

With a little help, Connor's now speaking easy



Connor and mum Andrea.

Connor Hanley is a little boy with plenty to say. But only a few months ago, the two-year-old Hawker tot couldn't talk at all.

A severe ear infection in 2007 had contributed to a delay in his language development.

"I was worried about him because our first child Gracie, when she was his age, was talking a lot," Connor's mum Andrea Hanley said.

Concerned with Connor's lack of verbal communication, Andrea enrolled in Therapy ACT's 'Is Your Toddler Talking?' parent workshop program.

The workshops provide parents with some of the strategies speech pathologists use to

stimulate language development in young children.

"It's a fantastic program that has helped Connor to start talking—he can now say about 40 words and has begun to put words together," Andrea said.

"He can now say all of our names, knows words like cat and can even name the features on his face."

Janelle Atkins, senior speech pathologist with Therapy ACT, said early intervention for children with delays in their speech and language development was vital.

"Early intervention provides children with the opportunity to develop their communication skills and provides many short- and long-term benefits for both children and their families," Janelle said.

"By two years of age, a child should be able to say 50 or more words, say some two-word phrases, and understand simple directions.

"If parents have any concerns in this area, we encourage them to bring their children to one of our Speech Pathology Drop In Clinics."

Janelle said the clinics provide families with the opportunity to discuss their child's language development directly with a qualified a speech pathologist.

"From here, children can then be referred for the parent workshops and to further Therapy ACT speech pathology services," she said.

To find out more about speech pathology services offered by Therapy ACT, phone 6205 1246 or visit the website at www.dhcs.act.gov.au/therapyact