



Welcome to our 2012 newsletter. Family Friends began the year by piloting a health and wellbeing project, supported by the NHS, designed to help families identify and work towards specific goals. This was a success with families eating healthier food, taking exercise and making health appointments, with help from their volunteer. We recently won more NHS funding to roll out the scheme to further families over the next few months. Family Friends was also pleased to receive reaccreditation from The Mentoring & Befriending Foundation as an *Approved Provider*. Their assessment involved interviews with volunteers and families and a review of our procedures. Their subsequent report concluded: *Family Friends demonstrated that it has an effective, professional mentoring scheme with staff demonstrating a high level of commitment and knowledge. Family Friends also has a clear ethos on delivering realistic goals and supporting vulnerable families within a professional framework.*

Family Friends has supported 100 families through 94 volunteers this year. Several of our families would like to report good news from 2012, as follows:

- Ali and Mani are now top of their class, Michael excelled in his mock exams, Sakina got a special prize for completing her homework every week and Rosa received a book token for excellent reading at supplementary school.
- Arrya was chosen as class representative.
- Amel had a successful audition to drama school and began taking acting lessons.
- Chantal made a really good start at secondary school and is regularly doing her homework.
- Nadeem joined a boxing club, Sarah enrolled as a Scout.
- 18 families achieved their health checklist goals.
- Ali gave up smoking and joined a gym, Freda began taking Cook and Taste classes.
- Simona and Kylie took parenting classes, while Alona, Mary and Leila joined babies and mum's groups.
- Lina met some local mums and is organising regular coffee meetings with them.
- Paula explored local mum and baby groups with her volunteer and now visits them by herself.
- Sharon has decluttered her home, Elica is managing her debt.
- Jannine began a volunteering position as an administrator.
- Sonia, Zarah, Steven and Izzy all started ESOL course.
- Gino began IT classes and Neila enrolled for an accountancy course.
- Hami passed the tests and secured her HGV licence.
- Mary Jane won funding for interview clothes and got a job as school meals supervisor, Teresa went back to full time employment in retail.



Christmas Robin made by Oliver and Ross

This year we can report good news from two staff as Louisa got married and Jameel and his wife had a baby girl. We wished goodbye and good luck to Mo, Angie, Mina and Julia.

Best wishes to you all for a happy 2013!



NOTICEBOARD

1

The ice rink in the grounds of the Natural History Museum is open until 6 January 2013. Ticket prices start from £8 and can be bought online (www.ticketmaster.co.uk), over the phone (0844 847 1576) or in person from the ice rink box office. It is best to book your tickets in advance. Sessions last 40 minutes. The Natural History Museum is located on Cromwell Road. The nearest tube station is South Kensington, buses 14, 49, 70, 74, 345, C1, 360, 414 go to the Museum.

2

The Southbank Centre Christmas Market is full of interesting stalls and activities for children of all ages. The market is open until 24 December. Why not wrap up warm and wander down Queens Walk, taking time to stop and watch some of the street performers and market stalls? The nearest tube station to the Southbank is Waterloo.

3

The Way Back Home is a Christmas Show based on the book by Oliver Jeffers. It is specially designed for children under 7. Performances run until 23 December. Tickets cost £8 with 10.30am and 1pm performances. Chelsea Theatre, 7 World's End Place, London, SW10 0DR. Tel: 020 7352 1967 www.chelseatheatre.org.uk



It's not a 999 emergency, but you need medical help fast. There is a new number to call. If you think you need A&E but you are not sure, call **111**. This is the new NHS telephone number being introduced in the London Boroughs of Kensington & Chelsea and Hammersmith & Fulham amongst others, to make it easier to access local health services. There are advisers on hand to give you the health care advice you need or send for an ambulance.

RUDOLPH'S CARROT FLAPJACKS from www.bbcgoodfood.com

This is fun to make and great to share with friends and family. Be careful when using the cooker and sharp knives.

You will need:

- 200g butter
- 100g golden syrup
- 50g soft light brown sugar
- 300g rolled oats
- 2 grated carrots
- Zest of 1 orange
- 100g chopped apricots
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 50g pumpkin seeds

Method:

1. Heat the oven to 160C and line an 18cm square baking tin with greaseproof paper.
2. Melt the butter, golden syrup and sugar in a large pan. Mix in the rolled oats, carrot, orange zest and apricots, cinnamon and pumpkin seeds.

3. Stir everything well, then spoon the mixture into the square tin, squishing the mixture down firmly.
4. Bake for 40-45 minutes then cool in the tin before slicing into 16 squares.



A Parent's Experience

I started receiving support from Family Friends almost a year ago. I have to say that I have been given great help.

Firstly, I had a home visit from a lovely co-ordinator Miriam who explained about the support. I was able to ask questions about the services which they offer and even describe the sort of volunteer that I wished to receive support from in the future.

I look forward every week to meet-ups with my volunteer. She is totally reliable, kind, and she never lets me down. Before I met my volunteer I thought there was absolutely no hope whatsoever, but with my volunteer's help I have become a better mum.

I've been living on the 3rd floor in a bedsit. There are 57 stairs (no lift) for me to climb up and down. It was impossible for me to take my little one to the park or even go to my GP to get my daughter's vaccinations done. Thanks to my volunteer these are now manageable.

Because of Family Friends and the support which I receive from them, I now look forward to each day more positively. I certainly feel more motivated and happier.... after a long time a human being once again.

Nuket

A Volunteer's Experience

Having retired from 39 years of teaching in an inner city nursery centre, I decided to volunteer with Family Friends. It proved to be a positive, interesting experience and gave me a lot to think about.

I was lucky to support a vulnerable single mum with three children under five, and watch her develop over the year into a strong, confident woman. The journey was incredible; and although really depressing and hard at first, changed so much by the end.

Initially mum was anxious about my involvement, but she soon relaxed. Over the time we had together I introduced her to games and activities to play with the children. We did something different every week ranging from visiting nurseries, drop-ins, parks, housing offices, the job centre, cafes and the museums. We learnt a lot from each other, feeling comfortable to speak about everything!

Family life changed dramatically for the mum when she was reunited with her husband which gave security to the children. My role altered then to what felt like a Marriage Guidance Counsellor for a few visits, but as the family readjusted and settled down they all seemed much happier.

Both parents got jobs, the two older children are now at school and the baby has the grandparents who have joined the family.

The mum has always been determined and ambitious and her self-esteem has grown. She is now in a better place. I never expected such a wonderful outcome. I felt a great sense of satisfaction when we said our goodbyes.

Jenny

Hellos and Goodbyes

Thank you very much to all the volunteers who have become befrienders and mentors for Family Friends this year. Four new groups of volunteers were inducted: Agnieszka, Alexandra H, Avtar, Ayse, Catherine, Crishanthi, Daniel, Dany, Edric, Foluke, Gemma Sc, Gemma Sh, Giedre, Hayley, Hazel, Helen, Herol, Honey, Jamie, Joseph, Julia, Kate, Kelly, Khadija, Kirsty, Laura, Maria, Monica, Muriel, Nicci, Rebecca, Robbie G, Roda, Ross, Selina, Simona, Stacey, Stephanie G, Susan and Zahra. We have said 'goodbye' to several volunteers in 2012: Anamaria, Annabell, Aquil, Barbara, Caroline M, Carol P, Caroline W, Charmaine, Charlotte, Delia, Dennis, Derya, Elly, Hassan, Helen L, Helen W, Jacqui, Jenny C, Juliet, Leila, Lidia, Marie W, Matthew, Mike, Nafisa, Pamela, Peter, Rebecca P, Reema, Roda, Ryan, Sharon M, Tracey and Victor. Congratulations to Beverley, Dennis, Diane, Helen W, Jenneh and Joyce F for winning *Make a Difference* awards from the Volunteer Centre. We are very grateful to family therapist Julia Tugendhat, Amy Stephenson and Catherine El-Houdaigui of the Kensington & Chelsea Health Trainers and Health Visitor Joy Kieran for being guest trainers at our volunteer support group meetings.

As ever, thank you to our funders and referring agents, for making our work possible. In 2012 we were delighted to receive funding from the following organisations for the first time: CMF Charitable Trust, London Communications Agency, Scorfen Charitable Trust, St John Southworth Fund, The London Community Foundation, The Radnor Charitable Foundation, The Sumner Wilson Charitable Trust Charities and Wilder Coe LLP. Special thanks go to BBC Children In Need, Campden Charities, Catalyst Gateway, Garfield Weston Foundation, Help a Capital Child, Kensington & Chelsea Primary Care Trust, London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham, Notting Hill Preparatory School, PF Charitable Trust, Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea, The Dischma Charitable Trust, The Douglas-Morris Charitable Trust, The Girdlers' Company Charitable Trust, The Kensington & Chelsea Foundation, The Northmoor Trust, The Sammermar Trust, Trusthouse Charitable Foundation and Waitrose.

We held two fundraising events this year. A film screening of Frankenweenie donated by Disney and An Arabian Night at Leighton House Museum. Thanks go to our committee, our sponsors Datadial Ltd and Londondom.com, and the people who bought tickets and donated prizes. Many generous individuals donated funding this year including: The Earl of Arran, Laura Banes, Thomas Bartlett, Bronwen Bevan, Caroline Bond, Colin Clive, Alannah Cochrane, Gillian Devas, Virginia Fairfax, David and Ann Fass, Jocelyn Floyd, Joachim Gottschalk, Mark Hamilford, Mr and Mrs Jack, Mr and Mrs Lewisohn, Anthony Loehnis, Laura Montgomery, Ronnie Norman, Andrey Osipov, Mr and Mrs Parker Bowles, Lady Virginia Robertson, Gavin Sasson, Julian Sheffield, Susan Spence, Christopher Sporborg, Mary Stopford Sackville, Lady Julia Tugendhat, Susan Wallace and Rosemary Yallop.



The Mayor and Mayoress of Kensington & Chelsea at An Arabian Night

Thank you to The Junior League of London for the wonderful hampers they have provided for our families and to Furnish for delivering them.

PLEASE NOTE: The office will be closed from 5.30pm on 21 December 2012 until 9.30am on 2 January 2013.

For emergencies, please contact Family & Children's Services on 020 7373 2227 (Kensington & Chelsea) or 020 8748 8588 (Hammersmith & Fulham).