HOPE'S PLACE

Mental & emotional wellbeing

THERAPEUTIC COURSES FOR SCHOOLS

Newsletter, Summer Term 2024

Where is the hope for children and young people growing in today's society? Amidst reports of knife crime, problems with County Lines, social media-induced isolation and a torrent of statistics concerning poor mental health, depression, anxiety and loneliness, Hope's Place courses can be a lifeline, a place of safety, a place where youngsters are listened to and find renewed confidence to communicate, feel that they matter and find strength to make positive life-decisions.



Maybe you'd like to join us in helping to provide these courses for more schools in Bristol and the surrounding araea - if so there are two ways contained in this newsletter - we need more Facilitators, for either boys', girls' courses in secondary or primary schools, and we need Trustees who can oversee the work, or help us in the many tasks of running a present-day charity. Scroll down to the descriptions of how you can help and how to apply or read on as we bid farewell to someone who has worked very hard for us and has deservedly found a new position, or as we talk with one of our facilitators about her work.

Thanks, Chris!



We are very sad to be losing our Boys' Facilitator, Chris Bellamy, after just over a year. Chris moves on to a full-time post, leaving us grateful for his hard work and dedication in further developing our Boys' course, exploring openings into new schools, and being totally positive throughout his time with us, in spite of having worked with some really challenging groups, and making brilliant progress in getting boys to talk (not easy!) A couple of comments from boys in his groups at the end of their course speak volumes for his effectiveness: "I got more confident going to this group and I can finally talk about things", and when asked what he enjoyed about the course, one said "Talking about myself and my worries. I want to remember how nice Chris was, and (how it was) really nice (that) the group listened to me" Chris made a real impact for Hope's Place. We'll remember him fondly and wish him every success in the future

A Facilitator's View



Suzie Gibson is in her second spell as a Hope's Place Facilitator, having had time off for the best of reasons – to start a family! Now that she has had experience of working with youngsters in Bristol schools before and after the pandemic, what has changed, and how does she feel about her return?

SG: It's good to be back with Hope's Place. I have always worked with young people and missed this connection while being away. With Anna and Chris, it's really good to be a part of a strong supportive team.

What has changed?
It's interesting to see that much has really changed in the 5 years I have been away. The young people we support are facing such a range of obstacles. It's possible to speculate about why, perhaps it's a result of the Covid lockdowns. The effects may be magnified because of social media and maybe there are labels that weren't there before. Life seems to be harder, though, and anxiety, depression and even deeper problems seem much more prevalent. But it is a privilege to journey with them as they explore who they are in light of these things.

What's the main objective in what you're trying to do for the girls in your groups?
I want them to have a safe place. Somewhere, in the busyness and apparent chaos of school, where teachers have so many things to think about, so many to care for, and perhaps don't have the time to offer much individual attention, that the girls know they have a voice, are heard, accepted and given time.

Does it make a difference to your approach now that you're a Mum?
Yes. But not always in a positive way! I hope my daughter will have a trusted adult in her life and somewhere like Hope's Place if needed. I also have less patience for sass and nonsense. I have toddlers now and there's nothing school pupils can throw at me that matches a 2-year-old who only wants to drink from the blue cup that is currently in the dishwasher!

Tell us about some of your groups.
I have one group where they are all confident girls, and we often spend our time talking though something from one of their weeks. They call it 'Therapy group' which makes me smile, but I hope sets them up with a positive look on talking therapy for life! Another group had a girl who, to start with, barely spoke in the group, let alone in her lessons, and by the end had made friends with another one of the group, and commented that she now has the confidence to speak out in class. These might seem like small steps but they are important for their understanding of who they are and in helping them to feel able to grow as they go forward. Comments such as "It's made me want to go to my lessons", It's good to be somewhere calm", "Being able to talk to an adult I trust", "My confidence has grown" and "I've learned more about other people" all make up for the hard times.

Thanks to all our Supporters

We are grateful to all who support the work of Hope's Place, especially to Bain Capital, for their time, qualified advice and their considerable financial help in recent years. Thanks to all the organisations listed on the Supporters' page on our web site, and to individuals who give to Hope's Place or who support us with their prayers and encouragements
... and while we're on the subject, thanks to Octane Accountants of Henleaze, Bristol, who provide our financial services at generous rates!

BainCapital
Community Partnership

OCTANE ACCOUNTANTS

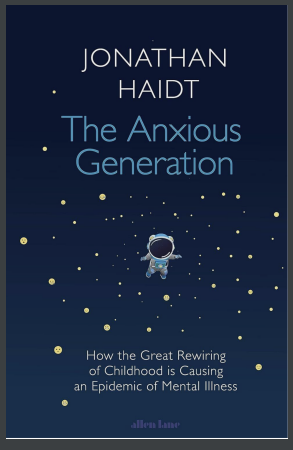
If you'd like to donate to our work, please note Hope's Place bank details:
Sort Code 60-83-71
AC no 36310797

Where have we been?

During the last two terms, twenty Hope's Place courses have been completed in schools around Bristol. These have included both primary and secondary schools, with boys and girls aged 10-14. Anyone dealing with these age groups currently will tell of the difficulties our young people are facing, so the work has not been easy and our facilitators are having to work harder to establish the trust and investment needed for benefits to come from the courses. Nevertheless we have been once again encouraged by the comments of the students.



Deserves a read...



We may not agree with everything in this book, but the arguments the American social psychologist, Jonathan Haidt, presents give a strong case for those who want to limit children's use of smart phones in the UK. As the blurb says, he "lays out the facts about the epidemic of teen mental illness that hit many countries at the same time. He then investigates the nature of childhood, including why children need play and independent exploration to mature into competent, thriving adults. Haidt shows how the *play-based childhood" began to decline in the 1980s, and how it was finally wiped out by the arrival of the "phone-based childhood" in the early 2010s.

Would you like to help young people fulfil their potential?

Are you looking for a rewarding yet challenging role?

Part-time Facilitators for Girls' and Boys' Groups

Hope's Place is seeking two PART-TIME FACILITATORS to join a team working with our established charity in a number of primary and secondary schools across Greater Bristol and South Gloucestershire. These roles enable the delivery of our unique courses to small groups of boys or girls (aged 10-18), helping them to overcome challenges, raise their aspirations and fulfil their potential. There is considerable demand for the support Hope's Place offers and several courses are running currently.

Flexible working hours available. School term time only.

Permanent contract, £16.13 per hour.

To find out more about our work see:

www.hopesplace.org.uk

For further details of the role and an application form please e-mail: Tony@hopesplace.org.uk

Closing date for completed applications: 31st May 2024

It is anticipated that interviews will take place in the week beginning 10th June 2024

Please contact us if that week is inconvenient.

Hope's Place is committed to safeguarding, child protection and promoting the wellbeing of all children, young people and members of the Hope's Place community.

Trustee Recruitment

We are seeking to recruit volunteer Educational Trustees to join our Board of Trustees.

Hope's Place

Hope's Place works effectively and creatively with young people in secondary and primary schools throughout Bristol and beyond.

Our facilitators run our own single-sex, ten-week courses for groups of up to ten young people who are facing challenges with their mental and emotional wellbeing.

Groups address themes which are prevalent in the lives of the children and young people, such as identity, relationships, self-esteem, body image and decision-making. Over two hundred and fifty young people benefitted from our courses last academic year.

We also run *Aspire* courses which comprises workshops, usually for a whole class, to enable children in their final year of primary to make the move to secondary education feeling well-informed, confident and enthusiastic.

VISION
Young people who have the stability, confidence and humility needed to reach their full potential as individuals and members of society.

MISSION
Through our courses in schools, to address the issues faced by children and young people and to help them develop resilience, overcome challenges and to make positive life choices.

VALUES
We believe:
That no person or situation is without HOPE
That all individuals are equal, unique and valuable and that difference should be celebrated
That everyone is worthy of respect and should respect others
That resilience is key
That healthy and positive relationships are essential
That with greater confidence young people are inspired to take their rightful PLACE in the world/society/community and fulfil their potential

Hope's Place is a registered charity (No: 105139, https://www.hopesplace.org.uk) based in Bristol. It is a small charity with four volunteer trustees and three Educational Facilitators. The latter deliver our courses in schools.

Hope's Place is committed to safeguarding, child protection and promoting the wellbeing of all children, young people and members of the Hope's Place community.

What are we looking for?

Skills and experience

- Ideally, a background in education and/or working with young people
- An understanding of the challenges faced by young people
- Enthusiasm and a commitment to helping young people overcome challenges, raise aspirations, make positive life choices and fulfil their potential.

What will you be doing?

Role responsibilities

- Working with fellow trustees toward fulfilling the objectives of the charity
- Attending Trustee meetings, usually six a year
- Attending Education meetings of trustees and facilitators, usually six a year
- Acting as Line Manager to provide support for the two Girls' Group Facilitators
- Contributing to the Education section of the Annual Report
- Contributing to the recruitment process when needed
- Contributing to updating Hope's Place policies when required
- Liaising with other trustees outside formal meetings, usually around ad hoc issues
- Contributing to discussion around the strategy and business plans of the charity

What difference will you make?

By becoming a trustee, you will be aiding our superb facilitators in the vital support they provide for young people often facing extreme challenges which are impacting adversely their wellbeing.

How to apply

If you are interested in learning more about the trustee role, please contact our trustees via email (chair@hopesplace.org.uk).

> "This is the first intervention I've come across that's actually had a lasting impact." *(Deputy Head , Bristol)*

> **"**I learned the signs of healthy/unhealthy relationships which was really helpful, and I learnt that people are struggling with all different worries and my struggles are valid." *(Young person, Bristol)*

> **"**I have enjoyed it because it motivates me to come to school."*(Young person, Bristol)*

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