

# ff familyfriends

## NEWSLETTER

December 2013

73 St Charles Square, London W10 6EJ. Registered charity number 1028214 **Tel:** 020 8960 9099 **Fax:** 020 8960 9144  
**Email:** info@familyfriends.uk.com **Website:** www.familyfriends.uk.com



Welcome to our end of year newsletter. 2013 was a memorable year in which we celebrated both Family Friends' 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of supporting local families and the charity being presented with The Queen's Golden Jubilee Award for Voluntary Service 2013. The award is the most prestigious accolade to be given to charities and volunteer groups across the UK, with equivalent status to the MBE. We were also delighted when Family Friends was awarded £180,000 Big Lottery funding. This will enable us to support over 60 children through our Child Befriending & Mentoring project in Hammersmith & Fulham during the next five years.

Family Friends has supported 82 families this year. Several families would like to report good news, as follows:

- Laura and Mohammed became Scouts, Ronald joined a youth club, Kieran enrolled at football club and Ali at Judo club.
- Nirvan now goes to boxing club and the gym twice a week, Francis and Mohammed run to and scoot home from school every day, Miguel visits the gym and plays football regularly while Mohammed is now working towards competing in a triathlon with his volunteer.
- Jon went to the dentist for the first time, Tania tries a new fruit with her volunteer each week, Omar, Amy, Mary and Lucy improved their diets.
- James came through his family bereavement and is now able to manage his behaviour and emotions.
- Laura, Emira and Vicky now get on well with their peers and are no longer bullied.
- 19 families achieved the health & wellbeing goals they set themselves via our NHS funded Health Checklist project.
- Tori, Kasia, Janice and Mary lost weight, Sharon, Matilda and Lin regularly cook their children healthy meals from scratch instead of packet food and takeaways. Janice goes to cooking classes. Kasia won a grant for a new oven and now provides her family with hot meals.
- Mary took up yoga, Janice rides her push scooter everywhere.
- Jill joined a mum and toddler group, Matilda attended sessions on child development and baby massage while Zoe benefited from classes on child development and first aid for babies.
- Rita, Funmi and Carolina's English has improved and they have grown in confidence.
- Andrea enrolled her toddler on a music class while Depika and Touria signed their children up at the library and they regularly take out books.
- Janice helps with the school Parent Teacher Association, Holly and Mary began part-time jobs.
- Lidia and Fiona moved to permanent accommodation.
- Nadia enrolled for an accountancy course and Alona for a Master's Degree course.



We were sad to say goodbye to two of our founder trustees, Sheila Paget and Paul Cooke, who both retired from the board after 20 years of sterling work. We also said farewell to two longstanding staff members, Jameel and Kristin, and welcomed new recruits Sylvia and Nico. Louisa Smith gave birth to a bouncing baby girl Ruby-Mae during the summer.

**Best wishes to you all for a happy 2014!**



## NOTICEBOARD

# 1

There are lots of Christmassy activities taking place at The Tabernacle this year: The Portobello Panto 2013 *Cinderella (She's from the Bella)* runs from 18-21 December and tickets range from £5-20. Younger children may enjoy performances of *Hedgemont the Hunter* by Honey-Bear Youth Theatre, Early Bird Tickets start at £5 from Sunday 16 December, 3pm. Call 07947 484021 or visit [www.tabernaclew11.com](http://www.tabernaclew11.com) for details. The Tabernacle, 35 Powis Square, London, W11 2AY.

# 2

The Portobello Ice Rink will be open from 12 - 29 December 2013 from 10am -10pm, closing only on Christmas and Boxing Day. Skating costs just £5 for adults and £3 for concessions and under 18's. From 20 December, there will be live entertainment from 6.30pm with local steel band Glissando Steel Orchestra, along with Pan Diva and guests. Call 020 8962 5720 or email [info@westway.org](mailto:info@westway.org) for more information. Portobello Ice Rink, Portobello Green, W10 5XL.

# 3

The St John Church Christmas Fair will have a bustling Christmas Market with lots on offer including delicious food, a Santa's Grotto, Christmas carols and a puppet show. It takes place on Saturday 7 December 11am – 5pm. Visit [www.stjohnsnottinghill.com](http://www.stjohnsnottinghill.com) for more details. St John's Church, Lansdowne Crescent, London W11 2NN.

By Jak  
aged 9



## DHRUV BAKER'S EASY TURKEY CURRY (serves 4)

### You will need:

- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 1 tsp grated ginger
- 3 cloves garlic, crushed
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1½ tsp ground coriander
- ½ tsp turmeric
- ¼ tsp chilli powder
- 227g can chopped tomatoes
- 500g left-over turkey meat, cut into large chunks
- 500ml chicken stock
- 2 tbsp chopped fresh coriander

### Method

1. Heat the oil in a large saucepan and fry the onion until soft, then add the ginger and garlic and cook for a further 2-3 minutes.

2. Add the spices and stir constantly adding about 1 tbsp cold water after a minute then cook for a further minute taking care not to burn the spices. Add the turkey and cook for 1-2 minutes so that it is coated in the spices, then add the tomatoes and stir through and cook for about 2-3 minutes.
3. Add the stock and cook for 10-12 minutes till reduced by half then season to taste.

Serve with the fresh coriander scattered over the top. Great with steamed rice, naan breads and a salad made of chopped tomato, red onion, cucumber, green chilli, fresh coriander, lime juice, a pinch of caster sugar and salt and pepper.



## A Parent's Experience

Last year I found myself at my lowest ebb. I was scared and lonely with a new baby, not getting along with my child's father, with my family living abroad - I had no one to turn to. As a nurse I was used to caring for old people but a baby was all new to me. My confidence was gone, I had no self esteem and did not know what to do. This tiny human being was depending on me to help him, but I could not help myself. As the tears fell from my eyes I wanted to end it all.

I went to the doctor and was diagnosed with depression and given anti-depressants. Then one day I had a call from Family Friends who explained who they were and what they did. It sounded just what I needed so I agreed to try their service and just before Christmas I was matched with my volunteer.

Our first meeting was brief but she was friendly, had a warm smile and as the weeks went on I felt quite comfortable speaking to her. I looked forward to her weekly visits. She would always listen and, without being judgemental, she suggested trying other things to do with baby, encouraged me to eat healthily and lose weight, helped me to sort out my living arrangements and to place my son in a nursery. Together we do research on the internet and go for long walks. She has helped me realise what my strengths are and how to improve on my weaknesses. After a few weeks I realised I did not need the tablets anymore; my mood was lifted.

I have now returned to full time work and I am also doing a course to help me improve in my job. My relationship with my son's father has improved and I have a healthy and happy little boy. My volunteer has been a tower of strength to me. I now have confidence in myself. A Family Friend volunteer is with you because they want to help.

**Tracey**

## A Volunteer's Experience

I was introduced to Family Friends nearly four years ago. It was perfect timing; I had been looking for a fulfilling challenge to do in my spare time and I have not looked back since becoming involved. I have been fortunate enough to work with three lovely families and met some great people along the way.

Before I started, I briefly wondered if my weekly visits could end up becoming a bit of a chore after a while, but I couldn't have been more mistaken. I look forward to them every week and consider it a privilege to not only be able to help, but to be trusted and valued in the role.

The training & support from Family Friends has played a crucial role for me not just in my volunteering, where without it I would not have had the confidence or experience to help a family, but I have also been able to use some of the skills & techniques I've acquired in my personal life.

One of the main lessons I have learnt is never to underestimate the value of my visits for either the family or myself. It doesn't seem a lot, after all it is only two hours per week, but I know that sometimes by simply being there I am appreciated, though at the time it might not always feel like it! Even on the odd visit when it hasn't been easy, I have always come away feeling better for it.

I like to think I may have made a difference to the families I have worked with and, for my own part, I have benefited in many ways too. You could say it's been a win-win situation for the family and for me.

**George**

## Hellos and Goodbyes

Thank you very much to all the volunteers who have become befrienders and mentors for Family Friends this year. During 2013, five new groups of volunteers were inducted: Alexandra, Amina, Ammani, Anna, Anthony, Avis, Barbara, Bernadette, Cecile, Christine, Colin, Cordillia, Dalia, Eleanor, Emma, Felicity, Hiba, Ilaria, Irene, Jamila, Jasmine, Jeanine, Josie, Karolina, Kelly, Konstantinos, Minna, Muniza, Nelly, Noemi, Russell, Sarah R, Sarah T, Shammi, Stasia, Stephen, Tim and Vanessa. We have said 'goodbye' to several volunteers in 2013: Alejandra, Alex, Angelo, Aprajay, Caroline, Diane, Gemma, Giedre, Hayley, Herol, Jenny, Josep, Joyce B, Julia, Karolina, Kate, Kirsty, Leonnie, Lucy, Melanie, Michael, Nicci, Rakshita, Reeta, Robert E, Robert H, Ross, Stacey and Stefanie. Congratulations to Daniel and Selina for winning *Make a Difference* awards from the Volunteer Centre.

We are very grateful to our guest speakers at our volunteer support group meetings: Ushma Ball from About Boys Course of Urban Partnership Group, Lucille Brown of Incredible Years Parenting Programme and Hannah Moss an RBKC Social Worker.

As ever, thank you to our funders and referring agents, without whom our work would not be possible. In 2013 we were delighted to receive funding from the following organisations and people for the first time; Comic Relief, Claire Ferguson via The Kensington & Chelsea Foundation, Irene Dick, The Eva and Hans K. Rausing Trust, Hammersmith United Charities and The Hollick Family Charitable Trust. Special thanks go to; The Austin Hope & Pilkington Trust, BBC Children In Need, Big Lottery Fund, Catalyst Gateway, Sally Clifton Brown, DMGT via The Kensington & Chelsea Foundation, Dischma Charitable Trust, Douglas Morris Charitable Trust, Evening Standard Dispossessed Fund, Judy Frances, The Girdlers' Company Charitable Trust, The Goldsmiths' Company, Help a Capital Child, The London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham, The Mercer's Company, The Northmoor Trust, NHS Kensington & Chelsea, The Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea, St John Southworth Fund and Trusthouse Charitable Foundation, Waitrose.

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

### The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service



On Tuesday 10 September, Family Friends staff, trustees and volunteers were invited to a reception and ceremony in the Mayor's Parlour, Kensington Town Hall. The award was presented by the Representative Deputy Lieutenant for the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea, Lady Elizabeth Arnold, in the presence of the Mayor and Mayoress of Kensington & Chelsea, Councillor and Mrs Charles Williams.

**PLEASE NOTE: The office will be closed from 5.30pm on 23 December 2013 until 9.30am on 2 January 2014.**

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