

HIGHLIGHT REPORT: MOZART COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS

Pop up Community Café



The Mozart Community Champions have been cooking up a storm for their monthly Community Café at the Beethoven Centre.

The Champions prepare free, healthy lunches for between 30 and 50 residents each month. In return for their lunch, residents filled in quizzes on topics including healthy eating, oral health, mental health and Black History Month. Delicious dishes have included wraps, vegan food and chicken rice and peas.

One resident said, ***'I loved the café - it is such a great idea, the staff are always so wonderful. I really look forward to attending the café. Today was great with such lovely food, I tried Vegan food which I have never tried before and I really enjoyed it, I don't eat veg as often as I should, but this food made me want to try more veg.'***

The café is a true team effort with all the champions working together to prepare, serve and clean up. It's

hard work but everyone loves it. One champion said, 'The atmosphere was so good - we really worked well as a team and everyone who attended the Café really enjoyed it. We were so busy, but we all worked so well together, really looking forward to the Café next month.'

The café has been so successful that the Champions are working with A2 Dominion to bring in further partners to support the event.

Champions Learn to Swim!

Last summer went off with a SPLASH as Mozart Champion and qualified swimming instructor Angie taught a group of fellow champions to swim! After hearing some champions saying that they would like to take their children swimming over the holidays but that they didn't feel confident

enough, Angie suggested they all went to the pool together. After a couple of sessions with Angie, they were all hooked. As well as taking their children swimming, two champions are now swimming regularly each week and another champion braving the cold waters of the ladies' pond in

Hampstead Heath! One champion said, ***'I'm really enjoying swimming. I was so scared of the water and thought I was going to drown; Angie was so kind and gentle - she really helped me to relax and enjoy the water which I didn't think I would be able to. Thank you so much Angie.'***



■ Mental Health Awareness Week

In May, to support the Mental Health Foundation's annual Mental health Awareness Week, the Mozart Champions put together 80 wellbeing packs for residents. The packs included essential oils, mindfulness colouring books and pencils, stress balls, tea and leaflets on key mental health services. They gave the bags out individually to residents whom they felt could benefit including their neighbours, friends, families, parents at the school gate, library and gym users. They also gave them out at their weekly activities.

Those champions who had attended Mental Health First Aid training were able to use their understanding to support their conversations and the project manager held some additional training to ensure they were confident in delivering the key health messages to residents. This comprised some role play, discussions about language used in conversations around mental health, listening, kind words and support and signposting.

Some of the residents, the champions gave bags to included a woman whose son was experiencing a serious illness; someone who had just become a full time carer; a man who had been working very long shifts and a resident who cares for a child with disabilities.

Champions received some lovely feedback about the bags and their accompanying chats with residents: **'that stress ball is great and I'm finding the colouring very calming'...** **"thanks, that's a great initiative, It's good to talk"...** **'the lavender oil is amazing, I use it every day now'.**

■ Spotlight on Community Champion, Bibiana

Bibiana is one of Mozart's longest-standing champions and stalwart of the project there. She says,

'In 2014 I had to leave work due to ill health and wanted something to do. I went into the Beethoven Centre and enquired about volunteering work. I was put in touch with Kimberley and the rest is history!'

My favourite thing to do as a Champion is sharing information at events on health and wellbeing – they seem quite interested and they take it away. It makes you feel good that you've given a bit of knowledge you have to someone else and that they might give that to someone else.

Community Champions has given me a lot of encouragement and support and the training has really built my confidence. It inspires me to talk to others and get them to take action on breaking stigmas and discrimination.

If someone was thinking about being a Community Champion I would say go for it! It's a good use of time that you have to spare – there is nothing more rewarding than telling someone something they didn't know about and that they are interested in and to see the look on their face. Sometimes they are reluctant to talk initially but then they come back again and again. There's lots of training and lots of encouragement and the people in charge help you to take action, be proactive and use your own initiative. It's a very safe space.'



■ Community Choir



The Mozart Champions' choir has gone from strength to strength over the past year with 13 regular attendees under the steady leadership of facilitator Jessica Cherag Zade. The choir aims to reduce stress, isolation, bring people together, and improve overall health and wellbeing. One participant said, **'For me I love to sing, I only sing at home when I clean but at this choir I can sing with others and learn how to improve my singing too. It's also relaxing for me and I can bring my son along so I don't need to think about childcare and can enjoy doing an activity that me and my son enjoy.'**

Mozart Community Champions: Facts and Figures

2263



VOLUNTEER HOURS

2422



RESIDENTS REACHED

477



ATTENDED 4 LARGE EVENTS

1355



REACHED BY 8 PUBLIC HEALTH CAMPAIGNS

2599



ATTENDANCES AT 10 REGULAR COURSES OR GROUPS