

Armenia

Caregiver Name: Margarit
Age at Implantation: 4

Child: Alen
Age Today: 9

There are moments in every person's life when it feels as though the whole world has turned against you. Yet from a mother's love is born that indescribable strength that pushes you to fight. Our family's story is exactly that—a chain of love, dedication, struggle, hope, and boundless hard work that has led us to today's victory.

The year 2020 became a time of immense trials for our nation. The pain of the Artsakh war, uncertainty, and the global COVID-19 pandemic created a reality in which the future seemed blurred and fragile. In those difficult days, we stood before the most important decision of our lives. My son was already four years old, and we understood that the time for cochlear implantation surgery was running out. Specialists warned us that four years old was already quite late for such an intervention, and achieving results would be twice as difficult.



But the greatest blow was financial. In the absence of state support, we had to cover the entire cost of the surgery and the expensive hearing device ourselves. Imagine living in a country at war, facing an economic crisis, while trying to raise a huge amount of money so your child can hear. We did not give up. We tightened our belts, gave up everything, and focused all our strength on that one goal. It was the hardest decision of our lives—but also the most correct one.

When people ask what my greatest source of support has been, I answer: my faith and my knowledge. Realizing that the surgery was only the beginning of the journey, I decided to become my son's best specialist. I began to study deaf education and speech therapy in depth. I studied at night and worked with my son during the day. We became a team. I learned how to "let him hear" the world—how to build his first sounds, words, and sentences. Our home became a small school where little miracles happened every day.



Today, when I look at my son, I see a wonderful boy who is already in the fourth grade. He not only attends a regular school but also fully participates in his classes and can read and write. Although his speech has not yet reached the crystal clarity we once dreamed of, his activity at school and in communication is simply astonishing. He has no complexes. He is friendly, disciplined, and incredibly caring.

His greatest love and way of expressing himself is drawing. He creates with colours and images that reflect his rich inner world. Art has become his language—a way to communicate with the world when words are not enough. **To other parents, I would say: Never lose hope because of your child's "diagnosis."** A diagnosis is not a sentence—it is a work plan. Stand beside your child not only as a loving parent, but also as their best teacher. Educate yourself so that you can educate them. I dream of a system where support for children who undergo cochlear implantation

is more accessible. We have walked that difficult financial path ourselves and know how important it is for the state to stand beside parents. I would like to see more specialized centres and greater public awareness so that society accepts these wonderful children with love and equality. Our story is still unfolding. Every day we learn a new word, create a new drawing, and celebrate a new victory. Because love does not ask whether you can hear it,