

**vision
australia**

blindness and low vision services

Video Conferencing: Together Towards Tomorrow

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Video Conferencing

- Highly applicable method
- Disadvantaged when accessing health services (Hoffman & Cantoni, 2008)
- Health access issues: distance to travel, lack of transport, recruit and retain (Bourke, 2001; FitzGerald, Pearson & McCutcheon, 2001; Mills & Millsted, 2002)



Video Conferencing

- Telehealth improves access to health care (Demiris, Shigaki & Schopp, 2005)
- Provide service across large areas where clients are geographically remote e.g. QLD (Boshoff, 2003).



VidKids™

Project Overview



- National initiative
- VA is one of 8 organisations from VidKids™ Alliance
- Services to children with vision and/or hearing impairments
- Access to a variety of health professionals

Overview

- Services are free and funded by Department of Social Services.
- Over \$4 million committed
- Eligibility = 0-18 years significant vision and/or hearing loss
- Live in remote and outer regional Australia
- Up to 2 face-to-face sessions per year

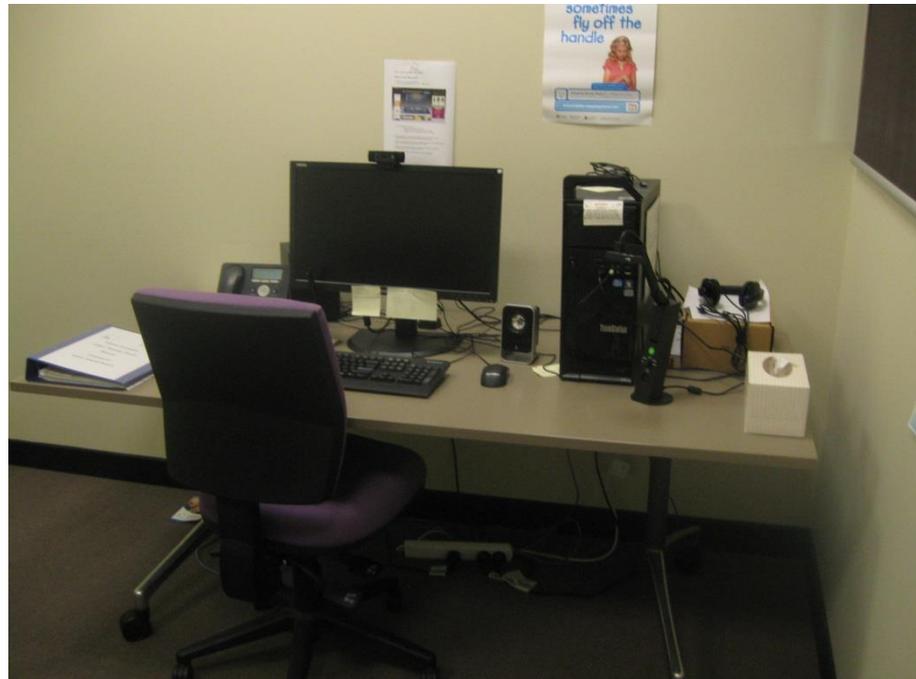
Overview

- Guidelines for:
 - Environment set up
 - Session planning
 - Structure and process
 - Logistics
 - Etiquette
 - Privacy and confidentiality



VA involvement

- 27 service providers
- 11 offices across NSW, QLD and VIC
- Clients: Darwin –Tasmania



Figures

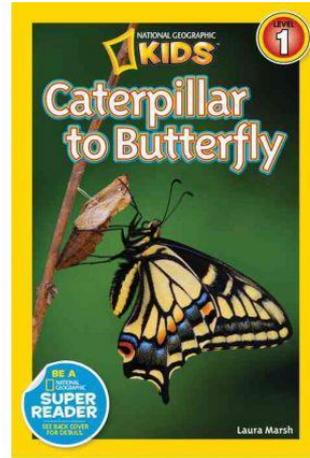
- 45 clients
- 12 withdrawals
- 1523 hours
- 100 goals achieved
 - learning to throw/catch ball
 - tying shoelaces
 - develop age-appropriate reading skills



Client resources



blindness and low vision services



Client resources



Benefits of video conferencing

- Increased services from variety of health professionals
- Regular service = goals met
- All you need is a computer
- Sessions from home



What families are telling us

- “We are getting physio sessions and speech sessions and it’s been very, very helpful”
- “It’s in the children’s own environment, in their house, so when they’re out in public they act differently than at home, so the therapist gets to see how the children are acting at home and change the lesson to suit the children”

What families are telling us

- “I’ve seen her achieve lots; she’s gone from not being able to talk very much, or express herself to being able to have conversations with people ...to being able to catch a ball... yeah just lots and lots of goals achieved”

Where to from here?

- Project ends on 30th June, 2015
- Smooth transition for all VidKids clients
- Explore options for providing VC to other clients

Where to from here?

- What works via video / what needs face-to-face
- Taught us to adapt service delivery
- Children with vision impairment can develop independence regardless of where they live

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