

youth news

an update for CBHA's young people and adults

summer 2006



Bang to rights! Youths meet prison inmates

A group of 13 CBHA youths went to jail at the beginning of August - but it was all right, they were only visiting!

The trip to Coldingley Prison in Woking, Surrey, was organised by youth worker Judy Griffith who thought it would be a good idea to show them the reality of what happens to those who choose a life of crime.

After handing over their mobiles and chewing gum to be put in lockers, they met the inmates. "The kids loved it," said Judy. They heard what life was really like inside and how it could really change you - for example, you can go in clean and come out a drug addict, or become more aggressive." The inmates also did some role-plays, including acting out a mugging before discussing it. They suggested the youths think how they would feel if it was their grandmother being attacked.

Here's what the young people said about the experience:

Mekeedah: They gave good advice.

Josh: Clear and useful information.

Man: We learnt a lot.

Joel: They talked about the different 'masks' we put on.

Ammar: Very good.

Riyan: Effective.

Rhianna: They used pictures of things that had happened inside.

They were very effective.

Others said they did not intend ending up inside.



Santana: "The shock tactics worked"
Rodelle: "Now I know what prison is like, I don't want to forget"

Young people finding training and job options

Youth worker Douglas Muhammed has been providing some outreach jobs and training advice to young CBHA people.

"Several of these young men have now found training to do. Some have found jobs and others are enrolled to start

college in September," he said.

"When I talk with them about their options, I can refer them to the government's careers scheme Connexions, the Job Service, other training schemes and colleges. It is good to see them moving on and doing something constructive and starting to realise their potential."

In addition, groups of young people have signed up for youth work training so they can help out at CBHA's youth clubs. Douglas has had a lot of this success in Chingford and is now targeting Leyton. He will be based in the office and will also be going out and about in the community.

Contact Douglas on: 020 7922 8524.

CBHA girl group Unleashed dance at Leytonstone festival

Unleashed, a group of four teenage girls, performed some street dance as part of Leytonstone festival.

Shona, Serene, Sabrina and Helene were watched at the Epicentre by one crowd

before racing across to Langthorne Park. They joined dancers from a Kids Culture Klub group for a free-style dance performance as part of the Youthfest event, organised by local partners.



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Hot summer of fun begins



A hot summer programme of activities and outings for CBHA young people is off to a great start.

Already they have been paintballing, spent time with their mates in the chill out zones, had fantastic days at Thorpe Park and Southend (pictured left) and gone wild at Port Lymph animal park. There they took a safari trailer to see the wildlife.

And they are an arty lot. The craft sessions have been extremely popular. Other workshops have included poetry, drama, music technology, DJing (pictured left) and IT.

Many have started picking up the vouchers that entitle them to a pizza or a cinema visit on a Friday night. In addition, some of the older teenagers have been interested in the health and beauty workshops and life skills sessions and have been picking up tips on self-development, budgeting and cooking.

Fund raising day

A fund-raising fun day at Leyton was a great success. The event, at the end of July, was held by Kids Culture Klub, facilitated by Yvonne Bailey and her team, and supported by CBHA to raise money for youth activities.



Reputation for great youth programmes spreads

Word of CBHA's extensive summer programmes has spread... Forest Homes, which manages Beaumont Estate in Leyton asked if its youngsters could be included in this year's programme and has provided extra funding for this.

Youth worker Douglas Muhammed said about 40 kids from the estate had been coming to the workshops and on the Monday trips out, taking the average going on the outings up to 100.

Truce gigs aim to connect with community

Former gang members from New York's hardest ghettos put on rap concerts in three of CBHA areas in July. They drew the biggest crowd in Leytonstone.

Truce is a team of young Americans, comprised of reformed former gang members and drug dealers who are now committed Christians. The evangelical Christian organisation put on the events in conjunction with London churches after being invited by police to help tackle gang activity and connect with deprived communities.

Truce uses a 'hit and run' approach – going into a neighbourhood, setting up equipment and playing loud music to attract a crowd.

CBHA young people in Oliver Road, Chingford and Cathall listened to the rapping and heard how Truce had got young people living in New York City's most

notorious areas, including the Bronx, to put down their guns, throw away their drugs and pursue a more positive lifestyle.

Behind Truce is Nicky Cruz, a former leader of New York's notorious Mau Mau gang. His story was published in *The Cross and the Switchblade* and *Run Baby Run*.

