

Charlie's story

Loud Shirt Day



Charlie does not let his hearing loss hold him back. Charlie loves playing with cars, going to kindy gym and swimming lessons. He can do everything other kids his age can do thanks to the support of Can:Do 4Kids.

Parents, Rachel and Beau, first had concerns when Charlie failed the newborn hearing screening. *"Charlie also failed the second test and I was reassured that it was probably just fluid in his middle ear. I was aware that Charlie was not reacting to sound but being my first child, I convinced myself that he had nerves of steel and congestion in his middle ear."*



Having no family history of hearing loss and an uncomplicated pregnancy, Rachel had no reason to suspect anything was seriously wrong. *"Only a few minutes into the test I was told that it wasn't congestion. I sat there holding my perfect little new born and tears began streaming down my face. That day my world ended"*.

"We wept for most of the day, it was as if we were in mourning. I don't like to think about that day except for how we ended it. Beau and I vowed that together we would do whatever we needed to ensure that Charlie would have the best quality of life possible," adds Rachel.

Rachel and Beau had a difficult few months ahead of them. Living in Port Lincoln they had to travel to Adelaide to find out what options to support Charlie were available.

"We joined the Cora Barclay Listening and Spoken Language Program, provided by Can:Do 4Kids in February 2018, being regional clients, we attend our weekly sessions via the internet. They have been a great support. Chris, has not only been a great Auditory Verbal Therapist but also a great counsellor to guide me through this process. She personally understands what it means to want your child to have the best access to sound and I feel comforted by knowing she has lived my experience," says Rachel.

There are many risks and possible side effects of cochlear implant surgery, but Rachel and Beau didn't want to take the opportunity away for Charlie to live in a world of sound and speech like his family. Charlie underwent his cochlear implant surgery on the 26th of September 2018, it was a great success.

Charlie is now 8 months post implantation of his cochlear implant and he is very quickly closing the gap in his expressive and comprehensive language. His last hearing assessment tracked him on the 50th percentile for a normal hearing child. Charlie has a bright future ahead of him and Can:Do 4Kids will be there to support his family every step of the way.