

## Building parents' understanding of play to nurture infant and toddler mental health



**Dr Rickie Elliot**

**Clinical  
Psychologist, NSW**

Dr Rickie Elliott is a Clinical Psychologist and Director of The Hummingbird Centre, a multi-disciplinary psychology and health practice with three locations in Newcastle NSW. Rickie has over 18 years of training and experience in assessing and treating a wide variety of adult, child and adolescent mental health conditions, with a particular passion of working in the field of perinatal and infant mental health.

Rickie has previously worked at Newcastle's Adult Mental Health Service; Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation Centres; Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services; Coral Tree Family Service (a state-wide, tertiary, inpatient family therapy service for children and their families with severe behavioural and emotional disorders); Perinatal Psychiatry Service; Parent and Infant Mental Health Service; First Steps Parenting Service; and private practice.

Rickie completed her clinical doctorate in the area of perinatal and infant mental health, specifically focusing on the relationship of new mothers diagnosed with borderline personality disorder. This was published in the World Association of Infant Mental Health Journal.

Rickie was also recently awarded the Regional Leadership Alumni award by The University of Newcastle.



**Lauren Haskins**

**Speech Pathologist,  
NSW**

Lauren graduated with a Bachelor of Speech Pathology in 2005 and prior to opening her own business, worked in several government and not for profit organisations. Lauren established A Growing Understanding speech pathology private practice in June 2016. Lauren is passionate about the need for timely, flexible, family-focused services and is dedicated to providing high-quality, evidence-based speech pathology care.

As a passionate and active advocate for the speech pathology industry, Lauren is regularly profiled in the media and recognised as an industry leader. She is often invited to be a speaker at various industry events. Lauren is also an instructor for The Hanen Centre's It Takes Two to Talk program involved in training and certifying speech pathologists as well as providing this program to parents of young children with language difficulties.

Lauren has been a judge of the Speech Pathology Book of the Year competition in the 0-3 years category since 2014. She has regularly been invited to provide education sessions to various community groups and early childhood centres.

Lauren currently lives in Newcastle with her husband and their two children.

## Building parents' understanding of play to nurture infant and toddler mental health



### Laura

#### Child and family partner, NSW

Laura is 28 years old and is a mother to Abigail, her four-month-

old baby girl. Laura is working towards completing her Bachelor of Early Childhood and currently holds her Diploma in Children's Services. Laura has worked on the floor, working with children in the Early Childhood sector for around ten years as both an Educational Leader and a Director of Centres.

Laura has a strong passion for the importance of the outdoor environment for children and engaging in nature-based play. Being a new parent gives Laura current and authentic experience of children's play, health and social and emotional wellbeing issues. Laura is also able to draw on her own experience of being an educator in early childhood settings to provide a view from both the parent and educators role.



### Facilitator: Vicki Mansfield

#### Practice Development Officer, NSW

Vicki Mansfield, a Practice Development Officer with Emerging Minds, has over 30 years' experience working with children and families. An accredited Mental Health Social Worker, Vicki has worked in a broad range of clinical roles in homelessness services, child and adolescent mental health, family and domestic violence services, child protection, acute hospital settings and private practice. She particularly enjoys the playfulness and creativity that comes with working with children and is committed to holding a safe space for the child's voice and individual uniqueness to shine.

For the last 10 years Vicki's primary area of focus has been perinatal and infant mental health, by providing clinical services, consultation, and reflective supervision across Australia. Vicki has a strong commitment to developing relationship focussed practice knowledge and skills, with the aim to promote infant mental health. She places great value in supporting parents in the perinatal period and feels this is a time of great transformation which offers many opportunities to make change as parent and child get to know each other. Vicki also works as sessional academic with The University of Newcastle in their Social Work Faculty specifically areas of mental health, child protection, grief and loss. She particularly relishes in integrating theory into practice.