



Kids Kabin

Annual Review
2009-2010

Welcome!

A Letter From the Chair

Again we are pleased and proud to present another issue of Kids Kabin Annual Review. As you enjoy these pages you may be able to detect that this edition has its own particular flavour. This is due, firstly, to the fact that as we notch up another year we have become conscious that Kids Kabin has a history which we need to preserve in archive, record in narrative and of course, represent in art form. This last is what a group of students from Walker College of Technology, many of whom have been and are Kids Kabin folk, have done in making the window for the foyer of Kids Kabin. The window will be unveiled at the Annual General Meeting. We extend a big thank you to all the young artists and to Sue Woolhouse, who has coordinated the piece. Theirs is the first contribution to the archive, but by this time next year the narrative will also be available.

Secondly, these pages will encapsulate the reasons why Kids Kabin has a history at all. We have always identified the factors which have propelled us into the future. These are found in the simple art of listening and in the ability to find another way. The Young Volunteer Programme is now a built-in feature of Kids Kabin, but it started because the teenagers took the initiative and were listened to. The current big 'On the Move' development plan came out of a cry for help from a young person who lived outside our usual catchment area. The spirit of adventure sometimes leads us out from home, taking our wares to new and unexpected places!

Another significant development is that we are piloting an apprenticeship scheme of a Trainee Project Development Worker. Of the first two candidates, one is a graduate of the Young Volunteer Initiative, the other is an experienced volunteer from the local community. The apprenticeship includes studying at Newcastle College for an NVQ in Youthwork.

Kids Kabin continues to attract volunteers of quality and who have many skills and experiences. We are grateful for their valuable and valued contribution which both adds to and receives from the unique 'Kids Kabin experience'. Last year our international volunteers, Rebecca and 'JR' were of star quality, and we welcome Melissa, Laura and Abby this year. Jenny, Amy and Charli have carried on the long tradition of volunteers from SCAN (Student Community Action Newcastle) and Northumbria University. Our local volunteers, of course, are a brand all of their own, fulfilling as they do, our initial aim of engaging the local community.

We welcome Sr. Simon Catlin to the Board and Brioni Barkwill to the staff team. We say a sad but very grateful goodbye to Jackie Boldon and Laurence Hughes, who have brought creativity, experience and expertise in the fields of playwork and education respectively. The staff team is losing Gary Bowden and we wish him well in his new business, providing accessible music workshops for young people with disabilities.

For Kids Kabin On the Move, the symbol has, of course, to be the bike. It tackles hills with determination, but never fear, when whizzing merrily downhill the brakes are always maintained in perfect order! To all who ensure this, and to all who cheer us on, our grateful thanks.

Christine Charlwood



A Word from Jackie Boldon

With thanks for many student placements and truly inspirational world-class practice.

It is with some sadness that after more than 10 years on the Board of Kids Kabin, I am this year standing down as a trustee. As a lecturer in Children's Play at Northumbria University, being involved with the Board has been both a privilege and an inspiring learning experience. Taking part in Board debates and playing a role in shaping the direction of Kids Kabin has been a fascinating experience. Over the years Kids Kabin has supported many Northumbria students undertaking placements as part of their Playwork Degree. Students have been well supported by Kids Kabin staff in building those all-important relationships with children, taking account of their diverse needs and different interests. Students have also undertaken a range of projects from volunteer induction packs to developing new approaches to inclusion. Kids Kabin staff have run creative workshops to help students to "unlock their creative potential" through the creation of clay faces and other imaginative techniques. I have been lucky enough to visit children's projects in many different countries, from Denmark to Portugal and have not encountered anything quite like Kids Kabin. It is a truly unique and cutting edge project, which has a profound and significant impact on the lives of disadvantaged children in Walker. Even more importantly it is a fun place to be!

Jackie Boldon
Senior Lecturer
Children, Families and Community - Northumbria University



Junior Sessions

Over the last year there have been a wide variety of junior session activities including dance, cookery, pottery, bike repairs, woodwork, glasswork, art and music.

These sessions have given the children a break from their studying and allowed them to do an activity of their choice with their friends in a safe environment.

We have found that all activities are popular but the most popular session is cookery – the children like to create recipes of their own and see the product finished in the session to give them a quick (and edible?) achievement. We feel giving the children creative sessions allows them to realise their own ideas.

The junior sessions have been particularly popular on Mondays and Tuesdays (with us often having to turn away lots of kids) although this often varies depending on the weather, events outside of Kids Kabin and which sessions their friends are coming to.

We look forward to another year of creativity at Kids Kabin and further afield.

Brioni Barkwill



Summer Trips

Our summer programme of residential trips this year comprised of back to back stays at Seahouses during the June half term followed by two journeys to Wooplaw Woods and overnight camps at Brockwell Woods and Rupert's Wood in the summer holidays. More than 50 children attended at least one of these.

The Seahouses week started with some cold, wet weather but turned nice and sunny later on. The rain did not deter several of the kids from getting drenched in the Alnwick Gardens water features and the sun shone on some good swimming at the beach and a trip to St. Cuthbert's Cave.

For both the stays at Wooplaw Woods in August we dragged the kids up the Eildon Hills - not universally popular, but redeemed ourselves with excursions to the driving range, Butterfly World and Peebles swimming pool. Back at camp, feisty (farty) horses, an electric fence, den building and the lantern game kept everyone amused.

The bike trip to Brockwell Woods had its fair share of thrills and spills – tree felling (it's ok it was dead) and of course the lantern game. The Rupert's Wood camp began with birds of prey at Kielder Water before we became prey for some savage midgies in the evening.

Finally, a special mention for Colin Ridley, volunteer extraordinaire, who attended every one of the summer holiday trips – dedication beyond the call of duty.

Bruce Tuckey



Young Volunteers

The young volunteers training has gone from strength to strength as staff have established a clear training programme and the volunteers have shown a strong commitment and understanding of their role within Kids Kabin.

The young volunteers are an essential part of the success of Kids Kabin and without their enthusiasm and determination many sessions would not have happened.

The young volunteers continue to help by running and supporting sessions, helping to fundraise and branching out into supporting outreach and street sessions.

The value of young volunteers on the street sessions is that they can quickly establish a rapport with their peers; most are known in the local community and by volunteering are seen in a positive light, by peers, parents and other members of the local community.

Over the summer young volunteers helped support staff during trips and residential and their maturity and ability to deal with responsibility gave our members a positive image of what a good volunteer is like. By seeing how much enjoyment they get out of it, they too have ambitions of one day becoming a Kids Kabin young volunteer. Members now know that this is the progression route they can follow. It has been a huge learning curve for staff to realise that this is not for everyone but we encourage and support all those who do express an interest.

We are just about to train a new group of young volunteers and I have no doubt they will do us proud as all the previous young volunteers have!

Tracey Thompson

Satellite Sessions

Now taking in more locations than ever, satellite sessions continue to be really popular. We often find ourselves setting off from the building with a posse already waiting to travel with us to our destination for the evening.

These evenings have seen epic games of rounders (with a few baseball rules thrown in by our international volunteers to keep everyone on their toes), more bike repairs than the Tour de France and enough popcorn to make Oscar Deutsch jealous.

We have now completed our mobile theatre trailer, and our thoughts turn to script writing so that her maiden voyage can take place over the forthcoming year. Along with our satellite family growing we have also had some casualties, with remedial work necessary on both the kitchen and pottery trailers and the workhorse that is the smoothie bike.

The year ahead will also see a new bike repairs tricycle, a mobile ice cream maker and a mobile street cleaner to sort out the mess.

Simon Irwin



Apprenticeships

Interview with James Arkless – Apprentice project worker at Kids Kabin.

When did you first get involved with Kids Kabin?

When I was 8. When I found out Kids Kabin was in the shopping centre.

What is your first memory of Kids Kabin?

Block making – carving Kids Kabin out of breeze blocks in a very squashed little building – it was really squashed that building.

What have been your greatest achievements at Kids Kabin?

Being a young volunteer and helping set up the young volunteers project. Learning how to cook and learning basic skills like joinery and all that.

What do you think you can achieve by doing an apprenticeship at Kids Kabin?

Find out more out learning and teaching skills. Learning how to deal with children's behaviour, thinking of projects and planning. Into a job in the future, I hope. More qualifications.

What do you think you have already learnt?

To plan out the day. To figure out and separate your day into bits so you know what you are doing when. How to communicate better with children. To separate yourself from being a friend to being a worker.



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