

SOUTH AFRICA

Caregiver Name: Bibiche
Age at Implantation: 2.5

Child: Bravery
Age Today: 12

Bravery was born in 2013, a healthy and happy baby. In 2015, my daughter was diagnosed with meningitis, which affected her hearing. I began to notice changes in my baby, she became very quiet and unhappy. There was no more singing, no calling her sisters by their names, and every word she had learned slowly disappeared.



The biggest challenge for Bravery was not being able to hear like her sisters. While they could laugh, talk, and respond to sounds naturally, Bravery lived in silence. This was very difficult for her and heartbreaking for me as a mother.

She suffered a profound hearing loss that could not be helped with hearing aids, as both cochleae had been damaged by meningitis. The only chance for Bravery to hear again was a cochlear implant. It was one of the hardest decisions I have ever had to make, but I decided to give my child the opportunity to hear.

In 2016, Bravery received a cochlear implant. From that moment on, my child has made incredible progress. She can hear, dance when music is playing, and she becomes very excited about every sound she hears.

One of Bravery's greatest achievements is that she is able to hear and respond well using only nine electrodes in her cochlear implant. Despite having fewer electrodes than some children who use hearing aids or cochlear implants, Bravery has shown remarkable hearing ability and progress.

Throughout this journey, I have had to put in a great deal of extra effort — supporting Bravery daily, patiently helping her learn, and constantly explaining her condition to friends and family so they could understand her journey and treat her with care and compassion. I would not have managed this journey alone.

My greatest support and help have come from my family and friends, the dedicated hospital support team, and my faith, which carried me through the most difficult moments and gave me strength and hope when the journey felt overwhelming. When I look at how far Bravery has come since the implantation, I am filled with gratitude and pride.

My child's journey inspires me every day. She is my very brave Bravery. **The advice I would give to anyone facing similar challenges is simple but powerful: "DO NOT GIVE UP!"**

