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# we want same opportunities says deaf Markinch teen



by Fiona Dobie  
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**A Markinch teenager is backing a charity's calls to improve education and employment opportunities for deaf young people.**

Amy Dawson (14) met with her MSPs at a parliamentary reception last Wednesday to warn them that deaf young people regularly fall behind at school and miss out on higher education and employment opportunities.

The teenager spoke with the politicians as the National Deaf Children's Society launches its 'Close the Gap' report which highlights new research showing a lack of opportunities for deaf school leavers in Scotland.

The society is calling for improvements in access to support for deaf young people to enable them to successfully move into further and higher education, employment or training after leaving school.

Amy said: "Deaf young people like me have ambitions and want to succeed just as much as other young people, but we are not being given the same opportunities to achieve our potential.

"In some places a lack of support can mean deaf young people's talent is wasted. I hope the Scottish Government listen and take action."

Heather Gray, director of Scotland society, added: "With the right support, there is no reason why a deaf young person should achieve any less than anyone else. But too many deaf young people are being left behind in Scotland. This is simply not good enough.

"We are calling on the Scottish Government to recognise and commit to closing the gap in school attainment for deaf young people.

"There are areas where we are getting it right for deaf young people and we need to share this good practice across Scotland and ensure all deaf young people have the same access to the support they need to be successful."

Alasdair Allan, Minister for Learning, Science and Scotland's Languages, said: "The Scottish Government is committed to closing the attainment gap by ensuring that all children and young people get the support they need to access learning, realise their potential and access further or higher education. There is no reason why this should not be the case for young people with hearing impairments."

The National Deaf Children's Society's research, conducted by the University of Edinburgh, highlights that:

Almost 10 per cent of deaf young people leave school with no qualifications



Only a quarter of deaf young people enter Higher Education

Only one sixth of deaf young people move into employment in comparison to a quarter of their peers.

The National Deaf Children's Society is the leading charity dedicated to creating a world without barriers for deaf children, young people and their families.

There are more than 45,000 deaf children in the UK, including 3,500 in Scotland.

NDCS works to ensure deaf children get the support they need by providing impartial advice to families about the range of communication methods open to them and by campaigning on their behalf.

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