



Anna: In my own words...

By

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Chicago

A little background from mom

- Normal pregnancy
- Typical full term birth
- 8.5lbs, 20 inches long and lots of black hair!
- Anna “failed” 3 screens before leaving the hospital / limited info available
- Mom’s intuition
- June 12, 2000: Where our road takes a turn and the celebration that followed...

A little about me!



- I was born with moderate sensorineural hearing loss and I wear hearing aids in both ears.
- I was diagnosed at 4 months and got my aids when I was 4 and a half months old.
- I have one older brother with normal hearing and one sister adopted from China who has aural atresia and microtia.

My family



My Early Intervention Story

- My mom got me started with Early On when I was 6 months old.
- We worked on Baby Sign and watching my mom's mouth for cues but I don't remember most of it! It seemed like a lot of fun playtime to me.
- We also did a lot of play groups to help me listen to other people's voices.

My first preschool

- I started ECDD/PPI (early developmental preschool) when I was 2. They didn't have a program in place for kids like me who were diagnosed with hearing loss so early.
- I went 4 days a week and loved it!!
- I also attended a private preschool for a bit because my mom wanted to expose me to lots of new experiences...

Graduation from ECDD/PPI 2004



My 1st EHDI Conference 2005
in Atlanta

Meeting Heather Whitestone McCallum and Justin Osmond



Kindergarten and The FM System

- My mom was very excited to be able to mainstream me. That was always her goal.
- I had a great time making new friends and getting used to wearing the FM system.
- Even the teachers had to get used to wearing the FM... 😊
- My mom could finally relax a little bit!!!

Making Friends

- Getting kids to understand why I wear hearing aids
- As I get older it gets easier to make friends and help them understand what hearing loss is about.
- Me and Natalie



Living in a small town

- Having to choose a communication mode with limited information/experience
- “Wow, those are cute earrings!!”
- “Does she HAVE an inside voice?”
- Having few HOH/Deaf mentors
- Feeling disconnected from other families
- Being the “poster family” for hearing loss

Where I am now

- I am in 4th grade and love music and science.
- I meet with a teacher consultant twice a week to work on anything I need help with.
- Still using the FM at school and waiting to get an iCom!!
- Being ok with knowing I will always wear hearing aids.
- Helping parents understand what it's like

My BFF's



Questions?



- Parents...you can never ask a dumb question of any professional that works with your child. Don't be afraid to ask!
- People are curious, sometimes they ask uncomfortable questions.
- What to say and when, knowing how to answer *those* questions...

Wrapping it up...

- What we've learned along the way
- How lucky we've been with service providers and schools
- Anna's view on hearing loss and wearing hearing aids
- Being normal?
- My advice to parents: Remember you're an EXPERT TOO! 😊
- And to the professionals...
- One last word to remember: TEAMWORK