

WELCOME FROM THE CEO



This year, The Shepherd Centre continues its annual assessments and measurement of our children's outcomes and progress. We are planning to have our own PhD student start research work with us shortly. Their research will develop greater knowledge and understanding of the outcomes and progress of our children as they learn speech and language.

Our Outcomes and Research

Three of our senior clinicians have recently given papers at conferences around the world. Aleisha Davis and Yetta Abrahams presented in Stockholm and Anne Fulcher in Milan. Their presentations, in both academic and therapeutic environments, showcased the outcomes of our children using our multi-disciplinary approach. Our services are being recognised as some of the best and most integrated in the world, producing exceptional results.

Our clinical staff returned from these academic conferences reporting that 'the landscape of deafness has changed'. Research shows that, central to good outcomes for children with hearing loss, is understanding that *hearing is not about the ears but about the brain*.

The Shepherd Centre is committed to ensuring children are receiving as clear a signal to the brain at the earliest possible age and teaching parents how to develop spoken language with their child to make the most of repeated meaningful exposure to sound. We are always reviewing our therapy to ensure we are using the most up-to-date and effective processes and getting the best results for all our children. This may mean a change in the way we approach some of our therapy with families as we adapt to new approaches.

Our team

I would like to acknowledge the great work of all the staff at The Shepherd Centre, whether it is clinical or preschool-related, fundraising, financial management or administrative support. As the Chairman has mentioned, the last couple of years has seen an increase of over 30% in clients each year; however, staff numbers have remained the same.

The staff are all adjusting to new technology, different approaches, greater accountability, more reporting to donors and governments, a new structure and limited resources. Their commitment to the work we do and the long-term outcomes for our families is a real credit to them. I know I speak for the Board when I say that we are very proud of what they are able to achieve and we hope that donors can see that their money is very well spent.

Anthea Green

Chief Executive Officer



CONGRATULATIONS!

On Friday 27 August, more than 200 guests attended the annual Australian Father of the Year awards with a luncheon at the Sydney Opera House, Bennelong Point. The Shepherd Centre Australian Father of the Year initiative celebrates the significant contribution, support, love and direction that fathers provide to their children and families.

Australian Father of the Year 2010: Guy Cooper - PSM



Guy Cooper, the former Director and Chief Executive Officer of the Taronga Conservation Society Australia (TCSA), has been awarded the Australian Father of the Year 2010. Guy is a father of five and grandfather of ten and has played an integral role in transforming Taronga and Taronga Western Plains Zoo into one of Australia's finest conservation, tourism and education resources.

He was first appointed to the Board of the Taronga and Western Plains Zoo in 1991 and held the position of Deputy Chairman from 1993 to 1998. Following an international selection process, he was appointed Director and Chief Executive of TCSA in August 1998. Following seven years as a Board member and eleven years as Director and CEO, Mr Cooper retired in August 2009. In the 2010 New Year Honours List, he was awarded the Australian Public Service Medal (PSM).

As a father, Guy believes in embracing the two Cs – competency and compassion. According to Guy, this refers to "the capacity to impart competency to one's children in as many of life's basic requirements as possible and to instil in them compassion for all the planet's life forms."

NSW Community Father of the Year 2010: Robert Schneider



Robert Schneider was awarded the NSW Community Father of the Year 2010 and was nominated by his son, George, "for his commitment to trying to create a better Australia through his community."

Mr Schneider juggles a full-time job with his free respite service for intellectually handicapped teenagers called 'Rob's Monday Respite' which he runs with the Holsworth Community Centre in Woollahra. The decision to start his own respite service came after volunteering with Eastern Suburbs Respite and Recreation for 12 months, during which time Mr Schneider quickly discovered that the service struggled to keep up with the enormous demand for respite care.

Despite his hectic work life, Mr Schneider still manages to spend quality time with his three children, Adele, George and Alyce and, at the ages of 50 and 54 respectively, climbed to base camp on Mount Everest and up Mount Kilimanjaro.

Congratulations to both fathers and all finalists. For more information about Australian Father of the Year, visit www.fatheroftheyear.com.au

GRADUATION 2010



This year's graduation ceremony will be held on Friday 3 December and many of our children are very excited about embarking on their next adventure – school! Meet one of our forthcoming graduates, Rory, and read his amazing story.



RORY'S STORY

Rory was diagnosed with hearing loss at the hospital when he was born. He came to The Shepherd Centre when he was 20 months old and after assessment, was fitted with bilateral hearing aids (in both ears). At first, Rory kept pulling them out, but once he got used to them and they remained in place his progress improved dramatically!

After receiving Auditory-Verbal Therapy with Amber, his therapist, Rory's speech and language began to develop. Rory's mother, Alex credits Amber with his amazing progress, "Rory's speech has improved significantly in the last 18 months and it's because of Amber – she's great." Amber also taught Alex some coping mechanisms and gave her tools that she could use at home to continue Rory's development.

A recent assessment showed that Rory has made 21 months' progress in the last 12 months! He has age-appropriate speech and language and his sentences range from 7-10 words. He is writing his name, recognising many letters and is, in short, ready for school.

Now nearly five, Rory graduates from The Shepherd Centre in December this year. He is extremely excited about starting 'big school' and being with his two older brothers, who attend the same school.



Rory with his mother, Alex

ANNUAL RESIDENTIAL WORKSHOP

Our 33rd Annual Residential Workshop was held at the end of January this year. For the first time we were able to conduct it off-site, thanks to the generous sponsorship of the Toga Group.

The workshop was attended by eleven families from rural and remote areas of Australia (and one family from Japan!), past parents, graduates and teenagers and adults with hearing loss. It was a great, productive week for everyone and included therapy, group language, audiology, family support and education sessions, also practical workshops in which families learned strategies and goal-setting to help their children develop spoken language at home.

The workshop continues to be highly regarded by families and all who attend. A parent who came to a previous workshop said, "The program was an invaluable experience and you have inspired our family to look forward to a promising future".

The Shepherd Centre's 34th Residential Workshop is set for early 2011. Call or email Sharon Hill on **02 9114 0880** or sharon.hill@shepherdcentre.com.au for more information or to register your attendance.

HEAR FOR YOU MENTORING GROUP



Olivia Andersen (nee Gemmell) is a former student of The Shepherd Centre and, having graduated from the University of NSW and RMIT and received a Churchill Fellowship Award, is now Director and Program Manager of mentoring group *Hear For You*.

Hear For You offers young people with a hearing impairment group mentoring, workshops, e-mentoring and more. It aims to help them realise that deafness is more a *difference* than a disadvantage, to improve their confidence and help them develop better social, communication and leadership skills.

Congratulations to Olivia and her team of mentors, students and parents on the successful completion of the 2010 mentoring program for adolescents.

If you would like further information about *Hear For You*, visit www.hearforyou.com.au.

Olivia Andersen, Director & Program Manager of Hear For You