

PARENT INFORMATION SHEET

What are the age ranges of the patients that you can see?

I treat children aged 3 years and up. However, if your child is under the age of 7 I will work directly with you in parent only sessions to teach you skills and strategies that you can use with your child to help him or her manage thoughts, feelings and behaviours. This is because very young children are most likely to respond to strategies taught by parents rather than from a psychologist directly.

What conditions can you treat?

I see children with a variety of anxiety disorders, depressive disorders, emotion regulation and anger issues. I do not currently treat children with eating disorders such as anorexia nervosa or bulimia nervosa or emerging bipolar or psychotic disorders.

Will my child be prescribed drugs?

Psychologists provide expertise in the assessment and treatment of psychological difficulties using talk therapy. Psychologists do not prescribe psychiatric medications. If your child is showing symptoms of a serious nature, I will discuss with you the potential advantages of obtaining a psychiatric opinion in addition to attending sessions.

What can I expect in the first session?

The first session will last for approximately 50 minutes. I often ask to speak with you and your child separately, depending on the age of the child, the concerns you may have, and your preferences. I will ask you questions about your child's history and current situation (family, school, social, health and developmental), main concerns, and treatment goals. I will ask your child similar questions tailored to be age-appropriate.

How long does each meeting last?

All treatment sessions last for 50 minutes.

How many sessions will it take and how often will my child need to come?

The number of treatment sessions needed and frequency of sessions will vary. All decisions about these details will be made in collaboration with you and your child.

Can I sit in on my child's sessions?

Treatments sessions could involve a child alone, parents and children together, or parents alone. Your level of involvement will depend on your child's presentation, age, and their preferences. At the end of the assessment, we will sit down together to make a plan about your involvement.

Will you tell me what my child says in session?

It is of the utmost importance that your child feels he or she can tell me things in confidence. At the outset, I will let your child know that I won't tell you everything he/she tells me during our meeting unless there is a risk and safety issue. I view parents as playing a very important role in helping children recover from their issues. Unless there is an extenuating circumstance or extremely sensitive issue, I encourage the sharing of issues of children to parents (and vice versa). In saying that, children will not be required to share issues with parents if they are reluctant (unless there is a risk and safety issue).

What if my child doesn't want to attend?

It is common for children to be hesitant to attend the first meeting. Sometimes your child may change his or her mind after coming to see me and we get to know each other. If your child is reluctant, I can attempt to tailor the therapy to suit your child's preferences and there are a number of different things we can try to improve engagement. If these approaches fail, forcing a child to come to therapy can be counterproductive in my experience. In these cases, I can work with you to empower you with skills and strategies to support your child if difficulties arise.

What costs are involved?

Fees for psychologists tend to vary according to the qualification level of the psychologist and session length. I am an endorsed clinical psychologist. This means that I have completed extensive postgraduate training followed by a period of supervised practice and this endorsement is recognised by the Psychology Board of Australia and Medicare. Please see the website (<https://annamckinnon.com.au/home/referrals/>) for a summary of my fees and charges.

How do I arrange a Medicare plan?

Medicare provides rebates to assist with the costs of accessing psychological treatment if you have a Mental Health Treatment Plan. A plan can be prepared by a GP. Children may receive a rebate toward treatment costs for a maximum of 10 sessions in a calendar year. After the sixth session, you must return to your referrer for a review and referral for the 4 remaining sessions. The referral should be in the child's name and made out to Dr Anna McKinnon. Please note, your child must be present at the session to claim the rebate (i.e. no rebate is available for parent/caregiver only sessions when the plan/referral is for a child).

Can I claim sessions using a Private Health Care Plan?

You may be able to claim a rebate for psychology services using your private health fund. However, you cannot claim a rebate from both Medicare and a private health fund for the same session. Contact your health fund about whether you are eligible.

What is the clinic cancellation policy?

If you need to cancel or reschedule an appointment, you must advise the clinic no later than 11 am on the previous business day.

Thank you very much for reading this information sheet.