

ff familyfriends

NEWSLETTER

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Issue 21

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Welcome to our 2006 newsletter. Family Friends is celebrating a year of growth and achievement: we now have four full-time members of staff at our offices in St Charles Square, which has allowed us to increase the number of families we have supported this year to a record 74, through 74 volunteers.

Of course the most important news is the feedback from families on the positive changes made to their lives, aided by the friendship and dedication of their volunteers. Several of our families would like to report good news from 2006, as follows:

- Helen secured a nursery place for her child and started a hairdressing course
- Kidest moved into a permanent two-bedroom, newly refurbished flat. Her child started nursery and Kidest began an ESOL (English for Speakers of other Languages) with IT course
- Yasmin and family received indefinite leave to remain in the UK and Yasmin began an ESOL course
- Hannah achieved top marks in her exams and secured a place at Lady Margaret School, Fulham
- Gilda started volunteering at St Charles Hospital in Ladbroke Grove
- Nathaniel joined the Air Cadets
- Darren started taking lessons in a steel band and played at the Notting Hill Carnival
- Fathima received top marks in her school exams and had a dancing part in a film
- Aya passed her citizenship test and is taking driving lessons
- Neshat passed her citizenship test
- Mimi received top marks in her school exams

This year we said goodbye to Vix, who after 10 years with Family Friends left to have a baby and to Daniela, who returned home to South Africa. We welcomed Leonora to the role of Services Manager and Nadia to the position of Family and Volunteer Co-ordinator. We were delighted when our founder, Sheila Carleton Paget, won a Kensington and Chelsea Mayor's Award in March this year. The award was for her outstanding contribution to life in the borough in setting up Family Friends in 1993, and being the driving force behind it still. Sheila worked as an unsalaried director for many years and today is an active member of the board of trustees. Also, this autumn, Family Friends implemented a quality assurance system *PQASSO*, and achieved Level I.

Best wishes to you all for a happy 2007!



Nadia, Leonora, Jameel, Flora

NOTICEBOARD

1 Can you spare a couple of hours twice a year to join our Family Panel? We are looking for family representatives to form a panel to provide feedback on the service we offer, so that we can make it the best it can be. Please call the office and let us know if you would like to join. Refreshments will be provided!

2 See the Christmas tree in Trafalgar Square whilst listening to carols from Saturday 3 December – Saturday 24 December daily from 5pm – 9pm to get you in a festive mood. Visit Father Christmas this season at Hamleys, where you will find him throughout the store, filling his sleigh and talking to everyone.

3 A stage production of Watership Down is at the Lyric Hammersmith (7 years and over) until 13 January 2007. A small band of rabbits makes a hurried escape out of danger. With giant bouncing lettuces, carrot pogo sticks, martial arts and live music this is an great family event. There are £9 tickets available for some performances. Big Balloon is an interactive show for babies and toddlers aged 6 months – 2 years. Some seats are available for morning and afternoon shows until 30 December 2006, starting at £6. The Lyric is on King Street, nearest tube Hammersmith. Call the box office on 08700 500 511 for details.

MEXICAN HOT CHOCOLATE

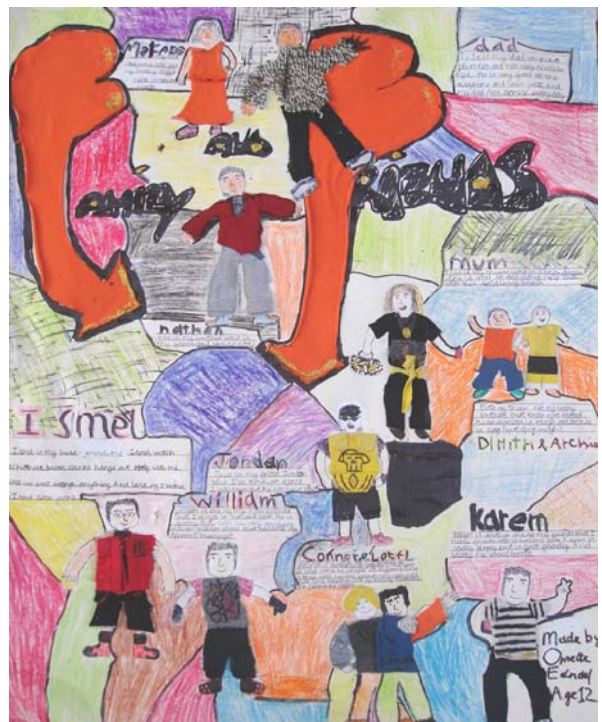
This recipe requires adult help. For 2 servings.

- 2 cups of milk
- 2 ounces semisweet cooking chocolate squares
- 2 ounces milk chocolate squares
- ground cinnamon or 2 cinnamon sticks
- additional milk (optional)
- Measuring cup
- Medium sized pot
- Mixing spoon
- Wire whisk
- Mugs

1. Pour the milk into the pot. Turn the heat to medium-high.
2. Break the chocolate squares into pieces and place them in the pot.
3. Stir constantly with the spoon. As the chocolate starts to melt, turn the heat down to medium and continue to stir until the chocolate is completely melted. Turn off the heat.
4. Whisk the chocolate milk for 30 seconds to 1 minute until foamy.
5. Pour the hot chocolate into the mugs. Sprinkle a little ground cinnamon on top or place a cinnamon stick in each mug and leave it in as you drink. If the hot chocolate is too rich, you can add some milk
6. Add whipped cream, marshmallows and chocolate sprinkles to really treat yourself!

ORNETTE'S PRIZE WINNING PICTURE

This summer we held a competition amongst families, for the best illustration of Family and Friends. We were blown away by 12-year-old Ornette's picture, which features a collage and a description of his family and best friends. It was displayed at the Children First event at the Kensington Town Hall in July.



A Family's Experience

I have been with Family Friends for over a year now. I hadn't heard of them before, it was my daughter's health visitor who told me about them. The first time Caitriona came round by herself I was very nervous.

Trina has made me feel so relaxed and happy, she has not only helped me with everything, but has become a really good friend. Charlotte, my daughter gets so excited when she is at the door, and says Trina's come to see me. She has been there for me whilst I became ill and was in hospital, she has helped me get back to work which I love to bits.

I love my Monday morning, as I know if I am stressed or feeling really down Trina takes it all away from me. I didn't ever believe anyone could help me as much as Trina has.

Trina you have made me feel so strong and feel good within myself. You're one in a million, and I am really going to miss our visits as I know they are coming to an end. I know Charlotte is going to miss you so much.

Katie

A Volunteer's Experience

I decided to do some voluntary work to 'make a difference'. I was matched with Aneeka in May. David is the sole carer of his 10-year-old daughter. He is hard working, intelligent, conscientious and patient, but simply does not have enough hours in the day to dedicate to all the duties involved.

Daniela came along with me on my first visit and then left me alone to spend some time talking to the family about their requirements. I did not know what to expect, but when Aneeka rushed to her bedroom and had a mini tantrum, my first impression was that it would be a challenging role.

Throughout my visits Aneeka and I have worked together on a work/reward star system based on aspects such as behaviour, nutrition, lateness and tidiness. We do a multitude of activities together such as bike riding, going bowling, visiting the cinema and theatre, tidying up and homework.

As a result of the teamwork of David, Aneeka and I, there have been noticeable improvements in Aneeka's behaviour, her timekeeping and her homework. She is an extremely lovable, creative and intelligent girl who just needs a female role model she can spend quality time with. I have really enjoyed working with both David and Aneeka, and being around her has brought out the playful inner child in me. Laughter has been a contributing factor in the success of our relationship. The whole experience has been thoroughly rewarding and we have built a friendship based on trust, honesty, respect and security.

I dedicate a couple of hours of my time volunteering on a Sunday afternoon, which equates to the time I would normally spend watching the re-run of EastEnders. Which one do you think would make the most difference?

Sharon

Hellos and Goodbyes

Good volunteers are the backbone of the work we do and we have been delighted with the high-calibre of our volunteers this year. During 2006, four new groups of volunteers joined Family Friends from our February, April, July and October training programmes: Carmen, Caroline, Farah, Irina, Jane F., Joanne, Kalpna, Katie, Rita, Audrey, Anna, Cicely, Jane D., Janine, Jean, Kene, Linda, Rosaria, Sharon W., Andrew, Bola, Emilia, Georgina, Isabel, Jacqui, Janet, Kamal, Natasha, Richie, Aldevina, Bridget, Christoph, Cordelia, Diana, Evelyn, Floyd, Kasia, Matthew, Meron, Millie, Michelle, Oyentari, Perry and Rosemary. We are busy matching and introducing the October training group to their families and wish everyone well as they get to know each other.

We have said 'goodbye' to several volunteers in 2006: Conrad, Linn, Donna, Florence, Ivan, Jo C., Jo S., Louisa, Michelle, Natalie, Nick, Nicola B., Patricia, Leia, Lizzie, Susan F., Rosemary, Sandra, Margaret, Sarena, Victoria, Susan R., Yen-Chu, Caitriona, Bola, Irina and Jane F., who we shall really miss. We wish you all good luck, and thank you for your befriending work.

Natalie, Lola and Lydiah recently won ***Kensington & Chelsea Make A Difference Awards 2006***. Carole B, Sandra, Sue and Margaret were presented with prestigious Community Service Volunteers' ***Year of the Volunteer*** awards in January. Well done and a huge thank you to volunteers Emily and Nicola B. for their London Marathon run, and Esther for her Regent's Park Summer Series run, in aid of Family Friends.



Sue Carole Sandra Vix Margaret

This year we introduced an on-going programme of volunteer training at our support groups. We are very grateful to Di Thomas and Lucille Brown from the Family Resource Project, Charlie Taylor and Julia Tugendhat for conducting the training.

As ever, thank you to our funders and referring agents, without whom our work would not be possible. In 2006 we were delighted to receive funding from the following organisations for the first time: Hedley Foundation, Bank of Canada and Coutts Bank. Special thanks go to Acorn Nursery, Barnabus Brunner, BBC Children in Need, Bridge House, Campden Charities, Caroline Roughton, City Parochial Foundation, Dischma Charitable Trust, Douglas Morris Charitable Trust, Garfield Weston Foundation, Goldsmiths' Charity, Henry Smith Charity, Jamie Eynon, John Lyon's Charitable Trust, K&C District Nursing Trust, Lloyds TSB Foundation, Mercers' Company, Northmoor/Runciman Trusts, Pro-Builders BCA, PF Charitable Fund, RBKC, St Helen's Old Girls' Club, Sammermar Trust, Sarah Slack, Vermillion Wine and Vincent Housing Association for their support. Thank you to the Junior League of London for the wonderful hampers they have provided for our families, and to Furnish for delivering them.

PLEASE NOTE: The office will close at on **Friday 22nd December 2006 at 1pm and re-opens on Tuesday 2nd January 2007 at 9.30am.** For emergencies while the office is closed, contact Social Services on 020 7373 2227.