



SUMMER PLAY 2 RECOVER

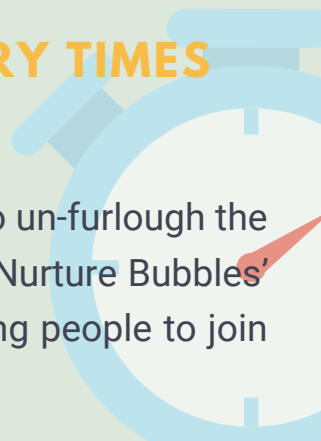
AUGUST 2020

Concern about the impact of the Covid-19 lockdown for the most vulnerable children in Gloucestershire created an opportunity for us to contribute to Gloucestershire County Council's working group for 'Out of School Holidays Planning'. Our challenge was to adapt our open access services into a more targeted way of working that complied with the Government guidelines, would keep staff and beneficiaries safe and that could support Gloucestershire's most vulnerable children.

Wendy Gray - Head of Service for Early Help and Prevention at Gloucestershire County Council told us **"GET YOUR PEOPLE [PLAY RANGERS] OFF FURLOUGH, WE NEED THEM!"**

TIME WAS OF THE ESSENCE BUT EXTRAORDINARY TIMES CALL FOR EXTRAORDINARY ACTION!

Commissioning was approved in mid-July leaving just under three weeks to un-furlough the play team, train them to work in a new Covid-19 safe way, create six 'Play Nurture Bubbles' in six venues across six districts and invite, via referrals, children and young people to join us for some therapeutic outdoor play.



PLAY BUBBLE VENUES

WITH THANKS

- Saracens Football Club, Cheltenham
- The Wild Oaks Children's Centre, Cotswolds
- Berry Hill RFC, Forest of Dean
- Oxstalls Campus, University of Gloucestershire, Gloucester
- Severn View Primary Academy/Parliament Children's Centre, Stroud
- Queen Margaret's Primary School, Tewkesbury

THE FOCUS

- To help vulnerable children to start to re-connect to their wider world after lockdown
- To improve children's physical and emotional wellbeing
- To ensure children experienced lots of adventure, friendship and fun

74 CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 7 TO 16 TOOK PART

48% OF ALL ATTENDEES WERE FEMALE



Thanks to a grant from Gloucestershire Community Foundation we were able to purchase pop-up tents to act as personal shelter and safe space for those attending our sessions. These tents became the property of the young people, and actually formed a vital part of our welcome and supported feelings of safety and wellbeing.

"The children I have worked with have enjoyed meeting other young people, alongside brilliant staff who have been engaging and attentive to the children's needs. One child especially, presented as shy and apprehensive about the group however soon became comfortable in her surroundings after some encouragement from staff. Feedback from the children was that they enjoyed the activities, the idea of having their own tent, and friendly staff."

Sara Abdul-Majid, Social Worker



PLAY NURTURE

There is increasing recognition that a combination of child centred and child-led play with nurturing interactions in the natural environment can help vulnerable children to build their resilience, cope with adversity and support wellbeing. Playing outdoors in all weathers builds resilience in children, and many have both benefited and enjoyed the chance to do this over a summer of extreme weather – hot, thunder storms and torrential rain. The outdoor play provided has clearly had a positive effect on both mind and body, and contributed to a sense of wellbeing for those taking part. For some children it had created a desire for more outdoor play.

“WHATEVER YOU HAVE BEEN DOING HAS WORKED. SHE IS A DIFFERENT GIRL TO THE ONE THAT STARTED FOUR WEEKS AGO.”

PARENT OF DAUGHTER EXPERIENCING SEPERATION ANXIETY



“It felt quite liberating and exciting at first to be out playing again, and refreshing after months of lock down. It also felt special to have the opportunity to support these young people. There is a little sense of sadness having been some support and for a short time creating a safe community around these young people, and I really hope that they continue to receive the support they need in to the future.”

PLAY RANGER REFLECTIONS



“THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR HAVING HIM. HE HAS LOVED COMING TO YOU. I WANT TO THANK YOU AND YOUR TEAM FOR THE KINDNESS YOU HAVE SHOWN HIM.”

PARENT

“SHE HAS ABSOLUTELY LOVED COMING EVERY WEEK, SHE HAS GOTTEN SO MUCH FROM IT, THANK YOU.”

PARENT

“The children I work with absolutely loved it; when I went to visit they talked all about the activities they’d done and how much they were looking forward to returning the following week. Mum commented that they came back each time ‘buzzing’. It’s a great scheme and so helpful for Mum too as it gave her a break. Tell commissioning we definitely need it to continue!”

Elizabeth Guest, Social Worker



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