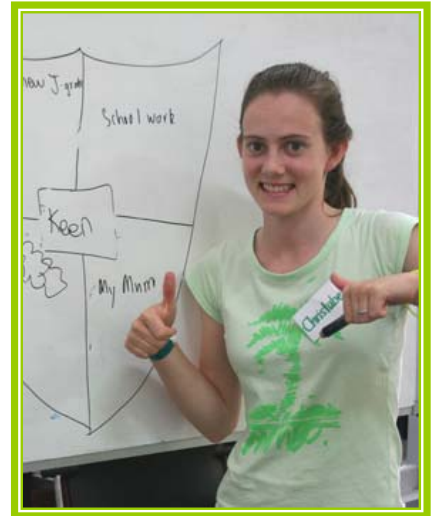


# Christabel's Story

I recently completed 'Hear For You' in Sydney - my first one ever!

I really enjoyed all four sessions. We did many activities such as listening to hearing people talk about their lives with deaf people. We also talked about experiences of being deaf. We did a performance for the parents and boot camp. We also met other deaf teenagers who are all different ages and go to different schools.

Meeting our mentors and fellow teenagers was the best thing about Hear For You because they have done it all and they were all able to share their personal life with us. I had thought all deaf adults would just have the same life but no, they have different lives and are all heading in different directions.



Having Olivia and Nick as my mentors was great because we are similar in that we all play sports and like to have fun. From what I can see, both of my mentors have been successful in everything they have tried despite having to overcome major obstacles. This has shown me that I can do it too! They have also given me tips on how to get the best out of my hearing loss.

In our sessions I learnt quite a lot. One of the things I learnt was that we have the same problems as each other such as being nervous to ask to repeat what they said and our batteries run flat and we don't have any spares.

In our first session we talked about communication. I often miss things when discussing issues in class or out in the playground but I didn't have the courage to ask people to repeat themselves. But after realising that people wouldn't be too offended if I asked them nicely to repeat what they said.

The second workshop ('Leadership') was my favourite because we did boot camp and it was all about teamwork and I like doing things with other people. I remember as a group we all picked David up and carried him half way across the park without dropping him.

In session 3 it was all about the future and life after school. We talked about our options whether we wanted to go to university and study or travel the world, or get into a part time job etc. I also learnt how to write a resume which was really useful because I had to write one for work experience at school.

And at the final workshop we did 'The Hear For You Presidential Debate' where we showed our parents/ family what we had learnt and the people we met and all the fun we had!

After the program finished, Jessica – a fellow teenager who I met at the Hear For You workshops – and I recently went to the AWD Cross Country. It was great to catch up with her.

Now I'm glad to have been part of a cool program like Hear For You!

***Christabel, Year 10, Cochlear Implantee***