



Anne M^cDonald Centre

A new deal for people with little or no speech



Annual Report 2018-2019

The Anne McDonald Centre Inc.

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Joan Dwyer OAM



Sadly, our dear friend Joan Dwyer died in September. Everybody who ever had anything to do with Joan as a lawyer, or as the first Chair of the Equal Opportunity Board, or on the Administrative Affairs Tribunal, admired and respected her intellect, her efficiency, her judgement, and her insight. Everybody who knew her personally responded to her humour, her sympathy, her curiosity, and her warmth.

And we at the Anne McDonald Centre were lucky enough to know her dedication, her enthusiasm, and her generosity.

Joan was on the Centre's committee for many years until 2010. Her donations through the Singer Foundation were crucial in keeping our services open. When she was awarded her well-deserved Medal of the Order of Australia in 2005, Joan was kind enough to give us, out of all her many achievements, pride of place - "for service to the community, particularly through the DEAL Communication Centre, and to the law".

Members of the Committee over those years remember, too, the marvellous Christmas dinners she and her husband John hosted for the Centre at their beautiful home in Richmond. Joan was unsparingly helpful, hospitable, and kind, and we will all miss her immensely.

Anne McDonald Centre Committee of Management President's Report July 2018 - June 2019

I am pleased to present the 2018 - 2019 Annual Report and accounts of the Anne McDonald Centre, a new DEAL for people with little or no functional speech.

This year the continued rollout of the NDIS has had a significant impact on the Anne McDonald Centre, and has enabled the AnnieMac staff to provide services to an increasing number of new clients, some of whom are adults without speech who sadly have never had access to communication aids previously.

In July 2018 the international conference on Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) was held in Australia for the first time, on the Gold Coast in Queensland. This gave three of our clients a chance to present. Tim Chan and Mitch Leggo - yes, he is a relative - delivered platform presentations and Victor Lam exhibited a poster. Annie Mac staff and committee also delivered three more presentations, making six presentations in total.

In November, just before last year's AGM, SBS screened a documentary called *The Silent Treatment* featuring Tim and Victor, which highlighted the inadequacy of DET's provision for students without functional speech.

In December our Director, Rosemary Crossley presented at another international conference on AAC in Italy and met up with augmentative communication users and professionals from Ireland, England, France, Russia, USA and, of course, Italy.

Early in 2019 we heard that four presentations by staff and committee had been accepted for the national AGOSCI conference on AAC to be held in Perth in August, however the big excitement was the launch of Tim Chan's autobiography at the end of April. We would like to congratulate Tim and his mother Sarah on the publication of *Back from the Brink - Stories of Resilience, Reconciliation, and Reconnection - The Hero's Journey through the minefield of autism* - and the hazards of unwelcoming schools.

Recently we sadly said goodbye to a wonderful supporter and long-time friend and committee member of the Anne McDonald Centre, Joan Dwyer, whose obituary is opposite. Our sympathy goes to her husband John, brother Peter, and all her family.

The AnnieMac would not be able to continue providing essential services and training to people with little or no speech without the generosity of our donors. Our thanks go to them all including those who contributed to our annual Tea Party.

The staff of the Anne McDonald Centre have again provided outstanding services and on behalf of the Committee of Management, I would like to thank them for their hard work and loyalty. Our particular thanks go to the Director for her untiring dedication to the rights of those with little or no speech.

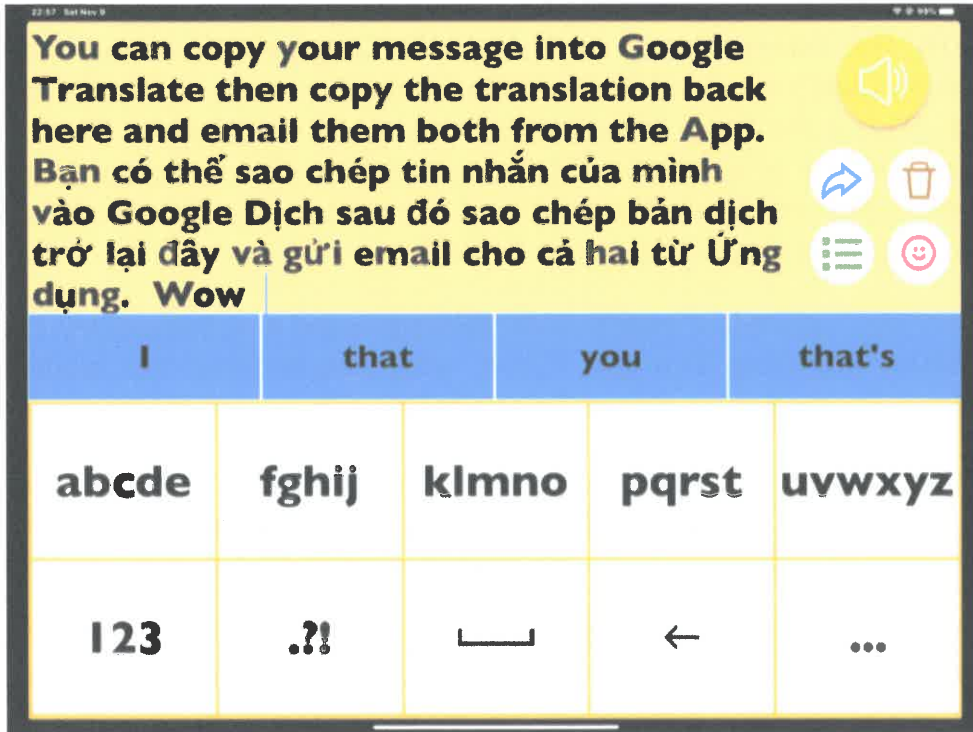
Finally, I wish to thank all the members of the Committee of Management for their ongoing support and enthusiasm.

Leane Leggo, President

NEW TOOLS

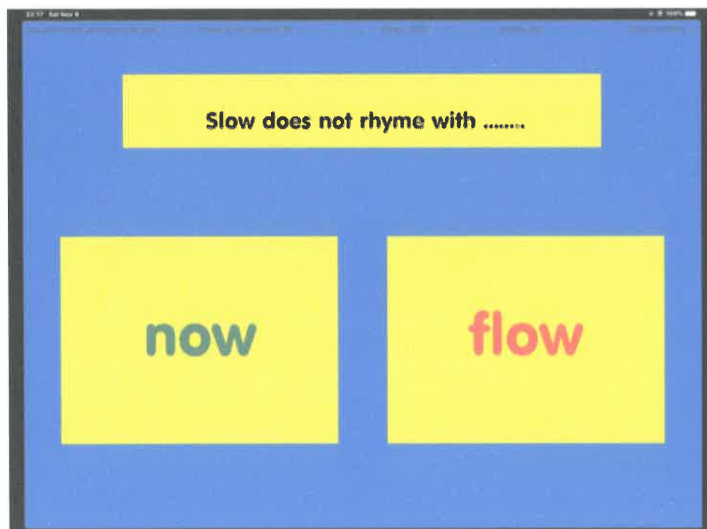
Predictable

Predictable is a text-to-speech app that offers a 10-key keyboard. It lets you type by choosing a group of letters, then choosing the letter you want from the expanded group. It has wonderful word prediction and lots of other cool features - see picture. Many of our clients love it, because they find it helps them to type more accurately and independently. Those clients whose families are not fluent in English love the ability to translate their utterances.



ChooseItMaker3

ChooseIt Maker 3 is a free iPad app that enables teachers who pay a subscription to make up multiple-choice iPad activities and share them with their students. We've been using it to make up quizzes that enable children who cannot speak and who have limited hand skills to demonstrate age-appropriate literacy and general knowledge by choosing from a small number of options.



What the Anne McDonald Centre contributed to Victoria, Australia and the World from July 2018 to June 2019

The Anne McDonald Centre (the Annie Mac) serves people with little or no functional speech, people whose opinions are never consulted, people who cannot even say 'I need help'. Since opening in 1986 (as 'DEAL Communication Centre') the AnnieMac has provided communication therapy to thousands of people without functional speech.

Communication strategies developed at the AnnieMac are used around the world, and have led many government agencies, schools and universities to establish programs in non-speech communication. For a small centre, the AnnieMac makes a large impact. Late in 2018 I was invited to present at an international AAC conference held in Regio Emilia, an educational centre in Italy. The Russian attendees brought copies of **БЕЗМОЛВНЫЙ**, the new Russian translation of *Speechless*, my book about our clients. After the conference I delivered a full-day workshop on AAC to Italian educators.

Hands-on therapy - In 2018-9 we provided ongoing therapy services to 139 individuals with severe communication impairments, 37 of whom were new clients. As well as providing hands-on services to Victorians, AnnieMac staff provided Skype consultancies to interstate and overseas families and professionals.

Research - We are continuing our important research into the appropriate cognitive assessment of people with little or no functional speech. We have now re-assessed more than 100 individuals, mostly school-age children, using standardized non-speech tests. All scored well above their previous scores on Weschler tests that required spoken answers and unimpaired hand skills.

Advocacy - As a result of our research, the Victorian Department of Education (DET) has changed its rules to allow non-speaking children to be assessed with non-speech tests. In July 2018, in conjunction with Communication Rights Australia, DET launched the **Teachers' Toolkit** to inform teachers and schools about resources and appropriate assessments for non-speaking children. Sadly, DET's good intentions have had little practical effect. Segregated schools still ignore students' scores on non-speech tests, saying they are "too good"! DET's efforts to re-educate both Assessments Australia and individual psychologists also appear to have fallen on deaf ears. Last week we received an assessment dated October 2019 which used a Weschler test requiring spoken answers to assess a boy with no speech. The psychologist declared the boy had a 'Severe Intellectual Disability' based on his lack of 'verbal language' and 'fine motor skills', which precluded him from answering any questions. We have already raised this injustice with the Disability Royal Commission and DET.

Information & Education - The Centre staff continue to host students undertaking tertiary courses in disability and deliver presentations on AAC. However, our young adult clients are now taking on a major educational role through their conference presentations and their writings, as the President outlined in her report. Tim Chan's fine book, *Back from the Brink*, is the latest, but we hope not the last, in which a student without speech allows us to enter his world.

Rosemary Crossley

The Anne McDonald Centre – Staff 2018-2019

Director	Dr. Rosemary Crossley, A.M., M.Ed., Ph.D.
Speech Pathologist	Ms. Leslie Zimmerman, B.App.Sci.(Sp.Path.)
Office Manager	Ms Sarah Greene
Research Consultant	Dr. Douglas Biklen, Ph.D., Emeritus Professor

The Human Research Ethics Committee ensures that our continuing research is ethical and meets the NH&MRC guidelines. We are very grateful for their honorary contribution to our work, and for that of our honorary Research Consultant, Dr. Douglas Biklen, and our other volunteers.

Leslie Zimmerman has continued her excellent work with children and young adults who need to use communication aids to augment their speech. Leslie and I would not be able to function without Sarah Greene, who books our appointments, and takes care of the ensuing NDIS paperwork.

Rosemary Crossley, Director

When you've been reading Aesop's Fables and you like writing about dinosaurs, what about combining them?

T Rex made a big nest and laid a very big and heavy egg. It couldn't sit on it because it would break it so it looked for a nanny to keep it warm.

It found a small velociraptor and made a deal. If the velociraptor sat on the egg the T Rex would bring it food.

This worked till the egg hatched and the baby T Rex ate the velociraptor.

Moral: *Great friends are not always good friends.*

T. B.



The Anne McDonald Centre Management Committee 2018-2019

President	Ms Leane Leggo
Vice-President	Ms Jill Johnson
Secretary/Treasurer	Mr Chris Borthwick
Members	Ms Sarah Barton Ms Amanda Ducrou Ms Kaye Gooch Ms Tracey Hayes Mr James Henry Mr David Wood

Nearly all of our Committee have family members who are receiving support from the National Disability Insurance Scheme. Consequently they have personal experience of the difficulties experienced by many of our clients in negotiating the system, attending meetings and handling paperwork. Despite their own commitments they have still found time to provide advice and support and to raise funds for the Centre.,

Our thanks go to them all, especially to our President, Leane Leggo, who is always available when good counsel is needed urgently.

Younger students practice using communication apps to write stories about anything they choose. Surprisingly often, it's dinosaurs, perhaps because the apps let them use big words without needing to spell them!

One day a huge dinosaur saw a little pterodactyl and thought that it would make a good sun hat. It took the little pterodactyl and put it on its head where it did a huge poo before flying away. Now the dinosaur had sunscreen and was happy.
C.F.





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Statement of Financial Performance

1 Jul 2018 - 30 Jun 2019

Accrual mode

2017-8		2018-9
\$20,000	Philanthropic grants	\$25,000
\$95,378	Donations	\$47,095
\$19,070	Seminars & Consulting	\$1,440
\$20,160	NDIS	\$96,638
\$400	Membership	\$600
\$798	Sale of Materials	\$20
\$178	Travel reimbursement	\$0
\$155,984	Total Income	\$170,793
\$180	Bank Fees	
	Communication	
\$0	Equipment	\$191
\$49	Subscriptions/Dues	\$49
\$136	Cleaning	\$139
\$559	Computer Consumables	\$215
\$477	Website	\$664
\$3,484	Insurance	\$4,267
\$435	Security	\$449
	Stationery, Printing &	
\$620	Copying	\$939
\$144	Staff Amenities	\$116
\$9,490	Superannuation	\$9,696
\$99,898	Wages & salaries	\$102,308
\$248	Postage & Freight	\$227
\$22,606	Rent	\$23,500
\$2,149	Telephone	\$2,583
\$196	Water	\$2,269
\$1,932	Electricity & gas	\$2,403
\$22	Travel	\$88
\$92	AGM Cost	\$91
\$20	Sundries	\$87
\$142,737	Total Expenditure	\$150,281
\$13,247	Net Profit	\$20,512

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Statement of Financial Position

Accrual mode

30 Jun 2017-8		30 Jun 2018-9
	Assets	
\$28,008	Cash at bank	\$40,110
\$2,663	Funds on hand	\$3,957
\$7,694	Debtors	\$10,676
\$38,365	Total Assets	\$54,743
	Liabilities	
\$241	Creditors	\$948
\$151	Accruals	\$217
\$3,647	Provision for long service leave	\$1,277
\$4,039	Total liabilities	\$2,442
\$34,326	Net Assets	\$52,301
	General Funds	
\$21,081	Balance	\$31,789
\$10,708	Surplus for year	\$20,512
\$31,789	BALANCE	\$52,301

Treasurer's Statement

In my opinion the attached Income and Expenditure Statement gives a true and fair account of the results for the year ended 30 June 2019 and the Statement of Financial Position gives a true and fair view of the state of affairs at that date.

Chris Borthwick
Treasurer
8 November 2019

