

# ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020

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# CEO AND CHAIR REPORT


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**Stephen Coutts stepped down as Chair in March 2020, replaced by Yetta Abrahams who comes into the role bringing experience from the hearing sector and as a director. Yetta has worked in the field of audiology for the past 20 years, is a current member of the board of Audiology Australia and a parent to two teens.**

In September 2019 the Hear For You Board confirmed our vision:

***Be the market leader where deaf and hard of hearing young people want to go, and sought by government and stakeholders, for trusted expertise and services. \****

Hear For You continues to journey on its roadmap to journey towards the vision of a reality, comprising four strategic pillars. This journey will lead us to our goal that 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.

**1** **SECURE OUR FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY**  
 – financial stability so we can offer more programs around Australia.

Fiduciary focus – in a space of six years the Board and CEO turned Hear For You around from a position of near insolvency to income of more than \$750,000 funding to place Hear For You in a good position to ride out the COVID pandemic.

The next challenge is to navigate the expected impact of a recession which will no doubt require our management and board to continue operating a lean low expense service so as to meet the challenge of providing mentoring for deaf teenagers.

# CEO AND CHAIR REPORT CONTINUED



## BUILD OUR NATIONAL BRAND, PROFILE AND REFERRAL PATHWAYS

– to grow awareness and participation, so we can reach areas of need.

Positioned at the Australian Hearing Hub, Hear For You continues to collaborate with other service providers including Macquarie University to raise awareness of hearing health for teenage and young Australians.

Hear For You continues to be recognised as a significant player in the hearing health sector, through being a lead member of the NSW Coalition of Hearing Health and Deafness Sector organisations, and is an active participant member of Deafness Forum of Australia through provision of information about teenager issues, input into parliamentary submissions, and providing the platform for advice from young Australians with a hearing loss.

For the second year, we hosted school students public speaking event at Parliament of NSW, with 4 out of 6 speakers from Hear For You, and participant, now mentor, Bettina Liang as event MC. The event itself was hosted by Felicity Wilson MP and attended by Minister Gareth Ward MP, Shadow Minister Penny Sharpe MLC, and a number of NSW Parliamentary Friends of Hearing health and deafness group.



# CEO AND CHAIR REPORT CONTINUED

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## CREATE A VIBRANT, POSITIVE COMMUNITY

– building a community with relevant, innovative and appealing services

Our focus in 2019 to 2020 was to update all Hear For You communications and social media to become on trend with teenagers in general. The purpose for this is to provide teenagers with a hearing loss the same environment their school peers are engaging online, while at the same time provide information and tips the teenagers can shine among their hearing peers.

We continue to meet the high standards required to be an NDIS provider by successfully passing the NDIA audit conducted by Global Mark to continue delivery of quality Life Goals and Skills programs. We are proud to be commended on the way we allow lived experience young adults share their invaluable experience of hindsight with the teenager generation.

Our operations structure has become customer-centric, agile, and innovative. All of which were put to the test in March 2020 when the COVID pandemic caused shutdown of our in person programs, meaning the Board and Staff were required to pivot to provision of attractive Online programs for the deaf teenagers Australia-wide.

# CEO AND CHAIR REPORT CONTINUED

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Our community includes contributions from volunteers, services, and supporters including:

- Professor David McAlpine and Professor Cath McMahon of Macquarie University (for providing the office and workshop location in Sydney)
- Lisa-Jane Taylor (database development)
- Helen Crozier (technology coach)
- Catherine Stone (Crybaby Productions)
- Angus and Julia Stone who, with their record company, gave permission for Hear For You to use their music in a campaign
- Lauren Gorfinkel and Macquarie University for providing media interns.
- Bob Cowan and HEARing CRC for providing the workshop location in Melbourne
- Deaf Services for providing the Brisbane and rural Queensland venues for workshops
- Hearing Australia for providing the opportunity to host in-house drop in clinics in Western Sydney and Macquarie University for deaf teenagers.

With so many talented and diverse people who have given of their time, skills and venues, Hear For You was able to provide solid foundations to deliver high quality workshops for the participants and mentors, as well as ensure good support for the staff working behind the scenes, thank you.



# CEO AND CHAIR REPORT CONTINUED

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## VALUE, NUTURE AND EXPAND THE ENGAGEMENT OF HEAR FOR YOU'S CORE ASSETS

— our mentors, staff, patrons, volunteers and founder working together to deliver our mission.

In 2020 Hear For You are working with Macquarie University to work on developing a formal Mentor certification program, that can be delivered as a combination of online and in-person training. Once launched, Mentor's will have access to the only formal certified Mentor training program to use to benchmark themselves, and recognise their skills to support their mentoring and in their careers. This training program ensures Hear For You will retain high level support for Mentors as well as ensure quality provision of mentoring for the deaf and hard of hearing teenagers.

All staff and mentors underwent formal youth mental health first aid training, and completed a two-day child protection course ensuring quality compliance with NSW and Queensland child safety practices. These extra training programs are provided by Hear For You as to ensure high quality programs for the teenagers who receive Life Goals and Skills mentoring either online or in-person.

The new Board took on the task to refine and implement the strong governance frameworks, structures, policies and processes around purpose and strategy put in place by the previous Board Directors before the 2019 to 2020 financial year. With these frameworks, the Board was able to perform its roles and responsibilities, be across the entity's risk management, measure overall performance, conduct effective stakeholder engagement as well as ensure high level compliance meeting NDIA, ACNC, and ASIC requirements.

# OUR IMPACT

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# HIGHLIGHTS

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**Participated in Federal Government Roadmap for Hearing Health Consultation**



**Secured new NDIA ILC Grants**



**Engaged With Australia**



**Hear For You Film Festival continues to grow**



**NDIS is Growing**



# HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUED

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## Journey Into The New Decade

On 11 February 2020, Hear For You hosted a special event with over 120 people in attendance at the Museum of Contemporary Arts in Sydney, to launch the new decade.

Guests and friends were treated to insights from graduates Tara Elvery and Grace Troughton, who shared their personal journey as young women with a hearing loss through their high school years to where they are in their adult lives. The audience were provided a bonus insight into the art work from both Grace and Tara, with Grace sharing her award winning HSC art work, while Tara showed why she was a Conservatorium of Music scholar by playing a musical score from her clarinet.

The launch provided the audience the plans Hear For You have to reach more than 8,000 teenagers with a hearing loss across Australia, the new hearing health awareness program, and the online program to meet the demand of teenagers wanting connection with mentors and peers online.



# HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUED

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## **NDIA ILC grants assisted growth and transformation**

The ILC Disabled Persons Organisation Grant supported the development of our business support systems and work on the development of a formal training curriculum for Mentors. In addition Hear For You were supported by the ILC Grant to develop the program in Western Sydney, which saw 65 Schools visited, 2 Itinerant Teachers team meetings attended, 1 presentation at Shepherd Centre in Liverpool, engagement with over 647 young deaf people across the Western Sydney region via social media and through Hearing Australia.

The ILC Chatbot program supported the development and trial of an automated online web-based chatbot to provide more consistent connection for deaf teenagers and their families with Hear For You. It resulted in creating 352 contacts (271 female – 81 Male) providing a significant increase in traffic to our website and also program and workshop enrolments over the course of this project. Facebook insight reporting indicates that when we first started this project we had 2,039 followers. We now have 3056. We had 176 new messaging connections via Messenger (where our Chatbot is housed) which is a 85% increase compared to the prior reporting period. Google Analytics reporting indicates that during this period consistently was at 44% of traffic came via Facebook referral (where the chatbot is housed).

## **NDIS is growing**

The NDIS is beginning to have a positive impact on the deaf teenagers and their families, as more workshop places are funded by the NDIS. We are seeing major life changes for many deaf teenagers through use of their NDIS as compared to previous generations develop the individual freedom to choose how they personally grow through their Hear For You developed Life Goals and Skills plans.

# HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUED

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## Hear For You Film Festival 2019

The Hear For You National Film Festival 2019 is supported by Hearing Australia who selected the theme of **Friendship**.

Films were made by deaf and hard of hearing teenagers from NSW, QLD, and Victoria, with 15 entries from QLD and NSW being submitted in the 2019 competition.

The winners were:

**Best Film:** Please Help (Massimo Zurzolo, Lachlan Rosenberger, Richie Huang from Melbourne)

**Best Director:** Hidden Heroes (Richard Moir, Jared Donaldson, Ryan Jones and Alexander (Sasha) Janzcuk from Sydney)

**Best Screenplay:** Hidden Heroes (Richard Moir, Jared Donaldson, Ryan Jones and Alexander (Sasha) Janzcuk from Sydney)

**Judges' Award:** A Friend (Oscar Lynch from Brisbane)

The winners were announced at the Premiere Screening and Red Carpet event in Sydney on 22 August 2019 at the Golden Age Cinema. Three of the winning films were selected by Hearing Australia to show in their clinics all over Australia and on their social media.

In 2020, the Film Festival and workshops were held virtually on-line.

# HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUED

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## New South Wales

### **Adapting to delivery quality programs**

We had a productive period from July – December 2019 with our Life Goals & Skills Blast in Tamworth, the flagship Life Goals & Skills Metro Program and Primary2Secondary Session all taking place. We were all set for another action-packed year in 2020 until March, when we joined the ranks of the many millions of people whose plans were thrown into sudden disarray due to the coronavirus.

Before the March lockdown and the resulting pivot to online programs began, we held our Year 7 Session in February where we welcomed new Year 7 students to Hear For You and caught up with the Year 6 students from the 2019 Primary2Secondary Session to see how they were faring in their first term of high school.

We were also able to launch our NSW Youth Project – Hearing Health Leaders which brought together deaf/hard of hearing youth from all over NSW – as far north as Taree on the Mid North Coast, west from Tamworth, south from Illawarra and east from Manly.

We look forward to generating momentum again in the tail end of this year and getting underway with more face-to-face programs in 2021!

# HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUED

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## Queensland

### **Branching into new regional areas**

Over the past financial year HFY in QLD has hosted a number of programs including one Life Goals and Skills Metro Workshop, one Primary2Secondary workshop, one Rock My World workshop at Tree Tops Challenge and three Life Goals and Skills Blast workshops including branching out into two new regional areas of Toowoomba and Bundaberg which was a great achieve in 2020.

Feedback received from each of the workshops was extremely positive with our parents wanting more programs hosted in the regional areas. Through the 6 workshops there were 32 mentees registered.

QLD recruited 3 new mentors in 2020 and promoted HFY at 7 speaking events at schools along with speaking at 2 community groups dinners.



# HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUED

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## Online Programs

### **A new way to reach deaf and hard of hearing teens around Australia**

In March 2020, we brought forward our plans to implement the Online programs due to the impact of the COVID19 Pandemic in Australia.

With no funding, we were able to utilise the staff resources to pivot and use their skills collectively to design, construct, and deliver an effective online program. The impact saw 123 teenagers with a hearing loss throughout Australia be connected with Hear For You's young adult Mentors during the long periods of social isolation from school and their community due to lockdown.

In addition to supporting teenagers with a hearing loss, we also provided special parents/guardian workshops around teenager mental health with psychiatrist Dr Kristina Clarke. Hear For You's focus during the COVID19 restrictions was on ensuring deaf and hard of hearing teenagers have a place they can feel safe to go to online, meet others like them, and be there to support them during the difficult times.

# OUR PROGRAMS

At the heart of Hear For You is our suite of programs, which have been developed specifically for deaf and hard of hearing teenagers. Here's an overview of what each program delivers and attendance numbers in FY20.

Type of Program	Locations	June 20	June 19	Variance	June 20 NDIS	June 19 NDIS	Variance
Life Goals and Skills Metro	1	9	23	-14	8	14	-6
Life Goals and Skills Blast	5	19	27	-8	13	19	-6
Rock My World	6	22	69	-47	10	30	-20
Primary2Secondary	5	15	26	-11	10	11	-1
Online	9	123	0	123	113	0	113
<b>TOTAL 19/20FY</b>	26	<b>188</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>80</b>
Cancelled	16	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

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# OUR PROGRAMS CONTINUED

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## Key outcomes

- COVID-19 early March 2020 closed the majority of face to face workshops for 2020, however, the pivot to Online programs provided the essential avenue for connection for the deaf teenagers.
- Continuing increase in growth of participants using NDIS funding to fund Hear For You program places.
- Enrolments continue to grow for Primary2Secondary since its induction in 2018.

## Primary2Secondary

This unique two-part program helps kids who are deaf or hard of hearing to make the transition from Year six to high school. We cover a range of topics from making new friends to dealing with bullying and adjusting to new environments. **In FY20, we ran five Primary2Secondary programs in Brisbane and Sydney with 15 attendees.**

## Rock My World

Designed for high school students who are deaf or hard of hearing, these one-off workshops focus on a different activity from filmmaking 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 FY20, we ran six Rock My World programs in Sydney, Brisbane, and Melbourne with 22 attendees.**

# OUR PROGRAMS CONTINUED

## Online Mentoring

The impact of COVID-19 forced Hear For You to pivot its operations towards providing more Online Mentoring Programs. Between March to June 2020, 123 teenagers enrolled in various Online programs that included weekly Community Catch Ups, Rock My World programs, Online STEM programs, Life Goals and Skills Online, and the League of Hearoes (our private Minecraft server for deaf and hard of hearing teens).

The success of the Online Mentoring programs during the pandemic enabled deaf and hard of hearing teenagers (and their families) to feel supported, and help overcome the massive challenges posed by lockdowns. For teens having to attend school from home, their connection with their peers reduced dramatically. Our mentors were there as a life-line, keeping social connections and reassuring teens as we faced pandemic challenges together.

## Life Goals and 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 FY19, 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 Australia).

The Blast format in FY20 is at a growth stage with delivery of the program to 19 deaf and hard of hearing teenagers in Rockhampton, Newcastle, Canberra, Tamworth, Townsville and Wollongong.

For many participants and their families, it was the first time they experienced any formal support with development of psycho-social skills from a deaf-led organisation.

Hear For You is pleased to be returning to all the Life Goals and Skills Blast locations in 2021 as well as Toowoomba and Gold Coast, and would like to thank the mentors who contributed to FY19-20's success.

# CELEBRATING OUR TEAM

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## Our Core Team

In FY20, 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) and Sherri Brereton (QLD), Kylie Browne (Marketing Manager) Rebecca Stewart (Western Sydney Programs Coordinator), Lisa Cremona (Business Operations Manager), Carl Moser (Company Secretary) and our Founder Olivia Andersen (Executive Director and Stakeholder Relations Manager), and casuals Zoe Hooper (Communications), Helen Bishop (Administration).

## Our Board

Thank you to the following people for their advice, strategic insights, and support throughout the year.

Stephen Coutts (Chair to March 2020), Olivia Andersen (Founder and Executive Director), Dan Jarvis (Appointed May 2019), Tony Coles (Appointed May 2019), Kashveera Chanderjith (Appointed May 2019, resigned), Yetta Abrahams (Appointed May 2019), Jodette Cleary (Appointed May 2019), Simon Greal (Appointed May 2019, resigned), Charlotte Sangster (Appointed May 2019), Thomas Andersen (alternate Director for Olivia Andersen).

# CELEBRATING OUR TEAM CONTINUED

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## Our Mentors (FY19-20)

With thanks to: Dan Jarvis, Brad Jardine, Sean Walsh, Dylan White, Jill Ash, Claire Cunningham, Cassandra Mulo, Teneale Houghton, Bec Stewart, Melinda Vernon, David Romanowski, Elizabeth Seares, Kelvin O'Malley, Sarah Barlow, Elly Unicomb, Eddie Hilliar, Siobhan McAlary, Gareth Jones, Troy Ward, Marie Crema.

## Our Auditors

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

## Our Lawyers (Pro-Bono)

Jessica Morath (Partner), David Hillard (Partner), Walid Sukari, Anneke Pol, Alexandra McCulloch, Jennifer Ball.

## Our Digital Marketing Agency

Suellen Hughes from Amica Digital Consulting

## Our Volunteers

With thanks to: Pauline Findlay, Max Learmont and Nolan Yu (League Of Hearoes), Muffy Churches, Lisa-Jane Taylor, Nina Badger, Shruti Gokhale (graphic design).

## Our Bookkeepers

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



## SOCIAL ISOLATION

We provide a direct connection and sense of security.



## SOCIAL CONTACT

We address a number of key issues that deaf and hard of hearing teenagers commonly face.



## RELIANCE ON COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY AND ACCESS

We focus on providing the information and developing the skills that young people need to communicate and thrive.

HEAR FOR YOU LIMITED ABN

26 131 365 298

THE AUSTRALIAN HEARING HUB

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