

11 May 2022



China's CODA share their stories

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Early hearing loss diagnosis

"She loves to do little concerts, music concerts at home for us — loves anything to do with sound." Alice is one of more than a million Queensland children who have undergone the newborn hearing screen since the program began in 2004.

Improving the NDIS

There has been a lot of discussion about what the next federal government can do to improve the National Disability Insurance Scheme. "The NDIS is confusing and stressful, but it also opens up opportunities for our children."

Six steps to mindful listening

It's a common misconception that listening skills develop naturally - good listening must be studied and consciously practiced. Good listening skills increase comprehension and reduce misunderstandings.

Cochlear to buy Oticon Medical

Australian company Cochlear Limited plans to acquire Oticon Medical for \$170 million following Demant's decision to exit its failing hearing implants business activities.



Currently **one in six** Australians suffer from some form of hearing loss. This may increase to one in four by 2050. Access Economics 2006

Deafness Forum Australia is a Voice for All. It is the peak body representing the views and interests of the 4 million Australians who live with hearing loss, have ear or balance disorders, people who also communicate using Australian Sign Language, and their families and supporters. Our mission is to make hearing health & wellbeing a national priority in Australia.

How early hearing loss diagnosis has changed the life of Queensland children like Alice

By Janelle Miles for [ABC News](#)



Five-year-old Alice Salisbury loves ballet and singing, but talking is her favourite thing — all only possible through what she describes as her "superpower".

Alice was diagnosed with a profound hearing loss in both ears as a baby and received cochlear implants a month after her first birthday.

After more than four years of intensive speech therapy and regular audiology appointments, Alice's mum Angelique describes her as a "sassy little thing who loves life and the joy of hearing".

"She loves to do little concerts, music concerts at home for us — loves anything to do with sound. "Her vocabulary is really strong," Mrs Salisbury said.

Alice has been brought up to not consider her cochlear implants as a sign of disability, but as a superpower.

Alice is one of more than a million Queensland children who have undergone the newborn hearing screen since the program began in 2004. In Alice's case, doctors found through her heel prick blood test, taken in the first few days of life, that she had been born with cytomegalovirus (CMV) — a known risk factor for hearing loss, which can deteriorate over time. Her mother had unknowingly caught CMV while pregnant with her daughter. Although the newborn hearing screen picked up a problem in Alice's right ear, the CMV resulted in progressive hearing loss in both ears. But her cochlear implants have given her the gift of speech.

"It's been definitely a journey and an uncertain one at times but with the support of so many different people, we really feel blessed that Alice is in a really good position. She's a bubbly, forthright little girl who will tell you exactly what's on her mind and loves to talk about her experiences."

China's CODA share their stories

Long marginalised by mainstream society, children of deaf adults, or CODA, are building a community of their own.

By [Zheng Xuan](#), a Deaf professor with Beijing Normal University's Faculty of Education.



China is home to over 20 million deaf individuals. Their children, sometimes known as CODA, or “children of deaf adults,” number in the millions.

I first came across CODA terminology in the 2000s, during my doctoral studies at Fudan University. As the mother of a CODA, it is more than just an acronym to me — it represents a particular, often overlooked subset of human existence, a link between the worlds of the hearing and the Deaf.

CODA don't always see it that way. Studies have found that between 85% and 90% of CODA are not deaf. Many feel as though they don't truly belong in the Deaf world, but they're not completely accepted by hearing society, either. Their lives can seem like a series of challenges. How can their parents take care of them? If they cry out in the middle of the night, who will come to their aid? Who teaches them to talk?

Rather than offer a helping hand, many tend to assume deaf parents have no answers to these questions. Deaf parents, under intense familial and societal pressure, often feel they have no choice but to call upon the assistance of their extended family, generally the child's grandparents. For CODA, this situation deprives them of their parents' presence in their lives growing up; for parents, it only reinforces their anxieties and self-doubt.

CODA who are fortunate enough to grow up with their parents in their lives must mature faster than their non-CODA peers. Tiantian, a 36-year-old CODA from east China, was raised by her parents and maternal grandparents. (To protect her privacy, I have given her a pseudonym.) Her grandparents taught her to speak and helped her with her homework; sign language she learned from her parents in a process so natural to her that she doesn't remember how it happened. When her maternal grandparents passed away during her third year of elementary school, the responsibility for communicating with the outside world fell squarely on her shoulders: paying bills, attending medical consultations, opening bank accounts, and even mediating her parents' relations with their bosses.

Many CODA experience this inversion of the parent-child dynamic. As children, they're often forced to play the role of caregivers and guardians. Growing up, Tiantian paid attention to her parents' affairs and worried whether they were being taken advantage of. In a sense, CODA learn how to be good parents from a young age, largely because they shoulder a burden far greater than that of their peers.

Meanwhile, the prejudices that people with hearing impairments face only exacerbate the stress of life as a CODA. When Tiantian went on excursions with her parents as a child, passers-by would point at them and gawk. When her teachers found out about her family circumstances, they wrote her off. The stereotype that "children of the deaf and mute don't learn well" became their way of justifying her lacklustre grades. Her schoolmates questioned whether she was her parents' biological daughter. This painful chapter of her childhood has had an enduring impact on how she relates to others and, to this day, she still doesn't like to ask others for help.

Yet, while insufficient support and societal recognition for Deaf and hard-of-hearing people — not to mention a lack of professional sign language interpreters — saddle CODA with unreasonable burdens, it also gives them a unique importance in contemporary Chinese society. In addition to assisting their parents, a lot of CODA become sign interpreters for other deaf people. To use Tiantian as an example, she recalls her mother taking her to fill in as an interpreter at an event held by the local Deaf Persons' Association when she was not yet 10 years old. Through no conscious decision on her part, over time, she became the first person many local deaf people would turn to when they encountered an emergency. To this day, she is still the favoured sign language interpreter of the local Deaf Persons' Association.

Unlike many sign language teachers in Chinese schools, CODA such as Tiantian don't learn to sign in the classroom, but rather from everyday interactions with their parents. The Chinese Sign Language taught in schools is heavily influenced by literary Chinese and strikes many deaf people as stilted, whereas the language CODA acquire growing up is much closer to the way that deaf people naturally express themselves. This makes it easier for CODA to communicate with deaf people, even those with little formal education.

More recently, Chinese CODA have begun to organise mutual assistance and research groups. One CODA WeChat group I belong to includes social workers who serve the disabled, researchers, and the head of CODA Hong Kong. Discussions range from sign language to information about upcoming activities and events. This unique space has allowed many CODA to find, for the first time in their lives, a sense of belonging: They have discovered that there are people out there who have had the same experiences and are dealing with the same issues as them.

Yet there are still many CODA in China who feel caught between the two worlds and isolated from society. Some cope by shunning their parents, rejecting sign language, or trying to hide their background from the outside world. To be CODA is to have a mixed identity: Are they marginal figures caught between two separate worlds, or are they a bridge that brings these worlds together? Having faith that a mixed identity will one day be seen as a blessing and not a burden is not always easy, but I'm heartened by the sight of more CODA families connecting with one another and sharing their stories — and I look forward to the day when society treats these families as equals.

From [SixthTone](#). Translator: Lewis Wright; editors: Cai Yineng and Kilian O'Donnell.

Support all Australians with hearing issues

Deafness Forum Australia urges the next federal Government to support all Australians who are deaf or hard of hearing to live well in the community.

A new Government can implement our Hearing Health Roadmap. This Roadmap has been created to improve the lives of the millions of Australians affected by hearing loss and will spearhead a coordinated national effort to improve hearing health.



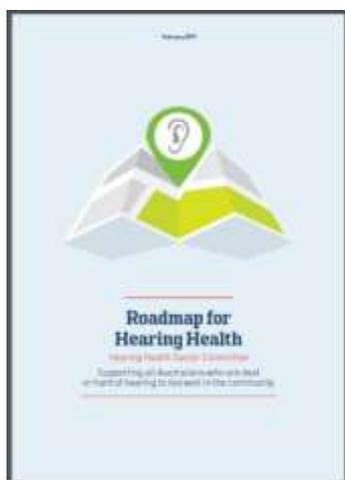
Eight key priorities have been identified. They include a public awareness campaign, child ear health checks, increased availability of Australia's sign language, Auslan, improved aged care hearing services, and more support for people on low incomes.

The Roadmap has a further 147 actions, highlighting the broad range of initiatives that a new Government and the hearing health sector can work together on.

Creation of the Roadmap involved a wide range of stakeholders including consumer and community groups, suppliers and providers, manufacturers, and researchers.

It describes a sensible and actionable plan that is widely supported.

Read [Australia's Roadmap for Hearing Health](#)



Improving the NDIS

“The NDIS is confusing and stressful, but it also opens up opportunities for our children.” *

There has been a lot of discussion about what the next federal government can do to improve the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

A simple and authoritative set of recommendations in relation to children has been presented by a not-for-profit organisation in Victoria, the [Association for Children with a Disability](#).* The Association’s recommendations (below) reflect the experiences of many thousands of Victorian families.

1. Help children and families to thrive

- Focus on inclusion, provide all children with core support so they can participate in ordinary childhood activities.
- Provide core support so families can have short breaks.
- Remove primary disability and take a holistic perspective.

2. Cut the red tape

- Stop the plan cuts.
- Explain what evidence is needed and give families extra time after the planning meeting to get necessary evidence.
- Offer all families support coordination.
- End the gap for Medicare funded mental health support.
- Provide greater clarity on parental responsibility.
- Coordinate multiple plans in one family by offering the same Planner or scheduling plan reviews at the same time.
- Include Companion Cards with an NDIS plan if needed.
- Make it easier for NDIS participants to access the Disability Support Pension when they turn 16.

3. Make it safe and accessible for all

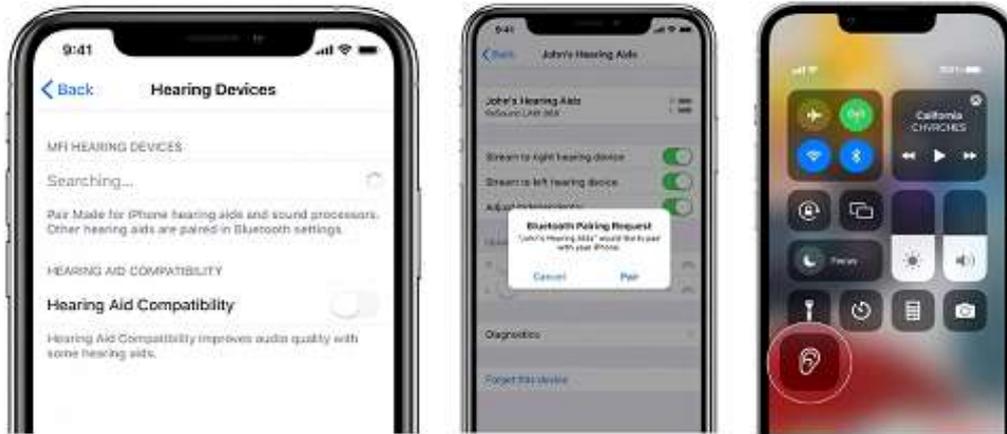
- More funding for child and family focused advocacy and peer support to navigate the NDIS.
- Improve quality and safety by requiring all early years capacity building providers to be registered.
- Train health care professionals and allied health therapists in writing reports and what the NDIS can and can’t do.
- Structure plans and the price guide so they reflect best practice, including Key Worker model and capacity building for the family.
- Ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and culturally diverse families can access NDIS support for their children.

4. Guarantee the future of the NDIS

- Greater representation of people with disability on the Board and in senior management.

Apple accessibility features

By Stephen Fenech for [TechGuide](#)



Apple has partnered with top manufacturers to create hearing aids and sound processors designed specifically for iPhone, iPad and iPod touch.

These advanced hearing devices provide outstanding sound quality, offer many helpful features, and are as easy to set up and use as any other Bluetooth device.

Users can also Instantly apply their audiologist's environmental presets as you go outdoors or enter noisy locations, like restaurants, without having to rely on additional remotes.

Other hearing accessibility features include:

Live Listen

Live Listen is an assistive listening feature that helps you have better conversations in loud places. Once activated you can move your device towards the people you're talking with. Audio is picked up by the device microphone and sent to your wireless headphones or hearing aid, so you can hear what they're saying more clearly. Set up instructions [here](#).

Conversation Boost

Conversation Boost for AirPods Pro helps you better hear conversations in crowded or noisy environments. Through computational audio and beamforming microphones, Conversation Boost focuses AirPods Pro on the voice of the person directly in front of you, making it easier to distinguish speech and follow along in face-to-face conversations. Set up instructions [here](#).

Sound Recognition

Sound Recognition can listen for certain sounds and uses on-device intelligence to notify you when a specific sound is detected. You'll receive a notification when a particular sound like a doorbell or crying baby is detected. Set up instructions [here](#).

In the Shortcuts app, it's possible to set up personal automations when sound recognition is triggered. For example, a smart light can turn red when the doorbell is heard.

Aboriginal corporation provides local hearing and audiology services

By Leigh Buckland, Ungooroo Aboriginal Corporation



Serious ear and hearing problems affect one in three Aboriginal children in Australia and if left untreated, ear problems can cause permanent ear damage and may also affect a child's speech and language development.

Ungooroo is working with Hearing Australia to provide hearing and audiology screening services in Singleton and Muswellbrook for preschool children through the Hearing Assessment Program - Early Years (HAPEE) and will be expanding screening services to include older school age children.

Ungooroo Chief Executive Officer, Taasha Layer, said it's important for parents and carers to get their kids and bubs ears checked early and regularly to prevent hearing loss.

"For many Aboriginal children, ear and hearing problems can start in the early years before they turn two which is a critical time when they are learning to listen, yarn and communicate. Often bubs can develop problems with infected ears soon after birth and they may not show any signs of infection so it's difficult for parents and carers to see if there is something wrong. If they don't get help, ear infections can stop them from hearing properly."

Hearing Australia's HAPEE program offers free hearing checks to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and babies aged 0-6 who don't go to school fulltime.

The tests are free, simple and easy to do and can pick up ear troubles which can be treated and fixed if identified early.

"The good news is that ear troubles can be treated and fixed if your kids' ears are checked early and regularly," Ms Layer said. Good hearing helps kids learn and listen and to do well at school and get jobs when they are older. These skills are important to help kids feel connected to family, friends and community and to learn and understand culture."

This article was produced by Ungooroo Aboriginal Corporation for The Singleton Argus and [Hunter Valley News](#).



**CHARGE
SYNDROME
AUSTRALASIA**

CHARGE Pre-Conference Workshop

The 11th National Deafblind Conference is pleased to offer delegates a pre-conference session based specifically on the stories and experiences of those living and working with CHARGE syndrome. These presentations are about the social model of disability which recognises that with the right support, a person with disability can live the life they choose.



Kaya Lyons:
Integrating
therapy in all
aspects of life



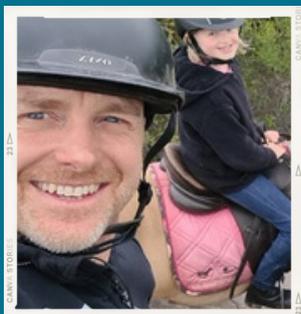
Debbie Bell:
Physiotherapy
Approaches for
children



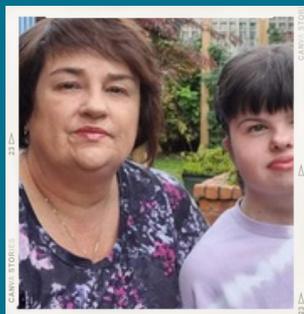
Carmen Roche:
Speech Pathology
and the Social
Model of Disability



Ann Greer:
A strengths-
based approach
to challenging
behaviour



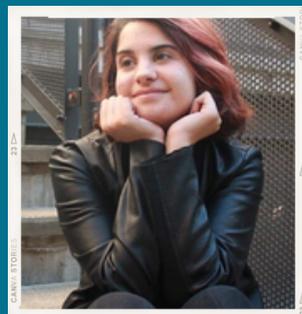
Phil Herborn:
Physical therapy
meets real life – a
dad’s perspective



Annette Stocker:
Schooling and
Implementation
of Specialist
Support



Dianne Mandeville:
One family’s
journey towards a
‘typical’ life in
community



Stephanie Begas:
Navigating Life

CHARGE Pre-Conference Workshop | 29th June, 2022
Esplanade Hotel Fremantle | Melbourne Virtual Hub | Online
www.ausdbconf2022.com.au | #AusDBconf2022



**11th National
Deafblind Conference**
30 June - 1 July 2022 | Fremantle

Presented by

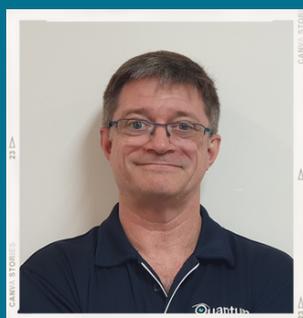


Usher Syndrome Pre-Conference Workshop

The 11th National Deafblind Conference is pleased to offer delegates a pre-conference session based specifically on the stories and experiences of those living and working with Usher syndrome. The Usher Syndrome Pre-Conference Workshop will consist of five presentations by members of the Usher syndrome community.



Dr Tina Lamey:
Progress on Usher
Syndrome Gene
Therapies



Peter Cracknell:
Technology and
Early Braille
Solutions



Fleur O'Hare:
Research
Revelations



Bronwyn Doak:
A Family Journey to Support
Clinical Research



Daniel Talko:
The Pursuit of Positive
Impact

Usher Pre-Conference Workshop | 29th June, 2022
Esplanade Hotel Fremantle | Melbourne Virtual Hub | Online
www.ausdbconf2022.com.au | [#AusDBconf2022](https://twitter.com/AusDBconf2022)



**11th National
Deafblind Conference**
30 June - 1 July 2022 | Fremantle

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SensesWA

Listen up: six steps to mindful listening

An article written for people who provide hearing services but just as relevant to everyone in their daily lives.

Good listening skills increase comprehension, reduce misunderstandings, and help determine a patient's needs so they may be translated into actions. It's a common misconception that listening skills develop naturally - good listening must be studied and consciously practiced.



In [Interpersonal communication: Everyday encounters](#), Julia T. Wood describes listening as an active and complex process that involves the following steps:

- 1. Mindfulness.** When we are mindful, we attempt to keep our minds from wandering, from thinking about what to do next. We focus on the person talking and reduce any distractions. We try to understand what is communicated without imposing our own ideas, judgments, or feelings.
- 2. Hearing** is a natural and critical part of listening. Hearing care professionals must be aware that this second step is often problematic for their patients – and they should be mindful of things they can do to make sure the message is understood.
- 3. Selection.** We can't remember everything we hear, so we must select what's important to us and filter out the rest. We can then make sense of the selected bits by organising them according to familiar schemes and prototypes. If the patient doesn't know what information is relevant beforehand, they will have difficulty organising the information in meaningful ways.
- 4. Interpretation.** This step in the listening process involves putting what we hear and observe into perspective. What's the feeling? What's the tone? What's the meaning? Here, the listener makes a genuine effort to understand the other person without inserting their own conviction.
- 5. Responding.** When we listen to support others, we must respond effectively by conveying attention and interest. This can be done through posture, eye contact, nodding, reflecting, etc. By contrast, when we multitask during a clinical appointment we can appear inattentive and convey a lack of interest, which may ultimately have adverse effects on the outcome.
- 6. Remembering.** The final step in the listening process is remembering what was heard. In helping patients make decisions that are meaningful to them in their daily lives, we must listen carefully to what unique factors affect them and influence their decisions. And we must retain this information to ensure relevant and constructive conversations in the future. When we remember details about patients' lives, we show them that they matter to us, which increases their confidence and, in the end, can improve outcomes.

This article was written by Helle Gjønnæs Møller for the [Ida Institute](#)

For further guidance on how to apply mindful listening in your clinic, explore [Module 2](#) of the Ida University Course. Ida also offers a 30-minute online course on Active Listening (closely related to mindful listening) in the Ida Learning Hall. [Find out more](#)

Deaf people have their own Sign Name



[Watch the video](#)

Cochlear plans to buy Oticon Medical

Danish hearing aid manufacturer Demant is getting rid of its loss-making subsidiary, Oticon Medical. Australian company Cochlear Limited plans to acquire Oticon Medical for \$170 million following Demant's decision to exit its failing hearing implants business activities. As part of the transaction, Cochlear has committed to providing ongoing support for 75,000 hearing implant recipients.

Cochlear's CEO said the acquisition would result in greater scale and increased investments in R&D and market growth activities.

"While Cochlear is a market leader in implantable hearing, we are a small player in the hearing loss segment where hearing aids remain the primary treatment option. Our goal is to improve the penetration of implantable hearing solutions, building customer awareness and confidence, and offering more patients hearing solutions best suited to their individual needs", Dig Howitt said.

The proposed purchase will be subject to a mandatory consultation process with Oticon Medical's employee works council. The acquisition will be funded from existing cash balances and is expected to close in the second half of 2022.

The 700 people employed by Demant at Oticon Medical face an uncertain future. CEO Søren Nielsen said some people might be transferred and others reshuffled, but he won't rule out dismissals.



**"I decided to live
a life that would
also inspire others"**

Eleonora Simonyan
Law student
Kuala

Eleonora Simonyan was two years old when she lost her hearing after a viral infection.

"It wasn't the start to childhood that my parents had expected for me, but with their love and support I'm achieving more than anyone had wished for and my life is full of colour," says Elenora.

"At that time, I simply wished to be like my friends. I soon realised that wishing for things that would never be would only hold me back. I learned to accept my deafness and embraced my cochlear implant.

"Following my passion for communications, I learned to speak three languages and am now studying to be a lawyer.

"I volunteer and speak to parents of deaf children about their problems and hopes, in order to inspire them and help children achieve their highest potential."



accessibility
around the globe

We can create greater awareness of hearing loss and take action to make ear and hearing care accessible to all. [Watch this video](#) from the World Health Organization.

From World Hearing Forum News. You can [subscribe here](#)

Hear & Beyond

This [new book](#) is a game-changer. Shari Eberts and Gael Hannan have created the ultimate survival guide to living well with hearing loss. For some readers, it will spark a sweeping life change. For others, it will be a turning point on their hearing loss journey. Its powerful strategies and engaging personal stories create a hopeful path forward for anyone affected by hearing loss.

New research

- [Improving the measurement and acoustic performance of transparent face masks and shields](#)
- [Investigation to Evaluate the Safety and Effectiveness of Cochlear Implantation in Children and Adults with Unilateral Hearing Loss/Single-sided Deafness](#)
- [Correlation Between Chronic Tinnitus Distress and Symptoms of Depression: A Systematic Review](#)
- [Speech intelligibility deterioration for normal hearing and hearing impaired patients with different types of tinnitus](#)
- [Prevalence of Self-Reported Hearing Loss and Associated Risk Factors](#)
- [Cerebellar Gray Matter Volume in Tinnitus](#)
- [How Audiology Alienates Transgender Audiologists](#)
- [Etiology of hearing loss affects auditory skill development and vocabulary development in pediatric cochlear implantation cases](#)
- [Development of infants' neural speech processing and its relation to later language skills](#)
- [Guidelines for Diagnosing and Quantifying Noise-Induced Hearing Loss](#)
- [Consensus on intratympanic drug delivery for Menière's disease](#)
- [An evaluation of newborn hearing screening brochures and parental understanding of screening result terminology](#)

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Contact us to receive this publication in an alternative file type.

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