

WAM YOUTH UPDATE MAY 2020

Update from Gemma gemma@wamyouth.org.uk

I hope you are safe and well in what are certainly interesting times for us all! We have faced our own challenges here at WAM Youth and we are truly grateful to the widespread support we've received from current and new funders, existing and new volunteers and the general encouragement we've received from friends and community members. I would like to thank our ongoing funders especially, as the consistency we have from their regular support is a major factor in enabling us to respond quickly to such a significant and operationally disruptive event. We're now in at the start of week 7 of lockdown and I wanted to give you an overview of what we have done, what we are still doing, what we are planning for post-lockdown and where the extra funds we've received have come from. You can see an update on the other side of this page of how we have been able to adapt to this new way of working.

We have only been able to do all that we've done because of the amazing flexibility of our staff and volunteers, the incredible support we get from you and our other regular donors and some extra support we've had from the following organisations in the last few weeks both for now and the coming months:

Barnwood Trust, Box Tree Gifts, Emporium Gift Shop, Gloucestershire Community Foundation, Langtree Trust, Severn Trent Community Fund, Tesco, Tewkesbury Borough Council, Tewkesbury Rotary Club, Winchcombe Rotary Club, Winchcombe Youth Partnership,

Because of all this support in a time when so much is uncertain we now know we will be able to be present and ready for the post-Covid world where we are sure young people are going to need our support more than ever. Due to the economic impact of lockdown there will be ongoing funding challenges for us and other charities, of that we are sure, so if you are able to help us seek out new sources of funding or help us to build partnerships with local businesses please get in touch.

The reality remains that if just 16% of the Winchcombe population donated £11 per month we would meet all our costs.

If you're able to encourage others to sign up to our coffee campaign this they can do so by going to our donate page <https://wamyouth.charitycheckout.co.uk/profile> or following the links or texting as in the box below.

We are determined to ensure that we can rise to meet the challenge that Covid-19 has and will continue to trigger in the wellbeing and mental health of our local young people.

Many thanks for your donations, encouragements and prayers for our work. We appreciate them all.

Gemma & The WAM Team

Talking Tuesdays with WAM....How are you surviving Isolation?

This is Jack. He's surviving lockdown with the help of one of our wellbeing packs. Today he's planting sunflower seeds. Maybe tomorrow he'll make the creme egg scotch egg, or read his Head Strong Journal...



Keep calm and forward plan...

Help us to help those in need post Covid-19

Our services are going to be needed more than ever when lockdown ends. Many grant funds are now closed and fundraising events cancelled.

Donate now to help us to forward plan for the support we already provide to vulnerable and at risk young people in our county.

Donate online at www.wamyouth.org.uk/covid19/

or text WAMYOUTH give £donation amount to 07380 307800
e.g. WAMYOUTH give £50





NEW SERVICES

Wellbeing packs

We sent out these to 70 children and young people, most of whom were young people we have or do work with whilst 25 were for children in care in Gloucestershire (through a charity called Change, Grow, Live). The feedback we've had from these has been brilliant and we are really grateful to the volunteers who created activity cards and packed the boxes full of goodies (see some of the cards on the left)

Online Chat/Helpline

We are still in the process of setting up a service for local young people and parents/carers in partnership with Winchcombe Youth Hub. We've had a brilliant response from people wanting to volunteer and have 9 people we're about to train. This is a service that we intend to keep running post-lockdown

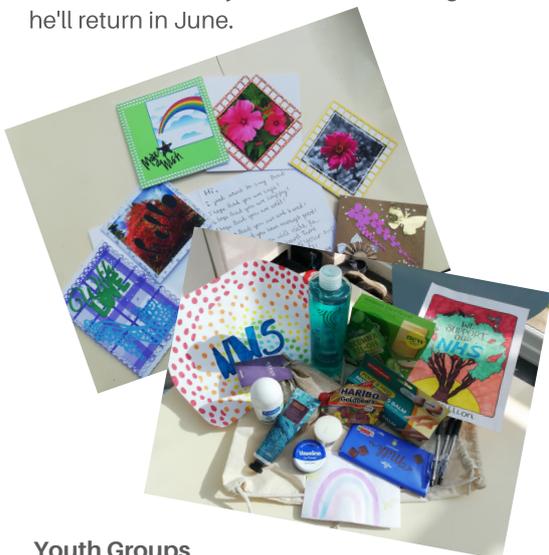
Wellbeing Groups

We will be running 6-week Wellbeing Groups for young people firstly online and then offering to schools once they re-open. These groups will be based on the Kintsugi Hope Wellbeing Course who we are working with to pilot their resources with young people (<https://www.kintsugihope.com/groups>)

EXISTING SERVICES UPDATE

Outdoor Education

All of our school groups have been cancelled for the foreseeable future. We don't know yet when restrictions will be eased enough to allow us to run these sessions.- Most of our 1:1 sessions have been cancelled due to school closures. The exception is one contract with a school that provides education for extremely vulnerable young people and in this case we are managing to continue provision whilst following social distancing guidelines- As a result of these cancellations we furloughed two staff members temporarily (one rejoined us last week to continue to help support the 1:1 sessions) and the other currently remains on furlough leave but we hope he'll return in June.



Mentoring

All of our mentors and mentees have been given the opportunity to set up their relationships to meet online via video calls. Ali has been sending out guidance and ideas for helping with this new way of meeting up! Most mentors and mentees have found this an easier transition that we all expected!- We are still receiving referrals for mentoring, some directly related to the current situation and the evidence suggests these referrals will increase as time goes on- We were successful in achieving our £5000 target for the Aviva Community Fund. Pre lockdown we had originally intended to use this towards a £15000 target with other funders. This would enable us to employ an extra staff member to expand the project. That is still our hope but will depend on how our main Mentoring project funding pans out over the next few weeks. Whatever the outcome the funds will be used to support Mentoring whether its to maintain the current project or expand it as originally hoped

Youth Groups

We split elev8 into two age groups to better manage the online meetings and we've been meeting weekly since lockdown began. We have a few new members in both groups and we've had a lot of fun playing silly games and enjoying keeping in contact- Our girls group had just started a project with Young Gloucestershire and UK Youth before lockdown and we have continued that through weekly zoom meetings. The girls have been really busy planning the social action part of their project which involves making up and sending out care packs to frontline NHS staff, creating a story writing competition to raise money for Bristol Children's Hospital's Grand Appeal and making and writing cards to send to people in isolation (see photos above).

Relationships and Sex Education

Gemma was due to deliver sessions to Year 10 this term on Consent in Relationships. This usually creates really interesting discussions in class and is quite a difficult subject to cover via distance learning but she has written a short online lesson covering the general themes and is offering 1:1 online chat sessions for young people to book if they want to talk about this subject in more depth. Winchcombe School have sent this out to their Year 10s. She's also going to be putting up some online content in coming weeks referring to previous lessons she's delivered on wellbeing to the rest of the school.