

10. The FaceTime Revolution

In the chapter titled "The FaceTime Revolution," we follow the story of Keith and Carol Adams and their son Trevin, who was born deaf on February 11, 2005. Despite their initial expectations based on genetic tests, the couple received the news from a doctor that Trevin was deaf. Carol expressed little concern, stating, "Don't worry about it," while Keith affirmed that Trevin's health was what truly mattered to them.

Trevin's upbringing contrasts sharply with that of his parents. While Keith and Carol faced significant communication barriers when they were young, relying on old methods such as TTY devices to communicate, Trevin enjoyed a vastly different experience due to technological advancements. American Sign Language became the primary mode of communication for Trevin, both at home and school. The evolution of technology around him allowed for nearly universal captioning on television and various devices, including mobile phones that facilitated instant communication through texting and FaceTime.

By the time Trevin played football at the California School for the Deaf, Riverside (CSDR), he had access to tools that bridged communication gaps, allowing him to interact seamlessly with both deaf and hearing peers. The influence of the iPhone, introduced by Steve Jobs in 2007, marking a revolution for the deaf community, making previous communication methods appear antiquated.

The chapter emphasizes generational contrasts, illustrated by Trevin's experiences against those of Ken Watson, a coach born in 1952 who faced isolation and limited communication during his youth. His summers were lonely, relying on letters to connect with friends, whereas Trevin maintains constant communication with family and friends through smart devices.

Carol expresses typical parental concerns about technology's impact, noting the risks of screen addiction but ultimately appreciating the broader access her children experience compared to her own childhood. She acknowledges both the pitfalls and the significant advantages that contemporary technology has afforded Trevin and his siblings, remarking, "The access for the kids is amazing." Overall, the chapter encapsulates the transformative impact of technology on communication within the deaf community.