



For over 60 years, Children's Hearing and Speech Centre of BC's primary focus has been on providing listening and spoken language therapy to children with hearing loss. Our mission is to equip these children with the necessary skills and confidence to reach their utmost potential.

Children start learning language while still in the womb. Babies learn about their world through all the sounds around them. If a child has difficulty hearing, they will likely have difficulty learning to talk, and learning to read. Hearing also plays a key role in a child's social and emotional development. It is important to recognize the signs of hearing loss early so children can receive all the supports they need to be successful.

## Independent - Chatterbox - Fearless

### This is Everly's story



Pre-birth genetic testing showed an abnormality with a range of possible outcomes, but further tests were inconclusive. Everly's diagnosis was exceedingly rare. Her parents were first told she was blind, and then learned she was also deaf.

"As a parent you never think that this could happen to your family. Everly is our first child. Initially we mourned the loss of our expectations of parenthood, and as first-time parents we had no time to prepare.

We worried about her development, and being able to learn new things, but since she was incredibly young, we used a lot of touch and would take her hands to feel things. From the beginning we narrated our lives to her. We talked through everything with her, which we believe helped Everly learn more quickly.

When Everly was first diagnosed we were given three choices for early intervention services. ASL was going to be more difficult, due to the fact Everly is blind, so we chose spoken language as our route. Using her voice was probably the best way for Everly to learn to communicate."

From the get-go, she was very curious. She is positive, strong, and is her own best advocate. She'll tell you to repeat something if she doesn't understand or to speak louder. She was already changing her own hearing aid batteries at the age of three.

Everly will be five soon. She is a happy child and is an incredible energy to be around. She brings positivity and joy wherever she is. Everly's vocabulary is particularly good, she communicates well and can understand what her brother, who is just beginning to speak, is saying, even when we (Everly's parents) don't.



Our experience with CHSC has been amazing. It's really a wonderful centre for any child. We were worried about Everly acquiring language as we didn't understand how this would all work. However, CHSC really got us on track. The therapists, the teachers, and all the staff are amazing. The education they provide the children is fantastic with a great curriculum and structure.

We looked at putting Everly in a competitive private school but were worried about her fitting in and any issues that might arise. CHSC assisted with the transition to the new school. When Everly left CHSC, she was given an aptitude test where she scored above average. This is a testament to the education and approach provided by CHSC.

Everly is learning French and Mandarin. She is singing songs in 3 or 4 different languages. She is excited to go to school and equally excited to see her friends every day. From starting with First Words at CHSC to where Everly is today, the process put in place by CHSC to have each child succeed, works.

*"My wish for Everly is to have a happy life. I want her to enjoy life". (Everly's dad)*

## A Message from our Executive Director

Unlock Potential - Change Lives - Build Futures

As we reflect on the journey of the Children's Hearing and Speech Centre of BC over the past 60 years and particularly the 2022-2023 fiscal year, we are filled with gratitude and excitement for the future.

We've implemented a new leadership model, added staff and skilled Teachers of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing which are all aimed to enrich the services we provide.

We are steadfast in our commitment to provide educational and intervention services from infancy through high school graduation for families seeking to support their children with the skills to listen and speak.

Living with hearing loss can be challenging, especially for young children. While technology has made it possible for children to hear, your generosity enables our team of dedicated teachers and specialists to support the entire family in developing the spoken language skills required for the child to connect, flourish, and thrive.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dawn McKenna".

Dawn McKenna  
Executive Director

**An anonymous \$20,000 matching donation means your gift today is doubled, creating 2X the impact for CHSC's children and families!**

**Donate. Connect. Transform.**

**HELP GIVE CHILDREN WITH HEARING LOSS A VOICE!**