**WeCAN (Waitakere Children's Action Network)  
Wednesday 8th November 2017, 10:00am – 11:30am  
Held at MPHS Hub West, 27 Corban Ave, Henderson, Auckland**

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| **Present:** | Tiaria Fletcher (WAVES), Amiria Fletcher (WAVES), Annee Lambert-Vickers (WAVES), Sally Kedge (Talking Trouble Aotearoa NZ), Jenny Fleming (Talking Matters), Janeth Dela Roma (The Fono, Waitemata Family Start), Rob Francis (Odyssey), Alistair Houston (Family Works), Kalesita Fonokalafi (Te Whanau o Waipareira), Rachel Knappstein (ATWC – Family Start), Rachel Wallis (Te Whanau o Waipareira), Kathy Greenstreet (Plunket), Dominique Young (WAVES), Sharyn Chow (Barnardos), Siulagi Tuigamala (ATWC, Family Start), Allison Sutton (Talking Matters, Comet Auckland), Phoebe MacClure (Talking Matters, Massey University) |

1. **Welcome and Introduction**

Amiria opened the meeting at 10.05am with a welcome and a Karakia.

Amiria outlined the Agenda for the meeting and introduced the two guest presenters.

Sally Kedge – **Talking Trouble Aotearoa NZ**

Alison Sutton – **Talking Matters Comet Auckland**

It was noted that this was the final meeting for 2017

1. **Whakawhanaungatanga**

Amiria asked each person to introduce themselves, their organisation and role.

**Presentation 1 -** **Talking Matters**:

Alison Sutton outlined that Talking Matters is from Comet Auckland Educational Trust to the Council.

The programme is to put emphasis on and teach the importance of “talk” for babies and young children. This programme has currently been running for one year this month.

Examples were shown explaining the strength of literacy and how powerful talking to the young can be in creating confidence, understanding, clarity, better relationships and less violence along with many other positive outcomes.

Alison emphasised how parents are the first teachers and it is never too early to read, sing and talk to baby.

All languages are fine and families should use whatever language they are most familiar and comfortable with.

Many messages and instructions are not clearly understood by the community and Alison asked providers to be aware of this and look for any indicators that this may be the case and try to find ways to improve sharing information.

Encouragement to talk, read, sing, play and draw as well as modelling these behaviours is important. Research has shown there can be a gap of up to 3000 words between children when starting school. This can result in children struggling to express themselves, not wanting to express an opinion, having fewer concepts and ideas.

First three years are critical and babies are wired to learn.

Some key points from Alison:

* At home have back and forth conversation, additional chat in everyday situations
* First three years of child’s life critical for learning
* Quality and quantity of talk, conversational turns
* Never too early or too late to talk more
* Babies are wired to learn
* Encourage reading, scribbling, drawing and writing
* Adults should model above
* “Gift” new words and stretch child’s understanding
* Encourage services to focus on talk
* Lots of books available in houses
* Babies can only learn what an older person explains to them

For further information go to Talking Matters website:

Facebook: TalkingMattersNZ

<http://www.TalkingMattersNZ>

Practitioner Hui scheduled for 2018 – more information to come

1. **Talking Trouble Aotearoa NZ**

Sally Kedge introduced Talking Trouble Aotearoa NZ.

The Talking Trouble team through speech language therapy work alongside vulnerable children and young people faced with speech, language and communication issues. Many cannot sort out the words they want to say and this lack of ability to communicate often results in displays of anger, frustration, resentment, no confidence, on-going issues with relationships and employment as well as displays of behaviour such as swearing.

Talking Trouble is a team of speech therapists highly trained to work with many children and youth and are involved with care and protection, youth justice, mental health and behaviour services as well as delivering court appointed communication assistance.

Sally explained with the use of various slides how in cases where oral language is compromised participation across all life is affected. She stressed the importance of oral language competence, the link to emotions and intentions, in particular empathy to others.

Some key points from Sally:

* Look at how you adapt your communication to every situation so that you will be understood
* Bad behaviour can mask communication problems
* Fear of being shamed if communication problem is not masked
* Adults need to know how to pick up on these difficulties and modify their language
* Choose words carefully e.g. change opposed to don’t want

For further information go to Talking Trouble’s website:

<http://www.talkingtroublenz.org>

Workshops:

24 November 2017:

Francis Fennell Education Centre, Manuwera

7 December 2017:

West Lynn Garden and Function Centre, New Lynn

\*PDFs of slides for both presentations are available and will be held on file\*

**Meeting Closed at 11:40am**

**Next Scheduled meeting – 2018 dates to be confirmed**