MEDIA RELEASE
For immediate release

CAP THAT! HELPS AUSTRALIAN TEACHERS BOOST LITERACY AND INCLUSION WITH CAPTIONS

In the lead-up to National Literacy and Numeracy Week, Media Access Australia has today launched cap that!, a new campaign asking teachers Australia-wide to turn on captions in the classroom to boost literacy and inclusion for students.

With proven benefits for all students, captions - subtitles that include speech and other sounds - are a tool already available on many DVDs, online videos and TV programs used in the classroom. By simply turning captions on, teachers can help bridge the gap for Deaf and hearing impaired students, ESL students, struggling readers and students with learning disabilities, while benefiting the whole class.

Media Access Australia CEO Alex Varley said, “Captions help all students link together spoken and written language and improve their comprehension and vocabulary. Australian teachers have a great opportunity to make a very real difference for their students.”

Research shows that while captions are essential for hearing impaired children, these students will often not ask for captions for fear of being singled out.

“What can really become just a simple habit for a teacher could mean the difference between inclusion and exclusion for some students,” said Varley.

The cap that! website provides downloadable teaching resources such as lesson plans and activity sheets that incorporate captions, and the resources for educators to be informed about what captions are, how to find captioned resources and how to turn on captions on TV, DVDs and online videos.

By signing up to cap that! news alerts, teachers, librarians and principals can keep up-to-date with developments in access to education and captioning, when new resources are added to the site and cap that! progress around Australia.

Educators also have the chance to win 1 of 8 ClickView 2 subscriptions for schools, and captioned entertainment DVDs and cinema passes for teachers, by sharing their ideas about using captions in the classroom.

Visit www.capthat.com.au to get involved and help improve learning outcomes for your students.

cap that! is proudly sponsored by Australian Communication Exchange, with major prize sponsor ClickView and supporting prize sponsors Hoyts, Event Cinemas, 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment and Sony Pictures Home Entertainment.

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CAP THAT! FACTS AND STATS

- For Deaf or hearing impaired students, listening, even with hearing aids, implants or similar devices, can still be difficult, tiring and stressful, particularly over long periods. Background noise and conversations also reduce the effectiveness of these devices.
- Our research shows that hearing impaired students will generally not ask for captions when they need them to avoid embarrassment.
- 83% of children with a significant hearing loss attend mainstream schools.
- Research shows captions can improve ESL students’ listening and reading comprehension, vocabulary acquisition and word recognition.
- There are over 600,000 non-English speaking background students in Australia.
- Captions can help all children, including those with learning disabilities, to read by linking written words to sounds and images, boosting literacy and general comprehension skills.
- Captions differ from subtitles because they also describe important sounds or music in text format.

ABOUT MEDIA ACCESS AUSTRALIA

*We believe that all Australians have the right to access all forms of media and information, through technology, so they can participate fully in society.*

Media Access Australia is Australia’s only independent not-for-profit organisation devoted to increasing access to media for people with disabilities.

*At the core of our work is the understanding that exclusion from mainstream audiovisual media has profound effects on educational outcomes, workforce participation and social inclusion.*

Access to media through technology empowers people to be independent, gain knowledge, make their own choices, and be active members of our society.

OUR EXPERTISE

We promote inclusion by providing expert knowledge and advice on existing and emerging mainstream technologies to government, industry, educators, consumer organisations and individuals.

We demonstrate how media accessibility can be improved in practical ways, by piloting innovative ideas and major projects.

We work as a catalyst for change in areas of access that include television, DVD, cinema, the arts, education, computing and the Internet, with a primary focus on people who are Deaf or hearing impaired or blind or vision impaired.

We seek to improve national and international Internet accessibility standards as a member of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), an international online community where the general public and organisations work together to develop web standards.

We are a national organisation, based in Sydney, with a satellite office in Perth.