

**SEE  
ABILITY**

SeeAbility Stories  
Spring 2022

**“When we can no longer provide Catherine with any care ourselves, we know that SeeAbility will always be there for her.”**

**John and Ann,  
Catherine’s parents**

**#WeSeeAbility**

# A parent's love by John and Ann

Our daughter Catherine is the centre of our lives. She's very loving, and she inspires love in other people. Eighteen months after Catherine was born, she was diagnosed with severe cognitive impairment with a lot of underlying health conditions. This means she has no understanding of language and often struggles to eat, causing weight loss.

Like all parents, our daughter's quality of life is important to us. However, we recognised early on that, on our own, we couldn't provide her with the quality of life that she needs. She went to a specialist boarding school followed by residential care. When we felt this placement was no longer meeting her needs, we applied for Catherine to be supported by SeeAbility. We could see that the charity specialises in supporting people with learning disabilities and complex needs and felt that it could give our daughter the good quality of life she deserves.

The staff at Aldershot, where Catherine lives, know her very well and truly provide her with person centred support. For example, a lot of Catherine's enjoyment comes through sensory experiences such as listening to music, being part of a group and listening to people talking.

So the staff regularly organise shopping trips out, carriage riding specially adapted for people with disabilities, cycling and music therapy. During lockdown they replaced these with themed parties in the garden, cinema nights and bingo sessions.



They go above and beyond every single day to ensure Catherine can participate in sensory activities that she enjoys and mean so much to her wellbeing.

The team at Aldershot also take pride in Catherine's appearance and support her to keep her weight up. They give Catherine the independence to choose her own clothes and they do her hair in ways that we can't – it's different every time we see her!

One particular carer, Nickie, supports Catherine as any caring mother would. You can see that Catherine really loves her and we believe Nickie loves her too.

**Nickie and SeeAbility have given us peace of mind. When we can no longer provide Catherine with any care ourselves, we know that SeeAbility will always be there for her.**

**If you can support SeeAbility's work, please do consider giving a gift this Mother's Day. Your kind donation will enable SeeAbility to continue empowering people with learning disabilities, autism, and sight loss, like our daughter Catherine, to live, love, thrive and belong as equals in society.**

**John and Ann, Catherine's parents**



# Seeing Mum, and the world, more clearly

**“My daughter Kiyana is a lively, fun-loving little girl. Thanks to SeeAbility, she can now see me and the world more clearly.”**

Dee, Kiyana’s mother

Meet eleven-year-old Kiyana. Kiyana was born prematurely and diagnosed with Down’s syndrome, a genetic condition that causes her to have a higher risk of developing problems with her vision.

**“When we visited the opticians, they told us that Kiyana is longsighted and needed to wear glasses to see clearly. They gave us a prescription and told us to visit any eye test shop who will be able to do the glasses for us.”**

Despite visiting many high street opticians and being prescribed with glasses, Kiyana still struggled to see clearly, as the regular frames didn’t fit her properly and constantly slipped off her face.

Thanks to SeeAbility’s eye care team, who regularly provide eye tests in special schools such as the one Kiyana attends, they were able to prescribe Kiyana with specially fitted glasses with an adjustable bridge that fits perfectly on her nose. Now, Kiyana can finally live the active life that means so much to her.



Her mum Dee says that: **“She’s a different girl and is so much more confident now. You’ll find her in the gym crawling down a tunnel, playing ping-pong with her friends or jumping around on the trampoline. I feel a sense of relief that SeeAbility was able to help us. Kiyana can now play around in a way any child should and I feel real peace of mind knowing that we’ve been able to support her to live the very best life she can.”**



## Thank you

From all at SeeAbility, thank you so much to everyone who watched and supported our BBC Lifeline Appeal.

If you missed it, you can still watch it on BBC iPlayer at [www.seeability.org/BBCLifeline](http://www.seeability.org/BBCLifeline)

# Finding the right words

Finding employment can be challenging at the best of times, but the process is so much more difficult when you can't find the correct words to sell yourself. This struggle was felt by Emma, our recent 'Ready, Willing and Able' participant.

Before joining the programme, Emma was finding it difficult to communicate her skills and abilities. This meant that when it came to job interviews, she found it impossible to talk about why employers should hire her.

That all changed when Emma started to work with SeeAbility's supported employment coach, Rhian. Working together, they developed Emma's skills, preparing a new CV, and learning how to best apply for jobs. Emma was also coached about the interview process and how to answer common questions.

Emma's motivation to find work – along with her newfound confidence and understanding of the interview process – quickly allowed her to find success working for a popular fast-food restaurant.

Emma told us: **"It feels great to be more independent. It feels nice to be in a supportive workplace that know about my learning disability and can support me. I feel proud to wear my uniform."**



Her coach Rhian said: **"When Emma first started working with me, she found it hard to find the right words to describe herself but now she really can sell herself."**

**"I'm really proud and happy that Emma has found work and that she will have independence,"** says Emma's mum.

'Ready, Willing and Able' has now supported 7 people to find paid employment and many others to progress on their journey to employment. Our team works hard to support people with learning disabilities and autism, like Emma, to learn new skills, find paid work and then keep it. Find out more about the programme at [www.seeability.org/RWA](http://www.seeability.org/RWA)

## Leave a legacy

To find out more visit [www.seeability.org/future](http://www.seeability.org/future)

From helping a friend, relative or supporting you directly, chances are that at some point a charity will touch your life – perhaps when you least expect it. Today, you can leave a lasting legacy by giving a gift in your will. Your gift will ensure we're here in the future to support even more people with learning disabilities, autism, and sight loss to live, love, thrive and belong as equals in society.

Contact us in confidence on **01372 755 042**

Email [supportercare@seeability.org](mailto:supportercare@seeability.org) for more information

# Volunteer with us

Ever thought about volunteering? By joining our fantastic team of volunteers you'll not only be supporting people to connect and participate in their community, but you'll also be contributing to making inclusion a reality for people with learning disabilities. Find out more by visiting [www.seeability.org/get-involved/volunteering](http://www.seeability.org/get-involved/volunteering)

# The London Marathon is back!

Get back in the race and join team SeeAbility for the world's most iconic marathon. As part of our super team, you'll receive plenty of support to help you get across the finish line and smash your fundraising target. Sign up today at [www.seeability.org/events](http://www.seeability.org/events)



# Any questions?




To **keep in touch** or find out more about how we're changing lives by focusing on ability:

**Call: 01372 755 042**

**Email:**

**[supportercare@seeability.org](mailto:supportercare@seeability.org)**

SeeAbility, Newplan House,  
41 East Street, Epsom KT17 1BL

-  [www.seeability.org](http://www.seeability.org)
-  [Facebook.com/RSB.seeability](https://www.facebook.com/RSB.seeability)
-  [@seeability](https://twitter.com/seeability)
-  [youtube.com/SeeAbilityFilms](https://www.youtube.com/SeeAbilityFilms)



**Registered Charity Number 255913**