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Community Connections

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Worldwide more than 62,000 people, ranging in age from 12 months to 93 years, can hear with their Cochlear Nucleus implant systems.

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Meet Robbie Barnes

“Oklahoma!” belted out 12-year-old Robbie Barnes while participating in the chorus of his school’s musical production.

Watching him sing with so much feeling, no bystander would be surprised to learn he truly enjoys music. Besides singing, he loves playing the recorder, violin, and piano. But to those who know him, Robbie’s ability to enjoy music is nothing short of amazing.

Robbie Barnes was born deaf. Yet for most of his life, Robbie has been able to hear. That’s because he has a Nucleus cochlear implant.

Robbie’s deafness was diagnosed at 13 months. Two months later, he was fitted with hearing aides. He received weekly speech therapy and auditory-verbal therapy, and was enrolled in an early intervention program. At first, he made progress, but hit a plateau around his third birthday. That’s when his parents began to investigate the options for a cochlear implant.

They soon learned they had a choice in brands for cochlear implants. After exploring the options, their decision came down to customer service.

“We were concerned about the ceramic casing of some implants, knowing how active young boys could be. Then we discovered that Cochlear’s Nucleus system has a silicone casing. The durability of the silicone casing was appealing, but there was a problem. We were concerned about Robbie’s allergy to silicone,” says Robbie’s mom.

Before going forward with an implant, [Name] needed to know whether Robbie would have an adverse reaction to the silicone coating from Nucleus implant’s casing. To find out, Cochlear sent several samples of the silicone material to Robbie’s doctor. The doctor determined Robbie would not have a problem with the casing.

“We were very impressed when Cochlear took the time to address our son’s allergy. That customer service was the deciding factor. We went with the Nucleus system.”

As the years have gone by, Robbie has upgraded his speech processor, and now uses the ESPrit 3G for the Nucleus 22. “He likes its style, how inconspicuous it is, and the freedom from the long cord going to the body processor.”

“I have to say, we’ve been impressed with Cochlear’s commitment to offering updates as technology improves. It shows that customer service is still Cochlear’s main concern.”

When asked what she likes most about Robbie’s Nucleus implant, she says, “There are no language barriers holding him back from relationships with his family. He is active in sports, Cub

Meet Robbie Barnes

Residence

Decatur, Alabama

Birthdate

Friday, May 01, 1992

Age at onset

Birth

Age When Implanted

Hearing Loss Type

Duration of Loss

0-5 years

Etiology

Congenital / Heredity

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Scouts, and our church, and carries himself with confidence and a joy of life. He is able to follow his interests, whether that is a Civil War reenactment, Space Camp, or musical performance. The implant has allowed Robbie to be the child he was meant to be.”

Document last modified: Wednesday, December 07, 2005

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