

Our friends



The newsletter of Friends of the Family Winchester

Issue 13 Autumn 2015

fotfwinchester.org

Open afternoon puts the spotlight on mental health

On Friday 2 October, Friends of the Family welcomed Dr Alain Gregoire, Consultant Perinatal Psychiatrist and Honorary Senior Lecturer at the University of Southampton, to an open afternoon to talk about his work supporting mums with severe mental health issues and the impact that childhood trauma can have on a parent's mental health.

Organised by Colette Dunford, Under 5s Project Leader at Friends of the Family, the event attracted 30 guests, from voluntary and public sector organisations across Winchester, who work with families coping with depression, anxiety and other mental health issues.

The open afternoon also highlighted the work of Dads Support, one of three projects run by Friends of the Family offering help to families and children across the Winchester district. The project is run by Charlie Wright, a qualified counsellor, and offers confidential support to dads who are struggling with their role as a parent and experiencing challenges within their family environment.

Charlie welcomed Jason Small, one of his first clients with whom he worked whilst in prison and continues to support today. Jason, who now works with young people to help prevent them getting into trouble, gave an honest and inspirational speech, saying: "My circumstances have improved enormously due to the counselling I have received from Charlie. I welcomed every opportunity to change my life whilst in prison and the support I have been offered from Friends of the Family has had a really positive impact on my life."



Pictured (from left to right) Dr Alain Gregoire, Jason Small and Charlie Wright.

Commenting at the event, Dr Gregoire said: "It is a real privilege to be here with so many amazing people dedicating their time to helping parents and children. You can't underestimate the impact that voluntary organisations have on an individual whom they help both practically and emotionally."

Colette Dunford from Friends of the Family said: "Dr Gregoire validated the work that our volunteers, trustees and team feel so passionately about. Thank you so much to Dr Gregoire for sharing his time and knowledge with us and providing us with so much more understanding in the field of maternal mental health."

5s to 13s have a thrilling time at Calshot

In August, Friends of the Family took nine children from the 5s to 13s Project to Calshot Activities Centre for a day of challenging activities and new experiences. The day was possible thanks to a Small Grant Award of £400 from the Winchester City Council Small Grant Scheme.

All the children were given the chance to participate in three adventure style activities: team orienteering, ringos and the giant swing. The challenging activities provided them with the opportunity to try new experiences that pushed their boundaries and boosted their self-confidence. It also enabled them to socialise and engage with new people outside of their home environment. The children were accompanied by 5s to 13s Project Leader Sam Hunt and five volunteer befrienders.



Cllr James Byrnes, Winchester City Council's Portfolio Holder for Local Economy, said:

"We are delighted to support Friends of the Family through this award. Their imaginative work shows how a small grant can make a real difference to the lives of vulnerable children and their families."

Chair of Trustees Vivienne Wheeler said: "Friends of the Family were very fortunate to procure this grant from Winchester City Council which enabled us to provide a fun, educational and stimulating summer outing for the children we support in our 5s to 13s Project. We greatly appreciate the grant allowing our children to enjoy an adventurous time at Calshot Activity Centre."

"The best bit was the ringos. I didn't think I would have a go at first but I did!"

M, age 12

The giant swing was great fun and I would love to do it again."

J, age 11



Children, volunteers and Project Leader Sam Hunt (far right) pictured at Calshot beach.

The Friends of the Family Workshop Wrap!

Children and volunteers from the 5s to 13s Project attended an afternoon workshop on Wednesday 7th October at the Salvation Army Hall.

The workshop provided the children with the opportunity to come together and meet up with each other in a relaxed and supportive environment. They played games and were challenged to complete an obstacle course and stunts with remote controlled cars.

Friends of the Family also provided a healthy teatime picnic which included the children making their own wraps with a variety of different fillings.



The children were encouraged to try new combinations for the fillings. The delicious combination of cheese and jam was named "The Friends of the Family" and this is now our signature wrap!

Did you know? Friends of the Family has been supporting families across Winchester for 22 years!

New Room for Teenager

Friends of the Family are very pleased to have supported a 5s to 13s family with the construction of a stud wall in their family home to create two separate bedrooms for their three children. The children, two girls aged 5 and 11 and a boy aged 16, had been sharing a large room with just a curtain divide and wanted to be able to offer their son a private space of his own.

5s to 13s Project Leader, Sam Hunt helped the family to receive some financial support from The Vincent De Paul Society to purchase the building materials that would enable them to undertake this project. She also put them in touch with a local volunteer handy man, Phil Cramp, who very kindly offered to come and help support the father of the family through the building of the wall.

The family are very grateful for the combined support that was offered to help complete this project and were very proud to show off the new room when it was finally completed in September. The son of the family said "It's great having my space. I can come here and be on my own and just invite my sisters in when I want to!"



The fabulous new dividing wall.

Friends of the Family welcomes new Trustee Rosemary Wright

Friends of the Family has welcomed Rosemary Wright to its Board of Trustees. Rosemary spent much of her working life with Social Services, managing domiciliary care, providing support for elderly frail people and working with vulnerable families with young children.



Currently a governor at one of Winchester's secondary schools, Rosemary's particular responsibilities include Chair of Welfare Committee, chairing exclusions panels when needed, safeguarding and welfare.

Rosemary said: "I had heard about the invaluable work of Friends of the Family and I'm very pleased to contribute in any way I can as a trustee. My role as a school governor has made me even more aware that there is a considerable number of children who have very complicated family lives and who need much support, not always available from Social Services."

Chair of Governors, Viv Wheeler, said: "We welcome Rosemary to our board acknowledging the many skills she has to offer us from her previous role as a senior social worker and current work with families and children as a school Governor."

For further information on volunteering as a Trustee please email viv@fotfwinchester.org

Quiz & Curry night raises £3,000!

Friends of the Family held a Quiz and Curry night on 9th October at St John's Hall in Winchester and raised a huge £3,080.75!

The event was a sell-out with 150 people taking part. The winning team, which included a Friends of the Family volunteer, was awarded miniature trophies and boxes of smarties! A choice of either chicken or vegetable curry was provided, by the award winning restaurant 'Bengal Sage', and any leftover curry was given to the homeless.

Richard Morse, a crossword setter for the Listener and husband of Trustee Chris Morse, devised the quiz and took on the role of quiz master for the evening.

Friends of the Family Trustee Amelia Ashton said: "We can't thank everyone who came to the Friends of the Family Quiz Night enough for their enthusiasm and generosity. A great evening was had by one and all and we raised a fantastic amount of money, so many thanks to all those involved."

Did you know? Our oldest volunteer is 84 years old and has been befriending with the 5s to 13s Project since 2009. What a superstar!

Volunteers enjoy an evening get-together

The 5s to 13s Project held a volunteer get-together on 22 September to enable volunteer befrienders to meet, socialise and share ideas. The event was well attended with nine volunteers joining Sam Hunt, 5s to 13s Project Leader, Lisa Travers, Volunteer Co-ordinator and Marcia Cunningham, Friends of the Family Trustee. The group also welcomed two possible new volunteers who had come along to find out more about the project and the befriending role. One said: "It was great to learn about the work you do and hear some real accounts of what a difference it makes."

Current volunteers shared experiences that they had enjoyed with their focus child including a successful fishing trip at the Water Meadows and a fruit picking trip to Arturi's which the focus child enjoyed so much that when it was time to leave she said "Has an hour gone by already?".

"It was wonderful to see so many people there and to hear such positive stories from our volunteers. They have a tremendous impact on the children and families that they support," said Sam.

Table-top sale raises over £550

The sun shone on the annual table-top sale which took place at St Maurice's Covert on Saturday 26 September. Over £550 was raised for Friends of the Family. Visitors crowded round the tables looking for a bargain amongst the books, clothes, jewellery, toys and bric-a-brac that had been kindly donated by members, volunteers, staff and trustees.

Chair of Trustees, Viv Wheeler, said: A huge thank you to everyone who gave so much time and effort. What a great team!"



New email and website address

Friends of the Family has a new website address and staff and trustees now have their own email address.

To contact the Chair of Trustees, email viv@fotfwinchester.org

To contact the Administrator, email helen@fotfwinchester.org

To contact the Under 5s Project Leader, email colette@fotfwinchester.org

To contact the Under 5s Play Leader, email pat@fotfwinchester.org

To contact the 5s to 13s Project Leader, email sam@fotfwinchester.org

To contact the 5s to 13s Volunteer Co-ordinator, email lisa@fotfwinchester.org

To contact the Dads Project Leader, email charlie@fotfwinchester.org

Our new web address is fotfwinchester.org. Our phone number remains **01962 864466**.

You can also follow us on Twitter [@FotFWinchester](https://twitter.com/FotFWinchester)



Our Friends is published by Friends of the Family Winchester Ltd. Please address editorial enquires to: lisa@fotfwinchester.org, tel 01962 864466, or write to Lisa Travers, Friends of the Family, 16 Colebrook Street, Winchester SO23 9LH

Buy your Christmas crafts from Yellow Moon and help us raise money for Friends of the Family

Yellow Moon stocks a fabulous range of art and craft material, games and toys and is a great place to buy Christmas and birthday presents for children.

All you have to do is buy some of the fun, great value, crafts and toys from the Yellow Moon website and Friends of the Family **will receive 10% cash-back** on everything you buy. So everyone benefits: Your crafty and party bag shopping is easier; your kids receive great products to help them create, have fun and learn; and we raise much needed funds too for FREE!

It's really simple, all you have to do is:

1. Go to www.yellowmoon.co.uk and make a purchase
2. Quote our unique SOURCE CODE: WFR03323 when you check out
3. Mention to friends and family as they may want to add to your order
4. Yellow Moon will send your order direct to your home!

Or you can order a catalogue on 0333 202 6377.

Happy Christmas shopping!



Help out when you check out this Christmas



We need you to...



1. Join
Head to [easyfundraising](http://easyfundraising.org.uk), search for us to start raising.



2. Shop
There are nearly 3,000 retailers on board, so pick the one you want and start shopping.



3. Raise
After you've made your purchase, the retailer will make a donation to us at no extra cost whatsoever!

Join, shop and raise here:
www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/fotf/



Make a child smile

Could you be a volunteer befriender for a child aged between 5 and 13?

Children across the Winchester district are waiting for volunteer befrienders who can offer them support and friendship for two hours a week. If you are a kind, caring individual, over the age of 23, with experience of looking after children, working with children or have children of your own, then Friends of the Family would love to hear from you!

We offer:

- A rewarding voluntary role
- Training and on-going support
- Regular get-togethers with other volunteer befrienders
- Paid travel expenses

What are you waiting for? Contact Friends of the Family today!

Call Lisa Travers, Volunteer Co-ordinator on 01962 864466 or email volunteeringfotf@btinternet.com to find out how you can make a difference to a child's life.



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