

## **Sunny Hill Health Centre For Children**

Sunny Hill Health Centre for Children was first opened in 1931 as a facility for children with tuberculosis and other chronic illnesses. Today, it is a major provincial resource offering specialized services to children with disabilities from birth to 19 years of age. Sunny Hill sees children with a wide range of disabilities including:

- *Developmental disorders present at birth (e.g. cerebral palsy)*
- *Disorders from injury or illness (e.g. head or brain injury)*
- *Complex learning and behavior disorders (e.g. autism and attention deficit disorder)*
- *Babies suffering from drug or alcohol withdrawal*
- *Children with unseen disabilities (e.g. visual/hearing impairment)*

The "***I Can Talk, Too***" program provides voice output communication devices ("talking computers") to children throughout British Columbia who are unable to speak due to a disability. These talking computers are purchased for long-term loan to the child and his/her family thanks to "***I Can Talk, Too***" program.

For the past fourteen years, Sunny Hill Health Centre for Children has been the only facility in British Columbia to offer a program like "***I Can Talk, Too***". This means that more than 5,000 children who are unable to speak for a variety of reasons, including neurological impairment, cerebral palsy, autism and Down syndrome have been assisted by our speech language pathologists.

Each year more than 400 children are assessed through Sunny Hill's Communication Development Department and provided with either technical or non-technical augmentative communication tools. Close to sixty percent of our clients also require a wheelchair and have significant mobility needs that limit them from different kinds of communication, such as hand and body movements.

The "***I Can Talk, Too***" program needs an annual funding of \$150,000 to help purchase the Voice Output Communication Aids.