

NEWS

OPINION

LIFESTYLE

SPORT

CAPE ARGUS

NEWS

# How early intervention transformed Zay-Lee Adams' life on World Hearing day

Staff Reporter | Published 1 month ago



*Five-year-old Zay-Lee Adams joyfully embraces the world of sound, a testament to the power of early intervention at the Carel du Toit Centre.*

*Image: supplied*

As the world observes World Hearing Day today, the Carel du Toit Centre marks not just an occasion of awareness but a

profound celebration of possibility, perseverance, and the unparalleled power of early intervention.

For the Centre's learners and their families, this day signifies triumph over adversity and the embrace of new beginnings.

Every child enrolled at the Carel du Toit Centre has a hearing loss or is deaf. Thanks to early identification, consistent use of hearing technology, and the Learning and Spoken Language approach, these young learners are not only taught to listen but also to engage in effective communication. For families, witnessing a baby hear their mother's voice or the joyful chirping of birds for the first time is nothing short of miraculous.

Among those inspiring stories is the journey of five-year-old Zay-Lee Adams, whose experience underscores the Centre's mission. Born with a permanent hearing loss in both ears, Zay-Lee's journey commenced at just three months old when a follow-up appointment revealed she was not responding to sound.





*Zay-Lee Adams shares a heartfelt moment with her mother, Shihaam, celebrating their journey of communication and connection on World Hearing Day.*

*Image: supplied*

A referral to the Red Cross War Memorial Children's Hospital led to a diagnosis by five months, and she was fitted with hearing aids shortly thereafter. Thus began her remarkable journey towards sound and speech.

Her mother, Shihaam, describes the diagnosis as a combination of shock and clarity. With both parents having their own history of hearing loss, along with a familial prevalence of hearing issues on Zane, Zay-Lee's father's side, the news transformed into a strong determination to help their daughter thrive. Zane has embraced both Sign Language and spoken language, while Shihaam primarily communicates using Sign Language.

The initial stages of communication were fraught with challenges. After receiving her hearing aids, Zay-Lee was directed to the Carel du Toit CHAT (Children Hear and Talk) Centre, a vital partner providing early intervention support to families facing similar circumstances. With structured guidance, practical strategies, and unwavering encouragement, Shihaam and Zane learned to convert daily interactions into vital language-building experiences for Zay-Lee.

As Zay-Lee began to articulate herself verbally, she found it natural to depend on her father to bridge the communication gap with her mother.

Today, at five years old, Zay-Lee confidently communicates using both spoken language and Sign Language. She no longer needs an interpreter to share in conversations with her mother.

What was once a source of distance has evolved into profound connection and understanding.

"She is my gift from God," says Shihaam. "Without the support we received, I do not believe Zay-Lee would have reached the level of spoken language she has today."

World Hearing Day serves as a crucial global reminder of the significance of early detection and intervention in cases of hearing loss. At the Carel du Toit Centre, it embodies a celebration of resilience, partnership, and the remarkable journeys birthed from the very first sound heard.

**Get your news on the go, click here to join the Cape Argus News WhatsApp channel.**

**Cape Argus**

RELATED TOPICS:

- HEARING
- RED CROSS WAR MEMORIAL CHILDRENS HOSPITAL
- SIGN LANGUAGE

From its earliest days in 1857, under the influence of its co-founder, Saul Solomon, the Cape Argus advocated for multi-racial democracy, women's rights, and local self-governance. This commitment to progressive ideals continued throughout the apartheid era, during which the paper served as a

SECTIONS ON CAPE ARGUS

- News
- Opinion
- Lifestyle
- Sport

OUR NETWORK

- Business Report
- Cape Argus
- Cape Times
- Daily News
- Independent on Saturday
- Isolezwe
- The Mercury
- Pretoria News
- Sunday Tribune