



Youth Social Action Case Studies

Sixth Formers at **Blenheim High School** decided on trying to provide an outlet for stress amongst their peers to give them an opportunity to relax away from their academic subjects. They decided that they would take over 3-4 PSHCE sessions for the Sixth Form to run an alternative activity. They organised a whole sixth form dodge ball competition which was attended by the whole sixth form and they had year 12 and 13 students working together. After Christmas the young people ran a quiz and are thinking about doing a mindfulness arts and craft session.

Several students at **Kings College, Guildford** had been deeply affected by personal experiences of bereavement, self harming, bullying and depression; they chose to run a mental health programme including peer to peer support at the school during lunchtime and afterschool.

The young people at WAVES, part of **YMCA East Surrey** decided to make a film to reduce the stigma of mental health that they could show at schools and colleges, so they could give their peers encouragement that they were not alone and that it was good to talk about mental health as you would physical health.

A team of young people from **Magna Carta School** in Runnymede developed a free mental health app, aimed at helping other young people with mental health related issues – My Teen Mind.

Epsom College students held an environmental awareness week where they gathered rubbish, spoke in assembly and used lessons to learn about the environment. In Spanish classes these students made an environment themed film. Throughout the week the students raised funds and presented a cheque for £1500 to Surrey Wildlife Trust. SWT have now invited the students to be part of a project making a pathway for disabled children at one of their centres.

Students at **Ewell Castle** organised 5 activities to “give” to their local community. These included: working around a farm, clearing/weeding/litter picking with a chance to meet the animals! Practical conservation task with Surrey Wildlife Trust. Helping Nonsuch Park with woodland clearing and bonfire, planting trees, tulips and shrubs ready for the spring. And at Christmas a choir of talented musicians performed Christmas carols in the Ashley Centre, Epsom with others handing out leaflets about Sunnybank Trust events.

Rebekah was a keen cadet in Reigate and loved sport. Her goal was to be a medical officer in the army, planning to start training at 16. She was diagnosed with glandular fever in 2014 and spent 4 months isolated from the outside world, dropping from a healthy size 8 to a skeletal size 4. Rebekah has had to give up her dream of the Army and it's been difficult to keep up with cadets. She continues to persevere with her studies with difficulty. Despite everything she constantly seeks to encourage others and has been working with East Surrey Hospital to develop “Bekah's Bag” – a scheme where gift bags containing a few luxuries is distributed to teenage girls in hospital. She felt in this way she could make the girls feel more ‘normal’ and bring a smile to their face and in turn having a positive effect on their mental health and desire to get better.

Other examples of ideas from young people in Surrey include:

- #notjustbanter surrey. A campaign to educate each year group on the difference between banter and bullying. Workshops in form time for each year group, with a whole school assembly
- LGBT awareness –seek support from an outside agency to look at ways the school can positively engage with LGBT.
- An environmental week including - environmental lesson in their form time, 1 own clothes day written into the school calendar to raise funds to then buy equipment to help start recycling programmes in each of the house. Hire a skip to a gathering of rubbish in the quad over the week.
- A project to encourage positive relationships between adults and students, running a programme of joint well being activities including Yoga and arts classes for both teachers and students.
- “Express your stress” – Tai Chi, gardening, and a series of other mental well being activities.
- A fundraising campaign to buy a new cooker for a guide hut
- A new community allotment and gardening project
- A project to combat anti-social behaviour in a park by having a community litter pick day and make posters and campaign.



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