

HEAR FOR YOU UPDATE

Thursday 12 March 2009

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Hear For You travels to Perth

We are getting ready to take the *Hear For You* program to Western Australia! *Telethon, Speech & Hearing* were recently successful in obtaining funding in Perth. As well as providing workshops, *Hear For You* will be involved in training Perth-based hearing impaired adults as potential mentors. They will travel to Sydney to observe and be involved in our workshops. We look forward to working along with this team and are very excited to have built up a close relationship with *Telethon Speech & Hearing* as a result of presenting at RIDBC's conference on *Hear For You*.

News summary of our Sydney workshop

Our Sydney workshop on 15 February was a great success!

Parents were invited to a "Meet & Greet" before the workshop began. This proved to be a wonderful opportunity for them to meet and speak with the mentors and also chat with the other parents of high school students with hearing loss.

15 students who came from different mainstream schools were then divided into three groups by age level and were allocated their mentors for the day. This first workshop dealt with Identity (Years 7 & 8), Communication (Years 9 & 10) and Relationships (Years 11 & 12). In the afternoon two guest speakers spoke about their relationships with a deaf person – a sister and a boyfriend – both with normal hearing.

One of the students Isabella Rosati (Year 12) generously provided the following feedback after the day:

*"The workshop was a nerve-wracking experience at first but once I met all the mentors I felt very welcomed and curious to know what I was going to learn from the day. Just knowing that everyone that surrounded me was deaf just like myself was amazing. **I felt that everyone understood each other and shared stories we never thought anyone else would understand.** Honestly, my favourite part of the workshop was when the two guest speakers, Olivia's sister and Kate's boyfriend, came and talked to us about how they have coped and dealt with living with a deaf person. I found both of their talks extremely interesting as I've never been given that opportunity so that was the time to really knuckle down and ask any questions from their point of view. Overall I learnt an*

awful lot, not only about myself but other deaf people too and I am looking forward to what lies ahead at the next workshop!" ~ Isabella Rosati, Year 12

The mentors met up afterwards and also expressed satisfaction and a sense of achievement in feeling that they had been able to help the younger ones.

Kate Locke, Mentor, felt that *"the best thing about the workshop was the feeling of being a part of something important – and knowing that everyone around you had the shared experience of deafness at some level. Afterwards, we were chuckling to ourselves about how tired we suddenly were, because we'd been operating on a natural high for the whole day!" ~ Kate Locke, Mentor*

E-Mentoring

We are now maintaining ongoing contact via e-mentoring and are very grateful to The Smith Family who recently provided us with administrative support in setting up MentorPlace where emails are exchanged safely online kindly donated by IBM.

Coming up . . . Teamwork, Leadership and Leadership Enrichment

Our next workshop is on 29 March and the topics will be Teamwork (Years 7 & 8), Leadership (Years 9 & 10) and Leadership Enrichment (Years 11 & 12). We will be discussing how best to develop confidence especially when speaking in front of a large group. Trainers from The Original Bootcamp have kindly volunteered their time to give a talk and run a physical session to help build teamwork/leadership skills. We will also have an inspirational speaker – a university student with hearing loss - who was a Prefect in Year 12 and has undertaken leadership roles in various areas over recent years.

Seeking passionate high-profile people to become Hear For You Ambassadors

Hear For You is currently seeking Ambassadors to help raise its profile. If you know of anyone who you feel has a strong emotional connection with inspiring young deaf people, please email us at info@hearforyou.com.au

Please feel free to forward this newsletter onto your networks or to any parents / deaf people you may know.

Thank you and best wishes,

The *Hear For You* team

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