

WBAF COFFEE MORNING WORKSHOPS FOR PARENTS at the Beethoven Centre & Cardinal Hume Centre

Topics include

- ◇ Stress reduction techniques.
- ◇ Healthy eating.
- ◇ IT skills.
- ◇ Yoga.
- ◇ Domestic abuse.
- ◇ Money skills.

Regular attendees to the Beethoven centre Coffee morning will be going bowling as a special end of term event



NEW!

BE CREATIVE

An exciting new crafts project has been started at the Beethoven Centre. This gives service users the opportunity to try out a range of different disciplines, building their skills, confidence and even a portfolio of work. Skilled instructors are at hand to teach the following crafts:

- Knitting
- Jewellery making
- Book making
- Painting

Beethoven Centre: Thurs 11am– 1pm

Beethoven Centre, Thurs 11:00 – 1:30  
Tel: 020 3181 0162

Cardinal Hume, Mon 10:00 – 12:00  
Tel: 020 7828 2765

INTRODUCING Our Social Work Students:

Hannah Kyei (Final Year Social Work Student) - London South Bank University. Managing the Young People's Project .

Eliesha Caprice (Family Support Worker - Homeless Family Project). I am currently in my second year studying a BA in Social Work. However, prior to this I was working as a volunteer Youth Worker for seven years, every summer holiday, for London Borough of Lambeth. In addition, I have mentored at my local community centre for young people. I absolutely adore children, have none of my own, but I do have nine god-children. My hobby is keeping fit— especially with the amount of god children I have :-).

Shadeene Henry-Mitchell (Family Support Worker/Second Year Social Work Student) - Middlesex University. Managing the Best Start Project

Sharon Hall (Project Manager - Best Start Project). I am currently in my second year at Middlesex University studying BA Social Work. My past work experience is working with children and families, firstly at Home-Start where I was employed as a Volunteer Co-ordinator. I then moved into the Children's Centre arena and was employed for many years as an Outreach Worker. I have a daughter called Amber, who is 23 years old (which makes me feel very old as it doesn't feel that long ago that I was that age!). I am not sure what I would like to do when I finish University. I value the voluntary sector very much and would like to stay working within a charity if possible.

Felistas Tutani (Homeless Families Project Manager) . I am a second year BA Social Work student at Middlesex University. My best experience so far, is being given the opportunity to learn from the different experiences of a diverse clientele on my first placement in a voluntary sector. My placement at (WBAF) has provided me with the practical experience of being able to understand the different issues faced in society.

I am a single mum with 2 young children. I came to the UK in the year 2000, as a refugee and definitely have a good understanding of the challenges of integrating into a community. I have previously worked for a voluntary organisation that supports Asylum Seekers and Refugees as an advocate, mentor and also liaising with legal representatives on behalf of the clients. Post qualifying, I intend to carry on working in the voluntary sector and to probably set up a charity in the future.



Supporting families across Westminster

Westminster Befriend a Family,  
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Familyfocus Newsletter SPRING 2014



WELL DONE AYSHA!

WABF would like to congratulate Aysha Sheridan on winning a British Land Chairman's award, celebrating her work as a volunteer. The winning prize was a trip to Antarctica.



Aysha is a long - time volunteer for WBAF - so we are really pleased and excited for her.

Aysha is pictured above (far left) as one of Santa's helpers. Santa, incidentally, was none other than British Land Chairman, John Gildersleeve (Ho ho ho!). Which brings us to say **THANK YOU, British Land**, who again made Christmas such a memorable event for our families and children. On December 14th, we invited our families to our annual Christmas party which was arranged by British Land and their staff. They also provided the food, presents for the children, and volunteers for the evening. More than 150 parents and children came to enjoy a delicious buffet, a range of activities, including face painting, African drumming and art. The feedback we received from families was fantastic.



All set for the 2014 London Marathon

A word from our American runner, Michael Wenger

I'll be running in the 34<sup>th</sup> London Marathon on the 13<sup>th</sup> April 2014 in aid of Westminster Befriend a Family (WBAF). It has been my long-term goal to run in the London Marathon, so what better way to take part than to have a target of raising £5,000 towards improving the lives of disadvantaged and vulnerable families - especially those who are homeless, living in temporary and overcrowded accommodation.

There are lots of charities, so why am I supporting this one? My sister has been volunteering with Westminster Befriend a Family for 2 ½ years, providing practical and emotional support to families, and supporting their community events. I've heard from her about the great need, and the fantastic work of the charity's 200 volunteers who support families that are isolated, without local family or friendship support.

*This is my inspiration for running the 42.6 miles...*

I grew up on Catalina Island, a small island off the coast of Southern California, and I am privileged to be living in the UK whilst studying at the University of Roehampton.

(Continued from front page...)

I've seen how social and economic changes are impacting families back home and here in London.

**Your donation will not only make you a supporter but also a friend!** I believe that each and every one of us at some point in our lives has needed help from a friend, family member, colleague or neighbour. **Westminster Befriend a Family** has been that friend for many families and young people.

### Michael "Hills are my forte" Wenger - 4 X Marathon Winner

I'm training hard for the event, but in a way I feel as if I've been training for this event for many years.



I was 12 when I started running and volunteering at the many national races held on the island. It was exciting for me to see all of the hard work and dedication that was put into these races, and I knew I wanted to be a part of the action.



I ran my first marathon when I was 13. It was gruelling, but I realised that in order to compete I would need to train hard every day. A couple years later, I joined my high school cross country team. Though our athletic program was small and limited, the rough and beautiful terrain was inspiring. My team competed across Los Angeles County, and as Captain I led my team to win the cross country league. I later focused on distance races, and this became my primary interest.



The marathon is now 3 weeks away. Do come along to cheer me on!!!  
**Please help Michael to reach his fundraising target of £5k**



[www.justgiving.com/Michael-Wenger](http://www.justgiving.com/Michael-Wenger)



Kristina Dimitrova (foreign office employee) WBAF's long-standing volunteer, provides family support to disadvantaged families and has also secured funding for WBAF in numerous occasions. In December, Kristina supported WBAF at the Belgravia Christmas market stall to raise funding by baking cookies, purchasing lots of items to sell on the stall. She also brought her two little daughters who were dressed up as Santa's helpers, to lend support for the day... Kristina also supported our Christmas party on 14th December by setting up the venue, welcoming families on arrival and serving them with food—along with British Land volunteers. We would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to Kristina and the other volunteers who supported WBAF.....

### A Volunteer's Testimonial...

I volunteered with WBAF for 3 months during my Masters, conducting social research. I really enjoyed the whole experience because I got to go and visit the families to do interviews and I could see first hand how much being involved with WBAF means to them. Everyone I met – both in the WBAF office and the families I spoke with - were so friendly and welcoming. It was really inspiring to work with an organisation that is making such a direct and positive impact in people's lives.

Laura West

### FREE KAYAKING LESSONS!!!

Westminster Befriend a Family and Westminster Boating Base are delighted to offer **six free Kayaking lessons** during the Easter holidays. Please contact the office if you are interested  
**Tel: 020 7828 2765**

Participants must be between the ages of **14 and 25**. Please note that by signing up, your child will be registering for **all six lessons** on the following dates from **2pm to 4pm**.



Please call the office for further information: Tel: 0207 828 2765

#### DATES:

- Monday, 14<sup>th</sup> April
- Tuesday, 15<sup>th</sup> April
- Wednesday, 16<sup>th</sup> April
- Thursday, 17<sup>th</sup> April
- Monday, 21<sup>st</sup> April
- Tuesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> April

At the end of the course, your child will receive a certificate.

## 2013 catch up!

Well done to WBAF volunteer, Paul Hogarth, who was shortlisted for a Team London Mentoring and Coaching award in November. Although Paul didn't win the award, we are extremely proud of his contribution to WBAF and our families.

'Paul has been working with WBAF since September 2012 and has made a massive impact in the lives of the family that he is supporting,' said Emmanuel Michael, WBAF's volunteer training and recruitment manager.

'It has been a pleasure to nominate him. He has dedicated so much of his time to providing intensive mentoring support to young people and practical and emotional support to parents. In a short space of time the family's circumstances and wellbeing has improved. We are proud of Paul, and all our other volunteers who help to keep families together and help to make their situations more manageable.'



Paul with his certificate



Paul, Ledley King (former England and Tottenham footballer), and WBAF's Emmanuel Michael

### THE BIG GIVE! Update

Just Before Christmas we took part in the **Big Give Christmas Challenge: the UK's largest match funding campaign.** 

This was a unique opportunity for charities to have their donations doubled by being match funded by donor pledges and Charity Champions. We were competing with other charities during those 3 days for a limited amount of available funds - so the clock was literally ticking. We are pleased to report back, that with the combination of donations and match funding, we raised just over £20K.

Thank you, to everyone who took part in making the event a BIG success!



### From one family to another...

A massive THANK YOU! to Cubitt House who have faithfully supported us for a year: putting on a fantastic fundraising dinner & auction, organising family events for our families, volunteering and organising a summer homework club, and also for supporting our families through befriending.

Through your effort and sacrifice - as well as sewing into the community and the lives of our families - you raised £34,315 for our volunteer Family Support Services.

Thank you!

### Christmas 2013 Update...

Over the Christmas period we were privileged to be supported by a number of school choirs, raising funds and awareness of who we are and what we do.



St Mary's of the Angels School

On 27th November, onlookers at Cardinal Place were treated to some heart-warming carols by the pupils of **St Mary's of the Angels School**. Shoppers were truly held spellbound by the young angelic voices, spreading the Christmas spirit through their spirited and selfless programme - raising a total of £233.81 to support WBAF's 'Homeless Families and Children' project.



King Solomon Academy

On Wednesday 11th December, the pupils of King Solomon Academy went down to Cardinal Place to inject the Christmas spirit into the atmosphere. They provided carols 'old-and-new', and really brought a warm smile to the hearts of shoppers and employees. The carol singing raised £188.80 on the day.



Burdett-Coutts Primary School choir

On Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> December, shoppers and workers in Cardinal Place were treated to an assortment of Christmas carols by members of Burdett-Coutts Primary School choir. They even had posters illustrating the famous "12 Days of Christmas".

It was a bit of a chilly day, but the choir's singing soon warmed the hearts of the passers-by, raising £320.54 for our Volunteer Family Support services.