

# The Can:Do 4Kids Connection

Winter 2022

Welcome to the winter edition of the Can:Do 4Kids Connection. We hope that you are keeping safe and well, especially in these colder months, and look forward to sharing our latest updates with you. So, grab your favourite blanket and sit down with a warm coffee, tea or hot chocolate and enjoy the latest news and information from Can:Do 4Kids.

## In this edition

- Farewell, Heidi
- Augmentative and Alternative Approach to Communication
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- Staff Profile

## Farewell, Heidi.

**Heidi Limareff, the Can:Do Group Chief Executive tendered her resignation and is stepping down from her role in August.**

Hired by The Royal South Australian Deaf Society (RSADS) in 2005 for her audiological and business skills and knowledge, Heidi started a social enterprise audiology business now called Can:Do Hearing. From a one clinician, one support person team, Heidi grew that business to have a footprint around metropolitan Adelaide running with up to 20 staff.

After The Deaf Society merged with Townsend House in 2007, Heidi joined the leadership team as the Manager of Can:Do Hearing. After achieving ongoing success within this role, she was offered and accepted the position of General Manager of Client Services for Deaf Can:Do and Can:Do 4Kids. Heidi then won the role of Group Chief Executive in Dec 2017.

During her time as a leader in the Can:Do Group she lead the transition of two organisations from block funding onto the NDIS, won a national award for positive change to corporate culture, built a state of the art therapy site at Can:Do South, merged with the Cora Barclay Centre and worked closely with staff, making our way safely through the current covid-19 pandemic. Heidi also lead us through the successful transition of Deaf Can:Do services over to the Deaf-lead Deaf Connect earlier this year.

The passion Heidi has for the organisation comes directly from the clients and families that come through our doors every day. Heidi has worked with staff, and together, Can:Do Group grew from servicing around 3000 people a year through our various business units to up to 10,000 a year. The impact that we make in the lives of children, families and the South Australian community has always been held to a high standard under Heidi's leadership.

As she leaves, Heidi has paid tribute to fellow staff and the Board for the many opportunities afforded to her during her time with the Group. Heidi jokingly says she has grown up at Can:Do – and if she, hasn't her two children, both born at the start of her time here, certainly have! The Board has asked Michael Piffel to step into the Acting Chief Executive role whilst they commence a national recruitment campaign for a new Chief Executive.

We thank Heidi for her amazing leadership and commitment to our mission, and wish her all the best for her next adventure.



*It's a can do future*

# Augmentative and Alternative Approach to Communication (AAC)

The improvements in technology have allowed us to gain more information than ever before, right at our fingertips. But, did you know that technology can be used to support a child's language development? Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) is a form of assistive technology that can benefit people with sensory needs of all ages by promoting independence, providing greater access to communication, and increasing social interactions.

Children with additional sensory needs can have a tough time communicating or understanding communication. Communication and language can sometimes be hard for them even after they've tried traditional development programs.

Therefore, they might need a different way to develop communication, or they might benefit from a range of options for communicating and understanding communication, including speech, gestures or writing.

This is where an AAC approach to learning can help. AAC systems, which can be used on devices such as computers, tablets and phones allow the pairing of tasks, actions, objects or concepts with pictures or hand signs. For example, an apple is paired with the image of an apple. The spoken word for the task, action, object or concept is used at the same time as the picture.

AAC systems can be an effective way for children to learn and use early words. That's because children remember the speech sounds and the visual image of the object, picture or hand sign that's paired with the word. This is likely to help children who respond best to information that's presented visually.

AAC systems can also improve children's understanding of words. This is because speech on its own can be very quick, whereas a visual image lasts longer and often stays still, giving children more time to understand the information.

Also, people tend to slow down when they're using visual aids or hand signs. For example, they slow down to recall a specific hand sign, find the right picture, or ensure the child has seen the whole message. This all gives children more time to understand the information and helps children avoid information overload.



## AAC Continued...

As an example of how effective AAC approaches can be, recently, Can:Do kid, Brianna was given a new iPad that included the AAC app 'TD Snap'. Since that time she has made leaps and bounds with her communication. For the first time, she is now able to initiate conversations, request, comment, express when she is hurt, ask questions, show humour and more! Her parents have commented that she is now able to express her personality and the relationship has grown stronger than ever.

If you would like to learn more about AAC, speak to your child's therapist or email us at [info@cando4kids.com.au](mailto:info@cando4kids.com.au)

## Baristas in the Making

In late April, we introduced our new Barista Come N Try sessions at our Noarlunga centre. The group program has been designed to provide a great way for our youth to develop the skills needed for future employment, while having plenty of fun.

Guided by an occupational therapist, the session was run by a trained, real-life barista who gave an insightful presentation about what happens before the café doors open and what it's like to work as a barista in a café. However, afterwards was when the real fun began! Those involved got hands-on experience operating a commercial grade, professional coffee machine at the Barista

Training Area and learned about the art of coffee making, including:

- The difference between a latte, espresso, macchiato and cappuccino
- How to make frothy milk until it is silky smooth
- How to pour a heart shape with milk foam
- How to spot the signs of a well-made coffee

The smiles on the youths' faces – and the milk moustaches – proved that the session was a resounding success. We can't wait for the next one!



Would you like to learn more about the Barista Come N Try sessions or what other school holiday groups we provide? Email [CD4K.groups@cando4kids.com.au](mailto:CD4K.groups@cando4kids.com.au) to join the mailing list.

## Staff Profile – Jasmine

### What is your role at Can:Do 4Kids? How long have you been a part of the team?

I began working at Can:Do 4Kids in 2017 as a speech pathology student on placement. I commenced working as a certified speech pathologist in early 2018 after I had graduated.

### Tell us about your journey towards becoming a Speech Pathologist?

After school I decided to study a Bachelor of Speech Pathology as it included voice therapy, which is a special interest of mine. I soon found out that this was just one small part of a very broad degree. I had my final year placement at Can:Do 4Kids and by that time I knew that I wanted to work in a company that specialised in supporting people with sensory needs.

### What is the best part about your day?

The best part of my day is getting back to the office to share client successes with the team!

### What do you love about working for Can:Do 4Kids?

Can:Do 4Kids focuses on embedding therapy into a child's daily routine. This is when I could upskill a parent to include speech and language stimulation into the "getting dressed" routine, for example. I love working closely with caregivers as I can upskill them to take on the therapist's role on the days I don't visit.

### What are some of your hobbies/interests outside of work?

I have many hobbies outside of work and love keeping busy. I like to sing for events, go to pilates, play the piano, guitar and ukulele.



### Contact us

We would love to hear from you. For further information about our services and to discuss your child's needs please contact us on

Phone: (08) 8100 8200

Email: [CD4K.bookings@candogroup.com.au](mailto:CD4K.bookings@candogroup.com.au)

Web: [cando4kids.com.au](http://cando4kids.com.au)

Post: 59-61 Grange Road, Welland SA 5007

### Stay up to date

Social Media is a great way to stay up to date with what is happening at Can:Do 4Kids. Don't forget to join our private Facebook group CanDo Connection.



[facebook.com/CanDo4Kids](https://www.facebook.com/CanDo4Kids)

[facebook.com/groups/CanDoConnection](https://www.facebook.com/groups/CanDoConnection)



[twitter.com/CanDo4Kids](https://twitter.com/CanDo4Kids)

Can:Do  
4Kids



Loud Shirt Day



Wear it loud for kids with hearing loss

FRIDAY 21 OCTOBER

[loudshirtday.com.au](http://loudshirtday.com.au)

We hope you've enjoyed catching up with the latest Can:Do 4Kids news. Please let us know if you have any questions, or any ideas for topics you'd like to learn more about.