



**N.T. SPASTICS
ASSOCIATION (INC.)**

Forget-Me-Not



THE HARRY GIESE CENTRE

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What is the Harry Giese Centre?

The Harry Giese Centre is a place where disabled or developmentally delayed children, up to six years of age, can be assessed and receive therapy.

History:

The Harry Giese Centre was originally established to cater for the needs of people with cerebral palsy. Over the years it has evolved into an early intervention unit for all children up to six years of age who have problems with their development.

Diagnostic and Assessment Team:

The Centre uses a team approach. The team consists of a Paediatrician, a Child Development Therapist (Psychologist), a Speech Pathologist, a Physiotherapist, an Occupational Therapist and an Early Intervention Education Officer (from the Department of Education).

Assessment of new children takes place over a week and involves the child seeing each of the above-mentioned disciplines. On the Friday of the assessment week, the team meets to discuss their findings and from this recommendations are made. Immediately after, the paediatrician meets with the parents or caregivers and through discussion with them, a management plan is agreed upon.

SERVICES

Early Intervention Programmes:

Following assessment the child may enter the early intervention programme. This consists of small groups tailored to individual children's needs. They range from the infant stimulation programme for babies to additional special education programmes for children who may already be attending a school in the community. The groups have input from all team members and special education teachers.

Respite Care:

This is available for families of Harry Giese Centre children and other children with a disability up to the age of 18.

Kath Friend House is very similar to creche facilities and operates between 8.00 a.m. and 5.00 p.m.

Albert Albany House provides a 24 hour service and will take children up to the age of 18 according to the needs of the family.

The Social Worker at the centre co-ordinates the respite care service and may also suggest other alternatives in the community if it suits the child better.



SERVICES

Rural Programme:

Children in remote areas come to the Harry Giese Centre in co-ordination with Airmed. If accompanied by their families, they can be accommodated at the Barry Marcus Cottage. Some remote communities are visited by Harry Giese Centre staff, and Katherine has a Harry Giese Centre Clinic consisting of the entire team visiting up to four times a year.

Support Services:

— Outpatient attendance. Some children may only need one specialised service as an individual and will receive this by coming in regularly or being visited in their homes.

— Transport. This may be provided for children whose parents are unable to transport their children to and from the centre.

— Parent Programmes. These arise whenever possible to meet specific needs. e.g. S.T.E.P. parenting courses in the evenings, (fathers' groups, coffee mornings).

— Volunteers. Contact is made by members of the general public to the social worker. Volunteers can often help with sewing, clerical work, child care and other tasks.

