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## March/April Newsletter

### EASTER COFFEE MORNING

Our coffee morning took place on Wednesday 14th March and once again it was an absolute success!!

The students had a truly amazing morning preparing and serving drinks for our visitors and the Rocky Road and chocolate nests were a hit with everyone.

We were busy busy busy with so many friends and family turning up to support us and once again we sold out of everything. Two of the staff - Dan Attridge and Jeri Anderton baked a delicious chocolate cake the evening before the coffee morning so we decided to auction it off, a bit of a bidding war took place but in the end the successful bidder donating a whopping £8 was Sheree Don.

Carol Dowling and Chrissy Bloomfield spent most evenings in the run up to the coffee morning and Easter knitting wonderful chicks with wool donated by Chrissy's sister Karen Shepherd. All in all at the last count approximately 85 Easter chicks were knitted, and stuffed with chocolate eggs to be sold for the absolute bargain price of £1.20 each. The students added the finishing touches in their sessions adding the beaks, eyes and neck ribbons to the chicks.

The students also created some chick and rabbit gift boxes from templates which sold extremely well.

All the staff and students love the coffee mornings that we have at Access, and for those of you that have been we really hope that you enjoy them as much as we do. Due to Fun day we wont be having another coffee morning now until sometime in September and this coffee morning will be for MacMillan as we have supported this for the last two years running now.

I am pleased to report that with the money that we raised at the coffee morning we have purchased a sound bar for Hazel and Acorn, some radios and CD players for some of the session rooms, a wonderful new hamster called Ollie and a beautiful new hutch for our resident guinea pigs Toffee and Caramel who are both overjoyed with the extra space they have to run around in.

We would like to thank everyone who contributed for making the morning such a wonderful success.





## COLCHESTER STADIUM TOUR

The Growing for Life department were lucky enough to be able to visit Colchester Stadium for a tour in March. They were shown round the conference rooms, they had a look in the changing rooms and got to stand by the side of the pitch.

Matt Hudson was their guide and he happily talked about the history of the club and answered all of the questions that the students and staff had to ask.

Sean is still talking about the visit and likes to show as many people as possible the picture of him at the stadium. I definitely think we may have to visit the stadium again, although we have been on the tour twice now the students enjoy the afternoon so much.

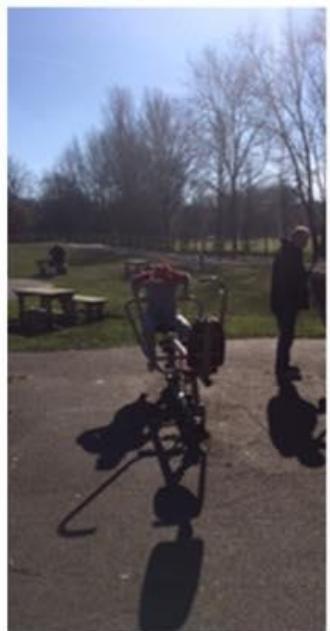


## SPORTS SESSIONS

We have had a few nice days in March and April and students have had the opportunity to start using some of the local outdoor gyms to help keep fit and build strength.

Access always encourage the students to be active and get fresh air whenever possible. This helps to increase energy levels and makes it easier for the students to learn and concentrate during other sessions. Overall happiness and well-being is also improved by outdoor activity. This is therefore why the external gym equipment is popular in community parks, and why here at Access we are keen to encourage the students to visit these outdoor gyms. The best thing for us is all of this equipment is free and easily accessible.

Participating in any type of exercise has been shown to improve mental health and relaxation. Doing these activities outside boosts the benefits even more. With dedicated outdoor gym equipment for use by the public, more people can enjoy feeling healthier and increasing their activity, and that is exactly what we want for the students at Access.



## COOKING SESSIONS

I am sure most of you are aware that here at Access we are constantly striving to come up with new ideas and improve everything that we do so the students get the maximum benefit from the time that they spend with us.

Recently the cooking sessions have been coming from different countries around the world as the theme, with students getting the opportunity to not only cook the ingredients and produce a dish that is symbolic of the particular country but they also get the opportunity to learn about the culture of the country and other interesting facts.

One thing we have also added recently is giving the students the opportunity to watch how a particular dish is made on Youtube by a chef, this allows the students a better understanding of the full creative process prior to creating the dish themselves.

We feel that this has added to the session and the students are definitely understanding the process better, there is also the added test of who has remembered what as we are going through the session, which makes it easier for discussions to take place whilst the cooking is going on.

Below are some pictures of one of the group of students during our Chinese week.



Trampolining Competition

As you are aware if you have a relative that attends the day centre they are probably supported by us to attend Bounceability trampolining centre on a weekly basis, and those that do attend are absolutely amazing on the trampolines.

We have received information from Bounceability that they would like our students to represent Bounceability at a competition taking place at Brentwood on Sunday 1st July. If the weather is good there will be a picnic and outdoor games afterwards.

Start time of the day is 10.00am and the competition should be wrapped up by 1.00pm with the picnic taking place afterwards for those that wish to stay.

The cost of entry is £5 per person and the closing date for entries is Friday 8th June.

I will be speaking to the managers of the houses to see if they have staff who can support the students who live at Essex Care Consortium. I will also be sending a letter home to parents/carers of our external students with full information so that they can be supported by their family should they also want to compete.

It sounds like this will be a really lovely day and will celebrate the achievements of the students to go alongside the badge work that they have been doing.



## NEVER MISS AN OPPORTUNITY!

Never let it be said that we are ones for missing an opportunity at Access! On Friday 20th April the weather was absolutely glorious - so what did we do? We packed up and took our session to the beach!

Students took a picnic lunch, buckets and spades, some sun cream and their hats and off we went. Students had the opportunity to paddle, search for shells, relax and of course we threw in a bit of numeracy and literacy, but that stuffs always more fun outside in the sunshine!

This will be hopefully be the first of many trips to the beach with the different student groups over the summer months - fingers crossed for the weather.



# Family Fun Day Caribbean Theme Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> July!

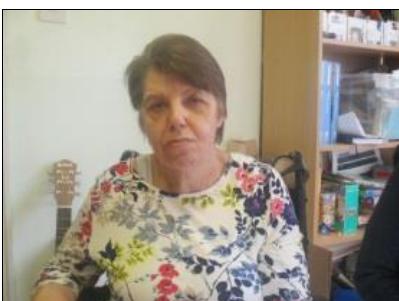
Tea room, Tombolo, Raffle, Games, Buffet lunch, Ice cream van, drumming group  
Featuring a performance by Andy and the Red Hats  
Full details will be sent out nearer the time!



It looks like we are set for another amazing Family Fun day this year and look forward to seeing as many of our family and friends on what promises to be our most spectacular event of the year!!

## ARTWORK

**I thought it would be nice to share with you all some of our most recent artwork that has been produced by the students - either on their own with support from staff or as part of a group. I am sure you will agree they are pretty amazing!**



It is with sadness that we inform you that we attended the funeral of Marion Drake on Wednesday 11th April. Marion was a long standing student at the day centre until recent times and loved the Making Music session every Tuesday. I am sure many of you will remember Marion playing the tambourine at our concerts. It was requested no

flowers at the funeral and all donations from the staff at Essex Care Consortium and others went to Essex Wildlife Trust, due to Marion's love of wildlife.

## **We are closed for the week of the 7th May for staff holidays**

### **ACCESS CLOSURES FOR 2018**

Closed Monday 7th May 2018

Re-opens Monday 14th May 2018

Closed Monday 28th May 2018

Re-opens Tuesday 29th May 2018

Closed Monday 2nd July 2018

Re-opens Wednesday 4th July 2018

Closed Monday 27th August 2018

Re-opens Monday 10th September 2018

Closed Monday 24th December 2018

Re-opens Thursday 3rd January 2019



**Essex Care Consortium Ltd are looking for Support Workers, Night Awakes and 1:1 Support Workers to work in their four different Residential Homes. If you know anybody who would like to work with us or if you would like an application form or further information please contact our Head Office on 01206 330308 or 07746603757**



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