

THE VOICE



For the friends of Children's Hearing & Speech Centre of BC

Issue #2 Spring 2015

www.childrenshearing.ca

Now serving families across British Columbia

This spring marks an exciting beginning: We are launching a new distance delivery practice that provides families from across BC with access to a teacher of the deaf and hard of hearing or listening and spoken language specialist and other specialists at the Centre. For BC families all that's needed is a login ID, an Internet connection and a laptop or a mobile device.

The launch of the new distance delivery practice brings us significantly closer to our vision: The day when every deaf and hard of hearing child in British Columbia, regardless of where in the province they live, has the opportunity to learn to listen and speak.

Helping us expand our reach is a platform called Medeo. It works much like Skype and FaceTime but is designed for professional consultation. It's easy to use and features:

- Scheduling tools
- Video conferencing
- Note capturing and sharing



[New online delivery tool enables children from across British Columbia to join our First Words Program and learn to listen and speak.](#)

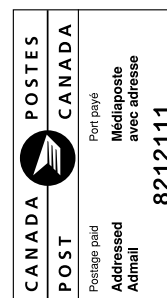
- Document, image and video sharing
 - Records management
 - Privacy
- "This is a game changer for children and families throughout BC who want and need our services," says Janet Weil, executive director and principal at Children's Hearing & Speech Centre of BC. "With Medeo, the Centre is portable; we are as close as a laptop and an Internet connection." This is terrific news for families who are stretched by an untenable commute, who live in the Fraser Valley, on the Island or in the Interior.

The Sears family in Kamloops has been working with the Centre to test drive Medeo and gives the new platform a big thumbs up, saying it's easy to use and reliable. Three-year-old Charlotte Sears has severe hearing loss in her right ear and moderate-to-severe loss in her left ear. She is enrolled in the First Words Program via Medeo. "I feel as if I have Loretta

(listening and spoken language specialist) in my back pocket," says Camilla, Charlotte's mother. "We have weekly sessions with Loretta from home, from my office and she has joined, via my iPad, to provide input in meetings with my daughter's daycare providers and other professionals."

Though the mediated connection is fantastic, the face-to-face connection remains integral. Home visits continue to be a key component of the Centre's distance delivery practice.

The Medeo practice is made possible with funding from donors like you. 🦋



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These donors went to court for us

On March 21st a group of lawyers met in court, or rather on the court; the basketball court. The charity tournament pitted law firms against law firms, barristers against solicitors and youth against experience. And the winners are deaf and hard of hearing children receiving services at Children's Hearing & Speech Centre of BC.

The Law Society of British Columbia's annual basketball tournament raised close to \$70,000 (wow) for two local non-profit organizations: Children's Hearing & Speech Centre of BC and Night Hoops. "We are so thankful to be one of the benefiting charities. This is a tremendous contribution to our school and our students," says the Centre's executive director and principal Janet Weil. "And it is huge for the children. What they learn now, in these first years of life will benefit them for a lifetime. Thank you. Thank you."

Funds raised through the tournament will support the Centre's Speech and Language Program (SLP). More than 50 per cent of the children in the Centre-based programs have complex and challenging needs in addition to their hearing loss. SLP is designed to meet their unique needs, giving them one-on-one language therapy that focuses on the mechanics of speech and language, on building skills in areas of processing language, and on learning how to express themselves and improve articulation.

The Hooplaw Tournament is an enormous undertaking. We want to thank the numerous sponsors, participants, UBC Law volunteers and the event host, Vancouver College. 🦋

Oh my word how things have changed

Ten years ago—March 2005—the Government of British Columbia announced a province-wide program to screen hearing of newborn babies.

Newborn screening has resulted in earlier intervention for children. We are often asked if it is too early for a child to start services. The answer is no. The earlier a child receives services to address the effects of hearing loss, the more time there is to influence positive learning outcomes. A young child's brain has the flexibility to learn how to listen, resulting in age-equivalent language skills, but it must happen during the first five years of life and the first three years are the most critical. This period is a precious window of opportunity.

A child whose hearing loss is detected early can often join a hearing mainstream school in Kindergarten or in the early elementary school years with academic and social readiness, as well as the confidence needed to integrate successfully with peers.

As a result of newborn screening, the Centre sees more parents with babes in arms. That means the First Words and Mother Goose programs are abuzz. We'd like to introduce a few of our youngest students.

The Mother Goose Program is made possible with funding from donors like you.



For three-year-old Leo, pictured here with his mom Jacquie, doing the actions to songs he's learning in Mother Goose is so much fun.



Noah is 23 months old. He is singing his favourite song: The Wheels on the Bus. He is pictured here with grandparents Wendy and Garth.



Seven-month old Liam attends Mother Goose with his mom Karen. He hears the music. You can tell by the smile on his face. He's been coming to Mother Goose since he was two months old.

How our remarkable, new playground got its jumpstart

When retired Canadian Tire dealer

John Pike came to visit his daughter Pam, a volunteer, at the Centre, he had the opportunity to observe an occupational therapy session with a four-year-old child in our pre-kindergarten class. John asked a lot of good questions about why this service was needed and how many children benefited from it. He learned that children with hearing loss might have additional learning needs, including sensory and central processing disorders, and balance, focus and fine and gross motor challenges. All of those impact their ability to learn and participate fully in school.

Our occupational therapy program addresses the various areas of learning challenges but a thoughtful and well-designed play area can stretch and reinforce those skills. John noticed the playground looked, shall we say, tired. He said the children needed something better, something permanent. Being a man of action, John built a team and got to work.

George Vallance, the Canadian Tire dealer in Langley, found himself in the lead of the wonderfully creative, no-holds-barred team John had assembled. They had big ideas.



Plush durable groundcover, an activity area, an interactive forest, a xylophone station, and street-hockey heaven add up to one remarkable playground.

Instead of scaling back, George picked up the phone. When he was done, all Lower Mainland Canadian Tire stores supported the project. The budget grew to \$50,000. Many might have stopped there, but the ideas kept flowing. So George called Jumpstart, The Canadian Tire Foundation, and the folks there jumped on board and agreed to match the local dealers' commitment. Now the team had \$100,000 to work with. At this point, George had another idea and he

made another call. This one was to his friends at Tire Stewardship BC. The folks there said 'yes!' and provided the surface for the playground.

One hundred volunteers from the Lower Mainland stores helped demolish, build and paint the play area. The use of volunteers meant the secured funds could be used to buy the best possible equipment, from supplier and designer Jeff Musson of Habitat Systems, as well as extras like the

[continued on back page >>](#)

DONATION FORM

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I give permission for Children's Hearing & Speech Centre of BC to contact me in the future using the information I have provided on this form. I understand the information will never be sold or traded to other organizations.

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I wish to become a Monthly Partner & support Children's Hearing & Speech Centre with a gift each month.

By becoming a Monthly Giving Partner you will:

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- Be able to change your monthly donation amount at any time or cancel it. You will maintain full control of your investment. Call 604-437-0255



outdoor musical instruments and the interpretive forest built by Phil Milton.

“The project has all the components for a Canadian Tire charitable undertaking,” says George. It involves kids who face roadblocks in their development, promotes physical activity, and provides opportunities for Canadian Tire staff to get involved.

Then, just when it looked as though George and the team had completely outdone themselves they found illustrator Gabriella Galvez who has dipped her brushes in paint to add colour and whimsy to the playground.

What’s a playground without a garden? That’s what John Minty of John Minty Designs thought. He and Nate Begin of Pure Landscapes

designed and planted a fragrant herb garden that will be used for a variety of learning opportunities from classroom cooking activities, art projects, plant life cycle or bugs and insects.

“It has been amazing to see these folks at work,” says Janet Weil, the Centre’s executive director and principal. “They make a decision and bingo, bango, bongo they get it done, and with a smile.” She adds, “And the kids, oh my goodness, they love their new playground.”

Next time you visit the Centre, take a turn on the rolling slide. It will make your day.



Scroll our facebook wall for more photos. You'll find us at www.facebook.com/chascbc

Vision 2020

To give a voice to deaf and hard of hearing children across BC, by:

1. Strengthening the core by increasing access to our one-on-one instruction programs from twice a week per child to five times a week per child.
2. Making services accessible throughout BC by expanding tele-practice delivery and opening a satellite site in the Fraser Valley.
3. To continue supporting parents who need a helping hand to pay for tuition fees and specialized services.



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PLEASE ACCEPT MY DONATION OF

\$50 \$75 \$100 \$250 \$500 \$1,000

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Enclosed is my cheque/money order.

I have left a gift to Children's Hearing & Speech Centre of BC in my Will.

Please send me information about leaving a gift to Children's Hearing & Speech Centre of BC in my Will.

I would like to become a Hearing Hero.

I wish to remain anonymous.

Please return the completed form or make your donation online

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