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At a Glance:

NEW WEBSITE

We recently launched our website which is www.hrsg.org.uk, so please check it out. If you find it a useful resource, please do feel free to link to it from your own.

WANTED

Committee Members
 Are you interested in joining our group as a Committee Member? Would you like to help bring hope, dignity and empowerment to asylum seekers in Hillingdon?

To find out more, please contact:

Freda on 01895 434 728 or
freda@hrsg.org.uk

DONATIONS

Thank you very much to Northwood Methodist Church who through their Christmas Toy Service donation of food, toys and gifts, were able to put smiles on many young peoples faces.

We also received a generous donation of toys and books from Jill Wells of Eastcote Church and these were distributed to young people who attend BHUMP.

MAGAZINE DESIGN COURSE

Returns in January.
 Are you into art? graphic design/urban art/photography/publishing/fashion/competitions/mixed media/you choose. You can develop your skills in art and learn new skills in using computers, digital cameras, design software, urban art as well as building confidence, making friends, giving your ideas and taking part in future projects.
 To find out more, please contact the number above.

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Hillingdon Refugee Support Group

December 2008— Issue 27



Our Mission Statement

To bring, hope, dignity, and empowerment to refugees and asylum seekers in Hillingdon. To work with all faith communities and with organisations with no religious affiliation in order to protect the interests and promote the rights of all asylum seekers and refugees, regardless of their beliefs, race, gender, sexual orientation or any other distinction.

Seasons Greetings from the Chairman

Dear friends, on behalf of all at the Hillingdon Refugee Support Group and the Befriending Unaccompanied Minors Project, seasons greetings and a prosperous 2009. It has been a great year for us with continued growth and development. We acknowledge and appreciate your contribution in every aspect and thanks to you all for your continued support throughout the year. Your support in whatever form it is given is significant and important for us in continuing to enhance the quality of life of young unaccompanied asylum seekers and refugees in Hillingdon. I am hopeful that we all together shall be able to continue in this fruitful partnership to raise awareness in the wider community to ensure a positive representation of refugees and asylum seekers.



Harvest Festival Donations from Churches

This October, HRSRG received Harvest Festival donations from five Churches; Eastcote, Northwood, St Lawrence Church Vicarage, St Andrews Church Eastcote, St Thomas Moore Roman Catholic Church. Christine Macqueen, one of our trustees organized this with the churches. There were cases of tinned food, bags of pasta and rice, toys and boxes of toiletries. Over 100 carrier bags were then filled with a selection of all the items. Some of the donations were taken to BHUMP and received by young people in a special session which included a group discussion on the importance of gift giving prior to

the distribution of the bags. Young people discussed their cultural traditions for the giving season, which was especially pertinent as it was the end of Ramadan and approaching the Christmas season. Each received a carrier bag which was most appreciated. Social Services then distributed the remaining bags to young people living in shared accommodation including mothers and babies. Over one hundred young people and children benefited from the donations. Our gracious thanks extend to those generous individuals and the churches who donated this quantity of gifts with such open hearts.



“This trip made us to be so close with my friends. We shared some ideas and had a very nice lunch.”

“I learned there are different kinds of animals and they got different ways of living... This trip motivates me to read about animals and know more about it.”

“ We had such a good evening, It was very nice to meet the lovely young people and make a difference.”

“ I feel very excited about this grant panel. We have already learnt so much.”

“ Being part of this makes me feel important and something to look forward to.”

Trip to Whipsnade Zoo

On Tuesday October 28th a group of young people went on a day trip to Whipsnade Zoo. They experienced an educational, albeit cold, day out over their half term break. Upon arriving at the zoo, everyone flocked to the monkey enclosure and were all

highly amused at the sight of a chimp dragging a duvet around his pen. There were informative and educational signs about all the animals and young people enjoyed reading about their history and sharing information about animals from their own country. The set up of an open safari park encouraged curiosity and

with small tame animals roaming the premises the group explored and interacted, together and did a quiz on Africa’s countries. Despite the cold weather it was still an enjoyable day full of exploration for the young people.



Make A Difference Day

On Wednesday October 29th a group of 15 students from Brunel University filed into the kitchen of Jupiter House to bring young people a special one off cooking session in part with Brunel University’s programme called Make A Difference Day (MADD). They brought with them ingredients to create a vegetable and chicken dish with rice. They engaged young people with conversation and interaction through the preparation of the food and once it was cooked, young people sat down together and enjoyed a meal. Food did not go to waste and all leftovers were enjoyed by young people residing in Jupiter House. Thanks to all of Brunel’s kind students who devoted their evening by engaging young people and providing them with a hearty meal.

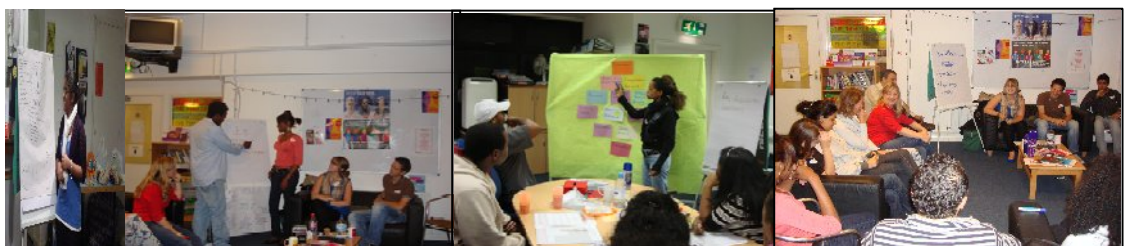


Paul Hamlyn Foundation and Youth Bank come to BHUMP

A group of eight young people who attend our BHUMP project have been working on an exciting project which is developing their own grant making programme for the Hillingdon area, with support from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation and Youth Bank UK since the beginning of October.

Youth Bank comes to BHUMP fortnightly to train the young people involved in this project. At the end of the project, they will all receive the OCN (Open College Network) Level 2 qualification in Grant-Making. The skills the young people are gaining will not simply empower them to run a grants panel, but to enhance their overall work ethic and make a

difference in the community. They created plans and developed roles, all the while communicating and presenting to one another their ideas. Their undertakings have required critical thinking and taught the importance of reaching a group consensus through teamwork and communication.



Quote *“The more we increase the active participation and partnership with young people, the better we serve them. ... And the more comprehensively we work with them as service partners, the more we increase our public value to the entire community.” - Carmen Martinez*

Take Over Day– October 31st 2008 at Paul Hamlyn Foundation

Comments by young people about grant making on Take over day.

“Grant making is not only about who needs the money the most, its about the outcomes. “

“It is challenging and need a good decision making ability”.

“It is really hard.”

“You need to be open-minded because there is a lot of things you have to look up.”

On Friday 31 October, the Paul Hamlyn Foundation (PHF) held its first Takeover Day hosting the group of eight young people on the BHUMP grant panel. Early on that Friday morning, young people met in Hayes to embark upon a special outing to the offices of the PHF in London. The young people were invited to essentially “Take Over” the offices and truly experience the process of grant making. During the day the participants learnt about professional grant making, and spent time considering how to apply criteria for applications to their own programme. The event was also an opportunity for the young people and PHF staff and trustees to get to know one another, and for the young people to learn about how a complex organisation works. Young people met with Jane

Hamlyn, current Chairperson of the PHF, and were privy to a special presentation on her father Paul Hamlyn who was a publisher and a philanthropist. He and his family took refuge in the United Kingdom when he was a young boy. He established the PHF in 1987 for general charitable purposes distributing grants to support social justice, promote arts, as well as education and learning. Young people sat captivated as they learned how a former refugee took one idea and created a network of help and support for others. Through Jane Hamlyn’s intimate portrayal of her father’s legacy the young people gained insight on how their hard work and determination can one day create a vast impact. It reaffirmed that all they needed was one idea and no matter how seemingly small, that idea could be the impetus for a larger force. A highlight of the day was a ‘treasure hunt’ around the PHF offices, in which the young people followed the path of

an application from initial receipt, assessment against criteria and development by programme teams through to signing the cheques and evaluating the supported activity. The activity prompted young people to think critically about the various wants and needs for criteria and how each point would ultimately affect the community. Young people examined how the needs of refugees differ from indigenous young people and discussed discrimination in certain criteria and people, yet how excluding others would be reverse discrimination from what they have experienced. The activities were incredibly thought provoking for the young people and they worked exceptionally well as part of the Paul Hamlyn Foundation team.



Craft Project- Basket Making

On Tuesday November 25th, BHUMP welcomed HRSG trustee, Sylvia Taylor, in a special craft project to commence the Christmas season. Sylvia brought baskets and an assortment of greenery and embellishments to the project where she engaged the

young people in decorating the baskets. Young people delved into this new craft and used the supplies to adorn their baskets with items that ranged from festive and colourful to simple and pretty. Sylvia captivated the group with her craft project and young people enjoyed interacting with one

another as they saw their new skills be put to use and their creations flourish. In keeping with previous such evenings some wonderful designs were produced and the opportunity for unbridled self expression was embraced with earnest.

“I can become a wedding planner with this new skill”



Mothers and Babies visit Snakes and Ladders in Brentford

“A great and relaxing day out”

On Friday the 5th of December, 24 young mothers and their children went on a day trip to Snakes and ladders Children's Adventure play in Brentford. They all had a fabulous time. The children had the opportunity to mix with others, learn new skills, and play with a range of games and toys in a safe environment. This outing was great as it enabled the mothers to meet each other and to relax and have fun. The staff who accompanied the mothers and

babies on this trip used this unique opportunity to recognise the Young mothers' achievements and presented those nominated with a Certificate of achievement over the last year for both academic and personal achievements. The Asylum Team Service Manager, Paula Neil presented the certificates and acknowledged their achievements. Christmas presents, donated by various organisations were also given out to all the children by Asylum Services own Santa (a staff member) to end the day.

Get your skates on



“We had such a good time, fell over a few times and I have never laughed so, so much”

On Wednesday 10th December, in order to utilise local leisure facilities, a group of young people went Ice skating to the ice rink at the Civic Centre in Uxbridge. None of them had ever ice skated before. Initially some young people were very hesitant to get on the ice but this did not last long and soon everyone got on and there were young people flying everywhere and it was hilarious. Everyone had a great time.

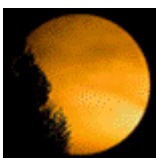


Decorating the Christmas Tree

On Thursday 11th December, young people of all cultures and backgrounds actively engaged in decorating the Christmas tree where they live and getting into the festive spirit . It was truly a night of Christmas cheer.



CHRISTMAS IN AFRICA, a poem by Elizabeth Natasha Karamura



A bright and beautiful morning,
the sun spares not its beauty and warmth;
within the homes, people are leaping with excitement and complete joy.

The sense of family reunion and love shared,

the ladies indulge in the preparation of the great meal,
the gentlemen gather out in the shades of green grass compounds.

Laughter is heard in all areas,
children play about, new play songs sung,
the hour awaited is soon at hand,
all the groups serve themselves,

except for the young ones.
The day is greatly enjoyed,
music flows as the families sing the Christmas carols so beautifully.
In different languages the songs are sung,
with Christ as their life so is joy; a heart forever.