



January 2006

The Summer Event

On the 28th July a group of R.A.W members, staff from children's services, and some great volunteers met at the Weatherly Centre in Biggleswade to set up for a fun day known as the "summer event". The day was kicked off with a special performance of skills and talent by Tom from Top Dogs who has performed in the Nike football and basket ball adverts, followed by the start of workshops which included dance, D.J-ing, MC-ing, basketball and football. There were also other great things for the young people to do such as glass painting, making hand casts, charcoal drawing with, circus skills and a dance mat competition and information stands. The most popular attraction of the day was the bouncy castle which was always occupied with young and "older" people!!! There was also a special visit from Biggleswade retained fire crew who came with their big engine which was a big hit with the children (and the women!) they even had a call out during the day which was exciting. Everyone had fantastic time, awards and prizes were handed out and "thank you's" given and the day was closed by two young people from the RAW group rapping!! Everyone left very tired but very pleased to have had such a wonderful time, let's hope we can make it bigger and better for the young people next year!

By Carly New



On The Road

In October 2005 the Bedfordshire Total Respect crew went on the road and delivered the very first Total Respect training in Cambridgeshire. John and Laura from Wooden Hill and RAW member Adam travelled to Wisbech to train staff and young people. It was weird being somewhere so new, but it was great to hear the experiences of other young people. Everyone really enjoyed it and it was just plain good fun!

Being A Young Trainer – an interview with Adam Scholes, 17

So Adam, how long have you been a young trainer?

I don't know, a few months six I think?

What training do you deliver?

Total Respect.

Who do you deliver training to?

Young people that are in sort of the same situation as me, Social Workers, Councillors, Independent Visitors, Student Social Workers and so on

Do you enjoy it?

Yes, it's exhilarating and exciting – it's a great feeling (of power!).

What do you enjoy about it?

Interacting with young people and adults.

What's been your favourite moment so far?

Going to Cambridge, it was totally new and we didn't know what to expect, but the people were really friendly

How hard is the work?

Extremely! No – it's great – it's plain good fun!

What have you got out of it yourself

A lot more confidence and friends.

What other things have you been involved with?

A Mental Health thing about young men and suicide, which I really enjoyed and learnt a lot from. The BRIT Awards (that I co-hosted!) and the Summer Event.

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Young people with the X factor

More than one hundred young people attended their very own version of the BRITS at County Hall. But instead of receiving awards for their contribution to British music, they received awards from the County Council's Children's Looked After Service. Councillor David Reedman, Cabinet Member for Services for Children and Young People, said: "The young people who attended received awards for a variety of reasons ranging from academic success to bravery in hospital. But they all had one thing in common; they have made massive achievements during the last twelve months.

"The BRITS theme was chosen by the young people who play a huge role in organising these awards. It was fantastic to see the Council Suite transformed into a pop arena and everyone who took part in the event put on a fantastic show.

"The youngsters organising the evening were all part of the RAW (rights and wrongs) group run by the Social Services team at the County Council. RAW are a very active group of young people who regularly meet with social services managers to help shape the service they receive. Young people from RAW took charge of hosting the event and, in a nod to the real BRITS; a number of them performed songs during breaks between awards. Nicky Pace, Head of Children's Services, said: "Young people in care often receive a bad press. These awards really help to raise awareness of their achievements and provide a great boost to their self esteem.

"Everyone at the awards looked very glamorous, they put the pop stars who attend the real BRITS to shame, and it made me doubly glad that I had bought a new outfit for the occasion!"

Leaving and Aftercare team

Those of you who have been in touch with our Service will no doubt have noticed a few changes in the last six months, which we hope you will agree, has helped improve our service to young people. These changes include an official change in title to that of - Leaving and Aftercare Team; an increase in staff numbers and change in structure; as well as our move from County Hall to brand new offices! Responsibility for our Service now rests with Maureen Cavanaugh, Service Manager. The day to day management of the office is the responsibility of Roseanne Johnstone, Team Manager, who is assisted by two Senior Social Workers. Our team is also made up of two other Social Workers, seven Personal Advisors and two administrative staff. With these changes, we strive to deliver a service to young people in care who have reached 16 or those who have already left care, to prepare for or maintain a suitable standard of independent living, by providing them with personal support until the age of 21 and sometimes longer. As well as putting them in touch with other resources that can help them improve their chances in life.

Trip to VCC Seminar in London

We arrived in the morning and heard a talk from the Chief Executive of Voice for the Child in Care (VCC). We were then put into groups depending on the colours on our name badges. The groups looked at relationships with people at the age of 6 and at the age of 16. I thought this was good and it was interesting to hear about the other people in the group's relationships with their parents, grandparents, brothers and sisters, friends and boyfriends and girlfriends etc We then went and had lunch. During the breaks I met other young people from all over the country including from Birmingham, Newcastle and London. In the afternoon we split into groups and attended another workshop. I went to the workshop titled 'no place like home: estate agent cards' run by Leicestershire County Council. They talked about having estate agent type cards with information on for young people going to a new placement either in a children's home or to a foster placement. The cards had useful information on them for example about the nearest town / city; the carers; whether there are any pets in the house; how much pocket money you will get; contact numbers for people like the Children's Rights Officer. I thought this was a really good idea and everyone should have them. I told Becky, from the Customer Relations Team and asked if she could find out if Bedfordshire County Council had anything similar and if not whether they would consider it. It was good to get down to London for the day and meet some new people. Since then I have been contacted by the Children's Participation Officer who has asked me to work with her to put together 'estate agent cards' or similar for Bedfordshire County Council. VCC have also contacted me as they want to meet all the young people who attended the seminar to do some follow up work about the day.

Brett New

We would welcome any constructive comments - good or bad, that you may have about our service.

If you wish to contact us, please do so at:
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