

# SPICE

## Helping people connect

LEE CONSTABLE

**M**AKE eye contact, be a good listener and find a common ground.

While these things are often the cornerstones of good communication, without hearing how do you talk to your loved ones?

How do you express yourself?

The consequences of hearing difficulties can be life-altering and can lead to depression, anxiety and social withdrawal.

For audiologist Jodie Miles, having an impact on someone's health and wellbeing is why she is passionate about helping children and adults to hear.

"Your hearing is your connection to loved ones and the world," she said.



A lot of my clients have become friends. They need to trust you.

— Jodie Miles

"My life's work is to maintain and enhance that connection."

Mrs Miles knew from a young age that she wanted to work in a profession where she could help people.

"I love that connection you can have with someone."

"I'm probably quite an introvert myself. I like to have deep connections, so when I see people being isolated (by hearing difficulties) I can help them."

"It feels good to know I've done that," she said.

Mrs Miles studied a Bachelor of Speech Pathology and a Masters of Audiology at the University of Queensland in Brisbane.

While she was studying she fell in love with a Mackay boy and would often visit the region during her uni holidays.

"I fell in love with Mackay. I loved the place. The relaxed lifestyle and the friendly people," she said.

The couple decided to settle in Mackay and Mrs Miles worked at several audio clinics around the city.

She found that her

customers were not really getting the chance to develop a relationship with their audiologist, and would often see a different audiologist each time they visited.

"A lot of my clients have become friends," she said.

"They need to trust you.

"I give my clients plenty of time."

"The biggest indicator of successful treatment is how motivated they are."

With 10 years of experience behind her, Mrs Miles opened her own clinic, Mackay Hearing, three weeks ago at Ooralea GP Superclinic.

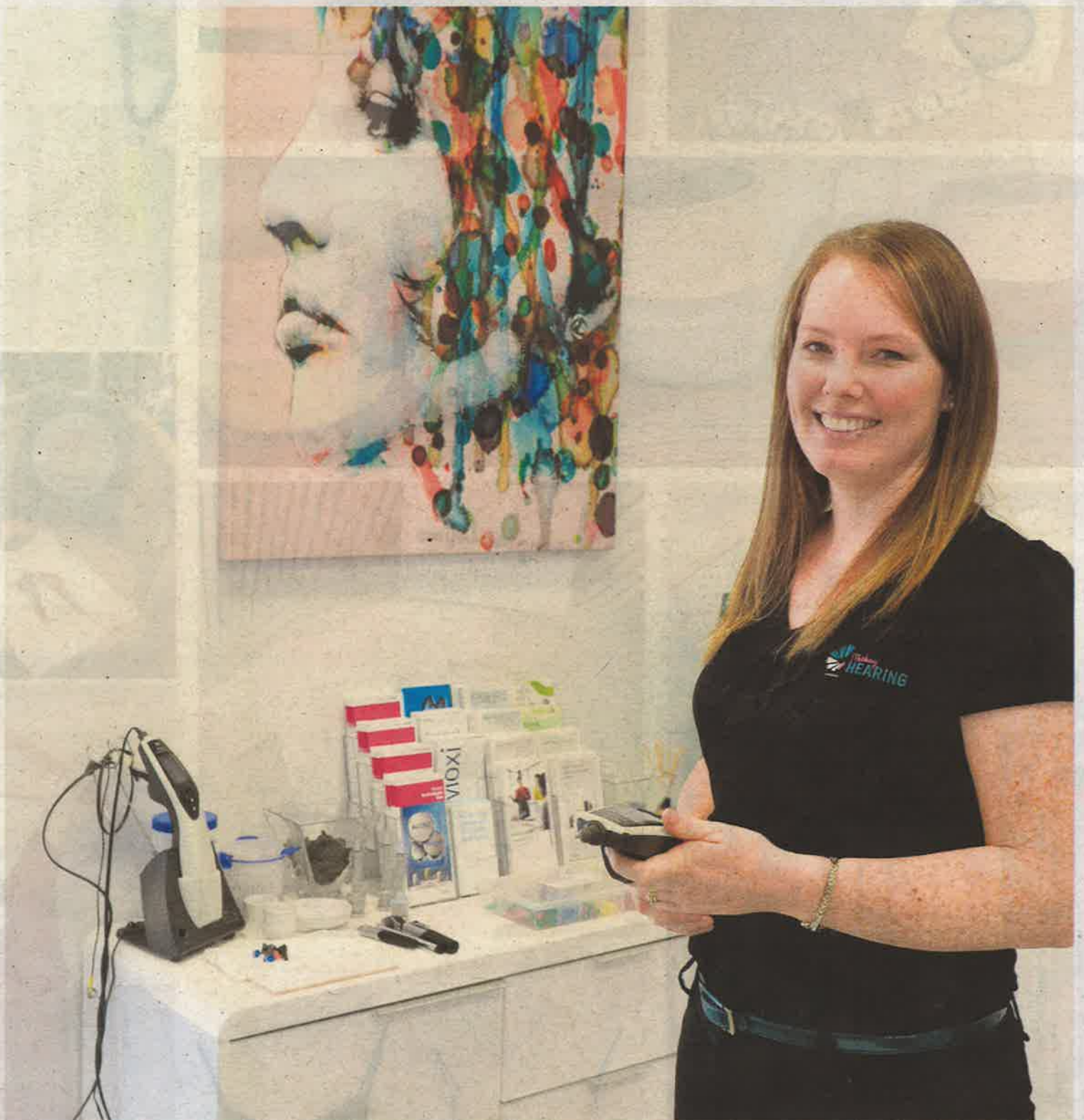
"Continuity of service and care is our main focus," she said.

"I want to improve hearing health in our region and give local people the attention and care they need."

"We work with adults and kids and we are approved to offer free

services to pensioners and veterans," Mrs Miles said.

Hearing tests begin shortly after birth and Mrs Miles also does workplace testing, and works with schools and teachers to develop strategies for students with hearing difficulties.



**SOUND BITE:** Audiologist Jodie Miles helps adults and children get the best out of life by helping them hear the words of loved ones and connecting them to their families and the world. PHOTO: LEE CONSTABLE