

# 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/  
DEAFNESS.**

Spring 2019

## FAMILY FEATURE

### It Takes a Village to Raise a Deaf Child



*The Virani family: from left, Riaz, Liyanna, Aydin and Farrah*

My Name is Farrah, and I am married to a wonderful man named Riaz. Together we have a sweet six year old daughter named Liyanna and a very charming three year old boy named Aydin. Aydin was born with bilateral profound sensorineural hearing loss; in other words, he was born deaf.

*Continued on page 2*

#### **Meet the Viranis!**

***We first met them in 2016, when Aydin was just three months old! We have seen him blossom into a preschool-ready little boy. Mom, Farrah, shares her insight of what they've learned along the way of her family's journey.***

**Mingle & Play**  
**August 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup>**  
**Registration Open!**

#### **Vancouver Satellite Centre**

#262- 3665 Kingsway, Vancouver, BC, V5R 5W2  
PH: 604-428-7949 FAX: 604-428-7950  
EMAIL: [info@bcfamilyhearing.com](mailto:info@bcfamilyhearing.com)

#### **Main Surrey Centre**

15220 - 92nd Avenue, Surrey, BC, V3R 2T8  
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#### **Victoria Satellite Centre**

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## FAMILY FEATURE

### The Viranis – It Takes a Village...continued

To this date I remember sitting and holding Aydin during his Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR) test, and I could sense that something was just not right. After the audiologist was done, she looked at us and told us that Aydin had profound hearing loss. At that moment I could feel pieces of my world falling apart. What did that mean for Aydin's future? Would he miss out on hearing all the beautiful sounds in the world? How would the world treat Aydin differently because he is deaf? You see in the East Indian culture being deaf is seen as an imperfection; something to be pitied and hidden from the world. Having a deaf child is sometimes seen as a punishment for families because they might have had a negative past. Most families will seclude themselves from their communities out of fear of being judged or ridiculed. That night my husband and I cried!

I dealt with my grief by researching and learning everything I could about being deaf. The more I learned about being deaf, the more I realized my son was perfect just the way he was. He would experience the world just differently than hearing people. It was not something to be pitied, nor was it our fault in any way. In fact, it is a blessing that we would soon come to realize.

Aydin went on to have cochlear implant surgery at 11 months of age. His cochlear implants were activated a few

weeks later, on the actual day of my husband's 40<sup>th</sup> birthday. It will always be a momentous occasion for us. Every year since then we celebrate my husband's birthday with our son's hearing birthday. Of course, we have had many other celebration worthy moments with Aydin! Such as the first time he signed (his first sign word was dad!); or when he said mama for the first time; or when he took his little ukulele and strummed a few notes and said, "music mama."



Aydin has shown us a whole different world in experiencing and feeling sounds all around us. We don't hide the fact that our son is deaf; we openly and proudly share that he is deaf with our communities! However, we would not be where we are today, if it were not for all the amazing and tremendous support we received from our families and from the BC Family Hearing Resource Centre.

Once we decided to work with the BC Family Hearing Resource Centre, we met with Noreen Simmons, the director, at the Centre. She was wonderful and so very understanding with what we were going through as a family. It was not too long after that we met with Cathy Luther and Jen Gow, the parent support staff. By sharing their own stories about their experience with having a deaf child, we came to better understand what it would be like to raise a deaf child. They are

## FAMILY FEATURE

### The Viranis – It Takes a Village...continued

both amazing individuals and go above and beyond in providing support and help to the families at the Centre.

We have also been lucky to work with great speech language pathologists over the past two and a half years. Each one has taught us so much, and Aydin has thrived in his language development as a result. The one important thing we have learned from all our interventionists, is how to listen. Sometimes as adults, we are bombarded with so many sounds around us that we forget to just stop and really listen to everything around us! So now when Aydin or even Liyanna stops to say, “I hear that”, it brings joy to our hearts; and we stop to listen too!

We were blessed to have the opportunity to work with Karen Jackson, our sign language teacher. She really is an inspiration and a great deaf role model. She was patient and kind with us. She shared her own stories and took her time to teach us how to sign just basic everyday words. I hope one day I can be fluent in ASL!

Let’s not forget all the amazing groups that are offered at the BC Family Hearing Resource Centre. We attended Bouncy Babies when we first started at the centre. The group gave me a means



to share my grief, bond with other parents, and come to accept having a deaf child. Soon after we enrolled in Rhythm and Moves. Aydin loved the group; it gave him a chance to get into his music groove. Singing and dancing was a fun way to encourage Aydin to try out and learn different sounds and words. Most recently, we have been a part of the group, Partners and Playmates. The group has been a wonderful introduction to a preschool like atmosphere. Aydin has learned to express himself through play, art, music and sign. Parents get to learn ways on how to encourage language and speech development in their child, and then use those tips while engaging in different activities during class or at home.

Aydin has been a blessing to our family. He has opened a whole new world for us. Even though he is so little, he has taught us to be strong, to be patient, to listen, and to play and experience each moment to the fullest. Aydin has grown so much in his language and self-expression over the last two years. Without a doubt our families have been a big part of that; but there is also a saying that it takes a village to raise a child. The BC Hearing Resource Centre has been, and continues to be an important part of our village in helping us raise a deaf child!

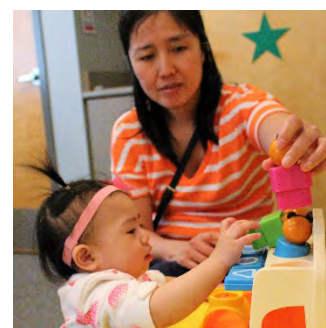
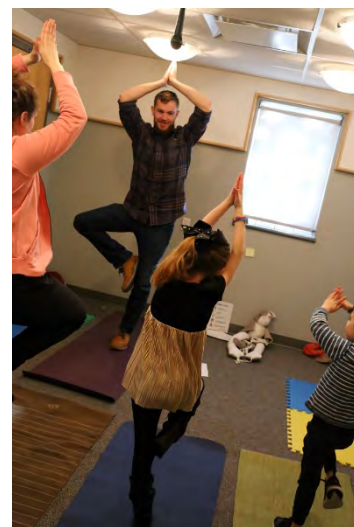
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*Would you like to share your family’s story? We would love to hear from you!  
Please advise your interventionist or contact our Centre.*

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# YOU AND YOUR DEAF AND HARD-OF-HEARING CHILD

## Family Fun Day



# YOU AND YOUR DEAF AND HARD-OF-HEARING CHILD

## Farm Field Trip



## OVER 35 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.



- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Anita Park</li> <li>• Beebe Cline</li> <li>• Boston Pizza Guildford</li> <li>• Burnaby Elks</li> <li>• Cache Creek Royal Purple</li> <li>• Cathy Costigan</li> <li>• CHHA-BC Chapter</li> <li>• Dairy Queen Fleetwood</li> <li>• Dan McQuillan</li> <li>• Emma Liffen</li> <li>• Fern Dunlop</li> <li>• Genevieve Hohnadel</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Google Matching Giving</li> <li>• J. McKittrick</li> <li>• Jason Low</li> <li>• Jim &amp; Sally Hurst</li> <li>• Karen Armitage</li> <li>• Kelowna Royal Purple</li> <li>• Keremeos Royal Purple</li> <li>• Lexie's Child Care</li> <li>• Monique Preer</li> <li>• Morris Family</li> <li>• Obviar Family</li> <li>• Paul &amp; Susan McFadyen</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Port Coquitlam Royal Purple</li> <li>• Prince George Royal Purple</li> <li>• Properties Plus Limited</li> <li>• Provincial Employees Fund</li> <li>• Salmon Arm Royal Purple</li> <li>• Saltwater Foods</li> <li>• Save On Foods Fleetwood</li> <li>• Smithers Royal Purple</li> <li>• United Way of the Lower Mainland</li> <li>• Vernon Royal Purple</li> </ul> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|



**We operate in partnership with:**

**Ministry of Children and Family Development, Government of BC**

**BC Early Hearing Program – Provincial Health Services Authority**

**We acknowledge the financial assistance of the Province of British Columbia**

**Thank you to our founders and long-time supporters:**

**Elks & Royal Purple lodges in British Columbia and across Canada**

### Wish List!

Our last issue featured the Wish List for the first time and what a great response we received! The **Port Coquitlam Lodge of the Canadian Royal Purple** purchased EVERYTHING on the list! Wow! That was so kind and generous!! The Vancouver Centre staff are overjoyed to be the recipients of their generosity. **THANK YOU!!**

#### Items we're wishing for:

- Leslie Patricelli children's books series
- 360° Conference Camera
- Nicky's Christmas Surprise Lift the Flap Book (out of print)



*Lisa & Sally (left) from the Port Coquitlam Canadian Royal Purple with Stefanie, Valerie and Jen of the Vancouver office, with the items received from the Wish List.*

Contact [info@bcfamilyhearing.com](mailto:info@bcfamilyhearing.com) or your interventionist if you would like to provide a wish list item.

## OVER 35 YEARS OF MAKING A DIFFERENCE

### Elks and Royal Purple Walkathon 2019

The BC Elks Lodges, along with the Canadian Royal Purple Lodges of BC, held their Annual Walkathon on **Sunday, May 26, 2019** at Aldergrove Regional Park.



We were blessed with blue skies resulting in a good crowd as we meandered through the lush trails. We started the day fueled with refreshments supplied by McDonald's. After the walk, the day was topped off with a delicious barbecue lunch supplied by Penguin Meats, Buy-Low Foods-Brookwood & Save-On Foods, and cooked up by members of the Langley Elks. Lucky winners received prizes donated by the BC Lions,



Vancouver Canucks, Vancouver Whitecaps FC, Marlan Holdings, Vancouver Giants Hockey Team, Langley Rivermen Hockey Team, Jagdeo Family-Sportcheck, Four Points by Sheraton Surrey, Karen Jackson, Carolyn & Bucke Hawrish, Jim McGregor (who has been our Emcee for the past 18 years!). We are happy to report a total of \$19,780 has been raised so far. Donations are being accepted until June 30<sup>th</sup>. Please help us reach our goal of \$20K. A sincere thank you to all who participated by attending the



walk, donating, volunteering, and supplying food and prizes. Special thanks to the hard working Walkathon Committee Members: Barb Gee (Chair), Sally Hurst, Steve Clark, Joheen Walker, Jock McGrandle and Cathy Cruickshank. A full list of walkathon donations will be provided in our next newsletter issue.



### Our Local Businesses Rock!



Barry of DQ Fleetwood

Our Centre is located in the Fleetwood area of Surrey. When we have events that require refreshments we ask businesses nearby if they would like the opportunity to provide them! Thankfully, we have been fortunate that **Save-On Foods, Dairy Queen and Boston Pizza** are quick to rise to the occasion.

Save-on Foods donated beautiful cupcakes and delicious fruit and vegetables for our Family Fun Day.

Dairy Queen provides our groups with ice cream and menu items at Halloween and more recently during our 3-day PEER event. Boston Pizza Guildford also provided Pizza for PEER!

**Thank You!!!**

## REACHING OUT TO COMMUNITY

### Penticton Elks Demonstrate Community Spirit

Dyan Spear, Teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing/Outreach Service Provider, and Suzie Fairweather, Sign Language Consultant travelled to the Okanagan recently. While in Penticton they had the opportunity to stop by the Penticton Elks Lodge. This visit was even more meaningful, as the Elks are hosting a fundraiser for a family receiving services from our Centre.



*Ashton posing with the bicycle for raffle*

Ashton is part of a small group of four children from BC to be the first to receive a unilateral cochlear implant as part of a larger Ontario research study.

The family has had to pay for all of their expenses themselves. The surgery alone is \$16,000 on top of travel and accommodation costs. The Elks have stepped up to help with these fundraisers.

They are hosting a silent auction with baskets made by Ashton's mom Cori, and knitting from his grandmother, in addition to a bike raffle, pancake breakfast, golf tournament and dinner with a live band on June 8<sup>th</sup>.

That's Community Spirit at its finest!



*Dyan and Suzie, 2<sup>nd</sup> from left (front & back), and Ashton's mom, Cori (far right) with members from the Elks and baskets for the Silent Auction.*

## GREAT GRADS ...WHERE ARE THEY NOW

### Riana Mulligan is Loving Being All Grown Up!

***Riana and her family have been a part of our Centre since 2000! They have remained steadfast supporters throughout the years. Riana's dad Ken, is one of our Board Members, and you will ALWAYS see him, along with mom, Jamie, and Riana at ALL of our events! Now that Riana is an adult, she wanted to share her memories and experiences with our readers. You can also read about the Mulligans when they were the "Feature Family" in our newsletter in 2001 [here](#).***



Hi! I'm Riana Mulligan and I have Cochlear Implants (CI) for both ears. Before I had a CI, I had hearing aids. I have bilateral hearing loss and have been deaf since birth. I am 19 years old. I graduated from BC Family in 2004 and from high school at Samuel Robertson Technical Secondary in Maple Ridge in 2017! When I was five months old, a hearing test at BC Children's Hospital confirmed I had a severe to profound hearing loss. I got a CI on my right ear when I was two years old. When I was ten, I got a CI for my left ear as my hearing had dropped significantly. I had continuous help as I grew up, having two CIs. I went to BC Family Hearing Resource Centre (BCFHRC) for



the Partners and Playmates program when I was two, then the PALS program until I was five. I had a Teacher of the Deaf, Terry (Parson-Tylka) and two teachers in the PALS program: Judy (Chrastina) and Sharon (Neufeld). If it wasn't for them helping, guiding and supporting me during my years there, I wouldn't be where I am today. It is such a great, loving and fun place to be at.

In elementary and high school, hearing resource teachers, Andrea Drummond and Donna Goodman, helped me through school. They supported me, gave me information, and guided me through school. I had lots of hearing appointments and lastly I got tons of love and support and from my incredible parents.

After I graduated from high school, my original plan was to go to Vancouver Community College for the Early Childhood Education Program because my dream was to work with kids. I love children; they are adorable and fun.

But during high school, before I graduated, I had a change of heart. I absolutely love to cook; I have been cooking since I was little. When I was 16, I joined my school's Culinary Chefs training program. I did that for two years. After high school, I wanted to keep up with cooking as it is my passion, and pursue my dream to become a prep cook. In August 2017, I went to Douglas College for a food services program to upgrade my skills and to work in the food industry.

I am a very energetic and outgoing person and I love to be active! I love going for walks, hiking, biking, camping and anything that's athletic. I joined the Outdoors Club at my high school to stay active. I also love photography. I love capturing the moment or taking beautiful pictures and editing them.

I love ASL! I love to sign as it gives me a way connect with my Deaf Community and my Deaf friends. I have also been learning to sign with Deaf Youth Today. They have helped me continue to grow my ASL skills and I am proud to use ASL.

I also love to travel. As a graduation gift from my mom and dad, we all traveled to Nashville and Memphis, Tennessee. It was such an amazing and memorable experience seeing incredible things; I would do it all over again! In November 2018, I went to Ottawa for the Canadian Hard of Hearing Association (CHHA) Youth forum. I got to reconnect with friends and make new friends. I loved it so much that I am also going to Quebec in May for the CHHA Conference and Trade Show in Montreal, with my hard of hearing friends.

I also like being with my friends. Another thing I enjoy is having movie and game nights with my mom and dad. I love it! My parents are the most amazing, supportive and awesome people I know.

In the summers of 2017 and 2018, I worked with Family Network for Deaf Children (FNDC) and Deaf Youth Today (DYT) at Hornby Island as a counselor in training (CIT). I worked with kids aged 9 to 14 years old and volunteered at day programs for kids aged 5 to 12 years old in Burnaby at Provincial Deaf and Hard of Hearing services. I love working with kids and teens; they are so much fun and energetic to work with. In summer 2018, I was given a chance to apply for a staff position at DYT summer camp. I currently work in the Kitchen at the Tradex Trade and Exhibition Centre in Abbotsford as a prep cook and dishwasher. I love my co-workers. It's a really fun and enjoyable environment to work in.

I am very excited for more of what my future holds for me. I am proud that I went to BC Family Hearing Resource Centre and to be deaf and hard-of-hearing. Without it I wouldn't be who I am today, doing amazing things.

## BITS & PIECES

### Student Practicum



Hello BC Family Hearing staff and friends!

My name is **Zoe Beukers**, and I am a second year graduate student completing my masters in speech language pathology (SLP) at the University of British Columbia. I am very excited to be here for eight weeks to complete my final practicum.

A little about me, in 2014 I received a Bachelor of Arts in Health Sciences from Simon Fraser University. Following that, I worked part time in sales, as a personal support worker and as a behaviour interventionist. During that time I also started taking evening ASL classes at Vancouver Community College. In 2015, I embarked on completing the long list of prerequisites for UBC's SLP program and was fortunate enough to be accepted. Fast forward to now, I'm a few weeks away from completing my program and look forward to working with both preschool and school age children. I know I'm going to learn so much from all of you, so thank you in advance.

### Registration for Fall Programs is Open Now!

**Attention Families:** You should have received an email from us with information about groups and programs for Fall that are appropriate for your child to attend. Please register early to establish minimum enrolment and ensure a spot for your child. If you did not receive an email from us about group registration for September, please check your junk mail folder first, otherwise, let us know and we will resend the information to you.

### Families Helping Families – Equipment Retention

We know keeping hearing equipment on your child can sometimes be a challenge. Did you find any strategies or accessories that helped you through this tricky time? We are hoping to create a box of resources to show and share with families. **Thank you to the Hohnadel family for donating of a variety of headbands!**

Please help us by donating retention accessories that you are no longer using, or photos of your child wearing them. Any of the following items would be really helpful:

- Hearing aid caps
- Headbands
- Retention clips
- Any home-made or adapted hats/headbands/clips
- Any other accessories

Please contact [info@bcfamilyhearing.com](mailto:info@bcfamilyhearing.com) or your interventionist if you have anything to pass along. Anything would be greatly appreciated!

\*Also, please remember, when you get a new accessory for your child's equipment, it is important to check with your audiologist to ensure it does not adversely affect your child's access to sound.\*

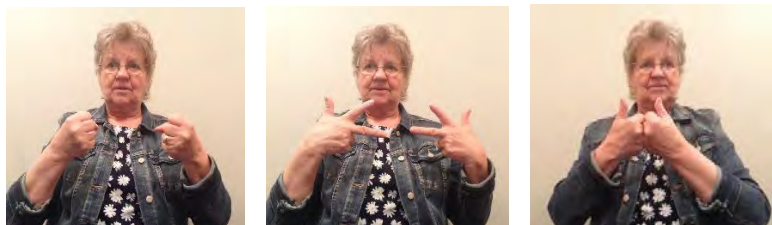
### The Shining Stars of BCFHRC

**ATTENTION current and alumni families:** we are looking for your "Shining Stars!"

Tell us why your deaf or hard-of-hearing child is a "Shining Star" and we will share it on our social media channels! If you wish to participate, contact us by email or on our website.

# SIGN LANGUAGE

## Out and About

<p>Stop</p> 	<p>Go</p> 	<p>Wait</p> 
<p>Car Accident</p> 		<p>Freeway</p> 
<p>Look Both Ways</p> 		<p>Walk</p> 
<p>Seatbelt</p> 	<p>Traffic Lights</p> 	

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

## Calendar

### April

- 4 Bloedel Conservatory Field Trip 10am in Vancouver
- 10 PEER Session #7 – 7pm
- 15 Farm Field Trip 9:30am- Eagle Acres
- 17 UBC Audiology Students visit BCFHRC
- 18 ASL with Sharon Neufeld, Nanaimo CDC
- 19 Good Friday – Centre Closed
- 22 Easter Monday – Centre Closed

### May

- 2-4 PEER 3 day Workshop
- 16 ASL with Sharon Neufeld, Nanaimo CDC
- 20 Victoria Day – Centre closed
- 26 Elks & Royal Purple Walkathon

### June

- 20 ASL with Sharon Neufeld, Nanaimo CDC
- 21 Family Fun Day- Beacon Hill Park, Victoria
- 24 Year End Park Trip

### July

- 1 Canada Day 🇨🇦 Centre Closed
- 17 New Brighton Park Day in Vancouver
- 18 ASL with Sharon Neufeld, Nanaimo CDC
- 20 Fraser Valley Get Together – Eagle Mountain Park

### August

- 5 BC Day 🇨🇦 Centre Closed
- 8-10 Mingle & Play
- 12 Centre closed in lieu of Mingle & Play Saturday

### September

- 2 Labour Day – Centre Closed
- 16 Fall Groups begin



### Reaching Out

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Dr. 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.

## Staff Visits to Communities in BC ...and beyond!

### April to June

**Charmaine Francis** - Quesnel

**Carolyn Hawrsh** – Deline, Northwest Territories;

Cranbrook, Kamloops, Kimberley, Prince Rupert, Smithers, Terrace

**Dyan Spear** –Courtenay, Duncan, Kelowna, Penticton, Summerland, Vernon, Victoria

**Emily Black** – Bella Bella

**Teresa Kazemir** – Port Hardy

**Alex Lay** – Prince George

**Stefanie Macaro** – Kimberley, Cranbrook

**Valerie Marshall** – Courtney/Comox, Prince Rupert, Smithers, Terrace

**Suzie Fairweather** – Penticton, Summerland



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