



# Courageous Clay: Teenager overcomes frustration with hearing loss to succeed at school

Meet Clay Freeman, a teenager who enjoys playing video games, participating in the Boy Scouts and playing the saxophone. In the past, Clay was frustrated with his ability to do all these activities because he couldn't hear well enough and wasn't happy wearing hearing instruments. Now, after finding a customized and personal solution, Clay is happier and more successful—in school and elsewhere.

Clayton Freeman was born with a high frequency hearing loss, but his condition was unknown to his parents until he was 3 years old.

Clay's parents, Mike and Cindy, first started to notice when Clay was a toddler that communication was frustrating for him and that he could not follow directions. They also noticed that he exhibited delayed speech patterns. Mike and Cindy took Clay to a doctor who suggested a hearing test. It was then that they diagnosed Clay, indicating he had most likely lost his hearing from complications during birth.

## Frustration with Hearing Aids

At 8, Clay received his second hearing aid, which was an earmold-type aid that filled up the entire space in his ear. Clay was frustrated with these devices because they were "hard and stuffy," he says.

His dad says that Clay would come home from school and immediately take them out because they were so uncomfortable.

"I used to throw my big box of a hearing aid across the room," Clay says.

Knowing that Clay was so sensitive about his hearing aids, his parents sought another solution. Mike knew an audiologist that he trusted, and so he asked her to recommend a hearing instrument that would help ease the frustration that had built up through the years.

## Pure Provides Discretion and Comfort for Clay

Clay's audiologist recommended the very discreet Siemens Pure® hearing instruments, which are hardly noticeable.

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A Lesson in Hearing Awareness

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"You can barely see that he is wearing hearing aids because from the front he just has a very small tube running into his ear," Mike says.

Clay finds the hearing instruments to be so comfortable that he no longer comes home and takes them out. He wears them from the moment he wakes up until he goes to bed. Additionally, he wears them everywhere socially, from the movies, to restaurants and baseball games.

Clay especially likes the fact that he can use Pure with Siemens Tek®, a wireless enhancement system that enables him to easily access his favorite entertainment devices.

Like other teenagers his age, Clay enjoys playing his handheld video games, and with the Pure and Tek combination, he can clearly hear his favorite games. He also uses Tek with his MP3 player, computer and television, and he can hear everything in both ears, something those without hearing instruments cannot do.

Clays says that the sound is great when it comes directly into his hearing aid from all these devices. He also appreciates that Tek eliminates the need to use any wires or headphones.

"I feel like I'm a teenager from the future," Clay says. "It's nice to have technology affect me like this."

## Pure Gives Clay Confidence to Succeed at School

The Pure instruments have also given Clay the ability to focus on his school work and extracurricular activities, rather than spending energy being frustrated with his hearing aids.

"When Clay first used the aids he was amazed by what he had been missing," Mike says.

The sound quality of the Pure instruments is "far superior" to that of the old hearing instruments, Mike says, which has allowed Clay to have a better understanding of words.

He can better hear the endings of words and has been reading at home out loud to reinforce this.

In addition, Clay has more confidence at school and in social situations. His Pilates instructor, saxophone teacher, Boy Scout leader and teachers have all seen an improvement.

"His confidence level has risen and his grades are up," Mike says.

It's no surprise that Clay has improved in school and in his other activities because he now feels more comfortable to be himself. Pure and Tek "make life much better," Clay says.

## Decibels