

**When you can read everything,
it changes everything.**



Rationale

With this campaign we wanted to show the power that literacy has to change the lives of children around Ireland. Learning to read, write and numeracy can open up a world of opportunities to them and impact greatly on their self-esteem. This brought us to our campaign idea:

“When you can read everything, it changes everything.”

To bring this idea to life as a press ad, we wanted to instantaneously show potential volunteers the difference they could make to a child’s life by simply helping them learn to read. To do this we used the characteristics of our chosen medium (newspaper) to its full advantage.

We created a 2-sided print ad that told the story of a young child with literacy problems, on the reverse side we continued the story. Thanks to the thin newsprint paper, when the ad is held up to the light, the extra words change the story entirely – from a negative to a positive. Demonstrating that being able to read everything really can change everything.

ADVICE

How can we help with a diagnosis of Parkinson's?

If you have any health queries for Dr Nina Byrnes, please email drnina@independent.ie. Please note that Dr Nina cannot enter into individual correspondence.

Q & A

My husband's brother — who he is very close to — has just been diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. He is only in his late fifties. Although our families are close, we don't have much information about the diagnosis as he doesn't want to talk about it. My husband is very worried about him and doesn't know what to expect in the years ahead. He's also concerned for our family — he is worried that the illness may run in families and that it might affect our own children later on in life. Can you give him any information about what he can expect for his brother, and are there any new treatments or breakthroughs which we could point his brother towards?

PARKINSON'S disease is a chronic progressive neurological condition. It is thought to affect about one in 500 people and occurs more commonly in men than women. Symptoms more commonly occur in those over the age of 50 but it can also occur in younger people. The actor Michael J. Fox was diagnosed at a young age and has done a lot to raise the profile of this disease.

Parkinson's disease occurs due to the loss of nerve cells in a part of the brain called the substantia nigra, which results in reduced levels of the neurotransmitter dopamine. This hormone assists in smooth movement of the body. When levels of dopamine are reduced by 60pc to 80pc classic movement symptoms of Parkinson's may occur. It is thought to take many years for this reduction to occur so research today is trying to identify ways to diagnose this before dopamine levels have dropped so low.

There are many symptoms that may suggest Parkinson's disease. Losing your sense of smell may be an early symptom and can occur many years before others appear. Constipation may occur as movement through the gut slows. There may be some difficulty swallowing foods or a feeling of things occasionally catching in the throat. The arms tend not to swing when walking in those with Parkinson's disease. There may also be a change in facial features often referred to as a "masked face". This results in a stern look and lack of facial expression. This can be associated with a blank stare and reduced blinking. Speech changes occur. Speech may become soft or hoarse and occasionally slurred. Balance problems and dizziness can be symptoms of the condition or may also occur as a side effect of Parkinson's medication. Writing may become very small.

Mental symptoms include anxiety, depression, memory problems in some and sleep problems.

The classic symptoms of Parkinson's remain the presence of a tremor,



ASK THE GP

WITH DR NINA BYRNES

drnina@independent.ie



slowness of movement called bradykinesia and rigidity. A tremor is an uncontrollable shake. This most commonly occurs in the hand or arm and is most noticeable when the limb is otherwise still. It may start with a back and forth rolling of the thumb and finger referred to as "pill rolling". Bradykinesia makes simple

movements very difficult. It may be harder to initiate movement such as getting out of a chair or starting to walk. Steps become shorter and stiffer and may result in shuffling to move. There may be stiffness and soreness of muscles throughout the body.

The symptoms of Parkinson's are not specific to this disease and may

occur in many other conditions and in healthy individuals.

However if several symptoms occur together it is worth considering. Parkinson's progresses at different rates in different people and it may or may not limit the affected person's life expectancy.

The majority of Parkinson's cases are not familial, but it is felt that about 10-15pc of Parkinson's may have a genetic origin. Research is ongoing into Parkinson's and its treatment. The neurological team caring for your brother-in-law will be able best advise you as regards new or experimental treatment options. There also a number of community based therapies. Exercise is important to maintain balance and mobility and there are a number of special dance and exercise classes for those with Parkinson's.

Beats Medical is an Irish company that provides app-based treatment to help maintain mobility, speech and dexterity in those with Parkinson's. Check out beatsmedical.com.

Exercise is important to maintain balance and mobility

If I wake up during the night and stretch my legs in the bed, I get terrible cramps in my lower legs. This has only started in the last two weeks. What could be causing it?

NOCTURNAL leg cramps are very common especially in those over the age of 50. The exact cause is not actually known. Risks include jobs that involve sitting for long periods of time or sitting improperly. Over-exercising muscles, standing or working on concrete floors also seems to increase the risk. Certain medical conditions such as pregnancy, Parkinson's disease, conditions that affect nerves and muscles, and

diabetes are associated with an increased risk. Certain medication such as diuretics (water tablets), cholesterol lowering medication and asthma meds may also be associated with cramps.

Whatever the cause there are a few possible remedies. Make sure you stay well hydrated drinking at least 1½ to 2 litres daily. Some find that ensuring adequate calcium and magnesium in their diet or taking supplements helps. Stretching the feet and

calves before bed has been shown to reduce the frequency of cramps. An older remedy is quinine. This may help, but is should be used with caution as it can irritate the heart increasing the chance of an abnormal rhythm. Cramps that occur when lying but get better when standing may suggest difficulty with the blood supply in your legs and this should be checked. If they go on much longer pay a visit to your doctor for an examination and a chat.

Exercise is the key to recovery

WITH PAT HENRY

PARALYSIS

WORKING with patients who have been referred to us for rehab and muscle conditioning — particularly after any form of paralysis, such as drop foot, leg and arm paralysis — in all cases the deterioration of muscle is very noticeable.

For example, I had back surgery that went wrong and my right leg and foot was completely paralysed. My thigh measurement went from 24" to 15" in a matter of weeks. Recovery was tough. Learning to walk again was difficult. The most important aspect of recovery is to not fall into the trap of sympathy from others. You are the only one who can decide mentally to fight back and get better. Sympathy can be the worst thing, where it can become a crutch. Fighting paralysis is not easy, but a lot better than the alternative. You can make great progress if you mentally decide "I am going to get better".

Seek help from professionals, especially if a physio recommends a series of exercises to help recovery make sure to do them and follow their advice even though it may be hard.

BAD TRAINING

I WAS watching a trainer working recently with a young girl who had severe bad posture. Her neck and shoulders were completely forward causing her hips to protrude. When the body leans forward like that it will eventually lead to back or neck pain. Shockingly the trainer had her doing upright rowing with a bar and dumbbells — that's standing straight pulling weights to your chin. Then shoulder shrugs combined with the pec deck plus the incline press — all movements, in my opinion, which will round the shoulders and just work the front of your shoulders or the deltoids.

It baffles me that any trainer can fail to see the obvious problem — particularly for those that have bad posture — and rather than concentrating on pulling the shoulders back, strengthening the neck and lower back with correct exercises they continue to make things worse. When I questioned him the

reply was: "It's what I learned on my course". To all trainers I would say, just open your eyes and your mind, look at your client and see what you can do to make improvements, particularly with posture.



*hold this page up to the light.

I am eight years old

the future is dark

I know

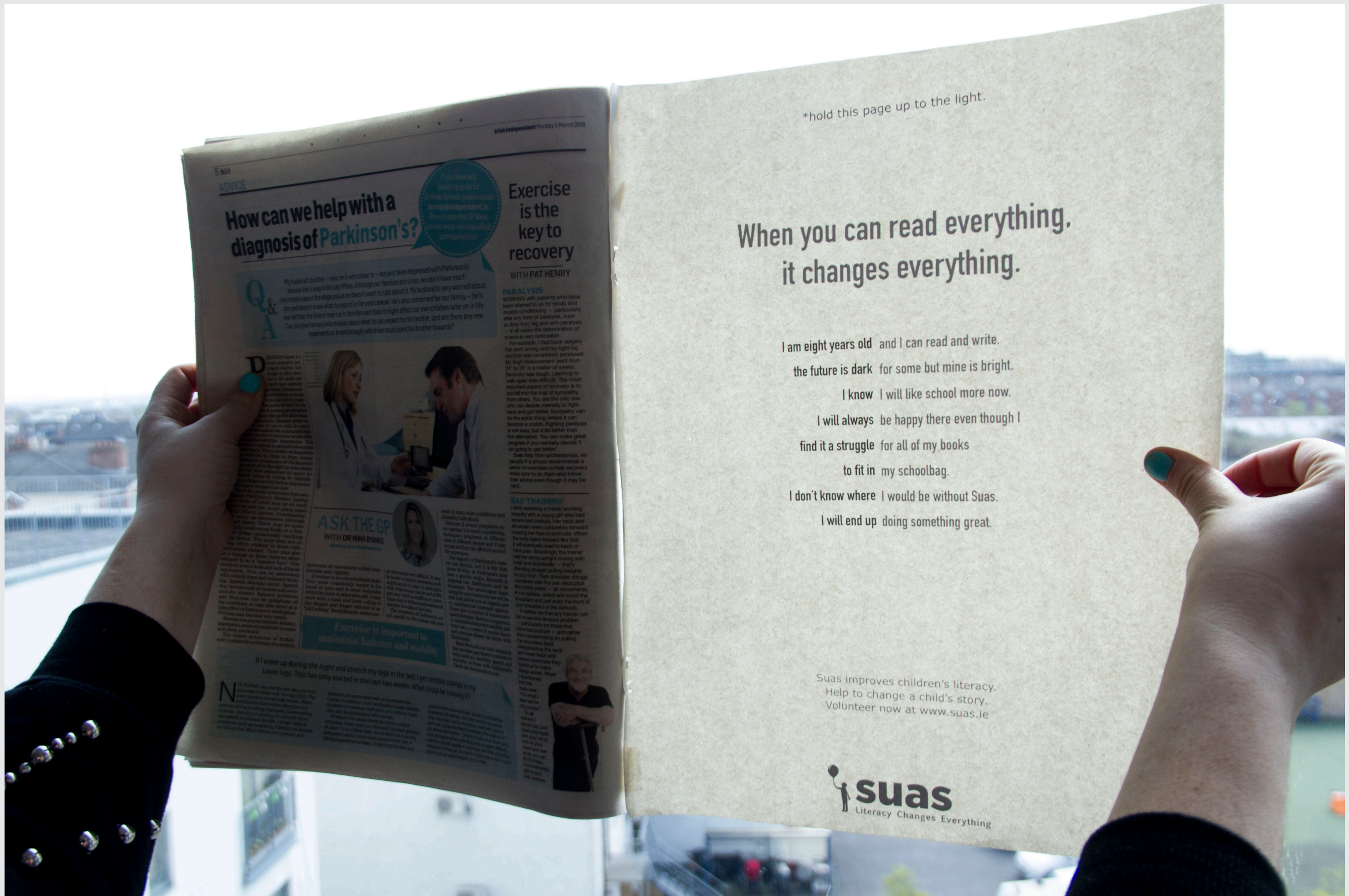
I will always

find it a struggle

to fit in

I don't know where

I will end up

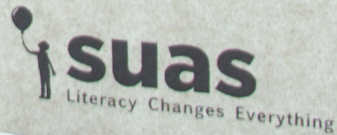


*hold this page up to the light.

When you can read everything, it changes everything.

I am eight years old and I can read and write.
the future is dark for some but mine is bright.
I know I will like school more now.
I will always be happy there even though I
find it a struggle for all of my books
to fit in my schoolbag.
I don't know where I would be without Suas.
I will end up doing something great.

Suas improves children's literacy.
Help to change a child's story.
Volunteer now at www.suas.ie



This is how the print ad will look when held up to the light.

*hold this page up to the light.

I am eight years old
the future is dark
I know
I will always
find it a struggle
to fit in
I don't know where
I will end up

When you can read everything,
it changes everything.

and I can read and write.
for some but mine is bright.
I will like school more now.
be happy there even though I
for all of my books
my schoolbag.
I would be without Sus.
doing something great.

Sus improves children's literacy.
Help to change a child's story.
Volunteer now at www.sus.ie



Front of ad.

Back of ad.

*hold this page up to the light.

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How the full ad looks when held up to the light.