

The Gift of Song

Jeff Poolton's song "Miracle of Love" has become an anthem at KidsAbility. Written as a tribute to his parents and other caregivers of children with special needs, this talented local artist and KidsAbility alumnus is using his incredible voice to make a difference for an organization that continues to be a part of his life.

Diagnosed with cerebral palsy, KidsAbility became a large part of Jeff's life as he benefited from therapy to help him gain strength, mobility and independence. When he was seven years old, Jeff would sit with his mom at the piano and sing. This was to be the beginning of his life journey.

Singing became a large part of Jeff's therapy as a child as he endured many surgeries. Following each of Jeff's surgeries growing up, KidsAbility's therapists were there to help get him back on his feet. For Jeff, he received more than just therapy to help him walk. He received support that played a critical role in his life in high school through Rob, a social worker, who helped Jeff work through emotions that arose in coping with social situations.

"In one word, I describe KidsAbility as 'community.'"

One thing Jeff always noticed and appreciated amongst the kindness, encouragement and patience that he experienced was that "can't" didn't exist – it was always "you can do it."

"Disabilities are not viewed like they were 30 years ago," remarks Jeff. He believes that KidsAbility has been a part of that, as he himself has gained much confidence and is now an advocate for persons with disabilities. "One of the neat things that is happening now is when I provide musical entertainment at area retirement homes, the residents are pleasantly surprised that someone with a disability is doing so well. I've been able to educate them through the storytelling I weave through in my shows."

Jeff married his wife, Jennifer, in 2011 and they have a son. His favourite memory at KidsAbility happened not as a child, but as an adult when he had the opportunity to open for Justin Hines at a fundraiser for the organization.

Jeff shares his music throughout the community and has chosen to donate a portion of every sale of his debut CD "Welcome to My World" to KidsAbility. These proceeds, along with the proceeds from his seasonal concerts, allow Jeff to give back and say "thank you" for all the support he received as a client. The proceeds have helped to fund Firefly's Music Therapy program which is appropriate given the role that music has had in Jeff's life.



Jeff Poolton

Alumnus and Donor