



GENTLE SENSORY
EMPOWERING NEURODIVERSITY

Neurodiverse Explorers: A Skill-Building Holiday Program

Program Dates: July School Holiday Period

Target Age Group: 7-12 years

Base Location: Gisborne Office

Staffing: 1:2 Ratios

Program Goals:

- To develop practical daily living skills in a fun and experiential way.
- To enhance independent travel and navigation abilities.
- To promote social interaction and peer connection.
- To build confidence and self-advocacy skills.
- To provide a predictable and sensory-considerate environment.

Core Program Structure:

Navigating Gisborne: Local Explorations

Skill Focus 1 (Map Skills): "Gisborne Grid Challenge" - Using a simplified map of Gisborne to locate key community landmarks (library, post office, local shop, park). Understanding basic directions (North, South, East, West, left, right).

Skill Focus 2 (Community Awareness): "Pocket Money Power" - Identifying different coins and notes, understanding value, practising simple purchases. Discussion on stranger danger and who to ask for help in the community.

Afternoon Adventure: "Park Pathway Pursuit" - Guided walk to a local Gisborne park, using the map created earlier. Emphasis on road safety, crossing streets, and staying together. Enjoy unstructured play or a group game at the park.

The Woodend Wanderer: Train & Trail Adventure!

Skill Focus 1 (Travel Planning): "Train Time!" - Introduction to train travel: understanding timetables (simplified), station signs, platform safety, purchasing tickets (supported demonstration/practice). What to pack for a day trip.

Skill Focus 2 (Advanced Navigation): "Woodend Trailblazers" - Studying a map of Woodend, identifying the train station, the destination park (e.g., Five Mile Creek Park or similar green space), and the walking route between them.

Afternoon Adventure: "Train Journey to Woodend & Park Exploration!"

1. **Gisborne Station:** Group walks to Gisborne train station, practising road safety and pedestrian rules.
2. **Ticket Purchase:** Supported opportunity for each participant to practice purchasing their own train ticket.
3. **Train Ride:** Focus on quiet travel, staying seated, and respecting other passengers.
4. **Woodend Navigation:** Upon arrival, participants will use their maps to actively navigate the walk from Woodend station to the chosen park, with staff guidance.
5. **Park Activities:** Enjoy the park by participating in a scavenger hunt focused on natural elements.
6. **Return Journey:** Reversing the process back to Gisborne, reinforcing learned skills.

This program is designed to be a highly structured yet flexible and fun experience, empowering neurodiverse young people to gain confidence and skills essential for daily living and community participation.