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I was introduced to The Clinic by Sharon Hendrickson-Pfiel in 1977. She found that many of the children she saw for speech and language therapy had measureable hearing loss. During those first few months, I walked around The Clinic waiting room and took children to the sacristy (the quietest room) to screen their hearing. I marked their charts with a big blue sticker so I would know they had already been seen. Now, I am happy to report that the Audiology Department is one of the busiest departments!

The children's parents are the spark and mainstay of The Clinic. Many parents work tirelessly with their children during the weeks between clinics and often times they make and sell tortillas to earn bus fare. It is the parents who bring their children back every month for the therapy and follow-up care they need to succeed.

I always experience a feeling of humility on my drive back to Tucson after Clinic. I feel thankful for my family and friends; and I feel appreciative of being given the opportunity to help these children who otherwise would not receive the help and hearing aids they need.

When my son celebrated his Bar Mitzvah, he decided that as his Mitzvah Project he would collect stuffed animals for the children at The Clinic. He collected over 100 stuffed animals and came to Clinic to distribute them. One of our hearing-impaired teenagers (who spoke no English) worked with my son (who spoke no Spanish) that day. Despite the language barrier, they got along well and had a fabulous, fun time.

For over 35 years, the first Thursday of every month has been Clinic Day for me, personally, and now for all of my office staff. Arizona Hearing Specialists is proud to have initiated the Annual Donation Drive for St. Andrew's Children's Clinic, and we plan to continue to provide support and hearing aids for many years to come. Thank you for allowing us to be part of this wonderful Clinic and Happy 40th Anniversary!

