

REACHING OUT

**A NEWSLETTER FROM THE BC FAMILY HEARING
RESOURCE CENTRE FOR FAMILIES WITH
DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING CHILDREN,
SERVICE PROVIDERS, AND OTHERS INVOLVED WITH HEARING LOSS .**



Summer 2016

FAMILY FEATURE

The Pucci Family Journeys through BC Family Hearing Resource Centre



Raff and Maria Pucci with (l to r) Enzo, Luca and Ayva.

We have had the pleasure of knowing the Pucci family for over 4 years. We first met when Luca was just a few months old and have seen the addition of two more Puccis along the way! Read on as Maria Pucci shares her family's story with poignant humour.

Luca is an amazing, smart, fun and caring little boy. They say that on your 1st year marriage anniversary the gift is paper but on November 10th, 2011 we got our little boy instead.

Even though Luca was born full term, he was in the NICU and Pediatrics for four days. Being new parents, we finally got to bring our baby home, although we did question how they were letting us leave the hospital with this tiny little human that we knew nothing about!

The next day, I received a phone call from Fraser Health asking us to come in for the early hearing screening test as it hadn't been done at the hospital due to him being shuffled around the units. The thought of him ever being hard of hearing didn't cross my mind at that point. That week we did the test and he failed it. We were sent home, told not to worry as it was most likely fluid in his ears from his birth. Two weeks later we tested again and he failed.

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Highlights from

**Mingle &
Play**

Page 4

FAMILY FEATURE *continued*

The Pucci Family

We took our little boy home and the emotions that came over me were intense. I would turn on the vacuum and I would watch Luca to see if his tiny little head moved. "See" I would say "he heard it." I was in complete denial. Yes he could hear the dog bark, the vacuum, something falling on the floor but I never stopped to think "can he hear my voice?"

On December 22nd, 2011, Luca was scheduled for his first audiologist appointment. I went into the appointment in complete denial so when the audiologist said that he has a hearing loss, I was completely devastated. My first question to our audiologist was "will he hear music?"

We went home from the appointment and I just didn't know how to feel or what to say to the rest of the family. I texted my cousin who is deaf, to come over and explain to me what was going on with my perfect little itty bitty baby. Even though my cousin made me feel a little better about his diagnosis, I still had to grieve the loss of Luca's hearing. It was strange to have to go through it and I didn't know how to explain it to anyone, not even my husband who might I add took it so well!

On January 13, 2012, Luca received his first pair of hearing aids. It was like night and day despite the fact that his hearing technically wasn't too bad, we could see the difference with him wearing his hearing aids.

Still grieving but feeling a little better about the fact that Luca had a hearing loss, I still didn't want people to ask me about it. First off, how was I supposed to remember "Mild to moderate bilateral sensorineural hearing loss"? I couldn't remember what I ate for breakfast that day but yet I had to remember that? Luckily I was contacted by BC Family Hearing Resource Centre. We started baby group (Bouncy Babies) right away and all I could think about was that we weren't the only ones going through this.



Dyan Spear (Teacher of the Deaf & Hard of Hearing) and Cathy Luther (Family Support Parent) really helped with trying to understand what our little babies were hearing and what they weren't hearing. Dyan always made the thought of wearing their hearing aids fun. Cathy opening up about her experiences with her kids was a big help. I still didn't want to talk about it nor did I want anyone asking me about it but at that point I was so thankful that there was a place where my beautiful baby boy wasn't different! I felt like it was my fault that he had his hearing loss, like I did something to him during my pregnancy. I didn't want him to ever feel different as life is hard and the world is cruel but I never had to worry about him feeling that way at BCFHRC.

Luca's Speech and Language Pathologists have been amazing. Emily Black, Marie-Elise Marcoux and Valerie Marshall have helped us through such important milestones and have given us strategies to help us through all the bumps in the road. We would be lost without their guidance.

Karen Jackson, (Early Childhood Educator) and Catherine Albert-Moore (Teacher of the Deaf & Hard of Hearing) in the Partners & Playmates group were so patient and kind.

For the last two years Luca has been in the 'big' class room in the LEAP program. Last year with Carolyn Hawrish (Listening & Spoken Language Specialist) and Sharon Neufeld (Early Childhood Educator) Luca did the most growing up. Watching him turn from a toddler to an independent boy makes my heart melt. This past year with Charmaine Francis (Speech-Language Pathologist) and Sharon Neufeld has been bittersweet. Watching him through the glass as he plays and participates in the class makes me so happy because I know that he will do well in kindergarten and I won't have to worry. I have all you guys to thank for that.

As his parents, we appreciate everything you have done for him to get him to this point in

FAMILY FEATURE continued

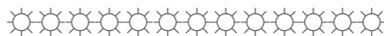
The Pucci Family

his life. I am sincerely going to miss him waking up in the morning and asking me to take him to school so he can play with Carolyn, Charmaine and Sharon. He loves you.

It has taken a long time but now I actually prefer people asking me about his hearing loss. As his parents we have learned so much from him because of his hearing loss and we are so grateful for that and for him. Being from Greek and Italian backgrounds, he's even taught us to be a little quieter. We are so thankful to BCFHRC. Coming here has not only



taught Luca to sign and interact with deaf/hard of hearing peers but it has formed him into the independent little boy that he has turned into. He has no problems asking people to be quieter if it's too loud, letting people around him know how he feels and he definitely has learnt amazing social skills that have helped him with mainstream preschool. It makes me so sad to know that this was Luca's last year. Watching him become such a strong little human has made us stronger as parents and we have you guys to thank for that.



Would you like to be our Feature Family? We are always seeking families who want to share their stories. If you would like to share your story, please advise your early interventionist, or contact our Centre.

Programs for Fall 2016

Children aged 0 – 18 months:

- Bouncy Babies, Mondays, 10am-Noon
- Butterfly Hands (ASL Baby Group), Wednesdays, 1:30-2:30pm

Children aged 18 – 36 months:

- PNP Jr. or PNP Sr., Tuesdays, 11:30am-1pm (Jr.) or 9:00-11:00am (Sr.)
- ASL Toddler Group (by Lila & Pip), Mondays, 9:30-11am

Children ages 3-5 years:

- PALS, Mondays & Tuesdays, 9:30am-12:30pm
- VALS (ASL Program), Wednesdays & Thursdays, 9:30-11:30am

If you are interested in any of our group programs, please talk to your Early Interventionist to ensure a good fit for your family. Registration can be completed online at <https://goo.gl/NUUf0g> or by phone at 604.584.2827.

YOU AND YOUR DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING CHILD

Mingle & Play 2016

We had a wonderful turn-out for our three-day summer event “Mingle & Play” this year, with 75-90 people attending each day, including three families who travelled from outside the lower mainland.

This was the first time our event was open to families from all three early intervention agencies, and we were very happy to have several families from Deaf Children’s Society and Children’s Hearing and Speech Centre join in the fun. The kids were kept busy with crafts, games, toys, and stories, not to mention playing outside in the sunshine.

Highlights included performances by Matt Johnson (illusionist) and Will Stroet (musician), the “info fair,” the caricature portraits, and of course the ASL dramas performed by the staff at the end of each day.

Thanks to all the staff, volunteers and families who worked together to make Mingle & Play such a great success!



YOU AND YOUR DEAF OR HARD OF HEARING CHILD

Making Water Activities More Accessible for Children with Hearing Differences



1. Equipment

- There are some hearing aids and cochlear implants that are water resistant (can withstand splashing, rain, perspiration, etc.) or water proof (can be submerged in water).
- Always check with your audiologist before using your equipment in the water.

2. Get your child's attention before talking

- Use their name and/or a gentle touch to get their attention. Wait for them to look at you before talking.

3. Face your child when talking

- Seeing your facial expressions and speech cues (lip, tongue, and cheek movements) will help your child understand what is being said.
- Be mindful of your positioning with the sun. Having the sun on your face will make it easier to see, whereas having your back to the sun will cause shadowing and make it harder to pick up speech cues and facial expressions.

4. Get closer, not louder

- The echo-y acoustics in a pool or noisy environment with lots of people can make it difficult to hear. Getting closer helps your child hear you better, but also see important speech cues on your face to understand what you are saying.

5. Add visual information when communicating

- Pools and splash pads can be difficult listening environments. Your child will not be able to access as much through listening alone (especially if they are not wearing their equipment), so adding more visual information can be really helpful to help them understand.
- For example: use gestures, facial expressions, sign language, point to signs or pictures around the pool, laminate pictures of key words or games you can bring into the water
- When playing a game, have another child go first or give an example before starting so that your child knows what to do.

6. Safety

- Tell the lifeguard that your child has hearing differences and may not hear them.
- Go over the safety rules in a quiet environment before taking off their equipment and entering the water area. Point out where they can and can't go, and where you will be sitting (if you are not in the water with them). Point out who the lifeguards are, in case they get separated or need help.
- Learn some key signs or gestures so that you can communicate with your child, when you are not within arms reach, to make sure they are safe, comfortable, and happy. You can ask the lifeguard what gestures they use, use sign language, or make up your gestures/signs.
- Here are some key phrases that are important for water safety: "I'm fine," "I need help," "wait," "stop," "come back," "time to get out," "no running," "deep end," "shallow end," "lifeguard."

Please follow this link for more tips on how to make **swimming lessons** more accessible for children with hearing differences: <http://www.agbell.org/Document.aspx?id=237>

OVER 30 YEARS OF MAKING A DIFFERENCE

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



Elks & Royal Purple Fund for
Children
\$50,000 annually!



ELKS OF
CANADA

**Elks & Royal Purple Lodges - Campbell's Labels for Education Program
Elks, Royal Purple Lodges and Individuals & Organizations**

We acknowledge the financial support provided by:

**The Ministry of Children and Family Development – Provincial Deaf & Hard of Hearing Services
The BC Early Hearing Program – Provincial Health Services Authority
The Province of British Columbia**

- Cloverdale Elks
- Langley Elks
- Vancouver Elks
- Westside Elks
- Parksville/Qualicum Elks
- White Rock Elks
- North Kamloops Elks
- Vernon Elks
- Oliver Elks
- Anita Park
- Chave Family
- Cindy Adams
- Georgina Hutton
- Hicks Family
- Marilyn McGregor (in memory)
- Marley Bridger
- May Young
- Marie-Isabelle Dupont
- Roberta Beck
- Sally & James Hurst
- Susan Small
- Telus- Ken Mulligan
- United Way of the Lower Mainland



Carolyn Hawrish, BCFHRC Listening and Spoken Language Specialist, presents a plaque to a representative of the Burnaby Elks to recognize their lodge as a leader in donations to our Society, at the 88th Elks annual conference held in Kamloops in May.

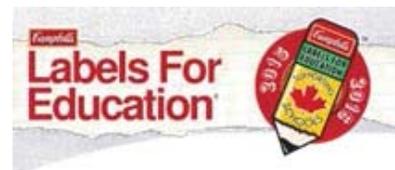


Cathy Cruickshank, BCFHRC Finance & Accounting Administrator receives a donation at the Canadian Royal Purple conference in Kamloops in May. Port Coquitlam lodge was presented with a plaque to recognize their lodge as the leading donor to our Society.

OVER 30 YEARS OF MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Campbell's Labels for Education

For many years, the Campbell's Labels for Education program has provided us with toys, equipment and materials necessary for our programs and services.



The Elks and Royal Purple have managed this program on our behalf, ensuring that we receive our annual credit to enable us to choose items from the Campbell's Catalogue. Campbells announced recently that they are changing the program and will no longer be accepting labels as of December 31, 2016. They have indicated that a new program will take its place, but the program has not been made public at this time.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the many individuals and organizations that have tirelessly supported us through this program by collecting labels over the years.

In particular, we like to introduce you two people who took label collecting to a new level! BCFHRC staff member Karen Jackson took a serious interest in this program, and recruited her mom, Joanne McKitrick to help out. The amount of labels collected was astounding! There were literally boxes of them.



*Karen Jackson & Joanne McKitrick:
a mother and daughter force in label collection!*

Thank you Karen and Joanne and your loyal band of collectors for your commitment to this program and support of BCFHRC.



The Bridger Birthday Tradition

We have known the Bridger family since they started receiving services for their daughter Roxanne. Roxanne 'graduated' from our program last June, but we happily are kept connected through a birthday tradition. Eldest daughter, Marley, insists on continuing to donate funds she receives for her birthday to the BCFHRS! Thank you Marley for your thoughtfulness – we look forward to maintaining a friendship with you and your family!



*l to r: Alisa, Cohen, Roxanne & Marley
Bridger, with Cathy Cruickshank,
Finance & Accounting Administrator*

REACHING OUT TO COMMUNITY SERVICE PROVIDERS

A Trip to Austria



This past June three of our staff had the opportunity to present at the Family Centred Early Intervention (FCEI) Congress in Bad Ischl, Austria near Salzburg. The theme for this conference was “**For Every Child and Family.**” This three-day conference is held every second year, and draws parents, Deaf, deaf and hard of hearing adults, and early intervention professionals from all over the world. It is one of few conferences that focuses specifically on family centred intervention for families of children who are deaf and hard of hearing.

Dr. Noreen Simmons, our executive director, presented on a published paper co-authored together with Dr. Brenda Poon titled “*Can Routinely Collected Early Intervention Data for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Children Be Used for Outcome Monitoring? A Case Example from British Columbia, Canada.* You can contact us for a copy or can find a copy of the publication at: Published online: 02 Feb 2016 in Deafness and Education International

Two of our early intervention staff, Dyan Spear and Teresa Kazemir, presented on “The Learning Place,” which is BC Family Hearing Resource Centre’s online learning platform. Dyan and Teresa were able to share examples from many wonderful recordings, gathered over the past few years, of parents talking about their experiences as parents of children who are deaf and hard of hearing. They also gave a preview of the new “microtia and atresia module” to demonstrate plans for future development of the site. Audience members gave positive feedback about the project, applauding the level of involvement and input from both parents and Deaf and Hard of Hearing individuals.

The FCEI Congress was a fabulous opportunity for our staff to showcase the work we are doing here at BC Family Hearing Resource Centre, and also to learn from what others are doing all over the world to support families of deaf and hard of hearing children. For more details on the event see <http://www.fcei.at/2016/en/>

Teresa Kazemir, Dr. Noreen Simmons, and Dyan Spear outside the Congress building in Bad Ischl, Austria.



REACHING OUT TO COMMUNITY SERVICE PROVIDERS

Let's Hear in Denver!

by Charmaine Francis,
Speech-Language Pathologist

This summer, I had the chance to attend the AG Bell convention in Denver, Colorado – *Let's Hear in Denver!* The AG Bell Academy trains professionals who work with deaf and hard-of-hearing children, focusing on the use of listening and spoken language (also known as Auditory-Verbal Therapy or AVT). The BC Family Hearing Resource Centre offers non-biased choices, and offers all communication options to families, AVT being one of them. For this reason, I was eager to learn more about this approach to intervention.

It was interesting to attend a conference specifically designed for professionals who work with children who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, and it was great to see everyone so passionate about their work with families! I had the chance to attend sessions on family-centred practice, delivering intervention through telepractice, and a session on fostering self-advocacy (which to my pleasant surprise, was presented by one of our past volunteers, Bowen Tang, now a Teacher of the Deaf in Vancouver)!

While the focus of AG Bell Academy is on listening and spoken language as the best method of intervention for children who are deaf or hard-of-hearing, our priority at BC Family Hearing is promoting evidence-based practice on communication in whichever method the family has decided to pursue. I came away from this convention with some good “nuggets” that I am excited to integrate in my individual, group and parent sessions!

If you have any questions about AVT or the AG Bell Academy, please visit their website www.agbellacademy.com or ask your early interventionist.



*Charmaine with Leo the Lion,
the Phonak mascot*

Alexander Graham Bell
ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL
ASSOCIATION FOR THE DEAF AND HARD OF HEARING

BITS & PIECES

Annual Satisfaction Surveys

We are happy to report an increase in the rate of return of surveys this year. The winners of the \$50 Chapters Gift Card are as follows:

- Local – The Leandro Family
- Outreach – The Hintz Family

Thank you **so much** to all who took the time to complete a survey. Your feedback is crucial for our ongoing quality improvement. We place a high value on your responses. This information is carefully considered when we plan our programs and services.

New Faces



Please join us in welcoming **Megan MacLeod**, SLP to the BCFHRC team! Megan has been working with the Society's Surrey Early Speech and Language Program since 2013, and joined the BC Family Hearing Resource Centre team in June. She is looking forward to working with the same great staff in a new capacity, and is excited to connect with new families.



Please join us in welcoming **Stefanie Macaro**, SLP to the BCFHRC team! Stefanie completed her undergraduate studies in Speech and Hearing Sciences at Brock University in Ontario and her Masters in Speech-Language Pathology at UBC. She has enjoyed working with high school students who are deaf and hard of hearing at the BC Provincial School for the Deaf, as well as with preschool children and their families at the Richmond Public Health Unit. Stefanie is excited to be a part of our team and working with families at BCFHRC!



Please join us in welcoming **Amanda Lemay**, SLP to the BCFHRC team! Amanda was born and raised in the Cowichan Valley on Vancouver Island. She completed her undergraduate degree at the University of Victoria and her Masters of Speech-Language Pathology at the University of Alberta. Amanda's research focused on animal-assisted therapy services. When not at work or school, she can be found hiking, camping and exploring the west coast with her husband and family.



Please join us in welcoming **Jen Gow** to the BCFHRC team! Many of you may have already met Jen and her family during their almost five years at our Centre. Her daughter, Connie, graduated from our programs in June and now Jen will assist us in her role as Family Support Parent.



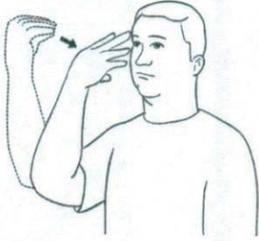
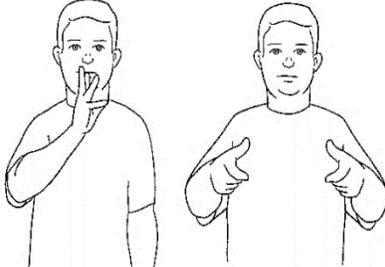
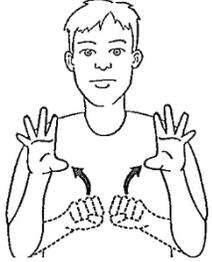
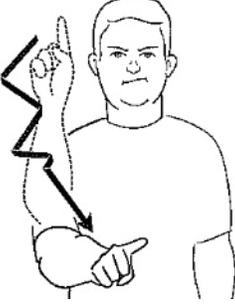
Say hello to the youngest member of our BC Family "Family". Meet **Jaya**. BCFHRC SLP Rina Dulku, her husband Jag and big brother Rahul welcomed Jaya on July 14th! Congratulations to all!

New Places - BCFHRC expands to Vancouver Island!

Demand for services on Vancouver Island has prompted a need for an office location in **Victoria**. The new BCFHRC office address is 320 - 702 Fort Street. Stop by if you are in the area. Our newest staff member, **Amanda Lemay**, SLP, is the primary therapist for this satellite office.

SIGN LANGUAGE

Let's Go Outside!

 <p>outside</p>	 <p>sunshine</p>	 <p>wind</p>
 <p>rain</p>	 <p>puddle</p>	 <p>splash</p>
 <p>umbrella</p>	 <p>thunder</p>	 <p>lightning</p>
 <p>nature</p>	 <p>grass</p>	 <p>tree</p>

Check out this website to see signs 'in person'
<http://www.handspeak.com>

Calendar

June

15-17 Family Centred Early Intervention (FCEI) Congress, Austria
19 **Father's Day**

July

June 30 – July 3 AG Bell Convention- Denver, Colorado
5 Elks & Royal Purple Appreciation Luncheon

August

3 to 5 Mingle & Play Summer Program

September

Fall Programs begin

October

4 Mindful Parenting: Communication Connections 6:30 at BCFHRC
12 PEER Session 1 – Kindergarten Transition: Why Start So Early?
21 Canadian Association of Educators of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Annual Conference
21-22 BC Association of Speech-Language Pathologists & Audiologists Annual Conference



Staff Visits to Communities in BC & Beyond!

June

**Noreen Simmons, Teresa Kazemir, Dyan Spear –
 Family Centred Early Intervention (FCEI)
 3rd International Conference - Bad Ischl, Austria**
Charmaine Francis – AG Bell Convention - Denver, Colorado
Carolyn Hawrish – Kamloops
Suzie Fairweather – Duncan

July

**Dyan Spear & Suzie Fairweather-Port McNeill, Port Hardy,
 Courtenay, Hornby Island**

September

Carolyn Hawrish- Grand Forks
Cathy Luther-Port Alberni
Dyan Spear-Port Alberni, Vernon, Kelowna, Victoria
Suzie Fairweather-Vernon, Kelowna

October

Carolyn Hawrish-Williams Lake, Cranbrook, Terrace/Kitimat
Dyan Spear - Victoria

November

Carolyn Hawrish-Kamloops, Merritt, Clearwater, Logan Lake

Newsletter – Mail, Online or Email?

Would you prefer to receive our newsletter emailed to you? Are you aware that our newsletters are posted on our website? In our efforts to “Go Green” we offer the electronic distribution option to those interested.

To receive your newsletter this way, simply email info@bcfamilyhearing.com with the email address you would like the newsletter sent to AND the current name and address it is being sent to by mail in order to have our name removed from the list.

Reaching Out

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 Resource Centre
 15220 – 92nd Avenue
 Surrey, BC V3R 2T8
 Toll Free: 1-877-584-2827
 Phone (604)584-2827(voice),
 (604)584-9108 (tty), (604)584-2800
 (fax)

Executive Director: Noreen Simmons
 Editor: Cindy Adams

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.

Reference to any specific commercial products, process, or service by trade name, trademark, manufacturer, or otherwise, does not necessarily constitute or imply its endorsement, recommendation, or favoring by the BC Family Hearing Resource Society.

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.