

**ANNUAL
REPORT**

FY18

**10 YEAR
ANNIVERSARY
EDITION**

Hear For You





WELCOME

This is a special Annual Report for Hear For You, as it marks our tenth year of operating. FY18 has been an exciting year with new strategies formalised and partnerships formed.

As well as reviewing our progress during the past twelve months, we have also taken the opportunity to reflect on Hear For You's journey during the past decade. It is incredible to think how many lives Hear For You has influenced in this time – and to give you some insight, we have gathered some personal stories from our mentors and participants. More than anything else, these stories illustrate what Hear For You is all about: supporting young people who are deaf or hard of hearing to reach their potential in life.

We hope you enjoy this year's report.

Hear For You

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OUR HISTORY

Hear For You was originally conceived in 2008 by Olivia Andersen, who had profound hearing loss from birth, in response to her personal and professional awareness of the issues affecting teenagers who are deaf and hard of hearing during their high school years.

Her desire was to help young deaf people develop the confidence and faith in themselves to achieve their dreams.

Since then, Hear For You Limited has conducted its signature mentoring sessions in locations across Australia and New Zealand, and assisted more than 900 deaf or hard of hearing teenagers between 12 and 18 years old. This would not have been possible without the help of over 78 volunteer mentors, who include doctors, lawyers, shop owners, animators, transport designers, social scientists, sports managers, Deaflympians, parents and community leaders.

By sharing their experiences, these mentors have created a new cohort of participants who are now inspired to follow a similar path. Today, Hear For You is an accredited NDIS provider Australia wide, run by a small team and large number of volunteers, with a Board of Executives governing the organisation's operations at a top level.



Hear For You was conceived in 2008 by Olivia Andersen



OUR VISION

For all young people who are deaf or hard of hearing empowered to reach their potential in life.

OUR MISSION

Mentor and inspire young people who are deaf or hard of hearing through evidence-based programs and services that are accessible to all.

OUR VALUES

Professional, inclusive, enthusiastic, ethical, experienced, progressive.

AT A GLANCE

2007

1 individual, Olivia Andersen, had the vision for Hear For You in 2007

2008

In 2008, 'Hear For You', a company limited by guarantee with charity status, established

First workshop hosted in Sydney 2008

2013

Hear For You was acknowledged as a National Disability Award winner for excellence in improving personal and community support

2017

Founder Olivia Andersen awarded the prestigious Peter Howson Award from the Deafness Foundation for outstanding contributions in the field of Leadership and Mentoring Youth since 2008

OUR FY18 IMPACT

900+
LIVES
TRANSFORMED
SINCE 2008



\$212k
DONATIONS
RECEIVED



126
TEENAGERS
MENTORED
Deaf or hard of hearing



PROGRAM
LOCATIONS



MENTORS
VOLUNTEERED



PROGRAMS
DELIVERED



SCHOOLS
REPRESENTED



Hear For You's Chair Kim Jones '2018 Board Director of the Year' finalist in The Third Sector Awards

KATE'S STORY

Kate Obermayer

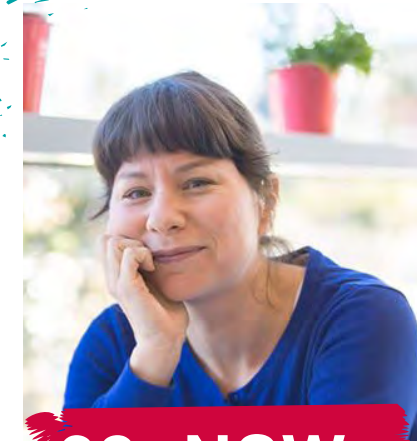
Works at Cochlear Ltd as a Global Volunteer Engagement Coordinator

2008 Original Mentor

Wears Cochlear implants

Mother of two

38, NSW



WHEN AND HOW DID YOU COME INTO CONTACT WITH HEAR FOR YOU?

I actually found out about Hear For You in 2008, when I heard that a woman called Olivia Andersen was setting up a mentoring program for young deaf and hearing-impaired teenagers. I was so intrigued that I contacted her to find out more. That's how I became one of the first six mentors who created the program from the ground up.

WHAT WERE YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF HEAR FOR YOU?

All the mentors bonded over our shared experiences – it was the first time we'd all been in contact with other successful deaf people of a similar age. I loved being part of such an incredible program. Nothing like this had ever been offered in Australia before.

My first year at Hear For You was really exciting, and I remember seeing all the teenagers coming into the building from all different backgrounds, all with different levels of deafness. It was the first time I think many of us had been together with so many people with a shared experience. It was life changing for both the participants and mentors.

The best bit was seeing the impact we had on the kids. At first, they were shy and quiet, and many of them avoided talking about their hearing loss – but by the end of it, they were happier, more confident, and proud to tell people they were deaf. There were life-long friendships forged there. Being part of the program also led to me getting a Cochlear implant after seeing the success many of the kids had with theirs, & I'm happy to say mine was a huge success too.

DESCRIBE YOUR MENTORING SESSIONS AND PROGRESS WITH SOME OF YOUR PARTICIPANTS.

One mentee that stands out is Stephanie Nasir. I first met her when she joined our Year 11 and 12 workshops – she was bright and bubbly, with a passion for art, architecture and photography. Stephanie had profound hearing loss and two hearing aids – and although she was very social, she was unsure of how to talk about her hearing loss in a workplace situation, or to deal with not hearing well in noisy environments. After spending a lot of time doing role plays and discussing different strategies, Stephanie was able to request modifications at work and in social situations, so she was able to hear better.

The other mentee who springs to mind is Rosie Gallen, who I met in one of our Year 12 workshops. Rosie had profound hearing loss and wore one cochlear implant and one hearing aid. We originally bonded over being country girls (she's from Tamworth and I'm from Dubbo). When Rosie first started at Hear For You, she was shy but over time I really feel the mentors helped her to become more confident about her hearing loss, and instead of hiding it, to embrace it.

WHAT'S CHANGED IN YOUR LIFE SINCE THEN AND WHAT ROLE DID HEAR FOR YOU PLAY?

If it hadn't been for Hear For You I don't think I would have ended up getting Cochlear implants. The only reason I looked into them was after hearing all the mentors' and participants' success stories with them. I recently just took the leap and got my second implant done too! I also believe that mentoring those teenagers helped me to build my own confidence and gave me the courage to try new things. Today I'm married with two children, and work for Cochlear. In my current role, I regularly travel for work, present at large functions & run global programs. Without the confidence I found at Hear For You, I really don't think I would be able to do the things I am doing today.

FROM THE CHAIR + CEO



FY18 has been an incredible year for Hear For You – topping off an epic journey over the past decade.

Back in 2008, when Hear For You was first created with our Founder and first Managing Director Olivia Andersen, we had big dreams and ambitious goals. However, we could never have anticipated the progress that we would make, and the organisation we would become.

Over the past decade, Hear For You has supported hundreds of deaf teenagers across Australia – and FY18 saw us build on that success by setting new strategic priorities and foundations for our next decade of growth. By 2025, we want Hear For You to lead the way in delivering evidence-based programs throughout a deaf child's journey to adulthood – arming these young people with the knowledge, skills, socialisation and connections to help them manage the psychosocial impacts of their hearing loss.

We now have a roadmap to help us make this vision a reality, comprising four strategic pillars. Below, we have outlined our progress and plans under each one.

PILLAR 1: SECURE THE FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY OF HEAR FOR YOU.

While Hear For You is fortunate to receive a huge amount of volunteer support, we do require money to run our programs – and as our operations expand, we will need increased funding. This year we identified our current revenue streams (including NDIS funding, grants and donations) and developed a plan for building revenue growth over the short and long term. This has included providing a clear pathway for families to follow when working with their NDIS planners, and applying to have Hear For You included as a service provider.

Our major funder Conexu Foundation has been a rock of invaluable support for the past five years, enabling

us to establish programs in four states and territories, enabling our board and staff to realise their potential to set us up for today. Without this support, the vision we had in 2008 would have been tougher to realise.

In addition to getting ourselves 'NDIS-ready', FY18 saw Hear For You focus heavily on our development and rollout of the Life Goals and Skills programs. We also invested heavily in providing access to our programs through sponsored places – and while this led to a \$39,281 financial loss, we believe this investment played a critical role in preparing attendees for their upcoming NDIS planning meetings. On the back of this, we look forward to seeing more and more deaf teenagers and parents using Hear For You to take them forward in their NDIS plans.

Fundraising has also continued to contribute to our financial stability, with activities including an inaugural Dodgeball event, which raised \$6,300 for Hear For You. Through skilled lobbying, we secured two major NDIS-Information Linkage Capacity grants for NSW. We have also secured another round of the Deaf Lottery Australia grant and built up a strategically strong alliance with UnLtd. Our bookkeeping system underwent an upgrade and now operates in accordance with the new financial accounting standards for Australian charities.

PILLAR 2: EXPAND THE SCOPE AND REACH OF HFY'S SERVICE OFFERING THROUGH APPROPRIATE SERVICE DELIVERY PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS.

Since moving our headquarters to the Australian Hearing Hub in Sydney's Macquarie University campus, Hear For You has actively sought to forge partnerships and collaborate with aligned organisations. FY18 saw us achieve a great success on this front – with Hear For You signing a strategic partnership with Australian Hearing in February 2018. As Australia's largest NDIS provider of audiology services to deaf and hard of hearing teenagers, Australian Hearing has already opened up new avenues for us to connect with our market. We look forward to exploring these further as time goes on. Hear For You is also working on other exciting collaborative projects with the Australian Hearing, Shepherd Centre and the Royal Institute for Deaf & Blind Children (RIDBC). Through these partnerships,

we plan to strengthen the network that exists outside the formal school system, so all deaf children receive adequate support before they enter the workforce.

In addition, our partnership this year with Australian Hearing resulted in a number of exciting awareness campaigns including promotions through all audiology clinics and supporting our Film Festival. These are highlighted later on in this report, and we believe they're a sign of even greater things to come as our partnership evolves.

PILLAR 3: PROVIDE STRONGER EVALUATION AND SUPPORT.

One of the benefits of being located within Macquarie University's HEARing Cooperative research Centre (CRC) is that it's given Hear For You access to professional academic evaluators and researchers. Until now, there have been few studies exploring the needs of deaf teenagers. Together with HEARing CRC, we are now in a position to address this gap by undertaking new research – which in turn, can help us refine and formalise our workshop content and structure over the next ten years.

We have already begun to refresh our curriculum, with the Life Goals and Skills workshop being our primary focus in FY18. We have also worked to expand Hear For You's reach through an enhanced digital presence, in the form of a new website, brand, tone of voice, social media strategy and evergreen content. We'd like to thank the pro bono partners who made this possible: UnLtd, Words By Nuance and the Ernest Group. Now, with a clearer, more cohesive communication plan, we're in a position to promote and operate our programs in a measurable way.

PILLAR 4: VALUE, NURTURE AND EXPAND THE ENGAGEMENT OF HFY'S CORE ASSETS – OUR MENTORS, STAFF, PATRONS, VOLUNTEERS AND FOUNDER.

We know all too well that our people are our greatest assets – and moving forward we plan to take even greater advantage of the skills, knowledge and energy at our disposal. In FY18, we held a successful Board strategy day, and we were also proud to see several Board members recognised externally – with Kim Jones listed as Finalist of the Third Sector awards for best Director 2017-2018, and Tanya Hundloe being awarded a Fellow of the Fundraising Institute of Australia. Looking forward the Board appointed Carl Moser to be our new Company Secretary, furthering our commitment to excellence in Board Governance. We are proud of the exceptional work by our State Manager; John Lui, Rebecca Driscoll, and Emilie Biggar in FY18. All of them continued to deliver programs, promote our programs, and lead their great teams of volunteer Mentors throughout the year. Supporting our mentors will become an increasing focus for us, as we recognise the importance of their involvement. We know that mentors deserve more than a letter of reference of their invaluable contribution to the community, so we're looking at providing recognised mentoring qualifications and skill building for all mentors.

Sharing the personal stories of our mentors and participants will also continue to form a key part of our communications. We hope you enjoy the stories our people have shared in the pages of this report – each one reveals the power that Hear For You has to change lives and shape futures. This is what we look forward to doing more of as we look ahead to 2019 and beyond.

Kim Jones, Chairman of the Board, and David Brady, CEO



ROSIE'S STORY



Hear For You reminded me it's about how you choose to deal with those challenges, not what you have to overcome. It's all about having a positive mindset and a can-do attitude.

WHEN AND HOW DID YOU COME INTO CONTACT WITH HEAR FOR YOU?

I first heard about Hear For You when it was in its first year, back in 2008. A friend who was working at the Shepherd Centre mentioned the program would be starting that year and that it could be a useful tool for me to learn tips and strategies to help navigate through the challenging and formative teenage years of school.

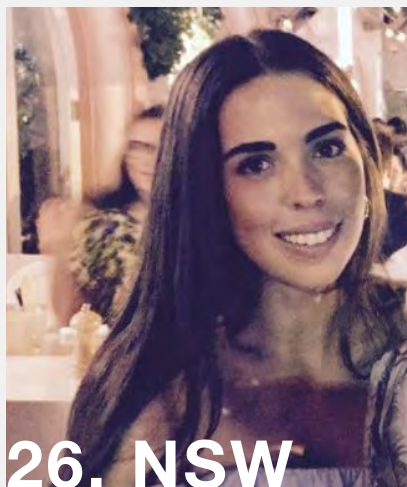
WHAT WERE YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF HEAR FOR YOU?

I immediately felt that everyone was incredibly encouraging, supportive and kind. The energy in the room was welcome and upbeat, and the mentors showed us that having a hearing impairment shouldn't hold us back – instead, we should reach for the stars and achieve our full potential. What stands out most in my mind is feeling a sense of confidence and that we had the right to stand up for ourselves and to expect the best. There's nothing greater than feeling inspired to take on whatever challenges or hurdles are thrown your way.

WHAT'S CHANGED IN YOUR LIFE SINCE THEN AND WHAT ROLE DID HEAR FOR YOU PLAY?

Following my time at Hear For You, I completed Year 12, received my HSC and travelled independently for six months, which was one of the most incredible experiences of my life. Since returning, I've studied Interior Design and am now working and enjoying the everyday joys of life living in the vibrant city of Sydney. Next, I'd love to do some more travelling.

Hear For You reminded me it's about how you choose to deal with those challenges, not what you have to overcome. It's all about having a positive mindset and a can-do attitude.



Rosie Gallen
Interior designer
Born in Gunnedah
Loves to travel

26, NSW

MATILDA'S STORY

Matilda Carnegie

Completing a Bachelor of Arts, majoring in politics & international relations

Profoundly & orally deaf wears a Cochlear Implant

New attitude



20, NSW

WHEN AND HOW DID YOU COME INTO CONTACT WITH HEAR FOR YOU?

My mother had worked with Olivia Andersen on projects before Olivia founded Hear For You. When she heard about Olivia's new initiative, her first thought was that it was a great idea. So, when there was a chance to participate I jumped at the opportunity.

WHAT WERE YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS?

To be honest I felt mixed emotions. I was really excited to meet other young people and mentors who had had a similar experience to me, because it reminds you you're not alone. I was also a little nervous though, as I'd never met another deaf person before and I was used to pretending I wasn't deaf, so I'd blend in. I didn't really know how or what it'd be like to own my deafness. Being open about my deafness was a process that took some time – it was also a huge relief and I've never looked back.

WHAT DID YOU GET OUT OF THE EXPERIENCE?

All the mentors were so passionate and it was fantastic to be able to chat to someone who'd been through the same challenges. The main thing I got out of Hear For You was the realisation I wasn't the only one who struggled with being deaf.

For ages, being deaf had made me feel on the outer (and if I'm honest, sometimes it still does). But it was so good to see other deaf students having similar struggles, particularly with social isolation. It made me realise perhaps my reactions and idiosyncrasies are quite natural, and that others react the exact same way to being deaf.

WHAT'S CHANGED IN YOUR LIFE SINCE THEN AND WHAT ROLE DID HEAR FOR YOU PLAY?

Hear For You showed me that there were other deaf people out there, and I wasn't the only one going through these experiences. Of course, I also have some fond memories of the fun we'd have playing games and doing workshops down at Bondi Beach. The outtake was that you can achieve a lot more as a team than you can on your own. As life's gone on, this lesson has sunk in more and more and really does ring true.

I am now more comfortable in myself than ever before and have grown to accept my disabilities as part of life. This has given me the freedom to do whatever I want with my life and take control of my situation. And I have Hear For You to thank for this new attitude I've adopted.

I am now more comfortable in myself than ever before

FY18 HIGHLIGHTS

1

PARTNERSHIP WITH AUSTRALIAN HEARING

In February 2018, Hear For You signed a partnership agreement with Australian Hearing, Australia's largest NDIS provider of audiology services for deaf and hard of hearing teenagers. This has already enabled us to connect with teenagers through specially created brochures and posters in Australian Hearing waiting rooms. With over 600 Australian Hearing Centres nationally, this partnership gives us huge scope to raise awareness of our programs.

2

TWO NEW GRANTS SECURED

Through skilled lobbying in FY18, Hear For You secured two major NDIS-Information Linkage Capacity (ILC) grants for NSW. These will be used provide support for the development of Hear For You programs in Greater Western Sydney, and develop an online Chatbot portal specifically for deaf teenagers.

3

NGEN AWARDS INSPIRES BRIGHT IDEA

In 2017, Hear For You was announced as the charity of choice by the Media Federation of Australia NGEN awards. These awards invited young creatives to submit innovative ideas to engage deaf teenagers, and over 12 outstanding entries were submitted to the Media Federation judging panel. Well done to Max Learmont and Nolan Yu, the duo behind this remarkable idea winning idea, 'League of Hearoes'. Since then, we have been working to bring League of Hearoes to life, and look forward to sharing more in next year's report.

4

PRESENTING IN NSW PARLIAMENT

In April 2018, Hear For You founder Olivia Andersen led a team of deaf school students to speak about their experiences in the Parliament of NSW. This opportunity saw more than 40 organisations across the deafness sector collaborate to raise awareness about the challenges faced by deaf young people – and the Hear For You representatives played a starring role. In an Australian first, Hear For You arranged for the event to be broadcast live with captions via Facebook, allowing it to be shared worldwide. The event attracted a number of NSW Ministers, including the Minister for Health The Hon. Brad Hazzard MP and Minister for Disabilities and Youth – The Hon. Ray Williams MP.

5

HEAR FOR YOU FILM FESTIVAL TAKES FLIGHT

FY18 saw Hear For You host our first Film Festival – inviting deaf and hard of hearing secondary students to script, shoot, edit and produce a film, and share their voices with the world. Sponsored by Australian Hearing, who helped promote the event, the festival was a great success, attracting many quality entries. The theme this year was 'Love@' – a topic that was brought to life beautifully by the young filmmakers who took part. Congratulations to the winners: Karen Nguyen, Samira Cox and India Cox (Best screenplay), Oscar Lynch (Best director), Raymond Moreno, Jared Donaldson, and Richard Moir (Best film), and Oscar Lynch (Judges' award).

We thank Australian Hearing for its support and involvement with this festival to help continue the growth of this initiative towards being an annual event for all deaf and hard of hearing teenage filmmakers and actors throughout Australia.

6

FRESH NEW WEBSITE AND ONLINE PRESENCE

We recognise that in this digital age, our online presence is crucial to our success – and in FY18, we overhauled it completely. Not only was our website rebuilt for improved functionality, our entire brand story and written communications were recreated through the generous support of Ernest and Words by Nuance. By developing a tone of voice that resonated with teenagers, parents and healthcare professionals, we have been able to convey who we are and what we do far more effectively. The site has been supported by an enhanced social media approach via Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and LinkedIn.



LIZZIE'S STORY

Lizzie Zappia
Early Childhood Special Educator
Mum to two kids
2008 Original Mentor

WHEN AND HOW DID YOU COME INTO CONTACT WITH HEAR FOR YOU?

Out of the blue I received an email from Olivia Andersen in 2007 saying she was interested in meeting up, and I agreed. I'd never heard of Olivia before then, but was curious to hear what she had to say. When we met, she filled me in about her idea for this fantastic mentoring program, and said that she felt I'd be a great mentor for these teenagers. It sounded like a great program to be part of, so I said yes.

WHAT WERE YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS?

I felt like this was something that had been needed for a while, so my first thoughts were: this is what's been missing all along. I believe that having a mentor who's been through the same experiences as you, and can offer you valuable advice is priceless. The thing

I remember most fondly is all the belly laughter we shared. Seeing my participants go from shy, awkward and scared to outrageous, fun-loving, confident and happy was so rewarding to witness.

WHAT'S CHANGED IN YOUR LIFE SINCE THEN AND WHAT ROLE DID HEAR FOR YOU PLAY?

Since then I've gotten married, changed jobs a couple of times and had two kids. The best thing Hear For You did for me was broaden my circle of friends who also have hearing difficulties. Having those friends at vulnerable times, like when I became a Mum has been so important to me. The power of Hear For You cannot be underestimated. The flow-on effects, from the teenage years to adulthood (whether you're a mentor or mentee) are astounding and so beneficial. It really is a very valuable program to be part of.



The power of Hear For You cannot be underestimated.



OUR PROGRAMS IN ACTION

At the heart of Hear For You is our suite of programs, which has been developed specifically for deaf and hard of hearing teenagers. Here's an overview of what each program delivers, and what we've achieved in FY18.

LIFE GOALS & SKILLS

This is our flagship mentoring program, which focuses on bringing together deaf and hard of hearing teenagers with inspiring mentors who have 'been there, done that'. Through Life Goals and Skills, mentors work with teenagers to explore different aspects of life, giving them a chance to exchange ideas and experiences.

In FY18, we delivered Life Goals and Skills in two formats:

1. Metro (a four-day program in Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne), and
2. Blast (a two-day program in regional and rural parts of Australia).

We were particularly pleased with the success of the Blast format, which was delivered to more than 50 deaf and hard of hearing teenagers in Rockhampton, Newcastle, Shepparton, Canberra, Newcastle, Tamworth and Townsville.

For many participants and their families, it was the first time they experienced any formal support with development of psychosocial skills from a deaf-led organisation in their lifetime. Hear For You is pleased to be returning to all the Life Goals and Skills Blast locations in 2019, and would like to thank the mentors who contributed to FY18's success.

ROCK MY WORLD

Designed for high school students who are deaf or hard of hearing, these one-off workshops all focus on a different activity, from film-making to treetop adventures. As well as taking part in interesting activities, participants also hear from a guest presenter and connect with mentors as part of the experience. In FY18, we ran eight Rock My World programs in Sydney and Brisbane with 49 attendees.

PRIMARY2SECONDARY

This unique two-part program helps kids who are deaf or hard of hearing to make the transition from Year 6 to high school. We cover a range of things, from making new friends to dealing with bullying and simply adjusting to a new environment. In FY18, we ran one Primary2Secondary programs in Sydney with three attendees.



SAM'S STORY

Sam Taylor

Surgical Registrar

Works at Auckland City Hospital

Father to a baby boy

WHEN AND HOW DID YOU COME INTO CONTACT WITH HEAR FOR YOU?

I first heard about Hear For You back in 2010 when Olivia Andersen came over to New Zealand to set up the Hear For You mentoring program in Auckland. We didn't have anything at all similar to this in NZ, so my first thought was – what a great idea!

WHAT WERE YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF HEAR FOR YOU?

Going through high school with a Cochlear implant wasn't easy, and I didn't have much confidence. A few of our kids in the Hear For You program were in the same boat, so I could really relate to what they were going through. With our combined hindsight, experience, tips & tricks, we had a fantastic group of mentors who were able to engage with and encourage these kids to really enjoy life.

What was amazing to see was that it worked! After four years of working as a Hear For You mentor, it was incredible to see the difference this interaction made on the kids. Their increased confidence to do what they wanted and to realise their potential was clear.

WHAT'S CHANGED IN YOUR LIFE SINCE THEN AND WHAT ROLE DID HEAR FOR YOU PLAY?

Hear For You really is a life-changing program that makes a huge difference. The value of being able to engage with and learn from those who can relate, cannot be underestimated.

Happy 10th anniversary Hear For You!



32, NZ



After four years of working as a Hear For You mentor, it was incredible to see the difference this interaction made on the kids.

THE ISSUES WE ADDRESS



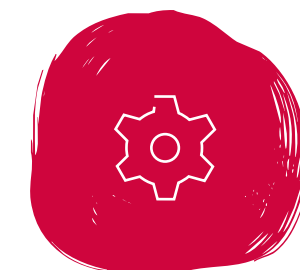
SOCIAL CONTACT

Social contact is one of the main benefits of Hear For You, but there's much more to our programs than that. Through mentoring, we address a number of key issues that deaf and hard of hearing teenagers commonly face.



SOCIAL ISOLATION

Hear For You provides a uniquely supportive environment where young deaf people participate and engage with each other. At our mentoring workshops, a group of no more than 20 young people work with 4-6 mentors, all of whom are deaf or hard of hearing. This provides a direct connection and sense of security that young deaf people may not experience anywhere else in their life.



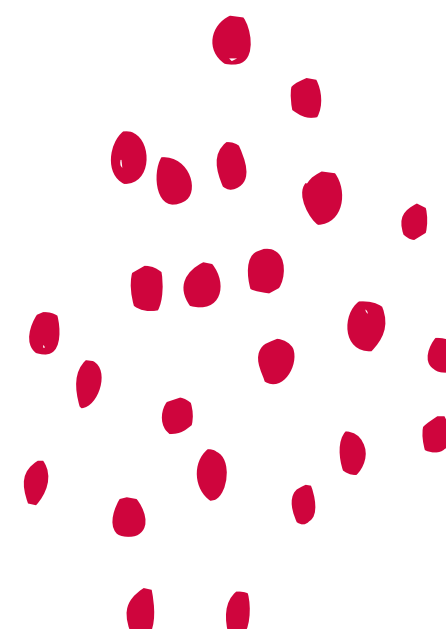
RELIANCE ON COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY AND ACCESS

At Hear For You, we focus on providing the information and developing the skills that young people need to communicate and thrive in life. Not only do we make deaf young people aware of the technology that's available, we also focus on supporting social skills such as assertiveness and social awareness mentoring.



PARENTS DON'T UNDERSTAND

90% of parents of Hear for You participants have no life experience of deafness or hearing loss prior to their experience with their own child. To address this, Hear For You informs and educates parents as well as teens, inviting them to attend parent presentations, providing networking opportunities that help improve their understanding of issues their child may be facing.





KEY FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO THE NEED FOR HEAR FOR YOU

In FY18 there are **8,607 teenagers** in Australia who are deaf or hard of hearing (Australian Hearing, 2018).

92% of children with permanent hearing loss are born to hearing parents (Mitchell & Karchmer, 2004). Then it is found that more than 83% of deaf children and adolescents attend mainstream schools where they are often the sole student in their class or school who is deaf.

Students with mild and unilateral hearing losses **fail a grade at ten times the rate** of students with normal hearing (Cole and Flexer, 2007). This in addition many Australians with a hearing loss face considerable barriers to labour market success often affecting income, finding suitable work and securing promotions.

Teenagers who are deaf or hard of hearing faces **higher risk of mental health** problems compared to their hearing peers (Stevenson et al., 2015). The range of mental health problems often associated with hearing loss in teenagers are depression, aggression, anxiety, and misconduct (Theunissen et al., 2014).

The adverse communication effects upon psycho-social development, impacting the role of family, education, and ultimately—community (Hindley et al., 1994; Vostanis et al., 1997). The review by Stevenson et al. (2015) generated consensus from 45 studies; identifying the need for deaf or hard of hearing teenagers to receive support for social skills—with peer-relationships cited as the most significant problem.

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TARA'S STORY

Tara Elvery
Year 12 student & School Captain
Represented QLD at Australian Deaf Games
Part time music teacher



17, QLD

WHEN AND HOW DID YOU COME INTO CONTACT WITH HEAR FOR YOU?

When I was in Year 8, my Mum saw a brochure advertising the Hear For You program at her audiologist appointment.

WHAT WERE YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS?

That everyone at Hear For You was really friendly and welcoming, and made me feel at home straight away.

WHAT DID YOU GET OUT OF THE EXPERIENCE?

The main thing that stands out from my experience with Hear For You is that I was able to feel totally comfortable with this group of people because they all had hearing loss. This was very different to my usual experience of being the one in the group who was different.

WHAT'S CHANGED IN YOUR LIFE SINCE THEN AND WHAT ROLE DID HEAR FOR YOU PLAY?

The mentors at Hear For You encouraged me to follow my dreams and passions, and also have confidence instead of feeling ashamed of my disability. They also gave me so much valuable information on hearing devices, services and apps to help me cope better with day-to-day living with hearing loss.

It was also through Hear For You that I found out about para-athlete competitive sports, which allowed me to travel to different parts of Australia, representing Queensland in Cross Country and Athletics. I've also been fortunate enough to play deaf netball for Queensland and competed in the Australian Deaf Games at the start of this year. All of this was only possible because of the contacts, support and advice I gained from Hear For You. They have really helped me navigate a confident and successful path through high school.

Everyone at Hear For You was really friendly and welcoming, and made me feel at home straight away.

WHAT DOES NDIS MEAN FOR HFY?

Over the past four years, Hear For You's Board and staff have been preparing for the NDIS rollout by engaging with deaf teenagers and their families, remodeling our programs, seeking input from peer organisations and experts, and lobbying government agencies and politicians.

This hard work has enabled us to provide a clear guided pathway for families to make the right application to their NDIS planners, and use their funding to access Hear For You's Life Goals Skills Blast and Metro programs.

Furthermore, the unique set-up of the mentoring programs driven by deaf teenagers through working with their deaf adult mentors and peers using the base of their personal Life Goals and Skills plans has enabled high level NDIS plan renewals and improvements. This critical basis enables all deaf teens who use their NDIS to become an advantageous support network to help them achieve their full potential.

This year, the NDIS income also made an impact for the first time, adding \$20,000 to our income. We are seeing re-approved NDIS deaf teenagers and parents using Hear For You to take them forward in their NDIS plans, and look forward to seeing the impact that NDIS plays in the future.



SAM'S STORY

Sam Cartledge

School Captain 2011

Content Coordinator for Expression Australia

Vice Captain of the Australian Deaf Basketball Team

Represented at 2 Deaflympics



24, NSW

WHEN AND HOW DID YOU COME INTO CONTACT WITH HEAR FOR YOU?

I was in year 10 when my teacher introduced my Mum to the Hear For You program, and suggested I go along. I was pretty shy back then, and was really reluctant to attend – but on the advice of my teacher I went along to my first workshop.

WHAT WERE YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS OF HEAR FOR YOU?

As soon as I met the mentors and other participants, I started to come out of my shell. I realised I'd never actually socialised with other teenagers who were deaf or hard of hearing like me before. For the first time, I felt like I could express my frustrations and problems at school with people who actually understood what I was going through. Spending time with people who I could relate to, and who'd been through the same challenges themselves really made me feel accepted.

WHAT DID YOU GET OUT OF THE EXPERIENCE?

The biggest thing for me was gaining confidence and learning leadership skills, which lead to

me being elected as the School Captain in year 12. Being part of the Hear For You program really helped me to accept my deaf identity, which is something I will always be grateful for. Starting to feel comfortable with who I was started to open so many doors for me career-wise and I'm now in a position where I can give back to the deaf and hard of hearing community myself.

One of my standout moments in my first year with Hear For You was meeting David Brady. He introduced me to the world of deaf sport and suggested that I play for Deaf Australian Basketball team. I didn't even know a Deaf team existed! Now, I can't imagine a life without Deaf Basketball.

DESCRIBE YOUR MENTORING SESSIONS AND PROGRESS WITH ONE OF YOUR PARTICIPANTS.

Back in 2015 when I was the Melbourne Program Coordinator, the participants really reminded me of myself. They were so shy and had never really hung out with other deaf or hard of hearing teenagers before. By the end of the four days, I was blown away by how much progress they'd made

just from spending time together socialising. The real highlight for me was seeing all the teenagers have fun as a group, and learning new ways to approach things – the relationships they formed with the mentors was what made the program so rewarding.

WHAT'S CHANGED IN YOUR LIFE SINCE THEN AND WHAT ROLE DID HEAR FOR YOU PLAY?

Now I work full-time at Expression Australia (formerly Vicdeaf) as a Content Coordinator. In my role I get to create stories focusing on the work we do with people experiencing barriers in their lives. I've become fluent in Auslan and have a huge network of friends who are deaf and hard of hearing all around the world. Currently I'm back at university part time doing a BA in Public Relations, which I plan on using to advocate equality for anyone with a disability who doesn't feel like they belong in society. Honestly, if it wasn't for Hear For You, I don't know if I would've ended up in the not-for-profit sector – and I have to thank them for giving me the skills and experience to mature and find my identity.

For the first time, I felt like I could express my frustrations and problems at school with people who actually understood what I was going through.



Being part of the Hear For You program really helped me to accept my deaf identity, which is something I will always be grateful for.



CELEBRATING OUR TEAM

Here For You wouldn't be where we are today without our founder, staff, volunteers and Board. We would like to say a sincere thank you to all the people who have contributed to our success in FY18, and in the decade prior.

OUR CORE TEAM

In FY18, our core team was led by CEO David Brady, who manages all aspects of the Hear For You executive management operations, including Human Resources, Finance, Marketing and Communications. David has been supported by part-time State Managers John Lui (NSW), Emilie Biggar (VIC) and Rebecca Driscoll (QLD), as well as Volunteer Strategic Operations Consultant, Michael Sutjiadi.

Thanks to our new NDIS Information Linkage Capacity Grants, we have also been able to add two new members to the team: Rebecca Stewart (full time Western Sydney Programs Coordinator) and Kylie Browne (part time Communications and Online Projects Manager). FY18 also saw the return of Founder Olivia Andersen, who coordinated our special 10th Anniversary Event in a part-time capacity.

OUR MENTORS (FY18)

Alysha Tan, James Leonard, Brittany Sanders, Brianna Fleet, Bradley Jardine, Dan Jarvis, Mary Dowd, Jonathon Helena, Cassandra Mulo, Jillian Ash, Kate Wilson, Julian Scharf, Holly Reedman, Dylan White, David Romanowski, Rebecca Stewart, Teneale Houghton, Harriet Drane, Danielja Ivancevic, Aleks Petrasic, Kelvin O'Malley, Sarah Barlow, Eddie Hilliar, Heather Hunt, Adrian Chau, Elizabeth Seares, Lucy Perone, Melinda Vernon, Amy Mills.

OUR AUDITORS

Gede Barone and Susan Grant of BDH Audit & Assurance Pty Limited

OUR VOLUNTEERS

Helen Crozier, Michael Sutjiadi, Barb Hawes, Catherine Stone (Crybaby Productions), Pauline Findlay, Victoria Cramp, Max Learmont and Nolan Yu (League Of Hearoes), Emma Nevison and Justin Horsfall (Ernest Group), Nikhil Bora, Julia Demine, Courtney Nolan, Rachel King, Muffy Churches, Nina Nyman and Rachel Troy (UnLtd), Emma Heath and Alex Pratt (Words By Nuance)

OUR BOOKEEPERS

Karen Groves, Brett Lowe, and the Successful Alliances team.



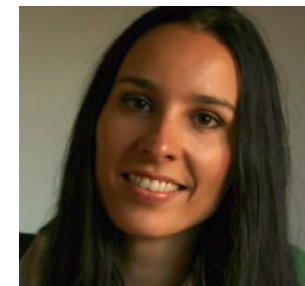
OUR BOARD

Thank you to Kim Jones (Chair), Olivia Andersen (Founder) and Directors, Stephanie Meares, Stephen Coutts and Tanya Hundloe, for their advice, strategic insights, and support throughout the year.



Kim Jones

Chairman of the Board



Olivia Andersen

Founder & Executive Director



Stephanie Meares

Non-Executive Director



Stephen Coutts

Non-Executive Director



Tanya Hundloe

Non-Executive Director



SOPHIE'S STORY



"I feel humbled to see the strength and courage the young teens develop through facing their challenges today. They have so much to give to the world. They just need deaf mentors and to hear the words, "You're deaf - so what? If we can do this, then you can too!"

WHEN AND HOW DID YOU COME INTO CONTACT WITH HEAR FOR YOU?

I was involved with a national research project run by Victorian College of Arts, called 'Let It Out!'. The project researched whether voice training under the Dramatic Arts course could also help oral deaf teenagers to improve their speech skills. One day, Nick Doyle from Hear For You, visited and explained his move to Melbourne to set up Hear For You after the huge success in Sydney. After the meeting, Nick asked me whether I would like to come on board. The rest is history!

WHAT WERE YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS?

At first, I was sceptical as I was unsure in how I could help. However, the program piqued my curiosity and I just had to go and check it out – and I am so glad

I did! Within the first day of the mentor training, I immediately knew the program was amazing and already formed new lifelong friends. There was no question that I would be involved as a mentor and volunteer.

WHAT DID YOU GET OUT OF THE EXPERIENCE?

Being part of this minority, it is almost rare to 'bump' into someone on the street who is just like you. So imagine how it feels to jump into a community where everyone is all on the same boat – deaf and perhaps the only one deaf student in the school. Having so many deaf young individuals to finally meet together as one big group – being together in a room feels so empowering! I feel humbled to be part of their life journey, the strength and courage in many young teens facing their challenges today. They have so much to give to the world. They just needed role

models who are 'just like them' to say, "You're deaf - so what? If we can do this, then you can too. What's stopping you?"

WHAT'S CHANGED IN YOUR LIFE SINCE THEN AND WHAT ROLE DID HEAR FOR YOU PLAY?

Not only have I learned how to mentor and guide young teens going through a tough time in their lives, but I also have personally learned so much from my years with Hear For You. In fact, I still keep in touch with many mentors and it's been an absolute pleasure to meet so many young teens. I have since been involved in the Australian deaf community and have learned Australian Sign Language fluently. Now I am embracing a new adventure abroad: China! I now live and work in Shanghai, learning Mandarin and Chinese Sign Language. Thank you to Hear For You - you have changed my life for the better!



Sophie Li
Lives in Shanghai, China
Web Developer
Discovering new languages

28, VIC

THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS



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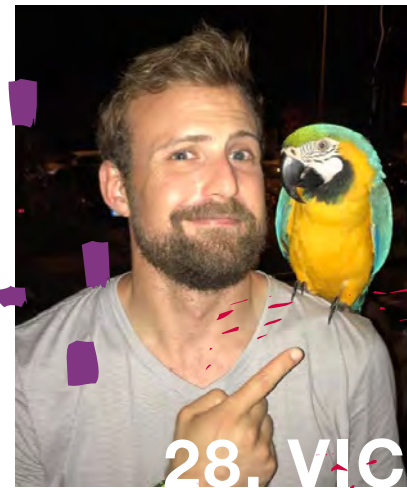
Grilled

+ seven generous individuals.



PATRICK'S STORY

Patrick Lane
Industrial Designer & UX Designer
Hard of Hearing
Represented Australia at Deaf Men's Basketball



WHEN AND HOW DID YOU COME INTO CONTACT WITH HEAR FOR YOU?

Sophie Li, the Hear For You Coordinator for Victoria, first introduced me to the Hear For You program. I was quite intrigued by what the program had to offer for both mentors and participants involved, and given the struggles I endured growing up, I knew I had to join.

I'd grown up in a hearing world, thinking I was broken, thinking I was different and that I needed these hearing devices and endless sessions of speech therapy to fit into the society 'norm'. Despite my tiring efforts to hear and speak like everyone else throughout my schooling, I felt isolated and alone as a hard of hearing (HoH) person. It wasn't until I began to socialise with people in the deaf community that I learnt more about what it means to be deaf. That's when I slowly established the one core value that drives who I am today – my deaf identity.

WHAT WERE YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS?

The 2015 program was a lot of fun. I was mentoring alongside people I knew well and as a result, we worked really well as a team. We got to know all the participants quite well too, through a range of fun activities, gaining an understanding of where their head was at and discussing any ambitions they had for the future.

WHAT DID YOU GET OUT OF THE EXPERIENCE?

As a mentor, it was great to see many of the participants that year progressively developing leadership and effective communication skills, ensuring everyone is being included in the activities. It was incredibly rewarding to see how the participants grew over such a short period of time. I saw a lot of myself in the participants that came through the program, and being able to be a role model for them was really heartwarming. **Whether it was assisting with issues they wanted to discuss, learning new skills, or guiding them as they planned their exciting future endeavours, it was an honour to play my part in the program.**

WHAT'S CHANGED IN YOUR LIFE SINCE THEN AND WHAT ROLE DID HEAR FOR YOU PLAY?

Since leaving Hear For You in 2015, I continued to focus on my design career while representing Australia in the national Deaf Men's Basketball Team (aka 'The Goannas'). I've so far competed in four international events, and was fortunate to win gold at Asia Pacific Deaf Games in 2015. I returned home to Melbourne last May to focus my efforts on upskilling my career with a full-time course in User Experience (UX) Design, which I have now completed. Ultimately, I wish to utilise these new skills to further educate society on the benefits of being inclusive of people from all backgrounds and disabilities – promoting a healthier society where everyone is treated equal.

Just like I told every mentee that came through the program; you can achieve absolutely anything you set your mind to, regardless of what others tell you otherwise. The world is your oyster, so venture out and seize it.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Hear For You celebrates its 10th Anniversary in November, 2018 and has a lot to look forward to in FY19 and beyond.

Here are just a few things we have planned.

- Building on our past success, we now aim to ensure we have the right format of mentoring programs. This will include a **new filmmaking and editing workshop** is soon to be launched in November 2018, which will dovetail into our second National Film Festival in 2019.
- As well as recruiting and retaining the best people, we plan to **implement an accredited training program** that recognises and rewards volunteers' skills.
- Through our partnerships we aim to **expand awareness of Hear For You**, reaching 8,607 deaf and hard of hearing teenagers in Australia by 2025.
- Our focus on **online communities** will intensify, with the launch of the League of Hearoes project, as well as a new Chatbot style community. We are even exploring the possibility for 24/7 online access to Hear For You support.
- The NDIS is expected to grow for Hear For You as more deaf teenagers become accepted into the scheme and access the funds. This will result in growth of the Life Goals and Skills programs, especially for **rural and regional communities** in NSW, ACT, QLD, and Victoria. We may be exploring other states post July 2019 based on need and securing support from fundraising and donations.
- We plan to seek new **support from philanthropy, corporates, and government** through a new 'Friends of Hear For You' group. This will be used to help support non-NDIS funded online programs, travel for participants in Rural areas, and overall governance administration support for the State managers and volunteer mentors. Our strategic priority is to build the financial reserves, so the work started in 2008 can be secure for the next decade.





HEATHER'S STORY

Heather Hunt
Teacher's Aide
Ready to be a teacher
Started with HFY in 2008

WHEN AND HOW DID YOU COME INTO CONTACT WITH HEAR FOR YOU?

An ex-mentee, Jess Waters, told me about it but after enquiring, I found out I was 'too old' to join the program. I decided to contact Olivia Andersen and find out how I could help.

WHAT WERE YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS?

I thought it was a wonderful network and wished there had been something like this when I was a teenager.

WHAT DID YOU GET OUT OF THE EXPERIENCE?

Lots – lifelong friends for a start! I also found a supportive community that understands what being hard of hearing really means and a group of people to laugh and cry at hearing related things with. I loved building a network and relationships with the participants. It is so encouraging to see them thrive and become a confident, influential teenager that can advocate for their hearing needs.

DESCRIBE YOUR MENTORING SESSIONS AND PROGRESS WITH ONE OF YOUR PARTICIPANTS.

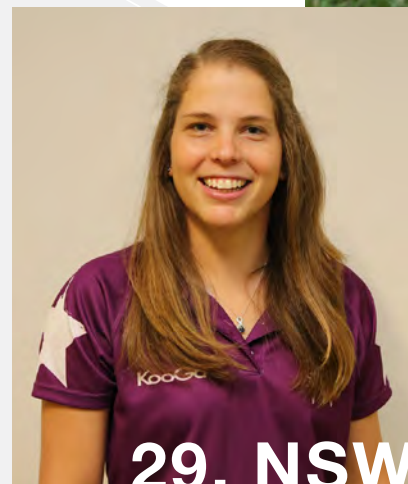
There are too many to choose from, but here are two that spring to mind.

Olivia B first arrived at Hear For You as a quiet, reserved young lady, and has developed into a much more confident one. She has spoken out about her hearing in front of her year group, done a TedX talk, won an award at a film festival and is an inspiration to the other participants around her.

Jared D kept to himself and didn't talk much to others when he first attended Hear For You but quickly became a confident, articulate young man who will now happily chat to anyone. He has tackled things he wouldn't have had the courage to do before. He also participated at the Australian Deaf Games this January, winning a gold and silver medal! A real achievement at such a young age.



I found a supportive community that understands what being hard of hearing really means and a group of people to laugh and cry at hearing related things with.



29. NSW



OLIVIA'S STORY

Olivia Barnes

Moderately-severe/severe hearing loss

Hearing aids fitted at 13 weeks old

Stood in front of the whole school to talk about living with a hearing loss

Gave a Tedx talk about being a hearing impaired teenager

Was part of Hear For You presentation team for the Federal Parliamentary Inquiry into Hearing Health and Well Being in 2017



18, NSW

WHEN AND HOW DID YOU COME INTO CONTACT WITH HEAR FOR YOU?

My Mum saw an article about Hear For You in Sydney's Child when she was in a doctor's waiting room. She thought it'd be a great opportunity for me to become involved in and it certainly was. I was in Year 7 at the time and was really struggling with the pressures of school and finding it hard to make friends.

WHAT WERE YOUR FIRST IMPRESSIONS?

I was amazed after attending my first Hear For You workshop at how comfortable it was to be with other deaf teenagers. I hadn't spent much time with other deaf people (other than when I was attending the Shepherd Centre when I was little). Being around other kids who were facing the same challenges was such a relief, and to be mentored by people with deafness was inspiring. I remember thinking that one day I want to be a mentor too!

WHAT DID YOU GET OUT OF THE EXPERIENCE?

I found the mentoring session really helpful as I progressed (sometimes painfully) through high school. Getting help with social interactions and learning to be an advocate for myself really helped me cope, especially with school.

One of my first mentors was John Lui, and he remains a constant support for me. He is a very positive person and always makes himself accessible. John is an absolute legend!

WHAT'S CHANGED IN YOUR LIFE SINCE THEN AND WHAT ROLE DID HEAR FOR YOU PLAY?

I've made some wonderful friends and I now have a social network, which is something I've always wanted. Hear For You helped me to see myself as a valued friend. I feel very supported and the empathy and guidance I get from the mentors has been absolutely life changing for me.



I feel very supported and the empathy and guidance I get from the mentors has been absolutely life changing for me.

THANK YOU!

Emma Nevison Photography, Designer - emmanevision.com
Pages 2,3,5,15,21,23,29,30,33,35
Jordan Roach Photo jordanpix.com - page 24
Phil Carrick Visions - carrickvisions.com - page 13
John Lui - page 18
Emilie Biggar - page 30, 31
Olivia Andersen - page 18,19
Rick Gates - rickgatesphoto.com.au - pages 9, 25

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