



## **National Association of Australian Teachers of the Deaf eBulletin**

Greetings everyone,

I know this will find members in our national association in vastly different circumstances, depending on the state you live in – from living relatively normally albeit with borders shut, to enduring protracted lockdowns.

Throughout the Covid 19 pandemic we watched with dismay as the needs of deaf and hard of hearing students were overlooked in the move to teaching online. Many DHH students were forced to try and lipread people in a tiny box on screen, if they had access to technology at home. Many students became disengaged. Teachers of the Deaf were magnificent in setting up better opportunities for learning, creating more meaningful interactions with peers, or driving to students' houses to ensure they had something to learn with, along with a myriad of other supports.

On top of increased commitments at work, NAATD representatives continued meeting via Zoom, frequently after a day online. Their commitment to representing the views of members in their states and contributing in meaningful ways is to be applauded. I thank Alison Hawkins-Bond, Donna Rees and Trudy Smith from NSW, Bronwyn Green and Melissa Homann from Queensland, Claire Loades and Alison l'amafana from South Australia, Bronwyn Birch and Janene Hall from WA and Kaye Scott from Victoria.

The executive for 2021-22 is:

Chairperson: Marie Fram

Vice Chairperson: Claire Loades

Membership Secretary: Melissa Homann

Treasurer: Donna Rees

Committee Members: Bronwyn Green, Bronwyn Birch, Alison Hawkins Bond, Alison l'amafana, Kaye Scott

eNews Editor: Trudy Smith

NAATD now has a Facebook page (National Association of Teachers of the Deaf). Thanks are due to Angela Maclean from Victoria who volunteered to be the Social Media Officer. We appreciate her willingness to support NAATD and her colleagues in this way.

In 2020 and 2021 NAATD worked on submissions and feedback focusing on the needs of DHH students:

- the Indigenous Cultural Competency in the Australian Teaching Workforce discussion paper where we focused particularly on hearing loss and the disadvantage which arises from undiagnosed or misunderstood hearing loss.

- the Disability Standards for Education 2005. NAATD was also invited to participate in a follow up closed webinar event which was chaired by Graeme Innes.
- a survey on a preliminary draft of Audiology Australia's Paediatric Competency Standards
- Audiology Australia's draft Teleaudiology Guidelines  
To recognise the commitment of teachers training to become Teachers of the Deaf in one of the three Masters level degrees, NAATD offers graduates free membership of their state branch. We have welcomed a number of new members in their first year of teaching DHH children and young people.

While all members receive a print copy of the journal Deafness & Educational International, access to online articles is available free of charge through the member area of the NAATD website. The username is the email address used to join your state branch, and the password is the NAATD member number provided by the state branch.

You will be aware that the publishers, Taylor & Francis, made the decision to send the journal without wrapping for environmental reasons. This has led to some journals being received in a damaged state. If this is the case for you, please take a photo and send it to the person responsible for membership in your state. This person will then forward it to Melissa Homann, the NAATD membership secretary, who is in regular contact with the publishers.

Many of you will have taken advantage of the reduced member rate to participate in ICED2021 and 4 lucky members received free registration from NAATD. The Queensland organising committee did an outstanding job in organising a fully accessible virtual conference with Auslan, International Sign and captioning for every session. Congratulations are due to the Co-Chairs Bronwyn Green and Joy MacDougall, and the other members of the organising committee: Greg Leigh, Trudy Smith, Claire Loades and Jenni Wilson.

While we have our challenges with COVID 19, the one constant is Teachers of the Deaf working to support other Teachers of the Deaf and the DHH children and young people with whom they work. What a privilege it is to be part of a community which works with passion and commitment.

Marie Fram  
Chairperson



The Queensland Branch is celebrating our recent achievements in hosting the International Congress on the Education of the Deaf 'The Power of Connection' from 5-8 July this year. One of the major goals of the conference was to provide a fully accessible conference experience for all delegates that included access to English and Auslan as the official languages of the congress plus interpreting in International Sign along with English captioning and we are extremely proud of how this goal was achieved.

Over 500 registrations were received for the fully virtual congress which provided participants with approximately 50 hours of professional development. The online environment with pre-recorded presentations will remain open until at least July 2022 which gives the participants the opportunity to view every presentation as many times as they desire over a year long period. For the participants from over 40 countries who joined live there was the added bonus of presenters joining in online while their presentation was shown for live chat sessions which fostered a real sense of connectedness during the sessions.

We were proud to offer 16 scholarships to participants from developing nations and for the first time ICED 2021 held an "Art Competition" for Deaf and hard of hearing students from around the world. Deaf and hard of hearing students were invited to share images of original artwork portraying the theme of 'Power of Connection' for display at Congress. 33 submissions were judged by a panel of local Australian deaf/hard of hearing artists and five winners were selected. All artwork was available for delegates to view in the resource gallery.

The Organising Committee invited close industry contacts to become ambassadors of the Congress and to assist in the promotion of ICED 2021. In total 5 ambassadors came on board and assisted in promoting the Congress. The program was successful and Colin Allen AM in particular assisted with strengthening connections with the Deaf Community worldwide. One of our Queensland members, Donna Lene, assisted in increasing awareness of the congress in the Pasifika Region. The other ambassadors were Denise Powell, Kate Crowe and Joe McLaughlin.

There were keynote presentations from 11 esteemed scholars from across the globe. Each of these presenters were online to engage in live discussion while their keynote address was being broadcast and the discussion remains online for others to view at their leisure now the congress has concluded.

The ICED 2021 Congress has resulted in some longer-term legacies for the Congress specifically and within the Deaf Education space moving forward. These legacies include:

- The high level of access for attendees by way of interpretation and captions, was highly regarded and has raised the standard for future ICED Congresses going forward.

- The virtual Congress reinvigorated the Zoom fatigue that was being felt throughout the community by providing delegates the opportunity to have discussions throughout the presentations (not just viewing/listening to the presentation). The opportunity to provide an engaging platform encouraged connection of all attendees. This also meant attendees were able to connect in real time with speakers who were online, providing an engaging atmosphere.
- More value was offered than ever before, with the opportunity for attendees to watch 100% of the program, rather than choose between sessions and miss out if the event was face to face. This ensures that presentations can be watched and viewed over and over to make lasting impacts.

While there are too many people to thank to list here special thanks must go to the members of the National and Local Organising Committees, the Scientific Committee – led by Professor Greg Leigh, the Conference Organising Company – Arinex, the Executive Committee of the National Association of Australian Teachers of the Deaf, the Interpreter Coordinator, the Ambassadors and the many sponsors who were brave enough to stay with us while we navigated the trials of face-to-face, then hybrid, then fully virtual formats. Without the steadfast support of these people and organisations ICED 2021 would not have occurred or been such an amazing event. The conference remains open so if you missed out in July you can still register and access ALL of the presentations, the discussion forums, the virtual showcase, the resource gallery and the art competition. To register go to <https://iced2021.com.au/> If you'd like to start planning to attend the next ICED congress in Rome sign up for the mailing list here <http://iced2025.com/>

Bronwyn Green  
AATD Qld



Our AGM was on the 25th of March. We organised a “Speed- Get to know your fellow members” activity, which worked well. We even managed to “Zoom” in some country members. As we (sadly) farewelled Leanne Potter we welcomed two new committee members, Claire Quirk and Anne-Maree Parkin.

In June, ten members of AATDWA met at a restaurant for our inaugural Bookclub. (We were lucky to be able to venture out and not be in lockdown!) Our book ‘Future Girl’ by Asphyxia generated some interesting discussion and sharing of experiences as the members teach across various educational settings. Our next book will be ‘The Shape of Sound’ by Fiona Murphy.

To encourage greater participation in ICED, we organised a group viewing and discussion session for members who had registered. On 22nd July, nine AATDWA members met and viewed some of the recorded presentations from the Tuesday sessions. Of particular interest was Professor Brenda Schick’s presentation,

“Fingerspelling, Phonological Awareness and Early Literacy in D/HH Children”. A springboard from this led Angela Linfitt, who is trained in this program and training up others in WA, to inform us of its current roll out and success with the signing students in WA.

We also viewed Dr Denise Powell’s presentation on Co-enrolment looking at the different schools around the world with different versions of co-enrolment. After watching the NAATD address and the promotion for the next ICED in Italy, it was great to mingle and share feedback and recommendations about the other presentations that had been viewed individually, over a glass of wine and pizza.

AATD WA have also been looking into the issue of lack of Interpreters in our schools. We have taken the issue to the Deafness Council in WA for their support. A meeting with the Minister for Disability Services, the Hon Don Punch MP, has occurred to look at possible solutions such as training courses to address this issue.

Bronwyn Birch  
AATD WA



### **AATDSA Sparkling Moments**

Thirty six teachers of the deaf attended ICED 2021, it was great to see facilities and the Education Department of SA support this event. Five members were sponsored by the AATDSA, Sarah Lewis’ reflections are included below.

#### **Sarah’s Reflection of ICED2021**

While I have attended a number of ANZCED and WFD conferences in the past, this Brisbane congress was to be my first ICED Congress. After attending the 18th World Federation of the Deaf Congress in Paris in 2019, and choosing to watch the presentations pertaining to education in each session, I was excited that one year later I would have the opportunity to attend another international congress where every stream related to different aspects of deaf education. I wondered how I would be able to choose which to attend.

As we are all aware, Covid meant that the organisers of the 2020 Congress showed great ingenuity and flexibility in rescheduling and changing the format of the Congress to online in July of 2021. Their efforts ensured that the tradition and knowledge sharing this congress affords all educators of the deaf around the world would not be lost. This undertaking I’m sure was far greater than anything they had imagined when they agreed to take on putting the event together. As an attendee, I thank all those involved for their efforts.

The online format meant we were able to attend not only one presentation in each breakout session, but could view all presentations in our own time. Having one year to view all of these presentations means learning can be re-watched, reiterated and far broader in scope than in a traditional congress format. Personally, the timing was serendipitous for me as I was on sick leave, resting in bed at the time the congress was launched but could manage my own participation flexibly.

While the scope of topics covered are far too broad to reflect on in a newsletter and admittedly, I am yet to watch a large portion of the presentations, I would like to take this opportunity to write a brief summary of two presentations and my thoughts. On Monday July 5th, Michelle Baker presented 'Adapting The Fingerspelling Our Way to Reading Program to the Australian Auslan Context', this was followed on Tuesday by Professor Brenda Schick's plenary address entitled 'Fingerspelling, Phonological Awareness, and Early Literacy in Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Children: Development of an Intervention'. As part of a larger team in America, Schick developed a detailed program of highly structured lessons aimed at developing phonological awareness in DHH students through fingerspelling rather than an auditory pathway. Her presentation summarised the reasoning behind the aspects of the program, provided examples of students' work, data from trials of the intervention program and summarised the structure of the program. Baker's presentation explained how she was gifted the American version of the program and given permission to adapt all the resources to an Auslan context, with the stipulation that the Auslan program be shared with all of Australia. I have had the pleasure of being part of this national roll-out and seeing first-hand the impact of the work of Schick, Baker and their collaborators. In her presentation, Baker again summarised the structure of the program, including the testing used to track students' performance and the process of adapting the program for Australian and beginning to share it nationally.

Most of us already recognise that fingerspelling is not just a stop-gap in the absence of a lexicalised Auslan sign. But the irrefutable evidence that fingerspelling can be used as a pathway to reading for those students who do not have functional auditory phonological awareness to support them reading is compelling. We need to be providing a fingerspelling-based reading program for these students, not to do so would be negligent. This resource has data proving its effectiveness in ASL but now also around Australia via Auslan too. It comes with kits of ready-made resources and lesson plans made for our students who are Auslan users (which almost never happens). Brenda mentioned reflections from American teachers that mirror my own experiences after participating in the program; in addition to significant vocabulary and reading improvements, students begin to incorporate fingerspelling into their daily communication more often. I have seen students begin to realise that fingerspelling is labelling a person or thing and junior primary students with severe language delays in both Auslan and English are beginning to use fingerspelling to clarify their meaning when chatting with others in Auslan. Thinking about the improvements these students have made as part of the program gives me goosebumps. While teachers need to be trained before delivering the program, this time-consuming process is beginning in South Australia and the project will continue to grow across sites and teachers over time.

I look forward to watching more of the presentations included in ICED, some to reinforce my current understanding, others to inspire alternative thinking or

reflections; luckily I have one year to peruse everything available to us. I was lucky enough to have my congress registration paid for by AATD SA after applying for the grant they offered to all members. I would like to thank AATD SA not only for supporting me directly in this way but for showing a commitment to supporting all Teachers of the Deaf in South Australia both members and non-members. The ICED Grant opportunity you offered to all members was indicative of the direct benefits you provide to us but I also recognise the many ways your efforts indirectly support all those working in deaf education within South Australia, whether members or not. Thank you AATD SA.

### **Support for Samoan Teachers of the Deaf**

Alison l'amafana has been providing support to teachers of the deaf in Samoa on a voluntary basis. To support this, we have agreed that teachers of the deaf are provided with access to online learning that we are undertaking within the State. This is a great way to support Deaf and Hard of Hearing students in countries that are not as affluent as Australia.

### **Professional Learning**

The Professional Learning committee has continued to use a blended model of training this year. The focus of the training has been on supporting teachers in mainstream schools to develop their understanding of the educational needs of Deaf and Hard of Hearing students. Late in term 2 AATD(SA) presented an informal Professional Learning collaboration between TODs and mainstream educators. It was an opportunity to share experiences, ask questions and discuss topics relevant to classroom practice. We had 40 attendees, who accessed the PD via a remote platform or face-to-face and representation from both the public and private sector. A large proportion of the audience was from regional areas, with over 50% accessing the event remotely. Topics covered included personal experiences, as a DHH person at a mainstream school and as a parent of a DHH child, differentiated teaching practices, auditory fatigue, supporting relationships with peers, classroom acoustics, technology, supporting challenging behaviours and different types hearing loss.



Claire Loades  
AATD SA



This year Teachers of the Deaf in Victoria have continued to rise to the challenge of teaching online and managing the health and wellbeing needs of their students. The demands of working online from home are considerable but opportunities for professional learning have been taken up with enthusiasm.

This year we have run Community of Practice gatherings on the Expanded Core Curriculum: Social and Emotional Learning.

So far this year we have also run webinars on the following topics:

- Special Provision for VCE Examinations and NAPLAN 2021 with Nicola Rowling
- Assessing Theory of Mind with Kaye Scott
- Learn More about Audio Solutions with Andrew Willis and Mary Mavrias from Word of Mouth Technology
- A practical clarifier workshop with Nicola Rowling
- AATD worked in partnership with the Victorian Deaf Education Institute, to offer:
  - Presentation 1: Using a clarifier to support deaf and hard of hearing students in VCE assessments
  - Presentation 2: Training for clarifiers, with each delivered by Nicola Rowling
  - The presentations are available on the VDEI website at <https://www.deafeducation.vic.edu.au/professional-learning/template?eventtemplate=123-using-a-clarifier-to-support-deaf-and-hard-of-hearing-students-in-vce-assessments>
- Donna Rees presented on the Heart Ear Bus at our AGM
- Reading Comprehension and Theory of Mind with Kaye Scott

In 2020 we introduced an AATD Victoria Exemplary Practitioner award which was presented to Lyn Sanders. Lyn's insight, passion and knowledge in Deaf Education and Inclusion is exemplary. Her ability to identify students' needs and apply high impact, effective, evidence-based teaching practices is exceptional. She has outstanding skills in forming positive relationships with students, parents, teachers and other professionals.

This year the Exemplary Practitioner award was presented to Nicola Rowling. Nicola's knowledge of best practice in Deaf education and her willingness to lead and share with colleagues is highly valued. She is resolute in finding answers to ensure DHH students receive what best meets their needs.

This year we presented our inaugural AATD Victoria Education Impact Award to Professor Louise Paatsch and Professor Dianne Toe for their long and distinguished careers including continued research with DHH students and professional learning with Teachers of the Deaf and other educators that is informative, practical and

challenging. Through research and teaching they have influenced the understanding and practices of Teachers of the Deaf for decades.

We updated our Special Provisions for Students with Hearing Loss document which brought together information provided by the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) as well as advice in those areas for which no guidance was provided. For those who might be interested, it can be found on the AATD Victoria website: <https://aatdvic.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/AATD-Special-Provisions-for-Students-with-Hearing-Loss-Version-3-March-2021-FINAL8.pdf>

The Victorian Committee for 2021-22 is

President: Marie Fram

Vice President: Kaye Scott

Secretary: Bev Gelbart

Treasurer: Geoff Rowling

Committee members: Christina Monk, Nicola Rowling, Sally Martin, Sharron Woolfe

Marie Fram

AATD Vic



EDSA has been working closely with Marina Laing, the Diversity Officer at the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) this year and we have contributed to the following work tasks:

- NSW Curriculum Reform
- NSW Auslan Curriculum Development Team
- HSC Recommendations
- 7–10 NSW syllabuses (including Life Skills content)
- Lead Teacher classification
- Aboriginal Syllabus Development

EDSA has had a busy year with lots of professional learning:

- Bev Walls talked about her work in Myanmar
- Dr Megan Barr provided a presentation about 'Experiences of the NDIS from around Australia and recommendations to best support children who are D/HH'
- Dr Melissa McCarthy provided a presentation about 'Parental self-efficacy and involvement in early education for children who are deaf or hard of hearing'
- Tim Byatt provided a presentation about 'Deafness and adolescent identity: What do the adolescents say?'
- Margaret Patrick will be providing a presentation about 'Who are the capacity builders?' talking about building capacity for parents from a New Zealand perspective

- EDSA provided a registration discount to members and sponsored the ITOD Conference Keynote Dr Jenna Voss who spoke about 'Putting Ourselves into the Story: Promoting Resilience for Children Who are DHH and their Families'
- We also provided a discount to members for the DeafBlind Masterclass Series featuring Dr Sampada Shevde

#### EDSA Member ICED Report 1:

Dr Stephanie Cawthon (University of Texas, Austin, USA)

Title: Shifting the Culture of Evidence in Deaf Education: Empowering Deaf People and Finding Your Call to Action

Stephanie provided a refreshing overview of the importance of collecting high quality evidence, while also empowering d/Deaf people. She shared some of her own experiences, which are supported by research, of "the tyranny of low expectations" for many d/Deaf people.

Stephanie is an advocate for improving postsecondary school outcomes for young d/Deaf adults, such as addressing inequities evident in tertiary education participation and employment outcomes. She believes that in order for research to be effective in deaf education, it needs to be culturally relevant, people focussed, and have the goal of changing systems.

Stephanie's presentation was engaging, authentic, and inspirational. She is a model for teachers and researchers to follow in working towards tangible improvements for d/Deaf people, while also valuing the individual and diverse lived experiences of young d/Deaf people.

By Tim Batt

#### EDSA Member ICED Report 2:

ICED 2021 offered a vast selection of intriguing topics. Presenters shared about new research, programs and resources, so many of which were applicable to my context. I decided to focus my attention on the breakout sessions that elaborated on the topic of bilingual/bicultural learning in mainstream settings. This article is brief review of the session presented by Dr Kim Kurz, titled 'Educational Interpreting: Mainstreaming as an Experiment?'

In NSW, there are very few placement choices for DHH students who have Auslan as their dominant mode of communication. As a ToD currently supporting students in mainstream settings who access the curriculum via Auslan, I am fascinated by this subject and hungry for information to improve my practice. I work with a team of brilliant educational interpreters and have seen the positive results achieved by students who work within this model. The session with Kim Kurz caused me to re-examine my perspective and to challenge the notion that provision of interpreters is a simple solution to the conundrum of authentic access.

Dr Kurz is a Deaf researcher whose field of study examines the outcomes of Deaf students who utilise ASL interpreters at school. In her presentation at ICED, she

speculated on whether providing interpreters is merely a stop-gap measure that sometimes even prevents us from examining the actual language needs of the students. Sign language interpreters are necessary because we have teachers who cannot sign. It is not, however, a perfect solution.

The presenter highlighted the problem of interpreter training in the USA. Despite a large cohort of Deaf students in mainstream schools using sign language to access the curriculum, there is a lack of professional training provided for educational interpreters. There are specialty courses provided for legal and medical interpreters, yet very few colleges offered specific training for educational interpreters. Kim Kurz challenges the perception that interpreters in a school setting have an 'easier' role than in medical or legal settings. Indeed, it could be the case that educational settings are the most complex and important and that we should expect the very highest skill level for interpreters working in this area.

Another option raised by Dr Kurz that I hadn't considered was Deaf interpreters. Deaf interpreters can work alongside hearing interpreters and teachers to provide an authentic communication channel. Deaf students are able to communicate their ideas to a native signer who then facilitates full access to robust language rather than the possibility of inadequate and partial access to the nuances and dynamics of classroom learning. It makes so much sense and I have been pondering this possibility ever since.

Dr Kurz highlighted to me that we don't have many Deaf language models in mainstream schools in NSW and this seems like such an essential element for true inclusion. My colleagues and I have begun to address this glaring omission. Small steps include inviting Deaf adults to our DHH excursion and pre-planning for regular gatherings for Deaf signing students from across the region. The next big step is to find a way to include Deaf interpreters as part of the daily education team.

ICED was a week of recalibration. I was rocked by Dr Kurz' session and I would say it was worth every cent of the registration cost just for this presentation alone. Oh...that's right...I didn't have pay because I won free rego! Thank you EDSA & ICED for providing the opportunity for professional growth.  
by Kimberley Williams, ISTH

EDSA Committee for 2021-2022  
President: Alison Hawkins Bond  
Treasurer: Donna Rees  
Secretary: Sue Richards  
Membership Secretary: Bev Walls  
NAATD Rep: Trudy Smith  
Public Officer: Penny Ward  
Project Officer: Tim Byatt, Adam Wilkinson

Alison Hawkins Bond

# Save the Date!

NAATD will host Dr Amy Szarkowski at our end of year gathering on Thursday 2 December 7:30pm AEDT. Amy will speak about Fostering Joy, and this interactive workshop will provide a wonderful opportunity to meet, reflect and celebrate the year together as one organisation. Further details are coming but put this in your diaries now!