

matthew

Background

Matthew* is a 3 year old Aboriginal boy who was removed from his parents due to concerns about his safety at home. Matthew was placed in a kinship placement with his sibling Jessica* (5 years).

Matthew struggled to adjust to his new home and develop a relationship with his new carer Emily*. His trauma presented as self-harming, nightmares, verbal and physical aggression, crying, and difficulty sharing Emily. He also struggled to adjust to pre-school.

Emily was dedicated to ensuring Matthew remained within the family, but she was struggling to manage his behaviours and the placement was on the verge of breakdown.



The LINKS Difference

Following a holistic assessment by the LINKS multidisciplinary team, Matthew's challenging behaviours and emotional difficulties were prioritised. He and Emily engaged in Parent Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT) over a six month period. Matthew's relationship with Emily improved and his play, interpersonal and communication skills were greatly enhanced.

Emily developed skills that she also applied with Jessica, and both children showed significant changes in their behaviour. Matthew no longer displayed aggressive behaviours at pre-school, and his level of conflict with others at home significantly decreased.

The LINKS Aboriginal Occupational Therapist worked with Matthew to develop a system of rewards at home. Emily also participated in the Tuning into Kids program, developing skills in emotion coaching. Emily stated, "I couldn't have done this without the help we've received" and described Matthew as "a different little boy. He's just so calm now".

Emily now has a sound understanding of the impact of trauma and multiple skills in her tool bag to support her family. She has been sharing these skills to support Matthew across all areas of his life. Emily has received many comments from others about how well Matthew is going, and how significantly his behaviour has changed.

*names changed to protect identities