



Speech by

Hon. PETER BEATTIE

MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL

Hansard Wednesday, 19 May 2004

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Hear and Say Centre

Hon. P.D. BEATTIE (Brisbane Central—ALP) (Premier and Minister for Trade) (9.42 a.m.): I am delighted today to detail that the state's deaf children will be better off. The state government will fund the Hear and Say Centre for Deaf Children with annual recurrent funding of \$270,000. This is a massive and deserved lift from the present \$30,000 a year. I rang those at the centre this morning and they were delighted. This money will be used to support its education program.

The funding will be administered through the Department of Education and the Arts. This is great news for the centre and also for the deaf community. Hear and Say provides intervention for deaf children known as auditory verbal therapy—AVT. AVT extends from traditional methods of assisting deaf children to learn to speak through listening—often by embracing new technologies which have not always been accepted in the deaf community, like cochlear implants.

This has a special link in integrating listening into the home and preschool environment. Today's funding is also recognition of the hard work of Hear and Say Centre founders and, in particular, clinical director, Dimity Dornan. Dimity was named the 2003 Queensland Australian of the Year for her work with children who are deaf.

For most of us, deafness is an issue we hope does not come our way—for us personally or for our children—but it is obvious when it does it is a time of needing support and care and also caring people. To Dimity and those caring people involved we hope this funding will assist in keeping up the good work. I know that the Minister for Public Works has something further to say about this later.