

Parents of Deaf Children

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# ANNUAL REPORT

## 2012



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Parents  
of Deaf  
Children



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# Introduction

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Parents of Deaf Children (PODC) is a non-profit organisation, dedicated to supporting parents with babies, children and teenagers with a hearing loss in NSW.

PODC aims to provide independent and unbiased information and support for parents and carers, irrespective of their chosen method of communication.

Collaborating with parents, professionals, other organisations and government, PODC attempts to influence change and improve opportunities for deaf children and their families.

PODC is overseen by a dedicated parent committee and staffed by two part time workers.

Financially the organisation is supported by the NSW Department of Ageing, Disability and Homecare and Deaf Children Australia.

There are 120 members made up of families and professionals in NSW and interstate.



*Linda Brady and Barney McAweaney with their two children, Eoin and Anna.*

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# Presidents Report

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The previous AGM on 13 November 2011 was our last as the Parent Council for Deaf Education (PCDE). On 11 March 2012, we held a landmark event “Looking Back, Looking Forward”, to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and to launch our re-branding as Parents of Deaf Children (PODC). This very successful event was held at the Shop-front Theatre, Carlton, with over 120 guests attending, including the Minister for Disability Services, the Honourable Andrew Constance MP, and the Honourable Helen Westwood MLC.

I acknowledge the ongoing financial contribution of the NSW Department of Ageing Disability and Home Care (ADHC), our funding body, and also of Deaf Children Australia. PODC is keen to embrace the new “Person Centred Approach” being introduced by the government, as well as the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

Ongoing initiatives and activities of PODC include:

- To facilitate and support Parents of Deaf (POD) groups – there are currently five groups including Northern Sydney, Macarthur, Central Coast, Mid-North Coast and North West Sydney.
- Continue building relationships with Deaf Children Australia and the Deaf Society of NSW, the Professional Advisory Panel, and other entities in the sector such as the Shepherd Centre and the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children)
- To facilitate and support POD related activities, for example ‘Play in the Park’, Christmas Party, Morning Tea, Dad’s Night Out.
- Support of Parent to Parent Mentoring, with the Deaf Society of NSW.
- Support National Week of Deaf People events
- Advocacy and support as required
- Publication of ‘Sound News’ magazine.
- Regular attendance at Interagency Meetings (with the Deaf Society of NSW, Ephpheta Centre; Australian Sign Language Interpreters Association; Deaf Australia NSW; Thomas Pattison School)



We are still working to establish a sub-committee for parents of children who are deaf, as well as having additional needs and/or to establish partnerships with other organisations in the disability sector.

There were four Management Committee meetings this year, and also a Planning and Vision meeting. I sincerely thank the 2011-2012 Management Committee for their valued contributions and support: Leonie Jackson (Vice President), Vicki Cox (Secretary), Amanda Li (Treasurer), Leesa Cluff, Anna Messariti, and Ann Porter. I particularly acknowledge the substantial contribution of Ann Porter who is stepping down from the Management Committee.

I am deeply appreciative of the exemplary work, well beyond the call of duty, of our Information and Advocacy Officer, Kate Kennedy, assisted by Gloria Simunovich (Administrative Assistant) to August, and now by Allison McNally (Administrative and Marketing Assistant).

Thanks also to the parents who have participated in the POD group meetings and PODC events.



Mark Burfield  
President



# Treasurer's Report

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2012 has been an tremendous year for PODC . The name change from Parent Council for Deaf Education to Parents of Deaf Children has eventuated and we celebrated the organisation's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary earlier this year. The funding in the disability sector is also facing some major changes with the introduction of NDIS. I believe we 're well placed to play an important role for parents as the changes are rolled out over the next few years. ADHC has renewed our funding at the current level with indexation until 2015. That will enable us to continue to provide advocacy and support to parents in the coming years. We continue to receive a steady amount of membership and advertising income as well as management and accounting support from DCA.

The major and one off expense of 2012 has been the cost of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration and the re-branding of our new name. Whilst the additional expense brought the income and expenditure into deficit for the year, the total cost of the function and rebranding fell within amount we budgeted for this purpose. These costs were met by surplus funds that had been accumulated from previous years. The PODC balance sheet remains in surplus with \$ 6614.36.

Apart form the deficit, the other change from previous year in the financial report is a substantial drop in the subsidy from DCA. Over the past few years of partnership with DCA our accounts have become more integrated with their accounting system. In previous years DCA had allocated a part of their operating expenses under PODC accounts. For more clarity we have requested that they remove some of those expenses this year to better reflect our direct operating costs. The additional expenses were covered by DCA subsidy amount therefore were never a real cost to PODC. However that also made the accounts less reflective of our direct expenses. The adjustments made has decreased the DCA subsidy substantially . Some DCA costs which are more directly applicable to us are still present in our expenses, such as accounting and business support , motor vehicle expenses and a small

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portion of the travel costs.

In conclusion, I'd like to present the financial reports to the meeting. PODC is in a solid financial position , after taking the one off costs associated with the anniversary and re-branding into account, our expenses are well under control and within budget.

### **Resolutions**

With that I recommend that:

the financial reports as prepared by Julie Chaplin and Lyn Rose be accepted  
a vote of thanks to be given to Julie Chaplin and her team at DCA for their work with PODC in the past year.

Amanda Li

Treasurer



# Coordinator's Report

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PODC's mission is "to empower parents in NSW to support their deaf or hearing-impaired children in reaching their full potential through information, support networks and representation". The last year has seen us deliver on a number of key priority areas to ensure parent capacity is being built and parent networks grown.



## Parent to Parent Support

PODC coordinates 5 active POD groups in NSW, with two newly created this year, due to parent demand. These parent groups provide a local venue for parents to come together for both social and information sessions. These groups could not exist without the commitment from parents, and we thank all parents who have attended POD groups over the year. Your willingness to share your stories, insights and humour with each other is what POD is all about. It has been an inspiration and a joy to see the groups grow and relationships form.

I would like to acknowledge in particular the following group leaders who without fail turned up, opened up, made new members welcome and brought the milk for tea and coffee:

Fiona Fairlie and Catherine Dunn, POD Central Sydney.

Liz Vermeulen, POD North West

Linda Brady and Claire Melbourne, POD Central Coast

Leesa Cluff and Priscilla Clarry, POD North Sydney

Emma Yateem, POD Macarthur

Robin Herpes and Julie Frendlin, POD Mid North Coast

## Parent Mentoring Program

We have continued to support our partner The Deaf Society of NSW with the running of the Parent to Parent mentoring program. Our role is to target and train parent mentors and to advise and support the matching of mentors. This program is growing in scope and demand. The DSNSW has reported that 41 parents were mentored in this financial year. We are grateful to the DSNSW for continuing to fund this program, which has as yet not attracted government funding. We will continue to lobby for parent mentoring and support to

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be included in the provision for parents post diagnosis as part of the upcoming NDIS. I would like to thank in particular John O'Neill and Teresa Thompson for their efforts in providing this valuable service to families in NSW.

### **Parent Advocacy**

PODC offers advocacy support in the form of representation for families who need to escalate issues and concerns to schools and government. PODC responds on average to 3 enquiries or concerns a week from families on a variety of issues relating to parenting and educating their child with hearing loss.

### **Systemic Advocacy**

PODC continues to represent families at government level on issues that relate to parenting and educating children who are deaf and hearing impaired. This year, the focus has been on building alliances both within the deaf sector and in the broader disability sector in order to best respond and position families needs within the NDIS. Our aim has been to build capacity for parents and to lobby government to ensure the needs of deaf and hearing impaired children and their families are met under this new funding model.

### **Information**

PODC has delivered 15 parent information sessions and workshops this financial year on a range of issues. Together with Aussie Deaf Kids, PODC gave 12 presentations this financial year to teachers, therapists and other professionals in NSW working with families in NSW including, Inservicing of Child and Family Counsellors at the Shepherd Centre and Inservicing of Teachers of the Deaf Northern and Canterbury regions on parent to parent support.

PODC published 3 quarterly editions of Sound News this financial year. Our magazine is aimed at families and the provision of current relevant information on education, support and technology issues.

This financial year saw the launch of PODC's new website, ensuring we now have an engaging, informative presence on the web where parents can find relevant, timely information and news.

This year we brought the publishing of Sound News magazine in house with a new colour photocopier. This not only has saved money on external printing costs but allows us more control over the materials we can produce in colour.

### **Acknowledgements**

I would like to acknowledge the efforts of my fellow staff members, Gloria Simunovich, who worked so hard for PODC over the busy period of rebranding, and whom has since left to spend more time with her family. My thanks also to Allison McNally who has stepped into the role of Marketing and Administration Assistant with enthusiasm and focus.



We have continued to benefit greatly from the close proximity of Ann Porter from Aussie Deaf Kids, who works beside us two days a week. We value this ongoing working relationship. I would personally like to thank Ann for her support and guidance over the year. Deaf Children Australia continues to provide PODC with financial support and guidance in areas of governance. Our thanks to Damien Lacey and his team for this ongoing support. In conclusion, I would like to acknowledge the active support given to staff by the Management Committee of PODC. We are lucky to have such an involved and interested group of parents prepared to volunteer their time for the benefit of children who are deaf or hearing impaired. I look forward to working with the new team to achieve our goals in 2012.



Kate Kennedy  
Coordinator, Information and Advocacy



# Management Committee and Staff

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## **Mark Burfield – President**

Mark is the father of four children. The first was born profoundly deaf in 1999, received a cochlear implant in 2001 and a second in 2010, and is currently in a public secondary school hearing support unit. Mark's primary concern is the maintenance and improvement of services for the hearing impaired at all stages. He is State Commissioner for Scouts with Special Needs, Secretary of the P&C Association at his two middle children's school, and works as the Secretary and bookkeeper of the "Family Federation for World Peace and Unification, Australia" and "Universal Peace Federation Australia".

## **Leonie Jackson—Vice President**

Leonie is the mother of two very active boys. Her oldest son is a Deaf bilingual child and attends RIDBC's Roberta Reid Preschool and Rockie Woofit Preschool. Leonie herself is also a Deaf bilingual adult and has 18 years teaching experience at the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children (RIDBC), and was Assistant Principal of the Thomas Pattison School, a bilingual K-10 school for 8 years. In 2006, Leonie received a Churchill Fellowship to conduct a research trip in the UK and USA to look at the possibility of live captioning solutions for the classroom and is currently working at Ai-Media as Head of Education Access. In this role, Leonie is leading Ai-Media's focus to close the existing gaps in the classroom for deaf and hearing impaired students.

## **Amanda Li – Treasurer**

Amanda is the mother of three children. One of her children is Deaf and attends a bilingual Auslan/English school in Sydney's North West. "I've had very little experience with deafness prior to my daughter's diagnosis, it hasn't been easy and it has certainly opened my eyes to the state of our education system. I believe that parents are the best advocates for their children and by becoming involved in PODC, I'd like to provide support and information to other parents and help them ensure their children reach their full potential.' Amanda practises as a dentist part time. She has recently completed the Diploma of Auslan and will go on to further study to become an Auslan Interpreter.

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### **Vicki Cox – Secretary**

Vicki is the mother of two girls who were both born profoundly deaf. They have now received bilateral cochlear implants and attend a Hearing Support Unit for school. More recently the girls were diagnosed with Usher Syndrome which has added a whole new dimension to the issues they face in the future! “Prior to children, I had a career in marketing but the difficulties my two children encountered inspired me to return to university to complete a Master of Speech and Language Pathology.” Vicki now works as a Speech Pathologist in early intervention and also mentors other parents who have children with a hearing loss.

### **Leesa Cluff - Committee Member**

Leesa is a mother of two boys, one of whom is deaf with additional needs. Leesa is currently a mentor with the Parent to Parent Support Program, run by the Deaf Society of NSW and has previously been involved in the stakeholder committee with Deaf Children Australia. She is currently on the management committee of Cubby House Toy Library for children with additional needs.

### **Ann Porter – Committee Member**

Ann has been actively involved in parent support groups since 1996 when her daughter lost her hearing. She founded Aussie Deaf Kids in 2001. Aussie Deaf Kids provides online support and information to families raising a deaf child. Ann has a Bachelor of Science in Occupational Therapy and a Masters in eHealthcare and is a founding member of GPOD (Global Coalition of Parents of Children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing). She is on the Board of Deafness Forum of Australia and the Australasian Newborn Hearing Screening Committee.

### **Anna Messariti**

Anna Messariti is currently on the management committee of PODC. Her son Xavier, who is three and a half years old, has a bilateral, moderate hearing loss. Xavier was diagnosed when he was 13 days old and has been aided since he was five weeks old. He attends Rockie Woofit Pre-school at RIDBC.

Professionally, Anna is an Executive Producer and Producer for *ABC Radio National*, working across its group of Drama, Literature and Performance programs. She also manages the *Ian Reed Foundation's* bequest for the ABC Board.

Prior to working for the ABC, Anna worked in independent film production. She produced the successful short film (35mm), *The Projectionist*, by writer/director Michael Bates.



Anna's previous work in theatre as an artistic director and theatre professional spanned more than a decade. She was a project officer for the *Australia Council for the Arts* and was a contributing editor for *Lowdown* magazine for several years. She has also been a secondary school teacher and has been employed by a range of schools as an extra-curricular specialist.

**Kate Kennedy – PODC Co-ordinator, Information and Advocacy**

Kate is a parent of three teenagers, two of whom have a hearing loss. She was a past Committee Member for three years prior to taking the role of Information and Advocacy Co-coordinator. In her professional life, Kate has worked in the IT training arena for many years and has had her own small business in the past. She feels strongly about the need for unbiased information and support for parents of deaf children so that they can make informed choices about their child's future.

**Allison McNally – Administration and Marketing Assistant**

Allison has recently returned to employment after taking time off to raise her three young children, now aged 6, 4 and 3. Prior to having a family, her background was in public relations and event management. Allison currently works two days per week and is very happy to be working again with such a dynamic and forward thinking organisation.



# PODC Balance Sheet

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AS AT 30 JUNE 2012

	<u>2012</u>	<u>2011</u>
	\$	\$
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Cash at Bank		
Cheque Account - St George	5,947.59	27,164.61
Gift Fund 471 Account - St George	18,789.06	19,161.28
Fundraising Account - St George	5,836.57	3,572.38
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>	<u>30,573.22</u>	<u>49,898.27</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<u>30,573.22</u>	<u>49,898.27</u>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Creditors		
Reimbursements to DCA	24,035.83	21,710.70
Net GST Payable	- 77.00	1,871.00
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>	<u>23,958.83</u>	<u>23,581.70</u>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	<u>23,958.83</u>	<u>23,581.70</u>
<b>NET ASSETS/(LIABILITIES)</b>	<u>6,614.39</u>	<u>26,316.57</u>
<b>EQUITY</b>		
Accumulated Surplus at the start of the year	26,316.57	20,988.02
Surplus/(Deficit) for year	(19,702.17)	5,328.55
<b>ACCUMULATED SURPLUS</b>	<u>6,614.39</u>	<u>26,316.57</u>

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## Income and Expenditure Statement for the year ended 30 June 2012

	<u>2012</u>	<u>2011</u>
	\$	\$
<b><u>INCOME</u></b>		
Department of Ageing, Disability & Home Care Funding	86,236.35	84,091.61
Memberships & Donations	3,250.45	2,720.91
Advertising	-	418.18
Fundraising Income	-	113.64
Other Grant Income	-	-
Interest Received	175.59	184.37
DCA subsidy/(contribution)	- 668.43	20,423.63
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>88,993.97</b>	<b>107,952.34</b>
<b><u>EXPENDITURE</u></b>		
Accounting & Business Support - DCA Recovery	7,058.04	5,543.00
Advertising and Promotion	301.79	-
Bank Charges	210.23	156.75
Cleaning	1,677.00	1,300.28
Client Support Services	143.63	835.13
Committee Expenses	9,385.82	116.38
Depreciation	-	2,977.00
Entertainment	1,076.45	255.91
Insurance	-	5,622.66
Interpreting	5,899.90	4,088.13
Office & Meeting Expenses	1,463.17	232.04
Membership Fees Paid	59.09	117.26
Motor Vehicle Expenses	1,066.93	2,069.59
Printing, Postage & Stationery	7,749.36	5,999.06
Publications and Information Resources	832.50	1,098.64
Rent & Utilities	1,714.52	1,772.70
Salaries	56,676.80	57,560.70
Superannuation	4,981.77	5,071.06
Workers Compensation	1,043.86	1,043.25
Staff Training & Amenities	506.81	136.36
Telephone & IT	2,816.68	2,639.89
Travel and Accommodation	3,431.11	1,627.03
Sundry Expenses	600.69	2,360.96
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>108,696.15</b>	<b>102,623.79</b>
<b>SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>	<b>(\$19,702.17)</b>	<b>\$5,328.55</b>

# Acknowledgements

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Parents of Deaf Children relies on a government grant provided by the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care (ADHC) to provide support, information and advocacy services for families. We acknowledge with gratitude their financial support and also that of Deaf Children Australia.

We also rely on memberships and tax deductible donations. We would like to thank Rosalie Judith White for her kind donation to PODC.

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