



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **Carine mum speaks out for Deafblind Awareness Week**

Deafblind Awareness Week is held internationally each year to celebrate Helen Keller's birthday on 27 June.

This year, Carine parents Corrina and Robin Parsons are keen to help Senses Foundation raise awareness of this unique and complex disability by talking about their own experiences.

Their daughter, Isobel (4), was born with lissencephaly which is commonly known as 'smooth brain'.

It took a full year for doctors to diagnose her condition, which includes cortical vision impairment, epilepsy, motor neurone disorder and cerebral palsy.

While this may sound challenging, Corrina says Isobel is a joyful, spirited and determined little girl who makes the most of life.

"The most challenging aspect of having Isobel isn't Isobel herself," explains Corrina. "She is a joy to have around.

"The greatest challenges come from all the other things we have to do to make Isobel's life as easy as possible, such as putting in funding applications for special equipment, accessing therapy services and making sure she has every opportunity to enjoy life to the full."

Senses Foundation has been providing a full complement of professional services to Isobel and her family since her second birthday.

She sees the Foundation's physiotherapist, occupational therapist and speech therapist regularly to assist her physical development.

Corrina also takes Isobel to Senses' Friday morning playgroup which is led by two members of the therapy team.

"Isobel loves the playgroup because she gets to play with other children in a relaxed atmosphere," says Corrina.

"It's great for the parents as well because we can talk to other parents in similar situations and share vital information. We can also have a casual discussion with a member of the therapy team about any issues we may want to raise."



Corrina and Robin have also recently begun accessing respite services for Isobel, giving them precious time to spend together and with their older son, Thomas (6).

“Senses has a consistent, family-centred approach and they are hands-on in everything,” says Corrina.

“Each year we sit down with the team and devise an Individual Family Plan, which enables us to review our progress and set goals for the next year. Knowing we are in the hands of such a professional team gives us such incredible confidence.”

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### **About Senses Foundation**

Senses Foundation had its origins 110 years ago as the Royal WA Institute for the Blind, then amalgamated with the WA Deafblind Association in 2001 to become Senses Foundation Inc. The Foundation is a charitable, not for profit organisation providing disability support services to people of all ages throughout Western Australia. Its unique speciality is the provision of services to people who are deafblind.