

15 March 2018



'Hear to Learn' school hearing screening returns to the Bowen Basin

For the second year in a row, Queensland based charity, Hear and Say will deliver its Hear to Learn – School Hearing Screening to ten primary schools in regional Queensland, in partnership with the program's founding regional partner, Thies.

Hear and Say's first visit for 2018 will be later this month, when the screening team return to screen the hearing of Prep students in Collinsville and Scottville. This will be followed up in April with a return to schools in Dysart, and for the first time, schools in Moranbah; and the final leg in late May, with new schools in Comet, Bluff, Dingo and Banana.

Chris McCarthy, CEO of Hear and Say said the team at Hear and Say were thrilled to have the continued support of Thies to screen students in the Bowen Basin area for a second year.

"We are incredibly proud of our 23-year partnership with Thies, and joining together for this initiative means that children with hearing issues living outside of the major cities, can be identified, and steps put in place to address any concerns," said Mr McCarthy.

Thies supports the early screening, diagnosis and treatment of hearing issues in young school children, to improve academic performance and social interactions. Supporting the Hear to Learn program is one example of how Thies' organisation wide CARE Program delivers social benefits to its local communities.

Hear and Say first brought Hear to Learn to the Bowen Basin in 2017, which saw over 600 children have their hearing screened across 12 schools. These visits discovered 17% of students found to be experiencing a hearing or ear health issue. This figure includes children requiring follow-up from a GP, a hearing test, or further monitoring by the parent.

"This year's visits are a little different as we will be going to some of the smaller community schools where students often miss out simply because of their size and remote location.

"Most importantly, we want to ensure that students who need extra support are identified as early as possible, no matter where they live," said Mr McCarthy.

Across Queensland, the Hear and Say team will visit up to 250 schools and screen an estimated 20,000 students through its Hear to Learn program. This includes extending its reach out to these ten regional schools with the support of Thies.

To find out more about Hear and Say visiting your school, or the other work they do to assist children with hearing loss, ear health or speech and language issues, contact a member of the team on 07 3850 2111 or go to www.hearandsay.com.au.

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For more details and to arrange interviews or photos contact Lois Shuttleworth, Public Relations Specialist, Hear and Say at lois.shuttleworth@hearandsay.com.au or 0481 212 420.

About Hear and Say

- Dr Dimity Dornan AO founded Hear and Say in 1992, starting with just six children. Today, Hear and Say has five Queensland centres, supporting children across the state, including a successful Telepractice program servicing families from regional and remote areas.
- Hear and Say provides a world-class implantable technologies program and has the largest paediatric cochlear implant program in Queensland.
- Hear and Say are paediatric hearing loss experts, and specialists in the Auditory-Verbal Therapy approach to listening and spoken language.
- Hear and Say supports more than 900 children across its early intervention, audiology services, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, and social skills development programs.

About Thiess

- Thiess is the world's largest mining services with an 80-year history in mining and construction. Their expertise spans most of the world's commodities including metallurgical and thermal coal, copper, diamonds, gold, iron ore, lignite, nickel and oil sands.
- Thiess delivers the full suite of mine services across Australia, Botswana, Canada, Chile, Indonesia and Mongolia.
- Thiess' capability, performance-driven culture and commitment to collaborative long-term relationships deliver value to all its partners and communities.
- Thiess creates and delivers significant social benefits through community engagement and Indigenous affairs, local employment, training and procurement.