
Sound News

Parent Council for Deaf Education

Winter 2011



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President Report

There seems to have been a lot of positive activity in recent months around “partnerships”. As mentioned in my last President’s Report, “... PCDE, along with some other Deafness sector entities, signed a significant ‘Memorandum of Understanding’ (partnering agreement) with the Deaf Society of NSW just before Christmas...”.

As a consequence of this, these entities could act quickly and collaboratively to run a successful ‘Deafraiser’ event in March to raise funds for deaf people affected by the natural disasters in Queensland. Amongst other things, PCDE provided children’s activities for this event.

The first interagency meeting with representation from the Australian Sign Language Interpreters Association (ASLIA) NSW, Deaf Australia (NSW), Deaf Society of NSW, the Ephpheta Centre, and PCDE was held in May. We are working together including with preparations for the annual National Week of Deaf People in October.

PCDE and Deaf Children Australia (DCA) held another constructive ‘partnership review’ meeting in May as a follow-up to our meeting in December 2010.

PCDE is also in the process of re-establishing a ‘Professional Advisory Panel’ to formalise partnerships with professionals in the Deafness sector who can provide specific expertise and guidance in key areas that relate to families, such as education, technology and advocacy.

The PCDE Management Committee is de-



President—Mark Burfield

veloping plans for our 50th Anniversary, likely to be celebrated with a major event in February/March 2012. This is to include the launching and rollout of our new branding as “Parents of Deaf Children”. We are working on a new logo, and if you have ideas to contribute, please do so!

I share some personal anecdotes.

Anita, my daughter who is profoundly deaf (turning 12 in June) has joined the “Hear For You” program this year. This wonderful program involves workshops and mentoring of teenagers who are deaf or hearing impaired by young adults who are deaf or hearing impaired. Anita went with my wife, Misako, to the introductory session in late March, which I missed. However the very next night I could go with Anita and meet some of the “Hear For You” luminaries, including founder Olivia Andersen as they presented at a PCDE Parents of Deaf (POD) event with the theme, “When I Grow Up I Want To Be...”, held at the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children (RIDBC). This

was a most informative and enjoyable evening where four young adults who are deaf and two significant others (a mother and a sibling), could share their experiences.

Our family attended a Cochlear Implant Club and Advisory Association (CICADA) function at the Sydney Cochlear Implant Centre (SCIC) in Gladesville in early April.

The guest speaker was Ms Hisae Shibadai, a Japanese-born cochlear implant recipient who is keen to set up a ‘Cultural Exchange and English Education Program’ between Japanese and Australian teenagers who are deaf or hearing impaired. (Given the devastating events in Japan just three weeks earlier, the development of this program may be a little delayed).

As my wife is Japanese, there was an immediate rapport. SCIC and CICADA “founding father”, Prof. Bill Gibson, the surgeon for Anita’s first cochlear implant in 2002 and second in 2010, was present briefly at this function.

Just three days later I attended a PCDE POD Central Sydney gathering at PJ Gallagher Hotel in Drummoyne. Arriving slightly early, I went upstairs, and by sheer coincidence, the first person I met was Prof. Gibson, who had come to the same venue for a Rotary meeting! Prof. Gibson and Anita also happen to share the same birth date... “partners in time”.

Mark Burfield

President

Staff Report

The PCDE office is changing, with the arrival of Ann Porter of Aussie Deaf Kids. Ann has moved into an office next to us at Dara House, RIDBC and we are enjoying the benefits of sharing information and ideas. Come and visit PCDE and ADK if you are in the area on Mondays and Tuesdays.



On the PCDE baby front, Anna Iacono our Admin Assistant, had her beautiful baby girl, Mia on March 30th. Congratulations to Anna, Rob and big sister Sarah. See photo below.

As you know, PCDE is passionate about parents having ALL the information so that they can then decide the best path for their child. This resonates at the moment, as parents (and service providers) grapple with the implications of a new federal funding arrangement for early intervention services for children with a disability. We want to support parents with information and guidelines to help them unravel what this means for them. We seek to shed some light in this edition.

Lastly, we trust you will enjoy this Winter edition of our magazine. Gloria and I have put together stories that we hope will inform and inspire. We have introduced a new profile piece in this edition, which will be a regular segment. Key individuals in our sector will share some insights into what makes them tick and what inspires them. Kris Newton, the new CEO of Deafness Forum kicks this off for us. Happy reading.

Kate Kennedy,
Coordinator of Information and Advocacy.

Update on Recent Federal Government Announcements

Better Start for Children with a Disability.

PCDE has been working with Ann Porter, from Aussie Deaf Kids to gather parent concerns and questions about this new funding for early intervention services, that is due to be rolled out from July 1st 2011. It seems that the parent response to this funding has been mixed. Many do not know about the funding and those who do are confused and concerned about what it will mean for them.

We have been in discussion with a number of EI centres about how they will administer this process and the general consensus seems to be that the service will not change regardless of the family's funding via Better Start. If you have not already heard from your service about Better Start, we suggest you contact them and ask them what this will mean for the service you currently receive.

Key points:

- If you have a child under 7 years, the funding allows for up to \$12,000 per child for early intervention services for 4 years, with a maximum spend per financial year of \$6,000 up to the age of 7.
- This funding can only be used on a list of approved EI services that have been determined by an advisory panel, via FAHscia.
- This is not a windfall for families and is viewed as a supplement only from the Federal Government and by service providers.
- Parents need to ask their early intervention service how this will impact the service they are currently receiving, both now and also in the future, when their funding "runs out".
- If you have a child 7 years or older, you will not be able to access the \$12,000 component of the package, but there is provision for additional Medicare items that can be used from July 1st up until 13 or 15 years of age, depending on the items. These items may include speech pathologists, occupational therapists, audiologists, optometrists and orthoptists.
- If you have any questions or concerns, please pass them onto us at PCDE@bigpond.com

Expansion of Services for young adults.

The Federal Budget 2011 included the announcement of additional resources to be invested into the Hearing Services Program (HSP). From January 1st 2012 the program will include hearing service provision for young adults up to the age of 26. The government's expressed intention is to ensure that young people, who formally lost access to Australian Hearing Services and devices at 21, will be able to continue to access hearing aid/cochlear upgrades, replacements and maintenance while they finish study and establish themselves in careers, assisting them to maintain their self-reliance in the longer term.

PCDE applauds the Government for this initiative, which, whilst it does not go far enough, will have a very positive impact on the lives of many young people who are deaf or hearing impaired. We acknowledge the efforts of many in the sector who, like PCDE, have lobbied extensively for this outcome. Great news!

PCDE spoke to two young adults about this announcement:

Pete, about to turn 21, wears two hearing aids, moderate loss in both ears, in the workforce.

"Best thing ever, Awesome – I just wished it was forever"

Bec, 18, wears two hearing aids, moderate loss in both ears, studying at University.

"I see this as an important and necessary change as at those ages many are studying full time, or just getting started in the workforce and their hearing is crucial at such times."

More Support for students with a Disability.

On 3 May, the Prime Minister announced new budget funding of \$200 million to provide extra support for students with a disability in Australian Schools.

This initiative will deliver new services, equipment and support such as:

- Speech therapy and occupational therapy to be delivered at school by health and student welfare professionals.
- Access to special equipment in classrooms such as audio and visual technology so that can students can more easily engage with their classmates and teachers.
- Additional hours of in-class support from staff including teachers aides, health and allied health professionals.

Visit: http://www.deewr.gov.au/Schooling/Programs/Documents/FAQs_SWD.pdf for more information on this.

What's On

Australian Museum

6 College Street Sydney
NSW 2010 Australia

Phone

(612) 9320 6000

Level 2 Dinosaurs Exhibition

Admission

- \$12 Adult
- \$6 Child (5 –15 years)
- \$30 Family (2 adults + 2 children)

Indoor Rock Climbing

Qualified instructors with Auslan Interpreters.

Age: 10-17 yrs old

Cost: \$10 per person

When: Saturday 9th July 2011

Time: Be there 11.30am

Where: 4C/1-7 Unwins Bridge Road, St Peters

RSVP: Let David or Donovan from **Deaf Dudes** know by Friday 8th July please.

Contact Donovan or David 0408697773 or 0408669672



Museum of
Contemporary Art

Sunday Family Funday

Sunday 12 June, 10.30 – 12.00noon

Explore the MCA Autumn season with these fun family friendly gallery tours and art making sessions. Learn about a different exhibition each month. Suitable for families with 5-12 year old children.

Learn about *MCA Collection: New Acquisitions in Context 2010* in June.

\$15 Adult/\$10 Children/\$40 Family Pass for 4
Prepaid bookings essential: education@mca.com.au
or 02 9245 2484

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Dear Parents/ Carers, you are invited to attend a

POD Macarthur Positive Parenting Session

Free
Parent
Session

DATE: Thursday 30th June 2011

VENUE: Western Suburbs League Club
Campbelltown
10 Old Leumeah Road, LEUMEAH,
NSW 2560
Phone: (02) 4628 4188

TIME: 10.00-1.00pm

RSVP: by 17th June to gloria@pcde.org
or ph 9871 3049

Please advise if an interpreter is required

What is Positive Parenting?

Positive Parenting is a well known parenting program that gives parents clear and simple strategies to turn problems around and also to prevent problems from developing in the first place.

Kathy Wright is a qualified Triple P Positive Parenting Program presenter and a parent of Deaf children.

In this mornings session Kathy will share with parents an overview of how Positive Parenting strategies can work for you and your deaf or hearing impaired child.

Meet **Kathy Wright** who will facilitate this session on **Positive Parenting**, with a focus on parenting deaf or hearing impaired children

Morning Tea provided

Children are welcome to attend.*



'POD' Macarthur is a local parent support group open to parents and caregivers of children with any degree or type of deafness.

POD Support groups are coordinated by Parent Council for Deaf Education (PCDE), the peak body for parents of children who are deaf or hearing impaired in NSW

Ph: 9871 3049 Email: pcde@bigpond.com Web: www.pcde.org



cap that! is a week-long event during National Literacy and Numeracy Week that promotes the simple concept

of using captions in the classroom. Our ultimate aim is to get every school across Australia with deaf or ESL

students to turn on captions for the whole class. **cap that!** is part of MAA's long-term education strategy.

The key message is: the classroom is not complete without captions.

The event concept is fully developed and ready to be implemented in two stages. The first stage is a grassroots version in 2011 with activities based around a website resource for teachers, aimed at building momentum and involvement for the full scale version in 2012. Deaf students can't wait. This is why MAA is acting now.

Why cap that?

83% of Deaf and hearing impaired students go to mainstream schools, but their needs are not being consistently

addressed across states and systems. Typically there are one or two hearing impaired students in every school.

What are the benefits?

Access: Captions provide access to audiovisual content for all hearing impaired students.

Technology: **cap that!** uses online and audiovisual media to engage teachers and students, and to inform teachers and parents about captions, their benefits and how to use them.

Resources: Captions are a simple, cost-effective and readily available resource, so

'turning the captions on' is an inclusive practice that can and should become

standard teaching practice.

Literacy: Captions can improve inclusion for English as a Second Language (ESL)

learners and visual learners, whilst having proven literacy benefits for all students.

Key cap that activities

Inclusion: Inclusion in the education process during primary and

secondary school years helps to improve tertiary and employment outcomes.

Beyond watching captioned content, activities for 2011 are based around a national website and include:

- Collaborative, web-based, age and subject appropriate activities designed to engage the whole class, rather than focusing on the hearing impaired student
- The ability to share stories of captions in the classroom and ideas to get captions switched on.
- Resources to build teachers' knowledge and skills on fully including hearing impaired students.

cap that! supports key Government initiatives, specifically the National Disability Strategy and the Digital

Education Revolution.

cap that! has received

strong endorsement from key deaf and education organisations.



Investment

MAA is securing funds for 2011 and will seek philanthropic support for the full version of **cap that!** in 2012. For **cap that!** 2012 MAA seeks funding from the Federal Government

Technology– Teaching Tools @ Home

In a recent information session at CICADA, Michael Harrison, a teacher of the deaf based in Yamba NSW, passed on the following information. He outlined useful applications (“apps”) that you, as a parent, might use at home to help develop language skills in your child.

Some general tips that you might wish to consider:

- It needs to be fun and relevant to your child!
- Have a couple of ‘plans’ in case plan A doesn’t work out.
- Let your child direct how things go (within reason).
- Positive reinforcement goes a long way
- Know when to give your child (and yourself) a break.
- Work with professionals (teachers, therapists, audiologists etc) to develop goals.
- Practise using correct language YOURSELF when you speak.
- Make a fool of yourself occasionally
- **Encourage** your child. **Stimulate** their curiosity.

Show them how to do it.

- Exaggerate occasionally (highlight the inane)

Some prompts that you might use in different learning opportunities.

“Tell me MORE about...”

“Can you show me the... “(one item)

“Can you show me the and the “(two items),

“Show me something that can fly.”, “Did you know that...”

“Oh Oh! What's wrong here!” (sabotage),

“This is a Your turn/say it with me -

this is a”

“Have you seen a.... with a ?“(make up unusual/funny combinations (dog with a log/ice cream)

Soundtouch .

This app will give you hours of fun (and learning opportunities).

<http://itunes.apple.com/au/app/soundtouch/>

You need to ensure that you have some sort of a goal in mind with this one as your child may end up going off and playing with other parts of the app that are not perhaps what you were hoping to work on this time around.

You could use most of the prompts above as a starting point.

An excellent way to use this app is to simply talk about the different images (animals etc) and their sounds with your child.

“Isn’t that a funny looking bird!

Can you see all the pretty colours on its wing?”,

“Is that your favourite animal? Why is that?”,

“Does that train go fast or slow?”,

“How cool would it be to have a toy like that!” and so on.

Try to vary between statements and questions as you want to encourage your child to speak, not just listen.

A second, more slightly challenging way to use this app is to get your child to close their eyes and you pick an icon, say, an animal for example. Your child has to guess what the sound is and then they can do the same to you and YOU have to guess what the sound is. Important note—you need to work up to this type of activity—it



would not be fair on a child to be able to identify a sound that he or she has had little or no exposure to. Some of the objects/animals won’t exist in your child’s life so you need to be careful with which ones you choose. You might want to introduce unfamiliar objects to your child before incorporating into your activities.

Even simply allowing your child to play with this app could actually be a good thing as far as developing their listening skills.

At time of writing there were 24 different apps created by this group. Some of the apps are simple flash card type apps which shows an image and plays an audio sample of the object (see below on left). Some of the other apps such as ‘What Rhymes?’ (WR) instructs you to choose images that rhyme from a choice of four.

Cont. on pg 13

Peter's Story

Written by Gavin and Liz Vermeulen, Peter's parents.

Our son, Peter was born with normal hearing in Jan 2005.

When he was 3 ½, he contracted pneumococcal meningitis. Whilst he was recovering in hospital, he lost his hearing.

Approximately 4 weeks after leaving hospital, he was diagnosed with severe-profound hearing impairment (sensorineural) in both ears.

Without doubt, this was the worst time of our lives. We were so grateful Peter had survived, yet scared for his future. We had no experience with deafness.

Approx 4 weeks post hearing loss, Peter's speech became unintelligible. Communicating became so difficult. We enrolled in RIDBC's Hearing Impairment Early Learning Program.

This provided support, Makaton sign language, and useful ways to communicate. For e.g. creating a photo book



Peter at switch on 18 Dec 2008

with photographs of places we took Peter too. Using Google images for those pictures we didn't have printouts for. These were new ways to communicate with Peter. He desperately wanted to know what was going on.



March, 2011 – Peter 6, with sister, Emma 4

Around this time we learned about cochlear implants, and the Sydney Cochlear Implant Centre (SCIC). We met Dr Cathy Birman, ENT and cochlear implant surgeon at SCIC. She explained that depending on the damage to Peter's hearing, he may be able to hear via cochlear implants. However, the decision was not easy. My husband and I really struggled with this decision on Peter's behalf (surgery has many risks, including meningitis). Fortunately, Peter had a successful surgery on 11 Dec 2008, switch on 18 Dec 2008. Peter had a little smile at switch on, but the impact for him was huge!!

Peter adapted well to the new sound. He worked hard at the appointments and at home. Within a few weeks, his level of frustration really reduced. Auditory verbal was his preferred communication mode, and he was able to latch onto the electric sound. We included him in everything. The only time he doesn't wear his processors is in the bath, beach or swimming pool, or asleep.

Peter started Kindergarten at the mainstream local school in Feb 2010 & receives Itinerant Hearing support. He adapted well to

school, as did his teacher. I've put her quote from Day 3 of Kindy

'This is really going to work!' What a relief! I found it really hard to handover Peter's care to his teacher, who didn't know deafness.

"However, I'm a strong advocate for Peter and the school is very well organised and truly caring. I've learned to trust the school."

Peter lost even more of his residual hearing in his non-implanted ear in May 2010.

Again, concern that bone could be forming in this cochlea meant rushing Peter for MRI and CT.

Preparing him for these tests, all in the same hospital where he first was ill and recovered, was really tough psychologically (for us parents too). This meant preparing Peter for another general anaesthetic (by now, he'd had about 10 in 18 months).

Peter's Story

The scans were clear...but this opened up the idea for a 2nd cochlear implant.

Again, this was a huge consideration, again, the concerns around meningitis risk and managing Peter's fear of surgery.



Peter, 6, loves sports – especially soccer, cricket and basketball

On the plus side, increased access to hearing in noisy conditions (school playground) & hearing the full speech range in each ear. I posed so many questions to Peter's audiologists, speech therapist, Dr Birman, and, other parents of CI children.

The next challenge was preparing Peter for surgery, in Oct 2010 (age 5 yrs, 10 months) .

It was to be able to easily communicate the road ahead – he had a clear understanding compared to the first CI. He was also equally clear he wanted the CI without requiring surgery! Showing Peter video clips of kids and adults talking about their 2nd CI helped here. Also letting him choose his reward for having surgery. I prepared a chart with the post switch on appointments & we had dinner out to celebrate his switch on.

Peter's worked hard with learning to hear the new sounds in his newly implanted cochlea.

From day 1 post switch on, he voluntarily listened with the new CI for at least an hour a day.



Peter's quote 'Mum, when I put on this 2nd processor, the sound goes up!' Peter's about to undergo his 6 monthly post switch on assessment for his 2nd implant. So far, he's on par with his hearing peers for speech, listening and language.

Our General Practitioner (GP) recently saw Peter & hadn't seen him since mid last year (pre 2nd CI). She was amazed at his improved hearing and his confidence. What great feedback !

Right now, Peter's excited about his future, so are we as his parents.

BOOKS -Available from The Auslan Shop

Simple easy way to teach your baby to sign and a great way to allow you to enjoy the rhyme.



Teddy Bear Teddy Bear

Age :6-12months

Author: Anne Kubler

\$12.95 inc gst



Baa Baa Black Sheep

Age :6-12months

Author: Anne Kubler

\$12.95 inc gst



Twinkle Twinkle Little Star

Age :6-12months

Author: Anne Kubler

\$12.95 inc gst



Incey Wincey Spider

Age :6-12months

Author: Anne Kubler

\$12.95 inc gst

Ten Things Teachers Wish Parents Knew

Teachers undoubtedly have one of the hardest jobs in the world.

Its important that parents once in a while, put themselves in the shoes of how challenging their working day can be. If we partner more successfully with teachers, we can help deliver better learning outcomes for our children.

Lets look at some of the key things that teachers wish parents knew, in the hope that we can make the most of the parent-teacher partnership.

1. Get the facts before you react

Sometimes parents go into attack mode when their child complains about a teacher or a classroom situation. Give your teacher the benefit of the doubt. Try to put emotions aside and find out the facts before you react.

2. Don't go over a teachers head

Often parents take a problem straight to the principal – or gossip with other parents. Gossip is damaging and sets the wrong behavioural example for your child.

Its important to respect the chain of command, talk to your teacher in the first instance. If you have an issue that is not resolved to your satisfaction with your teachers, then you might consider going to the principal. But in most cases, if you're open to hearing facts and having sensible dialogue, issues can be resolved directly with your child's teacher.

3. Respect your teacher and their view

Remember that the teacher is on your side. Teachers genuinely care for your children and are working towards their success.

Trust in the teachers feedback- even if you're hearing something about your child that you don't like. A child can your first set of hearing aids you can purchase an air puffer from your hearing centre.

exhibit very different behaviours at home than in the classroom. Listen to what the teacher has to say and work with him/her to find a solution.

4. Give feedback when things are good

Parents are quick to get in touch over problems, but often remain silent when things are going beautifully. An email or phone call when you have some positive feedback can go a long way.

It can be a much needed morale booster when teachers or principals hear some positive feedback. So if your child enjoys a class event or school festival, say so. If you have an exceptional teacher at your school, why not nominate them for an award?

5. Get involved and get to know your teacher

The relationship between teachers and parents is often key to student success. Unfortunately, many parents go through the school year without communicating with the teacher or understanding what needed to make the most of the year.

Remember that communication is a two-way street between parent and teacher. Be sure to make yourself known to your teacher- and not just on parent/teacher interview nights. Take time to introduce yourself early in the year and keep in touch at regular intervals.

6. Keep the learning going

Learning doesn't stop when the home-time bell sounds. One of the best ways you can help your child is to stay abreast of homework and encourage them to discuss what they're working on at school. This helps build confidence in your child and reinforces what is being taught in the classroom.

7. Help your child be organised

Keep up with school notices and permission slips that need to be returned. Encourage your child to hand up their bag and empty their backpack as part of their after-school routine. Two simple letter trays to place homework to be done and school notices can help.



8. Keep home a haven

Cut down on chaos and clutter at home. If your home life is disorganised, this can carry over into the classroom and make learning difficult for your child. Keeping a tidy home, an organised homework areas and a clean bedroom can help your child feel more relaxed, prepared and focused for the day ahead.

9. Understand that mistakes are ok

Being at school is all about learning, so your child is not expected to know it all.

“Some parents set such high expectation that they can end up damaging confidence”, says Stephanie, a Melbourne based teacher. “ Its important to avoid putting too much pressure on a child”

“Some projects look great but its easy to see which ones are truly the result of the children working independently – and that's something we'd much rather see because the student feels full ownership of their work”

10. Address behavioural issues at home

Lets face it- most children are not perfect and will, at times, have behavioural issues that need to be addressed at home, Its only in a parents nature to automatically jump to the defence of their child, but ultimately you might not be helping if this means that valuable life-lessons are being overlooked.

Disability Provisions For The HSC and The School Certificate

Parents who have a child with a disability face challenges every day. Supporting their child as they take on life events such as sitting major examinations can bring with it some of those challenges. It is important that those parents know about the services that are available to their child, and are confident that the right supports are in place.

Students who have a disability are eligible to apply for Disability Provisions (formerly known as Special Provisions) when they sit Higher School Certificate examinations or School Certificate tests.

Chief Executive of the Board, Carol Tyler, said that parents should be reassured that if provisions were required, the Board and schools were able to respond appropriately.

“Our Disability Provisions don't mean that a student gets a special mark, but

they allow a student to either use agreed resources during an exam, or sit the exam in modified circumstances.”

“The Provisions exist to give students with a disability a better opportunity to respond to an exam paper in a way that is fair to them, and to other students.”

Ms Taylor said that the process of applying for Disability Provisions was undertaken by the student's school, but may require supporting documentation from medical practitioners or other health professionals.

“We also require the school to demonstrate how certain provisions have been used by the student during their time at the school to facilitate learning and testing.”

“For the first time, in 2011, the process of applying for Disability Provisions is being done completely online.”

Examples of provisions may include: Braille or large print papers, use of a write and/or reader, use of an interpreter, extension of test time, rest breaks, use of a personal computer, separate exam supervision, individual supervision, and permission to take medication.



Ms Taylor said that the broad criteria for eligibility were that if a student, without Disability Provisions, would not be able to read examination questions and/or communicate responses to those questions.

Source: NSW Parent Council Newsletter vol 34, No:6 May 2011

Disability Provisions At a Glance

- Disability Provisions are available to students in government and non-government schools who are eligible to sit the HSC or SC
- Broadly speaking, a student may be eligible if, in normal circumstances, they would not be able to read examination questions and/or communicate their responses.
- Applications are submitted through an online system to the Board of Studies by the student's school.
- Documentation may need to be provided by the student and/or the school to support the request.
- An appeal process is available if the Board declines all, or part, of an application.
- Applications open in Term 4 and close at the end of Term 1.
- Students affected by unexpected circumstances may be able to apply for Emergency Provisions or lodge an illness/ Misadventure appeal.
- Over 5000 NSW students made an application for Disability Provisions for the 2010 HSC. Around 92 percent were fully or partially approved.
- A further 6000 students applied for Disability Provisions for the School Certificate tests.
- Parents can find more information on the Board of Studies Disability Provisions program at www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/special-provisions/ or they should speak to their child's principal or year advisor.

Cybersmart Guide For Parents– Social Networking

Social networking is everywhere. Deaf and hearing impaired children are using these tools to communicate and share information. This brings pros and cons and parents need to be aware. It happens on a variety of services like YouTube, My Space, Facebook and Twitter. These websites allow users to create profiles, communicate with others and form networks of friends. Users can participate in a range of activities including chatting, sharing information and photos and posting comments in forums, blogs or discussion groups.

Different social networking sites have different purposes, including to:

- create communities of friends- MySpace and Bebo
- create and download video content- YouTube and Google video
- share still photos- Facebook and Flickr

Advice for parents

Where inappropriate information appears on a social networking website, users can contact the web-

site administrator to request that the offensive content is removed.

Social Networking sites generally have policies about unacceptable content, restricting content that users are allowed to upload. For example, some sites limit false profiles, content containing nudity or which presents violence. Website administrators generally rely on complaints from users in identifying unacceptable content, though this can be difficult to monitor because large quantities of content are posted every day.

Users can complain to the ACMA about offensive or illegal material including text, photographs or videos. The ACMA may take action if the material meets the criteria for prohibited content.

When making a complaint, users should provide the web address and log-in details. Log-in details, such as a user name and password, are particularly important as many social networking sites offer users the ability to restrict information to friends or affiliated users.

Complaints about content can be made at www.acma.gov.au/hotline

Parents can:

Set house rules about when children can give out or share personal information such as name, address or mobile number

Advise children to set profiles to private so that only people they want to see it can

Encourage children to think before they put anything online. Information posted online can be there indefinitely.

Encourage children to be careful when making new friends online- they might not be who they say they are- and never arrange to meet an online friend unless a trusted adult is with them

Report to the ACMA any material suspected of being prohibited

Report abuse or inappropriate content to the website administrator and show children how to do this

Visit the Cybersmart website for more information on social networking

Contact the Cybersafety Contact Centre for advice

Technology– Teaching Tools @ Home Cont. from pg 7

ABA Flash Cards

<http://kindergarten.com/>

An important note that Michael makes is that ALL of these apps feature an American accent which may be hard to understand. On occasion, when trialling these apps, parents may have to play the sounds/instructions a couple of times to be able to understand what is required.

Further to the above types of apps that Kindergarten.com have developed, there are a few receptive language task apps that asks the

user to listen to instructions such as:

Kindergarten.com also offers affordability with apps ranging from free to \$1.19 each - a bargain in anyone's language!

Interactive Nursery Rhymes - Kids love it when nursery rhymes come to life, or offer them opportunities to interact, whether it be on television or on a device such as the iPad/iPhone. There are **MANY** different apps available from the iTunes app store that encourage your child to sing/talk along to the story—most with some form of interactivity. The

two Michael suggests are Bus HD & Old Macdonald's Farm.

While you are able to just sing along, there is the added bonus of being able to record you, or your child, singing to each song which can be played back afterward.

Kids will also get a laugh out of touching different things on the screen and seeing what they do.

A good group of general apps that simply makes learning fun!

Try them out and see if they work for you!

Did You Know?

- ? If your child has held a Health Care Card from Centrelink and is now over 16, he or she is eligible for a Health Care Card for over 16's. For an application form:
<http://www.centrelink.gov.au/internet/internet.nsf/forms/ss456.htm>
- ? Well known cookbook author and restaurateur Stephanie Alexander, has a hearing loss and wears hearing aids? Cicada, the publication of Cicada Australia, recently profiled Stephanie in their latest magazine. You can pick up a copy at your local Australian Hearing office.
- ? Phonak has released a new soundfield system, Dynamic Soundfield, which is getting good reviews from users. It is compatible with Phonak FMs and has recently become available in Australia.
 For information:
http://www.phonak.com/au/b2c/en/products/more_products/soundfield/dynamic_soundfield.html
 or contact: Mary Mavrias on 0488 443 296 to arrange a two week trial at your child's school.
- ? 2012 Australian Deaf Games will be held from 14th to 21st January 2012. Featuring 18 sports, they will be held in Geelong.
 See www.austdeafgames.org
- ? iPads are becoming increasingly popular as an educational tool. These devices offer fantastic apps and media for deaf and hearing impaired children to learn and develop. Parents need to ensure that they have activated a pass code or other restrictions to avoid "bill shock". Many parents are experiencing this as a result of finding out that their kids, often unknowingly, have made purchases within some apps or incurred high excess usage charges using the internet on the iPad.
 Visit: www.apple/support.com or www.accan.org.au for further information.
- ? The Federal Government has just released a response to the Senate Committee's Inquiry into Hearing Health in Australia. You can read it on:
http://www.aph.gov.au/Senate/committee/clac_ctte/hearing_health/index.htm
- ? Youthbeyondblue is the youth section of *beyondblue: the national depression initiative* that has a specific focus on young people aged 12 to 25 years. Youthbeyondblue programs and projects aim to raise awareness of depression and anxiety in young people and focus on early intervention and prevention. The Deaf Society has recently recd a grant from youthbeyondblue to run a series of workshops for this age group and would like your involvement. If you are 12-25 years and would like to participate in a training program for deaf youth in July, contact Katrina Lancaster at the Deaf Society of NSW. They are looking for a project group, of between 3 and 5 people of the ages between 12-25 to brainstorm the content of the workshop, to learn about depression and anxiety and to present to other young people! If this sounds like something you would be interested in, contact klancaster@deafsociety.com.



Profile : Kris Newton, CEO of Deafness Forum

Kris has recently joined Deafness Forum as their new CEO. Here Kris shares some insights about her life experiences :

Childhood....

I grew up on an orchard in the Blue Mountains, outside Sydney, in the 50s & 60s – an idyllic childhood in many ways, as we spent all of our spare time ‘exploring’ the bush, and roaming quite independently even when we were quite young; or riding our bikes for miles to visit our friends or looking for soft-drink bottles tossed out of car windows (they used to give a rebate back, as SA does now!).

Inspiration....

So many people – some well-known, and others completely unknown. Basically, the message is: ‘Stand up for what is right – even though you are alone this will make a difference; but if you stand by your principles, others (often many others) will join in trying to do what’s right’. Sometimes, I think people just need a ‘handle’ to hold onto – someone who can succinctly articulate the principle; someone who will act as spokesperson so others can say “Me, too”; a ‘cause’ to join. Too often, our ‘leaders’ are not – they may be ‘leaders of industry’, or politicians, or senior in their roles, but they don’t always stand by their principles - and this leads to disillusion and cynicism.

Marriage....

No, thanks! [See also ‘I wish I hadn’t ...’] I did ‘acquire’ a son, though, which was a huge benefit.

My parents always told me...

“You can do anything you set your mind to.” “There’s always a solution to every problem”. “Education = choice (i.e. independence)”. My parents were completely self-taught, and loved to learn. I learned to love reading from a very early age, and the excitement of learning the ‘new’ has never left me. I was the ‘book-worm’: on the school bus (we had a 40 minute drive to high-school) I would have my nose buried in

a book (fiction or non-fiction) while everyone else was gossiping or playing up; and as a child I would often take a torch under the bed-covers to finish a good book (luckily, I managed to avoid asphyxiation!). It is still a major luxury for me to just have the time to sit, relax, and read a good book.

I wish I had....

Gone to Crete, and Paris, and the other American National Parks (and several other places) when I had the chance!

I wish I hadn’t.....

Married my ex-! [See also ‘Life Lesson ... ’ ☺]

I am passionate about....

About respecting everything on the planet; which means I’m also passionate about human rights, social justice and the environment. It’s one of the reasons I sing with my women’s choir in Canberra – we sing for fun, but also for a purpose. I’m also passionate about my garden, about slow food, about creating beautiful things (around me, or to wear). I’m also a passionate giver – I’ve needed to learn to say ‘No’ occasionally and look after myself.

Career highlight.....

Coming to Deafness Forum! I spent many years as a volunteer in the community sector in the ACT; this way, I get to give back to my community AND get paid for it! I love working in this sector, and it is so very satisfying to begin to see the results of so many efforts by so many for so long finally coming to fruition, helping to change people’s lives for the better.

Life Lesson....

Trust my instincts. They’re good, I just don’t listen to them often enough ☺!!

Technology...

I’m a real geek-girl – I love my toys (like my iPhone, or my new iPad2) because they make work and life easier, and much more fun. I’m looking forward to being able to tell my household appliances what to do by remote control via my mobile! Seriously, though, rapid changes in technology are making such an enormous difference in people’s lives (particularly for the hearing or vision impaired), that it’s a pleasure to



Kris Newton

be involved with the sector at such a time of transition.

Mentor.....

The most influential mentor I ever had was my colleague and boss in the public sector, whose attitude was to “chuck ‘em in the deep end”, and see who could swim! Luckily, I did; and he encouraged me to find out just what I could do - so I did.

I am reading.....

Re-reading two old favourites, William L. Shirer's monumental study of Hitler's rise and demise, the *Rise & Fall of the Third Reich*; and *The March of Folly*, Barbara Tuchman's fabulous portrayal of the disastrous consequences of un-enlightened self-interest by various forms of government through time.

I am listening to.....

Tibet2Timbuktu a musical journey from Asia to Africa, and (an old favourite) Bach's fantastic Brandenburg Concertos. I've also become addicted to iTunes University, where I can download podcasts of lectures – the latest (I'm almost finished) is Dr Isobel Pafford's 'Roman Empire' series at UC Berkeley.

Deafness Forum is a national peak body for the deaf, hearing impaired and those with disorders of the ear.

Visit: www.deafnessforum.org.au

Our mission:

‘To empower parents in NSW to support their children who are deaf or hearing impaired in reaching their full potential through information, support networks and representation.’



Parent Council for Deaf Education

Block D
361-365 North Rocks Road
North Rocks NSW 2151
PO Box 4748
North Rocks NSW 2151

Parent Council for
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Enquiries, comments and sug-
gestions are welcome.

Note: We use the term ‘deaf’
to mean all types of deafness.