



16 November 2017

Two children from one family receive their second cochlear implant

Having one child in the family experience hearing loss can be difficult however in the case of Cairns based family, the McDonough's, it was a shock to find that all three children were experiencing hearing loss eventually requiring cochlear implants.

Joe, ETTY and James, who are 14, 10 and 8 years respectively, all passed their newborn hearing screening however have since experienced progressive hearing loss that is linked to a genetic disorder. All three received their first cochlear implants in March this year.

Mum, Kitty McDonough said, the children were all doing well academically which is why their father, Terry and I missed the signs that something was wrong with their hearing.

"It was a real eye opener for all of us, and a reminder for all families to seek specialist help if they suspect their child may be missing out on critical developmental milestones in particular hearing, listening and speaking. We are so grateful to have found Hear and Say and to know the children are now back on track." said Mrs McDonough.

The Cairns based family originally travelled to the Hear and Say Centre in Townsville in March to get 'switched on' to their new sound. This month they will be back again so Joe and ETTY can receive their second 'switch on' giving them in effect 'surround sound'. Younger child, James is still receiving benefit from his hearing aid and therefore does not require a second cochlear implant.

Liza Bowen, Hear and Say Audiologist and Listening and Spoken Language Specialist in Townsville said, we are very lucky that North Queensland families no longer have to travel to Brisbane for cochlear implant surgery which is now available in Townsville.

"The team at Hear and Say work closely with local ENT surgeon, Dr Anderson, who conducted the cochlear implant surgeries, to ensure families like the McDonough's are receiving the best outcomes for their children with hearing loss," said Ms Bowen.

With the second 'switch on' Joe and ETTY will now have improved access to hearing, via their bilateral cochlear implants. All three children are continuing to receive listening and spoken language support from their home in Cairns taking advantage of Hear and Say's successful 'Telepractice program.

The family will continue to travel to the Townsville Hear and Say Centre to receive regular audiology support such as MAPping of the cochlear implants. This 'MAP' ensures that the level of sound heard through the cochlear implants is at its optimum level and often requires more regular assessment in the first months of an implant.

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The media is invited to attend the 'switch on' of Joe and ETTY on Tuesday 21 November at 10.15am for a 10.30am switch on. The centre is located at Level 2 (turn left out of the lifts), 1 James Cook Drive, JCU (located near the IAG carpark)

On arrival contact Amy Russell on 0403 525 074 or Liza Bowen on 0402 571 747 to arrange someone to meet and escort you to the room.



For more details and to confirm attendance to the 'switch on' contact Lois Shuttleworth, Communications Specialist, Hear and Say at lois.shuttleworth@hearandsay.com.au or call 0481 212 420.

About Hear and Say

Established in 1992 by Dr Dimity Dornan AO, Hear and Say today provides services and programs to children, young adults and families across six centres as well as e-Auditory-Verbal Therapy and e-Audiology programs reaching out rural and remote families. Hear and Say also provides the 'Hear to Learn' School Hearing Screening Program and paediatric hearing services - as a child's hearing can change over time.

Our aim is to help all children to hear, listen and speak so they can attend a regular school, have wider career choices and can more fully participate in their community. Hear and Say interfaces state-of-the-art hearing technology (digital hearing aids and implantable technology such as cochlear implants) with the Auditory-Verbal Therapy approach.

As a not-for-profit organisation Hear and Say must raise more than \$10,000 each year, for up to five years, to fill the funding gap so that one child with hearing loss can learn to listen and speak.

Hear and Say is committed to using clinical research to measure outcomes and its success lies in the vital role that parents/caregivers play in teaching their children to listen and speak.