

Power, Energy and Drive – Makaton NSW 2004-2008

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Summary

- In NSW, since 2004, there has been a sharp increase in the numbers of Key Word Sign (KWS) workshops and people accredited to facilitate them. An analysis of the 2004-2008 data shows an increase in workshops, locations and Presenters, which highlights the increasing capacity of NSW to provide support for those who use KWS.

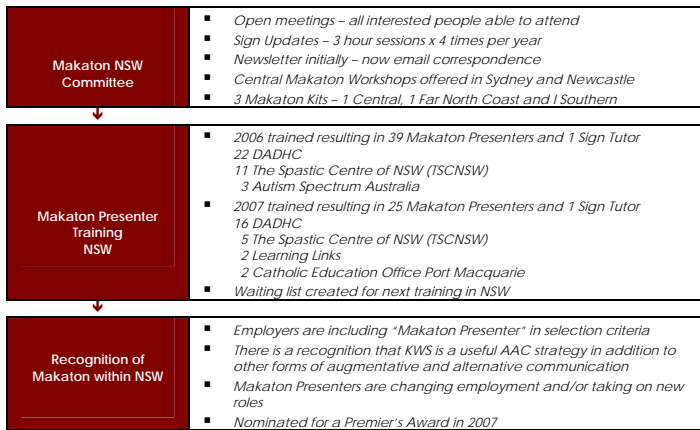
Background

- Makaton NSW was formed in 2001 in response to a growing community need to co-ordinate support services in the area of sign and gesture for people with disabilities.
- Makaton NSW acknowledges that the use of KWS and natural gesture is an unaided form of augmentative and alternative communication (AAC). Makaton NSW Presenters are specialists in AAC, and have trained to be skilled in the use of KWS and delivery of KWS workshops.
- The key objectives of Makaton NSW is to:
 - Provide Basic Makaton Workshops in local communities throughout NSW;
 - Provide Makaton Presenter Training (Train the Trainer) for NSW;
 - Provide ongoing continuing education for Makaton Presenters and interested others; and
 - Provide and maintain the Makaton resource kits.
- At the AGOSCI 2005 conference it was hoped that Key Word Signing (KWS) would no longer be considered "nice, different or unusual" in NSW. Makaton NSW co-ordination had been based at the Statewide Behaviour Intervention Service (SBIS), part of the Department of Ageing, Disability and Home Care (DADHC) since 2004 and interest in KWS was growing, especially for inclusion in positive behaviour support for clients with an intellectual disability. Since that conference there have been significant changes to Makaton NSW.

Power

Charging the batteries...

- In 2004 there were 21 Makaton Presenters running workshops within NSW and the ACT.
- They were a mix of Speech Pathologists, Special Education Specialists, private consultants and two staff working for an organization providing services for adults with an intellectual disability.
- Three of the Makaton Presenters were employed by DADHC.
- The Makaton NSW Committee recognised that there was potential for growth in the number of workshops held within NSW.
- Sign Updates were offered four times per year. However, only in metropolitan Sydney. These are provided to enable Makaton Presenters to check their sign production fluency, accuracy and speed. They are vital for networking and sharing of information.
- During 2006 DADHC provided 17 Makaton Kits for use within NSW. These kits are located in Metropolitan and Regional locations.
- During 2006 and 2007 Makaton Presenter Training events were conducted. Makaton NSW provided the training accredited by Makaton Australia in partnership with DADHC, The Spastic Centre of NSW and Autism Spectrum Australia (ASPECT). Participants were selected according to their employer, experience using AAC and their workplace location. A discounted registration fee was offered to participants who were willing to hold workshops as part of their job workload. Partnerships were sought within government and non-government agencies to (1) release staff for training in Sydney for 3.5 days, (2) allow staff to work on a weekend and (3) be supervised within the workplace by their supervisors/managers, who were Makaton Presenters.
- By the end of 2008 there were 80 Makaton Presenters in NSW. The majority were able to run workshops as part of their job.
- Workshops are held and interested people are asked to assist as Sign Tutors. This has steadily grown in number since 2004 and in 2008 there were 18 people assisting in a Sign Tutor role.
- A waiting list for Makaton Presenter Training was established. There are 33 people on the list.



Energy

Getting things running...

- An analysis of the workshops run during the period 2004-2008 highlights the growing capacity within NSW.
- Makaton Presenters have changed employment and continued to conduct workshops in their new roles.
- Some Makaton Presenters have moved into management roles and are supporting their staff to use KWS.

Location of Makaton Basic Workshops per Year

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Metropolitan	Bowral Lidcombe Parramatta Peakhurst Strathfield Sydney Telopea Toongabbie	Alexandria Hornsby Forestville Lidcombe Sydney	Bankstown Baulkham Hills Campbelltown Carlingford Chatswood Fairfield Hornsby Hurstville Mittagong Parramatta Penrith Parramatta Sydney Westmead	Allambi Heights Belrose Brunswick Canley Vale Chatswood Fairfield Hornsby Nepean North Ryde Parramatta Peakhurst Penrith Parramatta Westmead	Allambi Heights Burwood Campbelltown Castle Hill Chatswood Eastwood Fairfield Hornsby Lidcombe Mt Pritchard Penrith Penrith Parramatta Ryde Sutherland Sydney Westmead
Rural / Regional	Bega Goulburn Grafton Lismore Mangrove Mountain Newcastle Ourimbah Tumut Wagga Wagga Canberra, ACT	Bega Cobargo Eden Newcastle Ourimbah Queanbeyan Tamworth Wollongong Yamba Yarran Canberra, ACT	Albury Armidale Ballina Bathurst Bega Coffs Harbour Dapto East Maitland Finlay Gosford Goulburn Grafton Griffith Newcastle Orange Ourimbah Port Macquarie Wagga Wagga Yamba Canberra, ACT	Albury Armidale Bega Broken Hill Brunswick Heads Coffs Harbour Cooma Deniliquin Dubbo Gosford Goulburn Grafton Griffith Lismore Maryville Moree Morisset Narrabri Newcastle Nowra Orange Ourimbah Peat Island Port Macquarie Queanbeyan Stockton Tamworth Temora Tumut Wollongong Wymong Young Canberra, ACT	Albury Ballina Bega Berkley Vale Bombala Bourke Brewarrina Broken Hill Cobar Coffs Harbour Coonabarabran Coonamble Dubbo Fairy Meadow Gosford Grafton Inverell Morisset Mudgee Newcastle Niagara Park Nowra Orange Ourimbah Peat Island Port Macquarie Queanbeyan Stockton Wagga Wagga Warren Werrington Wollongong Yass Canberra, ACT
TOTAL	22	24	89	119	110

Drive

Keeping on track and moving forward...

Makaton NSW Survey November 2008

- 80 emailed and 40 responded – 50% return rate
- Responses to questionnaire collated by Kim McLellan, Makaton Australia.

Workshops

- 32 people present Basic Workshops more than 2-3 times per year – some running 7-10 workshops.
- 31 people source their workshops through their employment
- 36 have easy access to resources, such as a Makaton Kit
- 37 feel very confident or extremely confident in conducting a Makaton Basic Workshop
- 37 feel very confident or extremely confident in training with another Presenter

Makaton NSW Committee

- 38 people feel very supported or extremely supported by the Makaton NSW Committee
- 17 people would take on a role within the Makaton NSW Committee

- Support for Makaton Presenters in Rural and Regional centres – e.g.: more Sign Updates, information and handouts, videos on the web, Skype

- Wish to have further workshops - Refresher and Advanced

Sign Updates

- Not enough support for Rural and Regional Makaton Presenters, too Sydney based
- Localised networks run by an experienced Makaton Presenter - maybe Skype or webinar?
- Some people want to be extended further, others reassured and others just like to network
- The session and emailed notes on Deaf/Blind Communication Method well received
- 25 people would be keen to attend a Sign Update attached to a conference

Networking

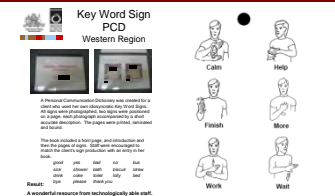
- 12 people are able to network with other Makaton Presenters daily
- 25 people are able to network with other Makaton Presenters once a fortnight

Professional Development

- 32 people thought that Makaton NSW should offer Professional Development
- Suggested topics: CALD, research, advanced workshop content, update on learning styles, teaching strategies, signing fluency, sign modification, evidence based practice for KWS and specific populations, ideas for maintaining signing skills, parent/carer forums, guest speakers, and sharing information via case presentations

Bright Sparks Showing innovation...

- Personal Communication Dictionaries with an individual's sign production and hand shape are common now in NSW.
- 6 Sign + Cards – a memory aid that is inexpensive, durable and easily accessible. Light blue plastic cards the size of a credit card were attached to lanyard or key rings.
- CALD - Basic Workshops in Vietnamese and Cantonese
- Workshops for Siblings
- Drop in Signing Sessions – MAKPrac or Makaton coffee mornings.
- Signing Stars – a sign choir, based at the Hunter Residences (Stockton Centre) is comprised of clients with disabilities, staff, foster grandparents and volunteers who practice together regularly.
- Learning Links Families Talk Makaton <http://www.learninglinks.org.au/pdf/Families%20talk%20Makaton%20-%20Formatted.pdf>



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