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director’s notes

With a drop in temperature and autumn knocking on the door we hope that a look back over the summer will keep you warm a little longer. As always, our summer was action-packed and we have plenty of articles and photos to show for it. Enjoy.

Marjolein

August Residential

For the fourth year running the self advocacy group headed to Norfolk for their summer residential at Whitwell Hall. With so many visits here it has started to feel like a home away from home with the staff there wanting to know which of the members would be attending and looking forward to seeing them all.

Luckily, we did not encounter too much bad weather and managed to fit plenty in. A day at the seaside was a big hit. Travelling down country lanes heading up to the north coast of Norfolk was an adventure in itself, but on arrival at Sheringham we hit the beach and found a rocky area perfect for a spot of crabbing. Before you knew it the lines were full of crabs trying to grab bits of bacon, but soon those crabs were back in the water with some leftover bait. This was followed up by some traditional seaside activities including ice cream, arcades and fish and chips, and this was just the first full day.

There was still time for plenty of other activities whilst dodging the odd rainy spell. Member led sessions were a big hit with marzipan modelling, our very own ‘Cube’ gameshow and exploring natural disasters while building our ideal emergency kits! Adding that to cycling, pottery, t-shirt design and geo-caching meant that there was always something going on. Evenings allowed a bit of relaxation after our busy days: the group enjoyed a camp fire and a visit to the pub.

By the end of the trip, which some called ‘the best residential ever!’, we all were ready for a rest so we packed our bags and memories before heading back to London, ready to do it all again in January.

KLASP Update

At the last KLASP TWO meeting there was a real sense of excitement that after 2.5 years of fundraising and preparation the project is ready for lift-off. As from 1st October a “new” advocate will be working 7 hours a week for KLASP TWO and she has started meeting up with families to draw up profiles for each of the members involved. We are delighted to welcome back Helen Heath, who has taken on this role.

Please support the KLASP(1) Jazz Night this Friday 10 October (see back page). The more the merrier!

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Please support the KLASP(1) Jazz Night this Friday 10 October (see back page). The more the merrier!
We had a successful two week Social Development Project starting at the end of July. The sun shone and a wide range of fun activities was enjoyed by the participants with a disability and their volunteers alike. Roshi’s music workshops were both entertaining and educational with drumming, singing, guitar playing and songwriting sessions. Art sessions with Richard and Mary ranged from painting and drawing to 3D work: building houses and making mannequins. An opportunity to make personalised cushions was also a big hit.

Madeleine’s drama workshop allowed people to find new ways of expressing themselves whilst Natalie’s workshop gave us the technical know-how to make video films. When the two workshops combined, we saw some spellbinding dramas, including a crime thriller!

Other venue-based activities included lots of sport, cooking, parachute games, story telling, pampering, beading and the very popular and trendy loom band making. Back by popular demand were the encounters with unusual animals which really drew out some of our very shy participants and made others squeal with nervous delight!

Fun days out included bowling, ice skating, a boat ride along the Thames, a picnic in the park, and a trip to explore Central London with a lovely Chinese lunch in Soho! When some recovery time was needed, Leah’s massage workshops provided the perfect tonic.

Because so many people with autism struggle with new experiences, the project had a theme of ‘change’ and looked at positive ways of dealing with these challenges. A lovely surprise on the final day was a performance by the Kith & Kids choir which got us into the mood for a great final show!

Thank you to all the participants, volunteers and workshoppers who helped to make it a brilliant two weeks! Once again everyone on the project was really well fed and a big thank you must also go out to everyone that helped cook lunch in the kitchen over the two weeks! Whoever arranged the sunny weather also deserves a mention.
On a warm Sunday afternoon in late August, our group of 70 members, volunteers and staff left for Sayers Croft Centre in Surrey; our summer camp is one of the highlights of the Kith & Kids calendar, and was especially so this time, considering we couldn’t run camp last year. We even welcomed three members, Oliver, Jake and Brett, for their first Kith & Kids camp.

It’s lucky that everybody was so excited, because it then proceeded to rain constantly for the first two days (all the water made the trampoline mat sag down to the ground!). Everything else may have been dampened, but our spirits certainly weren’t, and we still got to have all our usual camp fun.

We went on a scary night walk (through the woods by torchlight, listening out for owls and other creatures of the night), and had a bingo and quiz evening, as well as all our usual camp staples such as visits to Brighton, and going bowling, skating, or swimming. Alongside the heavy rain, the watery theme continued with a sponge-soaked water fight, and then Laurence falling out of a canoe to get totally drenched.

We also made our own fun with a games night, sing-a-longs and talent shows by the campfire, and our glamorous fashion show, which turned into an impromptu disco for the after party. We even had a sports day, with long jumps, welly-wanging, limbo, and gold medals for all!

To give us the energy for all of these activities, each group on camp took turns cooking for everyone, and we had some amazing themed dinners which included important birthday parties, Thai restaurant, pub meals, and a Bollywood extravaganza. It is great to see how the entire camp contributes to make the delicious meals we have all week.

There is always a strong bond that builds up within our little community on camp, and so it is a bittersweet feeling when the camp finishes (especially when the last day is brilliantly sunny!), but we want to say a big thank you to everybody involved for making this year’s camp such a success, and we’ll all look forward to next year.
I’m writing this on the last day of my internship with Kith & Kids and it’s a shame it’s come to an end. My time as an intern has provided me with lots of great memories and experiences to take away with me and lots of new skills which I can apply to future work opportunities (that’s hoping I get a bunch of interviews!)

I initially applied for this position as I wanted to gain more experience working with people with different physical and mental disabilities as I’m hoping to work as a support worker, and it’s definitely been able to provide me with that. Getting to know the different members and volunteers on projects has been the highlight for me; everyone is so approachable and it’s been really easy to build a rapport with them. This also applies to my fellow projects team and co-workers in the office, all of whom have been incredibly friendly, helpful and supportive which I’m truly grateful for, it’s going to be weird not heading into the office on a Monday morning!

I look forward to seeing everyone in the near future and wish the best of luck to the next person they take on to do the internship.

Nice working with you,
Dean Holden, the ginger bearded one.

One of Kith & Kids’ aims is to make the Employment and Life Skills Project more self-sustaining. With this in mind, our Friday group spent a few hours at Mitsubishi UFJ Securities Ltd (MUSI) on Friday 26th September. Each member of the group worked with a volunteer from MUSI, getting to know each other whilst completing some tasks. This was followed by a brainstorming session after lunch which ultimately focussed on two ideas – 1) the development of a new app for autistic children (as voted for by attendees), and 2) – setting up a café in which ELSP participants could gain work experience. Thank you MUSI for your help – we’ve got some thinking to do now!

Mitsubishi Brainstorm

Farewell from Dean!

Upcoming Fundraising events

Santa Dash – 5km jog in London’s parks on weekends in December - free Santa suit included! £22 registration fee.

Reebok Spartan Race – various dates and locations. An endurance, obstacle style race – take on a tough new challenge!
**FUNDRAISING NEWS and Thanks**

A huge thank you to everyone who got on board with our social media summer camp appeal over the last couple of months. By putting up photos on social media of yourselves as youngsters on holiday for the #HolsForAllKids campaign and texting your donations, we raised a brilliant £848.64!

On a very wet Sunday in August, our team of 15 cyclists took to the roads for the Prudential RideLondon-Surrey 100. Despite the hurricane force winds and rain that meant the course was shortened to 86 miles for safety reasons, our riders made it to the end with smiles on their faces. So far, they’ve raised an amazing £4577.72 – thank you!

Our newest corporate partner, Blick Rothenberg, have had a busy summer and embraced the partnership - leaping straight into two fundraising events! The first was the JP Morgan corporate challenge, a 5km race against other companies in Battersea Park in July – this raised £1209.68. The second event was the Thames Path Challenge – participants (16 from Blick Rothenberg) chose to either walk or run 50km or 100km along the Thames Path, day and night! Despite blisters and the cold night, they’ve raised £3892.30 so far – thank you so much!

Our other corporate partners have also been successful in fundraising this summer. A big thank you to all the employees at MUSI who did their ‘Dress Down August’ for Kith & Kids for the 2nd year in a row and raised £7000!

With the latest iPhone releases, Montpelier took the initiative and held a sale of their old iPhones and raised £820 for Kith & Kids - this was in addition to presenting us with a £5000 cheque recently! Thank you! Stephen and Richie did the honours for Kith & Kids, and enjoyed a tour of the Montpelier offices when they accepted the donation.

And to Monitise, whose fundraising efforts resulted in £3000 for our summer activities - thank you so much!

Thanks to Joel Kern and his Make Believe performers for their kind donation of £750 towards our summer camp!

Ellen Rayment and Michaela Gmuzdkova completed a 165 mile cycle to Paris in just two days over their summer holidays! Cycling from Dieppe to Paris with one overnight stop, they made it safely, ending at the Eiffel Tower and raised just under £500 – thank you!

Jo Taylor, a long time volunteer with Kith & Kids, completed the Henley Swim Bridge to Bridge – a 14km swim downstream in the River Thames between Marlow and Henley. Jo raised an amazing £1073.60!

Thank you also to the City of London Corporation who held a Dress Down Day in August and raised £142 – thanks to Imran Yasin for nominating us.

Marianne Streeter and her friend Denise Moores held a coffee morning including a bake sale and bring and buy sale in aid of Kith & Kids. Between them they raised just under £300 – thank you!

Thanks to Grunberg & Co for match funding the income from Prime Thinkers sessions - £400 over the last few months! And of course, a thank you to all the Prime Thinkers who are putting their time and effort into these sessions.

Most recently, we’d like to thank Jeff and Claire Whitehill who are doing two half marathons less than 2 weeks apart. The first one was last weekend, and they’ve raised an amazing £854.49 already! Good luck for the next one!
Anya Souza Mosaics

Anya Souza is a stained glass artist and former member of Kith & Kids. She was born on November 5 1962 and has Downs Syndrome. She has been making stained glass since 1990. Anya has exhibited her work in prestigious venues such as The Houses of Parliament, Ely Cathedral and Mattisse’s House, France. Her work is a mixture of decorative and functional items which enhance the beauty of coloured glass capturing the light. Work ranges from candleholders, hanging window panels, mosaic on vases, picture frames and mirrors. For further information & if you are interested in buying a piece, please contact us at Kith & Kids.

Rose's Article

Rose Way, a member of our ELSP Group, recently had an article printed in Today’s Railways UK magazine. Commenting on an article from the month before, Rose suggests a well thought out amendment to the proposals for the Waterloo and City Line. See the full article here: http://www.kithandkids.org.uk/latest-news/news-archive/

Supporting Kith & Kids Shops

As mentioned in previous newsletter, John Richardson, who runs the Supporting Kith & Kids shops, received a plaque for 25 years of raising money in support of people with learning disabilities. The shops urgently need more items, including furniture. Please contact the shop nearest to you to arrange collection or to drop off items yourself.

Tottenham - 0208 880 9034
Ponders End - 0208 805 6262
Waltham Cross - 0199 262 0407

dates for your diary

- Jazz and Blues evening in aid of KLASP - Friday 10th October, The Irish Centre, 7.30pm
- AGM - Sunday 12th October, The Irish Centre, 1.30pm
- Christmas Project - 27th - 31st December