

VCOD Enews

A Voice for Deaf People

Deaf Education - Moving Forward?

Department of Education & Early Childhood Development invited VCOD to attend a Netbook Launch in late May this year.

The Minister for Children and Early Childhood Development Maxine Morand launched the Netbook Project for Deaf and Hard of Hearing Students, at Mount View Primary School.

All Year 5 Deaf and Hard of Hearing students in Victoria will get their own netbooks.

Netbook ? What is it? A netbook is a little compact laptop with 28 educational software programs in it. For example, the netbook will allow the student to access internet, encyclopaedia software for research, create animation, movies and 3d designs. It can be used for making presentations, collaborate with other students local, interstate or overseas.

For more information about Netbook, you can access Department of Education website and enter Netbook Project in the search area.

Minister Maxine Morand also announced at the launch that she accepted the recommendations put forward by Deaf Education Review and to create a new position, Senior Project Manager - Deaf Provision Forward Strategy to oversee the implementation of future Deaf Education Program in Victoria.

VCOD will monitor closely the development of Deaf Education.

VCOD would like to thank you all those who have participated in the Deaf Education Review Survey as we believe presented valuable information and statistics for Government to make informed decision.

REMINDER

Deaf Australia Membership Form

2009—2010 Now Out



Victorian Council
of Deaf People

Marc Curtis**Vicdeaf****How to get the Right Interpreter for you****Marc Curtis**

VAIS always wants to provide the best-suited interpreter for each booking. What does that mean? It means that we want to assign the right interpreter for each and every job; as close of a match as we can between the Deaf person and the interpreter.

What is so difficult about that?

First, different Deaf people have differing communication needs. Some are strong Auslan, not much English. Other people want a mix of Auslan and English with key words fingerspelled. Sometimes the Auslan to English needs to be very formal and/or very academic. So many different needs!

Second, every interpreter has his or her own strengths (and weaknesses) in interpreting. That's normal in any profession – no one can do everything! Some interpreters excel at mental health work, but can't manage legal settings. Some interpreters can easily handle interpreting in a public forum; others work better in smaller meetings or in one-to-one settings. NAATI accreditation is a guide to knowing how skilled an interpreter is, but it is not the whole story.

What can you do...as the Deaf person wanting an interpreter? Quite a lot!

Most of the time, bookings are made by someone else – the hearing person/organisation who will pay for the interpreter. Usually they don't know anything about interpreters and they don't know who you would like to have to interpret for you.

So...again, what can you do?

Contact the VAIS office. You can email, sms, ring or come in for a face-to-face chat. Tell us:

- how you prefer to communicate, what's your language (Auslan only, mix of Auslan and English, etc.)
- provide us with a list of preferred interpreters

how we can contact you so when someone makes a booking for you, we can let you know the name of the interpreter(s) booked

All of this information will help us to try to get you the interpreter(s) that are right for you. We can't guarantee that we can always book the interpreter(s) that you prefer, but we will try our best. And if we can't book them, this information will help us to try to match another interpreter with your specific needs.

We look forward to hearing from you! Contact us by sms (0401 775 383), TTY (9473 1143), email (vais@vicdeaf.com.au), fax (9473 1144) or phone (9473 1117). The booking office coordinator is Karen O'Mahoney and the VAIS manager is Marc Curtis.

VAIS aims to provide you with the highest quality service.

Help us to serve you.

Brumby Labor Government Media Release
Improving Fire Safety for the Profoundly Deaf

<http://www.premier.vic.gov.au/minister-for-community-services/improving-fire-safety-for-the-profoundly-deaf.html>

Community Services Minister Lisa Neville today announced a \$220,000 Brumby Labor Government funding boost to subsidise specialised smoke alarms for the hearing impaired.

Recognising the importance of smoke alarms the Brumby Labor Government scheme will offset the cost of specialist smoke alarms for up to 520 Victorians who are profoundly deaf. The specialist smoke alarms consist of three components including:

- A smoke alarm fitted to the ceiling;
- A strobe light which sits in the eye sight of the house occupant; and
- A vibrating alarm which rests under an occupant's pillow or bedding.

Ms Neville said the implementation of a statewide subsidy to assist vulnerable Victorians builds on the Auslan Fire Alarm Subsidy pilot program launched in 2006.

Vicdeaf chief executive officer Graeme Kelly welcomed the announcement saying there were significant risks from fire to profoundly deaf people who lived alone or in all-deaf households.

"Visual and vibrating alarms may retail for upwards of \$450 and prior to the scheme, few deaf and hard of hearing people had purchased them for their homes," Mr Kelly said.

The Brumby Labor Government subsidy brings the price of the alarms down to be comparable with regular, sound alarms.

The scheme will be carried out in partnership between the Brumby Labor Government, Vicdeaf, the MFB, CFA and organizations' for the deaf. For further information on the scheme or how to apply visit firealarm@vicdeaf.com.au

Prime Minister of Australia Media Release
Hearing Screening for all Australia Babies

http://www.pm.gov.au/media/Release/2009/media_release_1101.cfm

The Australian Government will seek a commitment from States and Territories to deliver newborn Hearing Screening for all Australian babies from 1 January 2011. Presently, only 75 per cent of newborns are screened. This varies from over 95 per cent in some States and Territories to less than 40 per cent in others. Our children deserve better than this.

About 500 children every year are born with a moderate to profound permanent hearing impairment. However, many of these children are not identified until months or even years after birth. Hearing screening involves a simple, non-invasive test that is relatively quick and easy to perform.

Early detection and treatment of a hearing impairment can be vitally important in a child's ability to develop language skills, in their later education and their employment prospects.

Children whose hearing impairment is detected in the first days of life can be fitted with a hearing device from as early as three months. The Prime Minister will call on Premiers and Chief Ministers at the forthcoming Council of Australian Governments meeting to fast-track the introduction of universal and standardised newborn hearing screening.

This Government is committed to improving the health of our future generations, and ensuring that every child has the opportunity to reach their full potential. With the Government's \$60 billion in public hospital funding to begin flowing to States and Territories from 1 July 2009, this is one of the improvements that Australians can expect to receive.

Deaf Australia Media Release

Deaf Australia welcomes universal newborn hearing screening

Every newborn child will be tested for hearing loss under a new plan announced by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd on 29 June.

Deaf Australia congratulates the Prime Minister and welcomes this announcement on Newborn Hearing Screening. Deaf Australia believes that the earlier a child is diagnosed the better the opportunities for effective support to enable the child to reach its full potential.

However, Deaf Australia is concerned that only one support approach appears to be being offered - medical intervention, i.e., hearing aids and the cochlear implant. This is not sufficient. A whole range of supports need to be offered.

Acquisition of a language to native fluency, effective communication and family inclusion remain the key issues that are not adequately addressed under the current medical approach. The medical only approach can result in children failing to acquire age appropriate language, which has lifelong impacts. An approach that provides the best social and participation model needs to be developed and offered.

Deaf Australia calls for all babies newly diagnosed with a hearing loss and their families to be offered world's best practice bilingual early intervention programs that expose them early and equally to both English and Auslan (Australian Sign Language) and enables them to acquire at least one language to native fluency.

Hearing aids and the cochlear implant alone are insufficient to enable this.

Deaf Australia refers to the Australian Government's commitment to the *UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*, which states that all people have the right to live a life of dignity, freedom, equality and respect and have the integrity of the person protected.

Deaf Australia calls for Governments to adhere to the *UN Convention* and to seek and explore early intervention supports for deaf children and their families that support the child and family holistically and with dignity.

Deaf Australia is the National Peak Body representing Deaf people and we ask that Government and opposition include Deaf Australia in any consultations and development of policies that impact on the lives of deaf people and their families, to ensure sound policy and best practice in Australia.

Australian Human Rights Commission receives many complaints over the years in relation to access issues. Many of the issues for Deaf and hard of hearing people has been negotiated through conciliation with various services. These issues, for example, can be captioning, access to premises, access to hotel. The summary below is an example from a conciliated outcome from January—June 2008 under Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Commission is taken out for this VCOD E-news.

Access at Hotel

Hotel

A number of Deaf and hearing impaired people complained that a hotel did not provide accessible facilities. The complaint was resolved when the hotel undertook to develop an action plan in consultation with disability community representatives, including

Captions

- **Replacement of all existing televisions not able to support teletext with sets which do provide this capacity**
- **Fitting of visual emergency warning strobe lights in a range of different classes of room and in selected public areas**
- **Review of emergency procedures and staff training to ensure safety and equal service for guests with disability**
- **Purchase of hospitality kits for hearing impaired guests including TTY enabled and hearing aid compatible phones and visual doorbell.**

Source : http://www.hreoc.gov.au/disability_rights/decisions/conciliation/0608.htm

Note you can play a part in increasing access by requesting in advance if a hotel / motel / caravan park can provide televisions with captions and / or a hospitality kit. If the hotel / motel / caravan park does not have the facilities to accommodate you, you can provide information for them to contact Media Access Australia where to purchase televisions or Printacall for hospitality kits.

Media Access Australia has a dedicated web page to Hotel Captions. It is a resource page showing all the hotels & motels within Australia. The website link is www.mediaaccess.org.au and click Hotels section. Media Access Australia relies on members of the public who stay in hotels to tell them if they have televisions with captions. And if you planning a holiday, you can refer to the webpage to click on any state of Australia to find out which hotels has the facilities. Once you click on the State area, it will take you to a webpage showing hotels, addresses and website links.

I encourage you all to put forward names of hotels that may be not on the website, that has the facilities.

On another note—you can request for a hospitality kit when you arrive at a hotel or in advance. What is inside a hospitality kit, you ask? The contents inside are Wire free Bell Push & Chime with flashing light , shake awake alarm close, Uniphone (TTY) and Visual Alert & Flashing Light. If the hotel does not have one, you or VCOD can provide the information to them to organise through Printacall - www.printacall.com.au

Media Access Australia
Printacall

Phone 02 9212 6242
Phone 02 9809 2392

TTY 02 9212 6242
TTY 02 9809 1283

Employment

ANZ Abilities Program

ANZ believe it is important to understand their customers, and as over 20% of the Australian population currently have a disability, they are striving to reflect the makeup of the communities in which they operate.

As part of ANZ's broader diversity initiatives that centres on an inclusive workforce, they have put in place some measurable targets to ensure that hiring people with a disability forms part of the overarching plan.

ANZ plans to recruit 35 people with a disability into their organisation by 30 September 2009 and are well on their way to achieving this target.

ANZ appreciate that there are exceptionally talented people within their chosen profession who may have experienced barriers to employment due to accessibility.

With a Disability Action Plan in place, Accessibility Managers who ensure work tools such as technology are accessible to everyone and a Disability Network that brings people together from all over Australia, ANZ are well equipped to support the hiring of people with a disability into their organisation.

ANZ would love to hear from people with a disability who have an interest in working for their organisation. For a confidential discussion about the Abilities Program contact Joel Kilgour, The ANZ Abilities Program Manager via phone 03 8685 5368 or email Joel.Kilgour@anz.com

Auslan Teacher

A school is considering re-introducing Auslan next year and is very supportive of Auslan.

If you are interested in teaching Auslan at school, please do contact Lisa Dowse. Her contact details are listed below :-

Lisa Dowse
Program Planning & Development Unit -
LOTE
Department of Education and Early
Childhood Development

T 03 9794 3535

F 03 9794 3500

Email dowse.lisa.l@edumail.vic.gov.au

Independent Living Skills Worker

Deaf Children Australia

Part time permanent

Deaf Children Australia is Victoria's specialist provider of family and child-based services for children who are deaf, hard of hearing, or who have speech dyspraxia. We also respond to the needs of all deaf, hard of hearing and speech dyspraxic children who may have other disabilities, such as an intellectual or physical disability. Deaf Children Australia has provided services to children and their families for over 145 years.

We seek an experienced person to work with deaf and hard of hearing children to teach them independent living skills with the aim of increasing their confidence and by working in conjunction with families and other agencies, ensure that appropriate opportunities and options are open to them. This is an ideal position for a person with an interest in Deaf culture and Auslan Sign language.

Essential qualifications include Certificate 4 in Disability studies or Certificate 4 in Youth Work.

Job Description and applications:
Mandy Fellowes on (tel.) (03) 9539 5313,
email mfellowes@deafchildren.org.au

Further information: Andrea Campbell
on (tel.) (03) 9539 5318, email
acampbell@deafchildren.org.au

Applications close Friday 10th July 2009



Social Worker: Senior Case Manager Children and Families

Deaf Children Australia

Melbourne Based

Deaf Children Australia is Victoria's specialist provider of family and child-based services for children who are deaf, hard of hearing, or who have speech dyspraxia. We also respond to the needs of all deaf, hard of hearing and speech dyspraxic children who may have other disabilities, such as an intellectual or physical disability. Deaf Children Australia has provided services to children and their families for over 145 years.

We seek a qualified person to join our dynamic family casework team. This position offers potential for creativity in service delivery. The successful applicant will provide a range of services; including casework and group work services to families in Melbourne and rural Victoria. Demonstrated abilities in case management, teamwork and peer supervision are essential. Social work or social science qualifications at degree level are essential. An interest in child and youth work, and deaf culture and communication is desirable.

The successful applicant will be required to undergo a Police Check and Working with Children Check.

Job Description and applications:
Mandy Fellowes on (tel.) (03) 9539 5313,
email mfellowes@deafchildren.org.au

Further information: Andrea Campbell on
(tel.) (03) 9539 5318, email
acampbell@deafchildren.org.au

Applications close Friday 10th July 2009



Victorian Council of Deaf People
597 St Kilda Road
Melbourne VIC 3004

TTY 03 9521 2466
FAX 03 9525 2595
E-mail admin@vcod.com.au

Victorian Council of the Deaf (VCOD) is a non –profit organisation led and managed by deaf people through provision of advocacy and information services to strengthen community participation and quality of life for deaf Victorians.

It was established in 1982 as a result of a need for Deaf People to represent the Deaf Community

Contribution for VCOD E-news due 27th July

VCOD Board

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Karen McQuigg

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