

Fife Young Carers

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Spring 2009

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Fife Young Carers—a potted history—thanks to Helen and Marjory for rooting around in their attics for the details!



First Edition of Newsletter for Fife Young Carers!

Welcome to the first edition of Fife Young Carers newsletter!

We've had a very busy end of 2008 and start to the new year. The staff at Fife Young Carers are really looking forward to working with you all in 2009.

In this issue we'll be meeting the staff, sharing some experiences and providing useful contacts for Young Carers and their families.

FIFE YOUNG CARERS—A POTTED HISTORY

Young Carers in Fife have been recognized and receiving support since 1995. The first group to be established was in Levenmouth and was called 'Take-a-Break'. There soon followed the Problem Shared group in Dunfer-

line and the Caring Crew in Kirkcaldy/Glenrothes. These groups were initiated by individuals who saw the needs of young carers and they provided activity based 'time out', support and friendship to young carers aged 10-16. Fife Council and the Health Board provided minimal funding and donations from local firms and organizations were a welcome addition to enable these groups to function.



In 1998 Fife Young Carers was officially constituted but it was not until core money was secured, via the Chang-

ing Childrens Services fund initiated by the Scottish Executive, that the service began to develop Fife wide. 4 Young Carers Support Workers were employed and in addition there were Sessional Workers and Volunteers who helped to expand the number and age range of young carers receiving support.

Since a consultation exercise and subsequent restructuring in 2006, Fife Young Carers now employs a Manager, an Administrator, 3 Senior Support Workers, Sessional Workers and, more recently an Information and Liaison Worker, who, together with a great bunch of Volunteers, are all committed to providing a service to young carers throughout Fife.

WHAT IS A YOUNG CARER? What do they do?

A young carer is a child or young person under the age of 18 years, whose emotional, educational or physical development is being affected by their significant caring role for a family member to whom one or more of the following applies:

Long term illness

Mental Health
HIV/AIDS

Physical disability
Learning disability

Drug or alcohol issues

A Young Carer does things like :-

Domestic chores, personal care, caring for younger siblings, managing money, emotional support and medical care. Research shows that the average age of a young carer is 12 years old.

Wild Things in the Woods.....

Some members of Fife Young Carers recently took part in an ecology project at Craigenalc Ecology Centre, Kinghorn.



The project ran for 4 full days in the holidays.

Young Carers had to overcome many

challenges in the course of the project : setting off rockets with only the power of nature, crawling through underground tunnels, leading each other blindfolded and getting up close to toads worms & spiders (Yuck!) .

The project culminated a 'Procession at Dusk' where everything that they had done came together to create a magical evening of lights, storytelling

Fife Young Carers are very grateful to the Heritage Lottery Fund for giving us the chance to take part in the project .

and music to celebrate it all.

Here are some of the Young Carers comments -

"I loved the marsh & doing arty things. It's brilliant here!" CJ, 10

"This has been the best experience of my life! I am sad to go" Danni, 10



Christmas Party

Fife Young Carers Christmas Party was held at Cupar YMCA. All the hard work of the Support Workers and Committee Members paid off as everything ran smoothly and a great time was had by all including the staff!



The Young Carers arrived by all means of transport (excluding only boat and plane!) We were extremely grateful to Stagecoach who provided a bus to pick up Young Carers from the Levenmouth and Glenrothes groups.

Everyone looked fantastic, we even had 2 Mrs Claus attending!

First on the agenda was food, sausage rolls, pizza & quiche, lovingly prepared by Committee Members

sweating over two not too hot ovens! The cakes definitely went down best!



Then it was to the disco and party games. Seniors and Juniors enjoyed Corners, Pass the Parcel, Musical Bumps and Dancing Competitions. The floor was full for the Macarena and the Cha Cha slide with some of us having to rely on the Young Carers for the right steps.



The fun was momentarily interrupted when the press photographers arrived to take a group picture. It was fantastic to see how many Young Carers were all together to enjoy the fun.

When the last dance was done all that remained was handing out the Young Carers' presents (selection boxes – oh no! not more chocolate!) and our best Christmas wishes!

THANKS TO FIFE YOUNG CARERS SUPPORT WORKERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND TO STAGECOACH WHO PROVIDED A COACH FOR US.

FIFE YOUNG CARERS—MEET THE STAFF

Rose Davis, Senior Support Worker
West Fife & Kirkcaldy



Hi, I have been working for FYC for the last 5 years, previous to this I worked with groups of young carers as a youth worker. I run groups in Inverkeithing and Kirkcaldy, where the young people can have time just to be themselves, have a laugh and not have to think about their respon-

sibilities at home. This also gives them time with peers who understand and can relate to any issues they may have around caring. I love the job I do and get lots of positive feedback from the young people and their parents - it makes it all worthwhile.

Rose can be contacted by mobile :- 07717702061 or by email — rose@fifeyoungcarers.co.uk .

Liz McKinstry, Senior Support Worker, Cupar & North East Fife.



I have been working for Fife Young Carers since June last year. At the moment I have 9 seniors & 13 juniors. I organise group sessions, holiday events & trips, as well as visiting young carers in their homes, providing 1 to 1 support and help.

Last month we went to the New Star restaurant in Cupar to celebrate Chinese New Year, where we had a delicious meal.

I'm looking forward to the spring & summer evenings when we can go outside to the beach and Tentsmuir forest for walks, picnics, BBQs

Liz can be contacted on 07789811161

Email :

EMcKinstry@fifeyoungcarers.co.uk

Kay Templeman, Senior Support worker, Glenrothes & Levenmouth.



I have been a Support Worker for Young Carers since 2003, starting with only about 10 children and

young people within the Levenmouth area. To date, I cover Levenmouth and Glenrothes, with a very busy bunch of 50 young carers, ranging from 8 -18yrs!
Being a Senior Support Worker for FYC is very varied and I enjoy all aspects of the time spent with the children and young people.

There are never two days the same but, I wouldn't change that for the world!

Email Kay on,
kay@fifeyoungcarers.co.uk

Mobile 07717702062

Nina Collins, Information & Liaison Worker.



I came into post in October last year and will be raising awareness in Fife of young carers. I will also be involved in developing a training programme for Young Carers.

Contact : 01592 223894

FORTHCOMING EVENTS



**Nadfas
funding
Work-
shops
for
Young
Carers**

Some of Fife's Young Carers will be treated to silk painting, fusion glass & pottery workshops in the Easter Holidays.

The National Association for Fine Arts & Decorative Society is funding a full day workshop for 27 Young Carers which will take place at Lochgelly Centre on the 9th April—watch this space for the results.....

Young Carers throughout Fife will be receiving basic first aid training.

The 2 hour 'Save a life' course will be delivered by The British Red Cross and will take place during group sessions.



JUNIOR GROUPS NEWS

Kirkcaldy & Inverkeithing groups have been getting creative this session, painting pebbles, designing bags and finally making fantastic willow lanterns.



The young people will be using withies (very thin branches from the willow tree) to build lantern frames. After much fiddling with sticks & elastic bands the frames can be decorated. This is the messy bit, and of course the most enjoyable part—special tissue paper is covered in gluey water and then draped around the frame.



Leaves, pictures, drawings & writing can then be sandwiched between the tissue paper. After this delicate operation, decorative bits can be added making each lantern totally individual.

The lanterns look great as ornaments but become really special when a tealight is placed inside (under supervision!!!!) and all the images inside are illuminated.

SENIOR GROUPS NEWS

On Monday 2nd March some of our Senior Young Carers were treated to a special showing of Yellow Moon by Scottish playwright David Greig.

The play was performed by TAG Citizen's Theatre, (which stands for Theatre Around Glasgow) and was a very powerful account of the fortunes of two teenagers on the run.

Silent Leila is an introvert girl who has a passion for celebrity magazines. Stag Lee Macalinden is the deadest of dead end kids in a dead end town. They never meant to get mixed up in

murder...

Yellow Moon explores what it means to live in a celebrity obsessed world and what it is that defines you when you are 17.

Difficult/ taboo subjects such as self-harm, & drinking were very thoughtfully addressed during the course of the play and we were all mesmerized by it!

The play was performed in a space of about 5m square with the audience seated directly around it. The actors only used 4 chairs as their props but the audience could visualize every

scene.

The performance was funded through The Creative Links Project in conjunction with ATTfife.

Fife Young

Carers would like to thank everyone involved for making this fantastic experience possible for us.

**Special
performance
of
Yellow Moon
for
Young Carers**

SOME USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS

Attention Fife:- 01592 267858

Support network for parents/carers of children with ADHD/ADD.

Contact a Family : - 0808 808 355, www.cafamily.org.uk

Information & support for families with a disabled child.

Enable Scotland :- 01592 642612

Supported playschemes for children with physical and/or learning difficulties during holidays.

Fife Gingerbread :- 01333303124

Support for single parent families.

Fife Families Support:- 01592 641401

Supports families and carers of people with severe mental health problems.

Princess Royal Trust Young Carers website:-

www.youngcarers.net.