

# Isabella's Speech

Below is an excerpt from Isabella Rosati who spoke at the Hear For You "Meet & Greet" / Information Session on 28 February, 2010.



Hi everyone. My name is Bella Rosati and I participated in the **Hear For You** program last year in 2009. It is my absolute pleasure to be here today to talk to you about my experience at **Hear For You**.

At my first workshop, I remember feeling extremely nervous and reluctant but once I had met all the mentors and students, I felt very welcomed and part of something extraordinary. It was an immense opportunity to be involved in a program, which was focused entirely on deaf people. I thoroughly enjoyed meeting new people from similar backgrounds as I found that I had so much in common with them. Just knowing that everyone that surrounded me was deaf just like myself was indescribable and amazing. I strongly felt that everyone understood each other and shared stories we never thought anyone else but ourselves would understand. There is nothing better than having someone who has experienced the same things as you and completely understands where you're coming from. The fact that every single person involved in **Hear For You**, including the mentors are deaf made me feel very comfortable in my own skin.

At each workshop, you learn a different topic, which I found really thought provoking because for me it meant the topics never became boring or repetitive. The topics my group studied were leadership enrichment, further study and employment and relationships and wellbeing. Each workshop was very challenging as I participated in things I didn't normally enjoy like public speaking, mock interviews, debating and talking for one minute without saying "um" and "ah". However I gained a positive experience from participating in all these things as they helped improve my confidence, my communication, my career, my leadership skills and my outlook on life.

All the mentors involved in the **Hear For You** program are extremely successful, supportive and inspiring role models. Their incredible knowledge and optimistic attitude reminded me that life is too short to not accept yourself for who you are and not stand up for what you believe in. Since **Hear For You**, I've been willing to be more open with my deafness and not let it get in the way of achieving my dreams.

My **Hear For You** experience has made a huge difference to my life. The program enabled me to recognise that life is full of opportunities so therefore you should embrace your deafness and treat it as an opportunity not a disadvantage.

I hope my speech has inspired the new teenage participants and their parents to attend the upcoming workshops. I promise you that **Hear For You** is a once in a lifetime opportunity so make sure you get yourselves involved immediately! Thank you.