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Since the last Readabout we have gone through a period of adjustment and restructuring (and we are navigating through it still). With three fewer staff we had to cancel our summer camp, scale back some of our services and reallocate some tasks amongst the remaining team.

Even so, it has been a busy summer for Kith & Kids with lots of great activities and events. Before we report on those we want to bring you up to date with the latest staff changes.

First of all we have to say goodbye to Mat and Maithi. Mat first volunteered with us on our Christmas project in 2009 and then was a Project Co-ordinator for two years. He left in September to go travelling in South East Asia, but hopes to return eventually to do some more volunteering with us. Happy travels, Mat.

Maithi first volunteered with us in 2007 and then joined our fundraising team as an intern early in 2010. In September that year she became our full-time Community & Events Fundraiser and worked closely with Danielle to widen our range of income-generating activities, as well as organising and supporting the choir. She left at the end of October to go and work for Eaves for Women, a charity in South London, but she hopes to stay involved with the KK choir.

We thank Maithi and Mat for all the good work they’ve done for Kith & Kids, wish them all the best in their new ventures and look forward to continue working with them in some capacity in the future.

Taking over from Mat in the projects team is Laurence Woodcock, who until recently was our projects intern. Helen Styles, who started volunteering with us on last year’s camp, has become the new projects intern. Both have already been working for some weeks and are enjoying their new roles.

Last week another two people joined our office team. They are Maddy Wilhelmsson, our new Corporate & Community Fundraiser and Mike Moxham-Lalor who is taking on a part-time internship with our adult services team (ELSP/SA and Healthy Living activities).

A warm welcome to them all!

None of this summer’s activities and events could have happened without the excellent support from our many volunteers and we want to say a big THANK YOU to them all. A special page to mark Volunteers Week is devoted to their comments.

I hope you’ll find this Autumn Readabout an interesting read.

Marjolein
Following our Autumn 2012 Readabout, you may be aware that Victoria Willson was very ill and nearing her “final transition” as her mother Jean put it in her moving article “Life Transitions”.

Sadly, Victoria passed away at the end of September. Our hearts go out to her parents Jean and Norman and her sister Tara.

Helen Heath reflects on her friendship with Vicky:

Vicky made a huge impression on me when I first met her. I had signed up for 5 days of volunteering with Kith & Kids and had not the slightest clue that the woman I was to spend the next 5 days with would be someone I would be friends with and who would make me smile and laugh for nearly another 20 years.

For me there are so many anecdotes I could tell you about Vics when I have been out and about with her...just hilarious with Vics pinching bottoms, pinching ice creams, getting us into trouble in a multitude of ways. But it is the quiet moments when I liked to hold Vics’ hand or she would giggle with her hand to her mouth or actually just look incredibly intently in my eyes telling me so many things that I cherish.

Madeleine [fellow K&K friendship scheme volunteer], Tony and I are very lucky in having had Vics as a friend for many reasons but one is definitely because Vics’ family: Norman, Jean and Tara are so incredibly welcoming, open and thoughtful to our families and partners. We would like to thank them whole heartedly.

I wish we all had a big glass of red wine in our hand as I know Vics would love us to raise it and say here’s to you Vics!!
The summer 2:1 project took place from 12 to 23 August – two weeks later than usual, to avoid clashing with other schemes at Northumberland Park School, whilst leaving the school enough time to do their ‘holiday’ maintenance and cleaning after we had left. This meant that on all days we had the run of the school with no other groups around, which was really helpful.

As it turned out, there was still a lot of building work going on around us, and some of our participants really struggled with the noise levels it produced.

Despite this set-back, we were able to provide an excellent range of activities, ensuring each participant had an enjoyable learning and leisure programme.

Our workshop leaders provided sessions in music (Roshi), craft (Richard), massage (Leah), video (Natalie), dance (Lizzie) and cooking (Daphne). There was also dramatic storytelling by Mary Masaba, computer work, and relaxation in our mobile sensory room. In addition we had trampolining and swimming – and all that within the venue itself. This was complemented by days out to places of personal choice. Ranging from the huge slide and water-balls at Alley Palley to visits to the Science Museum and central London, ice-skating, bowling, boating, shopping and numerous other activities.

The Youth Group participated in sessions led by Mat on the theme of ‘news and reporting’. After some practice, they did some interviewing around the project, reported back to each other and produced their own newsheets. They also had their own ‘Come Dine with Me’ day during which they shopped and cooked for a guest they had invited to lunch. This is always a popular activity with the group and brings in lots of life skills.

The final afternoon took the form of a ‘Kithstock’ festival with a variety of stalls and musical and other performance in the show at the end. Overall the atmosphere and energy on the project was very warm, welcoming and positive. In particular we noticed significant developments with a number of participants, interacting more and participating fully in workshops, and speaking more than before - this is a testament to the support offered by all involved.

As always it is the teamwork from parents, volunteers, workshoppers and staff which makes the project work so well for all our participants. We thank them all for their hard work, energy and enthusiasm.

Robin
On the Respite Weekend in June, we all piled into a mini bus and drove to the Nancy Oldfield Trust Centre in Norfolk. This was my first time coordinating the weekend, and I was rather nervous, but the entire group was very welcoming and showed remarkable patience with the occasional glitch – even when we discovered that the only fish and chip in the area was closed on Friday night! Luckily George and his volunteers drove forth into the rainy night and rustled up some takeaways for a hungry group.

During the weekend, we spent Saturday afternoon out on the Norfolk Broads, riding in small speedboats, sailing boats, and to top it off, taking turns to steer a large motor cabin cruiser. It was great weather which showed the beautiful scenery (including the big Norfolk skies) off to its best effect.

To continue the watery theme, on Sunday we visited a beach, where Bradley decided to take an extremely close up view of the sea. Thankfully it was a lovely day, so he wasn’t soaked for too long.

On Saturday night, we made our own vegetarian pizzas, which due to their being ready at different times, tested our self control a great deal! We rewarded our patience with a visit to a local village pub for a drink, and a fun evening spending time together.

I felt very privileged to be welcomed so readily into such a friendly and warm group, and I’m sure we’re all looking forward to our weekends away in autumn.

Rich Pickup
On the evening of July 25th, Kith & Kids held their first 5-a-side Invitational Football Tournament. Taking the field were five teams in total: two from Kith & Kids, two from Elfrida Society and one from Resources for Autism.

It was a fantastic atmosphere, heightened by the friendly rivalry and competition between the teams! Thanks to everyone who was involved and to the teams (and supporters) who came along and made it such a memorable evening!

As kick-off to the tournament approached, the five teams got warmed up, stretching their muscles, going over tactics and getting mentally prepared for the games ahead. With all still to play for, the tension was palpable...
Kith & Kids invitational football tournament

Kick Off!
With 10 fixtures to play, there’s no doubt that it was a gruelling couple of hours. The players were stretched to their limits but still found plenty of energy to celebrate every goal scored (and there sure were plenty to admire - 34 in total!). Thankfully there was plenty of encouragement throughout, from teammates as well as the supporters on the sidelines.

Prizegiving
The tournament ended with a well-deserved presentation ceremony. The winners, Resources for Autism, were given a trophy as well as the Golden Boot winner. All the players were handed participation certificates and commended for their hard work. Afterwards, over snacks and drinks everyone joined in with their highlights of the evening.

thanks to ...
Lauren Dagger for these amazing photographs! Contact us if you’d like her to take photos at any of your
National Volunteers Week was from the 1st-7th June and so we wanted to celebrate our wonderful volunteers by giving them the chance to tell us why they volunteer with us. We put their stories up on facebook and got an amazing response and so thought we’d share with you some of what they said.

**Dominique:** I was very keen to get involved working with adults with learning disabilities. When I looked at the website and I read about the wide range of activities you can get involved in, from self advocacy to weekend clubs, I was excited to find out more and get stuck in! I have had the privilege of getting to know and enjoy spending time with the participants of this charity and their inspiring families. I have made lifelong friends and laughed until I have cried. I have even been inspired to change career and retrain as a social worker! I have learnt - and am still always learning - how to communicate with adults of all abilities.

**Tom:** When I turned up to the first Kith & Kids training day I did not have a clue about working with people with a learning disability. I thought that the volunteering would involve doing some sort of labouring for the charity, rather than providing hands on support. On the whole I feel that volunteering has brought out a softer, nurturing side in me that I did not think I had. I am really proud of everything I have done with Kith & Kids and it feels great to have discovered something I feel so passionately about.

**Moin:** I came across Kith & Kids through a friend and he encouraged me to attend the training. Once I came along to the training day, I got hooked on all the group games and the fact that everyone very quickly let go of all of the usual societal inhibitions and just got stuck in with what we were being asked to do (pretending to be a vampire, fish, etc!). It’s a place where everyone is genuinely themselves and it is somewhere that I will always come back to.

**Nisha:** I was recommended to Kith and Kids through a friend that also volunteers. As a volunteer, I’ve helped out on a weekend club where we played African drums, been out on a friendship day on the Thames river boat, and been out on a group day trip to London Zoo; all of which have been both challenging and highly rewarding. I have learned many skills that can be applied to the world of work, family and friends too; skills like how to engage, being clear, being adaptable, being organised, being alert and being a source of support for other people.

**Relez:** I really value the work that Kith & Kids does. One abiding memory I have is from a day out with Kith & Kids. There was a lovely moment when one participant, who likes to clap peoples’ hands as a way of greeting them, was clapping the hands of another participant and you could tell that they were really happy to have the chance to meet up and socialise again. For me this epitomises what a Kith & Kids project is about: it’s a friendship and social club for people with a learning disability.

**Adele:** I was first interested in working with Kith & Kids as I wanted to experience what working in a care environment would be like. I had no idea how to support people with disabilities and was looking forward to a challenge. After a challenging but awesome first project (which now feels like sooo many years ago), filled with paint, dressing up in weird hats, plentiful warm up games and constant giggling with the participant I was paired with, I was hooked and I haven’t looked back since.
There was a really special atmosphere at our 3rd annual D’s Day on 2nd June at Coram’s Fields. The sun even decided to come and shine on all of us, making it a pretty glorious affair.

D’s Day is a special play day for children of any age and any ability full of completely inclusive activities. Over 400 children and their families came along on the day and conquered the climbing wall, got their faces painted, made windmills, houses and lots more at the art table and made a spectacular sound in our drumming circle. New Games UK also ran some inclusive games using parachutes, huge tennis balls and more!

We also had a special musical performance by Make Believe Studios performing songs from hit West-End musicals and Michael Jackson!

There was a real sense of community and togetherness on the day, mirroring the spirit in which Kith & Kids began. The day is held in memory of Kith & Kids co-founding parent Doreen Collins, who helped begin Kith & Kids in 1969, and is sponsored by her charitable trust. Thank you to all who made it such a wonderful day.

The Mayor of Camden was thoroughly impressed.
Thank you to all those who have taken the time to get involved and run events for Kith & Kids and helping us raise valuable funds. You've really made the most of the warm summer months to get active outside, and it is heartening to know that so many of you are creatively thinking of new ways to help! The response to our requests for help has been inspirational, but please continue to get involved in whatever way you can over the festive season.

**Upcoming events & other exciting ways to get involved!**

**LONDON MARATHON 2014**

Calling all runners!

It’s that time of year again - we are currently recruiting our London Marathon team! It’s all taking place on the 13th April in Central London and it’s going to an amazing day as always. As part of the team, you’ll also get access to the Kith & Kids after party including a massage for your weary legs.

Arguably the best marathon in the world, this is a challenge that you won’t ever forget. If you are interested, or know anyone who is then get in touch! PLACES ARE GOING QUICKLY!

Contact Maddy on events@kithandkids.org.uk or 0208 885 1517 or for more information.

**Santa Fun Run**

If you reckon a marathon is a bit too much of a challenge for your legs then why not sign up to the Santa Fun Run. You choose whether you run or walk 5K or 10K and you do it in a Santa’s outfit (which you’ll get for free). It’s a fabulous way to get your friends or colleagues together for a laugh.

Sunday 8th December at 11am (Victoria Park)

Simply register online and select Kith & Kids as your chosen charity at: [http://www.doitforcharity.com/santa-charities-of-the-year.aspx](http://www.doitforcharity.com/santa-charities-of-the-year.aspx)

**Christmas Cards**

Christmas is fast approaching and our very own ELSP groups have been putting together Christmas cards, ideal for sending to your family, friends and colleagues.

Please see pages toward the back for details of the designs available. Artwork by Lindsay Tether (Helen Robertson’s mum!)

Pack of five cards for £4+pp. Individual cards £1+pp. To avoid pp costs, you can pick up your orders from the K&K office or weekend clubs.

To order cards, please email Alex on alexm@kithandkids.org.uk or call the office on 0208 801 7432.
This year we have been chosen as charity of the year for Montpelier, Mitsubishi UFJ Securities International and Make Believe Studios! Thanks to those who nominated and to all who chose us. It means a huge amount to us, not only the vital funding we will receive but also spreading the awareness about the great work that we do.

Montpelier have so far taken part in the Superhero Run, had pool jumps, jelly bean counts, duvet day raffles, a Summer Party Auction, dress down days, made cards and are looking forward to taking part in plenty more activities. They’ve also done an afternoon of volunteering with the SA Group. So far they’ve raised £10,000 so thanks to all those who have organised and donated!

Mitsubishi UFJ are planning a mash up of the Great British Bake Off and the Kith & Kids Love Cake Eat Cake campaign, and have already raised a staggering £9988 through Dressing Down August.

Make Believe Studios have run raffles, non-school uniform days and donated the programme sales of their last show to us too. They also did a guest appearance on D’s Day and entertained us with songs from hit musicals. (see page 7 to read more!)

CAN YOU NOMINATE US?
If you work somewhere or attend a school, college or university and you think we can somehow get involved then please let us know. We’d love to work with them and build some new great partnerships!

Lots of volunteers have used the warm summer months to get outside to run, cycle and skydive to raise valuable funds for Kith & Kids. Thank you to David Ross and his team, better known as Biscuit, The Tank, Boris, Tubes and Joey Essex. They cycled 300 miles from London to Paris and raised an amazing £3081!

In running news, big thanks to Henry Milton and Rupert Pearce who raised a brilliant £600 for Kith & Kids by running the Frankfurt Marathon in September. Also thanks to Monica Baker who raised £150 by running the BUPA 10km.

Well done to our Ride London team who cycled 100 miles through London to raise over £5000 for Kith & Kids! We know how hard they had to train to get ready for the big day, definitely putting them through their paces. The money that they raise will be going towards our autumn term activities so a huge thanks to those who rode and to those who sponsored them.

The recent Zumbathon was a great success, raising over £400 and got everyone moving! Thank you to organisers Claire and Billie and everyone who took part, including our own Krystina, Bradley and Alicia.
Volunteer Grace Abrahams and her friend Freddie Bailey cycled all of 874 miles from John O’Groats to Lands End (quicker than they hoped too)! On top of that they managed to raise a whopping £2218.50!

Well done to Jenny Atkinson who took part in Nightrider 2013. While the rest of us were sleeping, Jenny cycled through London in the moonlight passing all the famous landmarks, and raised a huge £1000.

Brave Jeanie Law threw herself out of a plane to raise over £1000 for us, thank you Jeanie!

Thank you to staff at The International Centre for Circulatory Health at Imperial College/Imperial College NHS Healthcare Trust who raised an amazing £790 by hosting with one of their summer charity lunches.

Thank you John Lewis, who voted for us through their Community Action Programme, raising £780 towards our vital Family Support Service.

Garfield Weston kindly awarded us £10,000 towards our Social Development projects; We thank them for this generous grant.

Thank you to the congregations of Newington Green and Islington Unitarian Churches for their generous donation of £420 in August. Thanks to Bryony Hadjidaniel whose talk for the Christchurch Southgate Women’s Fellowship raised £70.

Thank you Marilyn Finlay for raising £135 via Southgate Progressive Synagogue towards our Employment and Life Skills Project.

Thank you to all who donated in memory of Elizabeth (Betty) Maben 1923-2013 who passed away earlier this year. She was a great supporter of Kith & Kids and will be missed by her family and friends. All in all, over £1000 was donated in her name leaving a wonderful legacy to Kith & Kids. Thank you to all who donated in Betty’s name.
This summer our group of young adults and volunteers went away for four days on a residential trip to Whitwell Hall near Norfolk. It was our largest group yet (22 in all plus 2 coordinators). The overall theme was getting active so we were all out and about the local area with lovely weather to aid us. Cycling, kayaking, orienteering and tracking were all going on at different times to different levels of success!

With so much going on we split the group into two sets. This meant that everyone was able to try lots of different things out and then later in the day swap their stories and adventures with each other.

Just down the road we hired our bikes from an old railway station with a disused line. There were still a few trains there for any enthusiasts, but we were more interested in the bikes before jumping in the saddle (sort of) and heading down a local cycle route while checking out the nature on the way. Also down this path we passed the lake where we took to the water for a spot of kayaking. Most of the group had a go at this – some of us in a more steady manner than others – with just a couple of ‘dips’ into the lake from enthusiastic volunteers. When you are next in a kayak and are asked to touch the nose of your vessel, prepare yourself for a view under the water and a slightly submerged head. In other words – make sure you have a towel handy. As wet as some of us got though, it was great fun with the perfect weather to add to the enjoyment.

The group did a fantastic job of cooking the meals. This time, Chicken New York style, bangers & mash, burgers and plenty of veg helped keep our strength up. We also had some more relaxed moments during the sessions that individual group members had planned and then led. Bingo, real-life Cluedo, photography, clay sculpting, kick rounders, sports day, art, Frisbee golf, show & tell and relationships were all delivered with a level of professionalism that everyone was very proud of.

We all returned home aching and tired, but with some more great memories to cherish. I’m sure we will have recovered in time for the next residential in January.

Alex
Pack of five cards with the following designs included

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Pack of five cards with the following designs included
100% of profits from the sale of this card goes directly to

Kith & Kids

www.kithandkids.org.uk
0208 801 7432
Reg charity no: 1080972
Kith & Kids is a company limited by guarantee no 3956694

Sample inside message (can be personalised)

Seasons Greetings

......... are supporting disability charity Kith & Kids. The Art of Kith & Kids is a project designed to help people with autism learn practical skills and gain experience for work. 100% of the profits from the sale of this card go to

Kith & Kids

Artwork by
Lindsay Tether
Every four years the Special Olympics National Games takes place in different parts of the country. This summer it all kicked off in Bath with over 1,700 athletes taking part. One of these competitors was our very own James Mathiason who won three gold medals in the 200m sprint, running long jump and the relay! We are very proud of James for his amazing achievement and hope his sporting accomplishments continue long into the future!

Aled reveals all about Green Day gig...

On 1st June, some friends and I went to the Emirates stadium to see Kaiser Chiefs and Green Day in concert. We met at the Tollington Pub beforehand. John, Stephen, Neil, Alan, Mike and myself had a brilliant time. We enjoyed hearing the music live and everyone was on their feet.

My favourite part of the day were the songs, “American Idiot,” “Jesus of Suburbia” and “Brutal Love”. I like the atmosphere in a concert better than in my room. Being a Spurs fan in the Arsenal stadium did not make any difference, I was there to watch the bands with my friends. The concert tickets were kindly donated by Barclays Bank, so a big thank you to...