

The Family Support Connection

Parent-to-Parent Support

Meet the family:

Mom: Nicole
Dad: David
Children: Justin, 6;
moderate hearing loss
Joey, 3;
moderate hearing loss
Communication method: Voice
Newborn Screening:
Only available for Joey
Age at Diagnosis:
Justin-3, wears aids
Joey, newborn,
hearing aids soon

Dear Parent:

You have just been told that your perfect child has been diagnosed with a hearing loss. Where do you turn? Let me tell you our story and how we can help you.

We have two very precious children Justin and Joey with moderate to severe hearing loss, ages 6 and 3. Justin had the characteristics of a “normal” child up until he was about 3 years old. He had been battling several ear infections and we noticed a speech delay and the television being turned up all of the time. We went in for his 3-year wellness check up, which included a hearing test. He failed several tests, and we were referred to an ENT (ear, nose and throat doctor).

After several months of tests, we met with an ENT and an audiologist who indicated that Justin was not hearing in the “normal” frequency range. The ENT indicated that Justin had an “Atypical low frequency hearing loss.” Most children have hearing loss in the high frequencies. At that point we decided to get hearing aids for him to wear on a regular basis especially in school. We continue to work very closely with his school and have an FM system for the teacher to use in the classroom so he does not fall behind.

My second son, Joey, had his first hearing test through newborn hearing screening done at the hospital and failed twice before he was discharged. After having several ear infections and conducting several tests, we were told that Joey had the same hearing loss pattern as his older brother Justin.

Joey has not shown as much of a loss as Justin at this point in his life, but the ENT feels he will possibly end up with hearing aids, too. I have noticed that Joey’s speech is a little better than Justin’s was when he was his age. I believe it is because we discovered it early enough, having gone through the whole process earlier. I also know how to help with pronunciations for a little person with a hearing loss. I don’t think Joey would be talking as much as he is without the help of early intervention and also my understanding of the hearing loss.

My recommendation to you is to find out what resources are available to you through your community. We had to do all of the leg work due to our physicians not having the knowledge of what is available after the diagnosis of a hearing loss. Without the help of United Way, we would not have found out about Lifetrack Resources and the many services and support groups they provide.

This organization really cares about adults and children with hearing loss. It really means a lot when you talk to another parent on the phone who has been in the same situation and can be that strong support you are missing.

Thank you,

Nicole & David

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.