

Dear *60 mins/montel/oprah*
January 8, 2005

This letter comes to you on behalf of Mr. Robert Barron. I would like to tell you about our experience of receiving a prosthetic ear and the story that lead us to this wonderful, talented man.

My daughter Crystal was born with hypoplasia of the right ear. This is when the ear did not completely form in the womb. To be exact the only part of an ear that Crystal was born with was an ear lobe and a slight lump above that. Crystal had her first reconstructive ear surgery at age 3. This surgery consisted of removing a portion of her rib bone and carving it to resemble an ear. Then they took a skin graft from the groin area to cover this. After the healing process was complete I was not completely satisfied with the results. This reconstructed ear was flat against her head. Again when she was 5 years old she had another surgery to extend the ear away from her head. Once

again, my child experienced pain and discomfort and there was no visible difference in the finished product. I was told by the surgeon to massage behind the ear and it eventually will pull away from the head and appear more normal looking. This never occurred. The finished product in my opinion was a failure.

Now was time for Crystal to begin Kindergarten. This is where the stares and questions came from other children. Kids do have truthful remarks and questions that are cruel and hurt Crystal terribly. This continued all through school, it just got worse as she grew older. I did my best as a parent to keep up her self esteem and self confidence. Unfortunately, every day there was yet another story to come home and tell me.

Crystal was in her 3rd year in high school when I came upon an article in People magazine about Mr. Barron. I was so excited, could it be a man who could make such lifelike prosthetics? So, immediately I wrote to him to find out all of the details.

Before long, we were on a plane to Virginia. Mr. Barron took a mold of the reconstructed ear and a mold of her “good” ear to prepare her prosthetic. Back home we went and shortly thereafter we returned to pick up her completed prosthetic. Simply, that is all that is done. There is no pain, no stress.

Crystal began her senior year in high school with her beautiful lifelike ear. Some students still asked out of curiosity and she held her head high and said “I had a prosthetic made by Mr. Barron in Virginia. Her self confidence soared. Crystal went to her senior prom with her hair styled up beautifully and dangly earrings, not to mention a smile that went “ear to ear” and was worth a million!

I feel that more people should be informed about these so called “reconstructive surgeries” and be informed of the final outcome before going through painful, unnecessary surgery. The word needs to get out there that there is another option that has beautiful, lifelike results.

Our hats are off to Mr. Barron, a talented, kind man who has saved my daughters self- confidence. She is now attending college and is leading a happy life.

With your help this information can be shared with millions and help the lives of so many less fortunate people.

Thanks for listening,

Sincerely,

Nicole Sisak

Nicole Sisak

(Crystals mom)