Reaching Out

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

January/February 2003

Family Feature

Liam Adores His Audiologist!

Liam's Family
Darby, Liam & Dave

Future plans of Liam Kindree, "*play a round of golf at the crack of dawn whenever possible, have as many bananas and hot beverages as I want, try for a hat trick/shut out every game, hit the slopes for a few quick runs when the snow is good, spend ample time with friends and family to discuss whatever's on my mind, sculpt some clay to relax, and read a good book every evening before bedtime!*"

For now, Liam who just turned three on January 2nd, is living and learning at home with his mom and dad, Darby and Dave. Five months ago Liam was diagnosed with a moderate sloping to severe hearing loss for the right ear and a normal sloping to moderately-severe hearing loss for the left ear.

In this family feature, Lori Bell, the family's Speech Language Pathologist from our Centre, interviewed Darby and Liam's audiologist Dave Gordey. Liam and his family see Dave at the new North Shore Children's Hearing Clinic. Lori posed the same three questions to both Darby and Dave who shared their perspectives on working together at this early stage of Liam's diagnosis.

Liam's Audiologist , Dave Gordey

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website: www.bcfamilyhearing.com; e-mail: elks@uniserve.com

What led to Liam's first audiology appointment with Dave at the North Shore Children's Hearing Clinic on October 16th? What was your approach to this meeting?

Darby: Before connecting to the BC Family Hearing Centre just prior to that first visit with Dave, I didn't know what was happening. I had taken Liam to the first audiology appointment (in Squamish because the North Shore Clinic was not set up at that time) as part of what I thought was a 'hoop to get through' before getting speech and language therapy through the health unit. I was concerned about Liam's communication development but never suspected a hearing loss.

I was shocked when the results suggested a hearing loss. I left that appointment not knowing what could happen next. Then I got more information about hearing loss and interpreting the audiogram from the BC Family Hearing Resource Centre.

I was able to go to the follow up audiology appointment at the North Shore Clinic with more questions and an idea about why there was some uncertainty about the extent and cause of Liam's hearing loss. I hoped this appointment with Dave would confirm the loss was due to middle ear fluid and was not something permanent.

Dave: Liam had initially been seen by another audiologist further away. It was difficult to determine from just one assessment what Liam's hearing difficulties were beyond middle ear fluid. I wondered what kind of evaluations I would be able to do given Liam's young age (still 2 years at that time). We knew that middle ear fluid was affecting Liam's hearing and needed to determine if there was a permanent loss as well.

When the hearing is affected due to fluid, it is important get reliable results about the inner ear, or cochlea. Masking is an assessment technique that uses noise to keep the non-test cochlea busy while the other cochlea is tested.

Another assessment uses bone conduction testing where the sound goes directly to the inner ear to bypass middle ear problems. The oscillator that vibrates the sound across the bone to the cochlea can vibrate the sound across the bone to the other side of the skull and, potentially, the other cochlea, too.

Therefore, getting information about each ear without the fluid influencing the functioning of the other cochlea can be tricky. Although I thought Liam was possibly too young for these behavioural tests, I treated him as an individual and gave it a try. As it turned out, he wasn't confused by the masking and was able to respond to the test sounds.

When did you know Liam needed hearing aids and how did you deal with that information?

Darby: I went to the first appointment with Dave with a lot of questions and a strong hope that Liam didn't have a permanent hearing loss. What really impressed me was that Dave was so understanding, empathetic, and receptive to my concerns and questions. I got a good feeling about him. He became my son's advocate.

Although the results were not looking good, they were helping to explain some of what had been going on with Liam's behaviour at daycare. It was the way Dave interpreted those results and believed that Liam was a great kid who also had a hearing loss that helped me to understand the information. He explained how hearing loss would have an impact on how Liam coped in certain situations.

It suddenly made sense to me, which also felt like a relief. I had been worried that Liam had an attention problem.

Dave: It took two visits to get enough information from the behavioural testing (masked bone conduction and air conduction) to come to some conclusions about Liam's hearing loss. I always encourage parents to be involved in observing their child's response to behavioural testing. I tell them that objective testing with Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR) and Otoacoustic Emissions (OAE) is also helpful to back up the behavioural testing results, as well as to provide a second opinion.

After the first visit though, Darby was asking "Does this mean he has a permanent loss? I said something like, "This is what the results suggest," preparing the family for what may be a reality. The parents then take on the acceptance of the results in their own way, and their questions usually indicate what they are ready for next. I let the family have time to sit with the results, but also move forward in the best interests of the child. In this case, I saw Liam 3 to 4 times within a month, and Liam was also getting more comfortable each time.

Each visit it was important to go over the audiogram, clarify, and rephrase information. I never assume that what I've discussed previously has made sense to the family and so I repeat over and over, letting them dictate what they want information about. At the second visit, Darby had taken Liam to the ENT at Children's Hospital. She reported to me that he had said to go ahead with hearing aids.

I appreciated that she shared information like this with me and linked the parts of this discovery that were meaningful and important to her. It was clear that she was ready to introduce hearing aids to Liam and take on that commitment.

What did the family/audiologist do that helped?

Dave: Darby asked questions and that let me know where she was at and what information she needed. She also told me her concerns, such as Liam not wanting to wear the hearing aids at home. When I had suggestions, Darby patiently listened and considered what I had to offer.

Having Liam go to the Monday morning program at the BC Family Hearing Resource Centre was a bonus. It gave Liam a chance to see other children with 'pilot ears' and made getting the hearing aids fun and positive for him. When he came for the fitting, I appreciated that Liam already had some exposure to hearing aids and that I could connect with him through that experience.

Darby: Liam adores Dave! Seeing Liam having such a positive experience makes it so much better. Dave genuinely likes Liam; there is nothing 'clinical' about our experience with him. Dave also helped me find something optimistic about my concerns. When I was worried about Liam not wearing his hearing aids all the time, he compared our schedule and expectation to Liam's agenda. I could see that Liam wasn't being negative or bad, we just had to see the difference in where he was at and our level of excitement to get to full time hearing aid use!

Editor's Note: We look forward to featuring Liam, up and coming sports commentator, team captain, avid reader, potter, conversationalist in our Great Grads Feature in 2023!

Meet Dave Gordey, Liam's Audiologist:

We asked Dave Gordey to tell newsletter readers a little more about himself and the new North Shore Children's Hearing Clinic located on the 5th Floor at 132 Esplanade in North Vancouver.

"I worked as an audiologist for children and adults with developmental disabilities at Victoria's Capital Health Region Clinic for 8 years. After spending a year doing a research project with a hearing aid manufacturer, I returned to my work as an audiologist at the new ***North Shore Children's Hearing Clinic*** *in North Vancouver. Families living in North and West Vancouver up to Lion's Bay, and on Bowen Island, used to have to travel for audiology services, since there weren't any available on the North Shore.*

I am the full time audiologist there, and Onnolee Hayes, who used to be an operating room nurse, works part time as the audiometric technician. We provide services for children birth to 19 years, and to adults with developmental disabilities. The clinic is part of the Lion's Gate Hospital, so we are able to do sedated testing (ABR, for example) there.

We have an open referral policy for children who are 0-5 years of age and living in North and West Vancouver. Parents who are concerned about their child's development may call to make an appointment. Community service providers and family physicians may make a referral for older children."

On- Site..... New Building Update

We Are (Almost) On The Move

Have you driven by our new Centre at 15220 92nd Avenue lately? If you have, you can see construction is moving along and the building is almost ready for us to move in. **May 3rd** is our tentative moving date and we need lots of volunteers to move boxes and furniture. Please keep that weekend free and call the Centre to let us know you are available to help. Now imagine driving up to our new home, finding a parking spot within a few steps of the front door, and walking in to a bright, spacious, modern, state-of-the-art facility!! That dream is almost a reality!

Questions For My Audiologist

In this month's Family Feature, Darby and her audiologist Dave both comment on the importance of the parents' questions as a way to ensure the audiologist is providing information that the parent needs. **My Turn to Learn**, our popular resource guide written by staff of the BC Family Hearing Resource Centre, includes a checklist for 'Questions For My Audiologist' (pages 69-72). Here are questions that parents often ask about hearing aids and audiograms.

Hearing Aids

____ Where can I buy insurance for these hearing aids?
____ How to order batteries
____ How to check batteries.
____ When is the best time of day to check the hearing aid and batteries?
____ Why is it important to my child for me to check the aid and batteries daily?
____ Practical hints for keeping the hearing aids on.
____ What equipment should I consider buying?
____ When I listen through the stethoscope, am I hearing what my child hears with hearing aids?
____ What are the ongoing costs in the future (ear molds, batteries, new hearing aids)?
____ How long do hearing aids last?
____ Why did the audiologist choose these particular hearing aids?
____ Are there different kinds of ear molds?

Audiograms

____ What do the symbols on the audiogram mean?
____ What severity or degree of loss does my child have?
____ How might this hearing loss affect his development (language/speech/learning)?
____ What do you think my child can hear with hearing aids?
____ What do you think my child can hear without hearing aids?
____ Now that my child has hearing aids, why is he not responding yet?
____ Why do the responses change? (Why does the audiologist get different results on different days)?
____ How did the audiologist know my child was able to or not able to hear certain sounds?
____ How can the audiologist know accurately what my child can hear, when my child is not developmentally up to his chronological age (has additional special needs)?
____ Are hearing test the same for all ages? What kinds of tests are used at different ages?
____ What does ABR (Auditory Brainstem Response) testing tell you?
____ Can children learn how to trick audiologists so that the test results are wrong?
____ I want to be able to better understand the audiologist's written report.
____ My child responds to sound even without the hearing aids on. Does he really need the aids?

Reaching Out to Community Service Providers

Working Together - Outreach in the Okanagan!

by Dyan Spear,
Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
Outreach Consultant for the Okanagan

What do all these people have in common?

★ **Joyce Chen**, Audiologist - Central Okanagan Child Development Association
★ **Deni Skutchek**, Speech-Language Pathologist - Central Okanagan Child Development Association
★ **Carla Norheim**, Teacher of the Deaf & Hard of Hearing - School District # 23 (Central Okanagan)
★ **Dyan Spear**, BC Family Hearing Resource Centre

All of them are professionals who care about the deaf and hard of hearing children and families they serve. And all of them recently partnered together to arrange an evening for parents with newly diagnosed hard of hearing children.

The purpose of the evening was for parents to have an opportunity to meet each other, listen to a panel of parent experts, and hear teens and an adult who are hard of hearing speak about their experiences. Over 40 parents and professionals gathered in Kelowna on January 20. It was an overwhelming success! Families and professionals working with them travelled from Penticton, Enderby, Vernon and the surrounding Kelowna area to meet and learn from each other.

We were so fortunate to have the support of the Teachers of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing in the district. They arranged for some of their deaf and hard of hearing students to help with childcare so that the parents could meet. It also gave the children a chance to see other children their age and older wearing hearing aids. While many of us were busy with the parents, Debbie Chute the technician from the Kelowna Health Unit, and Janene Seabrook and Margaret Vellenoweth Teachers of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, also had their workout with the kids!

There were many smiling faces leaving that evening and we received many thanks for the opportunity for everyone to meet each other.

Great things happen when we all work together! If your community would like to partner to provide a similar event for yourselves, call the BC Family Hearing Resource Centre Outreach Consultant for your area. If you're not sure who that is, just call our Centre!

Parent's Piece

Me and My Audiologist: Surpassing the Test of Time

by Cathy Chow, Family Support Parent

When it comes to audiologists, I've been very lucky. They have been everything I've needed them to be - informative, kind, compassionate, respectful, patient, honest, considerate, understanding, helpful, supportive and empathetic. I consider my current and past audiologists to be very special people. They have played a huge part in the team of professionals I've worked with over the years (17 to be exact)!

Now that my children are older, (18, 15 & 12), I no longer spend as much time in the audiologist's office as I did when they were younger. The need for new ear molds every few months is no longer necessary. Now we go for new ear molds about once a year and really only because they become grossly discoloured! Breakdown of hearing aids happen less frequently and I no longer have to guess whether the kids' hearing aids are working properly or not....they tell me. My oldest can even drive himself to the audiologists's office. Yeah!! Hearing tests also happen less frequently and again I can depend on my children to say if their hearing has changed.

My first born was diagnosed with a hearing loss back in 1985. When it came to hearing loss, I was a blank slate. I knew nothing of sensori-neural, bilateral hearing loss, audiograms, speech bananas, hearing aids, etc. They were just words, and hearing aids were something I'd seen older people wearing. I now have a great understanding and much of that has come from an audiologist. Some because the audiologist knew it was in the best interest of the parent, to have this important information, and some because I learned to ask questions.

I encourage you to ask questions and to ask for clarification. In the beginning, I had to rely on the audiologist to make the right decision in choosing hearing aids for my children. I had no idea what or why they needed a particular model of a particular brand. It all makes sense now because I understand their individual hearing losses.

Learning is always a process and it took time for me to have the knowledge I have today. Do I know everything? No way! Changes sometimes take place in hearing status and I've looked to my audiologist to help me understand. Technology is also ever-changing. New products on the market may be worth a try. You can stay on top of this information with help from your audiologist.

Although my audiologists helped me to grow in my knowledge and understanding of hearing loss and technology, they also grew with me. By this I mean, they respected the fact that I was indeed learning, through them and through other sources, so they did not continue to talk to me at a basic level. They knew to trust that I would ask questions or for clarity if I did not understand.

So you see, over time, the relationship you share with your audiologist changes. The frequency of visits, the kind of support you require, the level at which they explain and give you information all changes. The one thing I feel that has remained constant throughout the years is that our audiologists truly care about me and my family.

Making A Difference

Our sincere thanks to the following companies, individuals and families whose generosity makes a difference in the lives of our children and families.

- Accurate Realtime Reporting
- Agressive Pump & Supply-Martin Family
- V.A. Berry
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- Cornelia H. Oberlander
- Don Rose, Placer Dome Inc.
- Dr.Tamara Shenkier & Dr. David Landsberg
- Ann Swain
- Douglas Warren (in memory of Margaret Wilkinson)
- **Elks**: Kamloops; Kimberley; McBride; Prince George; Salmon Arm; Smithers; South Vancouver; Vernon
- **Royal Purple**: Aldergrove; Cache Creek; Campbell River; Kelowna; Keremeos; Lillooet; New Westminster; Port Coquitlam (in memory of Margaret Wilkinson); Williams Lake

Fundraising News

Annual Walk-a-thon

This year the Walk-a-thon is on:

Sunday, May 25, 2003
Langley Elks Hall
22594 Old Yale Road
Registration 9:00 am
Walk begins at 10:00 am

Bring the family as we have a fun day planned. We are hoping to have a sports figure there to talk to and give autographs!

Chris Roenspiess of Port McNeill, (Outreach family at the Centre), is holding her 2nd Walk-a-thon. Last year Chris raised $800.00! This year she hopes to raise $2,000.00. Let's help Chris and other parents of deaf and hard of hearing children in our Province.

To date we have raised $57,744.00, our goal is $300,000.00. We still have a long way to go. You can get your pledge sheets from the BC Family Hearing Resource Centre.

Send pledge sheets and money to:
Sally Hurst
1220 Ellis Drive
Port Coquitlam, BC V3B 1G8

If you send them early we will do the walking for your pledges also.

For more information contact:
Barbara Gee

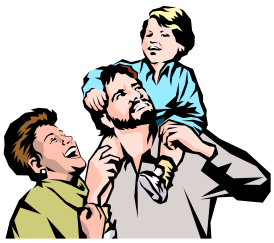
phone 604-533-6615; fax 604-533-9213
email: gg6615@shaw.ca

Bits & Pieces

BC Family Hearing Resource Centre's Family-Centered Services Recognized In Accreditation Process

As part of the BC Government's Ministry of Children and Family Development project, our Society will undergo an accreditation process to be completed by March 31, 2004. The accreditation project is a formal process of organizational development and review. Being accredited means our Centre has met international standards of practice that are developed by consumers, stakeholders, professionals, and provincial and national organizations. The focus of accreditation is to ensure quality of services delivered, accountability, and administrative competence. Our goal at the Centre is, with your input and feedback, to identify valuable aspects of our program and continue our commitment to include families in evaluating the effectiveness of services and making improvements.

What Accreditation Means to You



For more information on the Ministry of Children and Family Development Accreditation Project, and on Accreditation for Clients and Families, go to the Home page links under the Contents side bar on their web site:
www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/accreditation/

Please look for printed information at the Centre's entrance area, and you may contact Lori Bell at the Centre for more information. In our journey to becoming an accredited organization, we appreciate your time and thoughtfulness in providing requested feedback. Your input is important to our programs!

Save Those Soup Labels

One of our Board Members, Sheila Falk, has contacted Campbell's about receiving a new computer in exchange for soup labels. We're not sure how many labels we will need but let's get started right away. Please bring in your **Campbell's soup labels** and we will forward them to Sheila. Thanks for your support!

Cochlear Implant Newsletter

The Centre would like to inform our readers about a very interesting newsletter. The St. Paul's Hospital Cochlear Implant Newsletter includes stories from recipients which give good insights into their lives with an implant. To receive this newsletter or for more information contact:

Lois Pijl, Editor
604-888-2710 phone/fax/tty
email: pijl@interchange.ubc.ca

Please Note: The following advertisements are published as a courtesy. The BC Family Hearing Resource Centre does not necessarily endorse these products and/or services.

FM System for Sale

Phonic Ear Personal FM System - hardly used. Includes: transmitter, receiver, headphone set, recharging plug and microphone. For more information contact: **carolebritton@hotmail.com**

Sign Language Instructor

Private sign language lessons provided in-home. Hard of hearing, 2nd year visual language interpreters program student. Contact Amanda @ 604-532-0156.

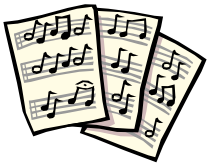
Bit & Pieces

Upcoming Events

VCC Deaf and Hard of Hearing / ASL & Deaf Studies 30th Anniversary Week

Vancouver Community College is planning a celebration week from **April 28 to May 3** for the 30th anniversary of the start of these two Programs. **Tuesday, April 29**, will be **Hearing Awareness Day**. This event will feature mini workshops for the college community and deaf & hard of hearing students and interested people. Information tables will be set up containing resources available in the community for deaf and hard of hearing people.

MuchSign 2003 - May 3, 2003



The Family Network for Deaf Children presents MuchSign 2003. This unique workshop combines music and sign language and offers parents and any others interested an opportunity to improve signing skills, review principals of making visual sense and hum your favourite tune all at the same time!

The workshop is from **9:00am to 4:00pm** at **Douglas College, New Westminster campus**. The **cost** is **$20** at the door. **Reserve your spot before April 25th. Late reservations not accepted. To reserve call 604 684-1860 or email: fndc@fndc.ca**

Silent Weekend - May 16 to 19

This event, held every two years at Thetis Island at Camp Capernwray Harbour, is a great place for deaf, hard of hearing and hearing family and friends to come together to experience a Deaf world for the weekend - full signing environment.

Children 12 & under are FREE!
$168 per person. Seniors $150
Registration begins March 26th

For more information contact:
Island Deaf & Hard of Hearing Victoria
(250) 592-8147 TTY or
Toll Free 1-877-667-5488 TTY
(250) 592-8144 Voice or
Toll Free 1-800-667-5448 Voice

Deaf Indo-Canadian Organization

The Deaf Indo-Canadian Organization has planned their **3rd Anniversary Party**. **Saturday, June 14** at **York Conference Centre #110 - 7938 128th Street, Surrey**. From 6pm - 1am ; Cost:Under 12 - Free; 13-18 $20 per person; Adults $25.00

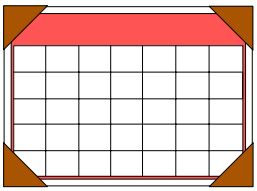
RSVP: Before May 31, 2003
email: deafdico@yahoo.ca or
fax:604-708-8639

CHHA-BC Announces 1st Ever Family & Friends Camping Weekend

Where: Monck Park Provincial Campground at Nicola Lake
When: Friday, July 25th to Sunday July 27th
Cost: $15 per campsite/night (family grouping up to 8 people, one vehicle)

Please contact Teresa Kazemir by phone: 604-552-2254 or email: **tkaz@lightspeed.ca**

for more information.



Calendar of Events

Feb 15 & 16	Variety Club Telethon
Feb 24 - Mar 7	Advanced Professional Training for Speech Language Pathologists
	The Centre welcomes:

Layne Hammond; Sunrise Resources for Early Childhood Development - Campbell River
Verity Howarth; Mission Health Unit
Joanne Torrence; Fraser Valley Child Development Centre - Chilliwack

Feb 28	Intinerant Teachers of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Conference
March 5	Board of Directors Meeting
Mar 17 - 21	Spring Break
March 28 & 29	Cochlear Implant Training
Mar 31 - Apr 2	Early Hearing Detection Workshop
Mar 30 - Apr 2	Nicola Swain, Outreach Consultant, travels to Campbell River, Port McNeill & Port Hardy
April 6-9	Dyan Spear, Outreach Consultant, travels to Kamloops, Salmon Arm & Cache Creek
Apr 18	Good Friday Holiday
Apr 21	Easter Monday Holiday
April 28 - May 3	VCC Deaf & Hard of Hearing/ ASL & Deaf Studies 30th Anniversary Week
Apr 30	Board of Directors Meeting
Apr 30 - May 2	Centre Closed to Prepare for Moving
May 3	Moving Day
May 19	Victoria Day Holiday
May 25	Elks & Royal Purple Walkathon/Family Picnic
May 31 - June 4	Elks Annual Conference

Gung Hey Fat Choy

February 1st was the celebration of the Chinese New Year. In honour of this special occasion we asked Angie Kwan, mother of Eva, age 3 (who attends our PALS Program), to share with newsletter readers the Chinese characters that make up the verb **'to listen'**. These characters remind us to give our undivided attention and really listen to each other in our daily lives.

Reaching Out

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Executive Director: Susan Lane
Editors: Terry Parson-Tylka & Cindy Adams

We are a Family Centered Early Intervention Provincial Resource Program committed to individual communication choices. We provide support and resources throughout B.C. 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.

B.C. Family Hearing Resource Centre
Registered Charity #13300 – 0182 – RR0001

Yes, I want to help to ensure that deaf and hard of hearing children have a Bright Future!

Please indicate your choice by placing a check (✓) in the appropriate box.

☐$25 ☐ $50 ☐ $100 ☐ $500

☐ I prefer to donate $_____

Cheque _____ Money Order _____

Once your donation has been processed, we will send you a tax receipt. If you are making your donation by cheque or money order, please make it payable to the BC Family Hearing Resource Centre.

Thank you for your kind donation to help children who are deaf or hard of hearing. Please help us update our records. If you name or address is not as it appears on the newsletter, please correct it in the form below. Please print clearly in block letters.

Name			
Address			
City		**Postal Code**	

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