

IMPACT REPORT 20 23

Delivering pioneering programs that foster inclusion and help children and young people reach their potential.

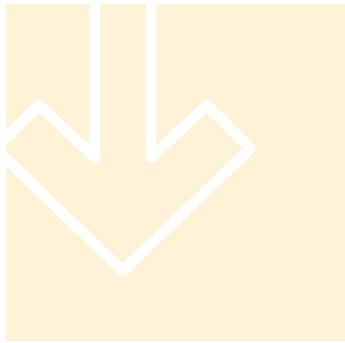
Deaf
Children
Australia.

MY HERO-MY MUM

Hasas Abeygunawardana, VIC

CATEGORY 8 TO 11 YEARS





MISSION

To inspire and empower deaf and hard-of-hearing children and young people to reach their full potential.

VISION

To create a world where children and young people who are deaf or hard-of-hearing have every opportunity to achieve positive life outcomes.



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CHAIR & CEO REPORT

We have great pleasure in presenting our 161st Impact Report, for the year ending 30 June 2023.

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Guiding the work we do every day.

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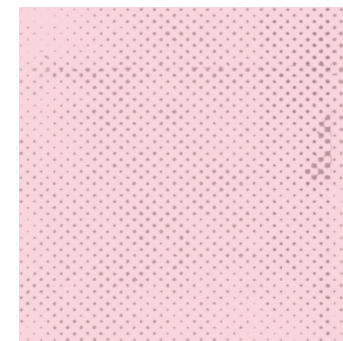
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THE BOARD

Acknowledgement of Country

Deaf children Australia would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the Country where we work and provide service. We would also like to acknowledge all indigenous peoples, whose wisdom and knowledge offered great opportunities for humanity to learn how to be more respectful of the land we inhabit.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers should be aware this publication may contain images or names of people who have since passed away.





Dear Valued Members,
Partners & Supporters,

It is with great honour that I present to you the Annual Impact Report for Deaf Children Australia for the financial year ending 30th June 2023. As we celebrate our 161st year, we have not only continued our journey of supporting, empowering, and advocating for deaf and hard of hearing (DHH) children, young people, and their families but also significantly expanded DCA's reach across Australia.

This year marks a significant milestone in our organisation's history, as we embarked on the first year of implementing our new 2022-25 Strategic Plan. This plan has been instrumental in guiding our projects and innovations, aiming to transform mainstream community systems and structures to better meet the unique needs of DHH individuals and their families.

In the continued unpredictability of the post-Covid-19 landscape, we have adapted to the evolving work environment, fully embracing a hybrid working model, creating a flexible and inclusive work setting for our teams. This shift, while bringing opportunities for greater work-life balance and efficiency, also posed challenges in maintaining connectivity and engagement. We have been proactive in ensuring that our teams remain cohesive and mission-aligned, regardless of their physical work location.

This year has been marked by remarkable successes, particularly our Puggles Swim Program, which received nationwide recognition and support. This initiative has been warmly received by the learn-to-swim community, and we extend our sincere gratitude to our national partners, AustSwim and SCTA (Swim Coaches & Teachers Australia), for their support. Additionally, the Deaf Children Australia Annual Art Exhibition has continued to spotlight the incredible talents of young DHH artists.

Maggie Sandles, one of the winners from our inaugural art event, will have her artwork prominently featured as part of Melbourne's ever-expanding skyline in a major public art project, demonstrating the public interest and engagement in this initiative.

We have continued our commitment to being resourceful and supportive, with our Flying Colours online resource, Blueprint Lead by Example project, and Platypus Playhouse bilingual language resources playing a crucial role in supporting children and families. Our Sign for Work program has been pivotal in facilitating meaningful employment for DHH individuals, ensuring their skills and aspirations align with real-world opportunities.

Our Parent Mentor Team continue to do their important work, helping families with deaf or hard of hearing children in Queensland and Victoria navigate their new worlds as journey partners in the early years. Our DCA Family Camps in Queensland and Victoria continue to be highly valued, where strong connections and great memories are made. We are extending this wonderful opportunity to our first DCA Tasmania Family Camp in 2024.

Aligning more closely with our vision, mission, and strategic direction, we made the significant decision to close our direct NDIS services under DCAPlus. This strategic shift enables us to concentrate our resources and efforts more effectively, ensuring we create the most significant impact in the lives of deaf and hard of hearing children and young people far and wide.

CEO REPORT



On behalf of the team, I extend our heartfelt gratitude to our volunteer Board members, dedicated staff, and generous supporters. Your unwavering support, particularly through the transitional changes of the past year, has been the cornerstone of our progress. The implementation of the new 2022-25 Strategic Plan, fostered by your support, is a testament to our collective vision for the future.

I would like to sincerely thank our Chair, Dr Kerry Ferguson, who is stepping down from the DCA Board this year. I have valued Kerry's counsel, support, and a like-minded long-view approach over the last four years as we embarked on DCA's transformational journey. I am extremely proud of what we have achieved together, and Kerry's legacy is clearly apparent in her steadfast support of our new initiatives, programs, and DCA's repositioning in the national space.

As we look back on this transformative year and ahead to the future, we are filled with optimism and determination. The foundations laid by the first year of our strategic plan have positioned us well for continued transformation and impact.

With deep appreciation and a renewed commitment to our mission, we stand united in our resolve to create a world of opportunity and inclusion for DHH children and young people.

Warmest Regards,

David Wilson
CEO, DEAF CHILDREN AUSTRALIA



It is with much sadness that I write this Chair of the Board Report. This is the end of my time constitutionally with Deaf Children Australia (DCA). I have been humbled and privileged to have been a Director of DCA for 9 years, with the last 4 years as Chair of the Board. During that time, there have been enormous changes, but at the same time, never departing from our mission of continuing to support and advance the opportunities of deaf and hard of hearing children and young people and their families.

During this last year, our lives continued to adjust and reconcile from the past turbulent years following on from the pandemic. We have learnt and adapted to new ways of connecting – with new language and more hybrid work practices emerging that have guided how we deliver on our mission and create a sustainable and efficient organisation.

The loss of revenue due to the downturn on the share market has required us to rethink how we operate and continue to provide the support and initiatives that are at the core of DCA.

During this year in review, one of our key milestones was the operationalisation of DCA's new Strategic Plan for 2022-2025.

The development of DCA's new Strategic Plan was based on rich information gathered from DCA's Flying Colours survey, undertaken in 2020 and 2021, to which close to 500 parents with DHH children and Allied Health professionals responded.

DCA's Strategic Plan outlines four strategic outcomes which are: Championing Communication and Life Skills, Better Supporting Families, Deeply Connecting Communities, and Advocating for Inclusivity and Change.

The new enterprises developed through the Strategic Operational Plan are exciting and already making an impact in the community. The financial basis for these activities will continue to be understood and managed accordingly.

Two of these initiatives, the Platypus Playhouse and Puggles Swim program, provide our stakeholders with much needed resources and assist our families and children to overcome the barriers to participation in community life that is the right of every child.

I had the pleasure of attending several events including the donors' luncheon and the DCA Art Exhibition. At these gatherings, the true spirit and extraordinary talent and stories of our community were remarkable.

As we all adapted to new post-pandemic work arrangements, I am grateful for the loyalty, resilience and adaptability of the staff and above all, their outstanding support of the families, children and young people of DCA.

This has been made possible through the leadership of the CEO, David Wilson. He has been steadfast in providing the organisation with a positive, confident and creative way forward.

I thank him for his devotion to the mission of DCA and the exceptional creativity of developing initiatives, programs and products that deliver on the mission's promise.

Thank you to the Board Directors and their extraordinary commitment to DCA. As volunteers, they have executed their Director responsibilities with enthusiasm, wisdom and generosity.



Carol Webb, as Deputy Chair, and her family have been wonderful ambassadors for DCA and I thank Carol for her endless support of DCA and myself as Chair of the Board.

A much-valued Board member, Karen Cleave, also departs this year. Karen joined the Board in November 2014, and having now met the three x three-year term mandate for Board participation, steps down at the 2023 AGM. She has been a fearless and steadfast force, particularly in addressing the challenges of the organisation, including but not limited to, property considerations. She has also brought a deep understanding and experience of the context of DCA in the government sector.

Thank you to our volunteers and donors - without you we would not be able to achieve what we do. Your contribution is vital to our ongoing success and sustainability.

CHAIR REPORT

Lastly, to our community of families, children and young people, we thank you for your guidance, honest feedback and generosity in supporting the mission of DCA. You are at the core of all we do and your involvement makes the organisation relevant and agile in order to respond to community, family and individual needs. I am endlessly in awe of your talent, resilience and achievements.

The future of DCA is bright, as together we continue to strive to be the best we can be and work to create an environment that supports the flourishing of our children and young people.

Cherish and nurture the mission as it is special. My deepest best wishes to all those involved in upholding the precious mission that is the purpose of DCA.

K. Ferguson

Dr Kerry Ferguson
CHAIR, DEAF CHILDREN AUSTRALIA

CHAMPIONING COMMUNICATION AND LIFE SKILLS



By developing and expanding our Platypus Playhouse storybook range, we are ensuring that families and carers of deaf and hard-of-hearing (DHH) children have easy access to learning resources that build language and communication skills. Fostering the personal development and life skills of young DHH people is paramount to what we do at Deaf Children Australia. This is being achieved on a national scale with successful Youth Grants applicants receiving funding for their projects from states and territories across Australia.

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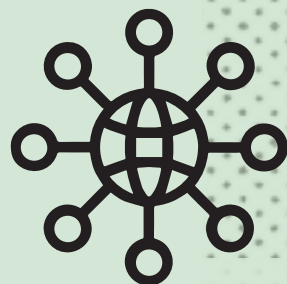
DEEPLY CONNECTING COMMUNITIES

Through our Annual Art Competition and Family Camps, DHH children and their families can build strong relationships and connections with other families and the Deaf community. These events provide a platform to foster resilience and confidence in DHH young people.

03

STRATEGIC OUTCOMES

Guiding the work we do every day.



BETTER SUPPORTING FAMILIES

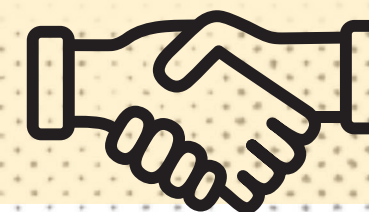
In order to enable families and caregivers of DHH children to make better decisions, we have provided a collection of clear, unbiased information and resources in one easy-to-access platform through our Flying Colours website. Similarly, our Parent Mentor Program supports families by connecting them to a parent with lived experience who is able to provide insights and information, no matter where a family is in their journey.

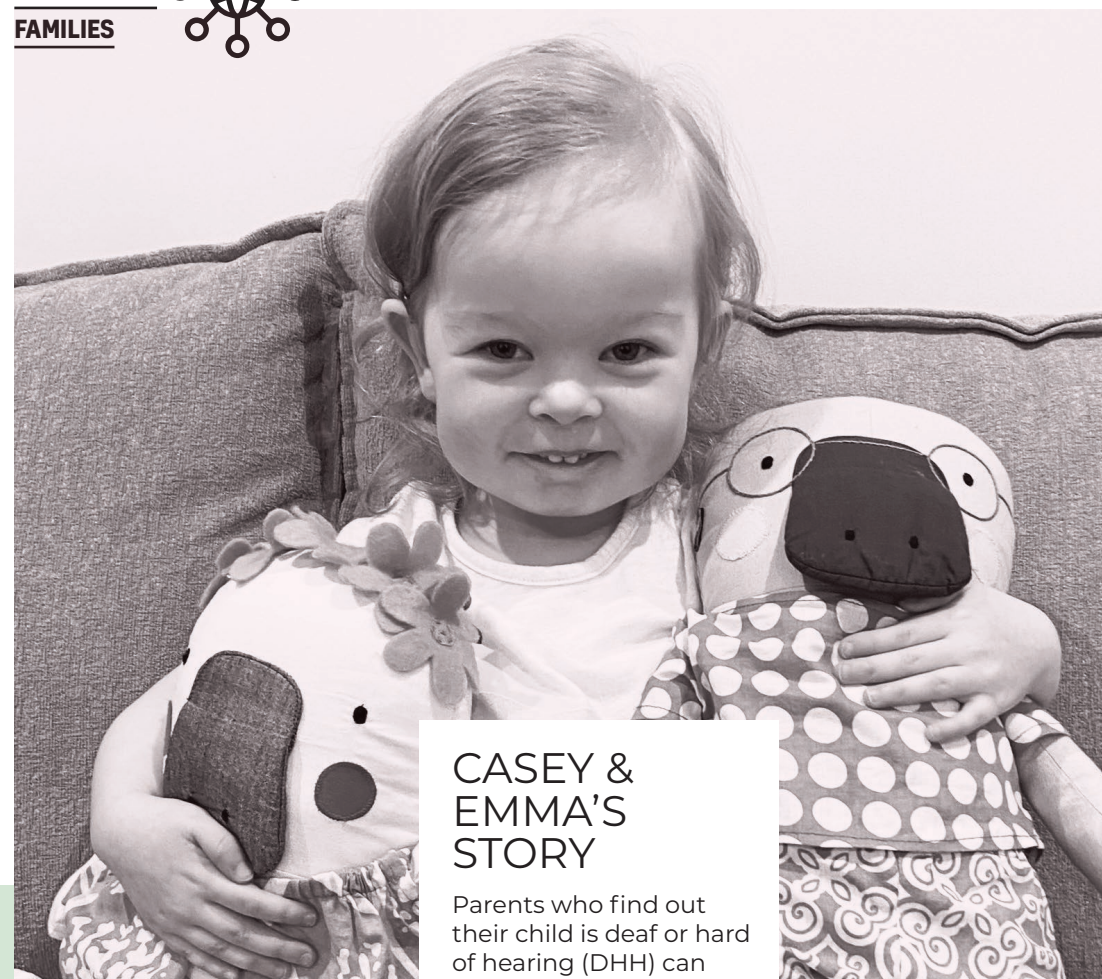
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ADVOCATING FOR INCLUSIVITY AND CHANGE

Our aim is for families to feel supported and confident about accessing activities and life opportunities readily available to others. Encouraging the inclusion of DHH young people in mainstream recreational and sporting activities is at the core of our Blueprint: Lead By Example project. Similarly, Puggles Swim is a way to upskill swim teachers so that they can confidently include a DHH child in their class.

04





CASEY & EMMA'S STORY

Parents who find out their child is deaf or hard of hearing (DHH) can often feel overwhelmed and unsure of what to do next. For many parents, having the support of someone with lived experience is instrumental in navigating a new world. For Casey, our Parent Mentor Program provided invaluable support in her child's diagnosis journey.

When Casey's daughter, Emma, didn't respond to the hearing test in the hospital, Casey spent a lot of time on Google, looking for stories of people with the same diagnosis, because she wanted to know what her daughter's life was going to be like. "I had no idea of what to do or where to turn," Casey recalled.

"Is she going to ever hear my voice? Am I ever going to hear her voice? What are the challenges going to be for her growing up? It was so overwhelming. And it was really quite scary."

CASEY, EMMA'S MUM



Casey was introduced to Deaf Children Australia's Parent Mentor Program through the audiology service at the Shepparton Hospital when Emma was about 6 months old.

Casey's Parent Mentor, also named Emma, would catch up with her monthly after the initial diagnosis, but it's now around twice a year. "It's just so nice to talk to somebody who just gets it. You can talk to family members, and you can talk to your friends, and they're lovely and mean well, but they just don't understand," Casey explains.

(top) EMMA with Pip & Annie Platypus buddies
(below) EMMA with her mum & dad

Casey really appreciated talking to someone who had experienced much of what she was going through, and getting lots of tips and tricks that she could try. She also appreciated having a safe person she could vent to when it all seemed like too much. "It's almost like a weight is lifted off my shoulders after I have a chat with her."

One of the suggestions Casey particularly appreciated was encouragement to engage with the local Deaf community, which seemed a little scary at first, but has opened up a whole new world for Emma.

Casey was delighted to meet her Parent Mentor, Emma, in person when her family attended our 2023 Family Camp in Victoria. She also enjoyed meeting other families with older children who had been through similar experience but were further along in their journey.

PARENT MENTOR PROGRAM

74
FAMILIES WERE
SUPPORTED ACROSS
QUEENSLAND AND
VICTORIA EACH MONTH
(ON AVERAGE)

1433+
OCCASIONS OF
SUPPORT WERE
DELIVERED BY THE
PARENT MENTOR
PROGRAM

providing
essential
support

Deaf
Children
Australia.

Our Parent Mentors support dozens of families every month and provide vital information that helps parents make the best decisions for their deaf and hard of hearing children. By supporting parents like Casey, our Parent Mentors have a huge impact on families as they embark on their child's diagnosis journey.

We'd like to thank **Children's Health Queensland** and the team at the **Healthy Hearing Program** for supporting the Parent Mentor Program in Queensland.

We'd also like to thank the **Flora & Frank Leith Charitable Trust** and **Collier Charitable Fund** for funding a Regional Parent Mentor in Victoria this year.

For 160 years Deaf Children Australia has been committed to removing the barriers to personal development and social inclusion faced by deaf and hard of hearing (DHH) children, young people and their families.



YOUTH GRANTS

**IN 2023,
WE AWARDED
APPROXIMATELY
\$39,000 TO
18 PROJECTS,
OFFERING YOUNG
PEOPLE THE
OPPORTUNITY
TO EXPLORE AND
ACCOMPLISH THEIR
VENTURE.**

Our Youth Grants continue to open doors for young people to pursue their interests and achieve their goals.

Here are just a few of the wonderful projects from all across Australia that will be supported and fulfilled by March 2024:



Edie Gifford (WA)

Edie is pursuing her passion and relocating to Sydney to study a Diploma in Musical Theatre.

Jay Pearce (NT)

Jay plans to open a market stall to sell hand-made crafts like crocheted items and hand-printed shirts.

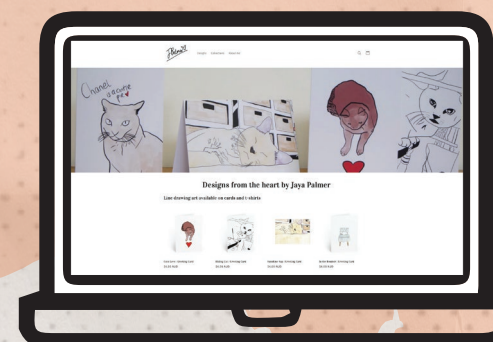


Nate Gale (QLD)

Nate will be using his grant to travel to Melbourne so he can compete at the Under 13 Australian National Ice Hockey Championships.

Cooper Todd (NSW)

Cooper is heading off to Indonesia where he will be improving his surfing, making it possible for him to compete.



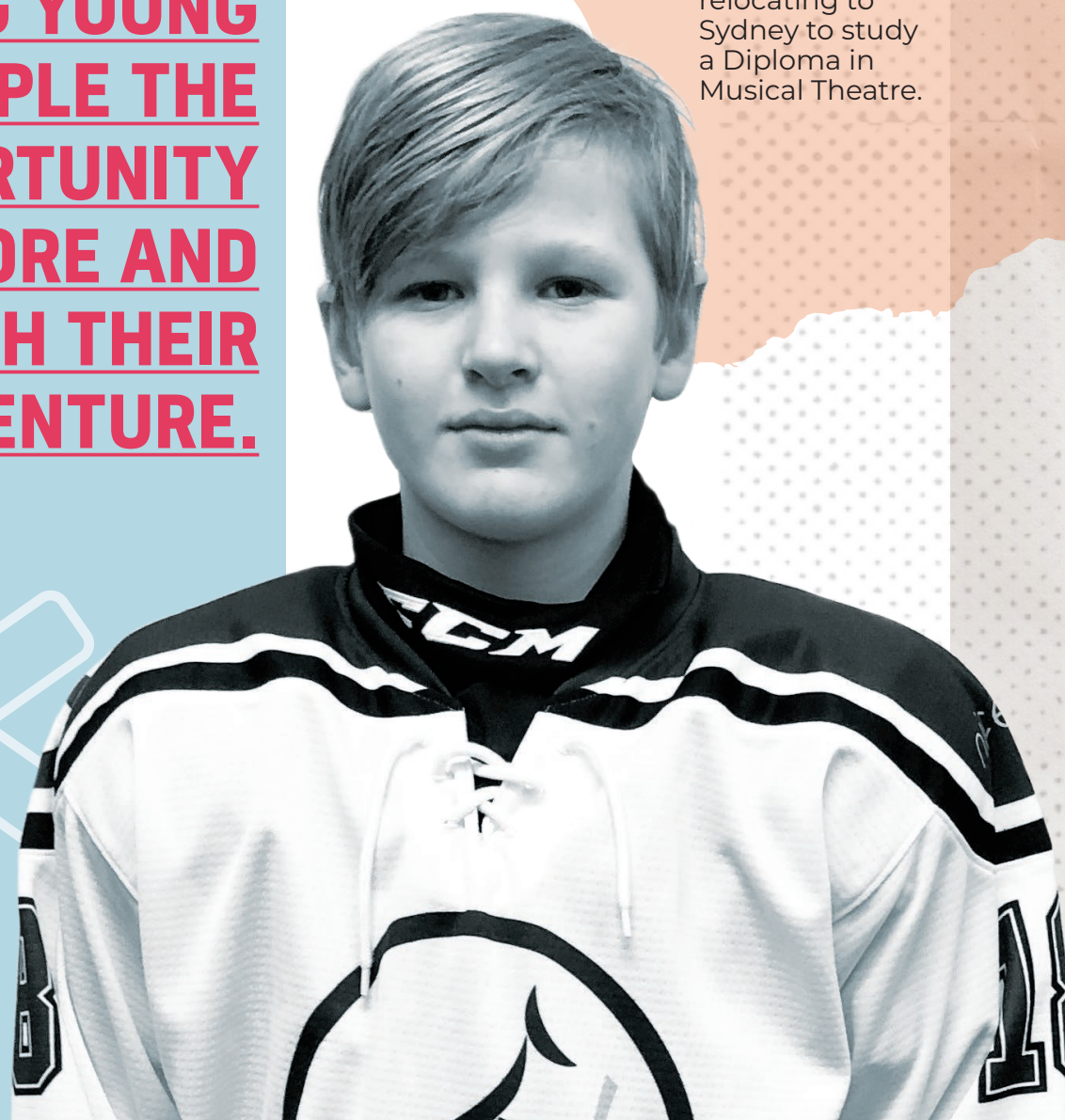
Jaya Palmer (TAS)

Jaya is building on the skills she gained from last year's Youth Grant, which she used to launch an online art shop. This year, she will be using her Grant to undertake digital art coaching so that she can expand the range in her exciting online art business.



Hugh Gionfriddo (VIC)

Hugh is using his grant to work towards his dream of becoming a professional football player in the AFL – his goal is to show his hearing teammates that being Deaf doesn't matter.



(right) **NATE GALE**
Under 13 Australian National
Ice Hockey competitor

If you want to help more young people reach their goals and realise their potential, you can assist through donations and by telling young deaf and hard of hearing people about our Youth Grants program, which we'll be re-opening in May 2024.

YOUTH GRANTS

ART COMPETITION

Deaf Children Australia’s annual art exhibition is a new initiative that was started just two years ago and is the only one of its kind in Australia. We have created this unique exhibition to promote, support and inspire deaf and hard of hearing (DHH) young people to be creative and enjoy the tremendous benefits of creativity.

The key objectives set out at the first art event in April 2022 have been met:

To turn it into an exhibition

To extend its reach to the broader public

Increase the age range of participants

To increase its national profile

To create opportunities for participants to further explore their creativity.

CELEBRATING DEAF ART

This year, our art event ‘Heroes and Leaders’ was transformed into a month-long art exhibition at Gasworks Art Park in Albert Park. We thank Greg Noonan for his generous donation which made this possible.

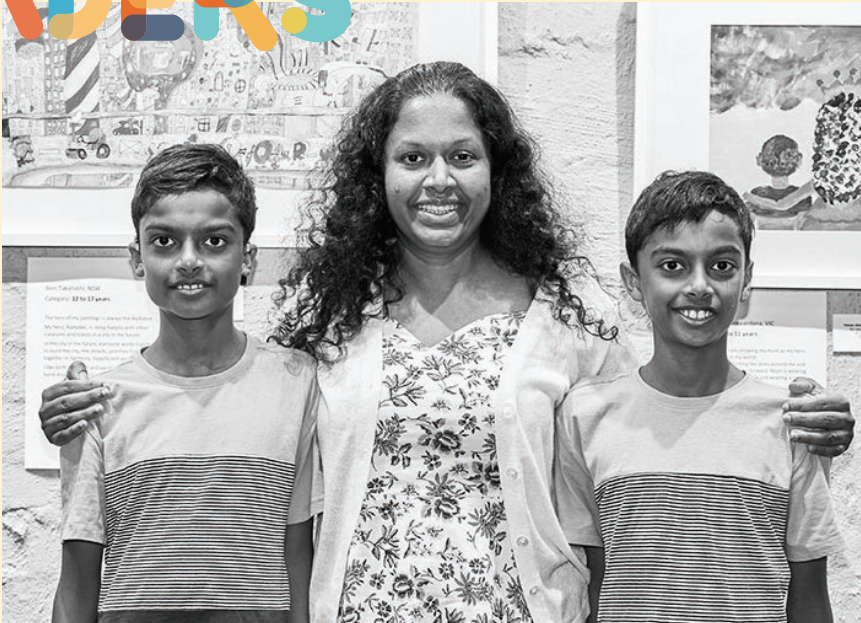
This increased the reach of the exhibition, garnering more interest and support. The celebratory event held on the 15th of April was livestreamed with 1,400 tuning in across Australia and close to 70 attending the event.

Heroes and Leaders secured extensive media including SBS World News, who ran an extensive news story about the event and the artists that take part.

EVERYONE IS DIFFERENT

The theme for our 2024 Art Exhibition is ‘Everyone is different’. We are currently accepting entries and we encourage young people to take part, get creative and see where it leads. The young people that have taken part have enjoyed being part of an exhibition and we are thrilled to see how this unique event has launched the careers of many young DHH artists.

HEROES AND LEADERS

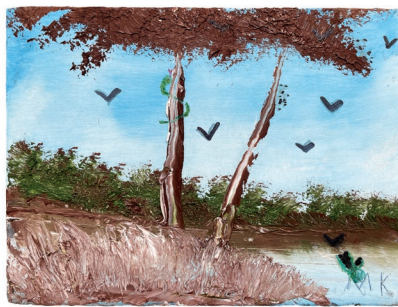


Jaya Palmer (TAS) has taken part in both events and this year received an Art Grant which she put toward starting her online design store where she is selling her beautiful digital artwork.

Maggie Sandles (VIC) took part in our first Art event and as result was commissioned by Crema Constructions to create a public artwork for their ‘Gallery in the Sky’ initiative. Maggie was asked to respond to the theme ‘Living in Melbourne,’ which allowed her to reflect on the many hours she spent rowing on the Yarra before school. Her art is scheduled to be installed on the Madison Grand, one of Crema’s major sites at 344 City Road Melbourne, later this year. It will tower above the city skyline, which provides great exposure to Maggie and places a spotlight on deaf creativity.

Sion Takahashi (NSW) has taken part in both our art events, receiving an art grant twice. He used his grants to launch a range of posters and t-shirts featuring his beautifully detailed and colourful art. His mum told us taking part has further inspired his creativity and confidence.

Our goal is to keep building and expanding the national profile of this exhibition so it can be enjoyed in other states and territories. This is where we see a wonderful opportunity for partners and donors to assist with making this possible.



(above) Steve Irwin’s Habitat, by **MATILDA KNAGGS**
(top) **HASAS ABEYGUNAWARDANA** & family
(left) **HAYLEY EDGAR** & family
(right) **CAITLIN PICKERING** & her artwork

“TO NOW HAVE
THIS PART OF
ME DISPLAYED
FOR ALL OF
MELBOURNE
TO SEE IS
A SPECIAL
PRIVILEGE.”

MAGGIE SANDLES, Artist





21
FAMILIES
38
CHILDREN
ATTENDED
FAMILY CAMPS
IN VICTORIA

FAMILY CAMPS

In September 2022, the QLD Family Camp took place at PGL Kindilin, Redland Bay. This successful event was followed by the VIC Family Camp at the PGL Campaspe Downs in October 2022.

Both events were fully booked with 23 families and 48 children attending in QLD, and 21 families and 38 children attending in VIC.

Through the generosity of our donors, and the CMV Group Foundation who supported the VIC Family Camp, we were able to offer these camps to the families attending at a considerably reduced cost. This enables more families to reap the benefits offered by these camps, which run over a weekend and offer two days packed full of fun activities and opportunities for families to connect with each other.



Children love participating in the outdoor games, abseiling, facepainting, crafts and huge variety of other activities. But mostly, children love the opportunity to make new friends.

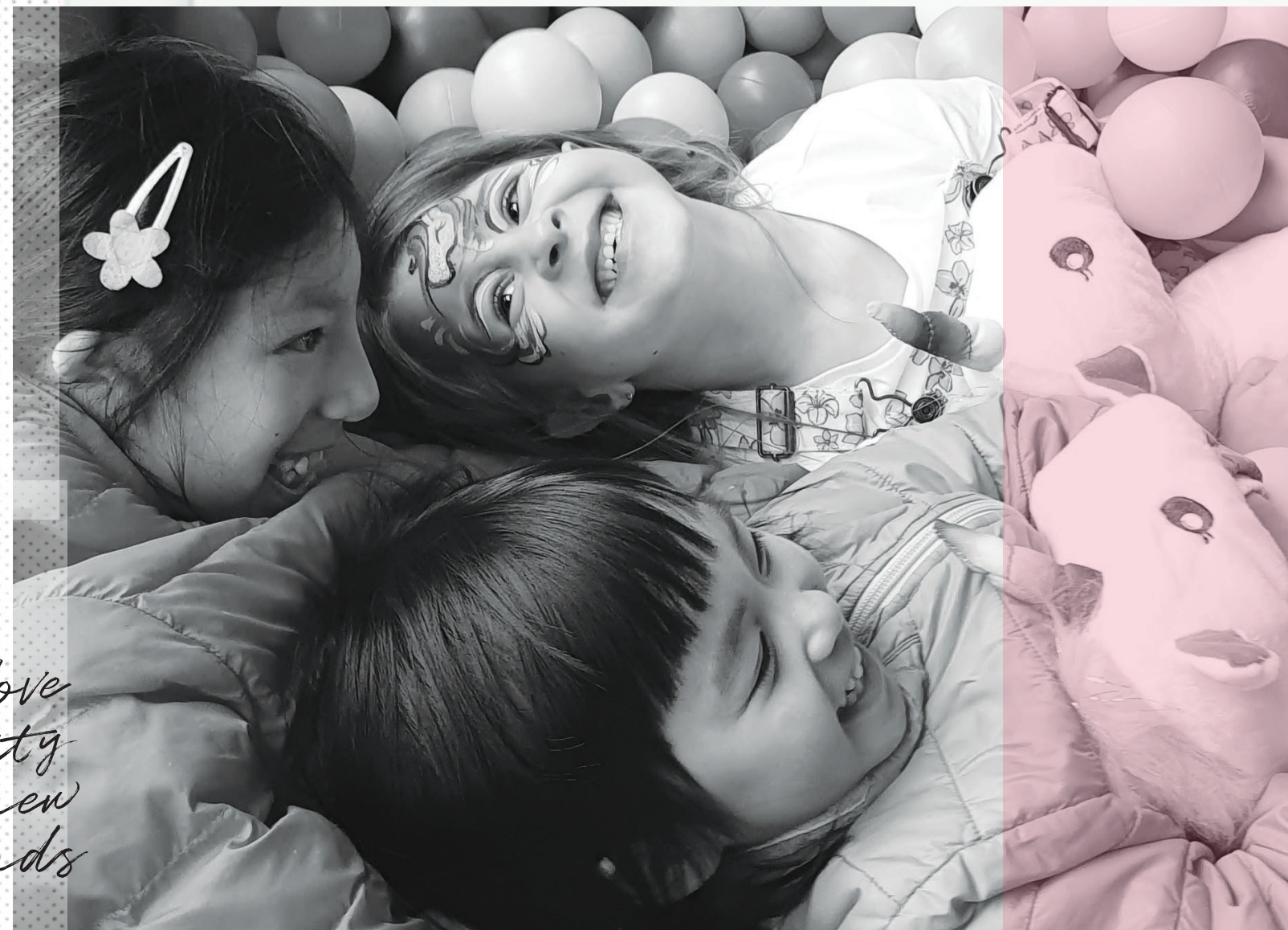
(top) the **JAYESH** Family
(below) the **ABEYGUNAWARDANA** Family

Our aim was to hold camps in other states and territories, and we are excited to announce our first ever TAS Family Camp that will be taking place in February 2024 at Camp Clayton.

children love the opportunity to make new friends

“ PLEASE MAKE THE TIME TO JOIN THE DCA FAMILY CAMP! IT’S A GREAT CHANCE TO SPEND QUALITY TIME WITH YOUR KIDS AND GET SOME MUCH NEEDED FIRSTHAND EXPERIENCE FROM OTHER PARENTS. WE ALL HAD SUCH A GREAT TIME. THANKS DCA - WELL DONE! ”

(below) all the fun of family camp



EVENTS

23
FAMILIES
48
CHILDREN
ATTENDED
FAMILY CAMPS
IN QUEENSLAND



“

**BUBBLE
SOCCER WAS
SO MUCH FUN,
WANT TO DO
IT AGAIN WITH
EVERYBODY!**

EVENTS

YOUTH FUN DAYS

During the 2022-2023 Financial Year, DCA established a youth activity program with the aim of connecting Deaf and Hard of Hearing children and youth by providing an activity to undertake during school holidays.

The program included Sport and Art activities at the Bluestone and a June activity day at ACMI and Strike Bowling.

The activities encouraged children and young people to socialize, meet others like them and to make friends on the day. The activities were run by Deaf and Hard of Hearing youth leaders at DCA. DCA had 44 registrations for these two activity days, with age ranges between 8-17.

44

REGISTRATIONS

Thank you for a fun and exciting day.

I've never seen others like me signing as a group before, I don't get to see that at school.

I had an awesome time!

A sample of some of the feedback received at our youth activity days.



(above) Bubble soccer activity
(left) MARCO, catching public transport
(below) ZARA & KEIRA in discussion



DCA PLUS

CLOSURE OF DCA PLUS

In 2022, DCA made the difficult decision to close NDIS supports provided under the DCA Plus brand. The decision considered the new strategic plan and our mission to provide support, advice, and options for deaf and hard of hearing children, young people, and their families.

Our NDIS supports and services were both well regarded and high quality. DCA Plus supported NDIS participants with Support Coordination, Support Work, Auslan Tuition, Travel Training, and Employment Supports, but our reach, scalability and impact were limited. While some of our services supported deaf and hard of hearing children, young people, and their families, up to 65% of participants who accessed NDIS supports at DCA Plus, were adults aged 25-70.

With the strategic focus on strong partnerships and projects with broad reach, high impact and scalability, DCA is moving away from small scale direct support delivery. DCA is looking at new and improved ways to provide the opportunities DHH children, young people and their families have told us they need. This includes ensuring DHH children and young people have the same social, community and employment opportunities and access to supports as their hearing peers.

Support Work ceased 30 September 2022 and the remaining NDIS services closed 30 June 2023. All participants were individually supported into other suitable services. We also helped the highly skilled DCA Plus team find employment with other organisations.

FUNDRAISING & PHILANTHROPY

As inflation impacts affect financial confidence, we remain grateful to our growing number of donors, who continue to ensure the children and families we work with can access the support they need.

We were fortunate to receive numerous philanthropic grants for special projects including a 3-year grant from the Brian M David Charitable Foundation to develop a program giving deaf and hard of hearing children across Victoria better opportunities to do a meaningful work experience placement in high school. It's been identified as a gap by academics and schools alike, so we're excited to see what a difference this can make when it's launched in 2025.

“ I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE THE WORLD A BETTER PLACE.

CHARLOTTE



JARED & CHARLOTTE CLARK with their donation

We also received two generous Gifts in Wills this year. These will support our long-term vision to help deaf and hard of hearing children overcome challenges and achieve their potential.

CHARLOTTE AND JARED ARE TRUE CHANGEMAKERS

One of our youngest supporters, 10-year-old Charlotte, inspired her dad, Jared Clarke, to raise funds for DCA as part of the Grand Opening of his Battery World store in Enoggera, Queensland.

Almost 12 months after Jared lost his original store to a fire, he celebrated the opening of his new store with a day packed full of activities and celebrations.

Charlotte had big plans to use this day for good and was determined to use her dad's opening day to make a difference in her community.

"I would like to make the world a better place," says Charlotte.

After choosing Deaf Children Australia, Charlotte organised and ran a multi-draw raffle to raise funds to support our work - work that is close to her heart, having many deaf friends herself. Charlotte has a genuine interest in deaf awareness and taught herself Auslan so she could communicate with her deaf friends.

It was a natural choice for her to choose an organisation working within the deaf and hard of hearing community, and she spent lots of time researching who she wanted to support with her fundraiser.

Charlotte sourced all the raffle prizes and worked hard to sell tickets in the lead up to the event, as well as selling bracelets to raise extra money.

The fundraiser was an absolute success. Charlotte and Jared raised over \$2,200, making a generous and impactful contribution to our work.

We are so grateful to Charlotte and Jared for their fundraising efforts and to everyone who donated at the event. You can follow in Charlotte and her dad's footsteps and call our Fundraising Team on 1300 219 160 to organise your own fundraiser.

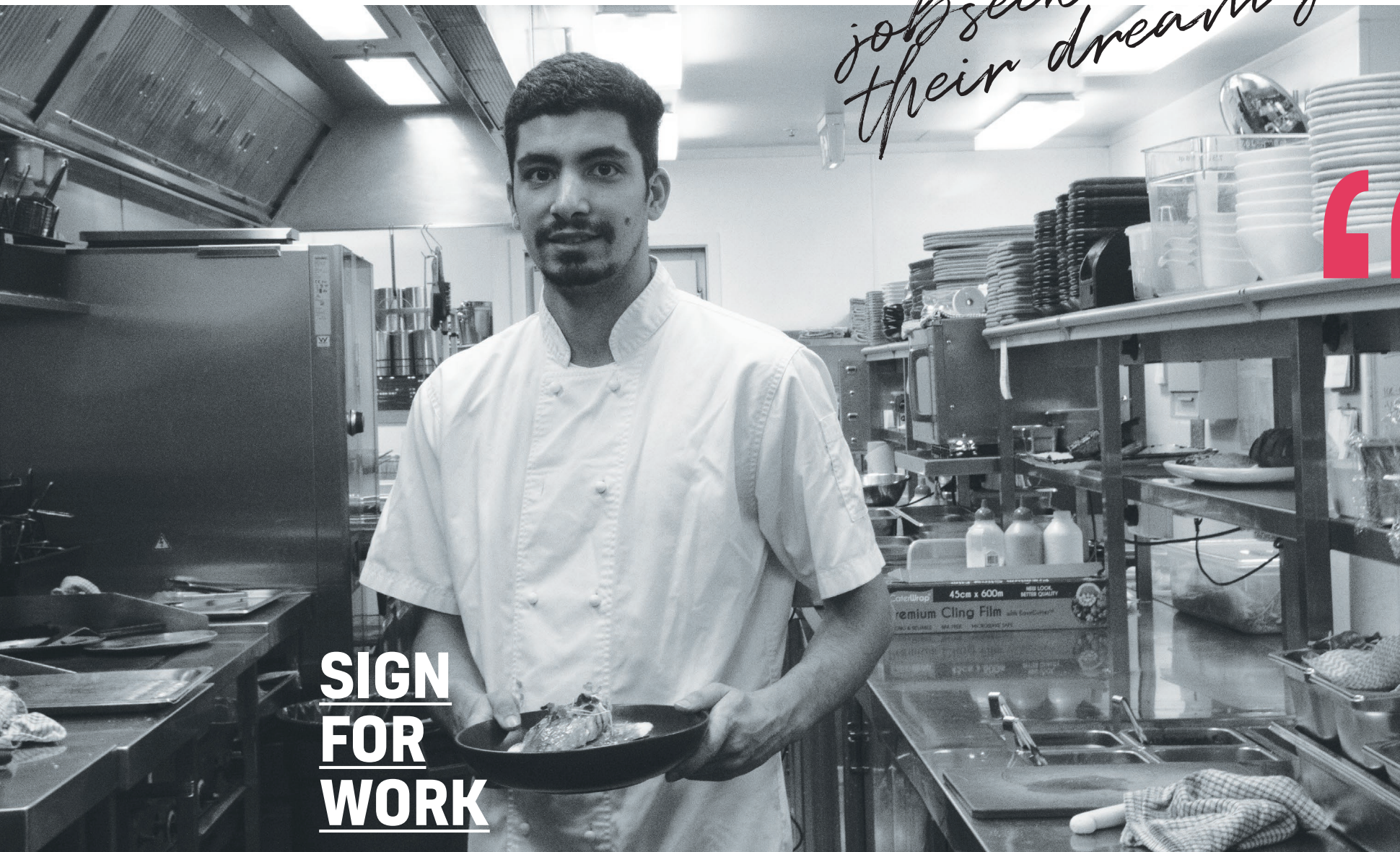
KEY SUPPORTERS

Ausdraft Pty Ltd
The William Angliss Charitable Fund

- Darren Bartlett
- Amy Bastings Estate
- Battery World Enoggera
- Brian M Davis Charitable Foundation
- The Beverley Briese Foundation Pty Ltd
- J D Brook Trust Fund
- Charles Wright Trust
- CMV Group Foundation
- Collier Charitable Fund
- Fiat Car Club Of Victoria
- Flora & Frank Leith Charitable Trust
- Ford RS Owners Club Victoria
- George Warman Charitable Bequest
- Mrs Jennie Gray
- Yvonne Gray
- Dr Anselm Gunesekera & Mrs Yolande Gunesekera
- Il Gusto Restaurant
- Hartwell Players
- Bobbie Holmes
- Jacobus Pty Ltd
- Estate of Robert Joseph Jenkins
- Estate of Kenneth Lay
- Estate of George Henry Jenkins
- Estate of William & Bessie Lennox
- Rosemary Lloyd
- Lily Maude Payne Charitable Trust
- Dagmar Logan
- Bronwyn Malouf
- David Mansergh
- Maserati Owners Club of Australia (MOCA)

- Melbourne Industrial Plumbing Pty Ltd
- Melman Trading Pty Ltd
- Merri Merri Christmas Tree Company
- Anita McKellar
- Ron McNeilly
- Rosemary & the late Douglas Meagher
- Bruce J Missen
- MRC Foundation Trust (Melbourne Racing Club)
- Greg Noonan
- Nina Nossar
- Paradigm Principle Investments Pty Ltd
- Ian Penney
- Brett Phillips
- Bill Pye
- Sara Lederman Charitable Foundation
- The Schiavello Group Charitable Foundation
- Smart Hire - Hein & Veronica Otten
- Maureen Stevenson
- Sun Health Foods Pty Ltd
- Binh Thai
- Kevin Thomson
- Tulliallan Primary School
- The Allen & Cecilia Tye Fund
- Urquhart Charitable Fund
- Steve Walters
- Estate of Henry Herbert Yoffa

thank you



*helping
jobseekers land
their dream job*

**SIGN
FOR
WORK**

374

TOTAL NUMBER OF
CURRENT CLIENTS

As a Specialist Disability Employment Service, Sign for Work assists people with an injury, health condition or disability. Our skilled team is also dedicated to supporting deaf and hard of hearing people at all stages of their careers.

Helping jobseekers to land their dream job is just the first step - Sign for Work also provides a range of services to support people and help them stay in their roles. Sign for Work is dedicated to providing individual support and encouraging each person to reach their full potential.

EMAD'S STORY

When Wendy Turner, Post Placement and Ongoing Support Consultant, started working with Emad Seyam, he was 6 years into a 4-year Chef apprenticeship with no prospect of finishing anytime soon. Wendy engaged with his workplace, The Mail Exchange Hotel, and Holmesglen TAFE to put some of the fundamental supports in place for Emad to succeed.

Wendy organised more opportunities for interpreters at The Mail Exchange Hotel and arranged specialist support from the highly regarded Deaf Chef, Ross, at Holmesglen TAFE, to assist with Emad's fundamental learning of the theory of cooking.

I COULD SEE HIM BEING A HEAD CHEF, WITHOUT A DOUBT, ONE DAY.

In addition, specialist English supports from a Deaf tutor were sought to increase Emad's ability to understand the English required to work in the kitchen and to make the connections between the English he was reading and the Auslan he understood.

Wendy increased the workplace supports from Sign for Work and made herself available to the kitchen staff at The Mail Exchange Hotel. For instance, she requested they call her to seek support and advice if they needed to ensure Emad understood important information, as well as to problem solve any challenges that arose.

The Mail Exchange Hotel has recently asked Wendy to help them set up an Auslan education program for the staff at the workplace so all staff can learn some basic Auslan. Wendy is looking into it for them.

There have been challenges, largely in relation to the availability of interpreters. However, Emad is thriving, and his confidence has grown with the individual support Wendy has provided. Nici Nicholson, the venue manager at The Mail Exchange Hotel, says, "I think there's more benefits and more satisfaction in doing something like this, than there's negatives."

WAYNE MOUNTFORD
HEAD CHEF
THE MAIL EXCHANGE HOTEL

In turn, the team at The Mail Exchange Hotel are benefiting from the skills Emad brings to the team and his dedication to his work. The head chef, Wayne Mountford, says, "I could see him being a head chef, without a doubt, one day."

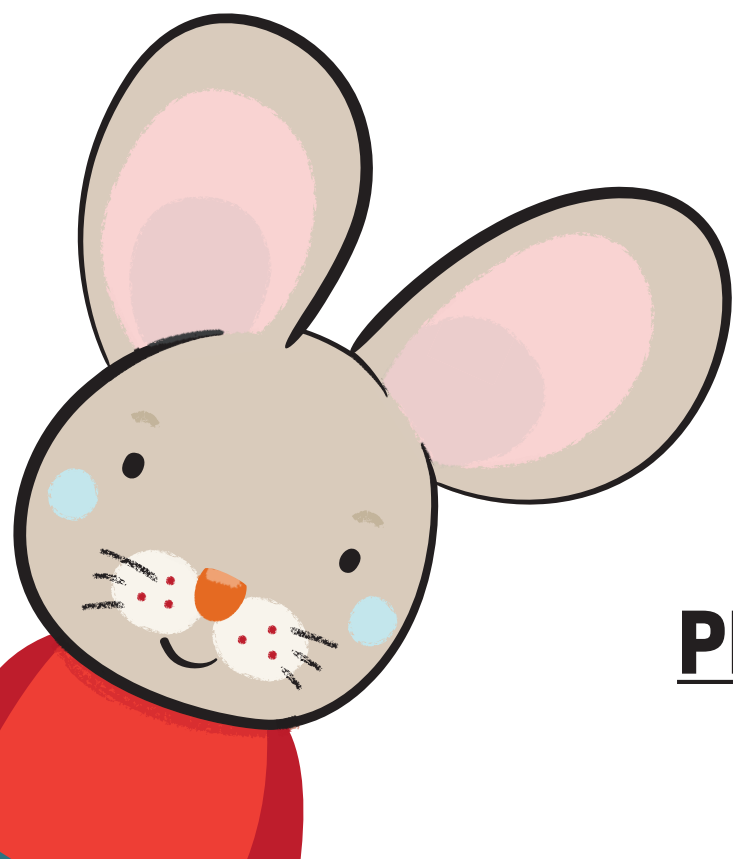
Through Wendy's amazing work and the supports she put in place, Emad has found success at work and has transformed into a confident, qualified chef. Emad loves his job and practices Auslan with the kitchen staff – often teaching people to communicate with him. Emad's inspirational story was featured online on SBS News on 13 April 2023 for Auslan Day.

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JOB SEEKERS PLACED
IN EMPLOYMENT
IN VICTORIA AND
QUEENSLAND



(both) **EMAD SEYAM**, chef at the pass



THE PLATYPUS PLAYHOUSE RANGE

Launched in August 2021, the Platypus Playhouse range which includes story books, finger puppets, tactile learning aids, flashcards, Matcharoo cards, Auslan finger spelling magnets, and Auslan translations (videos) of the story books, has been embraced across the DCA DHH community.



new release!

The sixth storybook in the series will be released in September, **Pip and the Party**. This book will explore different emotions. Pip, our cute little platypus, has a day of big feelings when he is invited to his best buddy's birthday party. Meet Mott the Mouse for the first time and try out the Auslan signs for feelings throughout the story.

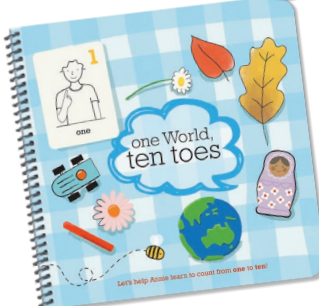
Ongoing feedback from our community has helped guide the new titles of the story books:

Good Morning Annie – Annie and her family are involved in everyday happenings with the aim of encouraging questions and interaction among family members. This approach is based on strong evidence on literacy and parent child engagement.

One World Ten Toes - Count from one to ten with Annie. Annie makes counting fun! She enjoys finding inventive ways to count from one to ten on her daily encounters. She counts her toys, hands, busy bees, friends, cakes, and more.

Pip and Annie Play Hide And Seek - Pip and Annie explore their home and playground in a fun game of hide and seek.

PLATYPUS
PLAY
HOUSE





FLYING COLOURS

As we enter the final year of the three-year ILC program Flying Colours, the focus has been on continually refining content to expand awareness and maximise engagement. In line with our commitment to continuous improvement, the Flying Colours website has undergone significant changes to improve end-user experience and overall functionality of the website.

(below) CODY
(right) KARLA & OLLIE

We are pleased to report that since its launch, the Flying Colours website has been embraced by families with deaf and hard-of-hearing (DHH) children with 7,522 new users, 22,207 page views across the site and just under 1,000 repeat visitors through to June 30, 2023.

For the second half of 2023, we are focusing on promoting and encouraging engagement with Flying Colours through social media channels. This tactic has been successful with close to 80% of new visitors coming through Facebook, followed by Instagram and LinkedIn with 10% each respectively.

We continue fostering our collaboration with the Indigenous Literacy Foundation. This includes collecting feedback about the product packs and printed resources we designed for 50 remote communities. The initial response from community educators about the resources was positive, with more detailed feedback to follow.

Our most recent initiative involves reaching out to tertiary providers across the nation to provide Audiology and Speech Pathology graduates with unique insight to help with their interactions with families with a DHH child.

Our primary objective is for graduates to gain an understanding about what it is like for families as they navigate their journey with a newly diagnosed DHH child, so they are better informed of the real-world challenges and can better support future clients and families.

Flying Colours is made possible through funding by the **Department of Social Services** - Grants provided as part of the Information Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) program.

7522

NEW USERS TO THE
FLYING COLOURS
WEBSITE

22,207

PAGE VIEWS
ACROSS THE SITE



FLYING
COLOURS.

BLUEPRINT

Blueprint: Lead by Example aims to promote inclusion of deaf and hard of hearing (DHH) children and young people in mainstream recreational and sporting clubs. The program is fully funded by the Department of Social Services.

As the first program of its kind in Australia, the idea for Blueprint came from research which showed over 50% of parents worry about their DHH child taking part in local community clubs.

By providing access to education, tools and resources, coaches, teachers, or instructors will learn how to support the communication needs of a DHH young person.

The demand for Blueprint has grown and as a result, we are extending the suite of resources we will make available to clubs across Australia.



(top) GRACE & STACEY
(below) ELIZABETH on the court

50%
OF PARENTS WORRY
ABOUT THEIR DHH CHILD
TAKING PART IN LOCAL
COMMUNITY CLUBS

Lead by
example



We have already created a broad range of material to date including:

11 video stories of young DHH people in their pursuit of sport, dance, and the arts. These dynamic videos include rich stories from coaches, teammates and parents to illustrate the unique and powerful contribution DHH young people make to a team/group.

18 narratives – these are the stories of people connected to clubs, be they a coach, parent, or young person wanting to be included. The lived experience exemplifies the need for inclusivity, what it looks like and the benefits it brings.

Downloadable resources – the tool kit will be available on our website, offering a step by step guide on how to be inclusive in a range of different sports and activities.

Blueprint: Lead by Example is made possible through funding by the **Department of Social Services** - Grants provided as part of the Information Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) program.



BLUE
PRINT

CURRENTLY IN
DEVELOPMENT:

Free webinars
for clubs and parents
sharing:

- tactics to be inclusive
- how to communicate with a DHH child
- how to be a champion for inclusion
- benefits of being inclusive
- how to support a DHH child in a club
- what to look for in an inclusive club

Blueprint kit
packed full of
relevant and helpful
information:

- tips, ideas and resources
- Auslan flash cards
- Auslan signing videos and more
- fingerspelling posters
- a range of interactive ideas

The full collection of Blueprint resources will be available in early 2024.

“
I REALLY DID ENJOY ALL
THE INFORMATION IN
THIS COURSE, I FOUND IT
VALUABLE ESPECIALLY
THE SHORT VIDEOS AND

LINKS TO
OTHER
WEBSITES.

dive in
and swim
with us!

WENDY HALL
Puggles Skipper



PUGGLES SWIM

Deaf Children Australia (DCA) developed and funded Australia's first nationally endorsed learn to swim program, Puggles Swim.

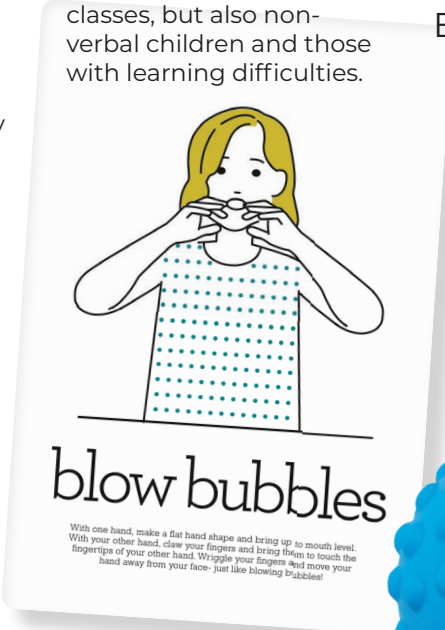
Launched on 17 September 2022 and guided by insights from a comprehensive survey with deaf and hard-of-hearing (DHH) families who were concerned their child would be excluded from community events, with swimming being a prominent example, Puggles Swim has been embraced by the Learn to Swim community.

With the support of national swim associations AUSTSWIM and SCTA, and along with course developers, seasoned swim educators, and a professional deaf swimmer, DCA developed a well-structured and rigorously evaluated swimming program, purpose-built to enhance the capabilities of certified swim teachers.



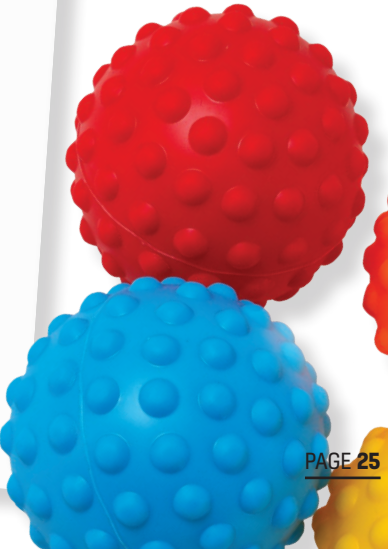
Upon successfully completing the three-hour online course, swim teachers are equipped with essential Auslan signs and improved deaf awareness. Swim teachers also have access to resources to enrich their knowledge and gain access to a wealth of assets to promote their new found skills within their local communities.

Early feedback from swim teachers praises the exceptional resources, engaging interactive features, and the course's ability to equip instructors to warmly welcome and support not only deaf and hard of hearing (DHH) children in mainstream swimming classes, but also non-verbal children and those with learning difficulties.



Puggles Swim now has over 1,400 enrolments with approximately 800 Puggles Skippers across the nation. Following the success of the first year of operation, Royal Life Saving Society – Australia (RLSSA) has officially endorsed Puggles Swim! Our collaboration with RLSSA will pave the way for a brand new Puggles Swim program.

800
PUGGLES SKIPPERS
ACROSS THE NATION
1400+
ENROLEMENTS

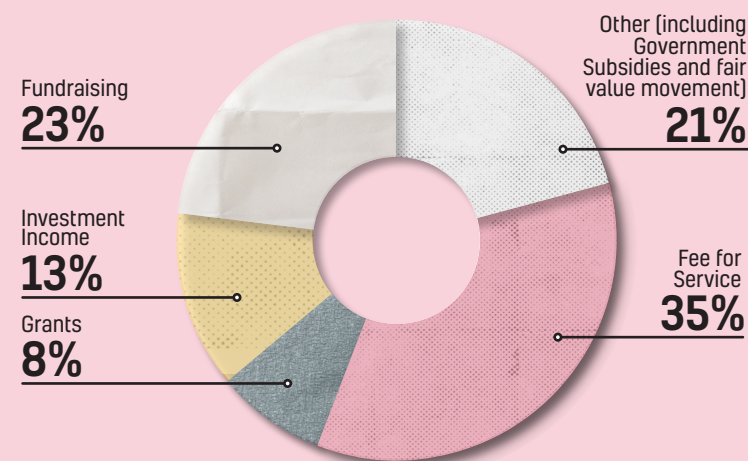


FINANCIAL REPORT 22-23

\$7.9m

For the financial year ending 30 June 2023, Deaf Children Australia reported an income of \$7.9m

WHERE THE FUNDING CAME FROM



OPERATING RESULTS

DCA's reported financial result was an operating deficit of \$143,206 for the financial year ending 30 June 2023.

Income for the year represents an increase of \$6,331,776 compared to the previous financial year. This is due to the receipt of a large bequest and the performance of DCA's Investment Portfolio.

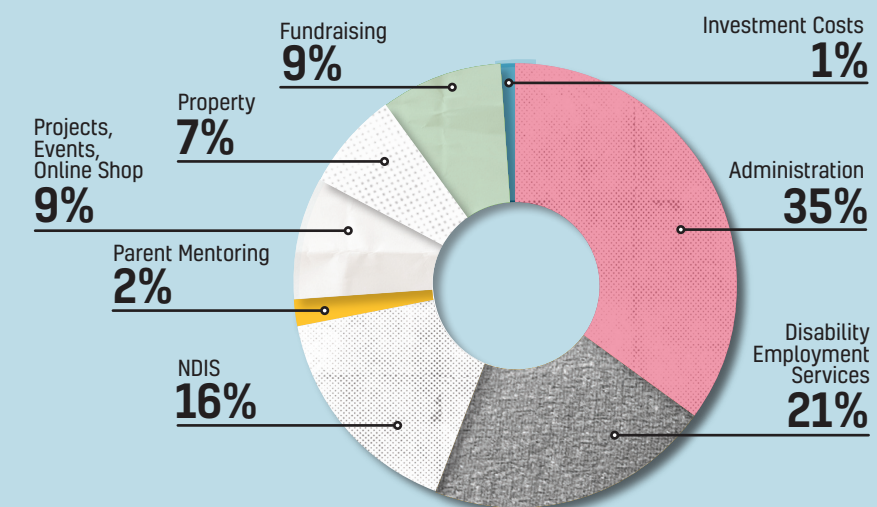
DCA is continually finding ways to generate more income and structure itself accordingly to ensure a positive legacy for the next generation of deaf and hard-of-hearing children.

OPPORTUNITIES

EQUITY

Our equity remained steady with a small decline in overall equity of \$143,206 during the year, DCA maintains a solid Balance Sheet. As at June 30 2023, there was \$30,163,726 invested in a managed investment portfolio.

WHERE THE FUNDING WENT



ANNUAL EXPENDITURE
2022/2023 \$8.09M

Total expenditure for the year was \$8,097,182 which includes \$4,809,135 of employee expenses, an increase of \$0.5m in employee costs compared to the previous year.

DCA has continued to invest in the ongoing development of current and new projects. The Platypus Playhouse range of language resources has been an ongoing focus in FY23, as well as the national Puggles Swim Program, a new initiative launched in September 2022.

CHALLENGES

COST PRESSURES

Notwithstanding DCA's strong underlying financial position, like most not-for-profit organisations, the organisation continues to manage significant operational challenges.

DCA has several legacy issues impacting the organisation that continue to be progressed to enable it to meet its strategic objectives. The main consideration here being the maintenance of the Bluestone building.

DCA also ceased providing NDIS services on 30 June 2023 due to the viability of service provision.

LEARNINGS

Challenges of the year were investment market volatility. The organisation was able to continue to adapt through flexibility and innovation, to provide high level service to participants, to meet the needs of deaf and hard-of-hearing children and young people in our community. During the year a key focus was the delivery of the strategic plan, which will positively impact the operations of the organisation moving forward.

QUALITY

At Deaf Children Australia (DCA), our commitment to quality and continuous improvement is at the core of our operations. We recognise the importance of maintaining high standards in serving our community and fulfilling our obligations to various stakeholders. This report outlines our dedication to quality management, compliance, and our ongoing efforts to provide the best possible support to our community.

QUALITY MANAGEMENT OVERSIGHT

Our Quality and Compliance Manager is at the heart of our Quality Management System. This system forms the basis for our dedication to quality, accountability, and excellence. We regularly review and tweak our policies and procedures to make sure we stay in sync with what our stakeholders expect.

EXTERNAL QUALITY AUDITS

To validate our commitment to quality, we subject ourselves to annual external quality audits, conducted by Global Mark. These audits serve as a robust mechanism for ensuring our services consistently meet the stringent quality standards required by government bodies and our broader community.

CERTIFICATIONS

DCA proudly maintains certification under multiple quality management standards, including the International Standard for Quality Management Systems (ISO:9001), National Standards for Disability Services, and the NDIS Practice Standards. Our dedication to internal audits further fortifies our quality, compliance, and risk management processes, while actively contributing to our ongoing quality enhancement efforts.

CHILD SAFETY STANDARDS

Our commitment to child safety is ongoing. We ensure all staff, volunteers, and the DCA board follow the Victorian Government's 11 rigorous Child Safe Standards. This addresses the National Child Safe Principles and includes an additional standard specific to Victoria.

These efforts reflect our strong dedication to maintaining a safe environment for children and young people.

COMPLAINT AND INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

DCA strives for a transparent and robust complaint and incident management procedures. Oversight by the DCA Leadership Team and committees such as the Health and Safety Committee and the Child Safe Committee ensures that our work environments and service delivery are safe, compliant, and fully accountable to our valued stakeholders.

ENHANCED FEEDBACK MECHANISM

As part of our continuous improvement journey, we are committed to enhancing our ability to receive feedback. We have introduced a QR code within this report, allowing stakeholders to easily provide their input and suggestions, which will be instrumental in shaping our future quality initiatives.

In conclusion, DCA remains resolute in its pursuit of quality, compliance, and accountability. We understand that by maintaining high standards, we can best serve our community and ensure that our stakeholders can rely on us as a trusted service provider. Your feedback is invaluable as we continue to evolve and grow, always striving to provide the highest quality services and support.

continually seeking ways to improve



1866



(above and right) Students from Box Hill Senior Secondary College at Tradeblock Cafe

HISTORY TOURS

During the pandemic, tour opportunities were very limited, but this year we saw people lining up to tour our Bluestone building and learn about our rich history dating back to 1866.

This year, Deaf Children Australia hosted a wide range of people for history tours including school groups, people studying a Diploma of Auslan, families of past students, donors, and supporters. We had Deaf people from all over the world visit us, while holidaying in Melbourne.

The list of schools we took on tours includes:

ARDEER PRIMARY SCHOOL

BOX HILL SENIOR SECONDARY COLLEGE

EPPING PRIMARY SCHOOL

EPSOM PRIMARY SCHOOL

HERITAGE COLLEGE KNOX

MOSMAN PARK SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA

MOUNT ERIN COLLEGE

VICTORIAN COLLEGE FOR THE DEAF

WARRAGUL REGIONAL COLLEGE



THE HISTORY TOUR LOOKS AT:

- How the school came to be, including the stories behind its founder, FJ Rose, and co-founder, Reverend William Moss.
- The first student, Lucy Lewis and her hand-written school books from the 1860's.

KEY POINTS OF INTEREST SUCH AS:

- **Foyer** – images of the founders and early students
- **Basement** – our water well and the boys' bath
- **History room** – what was it like to be in the Bluestone in the 1800's
- **Photos** dating back to 1866
- **Grand staircase** and the stained-glass window that was installed in 1866
- **The tower** with its amazing views of Albert Park Lake, Hobsons Bay and Williamstown

If your school or organisation is interested in our exciting history tour, book a tour with us at bookings@deafchildren.org.au

With the expansion of Auslan as a LOTE subject (Language Other Than English) in Primary and Secondary schools, we have taken many student tour groups to help young people understand what it was like to be a student and boarder back in the 1800's.

During LOTE learning, students study Deaf History and Culture along with Auslan. During the tours, students love an opportunity to engage in Auslan while learning about our pioneering Founder, deaf man and human rights activist of his time, Frederick John Rose, fondly known as FJ Rose. The tour of the basement tends to be one of the key highlights for everyone that we take on a tour, leading to ghost stories and the many myths that surround the Bluestone.

OUR BOARD



Kerry Ferguson | CHAIR
Audit, Finance and Strategy
Committee Member



Carol Webb | DEPUTY CHAIR
Audit, Finance and Strategy
Committee Member, Nominations
Committee Member



Colin Clark | TREASURER
CHAIR Audit, Finance
and Strategy Committee



Adam Rich | BOARD MEMBER
Governance and Risk
Committee Member



Chris Penman | BOARD MEMBER
CHAIR Governance
and Risk Committee



Karen Cleave | BOARD MEMBER
Audit, Finance and Strategy
Committee Member



Melisa Sloan | BOARD MEMBER
Audit, Finance and Strategy
Committee Member



Sendur Kathir | BOARD MEMBER
Audit, Finance and Strategy,
Governance and Risk Committee
Member, Nominations
Committee Member

Deaf Children Australia is a company limited by guarantee and is governed by a board of directors. Our board meets monthly and maintains two committees to support its governance functions. The Audit, Finance and Strategy Committee meet monthly and is chaired by the treasurer Colin Clark, our Governance and Risk Committee meets quarterly and is chaired by Chris Penman.

MANAGEMENT TEAM

David Wilson
CEO

Angela Woodruff
COMPANY SECRETARY

Noel Henderson
PROPERTY & HERITAGE
MANAGER

Chris Lardner
MANAGER SIGN FOR WORK

Rachelle Knoche
QUALITY &
COMPLIANCE MANAGER

Ele Raimondi
NDIS MANAGER

Lisa Ratcliffe
FINANCE MANAGER

Jane Harris
HEAD OF COMMUNICATIONS

Nichole Alfreds
FUNDRAISING MANAGER

THANK YOU

We thank **Chris Penman** who stepped down as Director of the Board in August 2022.

We welcome **Sendur Kathir**, who was appointed to the board on the 22nd November 2022.



HOW YOU CAN HELP

LEAVE A LEGACY

A gift in your will.

DONATE

Your donations help change lives.

VOLUNTEER WITH US

We offer a range of volunteer opportunities across our organisation.

WORKPLACE GIVING

Get your work colleagues involved.

FUNDRAISING FOR DCA

Do something amazing big or small, host a community event.

BECOME A REGULAR DONOR

Help DCA support deaf and hard of hearing children, young people and their families.

**Deaf
Children**
Australia.

CONTACT DCA

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facebook.com/deafchildrenaustralia

ABN 57 108 025 207
DCA is a Not-for-Profit organisation and registered with the ATO with DGR status.



to provide the support, advice, options, and unbiased information families need to raise deaf and hard of hearing young Australians.

*social
inclusion*