

VIETNAM

Caregiver: Thu Thuy
Age at Implantation: 2

Child: Son
Age Today: 10

The day my child was diagnosed with hearing loss was the day my world quietly changed. When the doctor advised us to consider a cochlear implant, my family and I stepped onto a path filled with fear, uncertainty, and a faint glimmer of hope. We were afraid that we would not know how to walk alongside our child, unsure of how to teach them to listen, to speak, and to live in a world full of sound. Yet beneath that fear was a powerful belief that one day, my child would hear my voice, express their own thoughts, and have a bright future like any other child.

The journey to reclaim sound has not been easy. It has been the most difficult journey of our lives, but also the most meaningful one.

The greatest challenges our family faced were financial hardship and geographical distance. The cost of cochlear implant surgery was an enormous burden. After more than a year of careful consideration, research, and countless sleepless nights, we could only afford to implant one ear. We told ourselves that one ear was still better than none that even a small doorway to sound was a miracle worth fighting for.

However, the challenges did not end after the surgery. Long-term auditory and speech intervention requires significant financial resources, time, and professional support. In our country, most auditory and speech therapists are concentrated in major cities. For families living in remote areas like ours, accessing these services is almost impossible. There were times when I was overwhelmed with fear, afraid that even with a cochlear implant, my child would not be able to hear and speak well without proper intervention.

In the darkest moments of this journey, support came from a team of professionals. They provided not only knowledge, but also emotional strength. When I felt exhausted and lost, they encouraged me to keep moving forward. They helped connect me with suitable therapists and created opportunities for me to attend a short-term auditory and speech intervention training program designed specifically for parents. Through this experience, I realized that parents are not only caregivers but can also become active partners in their children's language development. I learned how to turn everyday moments into listening opportunities, how to speak with intention, and how to trust my child's abilities even when progress was slow.



My child's greatest achievement since the implant, is not simply the ability to hear, but the ability to integrate and live with confidence. Today, my child is 10 years old. Even with only one implanted ear, my child speaks quite clearly, listens well, and is studying in a mainstream school alongside hearing peers. My child communicates, learns, and plays just like any other child. Watching my child smile, tell stories, and express thoughts freely is the greatest reward for all the hardships we have endured.

If I could offer one piece of advice to other parents, it would be this: stay calm, stay strong, and remain persistent in walking alongside your child. A cochlear implant is not a miracle that happens overnight. It is a long journey that requires patience, perseverance, and faith. **There will be days filled with exhaustion and doubt, but please believe that every effort is meaningful.**

One of the biggest decisions I made was leaving my hometown to move to a major city, where my child could have better opportunities to learn listening and speaking skills. More importantly, I changed myself. I chose action over waiting, learning over fear. I believe my child deserves the best possible opportunity to develop with a cochlear implant.

I believe that if I can do it, you can too. The sentence that has accompanied me throughout this entire journey is: **“Be diligent and never stop believing - miracles will happen.”**