

A group of seven young people are on a boat, all wearing life jackets. They are smiling and waving at the camera. The background shows a river and green trees. The overall mood is happy and adventurous.

RNIB
Scotland

Supporting people
with sight loss

**Our services
for children and
young people**

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RNIB Scotland

As the country's leading sight loss charity, RNIB Scotland supports families, children and young people from their early years all the way through to transition from nursery to school to further/higher education or employment. We place an emphasis on an aspirational “can do” attitude that promotes positive self esteem and allows them to thrive, to lead enriched lives and be as independent as possible.

We want every child and young person who is blind or partially sighted to be part of, and contribute to, an inclusive society and to reach their fullest potential.

rnib.org.uk/scotland

Seeing It My Way

At RNIB Scotland we believe that children and young people living with sight loss should be supported to reach their fullest potential. We endorse the “Seeing It My Way” declaration of the UK Vision Strategy, which outlines the rights all blind and partially sighted people should be entitled to enjoy in an inclusive society. Children and young people, as well as adults, should be supported to:

- understand their eye condition and the registration process
- have someone to talk to
- look after themselves
- receive statutory benefits and information and support that they need
- make the best use of the sight they have
- access information making the most of the advantages that technology brings
- get out and about
- have the tools, skills and confidence to communicate
- have equal access to education and social activities
- work and volunteer when they are older.



Family Services

RNIB Scotland's Education and Family Services provides advice, information and training for parents through home visits, family group events and signposting on to local and national support networks.

We assist parents to fully express their views in discussions with education, health and social work professionals.

For children and young people who are newly diagnosed with a visual impairment and their families, our Vision Support Service offers vital emotional and practical support, including peer-support that allows them to talk about problems and solutions with others coming to terms with sight loss.

You can email us at efs@rnib.org.uk

Family days, social events and other activities

Our Family Fun Days, residential weekends and other events take place throughout the year. Our Summer Camps for 11–18 year-olds promote independent living in a fun environment, offering support with:

- confidence-building
- a range of outdoor activities and disability sports
- use of assistive technology
- communication skills through social interaction
- peer support.

For parents, these events provide encouragement and an opportunity to share experiences and swap hints and tips on how to support a child with a visual impairment. Peer support groups are available across Scotland.

In Edinburgh and the Lothians we also provide additional weekly social groups for young people, week-long holidays, and a summer school two days per week offering a variety of social and educational activities.

You can email us at [**efs@rnib.org.uk**](mailto:efs@rnib.org.uk)

“The camp gave good advice on how to express your disability in a positive way during interviews so that employers wouldn’t feel panicked. This shows that you can achieve your goals if you try hard and express yourself in the right way.” John (17).

Education

We aim to help and support children and young people with sight loss, including those with complex needs, to become successful learners and confident individuals.



To enable this we work alongside parents, teachers and other professionals to ensure effective access to the curriculum and delivery of the skills necessary for independent learning, living and appropriate preparation for adulthood.

Young people are helped to make the best possible transition from school onwards by giving post-16 students support and advice on courses, colleges and universities, and grants such as the Disabled Student Allowance.

Our quarterly 'Insight' magazine is specifically aimed at teachers and parents; providing up-to-date guidance, strategies and resources for those supporting the learner living with sight loss.

As well as providing reading materials in accessible formats, our free assistive technology loan scheme, TELL, lets schools try out specialist equipment with pupils prior to purchase.

We also deliver bespoke training and guidance to schools, on request, across Scotland to guarantee the very highest level of pupil support.

You can email us at efs@rnib.org.uk for more information on how we can help your child or young person in education.



Complex needs

People with learning disabilities are much more likely to have serious sight problems. We believe all children and young people with complex needs should have an assessment of their vision appropriate to their cognitive, communication and physical needs.

Our Visual Impairment and Learning Disabilities children's service, based in Fife with a centre in Glasgow under development, provides space to play, grow, learn and have fun. Through our Toy Library and Resource Base, we work with families and childcare providers to raise awareness of sight loss, while our carers' café allows families to share experiences and access specialist facilities, family fun events and signposting to other services.

We also offer flexible training to childcare professionals and parents, beginning at introductory and awareness level through to more advanced Vision Champion level.

You can email us at learningdisability@rnib.org.uk



Haggeye

Haggeye, our award-winning youth forum for 12–25 year-olds, allows its members to raise awareness of what it's like to be young and blind or partially sighted. It provides a friendly and supportive place for them to campaign for change, make new friends, take part in activities, and share issues of concern.

Since its launch, Haggeye has won a Young Scot Award, a Diana Award and a Philip Lawrence Award for “establishing an atmosphere of trust between generations and cultures”. It was one of only three organisations chosen to promote civic participation by the Scottish Parliament.

Our Haggeye Juniors project for 5–12 year-olds offers information, events and activities for members and their families.

You can email us at haggeye@rnib.org.uk



Employment

To make the transition to work, we do school-based reviews with young people and parents, discuss options, arrange work-placements, and help with CV development, interview techniques and training in access technology.

We advise both employers and employees on schemes such as Access to Work and adaptations to the workplace that can make the environment easier for those with sight loss.

Email us at **elscotland@rnib.org.uk**





Resources

RNIB supplies a wide range of products to meet the daily living, recreational and educational needs of children and young people. Everything from audio soft-balls and braille board-games to scented marker-pens indicating different colours and child-size white canes.

Our online shop supplies educational resources that include large-button talking calculators, tactile maps, giant-print books, revision guides and braille tutorials.

You can see the full range of resources we offer on our website at [rnib.org.uk/shop](https://www.rnib.org.uk/shop)

Reading

Our Transcription Service produces audio, braille and large print books for children and young people for loan through our extensive national library service. Our librarians assist children and young people, and parents and teachers to choose from over 4,000 children's literature titles in accessible formats.

Authors such as Julia Donaldson (The Gruffalo) and Jonathan Meres (The World of Norm) have even personally recorded their own stories in our studios.

RNIB members are also entitled to 300 pages of free transcription of any item.

You can email us at glasgowtrans@rnib.org.uk





Radio

Our Insight Radio station caters for all ages, covering a wide range of issues and interests that appeal to younger listeners in shows such as “Tech Talk” which covers the latest accessible technology, and children’s stories in our Talking Book shows.

You can find out what’s on at Insight Radio’s own website: **insightradio.co.uk**

“I was part of a pre-recorded show where I was in the role of presenter. I was also asked to go out and about talking to the public about issues on forthcoming shows, like eye health and how people can prevent losing their sight.”

Jonathan, pictured left, completed a six-month training course with Insight Radio





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