

## Medical Student Immersion Program

# Teddy Bear Hospital

Dear Parent/Carer,

The Teddy Bear Hospital (TBH) is a community medicine strategy that assists children in becoming more aware and accustomed to hospitals and medical treatment whilst developing the clinical skills of medical treatment. In a TBH visit, children play the role of a parent and bring their teddy bears or favoured toys to a simulated hospital (classroom) for treatment by the Teddy Doctor (medical student). These Teddy Doctors demonstrate the entire process of a medical consultation in a fun, non- threatening environment.



The project is supported by the Medical Students' Association of Notre Dame and will be run by graduate entry medical students in the first at the University of Notre Dame Fremantle and second year students from Curtin University. All medical students are required to participate in a TBH training session before becoming a qualified Teddy Doctor. All Teddy Doctors possess a current Working with Children Check and are asked to carry this card as well as their student identification and Department of Health Criminal Record Screening card during school visits.

As part of the Wheatbelt Medical Student Immersion Program, bringing over 100 medical students to seven towns across the Wheatbelt, we are holding Teddy Bear Hospital sessions at your school. We would like to invite your child to take part in the visit.

TBH is a fun and valuable learning experience in medical concept engagement. Furthermore, it aims to teach children through a number of songs and games, healthy eating habits, the importance of hygiene (especially the hands) and sun smart practices.

### **What does participation in a TBH visit involve?**

TBH comprises a number of stations:

- Activities: Games, songs, craft
- Waiting room: filling out a Teddicare card
- Consultation: History, examination, playing with equipment (bandages and stethoscopes) and the eventual receipt of a paw-scription
- Nursing: Dispensation of paw-scription (ie fruit, teddy hugs) and hand hygiene. By allowing children to act as observers in this scenario and combining the visit with fun, health focused activities and games, this project aims to make children feel more comfortable about the prospect of visiting the doctor themselves. All phases feature friendly, relaxed engagement between medical students and your child.

**How much does the program cost? What does my child have to bring?**

The program is provided free for your school/community and participating children. Your child will be required to attend school/the center on the day of the visit with a teddy bear or toy. In the event that a child does not have a teddy, or is unable to bring one, TBH will supply teddies. We also encourage being sun smart; so all children will be required to bring a hat for outside activities.

**What are the benefits of this program for my child?**

- Reduced anxiety in medical settings
- Education regarding health lifestyle choices
- Creativity and imagination is encouraged
- Involvement in a fun and engaging medical program.

**Are there any risks associated with participation?**

The only foreseeable risks are those normally involved in attending school. TBH requires classroom teachers to be present at all times throughout the visit.

**Does my child have to take part?**

No. Participation in the program is entirely voluntary, however we ask that you inform your child's classroom teacher if you do not want them to participate.

**What will happen to information collected and is privacy and confidentiality assured?**

In order to assess the project's effectiveness we may seek feedback from staff. This feedback will not be linked to personal details of participants (with the exception of age) and will be used to help refine the program for future visits.

We will not collecting personal information or taking photos of children during the Teddy Bear Hospital sessions for any publication or promotional purposes.

**Who do I contact if I wish to discuss the program further?**

If you would like to discuss any aspects of the TBH program, please do not hesitate to contact Tallulah Sargon at Rural Health West, 08 6389 4500 or [futureworkforce@ruralhw.com.au](mailto:futureworkforce@ruralhw.com.au)

**How does my child become involved?**

Once all questions have been answered to your satisfaction, and you're willing for your child to participate, simply complete and return the attached TBH parent consent form to the school.

