

Kith & Kids

Winter 2011



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Happy New Year!

We hope you have had a wonderful festive season and a great start to 2012. The beginning of the new year is always exciting, as it gives us the chance to start afresh and look forward to the year ahead.

As you probably all know, the holiday period is generally pretty busy for Kith & Kids with both the Xmas 2:1 Social Development Project and Residential Project taking place. In this newsletter, you can find out how they both went and there are plenty of great pictures too! We will continue with our regular activities but 2012 also promises new opportunities. We are pleased to say that soon we are running some healthy living "taster" sessions for (young) adults, and in order to do so have just expanded to another room in The Irish Centre. At the moment, it is in the process of being repainted, refloored and furnished. By the time you hear from us next, we hope to have a few sessions under our belt.

The other project we are just embarking on is a respite service which is being developed by Helen Robertson. The first Respite Weekend was over the second weekend of January, and participants and volunteers were very excited at the prospect of going away! Read more about it on the next page.

We also welcome Paulina, the newest addition to our office who is interning with us for three months all the way from Poland. She will mainly be supporting Alex and Rich with the Employability and Life Skills Project (ELSP) and has already been on the Residential and helped out on the Xmas Project too.

So we have plenty to look forward to in this coming year but sadly we also are saying goodbye to intern Kingsley who has been absolutely wonderful working on the Projects Team for the last six months. Kingsley has really become part of the team and we are sorry to see him go (although he promises us he will come back and visit!) We wish him lots of luck in the future as he hopes to go on to study medicine.

Finally, we would like to thank Barclays Capital for generously continuing to support ELSP over the next two years. We are very grateful for their ongoing commitment.

With all this, and plenty more, sit back and enjoy our latest Readabout.

Maithi and Danielle



Paulina at Xmas Project!

Kith & Kids Choir Caroling!

The Kith & Kids Choir decided to cheer up London's commuters the week before Christmas by singing at two of the busiest underground stations! From *Good King Wenceslas* to *Santa Claus is Coming to Town*, we put plenty of smiles on peoples faces and managed to raise £467.99. We were so welcoming we even had a couple of bystanders come and join us!

All in all everyone had a great time (although maybe a few sore throats) and we even got into the local West End paper thanks to choir member and volunteer Rachel Levy. So thanks to everyone who came, sang and donated!

If there is anyone who wants to join the Kith & Kids Choir please get in touch with Danielle at danielle@kithandkids.org.uk. We are a lovely mix of people, led by Chris, and would love to welcome some new faces (and voices). Don't be shy, we are very welcoming so drop in at our rehearsals!

**Choir rehearsals are at at The Irish Centre at 7:30pm.
The next dates are: 18th Jan, 25th Jan, 8th Feb,
22nd Feb, 7th March**



At the start of the new year the family support team tries to plan around what parents and carers have highlighted are the main issues concerning them. We will be organising some themed meetings, one of which will be around finances, particularly when parents are no longer able to support their children.

We will keep you updated with what and when the meetings will be.

New Conference for 2012

On 9th May we are holding another full day conference focusing on care for people with severe learning disabilities, including the best quality practise, choice of home styles, the legal position and monitoring the quality of the service. The principal speaker is Luke Clements who is a leading authority on community care. Contact Sandra Rosen for more details at sandra@kithandkids.org.uk.

New Respite Weekends

From the 13th-15th January, brave pioneers, Emma and George, went on the first ever Kith & Kids Respite Weekend. It all took place at Woodrow High House, an old house in the countryside in Amersham, just outside of London, which is run by a London based youth charity. We had some lovely volunteers with us ensuring that Emma and George had 2:1 support.

It was a frosty, active, fun-packed weekend with loads of activities, for example nature walks, a camp fire with songs and marshmallows, arts and crafts activities, a very loud percussion session, and lots of our own time with plenty of K&K games to keep us busy – and exhausted! On Sunday we headed back to London to make it to the Sunday club, where Emma and George could relax and take part in the workshops before heading home. Phew!

Not only was the weekend a real adventure for the two young adults, but it also gave a break to the parents who live with and support them.

We had a fantastic time, with a real family atmosphere to the group, and all returned back to London on Sunday with rosy cheeks and full of lovely memories.

Helen Robertson



Xmas 2:1 Social Development Project

We had a brilliant Xmas Project, with over 40 people taking part along with volunteers, staff and workshoppers (about 140 people in all!). Along with plenty of new volunteers, it was Mat's first project as coordinator which we can confidently say went very well!



Thanks to all the dedicated workshoppers who once again excited, engaged and enthralled everyone with creative activities in music, video, crafts, massage, dance and drama. We tried a different approach to the kitchen this time round, with a different parent heading the kitchen each day. Everyone commented on the great food and being well-fed meant that spirits were high; the festive season setting the tone for the whole week. As well as having great fun at the centre, we also had varied day trips which included Winter Wonderland, London Zoo, a puppet show at the Southbank, Millfield Theatre, and bowling (all of which proved very popular).



The project culminated in a wonderful (indoor!) market which was abuzz with activity and had a wide range of stalls for everyone to enjoy. James M wowed people with his magic stall, Riya and Chrissie made people look gorgeous on their pampering stall, Amy and Matthew organised car themed games, Kieran took suggestions for a name for an anti-drinking reindeer made in the craft workshops (ironically the name chosen was Jack Daniels!) and there was lots more fun to be had too. To keep everyone energised the Youth Group also ran a refreshment stall. In the week, they had researched products and their prices and put into practice knowledge and skills learnt earlier about healthy eating and managing money. They also perfected their sales technique - it is rumoured a volunteer paid 13 "Kith & Kids pounds" for a packet of juice!



Of course there was also the customary end of project show which was themed around The Grinch. James B and Caroline narrated (via film projection they had made earlier!) with live performance on stage - special note to the costume department (George) who made a fantastic Grinch mask. Other highlights were the Thriller dance by the sibling group and Charlotte and Kwaga's duet of Bob Marley's *Three Little Birds*.

So thank you to everyone who took part and made it such a success. See you all at the next one!



ELSP Residential Project

Bright and early on 3rd January 2012, members of the Employability and Life Skills Project, along with volunteers and coordinators, Alex and Rich, went off to the Rock UK Centre in Northamptonshire. The sessions and activities were themed around healthy living, and what a packed four days it was!

There were sessions on nutrition and the science behind how we get energy and keep healthy, along with food-related games and planning healthy meals for the next residential. The food on the project itself was cooked by everyone in groups; the highlights including savoury pancakes and an oaty cheese bake! As usual, the members also ran their own sessions providing plenty of variety from bingo to smoothie making.

A big hit was an intense one hour workout involving four different activity stations that everyone went to in rotation. Paulina ran the "Work out station" which included skipping, push ups, punching bag and aerobics, which Stephen also led. Rich was in charge of the "Boxing section" leading safe(!) and fun boxing training games. There was a "Time Trial" station, run by Alex and finally a "Racket Ball" station which was run by the group themselves. All in all, it was an exhausting yet invigorating session, one that proved so popular it will become a regular feature at Residentials.

As if all that wasn't enough, the group also got to choose between outdoor activities of archery or bridge building. Despite adverse weather conditions, they all managed to persevere to the end.

Overall, the Residential Project was a great success, especially the relaxed atmosphere and how helpful everyone was to each other. It seems that the group have really come a long way together and we are all looking forward to what they will be doing in the future.

To keep updated on their activities, follow their blog at www.kithandkids.org.uk/what-we-do/employment-and-life-skills-project/elsp-blog/



Barclays Capital big news

We owe Barclays Capital a huge thank you! They are continuing to support the Employment and Life Skills Project (ELSP) by donating a substantial amount of money to secure the future of the project for the next two years.

Their community investment team commented that “Barclays Capital chose to support Kith & Kids’ Employability and Life Skills project because it fits exactly with the bank’s aims of partnering in projects which invest in building skills and raising prospects for employment.”

It is great news and we are all truly grateful to wonderful volunteer and Kith & Kids choir leader Chris Cullen who nominated us once more and of course everyone on the charity committee at Barclays Capital who made the final decision.

Navigant – £1000, 1 work placement...and a football tournament!

Our ongoing relationship with Navigant Consulting continues to go from strength to strength. A £1000 donation toward our work was awarded in December and they have offered another work experience placement for this year. Also, a group of keen fundraisers from Navigant are organising a football tournament...so watch this space! Thank you to everyone for your support.

New company support needed

As you can see, support from companies makes a huge impact on Kith & Kids. Our unique charity has a lot to offer a company in terms of fitting with Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) aims and objectives and we know how to maintain great relationships with them. If your workplace does not have a CSR policy as such, they may still be interested in supporting the local community; so please do ask if they can help in some way. We need to find more companies to help us keep our projects alive and kicking so please, if you can recommend a company, get in touch or ask some key questions on our behalf....

1. Who is the right person to talk to about CSR
2. Is there a CSR policy? If there is then there will probably be set channels of how to apply.
3. Does the company encourage employee volunteering?
4. Is there a matched giving scheme - where the company matches individual employee fundraising?
5. Does the company like to support particular projects? E.g. Vulnerable/under privileged people, Children, Autism, Environment
6. How much can we apply for? £100, £1000, £10,000 or more? What levels of approval are necessary?

All it takes is a few questions, we will help you with any further information or documents needed, but our best chances of achieving support is when people who know Kith & Kids, ask on our behalf. You are the experts so talk about your experiences and be proud of being involved with us.

Even if your enquiries don’t end successfully we are very grateful to you for trying, so please have a go. Contact Danielle for more information on danielle@kithandkids.org.uk.

Nominate us

We are also looking for nominations at local schools and universities, or any other community organisation that you are in touch with. You recommending us is the best way for us to spread the word about our work and to raise funds. All you have to do is ask and we’ll take care of the rest so please get in touch with Maithi on maithi@kithandkids.org.uk or **0208 885 1517** and let us know if you can help!

HOW YOU CAN HELP US!

Without people doing all sorts of exciting events for us, we simply could not go on. So thank you to everyone who ran, walked, swam, cycled, collected and everything else for us last year – you have made a huge difference!

Looking ahead to this year we have plenty of exciting events for you to get involved in. Here are some of the highlights:

Cheering Team needed for London Marathon 2012!

22nd April

We have 33 runners who are all raising money for us this year. Not only are they running 26.2 miles for Kith & Kids, but also all raising £1500 each – no mean feat we tell you. The London Marathon is our biggest fundraising event and we really do need to show our appreciation. Year after year, runners tell us what they need most is lots of people on the sidelines, keeping them going and it is the least we can do. It's a lot of fun and a wonderful atmosphere too so get in touch! Get in touch with Maithi on maithi@kithandkids.org.uk!



Nightrider 2012 - cycle through London at night

9/10 May

An exciting 100km moonlit cycle ride past London's iconic landmarks. Encounter Tower Bridge, a deserted City of London, Canary Wharf, Hampstead Heath, London Zoo, Piccadilly Circus, British Museum, London Eye, Houses of Parliament, Trafalgar Square, Royal Albert Hall, Battersea Power Station and more. A wonderful way to experience London!

North London Walk

May

We are planning a 5K walk around the Muswell Hill area to replace the Adidas 5K which will not be happening because of the Olympics. Perfect for families to take part, we will let you know as soon as we have confirmation!

Superhero Run

May

Dress up as your favourite superhero and run or walk around Regents Park for Kith & Kids. This is a sporting event with a difference – it's just a whole lot of fun! You get a free superhero costume too!

Other ways you can help!

If running or cycling is just a bit too active for you then there's plenty more you can do. Organise a bake sale at your workplace or school, sell unwanted items on eBay for us, or even just pop a collection tin at a couple of local shops (contact us and we'll provide you with one).

Hope (on the left) raised £22.50 in sponsorship by riding her scooter round the park, swimming four lengths, and feeding the dog everyday! Thanks Hope - you've shown just how inventive you can get.

If everyone does a little bit, we'll be a whole lot better off. So please contact us with your exciting ideas or to get inspired by us! Last year, we had all sorts of different events going on, from collections to giving up eating sweets for a month!



Stanley being fed for Kith & Kids!

more pictures from Xmas Project



new projects intern wanted!

The Projects Team are looking for a intern to help with Social Development Projects, Clubs and recruitment/training of volunteers.

Visit www.kithandkids.org.uk/volunteering for more info.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Weekend Clubs: 28th January, 12th Feb, 25th Feb, 11 March

Parent Support Meetings: 7th Feb, 8th March, 17th April

Kith & Kids Choir: 18th Jan, 25th Jan, 8th Feb, 22nd Feb, 7th March

Spring 2:1 Project, 1-5 April

Residential Project, 10-13th April

London Marathon, 22nd April

We need volunteers to help with hospitality!

9th May - Best Care Conference