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Becoming a mother for the first time was filled with joyful anticipation and uncertainty as our new baby was induced at 37 weeks and was born 4lbs 7oz. While he stayed in the NICU for a week, he was screened for hearing loss. The screening results showed that he had a possible hearing loss, and we were referred for a longer Auditory Brainstem Response (ABR). Our lives rapidly changed from there. Within two months of our baby being born, we found out that he was deaf and that he was a candidate for cochlear implant surgery.

Within the next nine months, we met with an ENT, started speech therapy with our baby, started physical therapy with our baby, picked out the cochlear implants we wanted, and put our baby through surgery to receive his cochlear implants. It was an eventful first year as a new mom, to say the least!

And then, two years later, the entire scenario repeated almost verbatim when our second child was also born with the same type of hearing loss as a result of a genetic syndrome called Warsaw Breakage Syndrome, like his older brother.

Now, we have three children, and two of them have hearing loss and cochlear implants. Hearing loss does not run in our family, and to say that it was a complete shock when our first two children were born with hearing loss is an understatement.

At the time, I had so many questions- *How would we educate them? Do we all have to learn sign language now? How did this happen to us?*

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However, each day we learned more, and we all got better at living with hearing loss. My second son was born with a small cochlear nerve, and so we also use American Sign Language (ASL) in our family to help our middle child communicate with us more easily. Since my children were born, I've lived with the idea that **every day is a new challenge and a new opportunity for learning!**

Now, ten years into walking through hearing loss with my kids, I feel competent and confident in advocating for my children with cochlear implants. The most important lesson that I've learned so far: *That hope and healing are possible even in the middle of the journey.*

I'm now passionate about helping other parents live their own story of hope and healing amidst hearing loss in their children. Through my job as an EHDI Parent Consultant, I encourage parents of children with hearing loss. I also connect parents to the resources that they need to help their children.

I would love to connect with you and answer any questions that you have about hearing loss in your child. **No parent should walk this journey alone, and we at EHDI are here to support you!**