

aussie deaf kids

2021 Annual Report





about aussie deaf kids

Mission

Aussie Deaf Kids aims to empower parents raising a child with hearing loss through online support, information and advocacy.

Vision

To be a respected source of independent information and support for families with a child who is deaf or hard of hearing

2020-2021 snapshot

Website

265,000 pageviews

Facebook groups

1,260 average daily active members

1,370 posts

13,840 comments

19,270 reactions



"I love people's real-life experiences and also the feeling of community."

"Thank you for all your support, advocacy and education you have provided me and my family over the past 7 years!"

"Thank you!! Online communities are extremely valuable in supporting families. It's support at your fingertips. Parent to parent support is also vital. No one else can understand."

Parents say...

Other activities

Collaborations

Aussie Deaf Kids collaborates with other parent and consumer groups to represent the views of parents of children who are deaf or hard of hearing, including:

- Deafness Forum of Australia
- Parents of Deaf Children
- Global Coalition of Parents of Children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (GPODHH)
- Usherkids Australia

Submissions

- Response to Hearing Services Program Expert Review draft report | May 2021
- Submission to the Joint Standing Committee on the National Disability Insurance Scheme Inquiry into Independent Assessments | March 2021

Consultations

- SWISH Resource Review - NSW Statewide Infant Screening - Hearing (SWIS-H) Program
- Choices Booklet - Hearing Australia

Working Groups

- Audiology Australia Paediatric Competency Standards Working Group
- Australasian Newborn Hearing Screening Committee
- Deafness Forum of Australia Advisory Group - Hearing Services Program Review
- Deafness and Mental Health Advisory Group - Child and Youth Mental Health Service (CYMHS) – Children’s Health Queensland
- GPODHH FCEI Principles review and eDelphi study
- NDIA Independent Assessment Working Group
- NDIA Participant Reference Group
- NDIS Participant Decision Guide Focus Group: Early intervention for children who are deaf or hard of hearing
- Queensland Early Intervention Working Group (Healthy Hearing)
- World Hearing Forum



Board of Directors



Roslyn Wyburn



Michael Allen



Jill Duncan



Flora Chan



Fiona Graney



Ann Porter



Bruce Porter

CHAIR'S REPORT

In my first year as Chair of Aussie Deaf Kids (ADK), it is my great privilege to report on ADK's efforts over 2020/21, and to report on where the Board sees ADK heading in the coming years.

The vision Ann Porter AM, our founder and CEO, had for Aussie Deaf Kids from inception in 2008, of being "a respected source of independent information and support for families with a child who is deaf or hard of hearing" continues to ring true and guide us into future. This could be seen as quite a singular and perhaps even a simple vision, but in reality, it is incredibly hard to achieve and maintain in today's electronically and socially connected world.

This is why the evidenced-based online support, information, and advocacy work of ADK continues to play such an important role in assisting families and carers to make informed choices about raising their child with hearing loss. This is reflected in the continued rise of our website pageviews and the number of parents accessing our online groups.

During 2020/21, ADK continued as the trusted representative for parents and carers at a number of working groups and consultations, including the National Disability Insurance Agency. Analysis of ADK website-access data and our annual member survey, indicate we continue to have a positive impact for families. ADK continues to deliver our assistance to families and carers at no cost - an unusual scenario in the current disability service provision model.

ADK's vision has always been for free access to information that is relevant, meaningful, and evidence-based, and that the integrity and independence of this information was never compromised by any funding or associations. This tenet on the source of funding has ongoing implications, but the Board has navigated this constraint successfully over the years and remains an ongoing fundamental belief of the Board.

Our two main sources of funding over the past year have been a grant received from the Australian Government Department of Social Services and our generous donors.

The online environment in which Aussie Deaf Kids operates means the organisation has minimal overheads and the cost-of-service delivery is exceptionally efficient. Our grant provides around \$82 per day. For this, our groups reach out to an average of 1,260 active members daily. This means that for \$0.06 a day, we can offer a parent some support and information, when they need it. This is an extraordinary return on investment for funders and donors.

Our donor base remains small despite our impact. This is a worldwide problem for groups supporting families with children who are deaf or hard of hearing despite parent-to-parent support being a cornerstone of family centred early intervention for children with hearing loss. It is disappointing how minimal our annual request for donations yields.

It has been a pleasure to welcome skilled, passionate, and enthusiastic young parents into our ADK team, both on the Board and operational side of the organisation. They bring new ideas and vision that we want to become part of what we do. Funding will be the key issue.

I want to thank Ann Porter for her ongoing selfless dedication and countless hours keeping ADK moving forward, especially as new information becomes available and the way the provision of supports and services continues to evolve. I would also like to acknowledge Ann's ongoing commitment and valuable work at an international level, as a founding member the Global Coalition of Parents of Children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (GPODHH).

Thank you also to our Board members and operational team for their time, valuable skills, enthusiasm, and commitment to Aussie Deaf Kids vision to assist parents in raising their child with hearing loss.

Roslyn Wyburn
Chair



CEO'S REPORT

The pandemic has again dominated much of our lives over the 2020-2021 Financial Year. The repeated lockdowns do have implications for our small team and the parents in our online groups. But Aussie Deaf Kids has always operated in an online environment, which is our strength. The support and information we provide have remained unchanged throughout these difficult times. Our online structure requires no physical space, which allows us to run a financially lean organisation with a substantial impact.

We were fortunate to receive a three-year grant through the Information Linkages and Capacity Building program and have welcomed two parents of children with hearing loss into our operational team. Bec White manages the day-to-day running of our online groups and social media. Jane Colys has taken on the role of Information Coordinator, and she brings new ideas and enthusiasm to carry out the organisation's mission.

Helping parents of children who are deaf or hard of hearing to access reliable information and support is central to our work. In the past year, we have added new activities, thanks to our grant funding. Our online group membership continues to grow. Parent-to-parent support is one of the principles for family-centred early intervention for children who are deaf and hard of hearing, and our member survey highlighted the importance of parent-to-parent support for many families. Almost 90 percent of the respondents felt that they learnt things from other parents that they don't necessarily learn from the professionals.

The survey revealed other pleasing findings. Parents generally felt more knowledgeable about their child's hearing loss and the services and supports available to their child through participating in the Aussie Deaf Kids Facebook groups. They also felt more confident about advocating for their child's needs. Every survey also highlights where members are dissatisfied. Members often have strong views, and emotions can be amplified, which can be distressing. We are fortunate to have a group of experienced parent moderators who can provide some balance and understanding in these situations.

They have been a loyal band of supporters over many years, and I am most grateful for their ongoing enthusiasm for the task.

One of the activities funded through our ILC grant was a pilot Facebook group focussing specifically on children with hearing loss and the NDIS. This group was conceptualised when hearing services were due to transition to the NDIS. When the government decided to keep hearing services for children with the Office of Hearing Services, we were unsure about the need for this group but implemented the pilot group nonetheless. An independent evaluation of the NDIS Community Group found that parents continued to post more messages about the NDIS in our other Facebook groups and recommended the closure of the NDIS group to provide parents with more experiences and ideas in a single group. The group closed in October 2021. This evaluation provided some additional recommendations which we have started to implement - simple things that improve user experience in the groups.



Our monthly newsletter Sounds & Signs is finding its voice, and subscribers have steadily increased since the first edition in September 2020. The newsletter provides an opportunity to explore some of the issues that parents have discussed in our online groups, and keep families and their supporters informed about important issues.

Governments and funding bodies are increasingly recognising the importance of the consumer voice in the planning, development and implementation of programs, research and reports. Aussie Deaf Kids has been at the forefront of representing the voice of families of children who are deaf or hard of hearing at a national and international level.

We have been involved in numerous working groups throughout the year. A few highlights have been our involvement in the Audiology Australia Paediatric Competency Standards Working Group, NDIA Participant Reference Group and being part of the Deafness Forum of Australia Advisory Group's involvement with the Hearing Services Program Expert Review. Through our membership of the Global Coalition of Parents of Children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (GPODHH) and the World Hearing Forum, we provided parent stories and input into the World Report on Hearing, which was launched on World Hearing Day 2021. Aussie Deaf Kids consistently promotes family-centred care, the importance of parent-to-parent support, and the rights of parents to make informed choices regarding their child with hearing loss.

I am fortunate to work with a dedicated and committed Board. They bring new strategic vision and ideas to the table, which the operational team are enthusiastically embracing. I want to thank the Board for their support and generosity with their time and expertise over the year. And I owe many thanks to our Chair, Roslyn Wyburn, who took on the role at the 2020 Annual General Meeting. The Board, our operational team, our moderators, and our donors are the small group of committed people who help Aussie Deaf Kids make a difference in the lives of families whose children are deaf or hard of hearing.

Ann Porter AM
November 2021

Governance of Aussie Deaf Kids

ADK is a public company limited by guarantee under the *Corporations Act 2001* (Cth).

Ultimate responsibility for the governance of the company rests with the Board of directors. The Board is responsible for setting strategic directions and monitoring progress towards the achievement of the company's mission to empower parents raising a child with hearing loss through online support, information and advocacy.

The Board is responsible for ensuring Aussie Deaf Kids Limited's financial viability, solvency and sustainability.

The Board of Directors are the Executive Members of the Company. Executive Members are entitled to attend general meetings of the Company and are entitled to one vote each at such meetings. The Board meet at least four times a year.

Aussie Deaf Kids Limited is registered with the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC).



Acknowledgements

The support of our donors, group moderators, and auditors makes the world of difference.



Our funding

Aussie Deaf Kids acknowledges the funding received from the Australian Government Department of Social Services.

Our auditors

StewartBrown - Chartered Accountants



Our donors

Andrew Bokser
Jill Duncan
Tien Foong
Xiaoyi Liu
Blaire Marsh
Bruce Porter
Alma Umali
Roslyn Wyburn



Our group moderators

Naomi Campling
Fiona McKay
Donna O'Mara
Jo Williams

Financial statement

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 30 JUNE 201

	2021 \$	2020 \$
ASSETS		
Current assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	98,865	108,844
Trade and other receivables	2,147	3,940
Financial assets	1	1
<i>Total current assets</i>	<u>101,013</u>	<u>112,785</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>101,013</u>	<u>112,785</u>
LIABILITIES		
Current liabilities		
Trade and other payables	37,275	54,222
<i>Total current liabilities</i>	<u>37,275</u>	<u>54,222</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES	<u>37,275</u>	<u>54,222</u>
NET ASSETS	<u>63,738</u>	<u>58,563</u>
FUNDS		
Accumulated funds	<u>63,738</u>	<u>58,563</u>
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>63,738</u>	<u>58,563</u>



STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2021

	2021 \$	2020 \$
Revenue	<u>55,057</u>	<u>117,602</u>
	<u>55,057</u>	<u>117,602</u>
Expenses		
Administration and other expenses	(11,549)	(10,907)
Consultancy expenses	<u>(38,333)</u>	<u>(120,882)</u>
	<u>(49,882)</u>	<u>(131,789)</u>
Surplus (deficit) before income tax	5,175	(14,187)
Income tax expense	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Surplus (deficit) for the year	<u>5,175</u>	<u>(14,187)</u>
Other comprehensive income	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total comprehensive income (loss) for the year	<u><u>5,175</u></u>	<u><u>(14,187)</u></u>



www.givenow.com.au/aussiedeafkids

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aussiedeafkids.org.au

Facebook

facebook.com/aussiedeafkids/

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