

# Our friends



The newsletter of Friends of the Family Winchester

Issue 14 Spring 2016

[fotfwinchester.org](http://fotfwinchester.org)

## Friends of the Family welcomes new volunteers



Friends of the Family has welcomed six new volunteer befrienders to its 5s to 13s Project. The volunteers have all completed the befriender training course which took place on 14<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> April and covered topics including the befriending role, safeguarding, issues that children face, confidentiality and parenting styles.

They also heard from current volunteer Jim Ford who has been a befriender with the 5s to 13s Project since April 2015 and guest speaker Kevin Knight who spoke about communication and listening skills.

Aged between 37 and 69, the new recruits come from central Winchester and the neighbouring villages of Otterbourne, Fishers Pond, Owslebury and Colden Common.

When asked why she wanted to become a volunteer befriender, Amanda, who has recently retired, said: "I'm at the time in my life when I can give something back. What's more important than being able to help a young person?"

Commenting on the training, Nancy who has two children in their 20's, said: "It's a real eye-opener. I hope it will give me the confidence to establish a good and supportive relationship with my focus child and their family."

Sam Hunt, 5s to 13s Project Leader, said: "It is reassuring to know that we have six more volunteers who are now ready to offer friendship and support to families across the Winchester district."

**To find out more about the volunteering opportunities available with Friends of the Family email [volunteer@fotfwinchester.org](mailto:volunteer@fotfwinchester.org) or call 01962 864466.**

# Kids get creative at arts and crafts workshop

On 24<sup>th</sup> February, Friends of the Family held an arts and crafts workshop for the children involved in the 5s to 13s Befriending Project.

Taking place after school in the Salvation Army Hall, the workshop was well attended with 7 children and 6 volunteer befrienders taking part in a variety of craft activities including creating individual bird houses and dream catchers. The children really enjoyed using many different resources such as decopatch paper, stickers, paint pens, feathers, beads and wool to make their creations, some of which were to be given to their mums for Mothers' Day.

The workshop followed a healthy tea of cheese and ham wraps, houmous and vegetable sticks, yoghurts, fruit juices and flapjacks.

It was organised by Sam Hunt, Friends of the Family's 5s to 13s Befriending Project Leader who brought in Marnie Hobbs from Fizz Art and Craft Parties to inspire, engage and entertain the children.

Sam said: "These workshops are a great opportunity for the children to come together with their volunteer to make new friends in the project. The children were able to be as creative as they liked and clearly enjoyed trying something new in the relaxed atmosphere of the Salvation Army Hall."



# Swimathon raises £190!

Friends of the Family would like to thank Jamie Russel, Seb Russel, age 15, Alex Russel, age 10 and Ross Sherwood, age 15, who took part in a sponsored swimathon and raised £190 for Friends of the Family. The team completed 106 lengths in 55 minutes!



Organised by Winchester Rotary, the swimathon is held every year and raises money for the chosen charities of those taking part. This year's event took place on 20<sup>th</sup> February at the Winchester College pool.

Jamie, who works at the Theatre Royal, wanted to help a small local charity and chose Friends of the Family because of the support and friendship they give to children and families living in Winchester.

Jamie and the boys were joined on the day by Olympic swimmer and Commonwealth Games medalist Kathy Read who also took part in the Swimathon.

Chair of Trustees, Viv Wheeler, said: "Our thanks go to Jamie for choosing us as his nominated charity. We appreciate the effort that he, his family and friends have gone to to gain sponsorship on our behalf. The amount raised will directly benefit the 5s to 13s children through an after school activity workshop."

## Save the date!

The date has been set for the Friends of the Family quiz night which last year raised £3,000 for the charity.

This year's event will take place on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> October.

More details will be published nearer the time.



## Mums and Under 5s Celebration Breakfast

The Mums and Under 5s held a Celebration Breakfast on 22nd March to recognise the achievements that many of the Mums have made and to bid a fond farewell to the families who are leaving.

The breakfast was held in the dining room of the Quaker Meeting House and was organised by Colette Dunford, Under 5s Project Leader. It was followed by an egg hunt at the end of the morning for the children.

## New Counselling Service

Friends of the Family has introduced a counselling service for mothers who are already engaging with the charity's other projects. The service is gaining momentum with six clients attending weekly. Two volunteer counsellors work from The Meeting House and the Salvation Army premises.

This service has been recognised through a grant from Hampshire County Council.



## Juggling Jake entertains at Christmas Party



On 9 December the Support for Dads project and the 5s to 13s project rounded off 2015 with a Christmas Party for all the children and families that they are supporting.

Over 45 guests joined staff and volunteers for an evening of fun, food and festivities at the Salvation Army Hall in Winchester.

Juggling Jake, a professional entertainer, amazed the children with his juggling skills and delighted them with his magic and

clowning act. This was followed by a workshop where both children and adults tried their hand at scarf juggling, diablo, plate spinning and tightrope walking.

A wonderful spread of food and drinks was provided by the Salvation Army who have just marked their 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of reaching out into the community. The Salvation Army also provided a Christmas present for every child. Marshall aged 8 said: "This is the best day of my life!"

Sam Hunt, 5s to 13s Project Leader, said: "We couldn't have provided such a fantastic Christmas party without the help from the Salvation Army. We are extremely grateful for all their support in making lots of local children very happy."

## 5s to 13s Befriending says 'thank you' to volunteers

5s to 13s volunteers gathered with staff and trustees for the annual volunteer thank you lunch which took place on 28 January at Côte Brasserie in Winchester. The lunch is held each year to thank volunteers for their dedication and commitment to the charity and the families needing support.

All of the volunteers are befrienders with the charity's 5s to 13s Project which has been helping children and families across the Winchester district for eight years. The volunteers spend two hours a week visiting a child and supporting them, both practically and emotionally, through the difficulties they are facing.

Lisa Travers, Volunteer Recruitment Co-ordinator, said: "Our volunteers are an amazing bunch of people and we are really grateful to them for volunteering with Friends of the Family. Our annual thank you lunch is a lovely opportunity for volunteers to meet each other and for us to show them how much we appreciate their hard work and dedication."



## Toy shed gets a makeover

Thanks to a £1,000 grant from WACA (Have Your Say) and a £389 donation in memory of Valerie Wright, who sadly passed away this year after volunteering with Friends of the Family for many years, the Under 5s toy shed, has received a much needed makeover.

New shelving and storage boxes mean that the toys are now stored neatly and staff and volunteers have easy access to them every Tuesday and Friday morning when the Mums and Under 5s group meets.



## Charity dinner raises £940!

On Monday 25<sup>th</sup> April, Friends of the Family held a fundraising charity dinner at the Corner House in Winchester. Forty-eight guests enjoyed a two course Italian meal and helped raise £940.

Chair of Trustees Viv Wheeler said: "Thank you to Jayne Gillen, the proprietor who made the event possible and her staff who came in on their day off. They provided lovely food in a wonderful setting. We couldn't have raised as much money as we did without everyone working so hard to make it an enjoyable evening for all."

## New website coming soon...

Friends of the Family is set to launch its new website in the summer. Featuring everything you ever wanted to know about Friends of the Family and kept up-to-date with all the latest news and information, the website will be a window into the world of the Winchester-based charity.

We will notify all of our newsletter subscribers when it is launched.

## Raise funds for Friends of the Family while you shop!

Join Easy Fundraising and raise money for friends of the Family each time you shop online. Go to [www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/fotf/](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/fotf/) to join. Every time you checkout, Friends of the Family will receive a percentage of your total order. It won't cost you a penny! So far we have raised £1,225 through 38 supporters!

You can also raise funds for Friends of the Family by buying your arts and crafts through Yellow Moon. Go to [www.yellowmoon.co.uk](http://www.yellowmoon.co.uk) to make a purchase and quote WFR03323 when you check out. Friends of the Family will receive 10% of your total shop.



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

# We need Volunteers



- to support children aged 0 to 13
- for a minimum of 2 hours a week

This is a great opportunity to undertake a rewarding voluntary role and make a positive difference to a child's life. Volunteers receive training and paid travel expenses.

Contact Friends of the Family to find out more:

Call **01962 864466**

Email **volunteer@fotfwinchester.org**



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