

VIETNAM

Caregiver Name: Ngoc Hoa
Age at Implantation: 4

Child: Nhat An
Age Today: 7

My name is Ngoc Hoa, and I am the mother of Nhat An. My child received a cochlear implant in 2023 and is currently studying at a special school in Trang Bom, Dong Nai, Vietnam. Today, I would like to share our family's small story, as the voice of a mother who has walked through tears and happiness during her child's cochlear implant journey.

The day I learned that my child had hearing loss, I felt as if I had fallen into an empty space. It was not because I did not love my child enough, but because I did not know where to begin. Hundreds of questions filled my mind: Would my child be able to speak? Would my child go to school like other children? What would my child's future be like?



Our family's biggest challenge was not only financial. The cost of cochlear implantation and rehabilitation was truly a heavy burden. Even more difficult was the emotional side. There were days when I was exhausted from caring for my child while learning how to enter my child's world. Then I realized something important: if I collapsed, my child would have no place to lean.

The greatest support our family received came from an international NGO, together with doctors, therapists, and especially the principal of my child's school. The NGO donated a cochlear implant. Our support team did not only provide technical guidance, but also gave me hope. I learned that a cochlear implant is not magic. It is only a door. The people who must guide a child through that door every day are the parents.

My child's greatest achievement today is not speaking clear or complete sentences, but truly connecting with the world around us. My child turns when called by name, recognizes familiar voices, responds to environmental sounds, and actively searches for sound sources. My child has begun to imitate speech, combine simple sounds, and use gestures together with words to express needs. The moment my child naturally called me "mom" deeply moved me. My child is more confident, plays with friends, understands simple instructions, and participates in daily family activities. For me, this is not only progress in language, but proof that my child has opened the door to sound and started building real connections with life.

If I could offer advice to other parents, I would say: believe in your child and believe in yourself. Do not compare your child with hearing children or with "fast success" stories. Every child develops at their own pace. Be consistent with early intervention, make sure your child wears the device every day, talk with your child as much as possible, and do not be afraid to seek help.

Now, when I see Nhat An running, playing, and gently practicing words, I know that choosing cochlear implantation was a major turning point in my child's life—and in mine as well. **I hope our family's small story can add one more voice, helping the community understand that behind every cochlear implant are countless quiet efforts by parents.** With stronger support from communities, healthcare systems, and education services, more children will have the opportunity to hear and succeed sooner.

