

## **Feedback from young carers groups – September to November 2019**

### **From South Somerset Young Carers Groups**

We made sensory toys both sound and sight which was fun with lots of glitter and sequins and many of the young carers expressed, ***"I will use this to calm down"*** and ***"this will really help me at home."***

One of the young carers came to perform at a talent show. Since then she has been opening up to me and talking to me a lot. She says it has really helped to talk about it and she said, ***"I am feeling happier and things are getting better."*** Music is one of her coping strategies and performing gave her more confidence, she also says it has given her ideas for the future as a performer/singer/songwriter. The music activities at young carers youth club are really helping her expand in this way.

### **From Mendip Young Carers Groups**

For the juniors the highlight of the two months has been their trip to Carymoor. This has increased their self-confidence, team working skills and cemented the group as a whole. We are now working with the Carymoor Trust who are seeking funding so that we can offer a further two trips to the centre.

The seniors are happy that they are growing in number and enjoy the new format of the session. They have been welcoming to new and returning members and come together as a group to support members who are going through a troubled time.

As an organisation we have worked with outside agencies so that the young carers are building a network of support. We have further partnership working over the next two months including Samaritans, Young Somerset Workshops, Mendip AONB, and a larger project with Bath Philharmonic.

YMCA Mendip has secured an agreement with the Tesco Supermarket chain who have agreed to supply birthday cakes and pizza and chips once a term for all young carers. Mendip Young Carers Group have also signed up to the Greggs end of day unsold food policy which helps to provide food and treats for each session.

### **From Bridgwater Young Carers Groups**

The sessions have been very youth led. Each group have taken ownership of the programme and offered ideas, which have been very successful, eg Soap making, cooking, board games and crafts, as well as sports and music.

The keyboard sessions with Indigo proved a success and even encouraged two young people to show others how to play. 6 young people left the sessions being

able to play a whole tune whilst another young person was signposted to a community music group and has started to attend their sessions after school.

Both Juniors and Seniors took part in the YMCA community action fortnight where they identified a charity and then decorated and filled shoeboxes for the homeless. They young people enjoyed thinking of items to add to the boxes.

The next few session we will be concentrating on making Christmas gifts for the family.

### **From Taunton Young Carers Groups**

The young people were very engaged and one young person who is usually very withdrawn connected with one of the new young people who hadn't attended before, over shared interests. The two new young people who were quite shy in their first session really opened up and were very involved in all activities. The young people enjoyed the pizza making session, something they had requested as a planned activity and in the last 15 minutes they chose to go on to the football pitch and have a run around and get some exercise.

The young people enjoyed interacting together over pool, table tennis and physical activities outdoors. Some shared photographs of artwork they enjoyed doing and did some glass painting. A lot of conversation in the group around image – body image, hair styles and around eating during the shared meal.

### **Feedback from the Forest School trip (all groups)**

"The night walk was 'cool' and spooky"

"This is really nice" (about the campfire and tealights)

"Can I put one more log on the fire?"

"I enjoyed making pizza"

"You get to make friends"

"Young carers group is fun and you get to make lots of friends"