

# Parent-to-Parent Support

### Meet the family:

Mom: Beckie, deaf

Dad: Robert, hearing

Children: Bryan, 25, hearing  
Bret, 23, hearing  
Jonathan, 12, hearing  
Molly, 10, deaf,  
profound hearing loss

Communication Method:  
Sign, Cue, and Voice

Newborn Screening:  
None available

Age at Diagnosis: 13 months

Not aided

### Dear Parent:

I will never forget the day when Molly's deafness was diagnosed. When she was 13 months old, Bob and I were perplexed when we tried to get Molly's attention by calling her name, but she wouldn't look at us. Then we stomped our feet and got her attention. We knew right then she had a hearing loss.

Since I was born deaf because my mom contracted German Measles when she was pregnant with me, I didn't think I would have deaf children. Boy, was I wrong! While I was surprised to learn Molly is deaf, I felt comforted to know that I am no longer the only deaf member in the family.

When my children were born, I used ASL and voice with them. So, without realizing Molly is deaf, I had been signing with her from the start. Molly started to sign very early, which is her greatest advantage today.

When Molly was little, we were living in Rochester, New York. She attended a deaf school in Rochester, my alma mater, and also went to a center for listening and speech training. Then Bob was offered a new job here in Minnesota about six years ago. A new challenge for all of us.

Molly is now attending Gideon Pond Elementary where she is fully mainstreamed. Bob and I decided to expose Molly to variety of communication methods to find out what works well for Molly. We have found that ASL and Cued English both benefit Molly. She has blossomed ever since she started going to Gideon Pond. This year she was in the advanced class for Math and English. She was also in the Accelerated Reader Program. She is a fluent cuer! I even hired her to teach me how to cue properly. I am still learning. Since Molly is very active, she is involved with Fastpitch softball, soccer, hockey, and art. Being exposed to variety of things has enriched Molly in many ways. It is so much fun watching her grow and face new challenges.

Bob and I have encouraged Molly to wear hearing aids, but she doesn't find them beneficial. A cochlear implant is our newest challenge. Molly wants to investigate the implant and learn more about it. If she qualifies for one, we will support her decision.

All in all, I want to assure you that being deaf can be a positive experience if you make it one. Don't worry that the decisions you make are right or wrong but, rather, what is best for your child at the time. Take advantage of the resources and the community support. You'll be surprised how it helps in many ways. Remember, "It takes a village to raise a child." You're not alone.

Together we can help our children succeed!

**Beckie**

*For information about how to connect with a family like this, please contact the Family Support Connection at 1-866-DHOH-KID, or 651-265-2435 in the Twin Cities. Or, you can email [fsc@lifetrackresources.org](mailto:fsc@lifetrackresources.org).*