

2 weeks Easter holiday activities with fun sessions for all ages was a great lead-in to the summer term, with a trip to the inflatable trampoline park, Jump In, Guildford; a campfire/night under the stars, laughing, telling stories, toasting marshmallows on the fire; and helping run the Easter Kids Club in partnership with Connect Community Church, retelling the Easter story including the creation of an Edible Easter Garden! All these holiday activities help us engage with youngsters and their friends in a very different way, building up greater trust and confidence, and helping some of them to overcome any fear of doing new things.

### **Groups**

This term saw the usual seasonal fall in numbers at Afterschool Club, mainly due to changes in afterschool club provision at the schools. The youngsters have demonstrated their green fingers by helping create the SYP living green wall and wildlife garden. The smaller numbers did enable us to talk about some important and difficult issues, such as fear that a grandparent was going to die, which led to a wider conversation about being afraid of dying. The young people who are attending this session really enjoyed the smaller group size, and I saw real improvements in their confidence and wellbeing. The Art Club however continues to grow, perhaps because it is both a popular and specifically focused activity. This term we have mostly experimented with paint and clay – messy but fun!

Wednesday Night Youth Hang Out is also growing - it's great to see young people come along, sometimes just while they wait to be picked up by parents, as they have been out and about since the end of the school day, others are dropped off specifically to attend the session. We offer traditional youth activities along with other ideas identified by the young people attending this session. So this term we started some woodwork projects (apparently a bikini box is what every young teenager is after!), and introduced padel balling which youngsters have enjoyed playing. We have also done some air fryer snacks - air fryer pizzas were not the best apparently but it was fun giving them a go. We also had our first keep fit/training session with Daisy from the Performance Zone; this was so well received that I'm asked every week if it is gym time yet! The more exciting bit is that the young person who asks about this every week used to say they hate gym activities! We have dealt with several issues around friendships and emotions with some of the young lads; although to them these issues are really big, once we have broken this down they can see that it wasn't really as big a problem as they feared. But it was great that they knew they had a safe space to be real with one another, and that their youth workers can help them with any concerns they may have. A few of the lads from this session have now asked to become young leaders at SYP, and the first event they helped with was running our Go Karts at Southwater Junior Academy Summer Fun Day.

Friday Night Junior Youth Club continues to develop, providing a safe space for youngsters to meet up to engage in positive and fun activities. Numbers this term dropped considerably, because the cricket season started and training for children and young people took place on a Friday afternoon/evening. However, the youngsters who continue to attend have experienced a wide range of activities. Dan Fairchild from HDC joined us one evening to get feedback from young people on out of school provision for children and young people in the Horsham District, and it was great to hear those who took part telling him how much they enjoyed coming to SYP's Youth Club and that it was an important part of their weekly activities. More exciting still was the fact that they all said that they felt listened to and valued at SYP.

Finally, at the time of writing our Bronze and Silver DofE Groups are preparing for their assessed expedition weekend, planning 2 days walking (3 days for the silver group) through Ashdown Forest, stopping for a one night camp, (2 nights camp for silver). During these walks they are also working on their project, which they will then share as a presentation at the start of September.

### **Community focused one to one support.**

SYP continues to offer pastoral support to young people and children in the community, and while currently we don't have any regular one to one sessions, support is taking place in a more ad hoc basis, with young people popping into youth club when walking past and asking to have a chat about numerous issues. Concerns raised include friendship and relationship issues, and, especially this term exam stress and what to do in the future. It's been a pleasure to have young people feel they can just pop in like this.

## Schools Work

This term I have been working in the following schools:

- **Millais:** lunchtime support for a small group of young girls including 4 Southwater young people, building up confidence and resilience.
- **Tanbridge:** One to one support to 3 Southwater students
- **Castlewood:** invited by the school to join Rev Kath Jones and Mr Bob Piper to deliver an assembly on VE Day
- **SJA:** supporting year 4 on their school residential at Dalesdown, running teamwork games and other activities.

## Summer Holidays

We are planning an easy and very relaxed summer with some sports sessions, and making good use of the new youth centre with informal opening, offering a safe open space for youngsters to meet up and engage in various activities, including the garden project, Kindness Rocks, as well as snack making (and eating!). We hope to recruit some sessional workers to enable volunteers to have some time off. This year's slightly less hectic summer schedule will also enable some much needed tidying, and essential admin!

On behalf of the young people, thank you for your support, funding, and encouragement.

Angie Choat SYP Lead Youth Worker



For more info about any of these sessions please contact  
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Upcoming  
THIS WEEK

YOUTH  
Hang Out

WEDNESDAY  
7-8.30PM

After  
School  
CLUB

THURSDAY  
4-5.30PM

Art  
club

FRIDAY  
4-5.30PM

JUNIOR  
YOUTH  
CLUB

FRIDAY  
6.30-8PM

All sessions take place in youth club @ The Ghyll.

