

DADS

Chairperson's Report

For the Year End March 2023

COVID restrictions began to ease but the number of individuals attending the webinars continued to drop off. We decided to develop online presentations and Rebecca McCullough finished working for the project in early April. The Buddy Hubs continued but again numbers were down. We tried a variety of activities for the children including music and drama, basketball and dance. The coffee mornings continued and continued to be well supported and we view these important to maintain our links in a variety of basis. We continue to spread the word, we give presentations to the EA guidance centre, and had a very successful information in Meadowlane Shopping Centre Magherafelt.

We continue to support both Sunflower Support Group and Tourette's Support NI while at the same time planning our next proposal for the National Lottery Community Fund which will be called 'Transitions'. Lots of summer activities were planned.

We surveyed our parents who told us that their lives were becoming busy again after COVID so we spent more effort putting resources and materials online so that they could be accessed when parents had time. Because we are now regarded as a Social Economy Enterprise we started to develop Balanceability Sessions and this has been successful and has taken us all over Northern Ireland. We bought our own equipment but encouraged children to bring their own bikes to each session.

We reviewed our summer activities which included Rugby Cub, Crafty Teddies, Healthy Eating, Photography, Belfast Zoo and the Infinity Park in Banbridge. We met with our Project Officer Michael Liggett and planned our Conference due for October 2022 in Tullyglass Hotel.

The Balanceability sessions have continued to be successful and we have had networking meetings in Garvagh, Derry, Omagh, and Newry.

The end of Project Conference was very successful and we are now putting finishing touches to our new National Lottery application. The scope of this application is wide and we hope to limit numbers so that we can gain most success.

Parents still keep coming forward with real difficulties that they are finding with statutory agencies, and we continue to try and assist them.

By the end of February 2023 the Lottery allowed us to extend the project until August 2023. The balanceability sessions has been facilitated in Newry, Omagh, Armagh, Moortown and Magherafelt. We still actively support Tourette's Support NI, Sunflower Support and the Base in Moortown and continue to have links with the local Council, Northern Trust, CWSAN, RCN, CYPSP, Mid Ulster Disability Forum, Mid Ulster Volunteers and many other community organisations.

We are at a key stage in our Empowering Young People application and are lucky to have sufficient funding generated by DADS to keep the project working in the meantime. We are hopeful of a successful outcome for our next application which would bring us work for the next 5 years. We would like to thank all of our Trustees for their continued support and look forward to working with them into the future.