

STORIES of HOPE

“A new, exciting life with sound”

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Can you imagine life without sound, our main communication tool? We need to hear sound to learn and understand language. But sister Anuradha (aged 22) and brother Pankaj (aged 14) lost their hearing ability at birth leading to loss of any chance to learn speech.

At the local government school they attended they couldn't progress to higher grades as they were unable to understand the classes and courses. They felt isolated at school and by the community who considered them as deaf, dumb and unintelligent. Finally their parents too accepted that they will never get their hearing back and admitted them to a special school where they learned Nepali sign language.

Pankaj loves watching movies and wanted to dance but he hadn't experienced dancing to music. He likes playing foot ball but he has never been part of a team since his skills have been underestimated by the local boys.

Anuradha wanted to make many friends and speak with them to tell them her feelings but has had few friends since they have always considered her as slow and not bright, which are misconceptions of those who are hearing-impaired by those who are lacking patience..

For these reasons Pankaj and Anuradha never left their home much, where Pankaj watched movies and football without sound turned on while Anuradha stayed close to her mother.

Now they are both skilled at sign language and both have a dream to be a teacher in near future and they are very happy with their friends in the special school for hearing- impaired in Pokhara, 8 hours by mountain road from Hope Centre.



Anuradha having audio test as her mum watches



Pankaj having first hearing aid fitted

Fortunately they visited to Hope Disability Centre where an audio test was done.

Immediately we found that they could hear with the help of quality hearing aids!

Apart from lip reading this was the first time in 22 years Anuradha could hear her mother and for Pankaj, 14 years.

Still they could not understand any spoken words as they only learnt language through sign. Not even the word “mama” did they know how to say!

For them hearing every single word is very new. They now need intensive speech therapy to acquire tone, volume and pitch of the words they speak.



Anuradha and Pankaj now hearing with recycled aids from New Zealand

Note: Hope Centre is planning to assess and fit hearing aids soon to many of the 250 kids and youth at the deaf school that Anuradha and Pankaj attend.

Pradip Rai,
Physiotherapist
Hope Disability Centre
Gulmi, Nepal