

Paraguay

Caregiver Names: Oscar and Rina

Child: Agustina

We are Oscar and Rina, parents of a child with a cochlear implant. We would like to begin our story by saying that early detection is the most important factor. In our case, our daughter was diagnosed with profound bilateral hearing loss. As parents we were completely devastated by the diagnosis. However, at the same time, we found support and strength within our family circle, which helped us begin to face this reality and explore every possible option.



Our journey began in early 2003. At that time, in our country, Paraguay, this diagnosis was very much unknown. There was only one specialized medical professional that performed this type of surgery, and he was working in South Africa. On top of that, **the cost of surgery and the cochlear implant itself made it extremely difficult for us to even consider it as a possibility.**

Through a member of a volunteer service organization in our country, beneficial connections were made with their colleagues in Brazil. **With this support, we were able to access the technology and surgery in the city of Bauru, in the state of São Paulo.**

Once this major step was accomplished, we fully committed ourselves to our daughter's therapy. She began her rehabilitation process here in Asunción, while we also traveled to Brazil once or twice a year for evaluations and updates on her implant. The road was long and full of sacrifices, but today we can say with absolute certainty that every effort was worth it.

Our daughter proved that despite her hearing loss, she was able to overcome countless obstacles. **Today, with immense pride and joy, we can say that she has become the first hearing-impaired graduate in Speech Therapy in Paraguay, working with children who have conditions similar to her.**

Our final message to parents who are facing this diagnosis is simple but heartfelt: do not give up and do not lose hope. Exhaust every option, knock on doors and be persistent. All of this is worth it. Improving our children's quality of life and allowing them to live fully and independent brings us immeasurable happiness.

Today, as parents, we are deeply proud of her. Despite discrimination and many challenges that not even the most advanced societies have managed to eliminate, she moved forward. As a family, we raised the flags of perseverance and resilience and today we can confidently say that we have fulfilled our mission as parents and as a family.