

2021 - 2022

Annual Report



Thank you to our funders

The Australian Government Department of Social Services who provides our NDIS Information Linkages and Capacity Building Project funding.

Acknowledgement

Aussie Deaf Kids acknowledges the traditional custodians of the lands across Australia and recognises the continuing connection to lands, waters and communities. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and future.

About us

Online information and support for families raising a child who is deaf or hard of hearing in Australia.

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 in Australia

Aussie Deaf Kids is committed to promoting the safety and wellbeing of all children and young people. Guiding our practice is respect for the inherent rights of children and young people to be safe, happy and empowered, as outlined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.



2021-2022 snapshot

aussiedeafkids.org.au

241,000

website page views

48

real life tips

10

webinars

Facebook Page

36,400

reach

5,309

followers as at 30 June 2022

293

posts

Facebook Groups

1,058

top posts

1,012

average active daily members

11,640

comments

15,970

reactions

Instagram

145

reach from Feb 2022

57

posts

140

reactions

Our annual surveys have traditionally low response rates but the parents who do respond, provide us with feedback that both encourages and points to areas of need. The 2022 respondents told us their thoughts about participating in ADK groups.

- 83% agreed they were more knowledgeable about their rights;
- 90% agreed they have new skills to achieve their goals;
- 82% agreed they feel more confident and motivated;
- 59% agreed they felt more valued by people around them; and
- 55% agreed they have more connections in their community
- 68% agreed they have a say on issues that are important to them.

Our Board



Roslyn Wyburn - Chair



Michael Allen - Treasurer



Ann Porter AM - CEO



Flora Chan



Dr Jill Duncan



Fiona Graney



Bruce Porter

Chair and CEO Report

At Aussie Deaf Kids, we want children who are deaf or hard of hearing and their families to thrive and find wonder and fulfilment in living an ordinary life.

In this annual report, you'll see the results of our efforts in helping children and families grow through our provision of online support groups and information. Parent-to-parent support promotes social and emotional well-being for families, builds parent knowledge, and provides a sense of confidence and competence in raising their child who is deaf or hard of hearing.

Since it began in 2001, Aussie Deaf Kids has operated online and asynchronously. It doesn't matter where families live or what time it is; they can connect with other parents and trusted, reliable information and resources via our online platforms. Our small team, including Jane Colys (Information Coordinator) and Bec White (Social Media Coordinator), have not missed a beat through COVID and the floods that have affected many of us this year. We thank them for their energy and commitment throughout the year.

The Information, Linkages and Capacity Building grant from the Department of Social Services has helped us expand our activities and offer additional opportunities for families to build their knowledge. Having a team to moderate the groups, analyse data and create and check content has been transformative for our operation. We have published a monthly newsletter - Sounds & Signs - and have offered a number of webinars over the past year informed by the needs of parents that emerge in our online groups. The presenters permit their presentations to be recorded and available on our website and YouTube. We are grateful for their support.

We have been updating the information on our website. This is no mean endeavour with almost 300 pages and over 1,300 links to review and update as needed. Our goal is to provide parents with meaningful, evidence-based information required in their everyday lives. Our Real Life Tips summarise information parents seek in our online groups into social media posts. These give families a brief outline of a topic or allow them to delve more deeply.

Not all our endeavours to engage and inform parents are successful. We added Instagram to our information channels in 2021 with limited uptake. Our Facebook group focussing on the NDIS and children who are deaf or hard of hearing was another good learning experience. The evaluation of this group by Dr Megan Barr provided us with some invaluable insights and suggestions. Her analysis showed that parents preferred to post their questions about the NDIS to the main groups where they received more feedback and suggestions. As a result of the evaluation, we closed the NDIS group. Her evaluation provided additional recommendations for the groups which we have been implementing.

Aussie Deaf Kids continues to support the Global Coalition of Parents of Children who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing (GPODHH). Two GPODHH parents, Snigdha Sarkar (India) and Dr Joyce Nagulya (Uganda), are heading to Geneva in November to attend the World Hearing Forum under the auspices of Aussie Deaf Kids. We are proud that our support enables parents to be agents for change at this international forum.

Through our CEO, Aussie Deaf Kids will continue participating in several working groups. Collaborating in working groups builds our knowledge and connections and adds the parent perspective to discussions and decisions. Co-design is increasingly recognised by government and research funding bodies as necessary in developing and evaluating services and research. Aussie Deaf Kids applauds this change and the opportunity for our inclusion in several consultations.

Last year this included:-

- Australasian Newborn Hearing Screening Committee,
- Healthy Hearing Early Intervention Working Group,
- Audiology Australia Paediatric Competency Standards Working Group
- Audiology Australia Paediatric Certification Working Group.

Continuing our collaboration with other consumer groups enhances our capacity when advocating for the rights and interests of children who are deaf or hard of hearing and their families. We are particularly grateful for the leadership of Deafness Forum and would like to thank CEO Steve Williamson, who is always open and responsive to our thoughts and contribution.

It was with regret that we farewelled Fiona Graney from the Board. We are grateful for her contribution over the previous two years. Her webinar with Alex Jones on Deaf Culture 101 was a real highlight. Despite her busy work and family life, she oversaw the process of modernising our constitution which will be adopted at the Annual General Meeting.

The key to everything we do is the families who join our online groups and offer the support and knowledge that only those with lived experience can provide. While we encourage robust debate, we always want the groups to support families wherever they are on their journey. Having such a diverse group of parents sharing their experiences is invaluable for parents to discover the many possibilities for their child who is deaf or hard of hearing.

We are always grateful to everyone who supports our work - our Board, our staff and the people who volunteer their time and expertise to Aussie Deaf Kids. The grant from the Australian Government and the generosity of our donors make it possible to continue to support families. Together we are building a stronger tomorrow for children who are deaf or hard of hearing and their families.

Roslyn Wyburn (Chair) and Ann Porter (CEO)

Governance

Aussie Deaf Kids 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).

Financial snapshot

Revenue	
Grants	59,775
Donations	14,856
Other	18
<i>Total revenue</i>	<u>74,649</u>

Expenses	
Program activities	(50,960)
Other	(10,621)
<i>Total expenses</i>	<u>(61,581)</u>

Surplus for the year	<u>13,068</u>
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ASSETS	
Cash and cash equivalents	76,906
Financial assets	1
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>76,907</u>

LIABILITIES	
Trade and other payables	101
TOTAL LIABILITIES	<u>101</u>

NET ASSETS	<u>76,806</u>
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FUNDS	
Accumulated funds	76,806
TOTAL FUNDS	<u>76,806</u>

Thank you

Auditors

David Gallery & Ben Grech
StewartBrown
Chartered Accountants

Lawyer

Joshua Theunissen
TheunissenTrollip
Commercial Lawyers

Website

Damian Codotto
Mindwire

Donors

Alma Umali
Andrew Stewart
Anonymous
Bruce Porter
Charlie Issacs
Cornelis van Egmond
Ernst & Young
Ian Muir
Inge Foley
Jane MacDonald
Jennifer Moore
Jenny Muir
Jill Duncan
Kaa Ee Cheok
Rebecca Knott
Tien Foong
Val Tapp



Thank you

Webinar presenters

- Dr Megan Barr - The NDIS and Education
- Roslyn Wyburn - NDIS 101: Lessons learnt as a Parent & Senior Support Coordinator
- Tim Byatt - Social capital, social communication and identity
- Dr Jill Duncan - Disability Discrimination: What parents of children who are deaf or hard of hearing need to know
- Stephen Tang and Flora Chan - A Conversation with Stephen Tang
- Alison King - Understanding the ins and outs of Hearing Australia's program for children
- Dr Michelle Todorov - Classroom engagement of children who are deaf or hard of hearing attending mainstream school
- Dr Valerie Sung - Finding a cause for your child's hearing loss
- Dr Melissa McCarthy - Best practices for family-centred early intervention for children who are deaf or hard of hearing
- Senior Firefighter Simon de Silva - Fire safety for families with children who are deaf or hard of hearing
- Dr Phil Harper - Sports participation and opportunities for kids who are deaf or hard of hearing
- Alex Jones and Fiona Graney - Deaf Culture 101: Alex Jones in conversation with Fiona Graney

Reflection on living an ordinary life

In October 2014, the Independent Advisory Council of the NDIS published a paper, *Reasonable and Necessary Support across the Lifespan: An Ordinary Life for People with Disability*. The Executive Summary highlights that an “ordinary life” is the “starting point” for the aspirations of people with a disability. The term “ordinary life” is now often used when discussing the NDIS and reasonable and necessary supports.

However, this underplays the extraordinary effort children who are deaf or hard of hearing or have other disabilities and their parents and carers make in achieving what much of the population see as everyday or ordinary life skills and activities.

Take the time to look back at the year and recognise what you, your child, and your supports have achieved. Congratulate yourself on your extraordinary efforts in helping your child with their achievements and finding “the wonder and the marvel of an ordinary life.”

Do not ask your children
to strive for extraordinary lives.
Such striving may seem admirable,
but it is the way of foolishness.
Help them instead to find the wonder
and the marvel of an ordinary life.
Show them the joy of tasting
tomatoes, apples and pears.
Show them how to cry
when pets and people die.
Show them the infinite pleasure
in the touch of a hand.
And make the ordinary come alive for them.

William Martin

Website

aussiedeafkids.org.au

Facebook

facebook.com/aussiedeafkids

Instagram

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