

25 years of making futures bright



BC Family Hearing Resource Society

Reaching Out

A Newsletter from the BC FAMILY HEARING RESOURCE CENTRE for families with deaf and hard of hearing children throughout BRITISH COLUMBIA.



Winter 2008

A Message from Susan Lane

Dear friends,

This year we are celebrating our twenty-fifth anniversary. For twenty-five years the BC Family Hearing Resource Society has been a leader in providing education, support, and resources to families with young deaf and hard of hearing children and children throughout British Columbia.



Twenty-five years ago there were no programs for deaf and hard of hearing children outside of the city of Vancouver and there were none that offered a range of communication options. We recognized there was no single communication approach that would work successfully for all children. The Elks and Royal Purple worked with us to start a program located in the Fraser Valley that would offer a range of communication options for families. This new program, originally called the Elks Auditory Rehabilitation Centre, consisted of one small room, a part-time speech-language pathologist, and four young children with hearing loss and their families who lived in the Surrey-Langley area.

Today our home is a beautiful state-of-the-art facility built specifically for deaf and hard of hearing children and children with communication difficulties. Over the past two and a half decades our organization, now known as the BC Family Hearing Resource Society, has grown to a staff of nineteen serving children and their families throughout British Columbia. We also operate the Surrey Early Speech and Language Program which serves children in the local area with communication difficulties unrelated to hearing loss.

Within the first five years of our existence we had gained such an excellent reputation for our use of the family centered approach that the BC government asked us to establish advanced professional development workshops for speech-language pathologists and audiologists. These training programs and workshops have continued to be in high demand for over two decades.

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Last year we published a completely revised second edition of our book, *My Turn To Learn: A Communication Guide for Parents of Babies and Young Children with Hearing Loss*. In the near future the family of every new baby identified with a hearing loss in BC will receive a copy of our book. Because of the rave reviews parents and professionals have given this book, the BC government recently provided us with a grant to have *My Turn to Learn* translated into five additional languages: Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Punjabi, Korean, and Farsi/Persian. With these translations this essential information will be accessible to many more families.

As we look back over the past twenty-five years we can be proud of our many accomplishments. We can also look forward to the future with excitement. Additional professional staffs have been hired so that we can increase services to families. Using web-cameras and the internet we are expanding our services to families who live in remote areas. Newborn hearing screening in British Columbia is starting and we will soon be working with babies who are just a few months old. Our staff has been busy developing new training courses to help other professionals in BC get prepared to work with infants with a hearing loss.

The BC Family Hearing Resource Society is getting very close to realizing its dream of becoming a "Centre of Excellence." We provide leadership in our field and have made contributions nationally and internationally through our book and conference presentations. We continually strive for exemplary performance, and provide advanced training to other professionals. This year we have created a new research department and Dr. Noreen Simmons has started conducting research related to effective services for families from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. It is truly amazing to consider what we have accomplished in the past twenty-five years. Just imagine what BC Family Hearing Resource Society will be able to do in the next quarter of a century.

I am leaving to take the position of Provincial Intervention Coordinator with the BC Early Hearing Program. I have loved my work at the centre. I have been so proud to work with such talented, hard working, and caring staff. They are the best you will find anywhere in the world. Over the years it has also been extremely satisfying to work with our many dedicated Board members who have donated their precious time, expertise, and guidance. I want to thank our current Board Executive, Dr. Charles Laszlo, Sally Hurst, and Carol Briner for the many extra hours they spent with us over the past two years. The BC Family Hearing Resource Society would not be able to realize so many of their dreams without the support of these amazing leaders. I have also worked closely with many donors, especially the fine men and women across Canada who belong to the Elks and Royal Purple. They were our partners when we started twenty-five years ago and they are still by our side today.

I believe helping families learn how to help their own children communicate effectively is one of the most important jobs in the world. Our first graduates from the 1980's are now adults and it has been my pleasure to continue to know and learn from so many of them and their families. I have been amazed by the strength, love, courage, and perseverance of these families. In recent years I have attended graduations, graduation parties, wedding showers and weddings and I have even held young babies born to some of our graduates. My life has been made so much richer by knowing these remarkable families.

Susan Lane, M.A., (CCC-SLP)
Executive Director

Accreditation Update

Accreditation -- What's It All About?

By Ellen Peterson,
Acting Executive Director, Business & Resource Development Manger

If you've been around the BCFHRS lately you may have heard the buzz - Accreditation is coming, Accreditation is coming! You may be wondering -- Why are staff running around tidying up, straightening pictures, re-organizing offices? What's this accreditation thing all about? What impact does it have on my child and the services we receive?

Across the province and around the world, organizations that provide services to children and families are embracing accreditation for their programs. Achieving accreditation is now a requirement from our provincial funder to ensure that provincial money is spent on the best possible programming for our children. Being accredited demonstrates that we comply with the highest possible internationally accepted standards of organizational integrity and service provision.

Who Is the Accrediting Body?

BCFHRS has chosen to be accredited through CARF, an international non-profit organization based in Tucson, Arizona with a Canadian office in Edmonton. Since 1966 CARF has assisted organizations like ours, throughout Canada and the United States, in achieving and maintaining top-notch programming for our clients and a first-rate working environment for our staff.

What Does Accreditation Involve?

We completed our first Accreditation Survey at BCFHRS in 2005. To prepare for that survey, we reviewed policy, developed surveys, refined outcomes measurements, created file review protocols, and completed dozens of other small and large tasks aimed at demonstrating our compliance with the standards. When we felt we were ready, we invited CARF to conduct a survey. The result was CARF's highest rating: a three-year accreditation. As it has been almost three years now, we are close to our second survey.

When's The Next Survey? What Will Happen?

Our next CARF survey is scheduled for the Spring of 2008. At that time a team of surveyors will be sent by CARF to inspect our facilities, review our policies and processes, and interview staff, clients, parents, our Board, our funders, and anyone else they can schedule in. Their purpose is to ensure that we do, in fact, comply with the standards. The successful outcome will be another three-year accreditation and the beginning of a new accreditation cycle.

Praise from CARF

Here are some things the Surveyors said about us in 2005:

"This facility is a model for the population it serves."

"The assistive technology devices and the techniques reflect excellence in the delivery of services and are exceptional in including cutting-edge attention to the advancements of the field."

How Can I Learn More?

- Visit the CARF website www.carf.org OR www.carfcanada.ca
- Visit the BC Government website www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/accreditation
- Ask staff

So don't be surprised when you see buzzing around the Centre. We're doing everything we can to get ready for our big week in the Spring! Oh, and would you mind straightening that picture over there? Ah, thanks!

25 Years of Making A Difference

Annual General Meeting Highlights

by Ellen Peterson

Acting Executive Director; Business & Resource Development Manager

The BC Family Hearing Resource Society's Annual General Meeting was held on November 28th. This year's meeting focused on celebrating our Executive Director, Susan Lane, and the society's 25 years of 'making futures bright'. The building was bursting with people as many current and past families joined us for this significant event. We acknowledged our wonderful donors by lighting up the Centre with a rooftop display.



Outgoing Board of Director's president, Dr. Charles Laszlo, was recognized for his dedication to our program, with a presentation of a commemorative plaque on behalf of our staff and board of directors. We also welcomed our new incoming Board President, Sally Hurst.



Past parent, Kim Sanderson, emceed a tribute to Susan, with a touching slide show of her time at our Centre. Surprise special guests included members of Susan's family.



Walking for Bright Futures – Save this Date

It's that time again! Lace up your walking/running shoes and join us on **May 25** for the **Elks and Royal Purple Annual Walk-a-thon**. The walk site is **Campbell Valley Regional Park** once again. Watch for more details coming soon.

25 Years of Making A Difference continued

In Appreciation of our Supporters

Since our last issue, the following individuals and organizations have continued to make a difference in the lives of our children and their families by generously donating to our Centre either monetarily or through goods and services.



Elks & Royal Purple Fund for Children

\$120,000 annually!



Elks

- Alberni Valley
- Burnaby
- Kelowna
- Prince George
- Revelstoke
- Salmon Arm
- Trail

Royal Purple

- Aldergrove
- Chilliwack
- Fort Nelson
- Kelowna
- Lillooet
- Terrace
- Vernon
- Victoria

Individuals & Organizations

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|
| • Lori Bell | • Kristofer & Jasmina Hansen | • Bob & Lynn Moore |
| • Valmore & Catherine Berry | • Grant & Gudrun Hiemstra | • Open Purse Foundation |
| • Chris & Carol Briner | • Ben & Amo Ho | • Balwinder & Gurpreet Parhar |
| • Bobbie Burkowski | • Casey Ho | • Francisco Pereira |
| • Sandra Burton & Blayne Wazney | • Rosalind Ho | • Peterson Family |
| • Drs. Graham & Cicely Bryce | • James & Sally Hurst | • Henry & Rose Pierce |
| • Caldor Foundation | • i-worx | • Anne Prymak |
| • Margie Colclough | • Joan Ford Charitable Society | • Queen Alexandra Centre |
| • Cathy & Alec Cruickshank | • John Hardie Mitchell Family Foundation | • Jim & Robyn Sawyer |
| • Hugh Curtis | • Brian & Jenny Johnson | • Eleanor Scott |
| • Sarah Doucet | • John & Edwina Kurta | • Lakhvir & Amarjett Sidhu |
| • Ekho Investments Inc. | • Angie Kwan | • SOS Technologies |
| • Jessie Ellis | • Cathy Luther | • Malclom Steinberg |
| • Bruce & Judy Finley | • Karen McLean | • Dr. R.G. & Ann Swain |
| • Dr. Joan Ford | • Arnold & Mary Moeliker | • United Way of the Lower Mainland |
| | | • Sylvia Zylla |

Bits and Pieces

Staff Changes



Ivana Kranjec joined the administration team in Fall 2007. Ivana brings with her technical and administration expertise that will help support the program staff and our clients. Welcome Ivana!



We are very pleased to welcome **Zara Newnham**, SLP to our program. Zara is immigrating from England and has had the benefit of working with newborns for many years. Staff are eagerly awaiting her contributions and expertise, welcome Zara!

Susan Lane, Executive Director, has moved to the Early Hearing Program effective January 2008. As we recruit a new Executive Director, an interim leadership team has been appointed. Ellen Peterson, Business & Resource Development Manager is the Acting Executive Director, Linda Spencer will be the Program Leader for our Surrey Early Speech & Language Program and Judy Chrastina is our Program Leader for the BC Family Hearing Resource Centre Program.

Please do not hesitate to contact any of the leadership team. We are available to assist you and your families in the interim and are committed to the family-centered care that is core to our programs and services.



Terry Parson-Tylka, Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, resigned from her position in December 2007. Terry was a member of our staff for 18 years. We are so very thankful for Terry's many contributions during her time with us. Terry has been involved in our outreach and local services, our professional training, and was our newsletter editor. We will greatly miss Terry's expertise and wish her the very best in her new endeavours. Here is a letter from Terry...

Dear Reaching Out Readers,

"The world is moved along, not only by the mighty shoves of its heroes, but also by the aggregate of tiny pushes of each honest worker." Helen Keller.

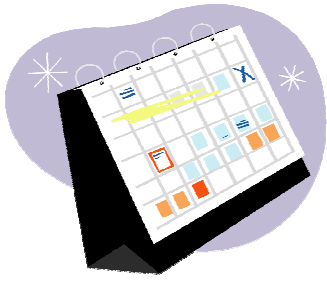
In the grand scheme of the world, I like to think that I am one of those "honest workers giving tiny pushes" that Helen Keller is referring to. I hope that my tiny pushes have helped move our shared world of hearing loss in a positive direction- me as an educator, and you as a parent, child, family, community service provider or colleague. Together we have pushed to help ensure that every young deaf and hard of hearing child has a whole world of possibilities open to them. Sometimes I am the one who needed those tiny pushes- to learn more, to work harder, to listen more carefully and to respond to your needs in the best way possible. So I would like to thank all of you who have pushed me, pushed alongside me, and pushed with me over the past 18 wonderful years that I have worked at the BCFHRC. I can only hope that all those little pushes have left positive impressions in your minds and hearts, as they have in mine.

The very first deaf and hard of hearing conference I attended featured a keynote address by a deaf man. He eloquently shared the secret to his success. Without hesitation he said it was his mother, who constantly encouraged him and worked with him. In other words, he appreciated those little pushes from his mom to move forward. The message that dedicated and involved parents are the key to a child's success has been repeated to me thousands of times since then, and has always been the core value I hold in my work with families.

Now the time has come for me to push-off in other directions. The work is not over. I urge you all to continue to push together for positive changes that are still needed to ensure success for every deaf and hard of hearing child and their family.

I will never forget you and all I have learned from you. I wish you all the best that life has to offer.

Terry Parson-Tylka
Certified Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing



Calendar

- Jan 28 – 30 Ski Hi Training for BCFHRC Teaching & Therapy Staff
- Feb 6 – 8 Ski Hi Training for BCFHRC Teaching & Therapy Staff
- Feb 7 Gung Hei Fat Choy – Happy Chinese New Year
- Feb 14 Happy Valentine's Day
- March 6 BC Provincial School for the Deaf Open House at South Slope Elementary
- March 21 Good Friday Holiday
- March 24 Easter Monday Holiday
- March 27-28 CARF Site Survey Dates
- May 25 Elks & Royal Purple Annual Walk-a-thon



Our Outreach Consultants visits to Communities Throughout BC

- January Judy Chrastina - Fort Nelson
Nicola Swain – Courtenay, Comox, Duncan, Nanaimo
Dyan Spear – Kelowna, Vernon
Cathy Chow – Kelowna, Vernon

Enjoy the
Winter Season
Spring is on the Way!



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We are a family-centered early intervention Provincial Resource Program committed to individual communication choices. We provide support and resources throughout BC to deaf and hard of hearing children, their families and Community Service Providers.

The purpose of the Reaching Out Newsletter is to provide information and support to our readers.

Articles and ideas are welcome! The opinions expressed therefore are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Board of Directors, or the staff. We reserve the right to edit contributions for brevity and clarity.

There is no fee for the Reaching Out newsletter, however, donations are gratefully accepted.

Sign Language from the Canadian Dictionary of ASL, Carol Sue Bailey & Kathy Dolby, Editors. Used with Permission from the University of Alberta Press.