

Go! neurodiversity affirming speech pathology

The Elizabeth Clinic
CARING FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

Autism Assessment Guide For Families

Information for parents and caregivers about the assessment process, what to expect, and how we'll work together.





Meet Jen

Jen is a Clinical Psychologist with over 20 years' experience working alongside children, teens and families across a wide range of clinical settings. She has extensive training and ongoing professional development in neuroaffirming autism assessment, is AHPRA registered and a member of the WA Autism Diagnosticians' Forum (WAADF).

Jen loves helping young people and their adults learn more about their amazing minds and what can help them thrive. As a late-identified autistic and ADHD woman and mum to two neurodivergent boys, Jen brings together clinical expertise and lived experience to offer families an assessment process where children and parents feel understood, respected and supported.

Contact Jennifer: enquiries@elizabethclinic.com.au

Meet Nat

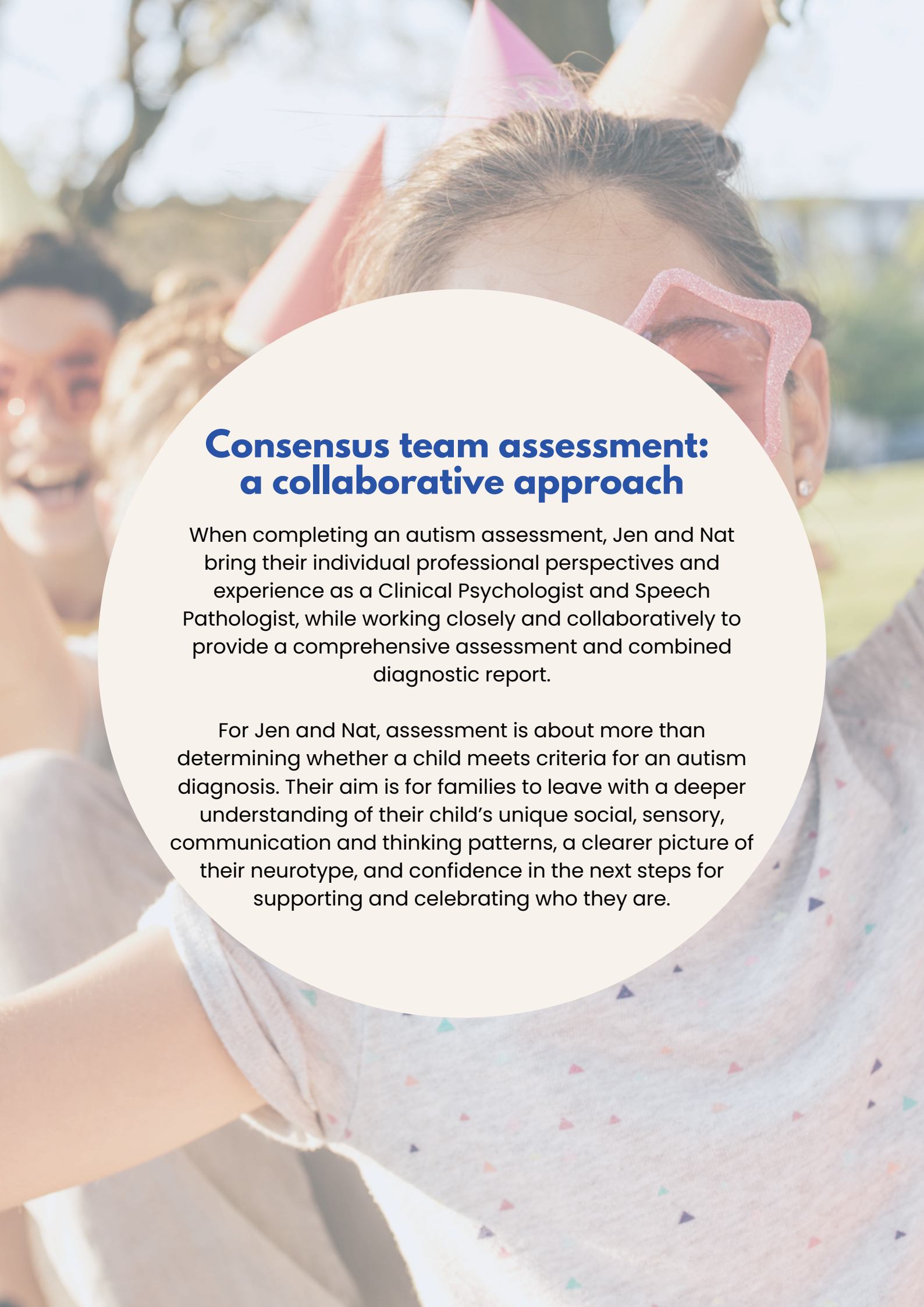


Nat has over 20 years' experience supporting Autistic children and young people across education and speech pathology settings. She is a Certified Practising Speech Pathologist and member of Speech Pathology Australia and the WA Autism Diagnosticians' Forum (WAADF), with additional training and experience in neurodiversity-affirming autism assessment, including training in the administration of the MIGDAS-2.

Nat is passionate about living authentically and empowering the young people she works with to communicate and connect with others in ways that are meaningful and joyful to them. Nat is Autistic & ADHD (AuDHD) and mum to two AuDHD daughters, giving her both professional and lived experience of the wonderfully messy reality of neurodivergent family life.

Contact Nat: natalie.willacy@gospeechppathology.com.au





Consensus team assessment: a collaborative approach

When completing an autism assessment, Jen and Nat bring their individual professional perspectives and experience as a Clinical Psychologist and Speech Pathologist, while working closely and collaboratively to provide a comprehensive assessment and combined diagnostic report.

For Jen and Nat, assessment is about more than determining whether a child meets criteria for an autism diagnosis. Their aim is for families to leave with a deeper understanding of their child's unique social, sensory, communication and thinking patterns, a clearer picture of their neurotype, and confidence in the next steps for supporting and celebrating who they are.

The Autism Assessment Process

Parent and teacher questionnaires

These questionnaires help us learn about your child across different settings and provide detail about their development and experiences at home and school.

Child's session with Jen at the Elizabeth Clinic

Telehealth parent intereview with Nat

Telehealth parent intereview with Jen

Child's session with Nat in your home

Assessment takes place across clinic and home settings, giving us a richer understanding of your child across different environments. Sessions are playful and affirming, with sensory tools, movement and plenty of space for special interests, supporting your child to communicate and engage in ways that feel natural to them.

This telehealth session is an opportunity to share your child's story, including their developmental history, strengths, support needs and everyday experiences. Your insights help us build a comprehensive and individualised understanding of your child.

Analysis and report writing

This time is allocated for Jen and Natalie to analyse questionnaires, assessment data and observations, consider these in relation to the DSM-5 diagnostic criteria, collaborate on a diagnostic formulation, and prepare your child's written report.

Telehealth parent feedback session

Jen and Nat join parents for a session focused on exploring your child's social, sensory, communication and thinking patterns building a rich understanding of their neurotype. . Families are supported to feel confident in taking the next steps in exploring, celebrating and supporting their child's neurotype in a neuroaffirming and strengths-based way.



Fees

Clinical Psychology Assessment	$1,720
Speech Pathology Assessment	$1,440
Total	**$3,160**

Assessment fees encompas direct assessment time, comprehensive clinical analysis, clinical collaboration and the development of a detailed diagnostic report. Psychology and Speech Pathology fees are invoiced and processed separately.

A 10% deposit is collected at time of booking.

Additions to the assessment process

Depending on your child's individual profile, we may recommend additional assessment, including:

- Developmental assessment for developmental differences such as intellectual disability or global developmental delay
- Assessment of your child's receptive and expressive language development

Additional assessment incurs an additional fee and is always discussed with you prior to the assessment process.

Medicare If your child's paediatrician or psychiatrist has provided a referral for an autism assessment, you may be eligible to claim a Medicare rebate. The relevant MBS item numbers and assessment fees are provided below for reference or when confirming your rebate eligibility with Medicare:

Speech Pathology
2 x MBS Item No. 93033 @ $360
2 x MBS Item No. 82005 @ $360 (Total $1,440)
Psychology
1 x MBS Item No. 82000 @ $860
1 x MBS Item No. 93032 @ $860 (Total $1,720)

Private Health Insurance

If you have Extras cover for Clinical Psychology and/or Speech Pathology, you may be eligible for a rebate towards some components of your assessment. Coverage and rebate amounts vary between health funds and policies, so we recommend contacting your insurer before commencing the assessment.

Autism diagnosis and funding

WA schools may apply for additional disability funding to support autistic students. For an autism diagnosis to be recognised for this funding, it must be agreed upon by **two** eligible practitioners (qualified and experienced in Autism assessment) from different disciplines, including agreement on the child's level of support.



One comprehensive diagnostic report

Jen and Nat's qualifications, comprehensive assessment process and diagnostic report meet the requirements for disability funding in Western Australian schools. The diagnostic report can also be submitted to support application to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).



FAQs

Do we ned to see a paediatrician or psychiatrist first?A paediatrician or psychiatrist referral is not required for an autism diagnosis when the assessment is completed by a Clinical Psychologist and Speech Pathologist, nor is it required for NDIS or WA school funding purposes. However, a referral from a paediatrician or psychiatrist may enable families to access Medicare rebates for the assessment.

When will we know the outcome of the assessment?
The diagnostic report is shared with families following their feedback session and is provided within four weeks of the assessment sessions.
If required sooner, for school or NDIS funding applications, Nat and Jen can provide a letter confirming the assessment outcome in the meantime.

Can Jen include assessment for ADHD in the assessment process? Jen can include thorough screening for ADHD as part of your child's assessment; however, ADHD screening is not the same as a formal ADHD assessment. As paediatricians and psychiatrists need to complete their own comprehensive assessment before confirming an ADHD diagnosis, Jennifer does not offer formal ADHD assessments, as this could mean families having to repeat the assessment process and bear the cost again.

Jen's ADHD screening is comprehensive and can provide valuable information to support your child's diagnostic picture. It may also significantly reduce the time required for a future formal ADHD assessment, should one be needed.

Can cognitive assessment be included if needed?
As part of the autism assessment, Jen and Nat also complete a thorough differential diagnostic process, considering whether other diagnoses or developmental differences may better explain aspects of your child's presentation. Occasionally, additional testing may be recommended to ensure diagnostic accuracy.
Where clinically indicated, Jen can also complete a brief or comprehensive cognitive assessment using the WISC-V or UNIT-2. This allows your child's cognitive profile to be considered and helps identify whether intellectual factors may be contributing to their presentation.



Considering an autism diagnosis

An autism assessment is about much more than determining whether a child meets the diagnostic criteria. It is an opportunity for families to develop a deeper understanding of their child's neurotype, their strengths and support needs, and the accommodations and approaches that can make a meaningful difference to their everyday experience.

We understand that embarking on this process can bring with it many different thoughts, questions and emotions. As parents of neurodivergent children ourselves, we know that at the heart of this process is a desire to understand your child more deeply, to support them in the ways they need, and to help them grow with confidence in who they are.

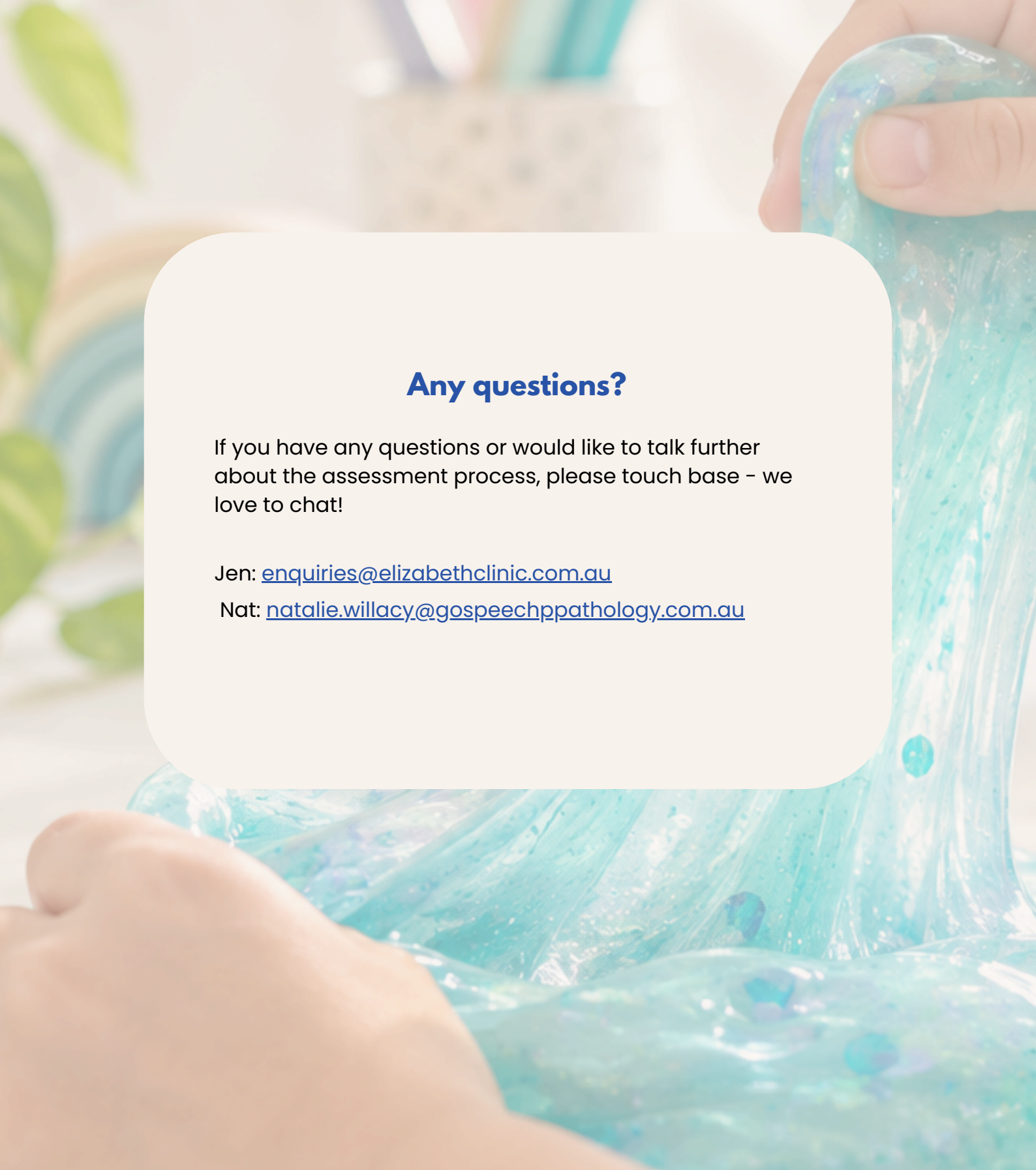
A diagnosis can support:

- A deeper understanding of your child and their unique social, sensory, communication and thinking patterns.
- Greater understanding of their individual support needs, including the environments, accommodations and approaches that help them thrive.
- Positive identity and self-understanding, giving your child language to understand their neurotype, recognise their strengths and advocate for what they need.
- Authentic connections with others, helping children recognise that there are many others who think, communicate and experience the world in similar ways.
- Individualised support at school, giving educators a clearer understanding of your child and the adjustments that support their participation, learning and wellbeing.
- Access to funding and supports, where your child meets eligibility requirements.

Many Autistic people and parents of Autistic children reflect that they wish they had understood their neurotype earlier. A diagnosis can empower children to grow with confidence in their authentic selves, recognising the beauty of belonging as they are, rather than feeling they need to change themselves to fit in.

For more neurodiversity affirming Autism resources, click here

Resources



Any questions?

If you have any questions or would like to talk further about the assessment process, please touch base - we love to chat!

Jen: enquiries@elizabethclinic.com.au

Nat: natalie.willacy@gospeechppathology.com.au

Go! neurodiversity affirming speech pathology

The Elizabeth Clinic
CARING FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY