

INDIA

Caregiver Name: Dhruti
Age at Implantation: 2 & 4

Child: Jiyaan
Age Today: 10

As a parent, **the biggest challenge I face is the problem of explaining to people what an implant is.** They are aware of hearing aids but unaware about what Cochlear Implants are. People have doubts about whether he would speak if the machine were not placed on his head. People are sceptical at times; social awareness is less. They wonder if the hearing loss can be cured or if it is a disease. Is it a lifetime condition, can he listen without the implant placed in his head, and many such questions are common in people's mind.

My biggest help and support have not come from one person, but many people. The 1st and foremost support are my family. They have been a constant source of inspiration and motivation when the road seems tough and light diminishes, the care, support and encouragement of my husband, his side of family as well as my side of family has been tremendous. My second biggest support is the team of audiologist, doctors, and speech therapists. The initial audio verbal therapy session has been very helpful for listening, understanding and acquiring knowledge as well as hearing. I learnt many techniques and strategies of doing speech therapy when I attended the speech session along with my child. We got the right path and guidance at each stage. From speaking 2 -3 words to now reading books and novels, my child's progress has been remarkable. I can't tell you how happy I am. I am so proud of him, you know!

My child's greatest achievements have been countless. He loves playing chess and he has taken part in many local chess competitions. He is also a badminton player and has participated in badminton tournaments. He loves to sketch, paint, and draw. He loves doing maths and he is passionate about world geo-diversity, learning about cities and new places. He also loves robotics. In school, he studies French and robotics. Robotics has been his favourite subject since then. **His biggest achievement was winning the national level Team Spirit Award 2025;** a robotics award. He and his team previously won trophies and stood in 1st position on other national and international level robotics championships.

My advice to other parents would be that every child is unique. Never compare your child with another child. Sometimes what we mistakenly do is, we compare our child's unfinished acts with someone else's finished products. So, avoid doing that. Always motivate and encourage them to go ahead and pursue their dreams. Provide opportunities for success. **Let your child learn to be independent.** That will help them lifelong.



How we made change happen, since we lived in a small city in Gujarat back then in 2017, we didn't have many resources for medical help, surgeries or even therapies in our town, so, **we moved** to Mumbai. My parents live in Mumbai. Since, Mumbai is a metro city, we had access to many facilities, and easy access to all required therapy sessions. We moved, for two years, to Mumbai and after the surgery and continuous speech therapy, we saw wonders in his growth and development. Then we moved back to Jamnagar (Gujarat). Then came the COVID wave where, suddenly, all learning happened online. From Zoom school meetings to family meetings, everything was online. Life changed not only for the cochlear implant (CI) kids but also for the normal kids all over the world.

But taking that time positively, and accepting it as a challenge, we also overcame the hurdles of listening on speaker, speaking on a mic and also learning many new skills in those two years.

Currently, in 2026, he is studying in Grade 5 at a school where English is the primary language of instruction. Since then, he has developed a liking for robotics, and French, which are taught at his school. He has also learnt to read, speak, and write in Gujarati and Hindi, which are our local languages. He is studying in a boarding school where the teachers are very supportive. He is preparing for his Primary Grade Checkpoint.

No obstacle is too big if met with the right dedication and determination. The collaborative work and efforts of my son, his teachers, his school, our parents, our family, professionals and the team have made a huge impact. He dreams and aspires to become the best he can be. We will continue to support him to bloom in his own way and at his own pace!

