



**Rebound Therapy**  
Australia



‘the true value of Rebound Therapy lies in the  
fact that part of what occurs is not ‘on earth’  
*Eddy Anderson*

# Rebound Therapy



**Australian Government**  
**Australian Sports Commission**



**Office of Communities**  
Sport & Recreation

# What is Rebound Therapy?

The phrase 'Rebound Therapy' was coined by the founder, E.G Anderson, in 1969, to describe the use of trampolines to provide therapeutic exercise and recreation for people with a wide range of special needs.

Eddy has been a paratrooper, a specialist exercise therapist in the RAF, a remedial gymnast, a physiotherapist and a qualified teacher before becoming the headmaster of Springwell Special Needs School, where he developed the techniques for using the trampoline for therapeutic exercise for children with severe special needs.

In 2006, Eddy joined forces with disability sports coaches and Saturn V Rebound Hall founders Paul and Shirley Kaye and formed "Rebound Therapy.org", [www.reboundtherapy.org](http://www.reboundtherapy.org), the UK governing body and international consultancy for Rebound Therapy.

Rebound Therapy is used to facilitate movement, promote balance, promote an increase or decrease in muscle tone, promote relaxation, promote sensory integration, improve fitness and exercise tolerance, and to improve communication skills. Participants involved in the program have ranged from mild to severe physical disabilities and from mild to profound and multiple learning disabilities, including dual sensory impairment and autistic spectrum.



**The principles of Rebound Therapy form the basis of gymnastic movement and can be used as a starting point for all trampoline coach training**

# So Why the Trampoline?

It is recorded that the trampoline was invented by a French neurologist to provide therapy for brain injured children. He named the apparatus the “Trampolino”<sup>1</sup>. NASA (the North American Space Agency) has since declared “rebounding exercises as the most efficient and effective exercise yet devised by man”<sup>2</sup>, due to its low impact, high cardiovascular, resistance workout.

These characteristics make Rebound Therapy particularly useful exercise for tackling obesity, which can be prevalent in those with mobility issues and is also a growing problem in society. The unique properties of the trampoline offer a high value therapeutic return for the time and effort involved.

The Trampoline is often seen as fun activity by children, unlike other more traditional forms of exercise. It is this ‘fun’ element that provides a distraction to the structured program that is being undertaken.

**“the essential value of the process is that, for a brief moment, ‘earth’ is left behind, and a new freedom is found in controlled movement away from gravity... in a sort of relaxed ‘poetry of motion’, available to all, irrespective of any disability”**

***Eddy Anderson***

The Rebound Therapy program is greatly enhanced when the Practitioner is able to create variable patterns of movement in harmony with the needs of the user. The two then share the surface of the trampoline with the Practitioner adjusting the effect of weight and speed in order to ensure smooth transitions between the phases of movement undertaken.

1 Delacato, C.H, 1963. “The Diagnosis and Treatment of Speech and Reading Problems”

2 NASA Report, *Journal of Applied Physiology* 49(5): 881 -887, 1980

# What are the Benefits of Rebound Therapy?

There are four key potential benefits that RT provides to the participant:

- Physiological
- Therapeutic
- Sensory input
- Interpersonal

## Physiological effects

- Motor development – stimulating the vestibular system helps to keep the brain alert and ready to take on new information. Cross-patterning activities require the two brain hemispheres to communicate in order to move one side of the body and then the other.
- Cardio-respiratory - a high demand on muscles to deal with the effect of gravity on deceleration and acceleration, causing an increase in the respiratory and heart rate. The constant muscle work required to maintain position and balance increases the demand for oxygen.
- Stamina - increases due to controlled jumping and regular sessions
- Muscle tone / tension – low level bouncing can cause a decrease in muscle tone and vice versa with high level bouncing. The two properties can be used therefore to increase or decrease tone where required

- Postural mechanism – stimulating the sensory systems though joints, muscle and skin can improve the output to the important postural muscles
- Balance mechanism – the dynamic movement achieved through RT challenges balance mechanisms and observable improvement can be achieved.
- Stimulation of the digestive system, improved bowel function and organ massage – achieved by the rhythmic movement of the trampoline
- Clearing of toxins from the body – bouncing causes stretching and contracting of cells in the body

## Therapeutic effects

- Relaxation - by using good positioning and low amplitude bouncing, good relaxation is easily obtained
- Sense of calm – the rhythmical motion develops a body map and sense of calm through consistent and predictable sensory feedback

**Rebound Therapy is a fun, enjoyable and achievable activity that is accessible to all.**

## Sensory input

- Proprioceptive feedback – the stronger proprioceptive (joint) feedback provided when bouncing on the trampoline overrides tactile sensitivities in clients that are tactile defensive
- Kinaesthetic awareness – by the multiple stimulation of joints, pressure stretch receptors, skin and muscles, kinaesthetic awareness is improved, leading to improved body image and spatial awareness
- Spatial awareness – locating the centre of the trampoline, spinning / twisting movements and awareness of the position of the body and limbs throughout the phases of flight
- Height and depth perception – controlled high and low jumping, mounting and dismounting the trampoline



## Interpersonal

- Body awareness – the use of proprioceptive, tactile and vestibular input to promote body awareness and body image
- Patience / social awareness – participants are required to wait for their turn and move through the progressions of the Rebound Therapy program. Participants are also required to recognise success of others and encourage each other throughout the sessions
- Trust and co-operation – developing trust and confidence in the Practitioner
- Independence and self-confidence – progression to bouncing or jumping on their own, mounting or dismounting unaided. Completion of activities / progressions within program
- Self-image – peer approval, achievement through the Development Scheme, coach praise and feeling good having worked hard
- Communication – due to cardio-respiratory effects, vocalisation is increased with exclamations and gasps.
- Eye contact and concentration – enhanced by the 'focus effect', face to face jumping with Practitioner or other participant.



## Rebound Therapy Australia

# Rebound Therapy Australia

Gymnastics NSW have been working in partnership with Rebound Therapy.org, since 2009, to launch and implement the program within Australia (Rebound Therapy Australia), which culminated in Paul and Eddy's first visit to Australian soil in October 2010.

Since this time GNSW have developed a three year Rebound Therapy Action Plan, 2011 – 2014, which details the processes that GNSW will follow, in partnership with Gymnastics Australia (GA) and other organisations, to develop and implement the Rebound Therapy program within NSW and other states. Initially the Rebound Therapy program will focus upon providing therapy for participants with a disability. However, the program will also aim to engage participants with injuries, those with health issues including obesity, the elderly and other disengaged groups who may benefit.

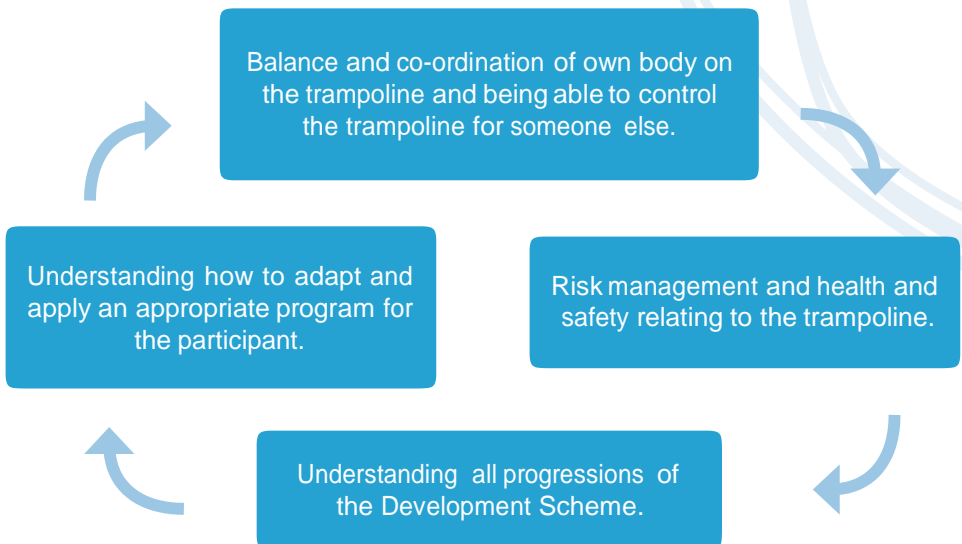
Rebound Therapy in Australia will be delivered as an integrated program within gymnastics, wherever possible, and can be utilised as a base level for all participants. Rebound Therapy will complement existing Trampoline activities by providing a regulated and progressive structure, utilising badges and progress charts. Rebound Therapy will aim to develop links with the trampoline levels program.



# Rebound Therapy Practitioner

The first ever Rebound Therapy training session in Australia was held in October 2010 at Castle Hill RSL Gymnastics Club. 9 participants attended this course, from a range of gymnastics backgrounds, and were all accredited as Rebound Therapy Practitioners. A number of these participants were also identified to become future Rebound Therapy Presenters.

All trained Rebound Therapy Practitioners are required to demonstrate a level of appropriate skill by the end of their training, including:







Rebound Therapy is a one day training course followed by a post course assessment.

Rebound Therapy Practitioners are required to work in consultation with relevant health professionals, where appropriate, to ascertain the capabilities of the participant and use Rebound Therapy to reach identified achievable goals.

### Who is suitable to become a trained Rebound Therapy Practitioner?

- Gymnastics and Trampoline coaches with disability experience
- Special needs teachers and assistants
- Physiotherapists
- Occupational Therapists
- Speech Therapists / Pathologists
- Rehabilitation workers and carers
- Any other relevant health professionals

Please note that you do not have to be a Trampoline Coach to become a Rebound Therapy Practitioner. After having completed the training, Rebound Therapy Practitioners and organisations will be required to meet quality assured requirements in order to become a “Rebound Therapy Centre of Excellence”.

# Rebound Therapy Pilot Program

Since February 2011, a Rebound Therapy pilot program has been implemented by Castle Hill RSL Gymnastics Club. Castle Hill RSL is committed to supporting the community. The opportunity to be involved as a pilot enabled them to link further to the Special Needs Schools and Community Groups that the RSL Club is already supporting.

The program has been developed by three coaches who attended the training in 2010. The Coaches involved are excited to be developing stronger skills in their Gymsport, to be able to offer their services as a therapy and to link to therapy and medical professionals that they would not normally be integrating with.

Over 20 participants have been involved in the pilot program and excellent feedback has been received. Rebound Therapy activities have been integrated with a soft play circuit program on the floor (45 minutes in total), which participants undertake whilst waiting for their turn to work one on one with the coach on the trampoline. Participants move through the Winstrada training modules, having approximately 15 minutes on the Trampoline. Classes are small and children are placed into the class that is compatible to their need, temperament and behaviour.

Castle Hill are currently recording a video library and reporting diary as case studies to monitor the progress of the participants. Jane Cooke, Castle Hill RSL Club Gymnastics Co-ordinator, reports that “Children and Parents are very happy with the program format and parents can see personally the growth in confidence, skill and mobility”.

**“Castle Hill RSL Club has embraced the opportunity to be involved in this worthwhile education and program development”**

*Jane Cooke*  
**Gymsports Co-ordinator**

In summary there are numerous reasons for Rebound Therapy to be adopted by clubs, schools and health professionals:

1. It is fun for the participant and Practitioner
2. Opportunities for higher quantity and quality of movement compared to other sport and physical activity areas
3. Similar benefits to swimming and hydrotherapy, however it is logistically easier and cheaper to implement. It also provides greater opportunities for all students to increase their heart rates
4. An active, dynamic approach to physiotherapy
5. Accessible to the whole special needs ability range
6. An easy to follow student progression
7. Can be taught in any reasonably sized space
8. Rebound Therapy Practitioners do not need to hold a coaching qualification to deliver the program
9. In addition to the physical benefits Rebound Therapy provides opportunities to work on other key life skills i.e. alertness, communication, cognition, independence, perception and relationships

10. Opportunities to measure student progress, not only in terms of physical skills, but also in the key life skills mentioned previously

To find a club near you, visit [www.gymnsw.org.au](http://www.gymnsw.org.au)





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Australia



**Gymnastics**  
New South Wales

PO Box 190  
North Strathfield NSW 2137  
Ph 9763 5011 | Fax 8116 4134