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**director's notes**

Time flies when you are having fun so it’s no wonder that the end of summer seems to have arrived well before we are ready to let it go! Never mind the changeable weather, we had a great and very successful summer. Lots of activities, some wonderful fundraising initiatives and results, de-cluttering and sprucing up of the office, and last but not least, the arrival of the Kith & Kids hoodies!! (Proudly displayed by our four models in the Norfolk countryside, see photo). I hope you will enjoy reading about it all.

We want to say a big thank you to our intern Lydia who helped us a great deal during the last 3 months (on projects, camp and developing the social media strategy). She is now travelling around Europe prior to her return to Hong Kong and we wish her happy travels.  

Marjolein

**family day & BBQ**

Thankfully the weather was kind to us at this year’s end-of-summer BBQ; over 100 Kith & Kids members, parents, volunteers and staff old and new (and older and younger!) joined us for the afternoon on 13th September. We used all the great facilities at the Markfield Project to play, dance, create and, of course eat! Jay was once again our star BBQ chef who quickly got everyone preparing salads, drinks and lots of burgers and sausages. Lizzie helped us build appetites with some disco dancing, and then things fell silent while everyone raced to get to the front of the queue for food. We also celebrated Aidan’s birthday with cake for dessert! After a very sociable lunch, Lizzie lead us all in some fabulous Bollywood moves to help us work off the calories (see the photo on the front page!)

The event served as a great opportunity for us all to get together after a busy summer of activities, and to welcome back people we’ve not seen for a while. As always, teamwork was the key, with everyone more than willing to do their part in making sure we all had a great afternoon. It was great to see that everyone just got on with all the necessary tasks, so that we could all enjoy this opportunity to once again be with the Kith & Kids ‘family’.

Robin

**anyasouza 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 or if you are interested in buying a piece, please contact us at Kith & Kids.
Our Summer Social Development Project took place over the course of ten days at Northumberland Park School during the last week of July and the first week of August. The participants enjoyed a range of activities provided by our wonderful team of workshoppers. There was craft with Richard, music with Roshi and massage with Leah. We welcomed our new drama workshopper Louisa for a few days in the first week, which members and volunteers seemed really enthusiastic about and then we had the lovely Madeleine for the second week producing some amazing ideas building up to our ‘space’ themed final show.

The two weeks also included a number of fun one-off workshops such as Bubble Art with Pien, Street Dance with Lizzie and Beading with Ben. On the first Friday we ran a Special Sports Event led by Mat which created such a good vibe and ended our first week on a high.

Myself and our Intern, Lydia, lead the Youth Group sessions this project. Their aim for the week was how to plan and organise a party for everyone to enjoy at the end of the project. It was a great success, the youth group really enjoyed choosing their own themes and interacting with others on the project for their own ideas such as writing invitations, and planning the food and decorations. They also found being able to create their own cocktails and cook food that they would serve at the party a really fun experience.

Overall the project had a great atmosphere which was thoroughly enjoyed by all, roll on Christmas!

Liz
With the return of Summer comes all the fun and excitement of our Summer Camp, seven nights and eight activity filled days at the Sayers Croft Field Studies Centre surrounded by the lovely Surrey countryside.

With around seventy Kith & Kids participants and volunteers all together, Camp creates a great atmosphere and even when the rain started to fall (and didn’t stop for 5 days), there was still a really nice buzz during the activities and days out throughout the week. It meant when the sun did shine we made the most of it!

With Camp so close to Brighton it is an opportunity too good to be missed! Each day a group of participants with their volunteers headed to the seaside for a day out. We enjoyed trips to Brighton Pier, the beachside train, Sea Life Centre and all the great places to have a spot of lunch in the Laines.

Meals at Camp are truly special times of the day, as all the food is prepared by the participants and volunteers working as a team! Each team is asked to come up with a theme for their meal at dinner time, which means decorating the marquee and playing music that fits the food. We really went around the world and had food from Mexico, Italy, India, the Wild West and the Caribbean, all of which was delicious; each team really outdid themselves and created a lovely (sometimes mildly competitive!) atmosphere.

At the end of each day we headed inside for activities. We had a fashion show with outfits made by the participants, giving them a chance to show off their creative sides and presenting them on the catwalk. We also had a game show night including Deal or No Deal and the Generation Game; and on the last evening we had a disco with some impressive dance moves! It was a really nice way to finish off the week.

With all the late nights and early mornings, Camp is an exhausting experience but by the end it is really nice to see how well everyone has bonded and there is a true feeling of community and friendship.

Summer Camp is such an amazing place to spend a week and it is the people that make it so special. Thank you to all who came and gave so much energy and enthusiasm and made this year’s Camp another big success.

Rob
Our Summer Residential project started on a sunny Thursday in August and we were lucky enough to have beautiful weather for the whole trip.

Whitwell Hall is surrounded by beautiful countryside and with the weather being so great we managed to spend the majority of our time outdoors. Stephen challenged Kola to a long run around the site, he also joined John and Louis when they hired bikes and cycled around the country lanes and villages. Four members in the group ran some great sessions including a game of rounders, a riddles quiz, a celebrity geography quiz and a challenge to make watermelon jelly set in a carved out watermelon.

After a drive through the Norfolk fields, we boarded a boat to go seal spotting. Our skipper took us out to Blakeney Point where we saw lots of seals and seal pups. Luckily no one was sea sick, so we stopped off at a local pub to make the most of the lovely weather in a sunny beer garden.

On the last day we had the Great Kith & Kids Bake Off, each team was given a choice of basic recipes, and a box full of different ingredients to create a tasty cake of their own design. Three guest judges joined us in the evening to taste each creation and award certificates and prizes. Mark and his volunteer George baked their way to victory with a very tasty victoria sponge covered in a lot of chocolate!

We’re all looking forward to the next trip in January and the fundraising for it is already well under way.
One of our partners, **Blick Rothenberg**, entered a team in the JP Morgan Corporate Challenge this year and raised £1106.99 altogether, thank you! 28 Blick Rothenberg employees are also undertaking a British Military Fitness obstacle course event next weekend, and are about halfway to their target of £3000 – brilliant! On top of these challenges, Blick Rothenberg partners have generously match funded the sponsorship that was raised over the past year; we’ve just received a cheque for £5700 - thank you so much!

This month we also welcome a new corporate partner **Digitas Health**. Digitas Health are a creative advertising agency dedicated to health and wellness brands. They have a whole team of staff ready to help us with our volunteer recruitment in various ways, particularly drawing on their knowledge of advertising and digital trends, and have already been to meet with us in our offices. We’re really excited about working with them over the next year.

We had a team of 8 cyclists in the **RideLondon** event this year, one of whom – **Lawrence Copello**, has cycled for us 3 times! After last year’s hurricane and the need to cut the route short, this year’s weather was perfect and the route was bathed in sunshine as 21,000 riders cycled the 100 miles. The team have raised a great £1500 altogether so far but there is more to come in.

Elsewhere, a few of our volunteers have been getting sporty over the summer! Thanks must go to our ex-Project Coordinator **Laurence Woodcock** who created his own challenge and ran 180 miles from Westminster in London, to the Britannia Stadium in Stoke over 6 days raising just over £1000. This was no mean feat - you can see how he got on in his article on the next page!

**Sam Parker**, whose younger brother Ben has been supported by Kith & Kids for many years, and his friend Telemaque Argyriou took on a summer of sporting challenges including four half marathons and three triathlons. They’ve raised £550 for Kith & Kids so far – thank you!

**Natalia Nowacka** did the Super Hero run for us raising over £220, and one of our members that you may know, **John Spenceley**, completed his first ever 5K doing the Colour Run. There was DJ entertainment throughout the course, and he said “I’d like to thank everyone at Kith & Kids and the boys at Ward-Thomas Removals.” John raised over £200. Thank you both John and Natalia!

Maddy
Smoke to Stoke

At times it felt like a slightly quirky holiday. The still water, and the floating ducks and swans on it are serene and tranquil and provide an escape from the noise and 100mph lifestyle of modern life.

One of my favourite activities whilst running was seeing all the different canal boats en route, and enjoying the various names, ‘Impulse, ‘Rose’ and Gin’, ‘Woodcock’. This often kept me entertained and kept me distracted from the miles ahead and the stiffness in my legs.

On the 4th and 5th days I lost touch with the surroundings around me and it felt a bit like I was just slogging out the miles, the previous days’ sense of romance and holiday feeling had gone a little. The fact that I didn’t have to run with any belongings was all thanks to my Dad. It was a real boost having someone to meet me for lunch and at the end of every day, making sure I was properly fed and watered and on a logistical level he also sorted out all the accommodation and most importantly went and got hold of emergency comppeed.

Over £1000 was raised for Kith & Kids and this really helped keep me going throughout the run as did all the messages of support that I received whilst on the towpath. It was a really pleasant surprise to hear from some old mates whilst en route.

Combined with my sense of achievement is the question of what next and what I should replace the hard training with. I planned this run as a bit of a tester for attempting a longer multi day run to mainland Europe next year. That’s still my goal!

Laurence

Respite weekend

We returned to our favourite venue, Dell Farm in Whipsnade for our first trip away this term, and had another great time.

Some of our planned activities didn’t quite work out the way we’d hoped; we made magic crystals which didn’t crystallise, rockets that stayed resolutely earthbound, and there wasn’t a wisp of wind when we went to fly our homemade kites.

However, none of this got us down, and we had a lot of fun building our highest ever Jenga tower (then watching it collapse!), we made some hilarious mix and match puzzles of our faces, and had a lovely walk along Dunstable Downs, taking in the view before popping into to our regular haunt, the Red Lion pub in Studham for a hot drink and to watch some of the Rugby World Cup.

After going bowling on Sunday afternoon, we stopped off for our traditional coffee before returning to the Irish Centre, all a bit tired but already looking forward to our next weekend away to Suffolk at the end of November.

Rich
congratulations roshi!
Many of you will know Roshi, who has been our music workshopper on our projects for the past 10 years. Roshi and her partner David recently welcomed a little boy into the world; Dara Cai Nasehi Stubbs, born on the 23rd August. Mum and baby are both doing really well. Congratulations from all of us at Kith & Kids!

know someone interested in volunteering?
We’re looking for volunteers to help us for our Christmas Project and beyond! If you know anyone who might be interested in getting involved with us on our projects and activities, please do ask them to come along to the following training days:

Weekend Clubs:
10am-12pm Sunday 11th October and Saturday 24th October

Christmas Project:
Course A
10am - 4.30pm Saturday 31st October
and 10am-4.30pm Saturday 28th November
and 11am-5.30pm Sunday 13th December

Course B
10am - 4.30pm Sunday 15th November
and 10am-4.30pm Saturday 28th November
and 11am-5.30pm Sunday 13th December

Come to: Ermine Road Day Centre, 2 Ermine Road, N15 6DB

upcoming events

London Marathon - Sunday 24th April 2016
Needs no explaining! We still have places in the iconic London race - join our team today!

RideLondon 100 - Sunday 31st July 2016
We are already recruiting for RideLondon next year! A 100 mile cycle through London and the Surrey countryside finishing on the Mall.

dates for your diary

☐ AGM: Sunday 11th October, 1.30pm, Irish Centre

☐ Choir Carol Concert: 16th December, 7.30pm, Irish Centre

☐ Xmas Social Development Project: 27th - 31st December

☐ Winter Residential: 2nd - 5th January 2016