

# Listen and Talk

## Education for Children with Hearing Loss



2010

# Another Great Year

2011



*Exploration and imagination, a salute from Iraq, listening checks, sparkly rings, growth and opportunity, and connections across time and space. Listen and Talk may be a relatively small program in an unassuming Seattle neighborhood but we're changing lives on a grand scale. The forward progress and positive energy that resonate through Listen and Talk's halls and programs are testament to the people that make up its fabric. Families, staff, administrators, and supporters are working together to make a difference for the children we serve. And every day, the children themselves add splashes of color to our efforts. This newsletter celebrates it all with our favorite stories and highlights from the 2010-11 school year. Thank you for your support of Listen and Talk!*

### Learning to Listen and Listening to Learn: *It All Starts with Audiology*

"Ms. Robin, can you *please* hurry up, everyone is outside at recess and I *really* want to go!" Daxx may have been antsy to join up with his buddies, but the very fact he was getting his FM system checked onsite at Listen and Talk was something to be celebrated. The Harry Levinson Audiology Suite was established last year with the generous support of the

Levinson family and other donors. With the addition of audiologist Robin Waterman to the staff this year, Listen and Talk has been delivering onsite audiology services to its students for the first time. Previously, when a student wasn't hearing well, the family would need to schedule an appointment with their audiologist and make a trip to the clinic to determine the root cause of the problem. The child would lose precious time in the classroom. Now, Robin can troubleshoot hearing problems and fix hearing technology on the spot. The child can then get back much faster to the business of learning to listen and listening to learn. Robin's primary goal is to address the daily listening needs of our

students, but she has also played a pivotal role as the communication conduit between each child's clinical audiologist, teacher, and family. Because she sees the children on a regular basis, Robin is able to monitor their progress and catch potential problems— like a malfunctioning hearing aid— earlier than might be discovered otherwise. When a child is getting ready to enter preschool, it is essential that the family and the child's school district understand and address the child's listening, language, and communication needs. Robin is working with Listen and Talk's educational and speech language professionals to provide independent and comprehensive hearing, speech, and language assessments. These

assessments help school teams plan and implement appropriate measures to ensure the child's success. In the year ahead, Listen and Talk will be exploring ways in which we can best support our school district partners and meet the needs of families whose children are enrolled in their programs.



## Reaching Families through Innovation and Technology



The Internet, mobile communications, high-speed broadband — no doubt such technological advancements are helping to make our world a smaller place. We're now able to connect with each other faster and more seamlessly than ever before. At Listen and Talk, we're capturing the possibilities of technological innovation and progress to pioneer a new future in early intervention.

Listen and Talk is testing the use of video conferencing equipment and online technologies, such as Skype, to deliver services from our facility to families in their homes. Such technology, or tele-intervention, complements our existing home visitations. It is a modern approach to a traditional model of early intervention that holds much promise and potential.

We can now reach families living in communities far away from Listen and Talk with an Internet connection and laptop or video screen. We can set up tele-intervention appointments after hours for family members whose work schedules make it difficult to engage in coaching sessions during the day. One of our families traveled to Canada for an extended period of time and was able to maintain Listen and Talk services for their son through tele-intervention. Another family continued services while on vacation.

Listen and Talk's early intervention providers help families by coaching them on ways to integrate listening and spoken language seamlessly into their everyday lives. The flexibility inherent in tele-intervention adds another dimension to this approach by enabling the delivery of services in spite of distance, schedules, or unexpected changes in a family's life.

Listen and Talk's early intervention specialists currently drive all over the region to visit families. The use of distance technology will greatly reduce the amount of time they spend on the road, increase our team's efficiency, and expand the number of families we are able to serve. We will also reduce program costs and lessen our impact on the environment.

With the support of federal "stimulus" funds and a generous grant from the University Lions Foundation, Listen and Talk launched its tele-intervention pilot in January with a few Parent-Infant families. Listen and Talk will continue to monitor its tele-intervention service delivery in the months ahead, and pursue additional funding support for expansion of the model.

Executive Director, Suzanne Quigley, and Early Intervention Specialist, Kim Hamren, are participating with other early intervention leaders in an innovative Learning Community dedicated to sharing and discovering the utility of distance technologies for early intervention services. These meetings are sponsored, supported, and organized by the National Center for Hearing Assessment and Management (NCHAM). The goal of the group is to network and learn from each other so that we may all move the model further and faster than any of us could successfully accomplish independently. We will also share our findings and experiences with the wider early intervention community.



## Here's To Our Military ★★★★★

Ava's father, Chris Petty, has been serving in Iraq during most of Ava's time in our preschool program. When Chris was first deployed, he didn't have an easy time connecting with Ava on the telephone because of her hearing loss. However, after a few short months at Listen and Talk, Ava improved her listening skills to a level where she is now able to converse with him over the telephone. It meant the world to Chris. When he returned to Seattle, Chris stopped by Listen and Talk to express his gratitude. He presented a flag that flew in Iraq in honor of Listen and Talk along with a plaque recognizing our program. The flag and plaque are now prominently displayed in the foyer of the school. We were touched by his gesture and are proud to contribute in some small way to the efforts of our military overseas.



## The Creative Side

Head downstairs when one of Listen and Talk's Arts classes are underway and you'll be in for a treat. Drawing masterpieces, painting projects, dancing to a new tune... no matter the exercise, Movement/Art Instructor, Anne Pfeil, energizes the children to think big, color outside the lines, and have fun exploring art, music, and dance.



Besides being a lot of fun, the program plays an essential role in Listen and Talk's curriculum, enhancing specific developmental areas. Music encourages the progression of listening and speech skills. Art cultivates cognitive ability. Dance helps overcome the balance



and coordination difficulties that many children with hearing loss face.

Supported entirely by charitable contributions, the Listen and Talk Arts program is a huge hit with our pre-school and pre-kindergarten students. When some arts classes were cancelled last year due to lack of funding, two of our students took matters

into their own hands. Lucy and Jack broke open their piggy banks and donated their coins to the fundraising effort. Lucy included a beautiful crayon picture with her contribution in honor of Anne. Jack proudly presented his plastic bag of coins to Executive Director, Suzanne, with solemn instructions that the money be used exclusively to support Arts.

We have managed to continue our Arts curriculum on a limited basis this year, but the program is in need of additional funding. Listen and Talk would be grateful for donations for its Arts program in the year ahead.



Upon entering the school, one of our students, Beth,\* passed by the Listen and Talk Garden and exclaimed, "They are sure growing a lot of groceries!"



Discussing Emperor penguins, the teacher asked: "Who do you think carries the egg, the mommy or the daddy?"

STUDENT 1:

The daddy because the mommy says, 'I'm too tired, I'm going to drop my baby into the ocean.'

STUDENT 2:

Mommy, because daddy just doesn't know how to do it. Mommy is smart.

After explaining that it is daddy who does the deed, the teacher proceeded to give the children bean bags to balance on their feet and waddle around like daddy Emperor penguins. It was unanimous — no one wanted to be a daddy penguin.

It was just too hard to carry the egg. Any mommies out there ever feel that way?



\* not the real name of our student

## Neighbors Helping Neighbors



In a world full of *tweets*, **blogs**, **spam**, and blinking pop-ups, it is good to be reminded sometimes of the power of individuals and what they can achieve collectively. Here is a story that helps us remember that...

When Derrick\*, was about two years old, his family was concerned that he might have a hearing loss, as his speech and language skills were not developing the way they thought they should. A hearing test completed last fall confirmed that Derrick was deaf in one ear. The family set out to find services to help address his hearing and spoken language development.

Unfortunately, they had a frustrating experience trying to find someone who would help them. The centers were either too busy or dismissed their concerns outright. Finally, a family friend who lives in the Maple Leaf neighborhood where Listen and Talk is located, told Derrick's mother, Sara Smith\*, about Listen and Talk's Parent-Infant program. Sara called Listen and Talk. Katie Söderlind, Listen and Talk's administrative assistant answered the phone.

"The first thing Katie said to me after listening to my concerns about Derrick's needs was, 'we can help you take care of your son,'" said Sara. "That was exactly what I needed to hear. When there is something wrong with your child and you finally find someone who is so welcoming and supportive, it is just overwhelming. Katie was the biggest breath of fresh air."

Katie immediately connected the family with Kim Hamren, Listen and Talk's Early Intervention Specialist. Kim invited Derrick and Sara to a Parent-Infant toddler group that was taking place at Listen and Talk the next day.

"We went to the toddler group and it was an incredible experience," said Sara. "The interaction with the other parents was very reassuring, and Derrick was ridiculously happy playing with the other kids. There was no question in my mind that this was where we needed to be."

The family has since enrolled in Listen and Talk's Parent-Infant program. Thanks to their persistence and Listen and Talk's support, Derrick is now on a course to success.

**Neighbors helping neighbors — how delightfully old-fashioned!**



## Listen and Talk Celebrates 15 Years at Hearts of Love

*In February, we held our annual benefit, Hearts of Love.*

*The event raised over \$50,000 in support of our programs and was a wonderful celebration of Listen and Talk's 15th year anniversary.*

*Thank you to everyone who supported the event and were able to join us on this special day.*



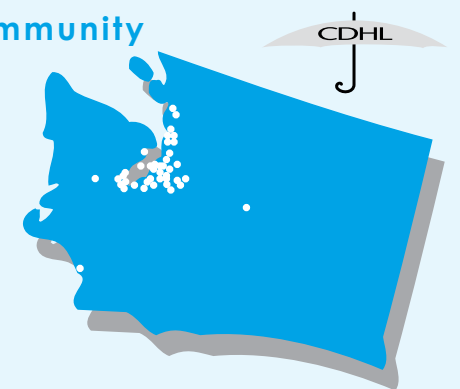
Founding Executive Director, Star Leonard-Fleckman gave a wonderful keynote anniversary speech.

## Making a Mark in the Community

Through a unique partnership with Center for Childhood Deafness and Hearing Loss (CDHL), Listen and Talk provided consultative services to 45 school district teams across the state this year to ensure the successful assimilation of children with hearing loss into neighborhood schools.

Consultations include observations and assessments of speech, language, and functional listening skills in order to clearly define a student's abilities and needs. Listen and Talk then provides teaching teams with information and mentorship in auditory techniques and teaching strategies that optimize the educational experience for students who are deaf and hard of hearing that communicate through listening and spoken language. Not only do students receive necessary services, but school staff members gain valuable training that enables them to meet the needs of students in the future.

As an outgrowth of the CDHL Partnership Project, Listen and



Talk has been consulting with the Tacoma Public School District — one of the largest districts in the State — to help them establish a listening and spoken language preschool within that district's deaf and hard of hearing program.

Beyond our Partnership Project, Listen and Talk's highly trained and experienced staff members continue to share their expertise with others across the state and nation through internships, observations, and in-service training. In addition, Listen and Talk holds a contract with Washington Sensory Disabilities Services to provide workshops to colleagues in Washington State who work with deaf and hard of hearing students.



*Johnny\*, a Listen and Talk preschool student with hearing loss, was taking a vocabulary test.*

*He earned a point each time he correlated a picture with the correct word.*

*He was shown a picture of a cat.*

*He excitedly called out "Cat!"*

*He was then shown a picture of a tree.*

*He was so pleased that he knew the word and said, "Tree!"*

*He was then shown a picture of some fruit.*

*He enthusiastically shouted, "Food!"*

*His therapist acknowledged that was a good answer and asked if he could think of another word that more specifically described the picture.*

*After thinking for a moment, Johnny beamed and yelled out, "Ingredients!!!"*

*Although he didn't get the test item marked correctly, we all felt he deserved extra credit for that one.*



*\* not the real name of our student*

## Get Involved!

**DONATE** Contributions can be made on our website at [www.listentalk.org](http://www.listentalk.org) or mailed to Listen and Talk 8610 8th Ave NE Seattle, WA 98115

Every contribution is **MATCHED, DOLLAR FOR DOLLAR**, by a private family foundation, whose mission is to support oral deaf education throughout North America. Listen and Talk is grateful to its donors, without whom we could not do our work. Thank you for your friendship and continued support.

**FAMILY VOICES** Family members across all our programs are invited to join our parent group and help support Listen and Talk initiatives. Please contact Communications Director Paige Stringer at [paiges@listentalk.org](mailto:paiges@listentalk.org) or 206-985-6646 for more information.

**COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM** The Community Partnership Program offers opportunities for local organizations and business to support program areas within Listen and Talk. Please contact Communications Director, Paige Stringer at 206-985-6646 or [paiges@listentalk.org](mailto:paiges@listentalk.org) for more information.



Join us on Facebook for Listen and Talk updates and news related to hearing loss.

## Those little letters mean a lot!

*Listen and Talk leadership enthusiastically supports the professional development of its staff. We strive to provide the resources for their continued learning so that we can remain on the forefront of best practices to meet the needs of the children and families we serve. Several of our staff burned the midnight oil, working to increase their expertise in their respective fields. Kudos to the following staff members who earned the following certifications and degrees this year:*

### Christine Lambert and Mona Oster

Both received Certification as Listening and Spoken Language Specialist-Certified Auditory Verbal Therapists (LSLS Cert AVT) from the AG Bell Academy for Listening and Spoken Language.

### Pam Yoshihara

Received certification as a Listening and Spoken Language Specialist-Certified Auditory Verbal Educator (LSLS Cert AVEd) from the AG Bell Academy for Listening and Spoken Language.

### Kristin Wilson

Completed her clinical fellowship year and now holds the Certificate of Clinical Competence in Speech Language Pathology (CCC-SLP) from the American Speech and Hearing Association.

### Mandy Frost

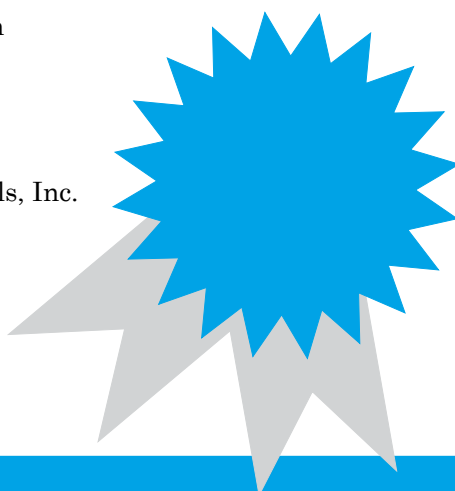
Earned her Masters degree in Deaf Education from Brenau University.

### Ashley Onorato and Kristin Wilson

Both have completed Hanen Certification for Speech Language Pathologists.

In addition to these accomplishments, **Maura Berndsen** was elected and is serving as President of OPTION Schools, Inc.

*Congratulations to one and all!*



## Comings and Goings

Listen and Talk welcomed five new members to its board of trustees this year: Amy Cooley, Natalie Delucchi, Justin Marlowe, Deb Masters, and Julie Templin. We are looking forward to having them with us and appreciate their time and energy in support of our program. Cyd Kelly resigned from the board as she and Tom moved to Texas to be closer to family. Mollie Langhout also ended her board tenure to pursue other commitments. We are very grateful to both Cyd and Mollie for their years of tireless service and dedication to Listen and Talk. We wish them all the best in the next chapter of their lives.

## Alumni Links

Listen and Talk Alumni Links is a new network designed to provide alumni families with a means to stay connected to Listen and Talk and other families after their children have moved on from our program. We'll have volunteer opportunities, networking events, and other ways to participate in the next school year. To learn more about Alumni Links, please contact Communications Director, Paige Stringer at [paiges@listentalk.org](mailto:paiges@listentalk.org)

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Education for Children with Hearing Loss



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## Parent Reflection

Amy Cooley

*Listen and Talk Family Voices President*

*As we enter our last month at Listen and Talk, I am reminded of feelings I had as a senior in high school 18 years ago! Excitement and nervousness were the dominant feelings then. And now in a completely different way, I feel them again. I think this is a common outlook for a parent or anyone entering a new phase in life. Parents of a child who is deaf or hard of hearing are no strangers to uncertainty. I remember walking into Listen and Talk five years ago and seeing Pam teaching her Pre-K class. Now I think of those who will come after our family at Listen and Talk. I know they will enter with the same anxiety, but I hope they will also leave with the same enthusiasm for the next chapter in their child's life.*

*I feel confident in my daughter's ability to make it out there in the big Kindergarten world. Listen and Talk has provided her with many technical skills and a big jump on learning but they have given much more than her education. We have a support system behind us. So many people have touched our lives over the past five years: other moms and dads, grandparents, therapists, teachers, board members, volunteers, and administrators have all contributed to where we are today—ready for Kindergarten!*

*That is why I think it is so important that we continue to support our school and all that it stands for. New students and families need and deserve to feel the same camaraderie that our family has felt.*

*That requires giving back to Listen and Talk and remembering where we all started. I hope to hold on to these thoughts and hold them dear to us as we continue to move through the many new chapters ahead.*



Family Voices is a Listen and Talk group of parents who actively support the school.

To learn more about how to get involved in Family Voices, please contact Communications Director, Paige Stringer

“

*Last fall, our teachers were emphasizing good hand-washing techniques with our students.*

*Germ was front of mind during this conversation as cake was served in celebration of a teacher's birthday:*

STUDENT: What kind of cake is this?

TEACHER: It is German Chocolate Cake.

STUDENT: WHAT kind????

TEACHER: It is ...GERMAN CHOCOLATE Cake

STUDENT: (looking troubled) I don't want to eat Germ and Chocolate cake!!



*Pirate's Booty, which looks a bit like popcorn, is a favorite preschool snack.*

*The teacher asked the students for their thoughts about how Pirate's Booty is made:*

TEACHER: How do you think they make Pirate's Booty?

STUDENT: They put pirates in it . . .

STUDENT: . . . And they put booty in it.

TEACHER: What is booty?

STUDENT: It's something . . . I don't know it's booty.

TEACHER: How does it get its color?

STUDENT: They put eggs in it.

TEACHER: The eggs give it its color?

STUDENT: Yes, by cracking open the yoke in the egg.

STUDENT: It makes it gooey.

TEACHER: Well then how do they cook it?

STUDENT: They put the gooey stuff in the pan . . .

STUDENT: . . . Then they put the pan in the oven.

TEACHER: So first they cook it on the stove and then in the oven?

STUDENT: Yes. First it gets hard in the stove

then you put it in the oven to cook it.

TEACHER: How do you think it gets the funny shape?

STUDENT: It's from the eggs

*The teacher read the list of ingredients aloud to the students.*

*No eggs are listed.*

TEACHER: So it looks like there aren't any eggs in Pirate's Booty

STUDENT: Yea, see? It's just pirates!

”

## Think Locally, Act Globally

Listen and Talk alumna Charlie Shafer will have much to share in his “what I did this summer” report next school year. Charlie will join Educational Director, Maura Berndsen, Early Intervention Specialist, Kim Hamren, and a team of speech and hearing and deaf education professionals from across the country volunteering their time and expertise to train teachers and families of children with hearing loss in Vietnam.

Our Communications Director, Paige Stringer, started the Global Foundation For Children With Hearing Loss to help children who are deaf or hard of hearing in developing countries have access to the hearing technology and education they need to achieve their full potential in our hearing society. The foundation's Vietnam Deaf Education Program is a



multi-year collaboration with Thuan An Center and Ho Chi Minh City University in Vietnam. *Its purpose:* empower teachers, professionals, and families with the expertise to help young children with hearing loss develop listening and spoken language skills in their earliest years of life.

Charlie benefitted from Listen and Talk's early intervention programs — the same services that the Vietnamese are trying to establish in their country. He is now a 15 year-old freshman at Seattle Preparatory School where he is on the Dean's List, plays



Giúp một trẻ nghe trẻ/ mới tập nghe

- Hướng dẫn gia đình về:
  - Mang máy trợ thính
  - Kiểm tra việc nghe
  - Nghe có nghĩa
  - Làm nổi bật âm cần nghe
  - Phát triển sự lắng nghe và ngôn ngữ
- Đồng viên trẻ
- Đo lường những kỹ năng hiện tại của trẻ
- Soan kế hoạch

sports and is a talented stage performer. He asked Paige last year if he could share his story and personal experience with the families and teachers in Vietnam. Charlie went on a tear . . . raising about \$4400 to cover his costs, and now he and his dad will be joining the volunteer team of professionals. Charlie is working on a personal video about a “day in the life” that he will share with the families and teachers there. Much more to come from Vietnam and you can find all the exciting updates at [www.childrenwithhearingloss.org](http://www.childrenwithhearingloss.org).



## Thank you Donors

Listen and Talk would like to thank all of our donors who contributed to our programs July 1, 2010— May 1, 2011.

We greatly appreciate your commitment to the education of children with hearing loss.

**All donations to Listen and Talk are matched, dollar for dollar, by a private family foundation. All gifts have a double impact.**

### Families and Individuals

Alison Allgor  
Erin Anderson  
Hong-Ying Chan and Douglas E. Anderson  
Phoebe Andrew  
Anonymous  
Doreen Aronson  
Doug Backous  
Jeannine and Ronald Bailey  
Andrea Bakke  
Marion and Jens Bakke  
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### Grantors and Service Clubs

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Washinton State  
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\* ARRA stimulus funds paid through King and Snohomish Counties

### OUR MISSION

*We teach children  
with hearing loss  
to communicate  
and learn through  
listening and  
spoken language.*

