

DEAL Committee of Management President's Report July 2008 - June 2009

I am pleased to present the 2008 - 2009 Annual Report and audited accounts of DEAL Communication Centre Inc.

A special highlight of the year was Anne McDonald's receipt of the 2008 National Disability Award for Personal Achievement. On behalf of the Committee of Management I congratulate Anne and to acknowledge her enormous contribution to those without speech.

This year DEAL extended its important work of providing services to people with severe communication impairments, both locally and internationally. It was a very busy year as an increase of more than 50% in overall client numbers was accompanied by vastly increased demands for support and advocacy for Deal's school-age clients. Fortunately we were assisted in meeting this need by a generous grant from the Newman's Own Foundation.

As well as continuing to provide services to our many clients through individual appointments, DEAL expanded its training of local and overseas professionals. A number of local speech pathology students and German and Italian interns spent time at DEAL as well as a visiting professor from Osaka University. DEAL also received funding from the Australia-China Council of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to provide resources and training in non-speech communication to parents, teachers and therapists in Shanghai. DEAL's partner institutions in this project are the Shanghai University of Traditional Chinese Medicine, and Putuo and Quyang Hospitals. A more detailed account of this project is included in the Annual Report.

As you can see from *What DEAL Contributed...in 2008-9*, DEAL continues to be involved in research, and the staff and committee members delivered many presentations on aspects of augmentative communication at national and international conferences.

Over the years DEAL has been fortunate in receiving support from many charitable foundations and private donors. This year one grant deserves special mention. In November 2008, the Sidney Myer Fund and the Myer Foundation respectively celebrated their 75th and 50th anniversaries by establishing a Commemorative Grants Program. As part of this program 37 not-for-profit organizations were provided with unsolicited grants to develop their strengths and improve their viability in a project called Celebrating Our Partners. DEAL is proud to have been selected to receive one of these grants, which is currently being used to produce instructional videotapes and make our website more informative and user-friendly.

During 2008-9 DEAL also received generous assistance from the Singer Foundation, the Pratt Foundation, the Lady Mayoress's Fund, and the James Kirby, Sentinel and Collier Charitable Foundations and several anonymous benefactors. On behalf of DEAL I would like to thank them all, as well as to DEAL's many kind individual supporters, including those who contributed to our Clayton's Tea Party. Your generosity has enabled DEAL to continue providing free communication therapy to people who need it.

On behalf of the Committee of Management I would like to thank the DEAL staff for their hard work, skills, support and loyalty. They have continued to provide services of the very highest standard.

Finally, I wish to thank all the members of the Committee of Management for their support and enthusiasm during my time as President.

Amanda Ducrou, President, DEAL Committee of Management