



18 January 2018

Rory's hearing loss will not hold him back on the first day of school

The smile on Rory's face says it all as he 'shows off' his new uniform in preparation for the first day at 'big' school.

For proud parents Jennifer and Michael McCaffrey this milestone is one that was originally fraught with uncertainty. Rory was born with hearing loss, identified at newborn hearing screening, and from two months of age wore hearing aids.

This is when Rory's parents joined Queensland based not-for-profit, Hear and Say's Early Intervention Program, including being one of the first babies in the 'Listen Little Stars' babies social group.

Mum Jennifer explained that Hear and Say provided the entire family with a range of supports to ensure Rory's hearing loss would not hold him back.

"Hear and Say has been a 'one stop shop' providing audiology, speech and language therapy lessons, and social skills development through the 'Listen Little Stars' babies group and following that, the LEAP playgroup and Launchpad Social Skills Programs.

"Michael and I cannot thank Hear and Say enough for what they have done for Rory. His speech and language is on par with his hearing peers, and he is a happy and sociable little boy. We are very proud of him and feel confident he will do well when he starts Prep in just a few weeks' time," Jennifer said.

Hear and Say's support of children like Rory doesn't end when they go to schools. Rory's Listening and Spoken Language Specialist, Ms Elizabeth Coomer said, steps are in place to ensure that the school and his teacher are aware of his hearing loss; that sound acoustics in the classroom will be monitored; and that Rory is prepared to answer questions about his hearing aids and to speak up in class if he has difficulty hearing.

"We know that correct acoustics in the classroom will not just help Rory but benefit all children as well as reduce strain on the teacher's voice, a win-win for everyone in the classroom," Ms Coomer said.

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For more details and to arrange interviews contact Lois Shuttleworth, Public Relations Specialist, 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.