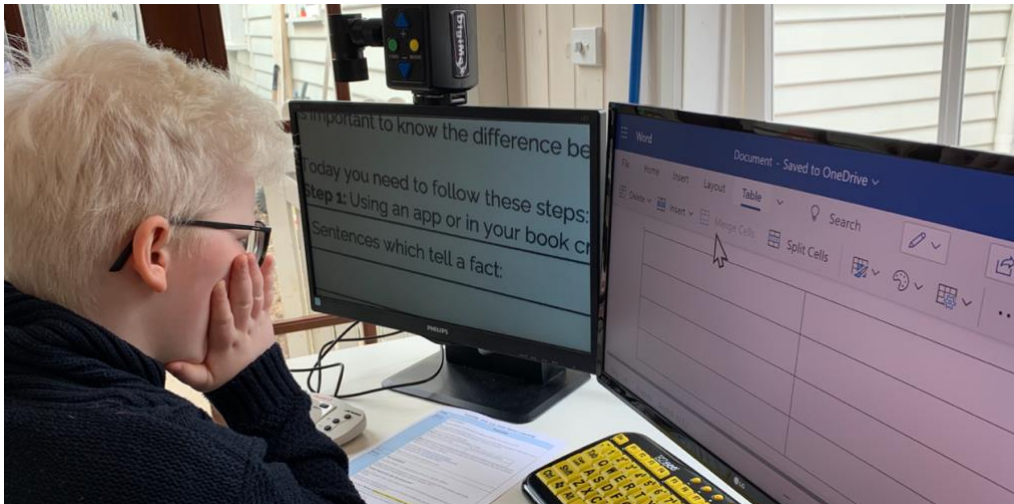


The Albinism Fellowship of Australia is Celebrating International Albinism Awareness Day (IAAD) on June 13th.

In 2014 the United Nations declared June 13th as IAAD and it is now celebrated around the world. We are very fortunate in Australia to not have the terrible discrimination suffered by people with albinism in Africa or other countries and while they support their efforts through the Global Albinism Alliance, the Albinism Fellowship of Australia (AFA) is centred on work in Australia.

Albinism is a rare condition with a lack of, or no melanin in the eyes, skin and hair (Oculocutaneous albinism). Sometimes the lack of melanin is in the eyes only (Ocular Albinism). You may know of this as being albino, but people with albinism generally prefer to think of themselves as a person with albinism.

The theme for IAAD this year is '**United in Making our Voice Heard**'. The day is an opportunity to let others know about albinism and our vision, to demonstrate how we get on with life just like everyone else! We still have issues that need to be tackled, but publicly celebrating what we can do on a daily basis, can be helpful in overcoming many misconceptions. No - we don't have red eyes!



I have to wear lots of sunscreen, long sleeves, hat and sunglasses to protect me from the sun and glare. I need to be very close to something to see it well, which is why I sometimes hold my iPad near my face or use a magnifier to read. I need to come close to see who you are and what face you are using - a sad, angry or happy one. When we are outside, it is difficult for me to see where my friends are and the sun can make everything seem white, so that I cannot see much at all. Sometimes I use a white cane in an unfamiliar area.

At school I have learned to use adaptive technology and special techniques to accommodate my vision, working next to my friends as we complete lessons. I will carry these skills carried into adulthood, where I will be able to access and work competently in most professions, careers, trades, farming and service jobs. With the arrival of bioptics and smart vehicles, I hope to be able to drive, but perhaps not be a jet pilot!

The AFA provides opportunities for me to meet other kids with albinism - it is great to know that I am not alone!. They help my family to learn about albinism and the new low vision technologies and techniques.

You can learn more about albinism, or help us by making a tax-deductible donation, on the AFA website: www.albinismaustralia.org



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