



Could Saskatchewan Have Done More For Beckett?



“It seemed like he just wasn’t listening, I couldn’t correct him or call him for his attention. He would ignore me. It was very frustrating.”

Aimee Lewis, mother to 2-year-old son Beckett, was starting to think the ‘terrible twos’ really were consuming her son. He wasn’t responding, he wasn’t listening; Aimee felt she couldn’t communicate with him. *“We started to wonder if this was normal “terrible twos” but it felt like we were missing something, so we booked a hearing test”.*

Just two weeks ago, Beckett, was diagnosed with severe hearing loss. Initial screening should be done at birth, and at the latest, before one month. Born in Saskatchewan, where there is no provincially mandated or delivered early hearing detection and intervention program, Beckett’s hearing was not tested at birth. Now mostly non verbal, Beckett has now was gone two years unable to hear his mother sing him to sleep, or his father chuckle at his adventures.

“If it was caught at birth, he would have the implants already and we could be working on his communication skills. To find out at a young age would have been a lot easier”.

In Canada, more than 2,000 children are born with hearing loss per year. That is nearly six in every thousand Canadian babies who have some degree of hearing loss. This makes hearing loss one of our country’s most common birth defects.

Unlike the United States, Canada does not have a national infant hearing mandate.

TinyEARS.ca, is a movement started by a national charity, The Hearing Foundation of Canada to mark Speech and Hearing Awareness Month. The position is simple. The petition is seeking 5,000 signatures calling on the Minister of Health to demonstrate leadership and work with the provinces to create a national mandate for infant screening and intervention. This way, every child in Canada has a chance at the best possible start. While some provinces do have screening in place, they have no process or policy for the critical intervention needed to assist communication at this crucial life stage.

Once tested, Aimee felt an immediate sense of relief for Beckett. *“If we had put it off longer, then who knows what would have happened. I can keep him safer now that I know he won’t be able to respond to my voice if he is in danger.”*

Although scheduled to get hearing aids next week, Aimee was told that they are unlikely to have an effect on Beckett as he is most likely a candidate for cochlear implants.

The TinyEARS.ca petition is asking the government to ensure that all babies get an equal start in life. Please sign the petition today to speak up for Canadian babies.



Share the petition to let the government know that we care about our children's equal access to resources and opportunities.

Talk about TinyEARS with your friends and family to help all babies hear their mother's lullaby and their father's chuckle.

"Because [Beckett] was born healthy in Saskatchewan, he got missed. That's just wrong. All parents in Canada need to advocate for their child's rights. All babies in Canada have a right to equal access and the best possible start."

For more information visit:

www.tinyears.ca

Join the community and meet other mothers on the

Facebook page at [https://www.facebook.com/](https://www.facebook.com/TinyEarsTHFC/?ref=aymt_homepage_panel)

[TinyEarsTHFC/?ref=aymt_homepage_panel](https://www.facebook.com/TinyEarsTHFC/?ref=aymt_homepage_panel)



About The Hearing Foundation of Canada

The Hearing Foundation of Canada is a national charitable organization committed to improving hearing health by fostering safe listening habits and hearing loss detection from an early age, raising awareness about the consequences of hearing loss, and supporting medical research that improves diagnosis and treatment.

-30-

For more information please contact:

Mary Smirle, Manager, Program Development and Public Affairs, THFC

msmirle@hearingfoundation.ca

416-364-4060