



VARIETY – THE CHILDREN'S CHARITY
DONOR REPORT
FISCAL YEAR 2017





"Just weeks ago, we were able to pick up this 'standing frame' which was custom ordered for him, thanks to the fine folks at Variety, and we are all loving it! This adapted positioning device will help Judah to bear weight on his feet and legs, to properly develop the muscles and ligaments in his hips, to set him up for success to stand on his own and to (hopefully) walk one day too. Judah DOES love it." - Judah's mom, Jenna, pictured on front cover. (Judah is seen in his standing frame at top of page).

TOGETHER WE ARE HERE WHEN CHILDREN AND FAMILIES NEED US MOST

Variety - the Children's Charity has been helping kids with special needs for over 51 years. The support Variety provides to families in every corner of our province is the foundation of our organization.

Our team recognizes that many families living in BC need financial help in order to provide vital equipment and services to their children. Without this assistance, the families we serve struggle to overcome the overwhelming costs of care that is needed but is not covered by the health care system. Support for these families is essential and together we can provide kids with the support they need to thrive.

In 2017, we initiated the Variety Kids Campaign to help more children and their families in BC. With a focus on individual grants in 2017, we believe we were able to make more of an impact in the lives of the families we support. Our goal is to always work towards our vision - that every child who has special needs achieves their full potential. Therefore funding to organizations was limited to our Sunshine Coach and Variety Cares programs.

This last year was an exciting year for Variety as we launched our first major gift campaign and new fundraising events. We redesigned our Annual Show of Hearts Telethon and introduced our first-ever Variety Week in partnership with Global BC.

Thanks to our incredibly generous donors in 2017, we were able to support 5,518 families across BC.



Cally Wesson
CEO



5,518*
CHILDREN
HELPED

\$3M
DISBURSED

58
COMMUNITIES &
CITIES REACHED

*5,518 reflects the number of children supported through individual and organizational grants. 676 children were helped directly through individual grants.



David, Kyla and little Noah · Armstrong, BC

NOAH WAS BORN AT 34 WEEKS GESTATION.

He weighed 4lbs 10oz and measured 45.5cm at birth. Kyla's water had broken a week earlier and she and her husband David were shocked to find out that their local hospital wasn't equipped to care for babies that premature. They were forced to travel to Kelowna and after a week of waiting, Noah made his arrival.

Following his birth, Noah had to spend the next 16 days in the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU) at Kelowna General Hospital.

With David taking time off work to be with his young family in Kelowna, Variety was able to step in and cover the costs of accommodation so that Kyla and David didn't have to worry about finances on top of an already very emotional experience.

"There are simply no words to express our gratitude. We feel so blessed and are extremely thankful to Variety and all the donors that made this possible!" - Dave, Kyla & Noah Henry

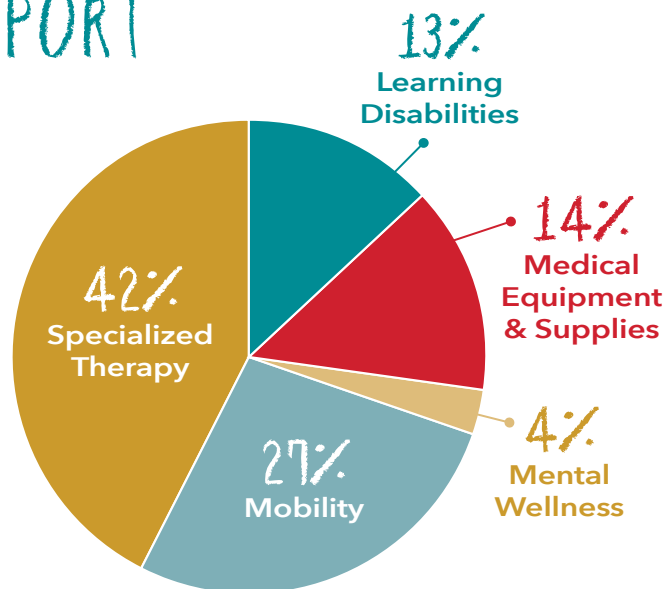
THE VARIETY CARES PROGRAM provides support for families so they can focus on the health of their child. The program is for immediate/urgent assistance and items not covered by government or private health care. Hospital social workers have direct access to the funds through their foundation and can provide immediate services/items as needed to reduce the monetary burden on the family. This interim assistance will provide the family with the opportunity to develop a long-term plan based on their needs.

"We are so grateful for the warm partnership BC Women's Hospital Foundation enjoys with Variety – a partnership that is improving outcomes for women, newborns and families across the province."

- Jeff Sodowsky, Chief Development Officer,
BC Women's Hospital + Health Centre Foundation

THE FIVE PILLARS OF SUPPORT

In 2017, nearly \$3 million was disbursed to help children with special needs across the province. As Variety shifts its granting programs with a redefined focus on individual grants, we will continue to grow within these granting areas in the near future.



- **Mobility** - helping more children move with freedom
 - » Power & manual wheelchairs, adaptive trikes, standing walkers, custom orthotics, Sunshine Family Vans and Sunshine Coaches



- **Mental Wellness** - achieving mental wellness
 - » Counseling and therapies related to mental wellness



- **Specialized Therapy** - helping kids reach out, communicate and connect with others
 - » Speech and language therapy, occupational physiotherapy, music therapy



- **Learning Disabilities** - allowing kids to learn in ways that work for them, to read, communicate and explore all of their opportunities
 - » Bursaries and education support



- **Medical Equipment and Supplies** - providing kids with life saving equipment and services
 - » Hearing aids, diabetic supplies, feeding supplies for newborns, medical equipment for home support

THE VARIETY CARES PROGRAM

The Variety Cares program provides short-term support to families from all across the province who are away from their home community seeking urgent or unexpected medical attention for their child. This program disbursed \$145,000 in FY 17 to a total of thirteen hospital foundations across the province.

- | | |
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| • BC Children's Hospital Foundation | • Royal Inland Hospital Foundation |
| • BC Women's Hospital & Health Centre Foundation | • Spirit of the North Healthcare Foundation |
| • Fraser Valley Health Care Foundation | • Surrey Hospital and Outpatient Centre Foundation |
| • Kelowna General Hospital Foundation | • Surrey Memorial Hospital Foundation |
| • Lion's Gate Hospital Foundation | • St Paul's Hospital Foundation |
| • Nanaimo & District Hospital Foundation | • Victoria Hospitals Foundation |
| • Royal Columbian Hospital Foundation | |

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2017

EVENTS

GOLD HEART GALA

Led by Mary Zilba (chair) and Fiona Forbes (co-chair) the *Gold Heart Gala* returned raising an astonishing \$550,000 for kids with special needs. Over 300 guests came together to honour and celebrate noted philanthropists Ian Telfer and Nancy Burke by presenting them with the Gold Heart Award at the Fairmont Pacific Rim. Presented by GoldCorp, it was a night of wining, dining and most of all, fundraising.



Nancy Burke & Ian Telfer

ONE NIGHT IN

Produced by the Social Concierge, the first annual *One Night In* was a great success! In addition to raising funds to help children with special needs, Variety was able to connect with a new generation of philanthropists in Vancouver. Attracting 350 of Vancouver's business leaders, we were able to raise awareness about Variety's Mobility Program while being immersed into this year's theme of Monte Carlo.

VARIETY WEEK & SHOW OF HEARTS TELETHON



In partnership with Global BC, Variety introduced a week-long campaign featuring programming on Global BC's newscasts. From Monday to Friday of *Variety Week*, viewers met children and families that needed help. A tremendous \$700,000 was raised during this campaign helping nearly 300 families across BC.

The week-long programming ended with a live *News Hour* broadcast from Central City Shopping Centre in Surrey and a street festival to celebrate!

As part of the 2017 *Show of Hearts Telethon*, children that were introduced during *Variety Week* were highlighted allowing donors to see their contributions in action. The *Show of Hearts Telethon* had another amazing year raising over \$5,000,000.



VARIETY KIDS CAN

Variety's first major gift campaign was launched with a \$2.5 million goal striving to help more children and families in BC. The campaign was launched at the Terminal City Club in Vancouver with a million dollar donation from the Milan & Maureen Ilich Foundation with an ask to community members to also step up and help kids. Shafin Diamond-Tejani of Victory Square Technologies responded with a \$500,000 matching gift.

THIRD PARTY EVENTS

Third party events are run by leaders in the community. A big thank you to everyone that hosts an event or a campaign in support of Variety. We are so thankful for your continued support!

32ND ANNUAL BOWL FOR KIDS CAMPAIGN

BC Bowls is a third party event organized by Ken Hayden (Variety Member) and Mickie Keeper (Bowl BC Administrator). Last year, the campaign raised \$63,000. Since 1986, bowling centres from across the province have raised over \$3 million to help Variety kids.

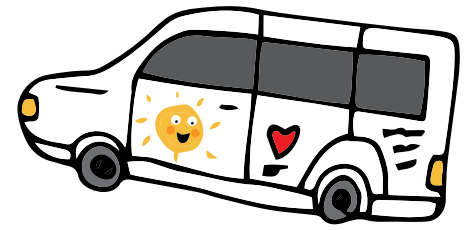


Variety recipient, Ryan (8), at Commodore Lanes.

IN 2017, \$286,375 WAS RAISED THROUGH
COMMUNITY EVENTS & CAMPAIGNS!

HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2017

GRANTS



6 SUNSHINE COACHES ON THE ROAD

The Sunshine Coach Program provides transportation to organizations that provide education, recreation and therapy to children with special needs.

"Staff are thrilled with the Coach's ease of use. Children in the Out of School Care program have also shown their excitement by remarking: 'This is the best bus in town!' and 'We love our bus!'"

WEST SHORE PARKS & RECREATION

2 SUNSHINE FAMILY VANS GIFTED

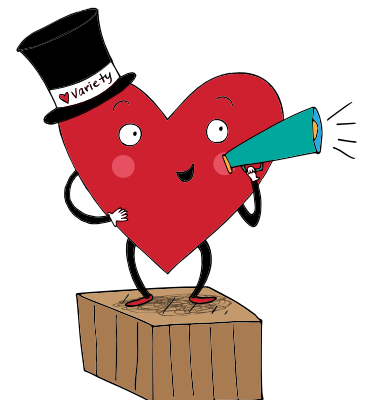
"If it wasn't for such caring people like you, I frankly don't know what we would have done. You all are such remarkable people and my son and I are eternally grateful for your support. I love you all, and if my son could, he would smile and thank you as well. In time he will."

"Thank you... thank you so much. Big hugs from this Mom."

- Shanna

NEW SUNSHINE COACHES

- West Shore Parks and Recreation Society
- Kamloops Child Development Centre (2)
- Boys & Girls Clubs Okanagan
- YMCA Okanagan
- Pacific Autism Family Network - Richmond



60

KIDS LEARNED
TO WALK
WITH THEIR
ORTHOTICS

6,070

hours*
SPEECH &
LANGUAGE
THERAPY

2,760

hours*
TUTORING



\$212,000

BURSARY TUITION
(63 GRANTS)



25 KIDS CAN HEAR WITH THE HELP OF HEARING DEVICES

*Speech and language therapy hours approximately calculated by dividing the total disbursement of \$728,350 by the average cost of 1-hour therapy of \$120.

*Tutoring hours approximately calculated by dividing the total bursaries for tutoring services in 2017 by the average cost of 1 hour tutoring session of \$50.

Q&A WITH AN EXPERT

Kristen McBain B.A.
Semiahmoo Speech Services

What are the challenges faced by children participating in your therapy program?

Many of the children and families that work with our teams of Speech-Language Pathologists (SLP) and Speech-Language Pathologist Assistants (SLPA) come to us with significant communication impairments.

How do you ensure the success of a therapy program for children?

Our expertise is in providing children with child-centered, play-based therapy while developing their speech, language and communication skills. Our therapists are specially trained to foster connection with children.

Children learn best through play. Therefore to simulate the environment, the children will be 'playing' with their therapist

while practicing a specific speech sound, learning an identified language structure or enhancing a targeted social skill. Some of them may also further develop their communication skills through online programs that are monitored by our therapists.

What are some of the positive outcomes from your therapy program?

With regular therapy, along with the supportive families we work with, changes in communication can be enormous! We also support families and caregivers by sharing with them techniques to maximize communication for their child thus essentially extending the intervention program beyond the therapy room and into the child's home and the greater community.

What impact does speech therapy have on children in addition to learning to talk?

An effective speech-language therapy provided by an experienced therapist can produce enormous results beyond improvement in communication skills. One of the greatest effects of therapy is the boost in confidence that the children gain. Therapy enhances the child's outlook and happiness in their life.

What would be the result if children do not get the timely intervention that you provide?

There are many children in the community who are unable to receive the speech-language therapy that they need to make a difference. For some children, their speech and language impairment can have a negative impact on their social life due to difficulties in communicating with others. Fortunately, many of our families are supported financially through Variety and get the support that they need for ongoing and regular therapy.



BENJAMIN'S STORY

OUR THREE-YEAR-OLD SON, BEN, HAS DOWN SYNDROME. I wish someone with the last name, Awesome had discovered Trisomy 21 because then we'd have "Awesome syndrome," a much more accurate designation. At three years old, Ben captures people's hearts with his kind nature and clever sense of humour, spreading smiles wherever we go. Ben is passionate about ball sports and has already begun Active Start British Columbia, his training for Special Olympics. He loves the alphabet and numbers up to ten and has learned to point them out in English and French. He also loves – in no particular order – music, books, flash cards, swings, travelling, photos of family, giggles and cuddles.

You know how they say it takes a village to raise a child? As a parent of a child with a disability, I'd say it requires a village with multiple bridges to many other villages with a diversity of resources. If you don't find those bridges,

you feel overwhelmed and trapped, worrying you're not doing enough for your child.

"As a parent of a child with a disability, I'd say it requires a village with multiple bridges to many other villages with a diversity of resources. If you don't find those bridges, you feel overwhelmed and trapped, worrying you're not doing enough for your child."

Little did we know before the diagnosis, we didn't even need a bridge to get ourselves to a fabulous resource. The nationally renowned

Down Syndrome Research Foundation (DSRF) is in Burnaby, less than a five-minute drive from our house. They offer programs in many areas of development for those with Down syndrome. Sadly, we assumed we wouldn't be able to access them for Ben because we couldn't afford it.

ENTER VARIETY WEARING A GENTLY FLAPPING SUPERHERO CAPE! The Director of Programs & Services at the DSRF told us about Variety and the incredible opportunity it could provide for Ben to receive services in order for his development to flourish. We've been fortunate to receive funding from Variety so Ben can access speech therapy and occupational therapy from the foundation's experts.

Currently, though Ben signs over one hundred words and has great communication skills, he only has three spoken words. Our speech therapist is talented, energetic and so encouraging. We all feel Ben is on the verge of a speech breakthrough. Lately he has been babbling morning to night including when he should be asleep. Seriously. Go to sleep, already.

Thanks to Variety, Ben has also been able to get orthotics. Low muscle tone also presents a challenge in learning to walk. With the help of his orthotics, he immediately made significant progress. He went from struggling to stand, to couch cruising, to walking with help, to taking steps on his own. I can't express the feeling



of seeing your child struggle for so long and then achieve such an important milestone. He's working hard on improving and has even taken to giggling when he speeds off away from his mommy. Now when he goes to his Special Olympics classes, his newfound mobility allows him to participate more fully and he loves it even more. Stay tuned for big Special Olympic Games news from Ben in the future.

THE BEST THING VARIETY'S SUPPORT HAS PROVIDED FOR BEN IS INCREASED CONFIDENCE TO TRY THE THINGS THAT ARE MORE DIFFICULT FOR HIM. His face lights up when we pull into the parking lot of the Down Syndrome Research Foundation. He loves the sessions with his therapists there. We've also noticed significant cognitive improvements since he's been able to more fully explore the world on his own two feet plus the fact he now has people working with him who believe in his abilities.

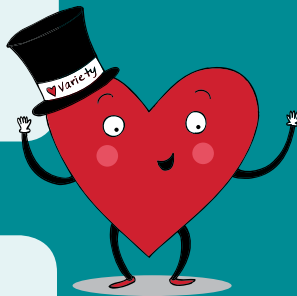
WE ARE SO GRATEFUL TO HAVE VARIETY'S HELP IN ACCESSING ALL THE BRIDGES WE NEED TO RAISE BEN. We look forward to our future adventures with Awesome syndrome.

VARIETY HELPS KIDS ALL ACROSS BC

"People who have donated from all across British Columbia make me feel special because they are helping me gain more independence, freedom and mobility. And it's not only me they're helping, it's a bunch of other children all across BC as well, so that's pretty awesome."

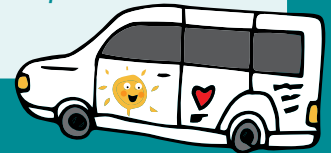
JENNA (17) · *Variety Grant Recipient*
Prince George

*
PRINCE
GEORGE



"You all have made my family's situation that much more manageable. The donation of this wonderful van and its accessories has made my little boy's rehabilitation that much more attainable. You will never know the impact of your generosity."

CHASE'S MOM, SHANNA
Sunshine Family Van Recipient
Williams Lake



* WILLIAMS LAKE

"With the continued help of Variety, Ty has been able to receive ongoing speech therapy. I have been so eternally grateful for your generous donations because they gave me hope. I didn't know if my sweet boy would ever be able to talk and communicate and wondered what kind of a future he would have."

TY'S MOM, MELISSA
Victoria

VICTORIA *

"We applied to Variety for a grant in 2017 and thank goodness they were able to help. We are sincerely grateful for the support Variety has given us in the past and I pray that you will continue to support Keston in the future."

KESTON'S MOM, SARAH
North Vancouver

* NORTH VANCOUVER



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