



For immediate release



'Hear to Learn' school hearing screening visits Tara

Hear and Say's successful 'Hear to Learn' school hearing screening program has screened up to 150 students in Tara and the surrounding Western Downs region over a recent three-day visit.

For 25 years Hear and Say has given Queensland children impacted by hearing loss a listening and speaking future. In 2015 Hear and Say rolled out a school hearing screening program, initially in Brisbane, the Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast.

Chris McCarthy, CEO of Hear and Say said, we have been very lucky this year to be able to expand our successful school hearing screening program to other regions, such as this visit to the Western Downs, as an outcome of funding support.

The visits to schools in Tara has been possible through support of 'Save the Children' who are the provider of the Tara Early Years' Service.

All hearing screening was conducted at Tara Shire State College with Prep and Grade One students from the college, as well as students from St Joseph's Primary School, and little ones from Play2Learn, and local C&K Kindergartens.

"'Hear to Learn' has helped identify students who may be experiencing a hearing issue that if left undetected could become a larger concern impacting on their ability to learn in the classroom as well as in social situations," said Mr. McCarthy.

Permanent hearing loss affects between 1 to 3 babies in a 1,000 at birth in Australia, and doubles by school age while middle ear infection affects 75% of children at some point in their childhood. 'Hear to Learn' school hearing screening has identified up to 23% of students on the day of their visit were experiencing a hearing or ear health issue with 14% requiring further investigation from a GP or a hearing test.

Early identification of hearing issues leads to better speech, language and learning outcomes for children. There is a well-established link between listening and literacy with the effects of hearing loss ranging from speech and language difficulties, to trouble in social situations, and an increased risk of poor academic performance. Put simply, if children can't hear, they can't learn.

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For more details contact Lois Shuttleworth, Communications Manager, Hear and Say at lois.shuttleworth@hearandsay.com.au or 0481 212 420

About Hear and Say

Established in 1992 by Dr Dimity Dornan AO, Hear and Say today provides services and programs to children, young adults and families across five centres as well as a Telepractice programs reaching out to rural and remote families. Hear and Say also provides the 'Hear to Learn' School Hearing Screening Program and paediatric hearing services - as a child's hearing can change over time.

Our aim is to help all children to hear, listen and speak so they can attend a regular school, have wider career choices and can more fully participate in their community. Hear and Say interfaces state-of-the-art hearing technology (digital hearing aids and implantable technology such as cochlear implants) with the Auditory-Verbal Therapy approach.



As a not-for-profit organisation Hear and Say must raise more than \$10,000 each year, for up to five years, to fill the funding gap so that one child with hearing loss can learn to listen and speak. Hear and Say is committed to using clinical research to measure outcomes and its success lies in the vital role that parents/caregivers play in teaching their children to listen and speak.