



Anna Seymour and Elvin Lam reach lavington's Lyle Taylor, 12. Picture: Ben Eyles

Deaf find dance groove

BY JOHN CONROY

DEAF and hearing-impaired Border students got the lowdown on hip-hop moves from a group of professional, and deaf, dancers.

Deaf Can Dance, a project by Arts Access Victoria's Deaf Arts Network, hosted the hip-hop workshop for Border youth at the Albury-Wodonga Dance Studio in Townsend Street, Albury, last week.

Dance teacher Ross Onley Zerkel said the workshop would help give students the awareness that they can achieve anything.

"We want to show people that deaf people can do anything in life," he said.

Deaf Can Dance formed in 2008 after

a group of six deaf people came together to create the unique and award-winning dance theatre performance, called *Sound of Silence* that performed to sell-out audiences at the Melbourne Fringe Festival.

Part of Deaf Can Dance Company's mission is to assist with the prevention of mental health issues about 800,000 people with a hearing loss experience from chronic isolation to depression.

"It is really exciting to have such accomplished performers in our region," Deafaccess Victoria Hume co-ordinator Julie Kiroloch said.

Ms Kiroloch said the workshops provided a grounding for deaf and hearing-impaired youth to join in a community dance class or even perhaps perform with Deaf Can Dance in their shows.