built centre to meet the increasing need for our services so that children and families can access help in a timely manner.

My hope for the future of Play Therapy in Australia is that it will be considered a first line treatment for young children who are experiencing emotional, behavioural and psychological difficulties and that any child who needs such treatment can access it.

“The joy of being a Play Therapist is being part of
a child’s journey of self discovery and healing.”





Compared with non-Aboriginal children,
Aboriginal children are:

24 times more likely to be incarcerated,
at a cost of \$440K per year, per child

twice as likely to report feeling high or
very high levels of psychological distress

significantly more likely to self-harm,
and

one in four parents/carers of Aboriginal
children rate their child as having
clinically significant emotional or
behavioural difficulties.



Developing a culturally appropriate Play Therapy program for Aboriginal children

Aboriginal children and their families have been identified as one of the most disadvantaged sectors of our community. While there is a substantial body of evidence demonstrating the effectiveness of Play Therapy for children experiencing trauma, there is a lack of research on adapting Play Therapy to working with Aboriginal children.

At the suggestion of Play Therapist Heather Coull, who has a background as a case worker with Aboriginal young people and could see the potential of Play Therapy in this area, Be Centre began a process of investigating the development of a culturally appropriate Play Therapy program to help Aboriginal children.

An important part of taking any type of service to Aboriginal communities is putting in the time and effort needed to gain their trust and acceptance and to understand their needs and wants. We began a process of extensive consultation with the Aboriginal communities in Sydney's Redfern and Glebe and worked with them on various projects as a way of us getting to know each other. The process led to relationships developing with local community members and Elders including Aunty Kath Dodd Farrawell and Aunty Wendy Buchanan and to partnerships with Deakin University, Weave and The Glebe Tree House.

Through community consultation we identified that a mobile service would be an effective way of helping

children in the community. Thanks to funding from Westpac Foundation and Dick Smith, Be Centre's first mobile Play Room was purchased and with advice from Aboriginal community members we have decorated and resourced it appropriately. It was named *Ngurra* (Little Blue Nest), by the community. The Vincent Fairfax Family Foundation provided salaries for Play Therapist Heather Coull and our first Aboriginal Community Connect Worker, Lynda Williams. Play Therapy has commenced with children identified by the school and/or community centre as needing support.

Working with Deakin University, we are undertaking a formal research project on our Play Therapy pilot program in the Glebe community. The results will form part of the university's Master of Child Play Therapy course and be presented at the 2017 Play Therapy conference in Darwin. We hope that the findings will be useful for all Play Therapists who work with Aboriginal Children.

Aboriginal communities are incredibly complex, with high levels of trauma. Some kids are so traumatised that even playing is going to be an issue for them initially. Be Centre was established to support children when they need it most and if we can continue to offer support to this community then we have an opportunity to make a positive contribution.

We hope to develop an ongoing program and are working on gaining the funding needed to achieve this.

Our team – circles of support



“Be Centre is changing lives with its intensive and nurturing approach to helping children suffering from emotional trauma. Its burgeoning reputation in the social services community highlights the vast need for highly specialised services in this critical area. You can help to meet this demand – we deeply appreciate your donation.”

– Simon Reeve, Be Centre ambassador

“As a pioneer of Play Therapy in Australia, Be Centre provides a vital service to traumatised children and their families. Dee Why RSL Club is very proud to support and encourage such an effective healing approach.”

– Sheila Malone, Community Relations Manager, Dee Why RSL Club

Get involved

Every day the most vulnerable children and their families depend on Be Centre’s services.
Please help make sure that we are there when they need us most.

Find a way to support us that suits you, from attending a fundraising event,
making a donation or getting your company involved.

Your support will make a real difference in the lives of the children we work with.

Join our mailing list or make a donation at www.becentre.org.au

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info@becentre.org.au

Be Centre is a registered charity CFN 12268
ABN 58 128 050 037

www.becentre.org.au