

Observations and Reflections on a Teenagers Sequential Cochlear Implant Journey

Presented by

Sheridan Howell (Parent & Teacher of the Deaf)

Jamie Howell (Sequential Cochlear Implants Recipient)



Decision to implant

- * Personal reflections...
- * Parent's perspective
- * Jamie's thoughts



Switch On 2000 (left cochlear implant)



Four months post switch on (2000)



Pros & Cons

+ Surgery

- Dr Parker has done procedure many times
- has commented it is easier to perform on an 'adult head' than a ~~head~~ baby's head
- Dr Parker is an experienced ENT.

+ Surgery

- group discussions
- confidence
- want to hear out of 2 ears
- Teacher - postschool
- hear 'better' - ambitious
- Don't have to be in 'outsider'
- Can sit in the middle
- 1. have to sit to the side
- hear more in class
- learn a bit more
- more social.
- positive - hair can 'hide' implant but Jamie can't - will look 'beautiful'

- Surgery

- Risks
- balance
- facial nerve
- taste nerve
- May affect some of my activities eg. rides sport surfing
- look funny
- having 2 implants.
- Negative - people will stare to me having 2 implants.
- appearance of Jamie as an individual.

20 Sept. 2012

+ Not Surgery

- don't have to worry about risks
- Get on with life!
- Can still enjoy all the things I do now.
- High Achiever
- already achieved so much with one implant → how much more would I achieve with 2 implants??

- Not Surgery

- lose opportunity to have 2 ears
- never know what it is like!
- experience 'switch-on again'
- previously young child → don't remember experience
- never get to see the benefits of having the implant eg class + group discussions.



Switch On 2012 (right cochlear implant)

Detection

Key Points

- * Localisation of sound was possible with both cochlear implants from the day of switch on.
- * Spontaneous awareness of sound took months to develop with the second implant.
- * Cueing to listen was a very important strategy for developing auditory awareness with the new implant.

Seven Speech Sounds Test - Results

Date	21/12/2012		Distance		1m			
7 Sounds	m	oo	ee	or	ar	sh	s	
Detect	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	
Identify	m (hard to hear)m		m	or	ar	ar	or	
Comment	sounds given in random order							

Date	22/12/2012		Distance		1m			
7 Sounds	m	oo	ee	or	ar	sh	s	
Detect	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	
Identify	or (louder)		ee	or	ee	ar	sh	
Comment	sounds given in random order							

Date	28/12/2012		Distance		1m			
7 Sounds	m	oo	ee	or	ar	sh	s	
Detect	?	?Y	y	y	y	y	y	
Identify		m	oo	oo	ar	s	or	
Comment	sounds given in random order							

Discrimination & Identification

Key Points

- * Revisit environmental sounds over time.
- * Noisemakers and instruments are a great way to develop discrimination and identification.
- * Discriminating and identifying voices takes time.
- * Acoustically highlighting suprasegmental and segmental cues is very important for developing identification.

Comprehension

Key Points

- * Observations have highlighted the impact of age, critical period of language development and auditory pathway deprivation on developing speech perception.
- * Training the brain to process sound and perceive speech through a cochlear implant is a complex process.
- * Reflecting on personal experiences helps to build knowledge for providing support to students with sequential cochlear implants.
- * De Raeve, L., Archbold, S. & Diller G. 2013. Maximizing the Benefits from Bilateral Implantation, in Therapy, at Home and at School. *Deafness & Education International*, 15 (1): 52-68.

Therapy Tips

- * Encourage natural conversations with just the new implant, including lip reading.
- * Don't cover your mouth with your hand or paper, it distorts the speech signal.
- * Spending time at home with just the new cochlear implant is beneficial.
- * Using content relevant to the individual makes listening tasks helpful, for example identifying friend's names or sports.
- * Reading interesting books out loud with someone is an enjoyable and meaningful listening task.
- * Remember that listening with an implant is really hard work and very tiring. Don't make therapy sessions too long and don't have unrealistic expectations about teenagers completing structured listening homework.
- * Make it FUN. It's the only way to get the kids motivated.