

HAND IN HAND

Befriend a Child's Volunteer Newsletter
February 2011

A big **hello** and welcome to the February edition of Hand in Hand! It looks we are turning the corner and can start to look forward to Spring. That means lighter nights and plenty of opportunity to get out and enjoy some fresh air and stay fit. If you have any ideas for outings that you would like to share, please let us know. Thanks to Ryan R for his report on a trip to the Beach Leisure Centre (see page 2).

As you hopefully know by now, Befriend a Child are expanding our service into Aberdeenshire, and have launched the first stages of a project to work with young people in the south of the shire. We will be actively recruiting volunteers to work with children in the Portlethen, Stonehaven, Inverbervie and Lawrencekirk areas and would be grateful if you could mention this to any friends or family who have perhaps been put off by the idea of befriending due to the travel involved.

So if you know anyone who stays in south Aberdeenshire, who would be interested in giving up a few hours of their time each month to help a less fortunate young person then please refer them to us.

We hope that this marks the beginning of a steady growth for the charity, with so many vulnerable youngsters across the North-east who could benefit from a positive adult role model in their lives.



Fancy taking on the ultimate challenge this September? Early bird places have been snapped up but it's not too late to register your interest now for the First Monster Challenge on Saturday, September 3rd. It's a duathlon around the picturesque setting of Loch Ness for dedicated teams of four. Each competitor will need to tackle a running and cycling leg of the 120k route which attracts hundreds of competitors of all abilities each year. For anyone looking for an even bigger challenge, there's also the option of tackling the course as a solo entrant in the

Iron Monster!

Registration for the next batch of places is open at www.firstmonster.com/registration. The website also has lots of information on the course, past events, what to expect and much more.

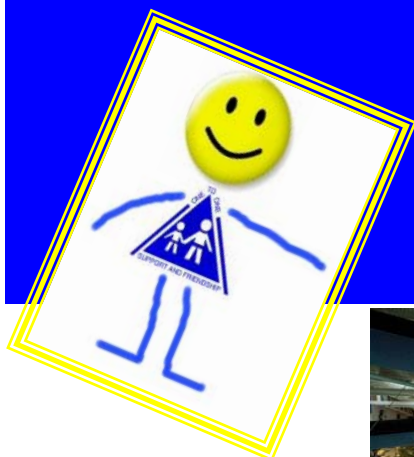
And the best news of all is that you can raise money for Befriend a Child at the same time! Call Duncan on 01224 210060 if you would like to hear more.

Every Little Helps!

A new branch of Tesco Express has opened in Holburn Street — and our Chief Executive Karen Farquhar was on hand to officially declare the super-market open. Store manager Lee Layton also donated a

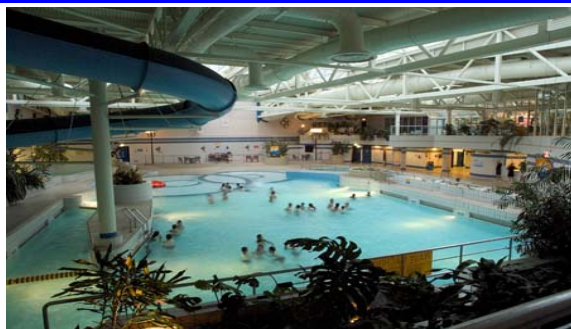


Cheque for £500 to Befriend a Child as their first community contribution.



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Where: Aberdeen Beach Leisure Centre.

When: All year round.

Duration: 1hr +

Items needed: Swim suit/shorts, towel, 20p for your locker.

Optional: Goggles, flume tickets, floats, armbands, ball.

Who doesn't like swimming? Lions. True, but other than lions who doesn't like swimming? That's right, no-one, at least not any children I know and when it comes to swimming, the Aberdeen Beach Leisure Centre is one of the best. Open all year round it is one of the staple items in my befriending arsenal with me and J probably spending 1 out of 4 trips there. I try and keep our outings varied but I know that swimming is always going to be a winner and with him actively asking to go there, why would I refuse? The BLC boasts 4 flumes, 2 pools, rapids, wave machine and jacuzzi along with unlimited swimming time, all for about £5 entry for both you and your befriender. You'll even get your 20p back from the locker (well most the time). For the really frugal befriender, you can also call up the Befriend a Child base unit and borrow an access to leisure card which will get you all this fun packed watery action at a lower price!

There is a café upstairs which sells a selection of hot food, drinks and pastries but it closes quite early so I'd suggest bringing your own grub just in case you miss it. They don't mind you using their table if you do this but be sure to clean up afterwards and maybe buy a cuppa if they're open just in case. One of the best things about regular swimming sessions has got to be the sense of pride and achievement you will see in your befriender over time.

When we first started I had to buy J a set of armbands but pretty soon afterwards they started getting left at the side of the pool and now I don't even bother bringing them. I just need to remember to bring his goggles so that he can practice his underwater strokes and show me how long he can hold his breath for (about 3 seconds but he swears it's closer to an hour). One thing I would suggest is grabbing a timetable from the Aberdeen City Council website or even calling them up before hand on 01224 655401 to check what times they are open as these change between winter/summer and term-time/holidays and there is also occasional maintenance on the pool.

So the BLC is one of those places that your befriender will never get bored of. You can visit again and again without spending a fortune and if you turn up on the day to find it is closed there is plenty to do nearby. **Ryan R**

Happy Birthday to the following Staff/Volunteers who celebrate a February birthday:

Mark H	-	4th
Jordan B	-	13th
Charlotta G	-	13th
Katie M	-	14th
Jenna S	-	18th
Ian W	-	19th
Catriona C	-	20th
Andy F	-	20th
Lindsay K	-	25th
Kelsey S	-	27th



Goodbye

Goodbye and thank you to David

Places are still available for the ceramics sessions at I Luv Art which are running each weekend (with the exception of 12th/13th) in February. Please call the office to confirm your place at either the morning or afternoon session.

Bev is also planning a Valentine-themed group session in the Base Unit on Saturday 12th from 11-1pm, and 1pm-3pm. Again please register your interest with the office.

Many thanks!



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February – What's On?

News In Brief



Please note that the regular office hours at Befriend a Child as of January 1st are

Monday to Friday,
9am-4.30pm. Please call ahead if you wish to make an

appointment out with these hours and we will be glad to make arrangements.



We currently have over 120 friends on Facebook – but we want more! Please encourage your friends, family and colleagues to add Befriend a Child as a friend. Through Facebook, we can highlight our latest news and events, and maybe even attract more volunteers! Go on – be social!

It seems February is a quiet month but here are a couple of sessions which may suit the outdoor type!

Sunday 13th – Valentines Fun With Mud Pies @ Crathes Castle. Come for an adventure around the fantastic grounds of Crathes Castle, look for natural treasures and then, back indoors at the lovely Artting Around studio, use your finds to make a beautiful heart-shaped wreath for Valentine's Day. All materials and snack provided by Mud Pies. Call Mandy Tulloch on 07929 465680 for more information and book online at www.mudpieadventures.co.uk. Cost: £10 per child (adults go free).

Saturday 19th – Bird Box Bash at Bennachie Centre near Inverurie. A great event for anyone with an interest in our feathered friends. Head along to the Bennachie Centre any time between 10am and 3pm and learn how to build a nesting box for the garden. For more information call the Garioch Ranger on 01467 681470.

Many thanks to Andrew S for taking a collection at his recent Birthday Bash in aid of Befriend a Child. We won't say just how old Andrew turned – we're not that bad – but we will say how delighted we are that he and his guests were able to support us.

Guests at the party were invited to don fancy dress, with Andrew making a proper 'Charlie' of himself by dressing as **Willy Wonka!**

If you have a big birthday or anniversary coming up, why not think about donating in lieu of presents?



Winner of the competition to guess how long it would take Liz Pirrie to cycle from Lands End to John O' Groats, was Fred Carruthers who correctly predicted 4 days, 10 hours, 7 mins.