BBC CHILDREN IN NEED

HELLO, MY NAME IS ROISIN

I am incredibly proud to share my story as one of BBC Children in Need's Young Ambassadors. I'm from Derry, Northern Ireland. I'm 21 and have a passion for performing. My dream is to become a professional actor and inspire others through my work.

HERE IS MY STORY

When I was 14, my life changed in an instant. I suffered an acute ischaemic stroke. Suddenly, I was faced with months in hospital, rehabilitation and having to relearn things many people take for granted; including to walk, talk and eat. I now have permanent weakness on the right side of my body, and every day, I continue to live with the effects.

I was also diagnosed with Crohn's Disease, which brought its own challenges. I often felt frustrated, isolated and unsure about the future. It was difficult watching my friends move forward while I was learning to adapt to a completely different life.

I found school difficult and often felt different from my peers. Some friendships faded and there were days when I questioned whether I would ever feel confident again. But with the support of my family, healthcare professionals and teachers, I slowly began to rebuild and discover who I was.

A BBC Children in Need-funded project provided me with the help and resources I needed to keep going. I met with other teenagers with brain injuries, and we attended many social events together. Meeting other people who understood what I was going through made me feel less alone.

I refused to let my disability define me. I returned to education, completed my GCSEs and discovered a love for acting and singing. I found a way to express myself, build confidence and make connections. I've achieved so much more than I ever believed.

One of the most difficult moments of my life came when I lost my daddy in 2025. I'm still navigating grief every day. My daddy was one of my biggest supporters, and, although losing him changed me forever, his kindness, strength and belief in me continue to inspire me.

Today, I am preparing to begin my BA (Hons) Acting degree at a prestigious drama school. Looking back, there were many moments when I wasn't sure I would get here - yet every challenge taught me resilience, determination and the importance of never giving up on yourself.

The incredible support of fundraisers like you makes a huge difference. It helps BBC Children in Need to fund projects that provide life-changing opportunities, resources and hope to children and young people like me. It gave me the opportunity to become one of the BBC Children in Need Surprise Squad in 2021. I'm now a BBC Children in Need Young Ambassador, and this has changed my life in so many amazing ways.

If there is one thing I have learned, it is that life can change in a second. We all face struggles that others may never see. I hope that, by sharing my story, I can help others realise that sometimes the hardest journeys can lead you somewhere you never imagined possible. Being a BBC Children in Need Young Ambassador has truly changed my life for the better.

THANK YOU FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART,

Roisin

SCAN TO EXPLORE OUR FUNDRAISING HUB OR VISIT BBC.CO.UK/CIN

OVER 55%
of young people say they frequently feel anxious

In the last year,
OVER 1M CHILDREN
were referred to children and young people's mental health services - almost doubling since 2018-19

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