Parentlink



ISSUE 41 | TERM 2, 2021



FORMER TALKABOUT STUDENT LAUREN, RETURNS AS AN EDUCATION ASSISTANT



Parentlink

Term 1, 2020

Our purpose

As experts in our field, we excel in bringing together services to support children and families to speak, hear, connect and learn, in ways that empower them to live fulfilling lives.

Chief Executive Officer

Mark Fitzpatrick

Principal

Janene Hall

Deputy Principal - Outpost

Geoff Reader

Deputy Principal - Talkabout

Karole Marshall

Head of Clinical Services

Felicity McNally

Head of Hearing Services

Philippa Hatch

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Dates for Your Diary

What your family can look forward to this year!

102

LAST DAY OF TERM 2

School Holiday period 03/07 - 18/07

04

NAIDOC WEEK

Heal Country! From 04/07 - 11/07

19

FIRST DAY OF TERM 2

For all Wembley-based programs

27

FAMILY INFORMATION NIGHT

An introduction to Telethon Speech & Hearing for families

21

BOOK WEEK

This year's theme: Old Worlds, New Worlds, Other Worlds

Reminder: Change your mics!

Have you changed your cochlear microphone covers recently? Remember it is important to change them every 3 months, or sooner if they are coming into contact with humidity or perspiration or there is a change to the sound. These are available for free through the Hearing Australia Cochlear support program. Instructions on how to change them are in the pack, or the manufacturer's website.

Please contact our audiology team if we can assist: speech@tsh.org.au.



Telethon Speech & Hearing acknowledges and thanks all individuals and organisations for their support of our centre, including: Channel 7 Telethon Trust, Channel 7 and The West Australian.

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Footy Fever

I play in the Mazenod Year 8/9 Eagles Cup football team and yesterday we played Comet Bay.

So far we are undefeated and are playing in the finals soon.

I mostly play in the half forward position and like it. Yesterday I was in the forward position and kicked the last goal in the game and we won by 4 points. It was my only goal but it felt good to kick the winning goal.

When I play footy I wear my helmet cause my mum wants me to wear it so I don't get concussion and to protect my hearing. I only hear on one side so I guess it's pretty important.

- Saxon Miller, TSH Outpost student at Mazenod College



Message From Our CEO

Term Two updates from Mark Fitzpatrick

How wonderful it is, to have a term not focused on or interrupted by COVID-19! It has been positive for our students, clients, families, and staff not to be too worried about lockdowns and interruptions to services and learning. But this does not mean that our team has stopped preparing, innovating, and updating what we do to support you, our TSH families, should we be faced with challenges in the future. In fact, the COVID interruptions have taught us a lot and, particularly for families accessing one-on-one services, provides a new opportunity for services to be delivered in a different way. We will keep innovating and preparing so you have the best possible care and support should any restrictions be imposed in the future.

Embedding new classes, schools and partnerships

With enough said about COVID, there have been other challenges and successes that have kept our team busy in Term 2. This included adding new Talkabout classes in Wembley, integrating into our new Outpost host schools at Northshore Christian Grammar and West Coast Steiner School, and welcoming new families across all of our programs.

Such has been the demand for our services, that for the first time we have had to temporarily pause adding new families to waitlists for our programs. We do recognise that for many families, access to speech services,

paediatricians, and other services in Perth has been difficult. We are busy recruiting good people to add to our wonderful team. We have also revisited the priority for our waitlists, focusing first on families we already support and those with the highest needs.

TSH bringing people together

Over the past 10 weeks we have held a range of externally facing events that has brought teachers, therapists and families into our centre. A number of our team have been busy putting on these events which included our highly successful mainstream teacher workshop for over 50 teachers, a new *Let's Talk About It* event for speech therapists, teachers and other professionals, and a session to equip parents with knowledge to support the speech and language development for their two-year-olds.



This year's mainstream teacher workshop.



Paying homage to key people in our history

In April, TSH was delighted to bestow a Life Membership to our ex-Board Chair, Professor Gary Martin. Gary has made such a significant impact at TSH behind the scenes, so awarding him with a Life Membership was an easy decision. What was most rewarding was to see his face beaming with joy upon receiving the award from our current Chair, Dr Alec O'Connell.

On the theme of people key to TSH's history, I encourage you to read pages 14-15 of this edition about Marie Kormendy AM. Marie was our very first teacher and Principal. She was a pioneer who had to fight the bureaucracy to establish and run our organisation, teaching deaf and hard of hearing children how to speak. Without her work (and those around her) our centre would not exist. Her passion was infectious and her attitude to life something to admire. We have a lot to learn from people like Marie and we are so privileged to share part of her story with you.

As we head towards the end of the term, I hope all of our TSH families have a restful and safe holiday. The TSH team is looking forward to seeing you back in Term 3.



Take the kids or leave them at home! This "Too Broome to Believe It!" MAJOR PRIZE includes a 2 bedroom x 5-night stay at Seashells Broome, an adventure flight for 4, guided tours of the region, food/drink vouchers + \$4,000 CASH to spend!

TOTAL PRIZE VALUE: 0.000



'CHOOSE YOUR STAY' ACROSS WA

Enjoy 5 nights in a Seashells property of your choice! Seashells upmarket, self-contained properties can be found at Broome, Scarborough Beach, Fremantle, Mandurah and Yallingup. Valued at \$2,000!



DELECTABLE CATERING FOR ANY OCCASION

This decadent catering package from Function Concepts can be utilised for any occasion you desire. From a special milestone celebration to a casual garden picnic, the choices are endless! Valued at \$1,500!



COMO THE TREASURY LUXURY EXPERIENCE

This fabulous staycation package includes one night's accommodation in a Heritage Room at COMO The Treasury! With breakfast and dinner for 2 at the highly acclaimed Wildflower restaurant on a 5-course tasting menu, plus many other complimentary additions. Valued at \$1,125!



TOTAL SKIN TRANSFORMATION

Experience the non-surgical revolution to total skin transformation with a Skin by Skyn treatment of your choice! SKYN is highly regarded as one of Perth's premier medical aesthetics destinations. Valued at \$1,000!

Enter to win! Scan the QR code with your mobile phone, visit tsh.org.au or call 9387 9888.

Proceeds from the Make a Difference Lottery go towards supporting programs at Telethon Speech & Hearing.

































Discovery Baskets

Encouraging children to boost their attention and observation skills

Often also called treasure baskets, discovery baskets are simply a collection of items for your child to explore. The items usually vary in shape, size, and texture, and appeal to the curious mind. These easy assortments can be put together in an infinite number of ways and make a fantastic go-to activity for your little one!

Why Discovery Baskets?

They encourage children to focus and observe items using all their senses. It also provides opportunities to develop skills including shared attention (i.e. shared point of focus), and provides opportunities for us to follow our child's lead and model language including:

- Names of items
- Action words
- Location words (in, out)
- Describing words related to shape, size, colour, texture, smell, etc.

How do you make one?

The good news is that making your own discovery baskets is easy and inexpensive. Start with a basket, container or tub (e.g. a basket, box-top, bowl, or tray). Next, think about what you'd like to put inside...

For a young children with shorter attention, you may want to include just a few things (4 or 5), whereas for an older child, you'll probably want a larger collection (10 or more).

The objects can be things you find around the house or things you collect outdoors in nature. You don't need to buy anything! The things you already have will be new and interesting! Varying sizes, textures, materials and shapes will keep things interesting.

What do you do with Discovery Baskets?

During playtime, simply present a basket to your little one and allow him or her to explore each object, using this opportunity to model language related to each item (e.g. Wow! You found a sieve. It feels rough. We shake, shake shake, the sieve).

Here are some ideas to try - the options are endless!



Texture basket

Everyday items of different textures (e.g. smooth, rough, soft, hard)



Room specific basket

e.g. Items from the kitchen such as a whisk, sieve, bowl, wooden spoon



Pre-literacy basket

Collect items starting with a specific letter (e.g. S for seal, scissors, saw, soap) - great for older children!



Shape basket

Find everyday items of a specific shape (e.g. round, square, rectangle)



Sound basket

Items that make different sounds (e.g. bell, container of rice, two forks to tap together, etc.)



Colour basket

Find and group items of the same colour

Mainstream Teacher Workshop

Supporting your child's mainstream teacher

The Talkabout team held a one-day teacher workshop on the 5th May. It was attended by 50 mainstream teachers from across the Perth metropolitan area.

The goal for the workshop was to provide upskilling on how to best provide support for students with language difficulties, emotional regulation issues, fine and gross motor delays, literacy, narrative, maths language and comprehension needs. Another key aspect of the mainstream teacher workshop was to help them better understand the effects of language difficulties on all aspects of a child's life.

The whole team presented on the day – teachers, psychologists, occupational therapist, speech pathologists and a parent. This day not only allowed us the opportunity to share our expertise, but also to form a working relationship with the mainstream schools that our students attend.

We had amazing feed back from the teachers that attended the workshop with many asking if we could hold a two-day workshop!

Do you think this workshop may be valuable to your child's mainstream teacher/school?

Contact TSH Deputy Principal Karole Marshall to help your mainstream school get notified about our next workshop! kmarshall@tsh.org.au.

Some of the feedback received:

I have attended WCLDC language
leadership, Letters and Sounds Trainer,
Talk 4 Writing PD, this was a very
beneficial PD. Wish I knew it was going
to be this great because I would have
campaigned for my colleagues to attend
also.

The information was amazing and so practical in our classroom setting. I am so excited to use this to support my students. Thank you.

Best PD I have ever been to. Loved how relevant and realistic the information was. Really enjoyed the examples and the information that was given as to how things would look in the classroom. Thank you!

Lots of information – that is useable and valuable. Love the information booklet too. This was amazing, a great resource to take way. So, Thank you!!









Honorary Life Member

Emeritus Professor Gary Martin

In recognition of his outstanding leadership and significant contributions to helping support children with hearing, speech and language difficulties throughout Western Australia, Emeritus Professor Gary Martin, the chief executive and executive director of the Australian Institute of Management WA, was awarded with a lifetime membership by Telethon Speech & Hearing.

A prominent education and workplace leader in Perth, Prof. Martin first provided exceptional knowledge and expertise to our organisation as a Board member from October 2015. The following year, he was appointed as Chair and remained so until his resignation in July 2020.

During his tenure, Prof. Martin showed extraordinary leadership, effectively and efficiently shaping our centre's culture, performance, and processes to better support Western Australian families and children in need of our services.



He has volunteered his time above and beyond what would be expected of a not for profit Chair to ensure the organisation's reputation was upheld and continues to contribute to the organisation by supporting our leadership team and staff with the provision of leadership training amongst other initiatives through AIM WA.

We are honoured to bestow upon Prof. Martin an Honorary Life Membership of our centre as a reflection of our great respect, appreciation and thanks.

Prof. Martin was presented with his Life Membership at this year's annual general meeting by currrent Telethon Speech & Hearing Chair, Dr Alec O'Connell.





Congratulations Mark!

CEO Mark Fitzpatrick wins Impact 25 Award

Telethon Speech & Hearing is delighted to announce that our very own CEO, Mark Fitzpatrick, is a recipient of the Pro Bono Australia 2021 Impact 25 Awards!

Mark joins a cohort of Australians at the forefront of tackling child development outcomes, improving access to healthcare services for regional communities, supporting people seeking asylum, domestic violence and changing the narrative around alcohol as well as many others. They are among some of the sector's most inspiring and influential social change leaders for 2021.

From 400 nominations, to a shortlist of 150, this year's winners have been picked for their innovation, influence, and collaboration following one of the toughest years of our times.

Mark is the only winner from Western Australia this year, and is being recognised for his tireless work within the not-for-profit sector, including his outstanding leadership at Telethon Speech & Hearing, which supports over 3,000 children with a hearing loss, or speech and language delays, across Western Australia.



Karen Mahlab AM, Pro Bono Australia founder and CEO, said that in such a challenging year, it was exciting to see so many bright stars of the social sector celebrated.

"Last year tested us, and called for inner strength and external action. And many of our Impact 25 have been doing just that for decades." Mahlab said.

"I am so proud to be celebrating the extraordinary leaders in our community that inspired us, and continued to help make the world a better place in a time of flux and uncertainty."

Let's Talk About It

Professional development evening at TSH

This May our auditorium was full of over 250 enthusiastic speech pathologists, teachers and professionals who were eager to learn about better supporting young children with speech and language difficulties.

Attendees were treated with highly insightful presentations from Curtin University lecturers Dr. Mary Claessen and Dr. Chantelle Highman, plus Telethon Speech & Hearing psychologist, Marie Limb. The night also provided an opportunity for professionals to learn how child developmental difficulties impact

families through an open Q&A session with parents Belinda and Rebecca.

A very topical discussion on the night included the 'correct' terminology that should be used when diagnosing a child with speech and developmental language challenges - using 'difficulties' until a definitive diagnosis is made is best practice!

Thank you to all our panelists and attendees for joining us on our very first professional development night!





Hear Now

Updates about our mobile ear health program for schools

Hear Now is Telethon Speech & Hearing's metropolitan ear health program which has been running since mid-2019 and currently works with 14 primary schools in Cockburn and Perth southern suburbs, as well as high school students at Clontarf Aboriginal College and boarders at Aquinas College. Thanks to funding from Telethon, it provides an invaluable service which removes the barriers of cost and travel for children at risk of ear disease and hearing loss.

Telethon Speech & Hearing's audiology team visits each participating school once a term and supports them to identify any students at risk of ear health and hearing concerns, as well as offering any necessary support and training to staff. We can see any child for whom there are concerns raised by school staff, particularly for those at increased risk of ear health concerns including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, those with speech and language or developmental concerns, or a history of poor ear health.

Each student referred is screened by
Louise Pannek, our Ear Health Program
Officer and results determine which
students need further audiological or
medical follow up. Those students are
then seen for full hearing tests. The care
doesn't end there - students are then
referred to see a general practitioner
or Ear-Nose-Throat (ENT) specialist as
needed. The Hear Now program has
helped to identify students with ear health
or hearing concerns and the supports
they need. This is with significantly short

waiting times for audiology and medical treatment. In one semester alone we were able to see 472 students! This enabled us to support them back to hearing and good ear health as soon as possible, which is imperative for their learning.

One of the surprise learnings was that many children are waiting on hearing tests prior to a diagnosis of autism or developmental delay. This process speeds up their diagnosis and access to the financial and early intervention support that they really need.

We work in partnership with the schools and have been grateful for their engagement and support over the last couple of years. In the words of one of our schools;

"We look forward to an ongoing relationship with Telethon Speech & Hearing and are grateful for the in-school program which allows us to identify students who may be impacted by undiagnosed hearing loss, support the parents to connect with a specialist and for us to then ensure we differentiate for the student so they can fully participate in day-to-day activities and ensure learning is not hampered"

We have also been especially grateful to ENT Specialists Dr Tim Cooney and Dr David Hall at *Perth ENT Centre*, and Dr Francis Lanigan at *Cockburn Integrated Health*, all of whom have volunteered their time and significant expertise to see our students through their clinics.

Over the next few months we are looking forward to continuing to support our current schools, as well as welcoming new schools to the program. We are also excited to welcome Shay Berry in her role as Community Liaison Officer in the region, and to be looking at new ways we may support the community, services and schools in working together for the best outcomes for our children.

Do you know a school that could benefit from the *Hear Now* program?

Telethon Speech & Hearing's aim is to ensure that ear health does not prevent learning for any child in our country. If you know of a school in the Cockburn area that would benefit from our services, please get in touch with our team at earhealth@tsh.org.au / 9387 9888.











TOTAL AREA ACROSS WA SUPPORTED BY TSH. VISIT OUR WEBSITE TO VIEW MORE DETAIL: www.tsh.org.au/programs-services





Benefits of reading to your little ones

It's never too early to start reading books!

Books are entertaining and fun but more than that, sharing books with your child is extremely beneficial for their early development and life long learning.

Reading books with your children provides them with many building blocks for important development throughout life. Books spark the imagination, expands their vocabulary and encourages them to think.

Reading to babies at least from birth is one of the more beneficial activities you can do with them.

Reading aloud to your baby teaches them the importance of language. The more stories you read to them, the more words they will hear and the better they will be able to talk.

A young baby won't understand the words you are saying but they will start to pick up tones, pitch and rhythm in your voice. They will learn the "story voice" or the sound of a story.

As babies learn through their senses it's a great idea to have books with simple colourful pictures, touch and feel pages or ones that make fun noises.

Reading to your baby also promotes wonderful bonding moments for you both as they lay in your arms and listen to your soothing and calming voice.

This supports social and emotional development.

This learning continues to toddlerhood. Enthusiasm for a book captures a toddler's mind and imagination. Seeing their excitement as they follow along with a story or start to anticipate what is going to happen next is a magical thing to watch as a parent.

Books are a great way to develop your child's attention and concentration, because as we know, at this age toddlers can lose interest in activities very quickly!

Consistent reading will help improve their ability to sit still for longer periods, which can in turn help in schooling years later in life. Start with short, simple picture storybooks or non-fiction books about things that interest your child like dinosaurs or trains.

It's also important for toddlers to know how a book works; where the beginning is, where the end is and how to turn a page. These early literacy skills are the foundation of learning to read themselves. It's through these simple actions they will start to develop handeye coordination, dexterity (finger movement and control) and cognitive (memory and thinking) skills.

Books offer a wonderful bridge to talk about behaviours and feelings.

When you read with your child, it can provide them with an opportunity to explore a wide range of emotions and when a child starts to puts themselves

into a story, or see things from another perspective, they will begin to develop empathy and begin to identify with the characters and what they are feeling.

So it's a great idea during reading time with your child to start exploring the wider range of emotions, behaviours and responses characters are going through. It's as simple as pointing out different emotions and discussing them, for example "Spot looks excited / proud that he's helping his mum bake a cake!".

Another, and perhaps one of the most important, benefit of reading to your child is language development.

Even though you speak to your little one every day, reading a book means using words or phrases they might not hear in everyday life which will help to extend their vocabulary. As you read you may find them asking what certain words mean and taking time to explain definitions is fantastic for their learning.

In need of books to read?

All family members of an enrolled student (grandparents included!) can enjoy borrowing something from Telethon Speech & Hearing's onsite library. Chat to our friendly Librarian Julie for advice on books to borrow! Or send Julie an email: jcox@tsh.org.au.

Excerpt taken from *Playgroup WA* and reprinted with permission. Full article available at: playgroupwa.com.au/benefits-of-reading



Donate Your Day

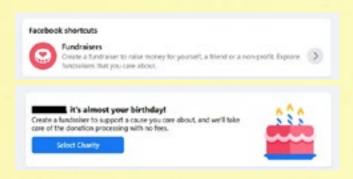
Celebrate and share your birthday with children and families at Telethon Speech & Hearing!

You may have noticed on your Facebook feed that a lot of your friends are fundraising for a charity or cause in the lead up to their birthday. Charities like Telethon Speech & Hearing that are registered with the Australian Charities and Not-For-Profit Commission are able to be supported over Facebook through the platform's 'Birthday Fundraiser' option.





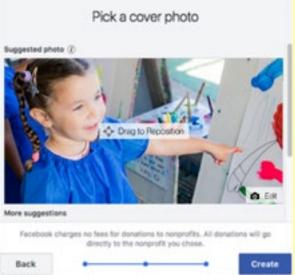
HOW TO CREATE A BIRTHDAY FUNDRAISER



- 1. In the search bar on Facebook type "Fundraiser"
- 2. A shortcut labelled Fundraiser will appear marked with a red heart icon. Click the prompts to see more.



- 3. A pop up will appear allowing you to choose the non-profit or charity that you'd like to support. Type "*Telethon Speech & Hearing*" and select our organisation when it appears.
- 4. Select the amount of money you're hoping to raise and the date you'd like the fundraiser to end. Payments are facilitated over PayPal so you can be sure that they are secure.



- Tell your story and pick a cover photo. Your friends and family will connect to the reason why you're fundraising for our organisation.
- Click Create and your fundraiser will go live! TSH is not notified when a Facebook fundraiser is happening in our name, so please get in touch with our team to let us know that you're donating your day.

Birthdays aren't the only days you can celebrate online!

A significant event like an anniversary or milestone achievement are wonderful reasons to start a fundraiser!

There are plenty of ways to support us, even if you are not on Facebook or social media! Visit our website to learn more:

www.tsh.org.au/support-us

In Loving Memory

Remembering our first teacher and founding Principal, Marie Kormendy AM

This January, we bid farewell to a very special individual of our organisation – Marie Kormendy AM, who passed away on 9 January 2021 at the age of 84.

Marie was a pioneer of deaf education in Western Australia. She made a tremendous contribution to the betterment of children with additional needs both in Australia and abroad, including helping to set up our centre (then known as the Speech and Hearing Centre) together with her former husband, Vince McCudden, and a small group of courageous parents in 1967.

The Centre's work was revolutionary at the time, introducing early education in language and speech for profoundly deaf children.

While Principal, Marie was not only in charge of the education program at TSH, but was also parent Counsellor, General Manager, Fundraising Coordinator and Public Relations Officer. In those early years, she also went without a salary for several years so that others could be paid. In addition to her official duties, Marie opened her own home to several country deaf children who travelled all the way to Perth for their education.

Beyond Telethon Speech & Hearing, Marie's selfless contribution towards creating better outcomes for children included collaborating with her former husband to establish the first teacherof-the-deaf course in WA at Edith Cowan University; working with Rotary and Hearing AID East Java to develop an ongoing humanitarian project for audiology, speech, and hearing services; and extending her support towards children with vision impairments through WA's School of Special Education Needs – Sensory (SSENS).

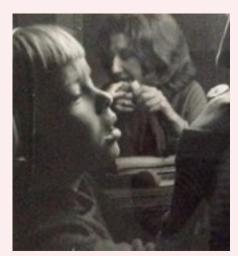
For her unrelenting humanitarian work, Marie was honoured as a Member of the Order of Australia AM in 2020.

Telethon Speech & Hearing is deeply honoured to share a personal association to Marie and her lifelong work with children impacted by hearing loss. Her tenacious spirit and virtuous principles paved the way for everything our organisation stands for and continues to practise to this day, as we help provide positive outcomes for families impacted by hearing, speech, and language challenges across WA.

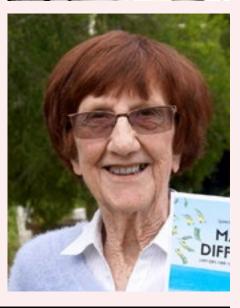
In Marie's own words, "It was satisfying to be able to help youngsters during this transition so they could achieve their goals as they moved onto adulthood and post-school education."

From all staff at Telethon Speech & Hearing, we send our heartfelt thoughts to Marie's family and friends.

The lives of thousands of children have been changed because of Marie's work, and Telethon Speech & Hearing is incredibly proud to carry on the innovative change in early education that she helped to create, in her honour.









Full Circle

Former Talkabout student Lauren returns to Telethon Speech & Hearing!

Having a child with speech and language difficulties can be anxiety provoking for parents to say the least! We constantly worry about how they are progressing and question: "What will their future look like?, Are they getting enough therapy?, Are they getting the right therapy?, Am I doing enough?, What will life after Talkabout be like for my child?".

Wouldn't we love to have a crystal ball to peek into their future so we could know exactly what to worry about rather than worrying about all the uncertainty!? This is why it is affirming when we see an ex-Talkabout student succeeding in their chosen career and giving back to students with similar experiences.

Lauren Johnson is a graduate of the Talkabout 5 program and returned to Telethon Speech & Hearing this term as a qualified Education Assistant. Lauren is employed by Catholic Education WA to support two of our Talkabout 5 students, Olivia and Liliana, in their mainstream class. She returned to Talkabout to observe how our staff implement their programs to provide continuity and consistency of support and practice back into the mainstream classroom. Lauren is passionate about supporting young children with speech and language difficulties and remembers fondly her time at Telethon Speech & Hearing.

Lauren's former teacher, and now Principal of the program, Janene Hall, remembers Lauren as a compassionate, helpful (and sometimes cheeky) child,





and knows these qualities would endear her to being a connected, committed, and supportive Education Assistant. It is also testament to our program that many of Lauren's teachers, education assistants and therapists are still in the program today and were able to catch up with Lauren when she attended.

From everyone at Telethon Speech & Hearing, thank you Lauren for giving us a glimpse into our child's possible future,

and thank you for all the hard work you do in supporting our children with speech and language difficulties!

Do you know a former TSH student or family?

We'd love to know how our former students are doing after graduating from our programs. Connect with our team and let us know about "life after TSH" at speech@tsh.org.au.