

BC HANDS & VOICES

What works for your child is what makes the choice right.

Beaming Hands & Voices!!

by **Rosalind Ho**

We had a very successful BC Hands & Voices (H&V) Family Social on Sunday, May 31. There were 49 people there, a chattering crowd that included parents, grandparents, children, H&V Committee members, and other volunteers. Children were everywhere, giggling and chattering.

Several attendees commented upon the feeling of instant connection they felt with others who had raised or are raising children with hearing loss. A grandmother excitedly described how she felt the entire "room was buzzing - you could just feel it!"

One parent commented that she found it easier to discuss things with other parents who also had

continued on page 2



BC Hands & Voices is a parent-driven, non-profit organization dedicated to supporting families with children who are D/deaf or hard of hearing. We are a parent/professional collaborative group that is unbiased towards communication modes and methods, believing that families will make the best choices for their child if they have access to good information and support. Our goal is to support families in achieving successful outcomes for their children.

www.bchandsandvoices.com

www.handsandvoices.org

Contact Us: info@bchandsandvoices.com

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children with hearing loss that she could not or would not ask medical professionals. Another parent commented, "There are so many children – I thought mine was the only one." It was the discovery of a new community that could figure importantly in the days to come.

It was a scorching hot Sunday afternoon, so the air-conditioned rooms were crowded as nobody ventured out into the blazing parking lot. Parents were everywhere with their little ones; young mothers pushing strollers of wide-eyed babies and affectionate dads rocking their toddlers. A parent witnessed "two dads [who] were just talking so intensely." Late in the afternoon, I espied one father tenderly watching over his sleeping son.

Overall, it was a fun, enjoyable day for the children with family sketches, nametags with colourful stickers, face painting – and lots and lots of food! There was so much food leftover that the cleanup crew wrapped up bundles of bread, cheese, and hams for some families to take home. Parents also deemed the day a success, a day of fun as well as a unique opportunity to connect with other parents of young children with hearing loss. One attendee summed up the whole day in a short statement: "You could tell everybody was just there to take in everything they could and to have fun."

BC HANDS & VOICES FAMILY SOCIAL

When: May 31, 2009 (Sunday)

Where: Courtesy of BC Family Hearing Resource Centre
15220 - 92nd Avenue, Surrey



Did you know...?



One of our readers recently told us about “tube riders,” which were



designed by a family in Tennessee “to decorate, individualize and de-stigmatize your own or your children’s hearing aids or

cochlear implants.” Their website is www.otocool.com.

There are also two companies in Canada that sell similar products. “Ear Gear” (www.gearforears.com) was designed by a family in BC – it is decorative, keeps hearing aids dry and clean, and can also attach to a child’s clothing so the hearing aids don’t get lost if a child pulls them out.



“Ear Wear” (www.ear-wear.com), designed by a jewelry-maker in Ontario who is herself hard of hearing, is meant to change hearing aids into “a fashion statement.” Ear Wear “comes in a wide variety of terrific colours and styles so you can match your outfit or your hairstyle easily.”

Please note that BC Hands & Voices does not endorse any particular products. Also, please keep in mind that small items may present a choking hazard for young children.

From Families to Families



MOULDS, MOULDS AND MORE MOULDS

By Jenn Kipling

I have a collection of hearing aid ear moulds 9 to be exact. As a new born Connor started wearing his aids at 3 months, from there it seemed like his ears revolved around his moulds! About every 6 weeks we would get a new pair. This meant that off we’d trot to the audiologist every 4 weeks to get fitted and then back again in another two weeks to pick up the moulds. The frequency of getting fitted for ear moulds slowed after Connor turned a year old. For the next year from 1 to 2 we’ve only had to go get fitted 3 times. Now some advise for parents enjoy the ear mould fittings in the first year when the babies are getting fitted they are generally calm and hold still. In my experience this last year Connor is constantly squirming and does not like to get fitted! I have been told that this is just a phase so my fingers are crossed hoping that Connor at 2 will be much like he was at 6 months when he gets fitted the next time.

Living With Hearing Loss in One Ear

by Diane Goodman

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I am 63 years old, and have a thirteen year old grandson who is hard of hearing.

I first noticed my hearing loss in 1990, when I was 44 years old. I was staying the night at a friend's house, and was irritated by the ticking of the alarm clock. However, when I rolled over in the bed, I couldn't hear the clock at all. Around the same time, I attended a CNIB workshop and was blindfolded so I could get some idea of what it would be like to be blind. Once the blindfold went on, I became not only blind, but extremely hard of hearing! I hadn't realized how much I depended on visual clues to compensate for my hearing loss.

Three years passed before I actually had my hearing checked.

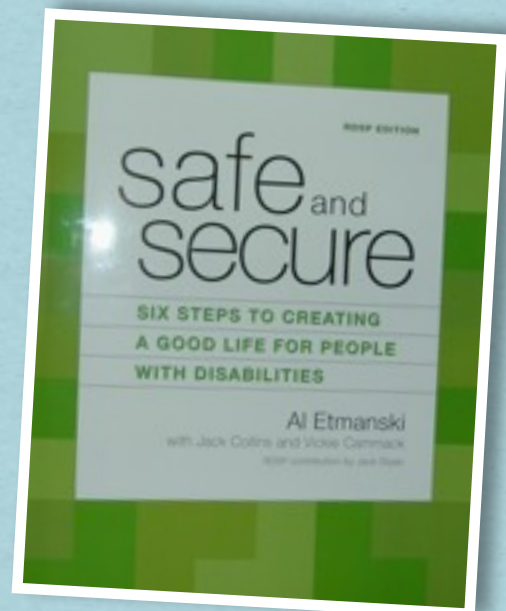
Although the findings indicated I did indeed have a hearing loss in my right ear, I chose not to get a hearing aid. Over the years, I have learned some tricks to aid my hearing loss. I always try to walk and/ or sit so people are on my left side. Because my loss is mostly in the lower tones, I have the most difficulty hearing my husband. He also has a hearing loss, so we have some house rules. For example, don't talk to me if you can't see me, and call my name to get my attention before you talk to me. Also, because my hearing loss is only in one ear, and I have trouble

locating where sound is coming from, tell me where you are! Crowds are difficult. When I am talking to a person in a noisy environment, I try to position myself so they talk into my good ear. Unfortunately, because people like to make eye contact, we end up turning in circles.

Because I don't wear a hearing aid, I have to inform people of my hearing loss. I am always pleasantly surprised at how accommodating people are. Everyone always knows someone who is also hard of hearing. Actually, most people my age (63) seem to be hard of hearing!

WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT REGISTERED DISABILITY SAVINGS PLANS (RDSP)?

You can pick up a **FREE** copy of the RDSP edition of *Safe & Secure*, published by Planned Lifetime Advocacy Network, at London Drugs Pharmacy.



To become a member of **BC Hands & Voices**, please go to www.bchandsandvoices.com and download the membership form. To get added to the email list, please write to info@handsandvoices.com