

National Council for the Blind of Ireland ***By Elaine Fitzharris 4.1***

On Wednesday 28/09/11 Michael Benson from the N.C.B.I. came to speak to the T.Y. class 4.1 as part of their Y.S.I. project. He told us all about different types of vision impairments and what they could do to make a difference.

He got straight to the point when he arrived. He explained what the N.C.B.I. was and what he did. In Wexford alone there are over 400 people with vision impairment. He told them all the different types of vision impairments which included Macular Degeneration which is a disturbance of blood vessels in the eye resulting in loss of central vision. Retinitis Pigmentosa which is a degeneration of pigment in the eye that is needed to absorb light and create visual images leading to tunnel vision and night blindness. Plus many more. He also brought types of glasses so we could see what it is like to have these vision impairments.



He told us what problems people with vision impairments faced everyday. Like the simple things we take for granted for example pouring a cup of boiling water and knowing when to stop . While walking some people have to use a stick to guide them. He also explained that technology had a huge part in how people with a vision impairment live but that it often comes down to money.



He finished up his speech by telling us what a T.Y. group could do. He suggested fun ways to fundraise and also explained we would need to raise a lot of awareness

because for the 400 people in Wexford suffering from vision impairment there are only 2 workers.



Fighting Blindness ***By Elaine Fitzharris 4.1***

On Thursday 29/09/11 Catherine O'Leary from Fighting Blindness came to visit the T.Y. class 4.1 about their Y.S.I. project. She told us about Fighting Blindness and their aims, Fighting Blindness funds world-leading research into cures and treatments for blindness. They also provide a unique professional counselling service for people with visual impairments and their families. Fighting Blindness is also the best kept secret because they are trying to find cures for vision impairments and Ireland is the most advanced country in the world in regards to this information. People don't realise that because they think fighting blindness only helps people with a vision impairment, get used to their new way of life with a vision impairment. Yes, that is one of the many things they do but they have also carried out research which has helped improve some peoples vision. Catherine also told us about all the types of vision impairment and she had glasses to show us what it was like.



Some of the girls tried to walk around with the glasses on but found it very difficult because they couldn't see to the sides or up/ down, they could only see what was in front of them. We asked Catherine how we could help Fighting Blindness as a T.Y. group doing it for a Y.S.I. project. She told us we could do a hard task like cycle to

Wexford with some of the class wearing the glasses and t-shirts saying support fighting blindness. She also suggested we had posters to hold up while entering Wexford. She said we could do anything and the main thing was to have fun while doing it. The talk was very interesting for the girls they said they learnt a lot and when the talk was over she gave us all pins and leaflets about fighting blindness.

