

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.**

Fall 2019

FAMILY FEATURE

Overcoming Obstacles with Help from BC Family Hearing

by Sarah Traun



Sheldon, Sarah, Rebecca & Lily Traun

The Traun family has done what it takes to be actively involved in early intervention services in spite of many obstacles, including their daughter's complicated medical needs and living in Hope, a small community in the eastern Fraser Valley. Teresa Kazemir, Speech-Language Pathologist is their primary therapist at BCFHRC. Read more about their journey, and what they've overcome to get to where they are today.

My husband Sheldon and I both grew up in small towns and we live in Hope, BC with our two daughters; Lily is five, and Rebecca is almost three. We did not know anyone who is deaf or hard-of-hearing until we had Rebecca.

Rebecca was born with several challenges, and the first one we found out about was her hearing. She did not pass her newborn hearing screening, and at six weeks old we found out that she had a permanent severe hearing loss in both ears. I was initially devastated and so sad at the thought that she would never be able to hear what her name sounded like. I felt guilty, and I cried a lot for many weeks. I didn't know what I was supposed to do to help her.

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Warmest Wishes of the Season!



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FAMILY FEATURE

Overcoming Obstacles...continued

Then a short time after receiving her diagnosis we were contacted by a Parent Guide who had a teenage daughter with similar hearing levels. That was an extremely inspiring and comforting conversation that helped me calm down and relax a bit.

Then at ten weeks old Rebecca was hospitalized with severe anemia and failure to thrive. At this time she was also found to have a cleft palate.

When Rebecca was hospitalized, it changed my perspective on her hearing loss a lot. That was a big shifting point for my grief, as I was forced to advocate for her related to her hearing access (e.g. with nurses talking to her in the hospital when she couldn't hear them). It forced me to "put my big girl pants on" and start to move forward.

Rebecca went through the first two years of her life with basically no immune system, and undiagnosed recurring bone marrow failure. This meant we had to take extreme cautions to avoid viruses – we could not attend any public events. Becca had very little social interaction with other people. This was made even more challenging because it meant keeping Lily, our healthy, active preschooler, away from germs as well.

We had a lot of medical and therapy appointments during those first two years and continue to! Becca was fit with bilateral hearing aids at 12 weeks old. During the first year, Rebecca became very orally averse and required a nasogastric (NG) feeding tube. Her cleft palate was surgically repaired when she was 14 months old, and after the repair, we aggressively worked on helping Becca learn to eat orally and not be dependent on her tube. We were supported

by the Speech Language Pathologist (SLP) and Occupational Therapist (OT) from our local CDC (the Fraser Valley Child Development Centre).

Throughout all of this, we were actively engaged in early intervention services through BC Family Hearing Resource Centre. We started weekly online sessions once we got home from the hospital, when Rebecca was four months old. Those sessions were a big source of support for me. It was so helpful knowing I had someone I could talk with each week about Becca. I would ask questions, share challenges and frustrations as well as successes – it was someone to lean on.

Shortly after starting early intervention we began individual sign language sessions, also online once a week. I received a lot of resistance from people close to us about using sign language with Rebecca, and it actually challenged me to advocate for Rebecca even more. Part of that was learning as much sign language as I possibly could and exposing her to it. I did my best to make signing a normal part of my communication with Becca. Becca never really signed back to me in those early days, but understood a lot of signs, and was very receptive to me signing to her.

In spite of her hearing levels and her cleft palate and oral aversion, Rebecca has always shown us that she wanted to talk. She has always enjoyed listening, and listening/spoken language is clearly her preferred modality, in spite of being exposed to sign language from a young age. Even so, acquiring speech has been a difficult process given her other challenges.

FAMILY FEATURE

Overcoming Obstacles...continued

When Becca was almost two, we noticed she was starting to sign more and her progress with spoken language slowed. Shortly after this change, during a routine hearing test with her audiologist, it was discovered that her hearing access had decreased significantly. We then started the process to determine if a cochlear implant (CI) would improve her access. This was all while still dealing with her ongoing health issues. After several months, in August 2019 Becca was implanted with one CI on her right ear. Since activation, Rebecca has exceeded all expectations and flourished with her CI. For the first time in a year, she is once again making progress with her spoken language development. We truly feel it was the best choice for her. She continues to use a hearing aid in her left ear.



Today Becca is almost three. She is very social, strong-willed, and feisty, with a playful sense of humour. She is medically complicated, but is starting to thrive with language and communicates quite fluently using a combination of signed and spoken language. With all of Becca's challenges in her short life so far, I cannot say enough about the early interventions that are available. They can make such a difference in your child's life and in their development. It can be challenging when you live far away from others, but one thing I found helpful was reading these newsletters, seeing inside other people's lives. This is especially important when you live in a small community that doesn't have any other hard-of-hearing children.

One thing I've learned about is the importance of advocating. Don't be scared to advocate for your children. Don't feel that you're inconveniencing people. I have found that when I do stand up and advocate, I'm always surprised about the positive response I get. My other advice is to embrace your child, and love them no matter what their hearing levels or challenges in life. The one thing they want and need the most is to be loved.

***Would you like to share your family's story?
Please advise your interventionist or contact our Centre.***

YOU AND YOUR DEAF AND HARD-OF-HEARING CHILD

Fall at BCFHRC



The Pumpkin Patch!

YOU AND YOUR DEAF AND HARD-OF-HEARING CHILD

Fall at BCFHRC



Hallowe'en!



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.



- | | | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACT/UCT Kelowna • Adera Foundation • Agatha Cluff • Alia Kallo • Amanda Lemay • Anita Park • Ashley Cochran • BC Royal Purple Association • Beebe Cline • Black Bond Books-Valley Fair Mall Maple Ridge • Bob & Lynne Moore • Caldor Foundation • Campbell Family • Canadian Online Giving- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Monique Preer • Carla MacAulay • Cathy Cruickshank • Cindy Adams • Commercial Landscape • Elks & Royal Purple Fund for Children | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emma Liffen • Graham & Cicely Bryce • Henry Pierce • Ivana Kranjec • Dr. Jeff Small • Jim & Sally Hurst • Dr. Joan Ford • Joan Popovich • John and Claire Nicola • Joseph Laleggia • Judy Chrastina • Justine Kendall • KRLT Holdings • Karen Armitage • Kathleen Trenker • Kelsey Sherriff • Kirk Bridger • Li Chen • Lillooet Royal Purple • Lisa Cable • Nicole Bowes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nicola Wealth Management • Private Giving Foundation • Obviar Family • Paul McFadyen • Paula MacAuley • PayPal Giving Fund • Port Coquitlam Royal Purple • Properties Plus Ltd. • Rick Moore • Rina Dulku • Robert & Fern Dunlop • Salmon Arm Elks • Sukhbir Kaur • Susan & Gordon Thompson • Dr. Susan Small • Teresa Kazemir • Terrace Royal Purple • United Way of the Lower Mainland <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dan McQuillan • Vancity • Victoria Tan |
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We operate in partnership with:

Ministry of Children and Family Development, Government of BC

BC Early Hearing Program – Provincial Health Services Authority

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Thank you to our founders and long-time supporters:

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OVER 35 YEARS OF MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Annual General Meeting 2019

Our Society's Annual General Meeting was held on the evening of November 20th, 2019. It's always lovely to have past & present families, staff, board members and supporters join us for this special event.

President, Dr. Charles Laszlo chaired the meeting, with presentations from Dr. Noreen Simmons, Executive Director, and Ron Moody of D'Abadie Moody, our accounting firm. Our Board of Directors was elected for the upcoming year. Following this, we lit up our rooftop with a festive light display to acknowledge our donors and supporters, and spent some time socializing and sharing refreshments.

Here is our Board of Directors for next year:

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2019-2020

Dr. Charles Laszlo, President
 Dr. Graham Bryce, Vice-President
 Agatha Cluff, Treasurer
 Rick Moore, Past President
 Barbara Gee, Director
 Rosalind Ho, Director
 Alia Kallo, Director
 Doug Klassen, Director
 Ken Mulligan, Director
 Joan Popovich, Director
 Flo Sala, Director
 Dr. Susan Small, Director

Giving Tuesday

THANK YOU everyone for supporting our efforts this year on Giving Tuesday. We set an ambitious goal of raising \$10,000 and met exactly that goal!!

If you would like to help us exceed this goal before the end of the year, you can still make a gift.

Donations can be made online at <http://www.bcfamilyhearing.com/get-involved/make-a-gift/>

Thank you for helping us "reach for the stars!"

Wishlist

Often individuals and agencies prefer to gift items instead of monetary donations. For this reason, we have a "Wish List" of items that are needed from time to time. If you wish to make a non-monetary donation, please consider gifting our Centres an item from the list:

- Dollhouse
- Videoconference Camera
- Michael's gift cards to purchase arts and crafts for Victoria Centre

Please contact info@bcfamilyhearing.com if you would like to provide a wish list item.

REACHING OUT TO COMMUNITY

BCFHRC Welcomes the Hanen Program to our Centre

by Courtney Lawrence, SLP



The Hanen Centre is a Toronto-based, non-profit agency committed to promoting the best possible language, social and literacy skills in young children.

From Nov 13th to 15th BCFHRC hosted the Hanen workshop ***It Takes Two to Talk***. This workshop is a Speech-Language Pathologist (SLP) training program designed to support parents of children with language delays. It focuses on interaction and language strategies that parents can use in everyday routines and play, to support their children's language development. It includes learning how to be a facilitator of a parent workshop, as well as how to integrate the training into individual sessions.

Five SLPs from our agency participated in this session. Many of our other staff have previously taken this workshop, as our agency has a long-standing relationship with learning about and using various Hanen resources.

We also had SLPs join us from the community including the Vancouver School District, Public Health Units and Child Development Centres, and others from private practice clinics. We were able to offer these SLPs a tour of our building and speak to them about how our building differs in its accessibility for people who are deaf and hard-of-hearing.

While the language strategies taught are probably what you have heard your interventionist talk about, this workshop provided a nice framework to talk through these strategies and specifically use video modeling to provide feedback to parents.

Don't be surprised if your interventionist brings up the idea of using videotaping during your sessions, as research supports this method as a great training tool for all adults.

The first strategy taught in this program is **OWL: Observe, Wait, and Listen** to your child, to see what they are interested in, and then join in with them. The next step is to talk about what they are doing at their level and interpret or expand their communication. This is a great way for your young child to learn new language or try to imitate you talking about things, whether they are experiencing language delays or not.

Feel free to investigate this program yourself at www.hanen.org. You can also buy the parent guidebook if you want more information on these language strategies. Your interventionist can guide you through these steps as well.

REACHING OUT TO COMMUNITY

The Northwest Territories

In April 2019, Specialized Outreach Service Provider, Carolyn Hawrish LSLS Cert. AVT®, travelled to the Northwest Territories to meet with a family and their community service providers. This was a new frontier for BC Family Hearing! Carolyn shares about her adventure below...



Nestled between the Mackenzie Mountains of the Rockies to the South and the Franklin Mountains to the North, on the shore of the Mackenzie River is the town of Norman Wells. Famous for its amazing natural beauty, oil industry and the historical CANOL Trail, this remote place with its warm and friendly people can be accessed only by ice road, water and air. At 57 degrees latitude, the sun sets around 10pm in early April with about 14 hours of daylight; while during the deep winter months, it is only light from approximately 11am to 3pm. There are two stores in town, a few restaurants and two hotels. The largest hub in the region, Norman Wells (pop. 800) is surrounded by smaller, more remote communities which

together make up the Sahtu Region. With a total population of about 3000, any individuals needing specialized services must fly to Inuvik or Yellowknife to meet with professionals such as audiologists or ear nose and throat doctors. Some professionals such as speech and language pathologists fly into the area to provide much needed specialized services to infants all the way to senior citizens once or twice a year!



Marty Ann & Charlotte Bayha, with Carolyn

The family returned to Norman Wells in the summer of 2017, and BCFHRC continued to provide services to the family via tele-practice, but Marty Ann was very keen to have someone come to her area to provide more information to her region. In anticipation of Charlotte starting Kindergarten in September 2019, Marty Ann and Collin advocated and obtained funding through "Jordan's Principle." As a result, I was honoured to be welcomed by the Sahtu Division Educational Council to visit the community and provide in-service training to Charlotte's dedicated and resourceful professional team at Mackenzie Mountain School. While in the area I was also able to meet with special education teachers at Ehtseo Ayha School and Chief Albert Wright School in the smaller communities of Deliné and Tulita, respectively. Special thanks to Wanda Quigg of the Sahtu Divisional Educational Council, Mike Duclos, Principal at Mackenzie Mountain School, Dean Bernard and Karen Christiansen of Chief Albert Wright School and Kim Hagarty and her team at Ehtseo Ayha School all for providing such a warm welcome.

A comment from Marty Ann:

"I can't go without saying how thankful we are for you & BC Family for all your support. It has truly made a difference for Charlotte and us. We have a strong foundation built with the support from you all to continue to make positive changes and support Charlotte in her hearing/access needs. We send our heartfelt thanks to you all." xoxo Marty Ann on behalf of my family.



Carolyn in Norman Wells



L-R: Carolyn Hawrish, Angela Denslow, Teacher Aid, Maryjane MacDonald, Teacher Aide, Trent Waterhouse, Learning Resource Teacher, Teresa (Snowbird) Kakfwi, Kindergarten Teacher of Mackenzie Mountain School, Norman Wells, NWT

BITS & PIECES

Introducing Emmi!



We are tickled pink to welcome the newest member to our BC Family 'family'. Say hello to Emmi! She is the first child for Amanda Lemay, Speech Language Pathologist at our Victoria Satellite Centre, and husband Matt. Emmi arrived a little late for turkey dinner on Thanksgiving Sunday, October 13th! Welcome to our world Emmi!

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.



Clowning Around



Former staff members, now retired, Sharon Neufeld and Judy Chrastina, found time to clown around while attending the Annual General Meeting.

SIGN LANGUAGE

Restaurant Related Signs

 <p>Restaurant</p>	 <p>Order</p>	 <p>Hungry</p>
 <p>Full</p>	 <p>Table</p>	 <p>Colouring</p>
 <p>Food</p>	 <p>Drink</p>	 <p>Reservation</p>
 <p>Server</p>	 <p>Menu</p>	 <p>Delicious</p>

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

Calendar

December

- 4 PEER Session #3 – Surrey Centre 7pm
- 16 Winter Party – Surrey Centre – ALL WELCOME!
- 20 to Jan 5 Holiday Break- No Groups at Surrey Centre
- 25 **Merry Christmas!** All Centres closed
- 26 Boxing Day All Centres closed

January

- 1 Happy 2020! New Year's Day – All Centres Closed
- 6 Programs resume for the Winter/Spring session
- 8 PEER Session #4

February

- 12 PEER Session #5
- 17 Family Day – All Centres Closed

March

- 11 PEER Session #6
- 12 Foundations for Professionals-BCFHRC Surrey
- 13-14 Foundations for Families – BCFHRC Surrey
- 17 **Happy St. Patrick's Day** ♣

April

- 8 PEER Session #7
- 10 Good Friday – All Centres Closed
- 12 Happy Easter
- 13 Easter Monday – All Centres Closed
- 16 18 BCFHRC Sign Language Workshop
- 30 May 1, 2 PEER 3 Day Workshop



Staff Visits to Communities in BC (October to December)

Carolyn Hawrish - Fort St. John, Dawson Creek, Pouce Coupe
Dyan Spear - Duncan, Nanaimo, Powell River, Sechelt, Victoria
Stefanie Macaro - Cranbrook, Kimberly
Valerie Marshall - Nelson, Rossland
Emily Black - Terrace, Smithers, Houston
Charmaine Francis - Quesnel
Teresa Kazemir - Hope



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Reaching Out

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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.

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.

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