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Extraordinary every day



SeeAbility Stories

autumn 2018

'Susie can now see her world more clearly; she can't stop looking at herself in the mirror and has taken up a new hobby – painting!'

Susie's Story

The power of sight

Adults with learning disabilities are more likely to have sight problems yet less likely to get the right eye care they need.

Susie, who now lives at SeeAbility's service in Surrey, has had cataracts developing for a number of years, but she and her family had been told at eye checks that an operation would not improve her quality of life. Susie's family however, didn't feel this would be the case.

After talking to Deanne, one of SeeAbility's Vision Rehabilitation specialists asked the in-house eye care team to look at Susie's eyes. They found that Susie had

centralised cataracts, she could barely see in the middle of her eyes, only through the sides. This was a serious problem.

Together with Susie's family, Deanne wrote a letter to Susie's GP, pushing for Susie to have the life-changing cataract operation.

After years of being denied the treatment, Susie finally received her referral to have surgery at Moorfields eye hospital in London. When the day arrived, an Eye Surgery Support Plan was put into place to ensure Susie was at ease, her support worker Jess, held her hand as she went into theatre.

The procedure was a great success. Within weeks, Deanne could see how much Susie had changed.

'I couldn't believe the difference! Before, Susie was constantly bumping her wheelchair into the walls and doorways around the house. Her knuckles were always covered with cuts, now there isn't a single cut on her hand!'

Susie can now see her world more clearly; she is able to communicate much more easily, she can't stop looking at herself in the mirror and has taken up a new hobby – painting!



Thanks to the expertise and determination of SeeAbility's charitably funded specialist teams, they changed everything for Susie. Having the right care changes the lives of many people like Susie. This is only possible thanks to our kind supporters like you.



Children in Focus - Campaign update

Over the past four years, the Children in Focus programme has provided over 2600 eye tests to children in special schools. This makes our study the biggest global study actively reporting on the eye care needs of children with learning disabilities.

Research found of the children in special schools that have used SeeAbility's service, nearly half had a problem with their vision and more than a quarter had a problem that no one knew about.

16-year-old Abigail is one of the

pupils who spent ten years at school, which was nothing but a blurred world.

When Abigail was six years old her mum was told it wasn't worth giving her glasses because of her autism. Yet when SeeAbility carried out a sight test at her special school, they discovered she was very short sighted and desperately needed glasses. Meaning Abigail had not seen clearly for her entire education, affecting her ability to learn, play and socialise.



1150
pairs of glasses dispensed



2686 sight tests to **1266** children



Mum, Lorraine:
'We had no idea Abigail's vision was so poor. Every child with learning disabilities should have access to sight tests and glasses so they can get the education they deserve.'

Thanks to a pair of glasses Abigail is much happier; she now smiles when she sees and recognises people.



Are you eye care aware?

You can't always tell if someone has a sight problem. There may be no obvious signs to poor eye health or even sight loss. This is why SeeAbility has created a new guide for families and support workers to promote better eye care.

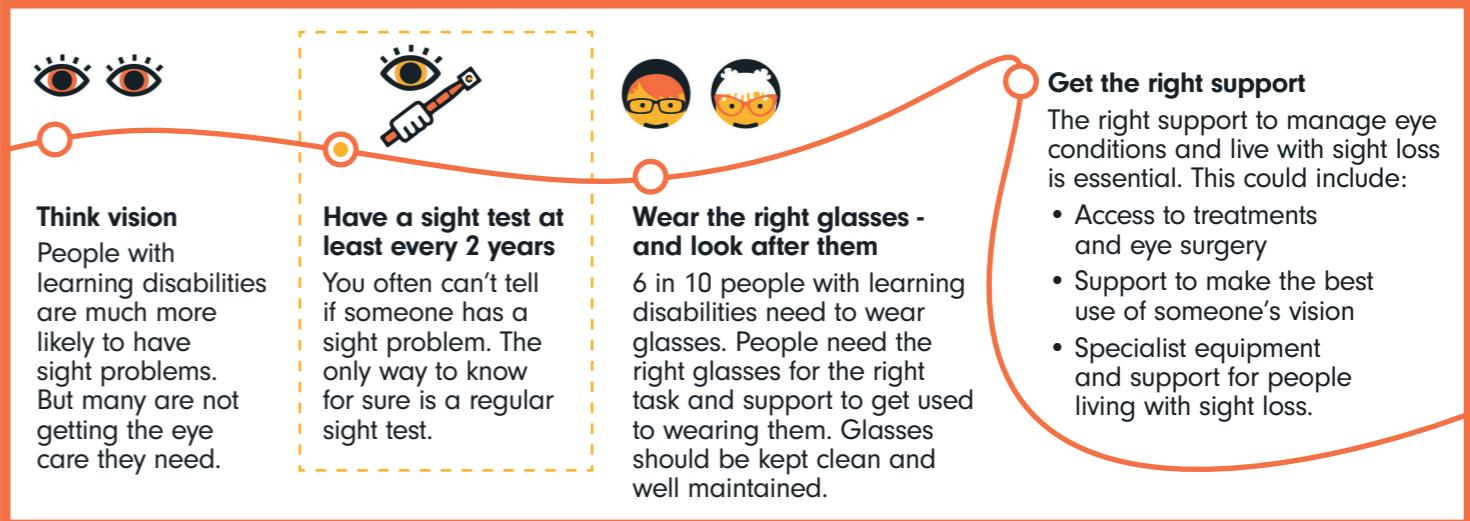
The easy step-by-step guide explains everything you need

to know to help someone with learning disabilities get started on their eye care journey.

Scott Watkins BEM, SeeAbility's Eye Care and Vision Development Officer says: "This new guide is

a real step forward in promoting better eye care. It offers families and support workers the advice they need, but so often cannot get. If you follow the steps in the guide, you could **change a life.**"

Visit seeability.org/news/how-to-be-eye-care-aware for more information and download your free guide.



Volunteers transform unloved garden

Volunteers have transformed a weed-strewn area into a sensory garden for residents at Fiennes House in Somerset.

The garden now hosts several wind chimes and a range of plants with different smells, colours and textures. It also features an accessible sandpit and a water fountain, which was generously donated.

Thanks to various grants and kind donations from volunteers and several local businesses, they were able to turn an unloved garden into a place where individuals can enjoy a different sensory experience.

SeeAbility would like to say a huge thank you to our wonderful volunteers who spent a year mucking in to create a fantastic much-loved space.



Before



After



Calling all riders

We're delighted to be able to offer budding cycling heroes the chance to take part in 2019 Prudential RideLondon 100.

Taking place on Sunday 4 August this 100 mile route through London and Surrey celebrates the legacy of cycling created by the London 2012 Olympics.

Interested?

Find out more at
www.seeability.org/Event/ridelondon
or email events@seeability.org

Pass on something wonderful

SeeAbility was proud to recently be part of **Remember a Charity in your Will week.**

Gifts in Wills play an incredibly important role in helping SeeAbility to change the lives of thousands of people with learning disabilities, autism and sight loss. Every gift left will help us to continue to provide extraordinary support and specialist services to those who need us now and in the future.

Making a Will and leaving a gift to charity is a personal matter and you do not need to tell us you have given SeeAbility a gift. If you would like to find out more visit www.seeability.org/give-in-your-will, contact us in confidence on **01372 755042** or email supportercare@seeability.org

To find out more about
Remember a Charity visit:
www.rememberacharity.org.uk

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