



Therese Kelly, pictured with Lachlan, has been nominated for an award for helping deaf children speak. Picture: JOANNA FINCHAM N15WH701

Building speech ability for deaf

FOR audiologist Therese Kelly, work is about a lot more than filling in the hours between 9am and 5pm. "I have a passion for the cause," she said. Ms Kelly helps deaf children learn to speak at Blackburn charity, Taralye. "It is satisfying to see children progress; our goal is for every child with hearing loss to start school with age-appropriate speech," Ms Kelly said. She has been working at Taralye - which also runs

hearing tests for children, a kindergarten and a children's book club - since 1991. The centre was founded in 1968 by a group of parents and hearing professionals who wanted deaf children to have access to a mainstream education. Ms Kelly said the key to the organisation's success had been its emphasis on family and community. "Good family relationships are very important," she said. "We are only with the children for such a limited

time each week, so we rely on the family to put in the bulk of the work." Speech pathologists and audiologists work one-to-one with children. The reward, Ms Kelly said, was seeing the students gain speech. "Communication is such an important part of life," she said. Ms Kelly has been nominated for IGA's Unsung Heroes competition, which recognises people who make important contributions to their local community.

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