

Isaac's story

"In our busy daily life, the voice of our youngest son is heard loud and clear above the constant babble that goes with the chatter of four children. 'I play Playstation. I play Madagascar, mummy?'"

Isaac talks with his 95-year-old great-grandmother and tells her about his day at kindergarten and the little friends he has there. He explains the symbols on his paper as an attempt at writing his name. He yells with excitement as his big brother gets a goal in soccer and loves to pretend he is a warrior in the land of 'Narnia'.

He is a normal four-year-old child who happens to be severely/profoundly deaf.

Christmas Eve 2002, at seven months of age, after a few months of me contemplating whether Isaac could hear the industrial vacuum cleaner at our restaurant, or wondering why he was startled when his three brothers raced into his room to wake him up, my worst fears were verified: 'Your son is profoundly deaf... Merry Christmas'.

A further audiology test at a clinic confirmed the diagnosis and hearing aids were fitted, speech and early learning programs with hearing peers started immediately.

It was obvious that Isaac's ability to speak and comprehend spoken words would be strengthened by a cochlear implant. After consultation with the medical teams, Isaac was successfully implanted at 21 months of age. Watching my little boy in recovery after the operation with a huge bandage around his swollen head was the hardest thing I've had to watch, but hearing the words 'I love you!' from the lips of my deaf son made it all so worthwhile.

Isaac learnt over 100 words in the first six months of implantation, each new word or sentence being a step closer to the independent life that we had hoped for. An aural approach means that he will be able to communicate with anyone he chooses.

Through his early intervention program, Isaac has access to professional support and interaction with his peers, which helps him to acquire the skills he needs for the future. We look forward to Isaac attending a mainstream school with his brothers and entering a career of his choice.

We are so thankful for the opportunities and support that early intervention has given Isaac. It has provided a high quality of life and independence not only for him but also for our whole family.

Recently, Isaac was playing at a local park and a mother playing with her child questioned me about Isaac's spoken language. She commented that he could not be deaf as his quality of speech was that of a normal hearing child. What more could a parent ask for but to get a deaf child talking!"

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Every
child,
every
opportunity

