

For Immediate Release - 12 October 2006

MEDIA RELEASE



Women's liberation lottery to build house for isolated deaf kids

A first of its kind women's 'liberation' lottery is being run by Deaf Children Australia to raise \$1 million to build a house for isolated deaf and hearing impaired children.

Many rural Victorian deaf and hearing impaired children are currently unable to access early intervention and specialist deaf education services because no such services exist in their areas.

Parents are uprooting their families to move closer to metropolitan deaf facilities or are struggling with the logistic and financial nightmare of accessing deaf facilities located hours away from their homes.

The house, which will be erected in Gissing Street, Blackburn, will answer the prayers of four rural families whose children aged 3-6 will then be able to access the specialist services of deaf preschool Aurora.

The Blackburn house will be the fifth residential facility in Victoria currently operated by Deaf Children to assist deaf children from country areas to attend schools appropriate for their needs.

Lisa Rookes, mother of deaf three-year-old Hamish is one of the families assisted through the Deaf Children Australia accommodation programme.

"The grief we experienced when we found out our little boy was deaf increased tenfold when we discovered that the only school available to meet his needs – Aurora - was located in Melbourne, a six hour round trip from our country home. Relocating to Melbourne was not financially viable for us. We would have had to send Hamish to his local school, where he would not have the vital services he needed.

"Deaf Children Australia threw us a lifeline by offering to provide our family with accommodation in Melbourne so that Hamish could access the specialist deaf preschool Aurora.

"Deaf Children Australia have given Hamish the opportunity to do what most other children take for granted – attend a school that meets his needs, and have friends he can communicate with. Because of Deaf Children Australia, we can approach Hamish's future with confidence, knowing that he has been given the best possible start in life."

The women's liberation lottery aims to improve life for all women by liberating them with fantastic prizes including a trip to Tuscany, your mortgage paid off or your household bills, groceries and petrol paid for five years. It also gives them the opportunity to choose 5 out of 12 prizes to the value of \$1,000,000.

Street:
597 St Kilda Road,
Melbourne, VIC 3004

Postal:
PO Box 6466,
St Kilda Road Central,
Melbourne, VIC 8008

Tel: + 61 3 9539 5300
Fax: +61 3 9525 2595
TTY: +61 3 9510 7143
Helpline: 1800 645 916
info@deafchildren.org.au
www.deafchildreanaustralia.org.au

ACN 108 025 207 ABN 57 108 025 207

CEO of Deaf Children Australia, Damian Lacey says, "Our vision at Deaf Children Australia is that deafness is no barrier. Buying a ticket will not only improve the lives of women; it will also give deaf and hearing impaired children who are living in isolated areas the chance to access vital education services they desperately need and allow them to fulfil their true potential."

Deaf Children Australia - formerly VSDC Services - has been providing information, advocacy, support services and educational resources to enrich the lives of deaf and hearing impaired children and young adults for 144 years. Deaf Children Australia represents the needs of 16,000 deaf and hearing impaired children throughout Australia. As a not-for-profit organisation, their service is made possible with the support of volunteers, the community, businesses and government financial grants.

For more information on Deaf Children Australia, please call 1300 365 196 or log on to www.deafchildrenaustralia.org.au

To buy a ticket, please call 1300 667 728 or visit www.liberationlottery.com

Media enquiries: please call Julie Postance on 9539 5362 or jpostance@deafchildren.org.au