

Tools for Toddlers

The role of Occupational Therapy in promoting independence and functional skill development for toddlers

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST SOUGHT
ONLINE (over 3 sessions)
Term 4, 2026

From infancy to preschool age, toddlers undergo remarkable transformations physically, cognitively, emotionally, and socially. Early childhood, including the toddler years, is where the foundations of key life occupations are developed. Fundamental skill development in this period includes the transition from full dependence to emerging independence, the development of attention and executive function, refinement of motor skills, emergence of resilience and regulation, as well as the expansion of relationships, play and social skills.

Early identification and intervention for developmental delays or challenges can significantly enhance outcomes and mitigate potential long-term effects. The role of occupational therapy in supporting toddler development encompasses a holistic approach that considers the intricate interplay between a child's developing self, their occupations and their environment; including their relationships with significant others. This workshop is designed to provide occupational therapists with an understanding of toddler development, evidence-based interventions and practical strategies tailored specifically to this developmental stage.

It is recognised that development in early childhood is influenced by a myriad of factors, including familial dynamics, cultural practices, and socioeconomic circumstances. By working in collaboration and empowering families, caregivers, and early years educators, occupational therapists can not only support toddlers to overcome developmental challenges and reach their full potential, but thrive.

Please note: This workshop is targeted at understanding development and early intervention approaches for young children with mild to moderate developmental challenges and those with emerging support needs.

Workshop Content/ Objectives

The workshop aims to provide participants with:

- An understanding of key developmental milestones and their relationship to the occupational roles of toddlers
- An overview of occupational therapy roles that support toddlers with mild to moderate developmental challenges, and their caregivers
- Understanding of best practice of early intervention principles and intervention approaches for this stage of development

This workshop aims to be practical in nature, include video and case studies to assist participants integrate their knowledge and skills.

Workshop Delivery

The workshop will be delivered over 3 weeks via an integrated system of pre-reading material, weekly pre-recorded lecture presentations and the scheduled online tutorial sessions. Participants will need to allocate **1.5 - 2 hours per week for self-study** outside the online group sessions.

- **Workshop Manuals** participants will be mailed a hard copy of the workshop manual which will include:
 - presentation notes, covering the online presentation content as well as the case studies used in the group tutorial sessions
 - resources to assist with implementing workshop content into clinical practice
- **Online content** one week prior to the workshop, participants will be emailed a link to the pre-recorded online presentation related to the upcoming tutorial session. Presentation content will be approx. 1 - 1½ hours in length – participants are expected to have viewed this content prior to participation in the scheduled group tutorial session (NB. the link to this content will expire on commencement of the accompanying tutorial session).
- **On line group tutorial sessions** – using Zoom videoconferencing, participants will have the opportunity to link into four consecutive interactive tutorials (group discussions, case studies and Q&A sessions) to integrate their newly acquired knowledge and skills. Participants will be emailed the link (including password) to their scheduled sessions. Participants will need to have access to internet facilities including Zoom and webcam to ensure that they are able to download and view workshop content, as well as actively participate in the on line group tutorials and agree to the [online T&C](#). To fully participate in the interactive components of the group tutorial sessions, participants are encouraged to log on using a tablet, laptop or desk top computer. While utilising a mobile phone to access these sessions, the functionality of the device may limit participants ability to fully engage in the interactive components of the session.

Workshop Recording

Please note to safeguard the copyright of material presented, maintain the confidentiality of case discussions and the privacy of participants, **this workshop WILL NOT be recorded**.

This workshop is suitable for occupational therapists.

About the Presenter

Dr Charmaine Bernie PhD, BOccThy (Hons)



Charmaine is an Occupational Therapist, lecturer and researcher with over 20 years' experience across community and hospital settings in Australia, and overseas. She currently serves as an Assistant Professor, Occupational Therapy at Bond University.

Dr Bernie's work focuses on the early identification and support of children with developmental concerns, delay or disability, particularly Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Developmental Coordination Disorder (DCD). Her research focuses on supporting children and families to identify and act on their support needs as early and as accurately as possible, across home, education and community settings. Charmaine's training interests include a focus on toddlers, as well as evidence-based supports including Occupational Performance Coaching (OPC) and Cognitive Orientation to daily Occupational Performance (CO-OP), for which she is a certified trainer.

Expressions of Interest for this workshop are now being sought for running this online workshop in Term 4, 2026. Register your interest via email to Zi Mei Events at info@zimei.com.au.