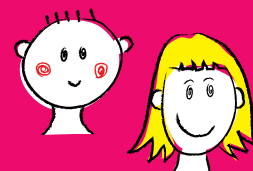


# The Shepherd Centre



A not-for-profit family service teaching children with hearing loss to listen and speak.

## ABOUT US

The Shepherd Centre is a charitable organisation that helps children who are deaf or have hearing loss learn how to listen and speak. We also work with their families to give them the knowledge, encouragement and support they need along the way.

Since we opened the doors of our first centre in 1970, we've worked to provide a world-class service for over 2,500 children and their families. Due to the continued generosity of supporters, we now operate across Australia, with six locations in NSW and the ACT, extended services to Tasmania and an outreach service to rural and remote areas.



## OUR VISION

Every child with hearing loss achieves their full potential in the world through their listening, spoken language and social skills.

## OUR TEAM

Our collaborative team includes Audiologists, Listening and Spoken Language Therapists, Child and Family Counsellors, Early Education Specialists and, if required, Ear Nose and Throat Specialists with specialised paediatric cochlear implant experience.

Every member of The Shepherd Centre team shares a common ethos that families come first. We're all passionate about doing the very best we can for every family we have the privilege of supporting.



The Shepherd Centre has given us amazing support from the day we walked in. I felt like it was a second home.

ASHLIE, KAI'S MUM



## WHAT WE'RE KNOWN FOR

**Family focused, personalised support** – Children are unique and their families are too, so we take the time to get to know families and work with them to create the most appropriate support plan for their child and family.

We equip and empower families, connecting them together so they can feel part of a strong support network.

**Ready for school** – Our programs are designed to ensure children with hearing loss have all the skills they need to enter school as confident, capable students. Most children who attend The Shepherd Centre typically achieve age-appropriate speech and language skills by the time they get to school.

**Unilateral and mild hearing loss** – We support kids with a range of hearing abilities including unilateral and mild hearing loss. Our research shows that children with all levels of hearing can benefit from being supported and equipped to learn how to make the most of the hearing they have access to.

**Support hubs and remote access** – Each one of our centres provides a full range of services so families can access everything in one place. For those who can't make it to a centre or who live in remote or rural areas, we deliver support via video conferencing facilities and our outreach programs.

**Research** – We're actively changing the future of hearing loss by exploring the possibilities in our field. Our insights have gained international attention and our findings ensure we offer the best service possible.

**Child and Family Counselling** – When a child is diagnosed with hearing loss, the journey ahead for parents and family can feel daunting. That's why we employ a dedicated and experienced team of counsellors who can help families take each step as it comes. They're the first people families talk to at The Shepherd Centre and they're a constant source of support for parents throughout their time with us.



## WHAT WE OFFER

### Early Intervention Program for children with hearing loss

Children are capable of incredible things and, while they're very young, their brains have the capacity to learn life-transforming skills. Our Early Intervention Program is designed to make the most of the crucial first five years of a child's life, helping them learn to listen and speak while their hearing peers are doing the same. This gives them the best chance possible to enter mainstream school with age-appropriate language skills.

The program also focuses on providing parents and family with information, support and education for the journey ahead.

### First Sounds Implant Program

If a child requires a cochlear implant, we guide their family through the journey every step of the way. Along with our in-house paediatric audiologists, families are in the safe hands of Ear, Nose and Throat surgeons with specialised paediatric cochlear implant experience. To date, we've performed

over 500 cochlear implant surgeries and have undertaken pioneering research in this space.

### Kids' groups and parent support

We offer a range of programs and services for children throughout their schooling life from infants right through to the senior years of high school. These include speech pathology, child and family counsellors who work with children or families in your child's school setting, school consultation visits, communication assessments, audiological services, programs for extended family members, professional development programs for teaching and educational staff and social skills building.

Our group programs aim to create interesting listening environments for the development of listening, speech and language, and social skills. All groups are facilitated by our team of specialists who help guide play-based therapy. We often run parent information sessions during part of our group times so, while kids are professionally supervised, parents can take time out to learn from experienced speakers and connect with other parents.

## OUR OUTCOMES

### Seeing results at The Shepherd Centre

Families who come to The Shepherd Centre seek a listening and spoken language future for their child, with the very best listening, speech, language and social skills possible. Our mission is to help every family achieve this vision for their child. We're committed to linking research and clinical practice to provide the best possible outcomes for children with hearing loss and their families.

Many people aren't aware that with advancements in technology and early intervention therapy, children who are deaf or have hearing loss can learn to listen and speak, attend mainstream schools and participate fully in the hearing world.

The vast majority of our graduates start school as confident students with equivalent or better

language skills than what is expected at their age – testament to their hard work and the skill and dedication of their families and our clinicians.

## WE'RE A CHARITY

From the start, The Shepherd Centre has always relied on our generous supporters to make our work possible. We receive very little government funding and even the roll out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) won't cover all of the costs to deliver our fantastic outcomes for children and their families. Our top priority is to ensure our world-class early intervention services are accessible to families of children who are deaf. We have only been able to achieve this through the generous support of our donors. If you would like to support The Shepherd Centre please visit <https://shepherdcentre.org.au/support-us/>.

## CONTACT US

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**The Shepherd Centre**

Giving deaf children a voice

