

# Kith & Kids

SPRING 2011



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## editor's notes

In these difficult times, where we have to make a fist to ensure that cuts in government spending do not affect people with learning disabilities and their families disproportionately, we all need some extra positive energy to keep us going.

I really hope that this newsletter can provide a little of that as we report on families being able to “arm” themselves with high quality up-to-date information (see article on Dame Philippa Russell’s recent presentation), and various people/organisations generously contributing to our cause in quite a number of different ways. And we look back on a range of very enjoyable projects, activities and celebrations having taken place in Kith & Kids over the last few months.

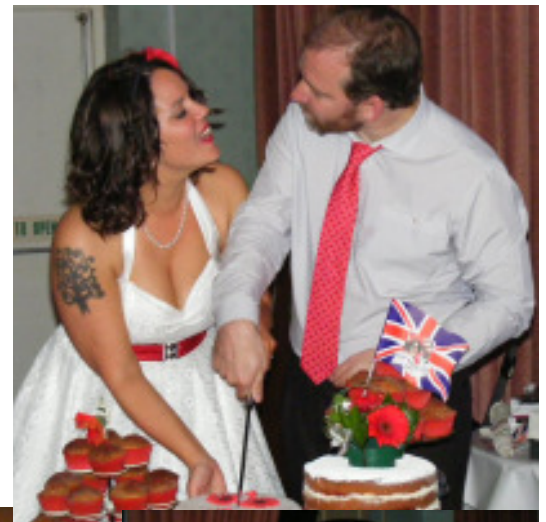


Even as I write this there are really positive noises coming from what we hope will soon be new Kith & Kids supporters. Superstition or not, I am beginning to believe that positive thinking can indeed attract positive developments (this coming from a no-nonsense Dutchie – who’d have thought it?!) But it worked in our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary year and this past year – so let’s support each other as best we can to keep it going. That’s the crux: **together** we can be strong and make good things happen. That is Kith & Kids’ past, present and future.

Marjolein

## alex's wedding

On 7<sup>th</sup> May we were lucky enough to celebrate with Alex (our ELSP co-ordinator) and Nicky on their wedding day. It was a wonderful evening; full of fun, laughs, music and plenty of merriment! Alex was an exemplary groom, Nicky looked stunning in her wedding dress, and little Rosie was particularly sociable and looked gorgeous too! So please join us in wishing them every happiness for the future (and in the short-term, have a fantastic honeymoon!)



# Presentation on Personalisation and Personal Budgets

On 26<sup>th</sup> March we had a presentation on Personalisation and Personal Budgets – ‘Transforming social care’ by Dame Philippa Russell. We were privileged to have her come to the Irish Centre to deliver such a clear, up-to-date, and detailed presentation for parents/carers from within and outside of Kith & Kids.

From the many questions posed by those attending it was evident that most of us still struggle to understand all the detail of this new government strategy and how it is being implemented locally. In part that is because many local authorities also struggle with knowing how to use the new strategy correctly and different authorities are at different stages in their implementation of it.

But it was very helpful to get this detailed update and to learn what choices and rights people with learning disabilities and their parents/carers have within the new system.

The presentation was filmed and on 10<sup>th</sup> May was shown (on screen) to parents who had not been able to attend the original presentation.

For those who were not able to attend either presentation we can provide a copy of the video and the accompanying slides used. Please contact the Kith & Kids office if you wish to receive these.

A big **THANK YOU** to Philippa for this excellent presentation.



*Philippa answers more questions during the break*



*Parents and carers networking at the presentation*

## an arresting performance!

From show tunes to stirring anthems the audience enjoyed a fabulous evening of musical entertainment as well as delicious home-baked snacks during the interval. It was a joyous event for all involved and helped raise money for our summer camp – we were amazed by everyone’s generosity on the night.

Thank you to everyone who came along to watch, provided snacks, donated raffle prizes and helped out on the day, and especially to our choir leader Chris Cullen – we really appreciate his enthusiastic leadership.

And of course a huge thank you to the Metropolitan Police Male Voice Choir – they were awesome and inspired our choir to become even more ambitious in our range of songs.

### **Join the Kith & Kids choir**

*After the success of the concert we welcome more people to join the choir (particularly male voices). Anyone connected to Kith & Kids (members, parents, sibs, volunteers, friends) who fancies a sing song, contact Danielle. We rehearse every other Wednesday from 7.30 – 8.45pm and have lots of fun!*

On April 20<sup>th</sup> the Kith & Kids choir came together with the wonderful Metropolitan Police Male Voice Choir to perform a concert at the Trinity at Bowes church in Palmers Green.



# Spring Projects in Tottenham and Kent

Our spring 2:1 project took place at the (newly refurbished) Northumberland Park School in Tottenham and it served us well. Plenty of classrooms to allow for small group work in the various creative workshops, a good communal space for breaks and lunches, the theatre for large group activities (warm-ups, wind-downs), good kitchen facilities and the wonderful swimming pool.

Even though it was a real challenge to get sufficient numbers of volunteers we were once more able to welcome a few new participants. It is quite wonderful that even in these challenging times the number of people benefiting from our projects and services is still gradually increasing and that is in no small measure due to the skills and commitment of our projects manager Robin and our project co-ordinators.

Creative therapists and activity leaders ensured that all participants were able to work on (social) skills and enjoy themselves in a wide variety of workshops. And for the first time these included comedy workshops provided by our Vodafone sponsored intern Lucy Elliston. Lucy was on a 2-month placement with us and did incredibly well supporting the spring project, weekend clubs and some of our fundraising activities.

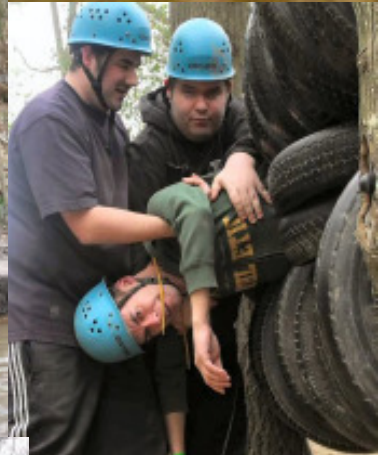
John Thompson did a great job co-ordinating the kitchen and providing yummy lunches with the support of many KK parents.



**We thank all who made the projects a success and in particular the 80+ volunteers who so generously gave their time and energy to provide the crucial individual support that enabled each participant to have a wonderful time on the spring projects.**

## Residential Project

At the same time as the 2:1 project, a group of young adults embarked on a residential project at an outdoor centre in Kent. They undertook a challenging but enjoyable programme of activities that ranged from classroom-based workshops to physical challenges. A number of these activities they had chosen and prepared themselves (with Alex's support) and they led these activities in turn (supported by volunteers). In addition they were responsible for the day-to-day tasks to make for a smooth running of the project (cooking, cleaning, keeping the venue in good order). It was no wonder they returned to the Irish Centre fairly exhausted but very satisfied at the end of their project.



## Removal men !



It is nice to see that the teamwork does not stop once a project finishes.

When our Richie recently needed a hand with moving house, the Spenceley brothers came to the rescue. Together with co-ordinator Rich (whose last name is after all Pickup, but he does drop-offs as well), they donned professional gear and got stuck in – ensuring a smooth move. Great job, guys!



# Fundraising news

For the financial year 2010-11 we received no (local or national) government grants at all. We worked hard to find alternative sources of funding and in turn have been amazed by the generosity of individuals through donations, sponsorships and very creative fundraising activities, groups, charitable trusts/foundations, and companies (donations and work experience placements).

Together they ensured not just the continuation of our much needed projects and services, but also their continuing gradual expansion. **We owe all our supporters a debt of gratitude** for this fantastic outcome.

Here are some examples of their most recent efforts on our behalf.

## Corporate Support



Since Christmas **City & Guilds** has been raising money for Kith & Kids. After an amazing £3000 donation from the company from a decision not to send costly Christmas cards, they arranged a very high brow pub quiz in our honour too. We entered a team ourselves...but let's not talk about that (it wasn't our greatest moment of glory!). With specially designed Kith & Kids T-shirts, a great raffle and genuine support for the charity the employees raised £711 bringing the total to just over £3,700.

Thank you so much C&G and please keep up the good work!



**Kinnerton**, the confectionery company, generously donated easter eggs and other delicious, fun sweets for everyone on our spring projects. In addition they are providing a new work experience placement for our *Employability and Life Skills Project*. James M has just started his placement there and has reported back enthusiastically on the various tasks he has been working on (incl. data-basing and label sorting) and how much he is enjoying it. "The work is good and the people are very friendly".

Many thanks to



Conoco Phillips held a dinner dance event to raise money for charity. They raised a very handsome sum for Kith & Kids: just over £2,700 and we thank them heartily for their support.



Navigant Consulting overall and a number of their employees in particular continue to support us with work experience placements and donations. The latter most recently was for \$1,000 adding an international dimension to our income from corporate support. We thank them for their ongoing commitment.

## Do you know a company that could support us?

As you can see from the above, corporate support is incredibly valuable to Kith & Kids. Over the past year we have seen that personal recommendations from those within a company, who know (of) our charity, have proven to be the most successful way for Kith & Kids to seek and gain support (financial and in kind) from companies. Whether that's a £500 donation to sponsor an individual employee in a challenge or £20,000 toward a particular project, every contribution counts – especially this year, as statutory support becomes even harder to secure.

So please think hard about who you might be able to approach on our behalf. We will support you, write applications and help as much as possible so don't delay and get in touch with Danielle or Marjolein at the KK office.

## Sponsored Challenge events

### Feeling hot hot hot – London Marathon 2011.

Our team of 26 London Marathon runners sizzled with success on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> April. After a gruelling 26 miles in the blazing spring sunshine it was a tough day for everyone. Yet, the injuries and exhaustion soon turned to elation as the runners met up with their families and friends at the Kith & Kids post-race party in Pizza Express, Haymarket. There were cheers, hugs and pizza for everyone and deservedly so as the 2011 team are on their way to raising £40,000 for Kith & Kids.

**Thanks to everyone who ran, cheered and helped on the day!**

*If you have been inspired you can apply now for the 2012 Virgin London Marathon – in an Olympic year no less! Please contact Maithi for more information.*



### Origami Kayak challenge raises £300

Fearless Tom Levitt spent the Easter weekend kayaking down the Thames for Kith & Kids...in a build-it-yourself plastic origami kayak!

Four days and £300 in sponsorship later Tom crossed the finish line. Well done Tom!

*If you have a crazy idea or ambition don't just sit on it...make it happen like Tom did and help Kith & Kids raise money all at the same time! Contact us for a fundraising pack and make sure you send us your photos!*



## Individual Support

### Regular donors

Regular monthly/weekly donations help us plan ahead with a degree of confidence and we want to thank all who have contributed in this way over the past year.

### Supporting Kith & Kids shops

The supporting Kith & Kids charity shops have raised over £15,000 during the past financial year - a terrific amount and a big thank you to all working in the shops and all who have contributed items to be sold.

### Congratulations Jo and Matt

Volunteer Jo Cordy and new husband Matt generously decided to ask family and friends to donate to Kith & Kids in celebration of their wedding day! This is a wonderfully generous gesture and we thank everyone for their help in raising over £700 for our projects. A huge congratulations to the new couple, we wish you all the best for your future together!

### Beth and Ana's fun cafe

Carol's grand-daughters Beth (11) and Ana (9) came up with a great fundraising idea all by themselves. They created a cafe at home where they not only served a healthy and varied menu, but also ensured that the guests were entertained with home-made puzzles, jokes and drawings to colour in; raising a handsome £51.25!

Thanks Beth and Ana



# Can't ignore politics

While a number of KK families and staff marched on 11<sup>th</sup> May toward Westminster to protest against the proposed cuts to disability benefits, a week earlier our Alun used part of his recent day out to rush into a polling station and we're sure his presence made an impact. Whether based on eagerness to vote or plain curiosity, we may never know, but he clearly enjoyed the experience!



## \*\*\* D's Day \*\*\*

There will be a very special play-day at Coram's Fields on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June from 11am to 4.30pm. Activities will include: drumming, face-painting, arts & crafts, parachute games, and a fantastic climbing wall. This special day is provided by Maurice Collins to honour and celebrate the life of Doreen Collins, co-founder of Kith & Kids.

## new drop-in at Bound's green scout park

Haringey Autism Consortium is running a new club with indoor and outdoor activities for adults on the autistic spectrum in Haringey (aged 16 and older) on Thursdays, between 10am and 4pm.

Next dates are:

May 12 (Sheridan Hall)

May 19

May 26 (Sheridan Hall)

**(No club on June 2 – half term break)**

June 9 (Scout Hall)

June 16

June 23

June 30 (Sheridan Hall)

Activities include keeping fit, art and pottery, bonfire building and barbecues, gardening, computers, cooking and more.

Contact Julia Wilkins on **020 8889 8422** to ask for a place or for more information

## Dates for your diary

**Sunday 5th June - D's Day - 11am - 4.30pm, Coram's Fields**

**3rd July - Family Day - 1 - 4.30pm at the Markfield Centre**

**4th Sept - End of Summer Barbecue**