

OYCI IMPACT REPORT

April 2021 – March 2022



Overview

This financial year, OYCI ran activity for young people aged 10 – 18 both in and out of school, during term time and holidays.

Our work fell under the following strands:

- Creative Arts
- Life Skills and Well-being
- The Natural Environment
- Youth Voice

Youth voice runs through everything we do, and we ran several "Have Your Say" sessions throughout the year to shape our programme, we are always ready to adapt to what the young people want and need.

This document gives an overview of the activity we ran in this period, and the impact it had on our young people. Please note some activity blocks started or ended outside of the financial year, but the majority of the work took place in this timeframe.

Key Stats

1082 PARTICIPATION EXPERIENCES

575 YOUNG PEOPLE WORKED WITH

324 ACCREDITED YOUNG PEOPLE*

189 SESSIONS DELIVERED

109 GREEN HEART PLEDGES

88 PARTICIPANTS WITH ASN

9 WEEKS OF FREE HOLIDAY ACTIVITY

*300 Hi5 awards, 18 DYA awards, 3 Sports Leader Awards, 3 Place2Be Mental Health Peer Mentor awards

Who took part?

Boys 36%	10 – 11 years 21%
Girls 63%	12–15 years 72%
PNTS 1%	16–18 years 7%

ORGANISATIONAL OUTCOMES

Improve opportunities for young people to participate

We have consistently offered young people opportunities to participate in a way that works for them throughout the year. We have had 1082 participation experiences with 575 young people over 189 sessions (or on average 4 per week). Young people can participate in and out of school, online, in person, in term time, and in the holidays.

Strengthen the voice of young people in decision making

Regular "Have Your Say" sessions allow young people to feedback to us on issues they feel strongly about. Groups have met on Fast Fashion, Social Media, and Climate Action to discuss how we can support them to make a difference. Each programme and activity has regular evaluations and co-design sessions with young people to inform what they do and how they work.

Enhance connectivity of organisations and people

We have worked with the following partners to deliver our programme this year: Alva Academy, local primary schools, Tillicoultry Baptist Church, Dollar Development Trust, Paisley YMCA, Youth Scotland, Menstrie Community Action Group, CLD, as well as many funders. Some of these relationships are existing, some for the first time – we strive to continue to work in partnership with local and national organisations.

Increase employment and training opportunities for young people

Through our leadership programme and Hi5, we have helped 324 young people get some form of accreditation this year – Hi5 awards, Youth Achievement Awards, DYA awards, Mental Health Peer Mentors, and Youth Scotland games training. We have also begun to offer volunteer opportunities for the older young people to assist with our provision – giving valuable experience for work/college/uni applications and CVs.

Develop the skills and confidence of young people

100% of our young leaders said they had fun, developed confidence, challenged themselves and learned new skills. 78% of S1 Hi5's reported improved experiences and outcomes from their participation including feeling better about themselves, trying new things, learning more skills, working better with others & joining in more. We strive to offer activities that young people may not have experienced before – coding, digital design, cooking and baking. Our dance leaders have had the opportunity to run their own session during our holiday provision. We will always include young people in our decision making – giving them key skills and confidence to realise their voices are being heard.

CREATIVE ARTS

April 2021 – March 2022



Activity Overview

In this time period, our creative arts output has been:

- After school drama club at Alva Academy:
A regular Friday night club for S1-3 to play drama games, do improv, and create scenes.

- Sunday drama/OYCI Create

Regular workshops included: directing, creative writing, and 'hear my voice'

- Heritage project

Working with a composer, young people created a sound performance inspired by the history of their area

- Play in a week (as part of our holiday provision)

Young people work for an intensive week and put on a play at the end of it.

- Alcohol project

S3 pupils from Alva took part in this project which allowed them to creatively explore issues surrounding alcohol

Key Stats

593 PARTICIPATION EXPERIENCES

94 PARTICIPANTS

66 SESSIONS

35 YOUNG PEOPLE WITH A
DISABILITY OR SUPPORT NEED

"OYCI IS A SAFE SPACE WHERE I FEEL OPEN
ENOUGH TO SHARE"

- YOUNG PERSON ON SUNDAY DRAMA

"I COME FOR FUN AND ESCAPISM. I FIND CREATING
AND ACTING OUT SOMEONE OTHER THAN MYSELF
TO BE QUITE THERAPEUTIC"

- YOUNG PERSON ON DRAMA CLUB

MY SON WAS SO LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS
EVERY DAY - A BREATH OF FRESH AIR AFTER
LOCKDOWN"

- PARENT ON PLAY IN A WEEK

"I PUT EVERYTHING IN TO DOING IT AND I REALLY
ENJOYED IT. IT WAS SO FUN!"

- YOUNG PERSON ON THE HERITAGE PROJECT

CREATIVE ARTS

Case Study: Heritage Project

In summer – autumn 2021 we delivered a creative arts project exploring the history and heritage of Clackmannanshire, through the creation of a recorded audio performance. The project was delivered in two phases, and engaged 23 young people.

Phase 1 took place in the school summer holidays 2021, and was focused on research.

A group of young people began researching the history of Clackmannanshire through creative workshops, a visit to Dollar Museum, a session with a local historian and individual research, supported by OYCI staff via regular check in's on Zoom.

The research was collated on Tumblr, and young people began to select themes and strands of research that they found most interesting, to take forward into phase 2.

In Phase 2, OYCI's Creative Arts team worked alongside freelance composer and sound designer, Ross Brown, to create the audio performance. Young people met over 6 intensive full day sessions on Sundays, to bring the research to life through drama, song, storytelling and creating sound effects. Young people showed a huge level of commitment to this project, and worked very hard to bring their creative ideas to life.

OYCI's coding club also took inspiration from the project themes, and used their coding skills to create computer games based on Clackmannanshire's history of witches.

The final piece was shared at an outdoor event at Gartmorn Dam- a local nature reserve, with beautiful views of the Ochil Hills, which were referenced throughout the piece. Audience members were asked to bring their own phones and headphones, and go for a walk around Gartmorn Dam, while listening to the audio performance.

Case Study: Ellie* (Sunday drama)

Ellie has a sensory processing disorder and can struggle to focus and follow instructions. She used to really struggle during games and was quite isolated from the rest of the group. Through regular participation we noticed a big improvement in Ellie's confidence, and in her ability to focus and participate well in sessions. She contributes smart, well thought through ideas, and is respected and liked by the others in the group. We're really proud of how well she has done! She is now an integral member of the Sunday drama group.

**Name has been changed*

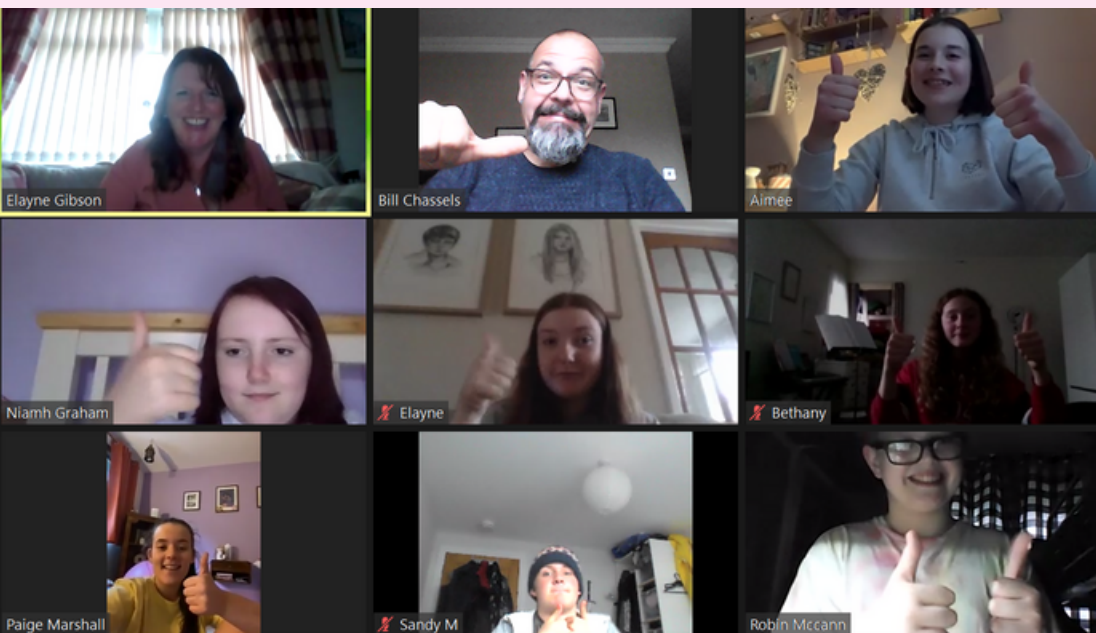
The Future

This year of drama activity has ignited an interest in the creative arts, and the young people who have participated are keen to do more.

Our aim is to continue running our weekly drama provision and holidays projects, while developing new projects and programmes in consultation with our young people. We aim to expand on our Heritage themed work, as well as our digital provision. We also feel it is important to continue providing regular and consistent activity that offers young people a place to be themselves, relax and make new friends, while trying out new creative activities.

CONNECT

April 2021 – March 2022



Activity Overview

OYCI Connect provides a safe space for young people aged 10–18 to meet weekly, make friends, share ideas, learn new skills and act on issues that are important to them. Covid-19 has had a lasting impact on the health and wellbeing of young people, and finally moving back to face-to-face sessions in January has had a significant impact on engagement.

Connect provides upstream early intervention approach designed to provide a positive alternative for young people to engaging in risk taking behaviour (diversionary). Having a permanent base provides young people with a safe space to socialise with other young people rather than hanging around streets at night with no real purpose.

Our sessions aim to continue to build confidence and resilience, provide opportunities to volunteer and lead on sessions, share and learn new skills and develop skills for life, supporting physical and mental wellbeing. Moving from online provision to indoor face-to-face sessions in Tillicoultry has helped to develop greater links with the community.

Key Stats

230 PARTICIPATION EXPERIENCES

30 AFTER SCHOOL SESSIONS

30 REGULAR PARTICIPANTS

7 YOUNG PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY OR SUPPORT NEED

What did we do?

Activities included;

Online during Covid-19 restrictions:

- Crafts
- Baking
- Quizzes

(all materials were delivered in advance to the young people).

Face to face:

- Seed planting
- Karaoke
- Crafts
- Cake Craft

CONNECT

How we've grown with Connect

As part of our evaluation we asked the young people how they've grown, what they enjoyed, what they'd like to do in the future and anything they'd change:

"I love OYCI because I feel it is a safe environment for lots of fun"

"OYCI always makes you feel like you"

They told us they feel excited for Connect, and they loved the baking, crafts, and music activities. Suggestions for the future included challenges and a movie night.

When asked what could be better, one young person simply answered *"nothing"*



The Future

Connect is a popular and well attended activity within our programme and as long as we can secure funding and young people want it, we will continue to run it. We'd love to add another session so more young people can attend.

Polling data

As part of Connect we asked the young people to give their opinion on various development areas, and if Connect had helped them:

- **100% said they had fun** all or most of the time
- 91% said they felt listened to and respected
- 91% felt Connect gives them a safe place to meet new friends and try new things
- 91% said they feel they are more caring towards others
- 83% said they felt more confident
- 83% said Connect makes them feel included by friends and the wider community

Awards

A number of our young people had the opportunity to use Connect for awards – DYA, YAA & DofE – which helps improve employability and personal development.

We have young leaders helping at Connect which they can use as evidence for their awards, whilst gaining valuable leadership experience.

FUN, FOOD, AND FRIENDSHIPS

August 2021 – June 2022



Activity Overview

Fun, Food and Friendships is based in school and invites pupils from Alva Academy to take part in a variety of activities on a Tuesday afternoon after school has finished.

The sessions are aimed primarily at S1 pupils to help them settle into secondary school, but it is also open to any mainstream pupils S1-S3 attending Alva Academy. The sessions aim to develop confidence, build relationships and have fun. The sessions also give our young leaders an opportunity to lead on activities especially games, putting into practice the training they did with the iLead DYA in October 2021.

Each session has a similar format, so young people know what to expect each week, starting with a snack and a chat, catching up on how the young people are and a chance to unwind and on occasion let off steam after the school day. We play ice breaker games, often led by our Young Leaders, before doing the main activity.

"I LOVE BEING ABLE TO BE IN A GROUP"
– PARTICIPANT

Key Stats

142 PARTICIPATION EXPERIENCES

29 AFTER SCHOOL SESSIONS

3 YOUNG LEADER VOLUNTEERS*

*One of our young leaders is using Fun, Food, and Friendships as the volunteering section for her Duke of Edinburgh award, and all have the opportunity to gain a Youth Achievement award.

Activities

Young people took part in a variety of activities including:

- Baking
- Gardening
- Crafts
- Games

All activity is shaped by young people and focusses on their wellbeing and mental health.

FUN, FOOD, AND FRIENDSHIPS

Case Study 1

One young person who can become dysregulated took a leading role in the planting activity. He shared this knowledge and experience with his peers – encouraging, giving advice and helping where necessary. As a result of this he has been tasked with caring for and looking after a garden balcony area during school time, ensuring that the plants are watered and checked frequently. He has also better connected with the teacher involved with this who reports an improvement on interactions and a better relationship with him.

"I'M EXCITED TO DO NEW THINGS" - PARTICIPANT

"IT WAS GREAT TO WORK WITH THE YOUNG PEOPLE IN A DIFFERENT SITUATION FROM SCHOOL CLASS AND I WOULD BE HAPPY TO HAVE YOU IN THE DEPARTMENT ANY TIME" - TEACHER

Case Study 2

One young person has ASD, a learning disability, delayed speech and struggles to interact with peers. He does not feel comfortable if he thinks people are looking at him and does not like to be the focus of attention. When he first started coming to FFF he would sit on the side lines and often observe rather than participate. Gradually week by week we could see his confidence grow, he would become more involved but was free to step back at any point if he felt uncomfortable. He became more confident to speak and with support from our staff and young leaders he participated fully in all of our activities, forming relationships and attempting to have conversations with the other group members.

"IT'S FUN AND ENJOYABLE" - PARTICIPANT

"I LOVE HANGING OUT WITH MY FRIENDS FROM OTHER YEAR GROUPS" - PARTICIPANT

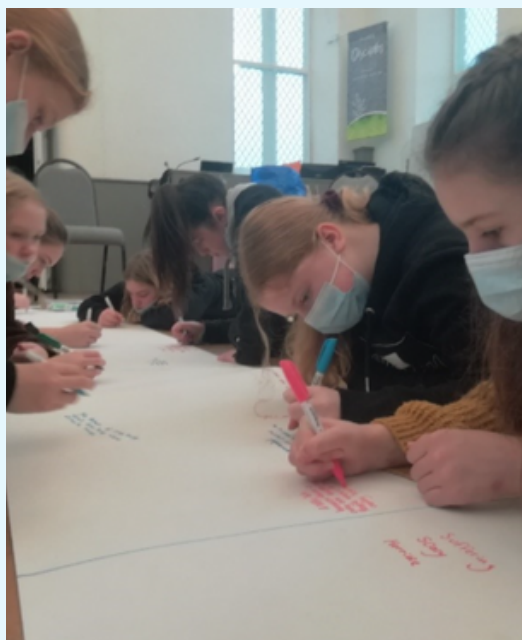


The Future

We look forward to another term of Fun, Food, and Friendships having built up a regular attendance of engaged and happy young people. Our young leaders are keen to join us again and gain experience in leading games, assisting with activities, and providing support to younger peers.

Hi5

2021/22



Activity Overview

This project aimed to assist and support in the transition of young people from P7 to S1. It was set in the school environment at Alva Academy and activities were centred on making friends, communication skills and health & wellbeing. These themes were explored through games, activities, drama and group discussions. Within each session young people were given the opportunity to complete a Hi5 Award, achieving their first SCQF Credit points. They also received a certificate marking this achievement.

Due to the pandemic, the current S1s had not had the opportunity to do Hi5 so we pledged to put these S1s through a bespoke Hi5 to help build their confidence within the safe community environment of Tillicoultry Baptist Church. The project focused on themes of communication, mindfulness, wellbeing and climate action. Activities included active games, group discussions and creating a climate pledge, all of which had opportunities for young people's voices to be amplified and empowered. Within the session participants worked towards completing a Hi5 Award which provided them with SQA credit points.

Key Stats

300 PARTICIPANTS

17 SESSIONS DELIVERED

6 PRIMARY SCHOOLS

4 YOUNG LEADER VOLUNTEERS

Young Leaders

Our Young Leaders led ice breaker games and supervised the friendship activity, supporting the participants engagement. Across the weeks the Young Leaders confidence grew from working with the P7's on a regular basis. Their involvement has been positive and impactful, making them potential role models for the younger participants. It has also been valuable for the Young Leaders growth and progression as this was their first time putting their training into practice.

HI 5 - P7

Case Study

Several young people had significant support needs, one of which had chosen to be mute in the company of adults. We were made aware of this prior to the workshop. We adjusted the programme which not only allowed her to communicate but also benefited the other young people who found this useful themselves.

Alva Academy's Support for Learning Assistants (SLA's) took part which allowed this young person to get to know them, this is particularly important as the SLA will be supporting the individual post transition. At the end of the workshop, this young person noted that the SLA was helpful.

"THIS WAS A REALLY FUN EXPERIENCE, AND I WOULD DEFINITELY DO IT AGAIN! 😊" - PARTICIPANT

"I'M GLAD I CAME HERE" - PARTICIPANT

"DIFFERENT, FUN, EXCITING" - PARTICIPANT



When asked for 3 words to describe the session, the words 'Fun' 'Exciting' & 'Enjoyable' were mentioned most

HI 5 - S1

Case Study

We had several students facing significant barriers to participation including:

Student A, who had the potential to not show up for the workshop. However, they attended and participated well, enjoying the day and completing their award.

Student B was very apprehensive at first. We were able to encourage her participation in games, especially the silly ones, to help her grow in confidence throughout the session.

Student C had missed a lot of primary school but felt that he was able to fully participate in the workshop and make the most of the opportunity presented.

"I ENJOYED PLAYING GAMES AND I TALKED TO OTHERS WHILE BEING CONFIDENT" - PARTICIPANT

"ENJOYED PLAYING THE GAMES" - PARTICIPANT

"I ENJOYED DOING THE CLIMATE CHANGE ACTIVITY" - PARTICIPANT



The Future

Having gathered feedback from the participants, primary teachers and Alva Academy staff, moving forward, we will be working closely with both participating schools and Alva Academy to shape the next Hi5 programme. To ensure that it is highly targeted and relevant for the next round of participants.



HOLIDAY PROVISION

April 2021 – March 2022



Activity Overview

OYCI run holiday activity during Easter, Summer, and October breaks.

During easter we ran Wednesday – Friday trialling the "Fun, Food, and Friendship" theme the young people had suggested. Every activity fell under one (or all!) of these.

In summer our programme offered Cooking and Baking, The Great Outdoors, and History and Heritage, which included trips to Gartmorn Dam, Dollar Museum, and Lendrick Muir. As well as these we ran our first Festivals of Fun, attended by nearly 200 young people over the two events.

We ran Tuesday – Friday in the October week, offering dance, arts and crafts, cooking, and coding.

"TIRED BUT HAPPY"

"SO TIRED... SO FUN"

"HAPPY. TIRED"

-YOUNG PEOPLE ASKED HOW
THEY FEEL POST GREAT
OUTDOORS HIKE

"AMAZING"

"FABULOUS"

"FUN FUN FUN!"

- YOUNG PEOPLE ASKED TO
DESCRIBE THE FESTIVAL OF
FUN IN ONE WORD

Key Stats

699 PARTICIPATION EXPERIENCES

291 PARTIPANTS

41 SESSIONS

Holiday Hunger

Food is always provided at our holiday provision, to try and combat holiday hunger.

During the summer cooking programme, we ran "a meal for 2 session" where the young people took home a meal of lasagne and apple crumble to share with a parent or someone at home.

At both festivals of fun, our noodle stall proved a hit, and meant we gave a hot lunch to nearly 200 young people.

HOLIDAY PROVISION

Case Study: Summer Social Action

Young people undertook some clearing of overgrowth on the Tillicoultry Glen Paths to assist the ongoing maintenance of the paths on behalf of the Tilly Glen Action Group. As well as helping improve their community, young people learned about tool use and safety.

Many of them seemed engrossed in their tasks. They occasionally needed reminding that they didn't have to make it pristine because they were so focused on it! This type of activity engaged young people who may struggle in a more enclosed school setting, which was impressive. It was really nice to see them working together, supporting one another and banding together to create a big impact as a group.

100% of the young people who took part said they felt like they had made a difference.



Case Study: Festivals of Fun

There was such great attendance at both festivals, far higher than anticipated, with a wide range of young people participating - many who had not participated in OYCI activities before.

Some young people have gone on to attend our regular provision: one went on to attend our drama heritage project and to take part in pop up workshops learning life skills such as cooking.

Another who requires support for learning within mainstream education and is in P7 has engaged with us and is enjoying the opportunity to participate. This young person, according to her parent, is experiencing bullying related to her learning support requirement and is enjoying having fun with us and taking part in experiential learning that does not require a 1-2-1 learning support worker but instead our skilled and experienced youth workers support her within the group.



The Future

We spend considerable time gathering feedback and evaluating each holiday programme, and aim to deliver as much as is possible within budget and staff time. The Festival of Fun is a great way to engage new young people and we hope to continue this in some form year on year.

HOLIDAY PROGRAMMES



OYCI

EASTER 2021

WED 7TH: THE GREAT OYCI BAKE OFF 1.30 - 3.30

THURS 8TH: SUCCULENTS & SELFIES 1.30 - 3.30

FRI 9TH: DRAMARAMA 1.30 - 3.30

WED 14TH: CAMPFIRES & STORIES 1.30 - 3.30

THURS 15TH: DRAG RACE VS GREY'S ANATOMY 1.30 - 3.30

FRI 16TH: WEEKEND WARM UP 1.30 - 3.30



OYCI OCTOBER HOLIDAY

OYCI IS A YOUTH ACTION CHARITY DEDICATED TO ENSURING ALL YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO HAVE FUN!

TUESDAY 12TH DANCE WORKSHOP
JOIN OUR DANCE LEADERS TO LEARN ALL THE LATEST MOVES WHILST HAVING LOADS OF FUN!
1-3PM. THE HIVE

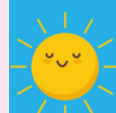
WEDNESDAY 13TH ARTS & CRAFTS
IT'S A SPOOKTACULAR ARTS & CRAFTS SPECIAL - WE'LL BE PLAYING WITH SPECIAL EFFECTS HALLOWEEN MAKE UP.
1-3PM. TILLY BAPTIST CHURCH

THURSDAY 14TH COOKING
WE'RE MAKING SUSTAINABLE SOUPS AND SMOOTHIES TO TAKE HOME TO YOUR FAMILY - ALL INGREDIENTS PROVIDED.
1-3PM. THE HIVE

FRIDAY 15TH CODING
LEARN HOW TO WRITE COMPUTER CODE TO CREATE SIMPLE GAMES AND CHARACTERS IN THIS FUN WORKSHOP.
1-3PM. TILLY BAPTIST CHURCH

ALL OYCI ACTIVITY IS FREE TO ATTEND FOR ANYONE AGED 10-18 IN THE HILLFOOTS AREA. TO BOOK YOUR FREE PLACE CONTACT BOOKINGS@OYCI.ORG.UK

www.oyci.org.uk

OYCI SUMMER 2021

FESTIVAL OF FUN

7th July and 13th August

Start (and then end) your summer the way you mean to go on - an inflatable obstacle course, silent disco, face painting, chill out zone, popcorn, candyfloss, street food and more!

THE GREAT OUTDOORS

12th - 17th July

A week of outdoor skills including a trip to Lendrick Muir, and a day of watersports, plus learn bushcraft, whittling, campfires, hiking and more!

HISTORY & HERITAGE

26th / 27th July

Do you know about where you're from? Starting with a trip to Dollar museum, we'll then gather stories from the local area and record them in creative and fun way.

COOKING AND BAKING

28th/29th July and 30th/31st July

A 2 day cooking and baking bonanza - learn basic cooking skills and take dinner home to your family at the end!

ALL OUR ACTIVITY IS FOR ANYONE AGED 10-18 AND IS COMPLETELY FREE. BOOK YOUR PLACE BY EMAILING BOOKINGS@OYCI.ORG.UK





LEADERSHIP

August 2021 – June 2022



Activity Overview

Senior Alva Academy pupils were offered a series of Leadership training opportunities by Youth Scotland from June – October 2021.

Some were based at Alva Academy while others were off site at Gartmorn Dam and The Hive, Dollar. Participants were offered a taster session, then a 2 day iLead Dynamic Youth Award. Day one focused on inclusive participation, leading games and communication skills. Day two was a canoe / team building session.

From there, 17 young people continued with OYCI in various leadership roles, undertaking further training and volunteering across our provision as detailed opposite.

"AS FOR ALL THE YOUNG LEADERS WHO HAVE PARTICIPATED ACROSS OUR PROVISION, I HAVE BEEN IMPRESSED WITH THEIR DEVELOPMENT AND SEEN A MARKED INCREASE IN CONFIDENCE WHEN WORKING WITH YOUNGER YEAR GROUPS ALSO THE RELATIONSHIPS THEY HAVE DEVELOPED AND THEY ARE SEEN AS POSITIVE ROLE MODELS..."

- ELAYNE, LEADERSHIP YOUTH WORKER

Key Stats

17 YOUNG LEADERS

8 STARTING PLATINUM YAA

4 REGULAR P7 TRANSITION VOLUNTEERS

3 REGULAR FFF VOLUNTEERS

3 TRAINED DANCE LEADERS

3 TRAINED MENTAL HEALTH PEER MENTORS

1 REGULAR CONNECT VOLUNTEER

1 REACH 4 EVENT PARTICIPANT

Award: Service to School

Our young leaders were recognised as part of the Alva Academy prize giving and awarded a service to school award for the work they do across our in-school provision.

LEADERSHIP

Case Study: Walk Happy

Three young people completed the Place 2B Peer Mentoring training in October 2021 and went on to put in a successful funding application to Clacks Youth Bank for their #walkhappy22 project. The project encouraged their fellow pupils to go for short study break walks throughout the exam diet, with small prizes to claim as a reward. Every person participating would also go in to a prize draw for a bigger prize at the end.

Through this project the young leaders clearly demonstrated their learning and knowledge of mental health, their research in to what can help young people's mental health and wellbeing, and their desire to improve mental health within the school.



"I FELT INSPIRED WORKING ON THE WALK HAPPY CAMPAIGN KNOWING I WAS TRYING TO HELP OTHERS THROUGH STRESSFUL TIMES." - MENTAL HEALTH PEER MENTOR



Feedback

- 100% of our young leaders had fun
- 100% felt more confident
- 100% felt they challenged themselves
- 100% learned new skills

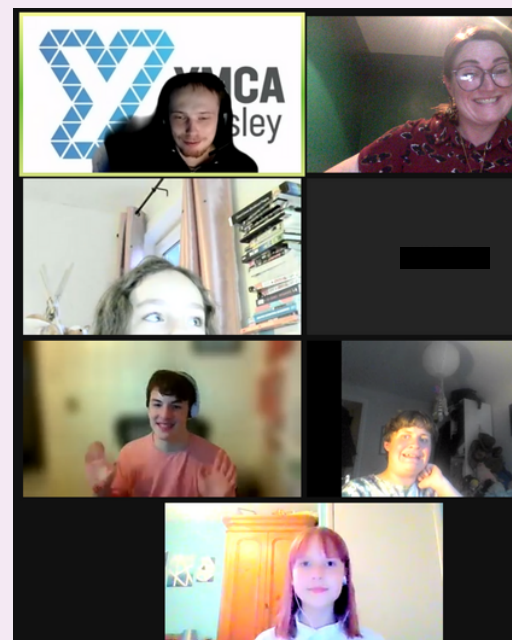


The Future

Of our Young leaders who volunteer regularly, only one is in new S5 so the rest will be leaving school as of Easter next year. We will hope to run another training session opportunity for the new S5 and give more young people the opportunity to gain accreditation, increase their skills, and thrive as young leaders.

LIFE SKILLS

April 2021 – March 2022



Activity Overview

Our life skills programme consists of three main skill areas:

- Cooking and Baking
- Digital Design
- Coding

During our cooking and baking workshops we ensure each young person learns a new skill (knife skills, cake decorating, use of different kitchen appliances) and also has something to take home or eat with their peers at the end of the session. These sessions are always full.

Digital design has been both online using programmes such as canva to create artwork, or face to face, making use of our Cricut machine – a piece of technology not available to most young people.

Our coding sessions were run in partnership with Paisley YMCA, predominantly online but with one face to face workshop. Participants learning started with the programme Scratch, then some requested to learn the more advanced Java, which we were able to facilitate.

Key Stats

102 PARTICIPATION EXPERIENCES

58 PARTICIPANTS

15 SESSIONS

Real world skills

Each of our life skills have crossed over in to our other provision, proving how useful and vital they are:

- Cooking and baking participants have assisted on larger group events such as our summer BBQ and festivals of fun.
- Coding participants created a game to go alongside the heritage project.
- Digital design participants have expressed a desire to create product to sell in order to fundraise for OYCI.

LIFE SKILLS

Case Study: Polly*

Polly (10) started to engage with OYCI in our online coding sessions. For the first block her camera was off, she never spoke or typed in to the chat box, but continued to attend. During the second block in a quieter session, she was in a breakout room and started to engage with one of our youth workers, keen to show them some artwork she had created. From there we were able to start a conversation about other OYCI activities, including arts and crafts. She built up the confidence to attend our face to face coding session, and then began to attend more and more OYCI provision. She now attends at least once a week and has made firm friendships within the group. She used to be heavily dependant on her phone, as a way to 'escape' the group if she needed to, but at our recent festival of fun she handed the phone to us to look after, happy to be away from it.

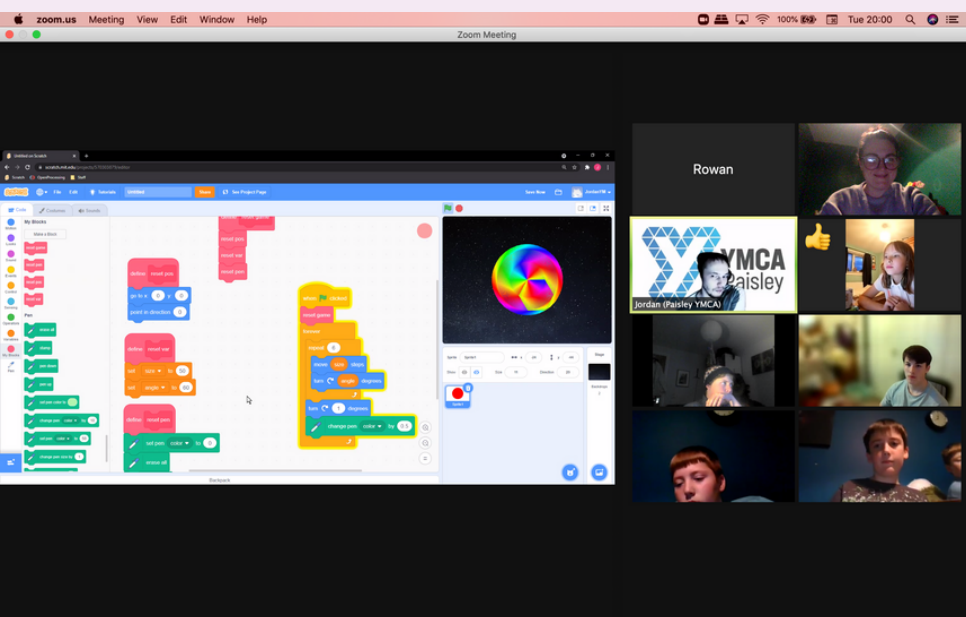
*names have been changed for anonymity

Case Study: Olivia*

When Olivia first started with OYCI, she had issues with her confidence. She learned quickly within our cooking and baking sessions and discovered she had a flair for preparing food and offered to lead a session on baking during Connect, our Thursday night drop in. She was confident enough to be able to lead other young people through the process of making scones and a mars traybake.

Case Study: Hannah*

Hannah started to attend our digital design sessions and her mum had concerns about her being bullied at school and issues with friendship. She loved these sessions and was thrilled to be able to make gifts for her family during them, but has also formed friendships within OYCI and her mum reports that she is much happier as a result.



The Future

We have plans to develop our base further to support these activities – a new kitchen so we can do cooking and baking on site, more digital equipment for design and coding, and we have a staff member training in Raspberry Pi to support coding provision.



THE GREAT OUTDOORS

August 2021 – June 2022



Activity Overview

We started The Great Outdoors project in October 2021 with the view of taking young people from Alva Academy's ASN department out of their usual school day and give them the opportunity to experience the natural environment of The Great Outdoors. The idea came from our summer holiday sessions which had been particularly attended by young people with support needs. We wanted to explore whether the different environment could help them grow in confidence, build trust and improve communication. We held our first sessions at Devilla Forest, exploring the area and observing the seasonal changes. We revisited this area during the school year and across the seasons to further observe and note changes. The young people were given opportunity to take part in a variety of outdoor activities from familiarising themselves with a new area to shelter building, art and crafts, and fire lighting skills. For the final phase of our project, we utilised the forest area at Gartmorn Dam and a final visit to Devilla Forest to once again observe and compare the seasonal changes.

Key Stats

29 PARTICIPATION EXPERIENCES

7 SESSIONS

3 OF OUR 4 PARTICIPANTS NOW PARTICIPATE WITH OYCI EVERY WEEK

"If young people are climbing the walls, remove the walls".

Taking young people who have struggles in school in to the outdoors and using different skills and activities has proven to make them more engaged, confident, and able to communicate better. They have built trusting relationships with our staff and each other and begun to engage in our wider provision.

THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Case Study: Amber*

Amber has gone from being quite stand-offish and suspicious of the adults involved to openly chatting to us and approaching us without invitation any time she sees us. Amber shows respect and listens to our input & opinions. She offers suggestions and shares her own knowledge and ideas. As the project has progressed, she has shown an interest in the natural environments we have visited and has noticed and commented on the changes she has seen. As we have connected with her, we have seen her be more thoughtful of the staff involved and has latterly offered help with many things on our trips out. We see a different young person to the lass we worked with during last summer's Great Outdoors Week and cooking experiences.

*names have been changed for anonymity



The Future

Research shows that heading outdoors for forest experiences can be beneficial. This impact report reflects that this project has been valuable for the young people involved. Particularly for those with additional needs. Nevertheless, it can be complicated to pull young people out of subject specific classes. A potential route of development could be partnering with primary school P7s or working with younger high school students to avoid clashes with exams. We would like to develop the work to provide more valuable outdoors experiences to young people if possible.

Case Study: Cassie*

Cassie's mum is delighted with all the OYCI provision that she attends. She is an outdoor person according to both her mum and key worker which means that this piece of provision is really suited to engaging her. Although Cassie is a quieter member of the group of louder personalities she reports back to her mum very enthusiastically about The Great Outdoors sessions.

In school, a teacher reports that Cassie is always keen to share her experiences of TGO days. She has seen a build in Cassie's confidence, particularly in approaching other school staff when querying something. She does not rely on her key worker accompanying her to speak to them. Her teacher notes Cassie thrives more in an outdoor environment. Following on from planting in FFF (a different project but health and wellbeing related) she has offered and is keen to build a bug hotel in the ASN garden area. Her development is highly linked to the outdoors, which TGO has been a part of. It has been great to see her thrive in the TGO provision and benefit from her growth with OYCI overall in other environments, doing good in and for her school.