

Cochlear Family

Keeping you supported, connected, inspired

Issue 03 2021

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Cochlear®

Hearing care for all, now!



Have your say now to make hearing health a global priority

Imagine being asked by the World Health Organisation (WHO) what is the one most important thing the WHO could do to tackle a growing global challenge: the rapidly rising prevalence of hearing loss.

Alana, a cochlear implant recipient from Taiwan, was one of a handful of speakers at the WHO's World Hearing Day event in March who was asked this question by the Director-General, Tedros Adhanom.

The purpose of the event was to launch the WHO's landmark first-ever World Report on Hearing, Hearing care for all – screen, rehabilitate, communicate, calling on governments to help curtail a worldwide rise in hearing loss. ▶



Canadian rocker Bryan Adams says, “I’d like to use this World Report on Hearing to pass on this message: Hearing loss doesn’t just affect the young, it affects all age groups. The way we enjoy our music is what counts; volume can damage your hearing forever. So, take care of your hearing with the level you listen to it.”

◀ The resounding message from Alana and other speakers was the need to destigmatise hearing loss by talking openly about it and to join the groundswell of support for governments and societies to make hearing care available for all.

“One of the biggest things we have to do is exactly what we’re doing today – which is talking about it,” Alana told about 500 people and organisations worldwide who had dialed into the virtual event.

New WHO figures reveal that globally, 1.5 billion people live with some degree of hearing loss. This includes around 60 million people who live with severe to complete hearing loss.¹

In response to the rapidly rising prevalence of hearing loss, the WHO report sets out hearing care policy actions for all societies and age groups, including babies, children and adults.

It follows a 2017 World Health Assembly resolution (WHA70.132) that reinforced hearing loss is a significant public health issue, requiring all governments to make it a higher priority and develop national action plans.

“A big part of my success today is because my parents fought extremely hard for me to have access to the resources that I needed as well as the rehabilitation. It was extremely important for me to emphasise this and share my story,” she told the event.

Alana has gone on to host a TV show, travel the world and embark on endless adventures. She also leads charity work that aims to help others to hear, especially children. All the while she has promoted the importance of self-advocacy, raising awareness of hearing loss and empowering people to pursue their dreams. ▶

“This topic is deeply important to me because I am someone who almost did not receive ear and hearing care”

Alana, Cochlear™ Nucleus® System recipient, Taiwan

◀
“I have seen firsthand the effects of not having access to the necessary ear and hearing care rehabilitation. I have seen children and grandparents ostracised and isolated because of this and it is time that we changed the conversation around it. Because ear and hearing care is not always about hearing loss. It is also about language and communication access.”

Alana said advocacy is key: “It is extremely important in giving people the ability to advocate for themselves in this world.”

Alana is also an active member of the WHO World Hearing Forum Champions and Changemakers group, which has launched a pledge to help build a worldwide, grassroots movement to persuade societies to prioritise hearing health. The WHO calls upon governments to include the best possible person-centred ear and hearing care in national health plans for universal coverage.

So how can you too get involved? Join Alana to take the pledge and share with others. By taking the pledge, you are also advocating for all governments to include the best possible person-centred ear and hearing care in national health plans for universal coverage.

Here's what you can do:

- 1** Write a personal message to show why you support societies and governments prioritising hearing health to make sure the best possible hearing care is available for everybody. And, why governments should include person-centred ear and hearing care within national health plans.
- 2** Upload the pledge with your personal message to your social media channels.
- 3** Include the following hashtags with your post: #hearingcarepledge #WorldHearingDay, #HearingCare, #SafeListening.
- 4** Add the words “share if you agree” at the end of your message.

The World Report on Hearing calls for action now.
Together, our voices can make a difference.

Hear my story: Meet Akanksha

Most of us have vague memories of our childhood, but all I remember is living in a world of silence. When I was 2 years old, my parents realised that I was not babbling-which was a regular phenomenon for other kids my age. I began attending speech therapy, during which there was minimal development. However, my parents realised that I was relying a lot on lip reading and gestures -indicating that this was beyond just speech issues. I was almost 6 years old when my hearing loss was detected. Hearing tests confirmed that I had profound hearing loss in one ear and severe to profound in the other. I was fitted with hearing aids, however it gave me very limited benefits.

I remember that phase in life where I felt so disconnected and left out. I used to feel different from others and emotionally exhausted. We had to make a huge decision, and today, I am so glad we went ahead. I got my first Cochlear™ implant surgery in the left ear at the age of 9.

Since I underwent surgery at a late age, I required even more rigorous speech therapy. I received immense support from my parents, family, friends and teachers. They helped me come out of my shell and I began to succeed in my academic achievements which really increased my confidence. ▶



“Akanksha’s never-give-up spirit gives us immense joy that our decision to go for a cochlear implant really paid off! At such a young age, she has achieved so much and as parents we are extremely proud of her.”

Prakash, father of Cochlear™ Nucleus® System recipient Akanksha, India

“Live, love, laugh has been my motto in life. All of this would not have been possible without one of the most important senses we have – hearing.”

Akanksha, bilateral Cochlear™ Nucleus® System recipient, India



◀ I finally had the self-belief to start doing things I loved - I flourished into a self-assured young girl. When I was 15 years old, we decided to go ahead and implant the second side as we knew it would further accelerate my progress.

With better hearing, I am capable of so many things that I would have missed otherwise. I am only 20 years-old but I have had the opportunity to chase all my passions. I have my own YouTube channel

and I am a co-founder of Aksa, a boutique fashion label. I love dancing and choreographing and also play a lot of sports.

I am currently pursuing my second year in Bachelor of Design at the National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFT).

Live, love, laugh has been my motto in life. All of this would not have been possible without one of the most important senses we have – hearing.

“When I see her dance to the rhythm of music, I am lost for words. What else can a mother ask for? Watching her chase her dreams gives me so much joy.”

Archana, mother of Cochlear™ Nucleus® System recipient Akanksha, India



Top tips for managing hearing loss at work

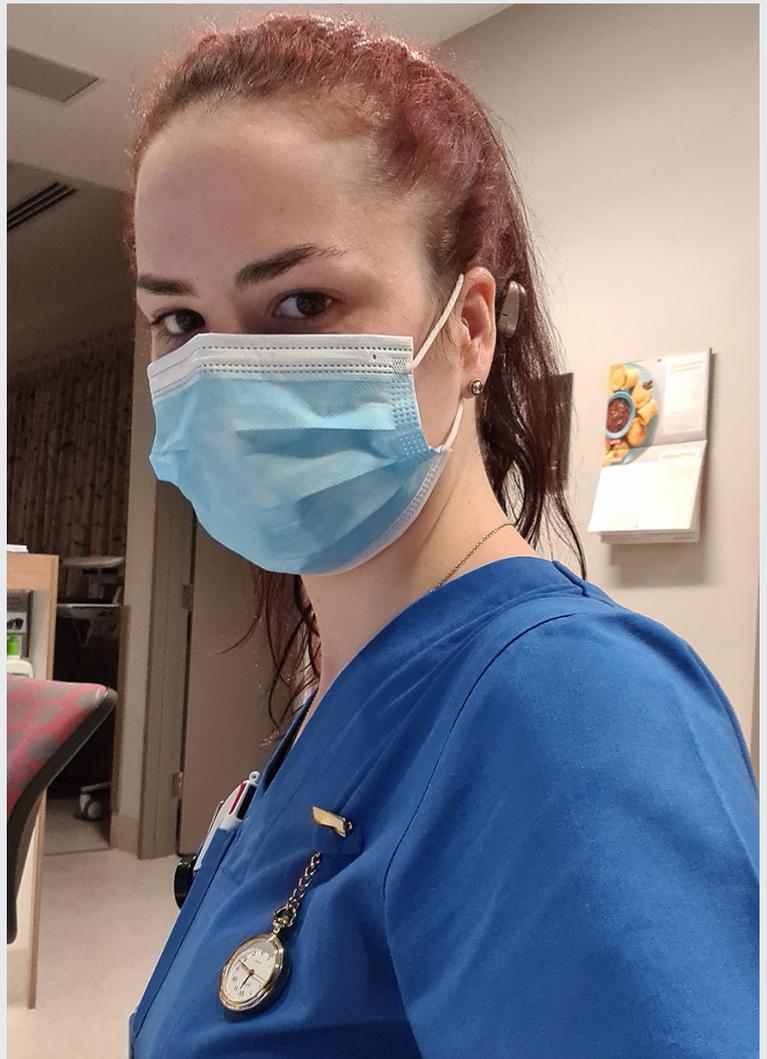
Twenty-four-year-old residential aged care nurse, Alisha didn't hesitate when deciding to get her second bone conduction implant surgery.

Before getting her first Cochlear™ Baha® 5 Sound Processor three years ago, Alisha had struggled with bullying at school and dropped out before completing high school. Milestones for other young people, like getting a driver's license and a first job, seemed out of reach to Alisha.

“As I couldn't hear properly, I didn't feel as though I had the confidence to be able to drive a car,” she says. “Finding a job due to my hearing loss was another difficult feat – I felt as if I was held back, like I was being discriminated against.”

Those feelings have changed since getting her bilateral Baha 5 Sound Processors.

“The thing it helped mostly with is my job,” says Alisha. “It has helped me get to where I am today and has made me a stronger, happier person than I was without them.” ▶

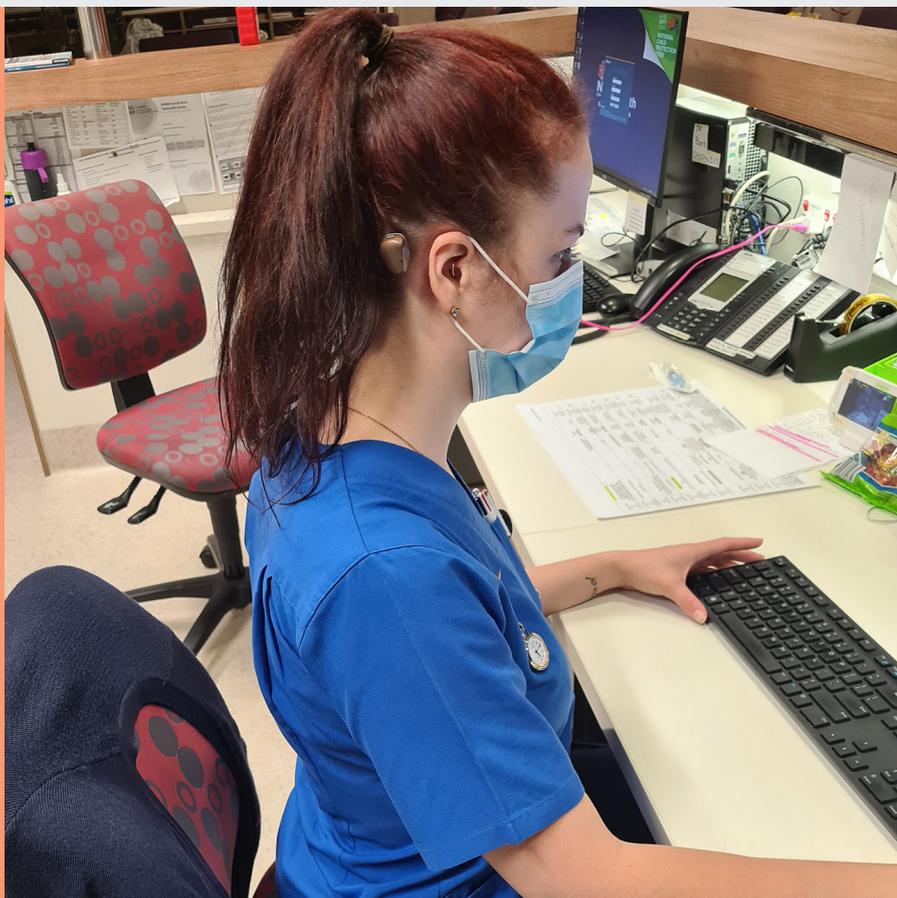


“I was willing to try anything and everything to be able to hear on both sides, so I would be able to focus more on improving myself and getting where I wanted to be in life”

Alisha, Cochlear™ Baha® System recipient, Australia

“Do not feel bad if you need to ‘take five’ for yourself, whether that is going outside for fresh air or going to a quieter area. If you are struggling to hear someone, let them know.”

Alisha, Cochlear™ Baha® System recipient, Australia



◀ Having returned to school and trained as a nurse, Alisha now works with the elderly in residential aged care at a small country town hospital. Many of her patients speak softly and with their heads down, and now with the added challenges of colleagues wearing masks, Alisha has had to develop some strategies to manage her hearing loss at work.

“My advice would be to just explain to anyone you work with that you have hearing loss,” says Alisha. “Tell them what works for you, whether that’s face-to-face communication, whether they need to talk a little slower for you.” She finds that most people are very understanding and more than happy to assist you, particularly if you ask them to repeat important instructions.

Using the Cochlear™ Wireless Phone Clip for her Android™ smartphone has also made calls clearer and easier for Alisha, both at work and in her personal life, by streaming the audio to her sound processors.

“Now I don’t have to have my phone on speaker, and I can have private phone calls if needed – especially in public,” she says.

In dealing with stressful situations or places where the noise levels are overwhelming, Alisha suggests taking a short break.

Alisha’s success with her first Baha 5 Sound Processor made her decision to get a second implant easier: “As soon as my ENT (ear, nose and throat specialist) told me about it, I decided to go for it”. She is now able to hear people talking in the distance and background sounds like the blinker in a car, birds chirping and people’s shoes on the pavement.

“Having two sound processors has helped me more than I thought it would,” says Alisha. “Because with the two of them I can hear so much better than I did with the one”.

See how a **Cochlear Wireless Phone Clip** can also help you at work

If, like Carly, you lead an active lifestyle – or just seem to be always on the go – you’ll be excited to learn about the new Kanso® 2 Sound Processor and why an off-the-ear device may make sense for you. ▶

Everything you’ve been waiting for in an off-the-ear device



Do you lead an active lifestyle? Carly runs and practises yoga most days, and in the winter months you’ll find her snowboarding with friends on the slopes of the Colorado mountains. All the while, she likes to stream her favourite music or phone calls to her sound processor.



◀ If, like Carly, you like to stay fit or your average day finds you on the go, you'll be excited to hear that the new Kanso® 2 Sound Processor – Cochlear's most advanced off-the-ear sound processor technology – is now available.

Like the Nucleus® 7 Sound Processor, its behind-the-ear cousin, the Kanso 2 Sound Processor features direct streaming and control via the Nucleus Smart App from a compatible smartphone*.

By pairing your sound processor with your compatible smartphone*, you can make phone calls and enjoy music, movies and apps with audio streamed directly to your sound processor. There's no need for extra Bluetooth®-enabled devices – you're ready to go.

When you're at work, in a busy cafe or other noisy situation, you'll find using ForwardFocus may help you hear conversation more clearly. Simply turn on the function through the Nucleus® Smart App^ to decrease the noise coming from behind you and help you focus more easily on the face-to-face conversation in-front.

You've already experienced life with your current hearing solution. Why would you choose to upgrade to an off-the-ear device like the new Kanso 2 Sound Processor?

Let's look at what recipients tell us they love about their off-the-ear sound processors, and how the new Kanso 2 Sound Processor measures up. ▶

1 It's comfortable and discreet

"I usually always have sunglasses on or glasses. And having the Kanso on my head and off the ear is a very relaxing and comfortable feeling."

– Sheiladawn, Cochlear™ Nucleus® System recipient, USA

Being the world's smallest and lightest rechargeable off-the-ear sound processor, the Kanso 2 Sound Processor is designed to be so discreet and so comfortable you won't know you're wearing it.³

2 It makes sense for people with an active lifestyle

"I live a very active lifestyle... and most people would think, with the Kanso, wouldn't it bounce off while you're running, or wouldn't it slide down if you're going upside-down in yoga poses? But it doesn't."

– Carly, Cochlear™ Nucleus® System recipient, USA

Whether you're working out or exploring the great outdoors, the Kanso 2 Sound Processor is designed to stay securely in place. For your adventurous child or more vigorous activities, there is a range of comfortable retention options including a headband, or hair and clothing clips.

Plus, the Kanso 2 Sound Processor has a powerful, integrated rechargeable battery that you can rely on for all-day hearing[†] and convenient Portable Charger for when you're on the go.

3 You can enjoy your favourite water activities

"The Kanso represents a real sense of freedom to me... thanks to the extra opportunities it offers me, especially taking my nephews swimming."

– Julia, Cochlear™ Nucleus® System recipient, Australia

With the highest water resistance rating available* and the added waterproof security of Aqua+, the Kanso 2 Sound Processor lets you swim, snorkel or just splash about in fresh, salt or chlorinated water.

If you've imagined having better conversation in noisy places, making calls with confidence, or enjoying streamed music and entertainment, it's all possible with the new Kanso 2 Sound Processor. When you're ready to upgrade your current device to the latest technology, you can get help in choosing the compatible[‡] sound processor to suit your needs from your clinician or **Cochlear Customer Service**.

[Find out more](#)

Stay New Plan



Exchange your old sound processor to StayNew!

We are committed to supporting you on your hearing journey, and strive to continually innovate and bring to market the latest technology.

We understand the importance of better hearing, and to help you upgrade to a new and advanced sound processor, we bring you the StayNew Plan.

The StayNew Plan is a sound processor exchange plan for those who want to upgrade to advanced sound processing technology.

Contact the Customer Service Team for more information.



Building confidence in teens to navigate high school

It takes a gutsy teenager to write to the Queen of England, reach out to the creators of hit TV comedy *The Simpsons* and compose a musical about hearing-impaired kids called 'Listen Up', ready to stage as a performance.

At the tender age of 14, Isy is so enthusiastic about her future, she has crafted a CV and, while studying Grade 8 in high school, has recently applied for a job as a TV scriptwriter.

Since receiving her implant and Cochlear™ Nucleus® 6 Sound Processor at age 10, Isy has developed confidence and found a way to express herself through music and the stage says her mother Rachael: "Creatively, she has 'come to life.'" ▶

◀ “I saw so much change – changes in her personality and confidence. Before her implant, she would tend to get tired socially and withdraw into her own world.”

The teenager has taken up the piano, now composes music, writes plays, and sings in the school choir and rock band. She was recently named Voice of The Future by The Shepherd Centre, an Australian organisation that supports children with hearing loss.

But despite Isy’s creative talents and vibrant exterior, high school has been a challenge.

“Life is not always easy at school,” says Rachael. “Being ostracised is an everyday thing – some days it’s hard to muster the courage to go to school.”

Rachael says that while schools might have strategies to combat bullying, it’s often the less obvious behaviours that can be hurtful and hard for a teen to deal with: rolling of eyes, hand signals, physical exclusion, sitting alone in class or being the last one to be selected for a team sports activity.

So how do you support a child who is experiencing the emotional torment of bullying or feeling excluded by others at school?

Here are Rachael’s five tips that help Isy cope with high school challenges:

1 Find out what lights them up

“If you have a child with challenges, find their signature strength. Be open to discovering, try lots of different activities and find out what lights them up,” Rachael advises. For Isy, this has been taking up the piano and, more recently, enrolling in drama classes. “She has found a beautiful tribe outside school. Isy has also been lucky to find inspiring art and English teachers who have ignited a spark for Isy. She’s loving drawing, cartooning and animation.”

2 Arm them with a toolkit for school

Children are curious and ask questions about hearing loss and hearing devices. Talk about questions that people might ask and help your child to have responses ready.

“We would advise her to answer their questions and be open. It’s often not as bad as you think when you have some answers prepared. Kids have asked Isy questions like: ‘What’s that brown thing on your head? What’s the flashing light on your ear for?’ So many kids these days are wearing tech devices anyway.”

3 Deal with the Sunday night dread

Give children a mental break when they are at home from school and surround them with support, says Rachael. Focus on making home a place of laughter, happiness and positivity.

Try activities to distract teens from the ‘Sunday night dread’ ahead of school on a Monday.

“We go for a long walk with the dog and Isy tells us her new story ideas. Sometimes her dad takes her for a late swim at the beach. Or we play music and cook together. Or have a movie night,” says Rachael. ▶

“Children with hearing loss are coming from a difficult place because they can be excluded and it doesn’t help if your child is not sporty”

Rachael, mother of Cochlear™ Nucleus® System recipient Isy, Australia

4 Find a coach for extra-curricular activities

In activities where your child lacks confidence, find someone outside the family to support them. To help Isy with co-ordination and fitness, Rachael found a coach to train with her. She says the key is to find someone young and inspiring who gets what it's like to be growing up. Now Isy is fitter, stronger and more confident to try. She's playing soccer and enjoys new sports like American Football.

"Once she would never have tried this and always shied away from sport. I've tried teaching Isy so many sports but sometimes you need to let go and let someone else step in," says Rachael.

5 Push boundaries to normalise hearing loss

"We've always expected Isy to try everything and not make her hearing loss an excuse. We're keen bushwalkers and Isy enjoys camping and hiking trips and kayaking with her cousins. She's enjoyed horse riding and pony camp, a suggestion by her grandparents and close family friends."

Isy recently joined us on a family cycling trip in New Zealand – it was a challenging ride for all of us. Isy digs deep and really showed us and herself what she has inside when she's pushed physically and mentally. Achieving these challenges gives Isy more confidence in her abilities.

6 Consider a pet

"We welcomed a dog called Honey into our family at the time of Isy's surgery. Honey and Isy are inseparable and have an incredible bond," says Rachael.

"When things are changing quickly, her dog is there. When Isy leaves for school her dog stands by her while she gets ready. Honey's waiting at the door as Isy returns home. Isy confides in her, practises her lines with her, watches TV with her, walks with her – she is truly a best friend!"

7 Involve siblings

Ruby, Isy's 16-year-old sister, has played a powerful role in helping Isy be aware of social cues, which matter to teenagers.

For example, how girls wear their hair and even the length of the hemline of the school uniform. Rachael says the little things like this count and helps a child to fit in socially.

"It helps if you can empower the siblings as part of the family support," says Rachael. It's also helped to have an older sister at the same school and for Isy to have a safe haven with these older girls in the playground.

Life can be tricky for all teenagers and as parents we try to help them navigate these years, but ultimately kids have to do it themselves. "We've always tried to listen to Isy – to hear her ideas and stories and discuss concerns and ways to stay positive.

Encourage them to get up and have a go – nurture the desire to try and their in-built resilience," Rachael says. "Isy now has the ability, focus and self-esteem to take her wherever she wants to go in life. We're also very lucky Isy has an innate optimism and enthusiasm for life. And often it's Isy who's showing us the way!"

Download Cochlear Family's Raising Confident Teens guides and rehab resources here.

- Practical advice for parents
- Support advice for parents
- Practical advice for teachers
- Support advice for teens

Keeping you connected and supported

Thank you for taking care, staying calm and being safe during these uncertain times. We are still contactable and available to assist with your enquiries and support needs, just get in touch with one of our helpful Customer Service team members by emailing cincustomerservice@cochlear.com



Hear now. And always

As the global leader in implantable hearing solutions, Cochlear is dedicated to helping people with moderate to profound hearing loss experience a life full of hearing. We have provided more than 600,000 implantable devices, helping people of all ages to hear and connect with life's opportunities.

We aim to give people the best lifelong hearing experience and access to innovative future technologies. We have the industry's best clinical, research and support networks.

That's why more people choose Cochlear than any other hearing implant company

www.cochlear.com/in

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- ^ ForwardFocus is clinician-activated and user-controlled via the Nucleus Smart App.
† Expected battery life is up to 18 hours. Battery life may vary by individual.
¥ Off-the-ear sound processors only.
‡ The Kanso 2 Sound Processor is not compatible with the Nucleus 22 implant.

* The Cochlear Kanso 2 Sound Processor is compatible with Apple and Android devices. For compatibility information visit www.cochlear.com/compatibility Please seek advice from your health professional about treatments for hearing loss. Outcomes may vary, and your health professional will advise you about the factors which could affect your outcome. Always read the instructions for use. Not all products are available in all countries. Please contact your local Cochlear representative for product information.

The Cochlear Nucleus Kanso 2 Sound Processor with Aqua+ is dust and water resistant to level of IP68 of the International Standard IEC60529 and can be continuously submerged under water to a depth of up to 3 metres for up to 2 hours. Refer to the relevant User Guide for more information.

The Cochlear Nucleus Kanso 2 Sound Processor is dust and water resistant to level of IP68 of the International Standard IEC60529.

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Views expressed are those of the individual. Consult your hearing health provider to determine if you are a candidate for Cochlear technology.

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