



***Parent Council for Deaf Education***

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**2007**

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# 1. Presidents Report

This year has been incredibly challenging for our organization, beginning with many questions about our viability and future. We commenced the year by reflecting on our relevance to our stakeholders, deaf and hearing impaired children and their families in NSW, our capacity to respond to the ever increasing need for information and advocacy and our need to build up our membership base.

I am pleased to report great success in all regards. We have affirmed a new strategic direction for PCDE, in partnership with Deaf Children Australia, and like parent councils nationally. We have implemented Governance Policies that clearly set out the conditions under which we will operate as a Management Committee. We have successfully recruited an Information and Advocacy Manager to operationalise and implement our direction. We have completed a full business planning cycle that has seen broad consultation with a range of stakeholders, the publication of our quarterly newsletter 'Sound News', a repositioning of PCDE as key player in the deafness sector in NSW. We have put in place systems and processes that ensure we are in a position to meet expectations, particularly those of our funders. We have regained a viable financial position from which to move forward, securing our finance and accounting processes to ensure transparency and efficiency.

Of course, we rely on the support of many in achieving these goals. We wish to extend our thanks and appreciation to the staff of PCDE for their hard work and enthusiasm in progressing an ambitious agenda. We also thank the Management Committee for their many hours of voluntary commitment. Without their efforts, we would not be in the positive position we are in today. In particular, we would like to thank Bruce Porter, who in the role of Treasurer over the past two years, has ensured that PCDE can move forward from a position of strength. We would also like to acknowledge the efforts of Ann Porter who has worked tirelessly for this organisation, in particular by re-invigorating *Sound News* and the website. We also thank Deaf Children Australia for their ongoing support. Our relationship with Deaf Children Australia is an essential component of our success and we look forward to developing that partnership into the future.

Our belief in the benefits of partnership underpins all our activities, beginning with partnerships with parents, organizations in the deafness sector and wider community. We wish to record our thanks to a number of key organizations who have supported us during the year. They include Royal Institute for Deaf & Blind Children, The Shepherd Centre and Deaf Society of NSW.

As we look to the future, PCDE recognizes that to be effective advocates for families, much work needs to be done in strengthening the parent voice in NSW. A key strategy is the development of parent networks, giving families across the state an opportunity to engage with and be supported by others who have been through similar experiences. Parent networks are vital to effective advocacy, ensuring that peak organizations like PCDE can accurately represent the needs of those in our community. Our focus in coming years will be to support the development of parent networks across the state, linking with similar parent organizations nationally. Our information and advocacy program will be aimed at linking parents into local networks, with communication strategies ensuring that information and support flows openly through these channels.

There is much to be done to ensure that deaf and hearing impaired children have access to the resources they need to reach their potential. The first step in this is empowered families. PCDE is committed to playing an important role in ensuring that these opportunities are realized. We look forward to your support as our organization develops to meet the expectations of our community.

Kate Kennedy  
President

## **2. Parent Council for Deaf Education & Deaf Children Australia in Partnership**

Deaf Children Australia is committed to ensuring strong representation and support for families of deaf and hearing impaired children at national, state and local levels. To this end, our support of the Parent Council for Deaf Education is part of a national strategy on parent networks. We are committed to facilitating opportunities for parent engagement, whether that be through the development of new networks or the support of existing groups. Parent Council for Deaf Education approached Deaf Children Australia two years ago to assist in the redevelopment of their structures and profile. Over the past 12 months Deaf Children Australia has offered Parent Council for Deaf Education support through the following:

- Parent Council Charter and subsequent Heads of Agreement, defining expectation of both parties.
- Governance workshops (x2) to the Management Committee
- Attendance at Management Committee meetings

- Governance framework and manual tailored specifically to PCDE to guide all Committee members in their duties and responsibilities.
- DADHC review of funding and service agreement completed by DCA Managers
- DADHC acquittals completed by DCA managers in consultation with PCDE staff and Committee
- Developed new job specification for the key PCDE role, Manager Information and Advocacy and undertook all recruitment activities.
- Inducted new staff member.
- Created platform on DCA server for all PCDE electronic data.
- Provided PCDE with access to all internal DCA communications for the purposes of open communication and training.
- Provided access to our Client Services Database for the storage of confidential client information and project management software.
- Provide IT support for remote access to network, both from PCDE office, and home.
- Provided line management support in the form of weekly two hour supervision over the phone. Email communication on a daily basis.
- Provide a strategic planning workshop over one day with PCDE staff, volunteers and Committee members. This workshop was aimed at developing a workplan for the PCDE team for the following months.
- Provided advocacy strategy for the Hearing Support Unit campaign.
- Provided a journalist to work with PCDE staff and Hearing Support Unit campaign committee on a media strategy. They are in the process of preparing a communications strategy identifying key messages, communication targets and developing a press release.
- Provided a one day workshop on the topic Standing By Your Child – Parent Advocacy, identifying the key issues of concern to families in NSW. Hosted a visit to DCA by PCDE President aimed at meeting the Victorian Parent’s Federation and outlining our partnership advocacy strategy.
- Provided a car and all associated costs to the PCDE.
- Provided accounting support to staff and the Management Committee and from July 1, 2007 will provide all accounting services including statutory returns and audit.
- Agreed to invest additional funds in NSW to enable increase activity beyond the levels possible from the DADHC grant.
- Created the position of Victorian Services Manager, releasing Gene Reardon, General Manager of Deaf Children Australia, to focus on NSW service roll out and support to PCDE staff.
- Delivered the Cool Parents Cool Kids Parent Education Program, both as a train the trainer model for PCDE staff and interested Committee members and as a workshop for parents.
- Monthly face to face meetings between PCDE staff and DCA Management to work on advocacy campaign and general information functions.

Deaf Children Australia looks forward to the future of our partnership as we seek to address the service and information gaps for parents and young people. We are especially keen to partner in the delivery of training and information for parents, to develop support networks across the state and to ensuring a strong parent voice and participation at the policy level of government.

Veronica Pardo  
Deputy Chief Executive Officer  
Deaf Children Australia / Deaf Services Queensland

### **3. Staff Report**

As Parent Council Deaf Education celebrates another year of service, time seems to be in our favour as we honour our achievements, continue to grow and build our profile. In reflection of PCDE's accomplishments, our focal point for 2007 has been to concentrate on providing parents with support and information. Whilst we have only just begun to touch the surface in this regard, our achievements have demonstrated PCDE's considerable potential in providing valuable support to parents across NSW.

Our newsletter *Sound News* continues to be published every quarter and this past financial year was circulated to over 400 families, parents and service providers across NSW. This is 150 copies more than last financial year and is indicative of the usefulness and need for such information for our target group.

Our feature stories mostly focus on literacy, resources, education, self esteem, teenage mentoring, Makaton sign language and planning for the deaf child's future. Parent stories and interviews with deaf teenagers have also been popular and will continue to be regular features in future newsletters. A special thank you to Ann Porter for her continuous efforts with the publication and to professionals, parents and teenagers who have contributed to *Sound News* throughout the year.

PCDE's presence at conferences and seminars has put us in the opportune position to meet many professionals and parents across the state. Some of the events staff and committee have attended include the Australian Association Special Education Conference, Educators of Deaf Student Association conference, the annual Down Syndrome Association conference, KU Children's Services Seminar, a meeting with the Department of Education and the captioning awards.

The partnership between PCDE and Deaf Children Australia (DCA) has been extremely positive on all fronts, particularly in providing excellent frontline

supervision and sharing valuable resources to build our profile. This includes DCA's generous time and efforts spent in upskilling our staff as facilitators for the Cool Kids Cool Parents program - a parent support program which explores the challenges of raising deaf children.

In September/October 2007 PCDE, with the support of DCA and Deaf Society of NSW, offered the program to fifteen parents across the state. The following feedback was provided:

*"...The most useful part of the course is parents coming together to share their experiences and knowing you're not alone..."*

*"...I don't know that I have changed, but I think I may start to need to be more focused on being a parent rather than just a buddy..."*

*"...I have heightened awareness of how my behaviour affects my boys..."*

The attendance and interest levels from parents have been exceptional as has the support from service organisations like Deaf Society of NSW, Royal Institute for Deaf & Blind Children (RIDBC) and The Shepherd Centre in assisting us to promote the program. Many thanks goes to Burwood RSL for kindly offering us their premises and to all the facilitators, interpreters, staff, parents and children who have made this program as interactive and as useful as possible. PCDE anticipates facilitating this program across NSW and will be training interested parents to co-facilitate the program. Look out for next year's program calendar.

Several road trips across the state have taken us to Dubbo, Lismore and Canberra where we have been fortunate enough to meet lots of new families and offer workshops to parents in these areas. Opportunities like these are useful in helping us to identify issues for families living in regional/rural NSW.

Our vision day was held in October 2007. Thanks to the input of committee members and DCA management staff, PCDE has now developed a two year strategic plan which will govern our working practices and help us to build a stronger base for parents across NSW. PCDE's future will be about "...empowering parents in NSW to support their deaf/hearing-impaired children in reaching their full potential through information, support networks and representation..." More information about PCDE's strategic direction will be released in our Summer Edition of *Sound News*.

Thank you again to all committee members and Ann Porter for their efforts and organisational support. I would also like to thank Gene Reardon, Veronica Pardo, Damian Lacey and other DCA staff for their amazing efforts in supporting our administration and program implementation. Lastly, I must not forget to mention the excellent support service organisations have shown us throughout the year.

Nickie Flambouras  
Information & Advocacy Manager

## **4. Management Committee & Staff**

*Kate Kennedy - President*

Kate is a Sydney based working parent of three children in primary school, two of whom have a hearing loss. Kate says “I feel strongly about being an informed advocate for my kids. Our family have received a lot of support, information and friendship through various organisations over these last few years and by joining the committee of PCDE I hope to support other parents with practical, unbiased information as we all work towards positive outcomes for our kids.”

*Gabrielle Hill – Vice President*

Gabrielle has three beautiful children, two profoundly Deaf sons and an older hearing daughter. Gabrielle says, “We are a signing family. As a family we are bilingual and bicultural with Deafness a celebrated part of life. The fascination of watching my sons’ language unfold inspired me to study linguistics and ultimately to become a teacher. The boys are avid readers and writers. This is my passion - literacy.” Gabrielle is currently enrolled in a Masters of Special Education, studying Deafness and Literacy.

*Bruce Porter – Treasurer*

Bruce is the father of three girls. His youngest daughter was diagnosed with a unilateral hearing loss when she was 4. She lost the hearing in her other ear at age 7. She is fully integrated into a mainstream high school and is an excellent hearing aid and FM user undertaking her HSC this year. Bruce is married to Ann who is the founder of Aussie Deaf Kids. “My aim, as treasurer, has been to assist PCDE to get back to a sustainable financial position and leave it with a straight forward administration systems which allow PCDE to focus upon the delivery of services to all families of deaf children throughout New South Wales in balance and partnership with DCA. Bruce is particularly committed to advocating for families who are disadvantaged by distance, environment or circumstance.” Bruce is a Real Estate Valuer and Economist and works for an investment bank.

*Vicki Cox – Secretary*

Vicki is the mother of two girls who were both born profoundly deaf. Both have received cochlear implants and attend a Hearing Support Unit. “Prior to children, I had a career in marketing but the difficulties my two children encountered, inspired me to return to university to complete a Master of Speech and Language Pathology.” Vicki now works as a Speech Pathologist with children who have a range of special

*Mark Burfield – Committee Member*

Mark is our new committee member and the father of three young children. The first was born profoundly deaf in 1999, received a cochlear implant in 2001, and she is currently in a public school hearing support class. Mark's concern is the maintenance and improvement of services for the hearing impaired in the education system and beyond. He is President of the P&C Association at his daughter's school, Chairman of the scout group that she attends, and works as a Director and Treasurer of entities in Australia of the "Universal Peace Federation".

*Tracy McGee – Committee Member*

Tracy lives at Emerald Beach, north of Coffs Harbour. She has a thirteen year old daughter who is profoundly deaf and communicates using Auslan and Signed English. She is fully mainstreamed into her local high school. Tracy is actively involved in the Coffs Harbour Deaf Community

*Aileen Ryan – Committee Member*

Aileen and her family live in Raby, Sydney. She has three sons, one daughter and two grandsons. Her daughter has Down syndrome and was diagnosed with a hearing loss at age 4. Her daughter is in a hearing unit in high school and is dependant on the use of Auslan together with spoken language to be clearly understood. Aileen works with parents and professionals involved with children/adults with speech and/or developmental delay teaching and presenting talks on "key word signing". She has written three sign language resource books and has been involved with Makaton Australia for many years. Aileen feels very strongly about sign language support for children during their years at school.

*Kelly Norton – Project Co-Ordinator*

Kelly Norton has considerable experience working with families and young deaf people in both the Northern territory and Victoria. She studied Anthropology and at La-Trobe University and Auslan at Chisholm TAFE.

Kelly has worked at the Deaf Blind Association and has spent three years on the Helpline at Deaf Children Australia. This experience has provided the foundation for her understanding of the needs and concerns experienced by families of deaf children throughout Australia.

*Nickie Flambouras - Information & Advocacy Manager*

With an interest and passion in education & training, Nickie comes to PCDE with 15 years experience in the disability field. Her knowledge is broad and her skills have varied in areas such as guardianship, project co-ordination, accommodation, advocacy, network establishment and education/training. With an interest in promotion/ publicity, education and training, Nickie is focused on assisting PCDE to achieve their organizational goals, meeting lots of new people and more importantly developing her knowledge on the issues affecting families, carers & children across NSW.

# 5. Auditors Report

**PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT**  
**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE 2007**

	<u>NOTE</u>	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u> \$
<b>OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) BEFORE INCOME TAX</b>		5,177.19	5,398.61
Income Tax Expense	<b>1(a)</b>	0.00	0.00
<b>OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) AFTER INCOME TAX</b>		<hr/> 5,177.19	<hr/> 5,398.61
<b>ACCUMULATED SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR</b>		7,491.64	2,093.03
<b>ACCUMULATED SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) AT THE END OF THE YEAR</b>		<hr/> <hr/> 12,668.83	<hr/> <hr/> 7,491.64

**BALANCE SHEET**  
**AS AT 30 JUNE 2007**

	<u>NOTE</u>	<u>2007</u> \$	<u>2006</u> \$
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Cash	<b>2</b>	2,489.30	43,879.77
Other Assets	<b>3</b>	4,510.53	(6,141.04)
<b>TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<u>6,999.83</u>	<u>37,738.73</u>
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Property, plant & equipment	<b>4</b>	5,669.00	1,237.00
<b>TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>		<u>5,669.00</u>	<u>1,237.00</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<u><u>12,668.83</u></u>	<u><u>38,975.73</u></u>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Creditors & borrowings	<b>5</b>	0.00	31,484.09
<b>TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		<u>0.00</u>	<u>31,484.09</u>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<u><u>0.00</u></u>	<u><u>31,484.09</u></u>
<b>NET ASSETS/(LIABILITIES)</b>		<u><u>12,668.83</u></u>	<u><u>7,491.64</u></u>
<b>REPRESENTED BY :-</b>			
<b>ACCUMULATED SURPLUS</b>		<u><u>12,668.83</u></u>	<u><u>7,491.64</u></u>

**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT**

**FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2007**

	<u>2007</u>	<u>2006</u>
	\$	\$
<b><u>INCOME</u></b>		
Ageing & Disability Department Funding	75,068.00	74,668.00
Members' subscriptions	1,931.50	0.00
Donations & Corporate Sponsors	0.00	5,730.50
Fund Raising	0.00	836.25
Miscellaneous Income	1,178.29	0.00
Interest Received	217.52	360.93
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<u>78,395.31</u>	<u>81,595.68</u>
<b><u>EXPENDITURE</u></b>		
Activities	7,431.47	8,975.74
Administration	512.25	1,965.64
Bank Charges	409.31	270.64
Computer Expenses	1,129.56	2,435.00
Consultant Fees	61,652.49	0.00
Depreciation	368.00	505.00
Filing Fees	43.00	87.00
Insurance	2,109.60	7,610.71
Interest Expense	143.29	0.00
Interpreter	(88.86)	2,157.94
Meeting Expenses	298.69	864.89
Memberships	4.55	339.00
Postage	473.55	605.82
Printing & Stationery	362.30	2,251.14
Rent	890.65	1,289.26
Repairs & Maintenance	148.18	2,915.26
Salaries	0.00	24,660.42
Superannuation	1,623.55	2,126.61
Provision for Staff Benefits	(7,327.39)	642.50
Sound News	622.27	1,261.91
Staff Training & Amenities	795.59	436.36
Telephone & Internet	737.57	236.23
Website	878.50	14,560.00
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<u>73,218.12</u>	<u>76,197.07</u>
<b>EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE</b>	<u>\$5,177.19</u>	<u>\$5,398.61</u>

## **7. Acknowledgements**

Parent Council for Deaf Education Inc. relies on tax-deductible donations and government grants to maintain our support, information and advocacy services for families. We acknowledge with gratitude the invaluable support provided by Department of Ageing & Home Care and others.

Our special thanks to John G Oehlers, Chartered Accountant, Parramatta, who has kindly donated his services in auditing our accounts. In addition, we would like to recognize the support provided by Deaf Society NSW, Royal Institute for Deaf & Blind Children, The Shepherd Centre and Aussie Deaf Kids in promoting our service, publications and training programs. We must also acknowledge the work of Ash Graphix who designed our newsletter *Sound News*.

Lastly, the management committee would like to thank the staff and management of Deaf Children Australia for their support and leadership. Your time and committee has been much appreciated and valued.

### **Parent Council for Deaf Education**

Block D, 361 – 365 North Rocks Road  
NORTH ROCKS NSW 2151

PO BOX 4748  
NORTH ROCKS NSW 2151

Ph: 02 9871 3049  
TTY: 02 9871 3025  
Fax: 02 9871 3193  
Email: [pcde@bigpond.com](mailto:pcde@bigpond.com)  
Website: [www.pcde.org](http://www.pcde.org)

ABN: 47 618 685 904  
CFN: 11530