



WELCOME TO FAMILIES FIRST!

Families First is a small charity based in St Andrews, Scotland, supporting children and families facing disadvantage and adversity across North East Fife.

We run Befriending, Youth Group, Schools Work and Family Support services, all with the help of our wonderful volunteers, supporters and donors!

YOUTH GROUP

We had a very busy and creative Autumn term at Youth Group and have exciting plans for the Spring! In November the young people made some fabulous collaborative art mosaics.



Every individual element is unique and combined together they make a real impact!

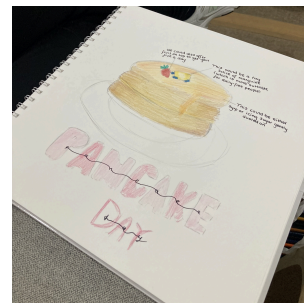
Our Christmas activities were as popular as ever, especially decorating cookies and the Rose Lane Centre.

This year we dressed up as elves and Santas for the annual Christmas movie nights! The young people enjoy all the activities on offer at Youth Group, but they particularly love to just



hang out and chat; they barely even notice their increasing confidence and the team work and social skills they develop session by session!

This term, we are starting an exciting new cookery project funded by Sainsbury's (thank you to Sainsbury's St Andrews for nominating us!) We will be focusing on food poverty and reducing food waste while working towards 'Dynamic Youth' Awards.



The young people have so many great ideas! One group has been planning how to make 'Pancake Day' more affordable and healthy, while a young person with an interest in horticulture is looking at recipes using local, seasonal produce. There is also a lot of interest in international cuisine, as our student volunteers come from all around the world! We are looking forward to a fun few weeks in the kitchen, experimenting with a lot of new recipes while following a budget!

- Kathryn Henderson, Youth Worker (Young People's Service)

CHRISTMAS APPEAL

Thanks to our wonderful community, our Christmas Appeal was a great success. You all achieved something truly fantastic and made Christmas special for so many local children.

Thank you so much for your support!

82 advent calendars were handed out to children (thank you Morrisons, Sainsbury's and Tesco!), and 1 charity partner (Youth 1st) and 16 kind individuals donated toys, books and gifts. 2 big Christmas campaigns supported our families again this year (Fife Council Toy Drive and Tay FM Mission Christmas), and 5 wonderful local



organisations set up toy collection points for us (St Michael's Golf Club, Cupar Old Parish Church, University of St Andrews



School of Physics and Astronomy, St Andrews Dental Care and Nationwide St Andrews).

We were able to purchase the extra presents we needed thanks to donations from Kobi Carpets and Holy Trinity Church, and 47 children were able

to choose something special using their gift cards from Cornerstone!



51 families munched on biscuits from St Marks Church and pulled 70 crackers from the Dundee Rep Theatre!

Finally, thanks to every one of you, all 115 excited children had lovely presents to open on Christmas Day!

- Kathryn Henderson, Christmas coordinator

SCHOOLS WORK

Over the past year, we have continued to support children and young people experiencing emotional difficulties affecting their school attendance.

Our one-to-one and group sessions help them manage anxiety, build confidence, and develop coping strategies, using creative tools like story cubes and art activities to help them express their feelings in a safe way. We also run fortnightly lunchtime drop-ins at Madras College where the children can stop by for a quick chat about any worries they have, helping them feel connected and supported.

One young person who hadn't attended school for over three years has gradually re-engaged through consistent support. With tailored learning sessions and community classes, they have gained confidence, achieved a National 3 qualification, and have started exploring further educational opportunities beyond school; we are so proud of how far they have come!



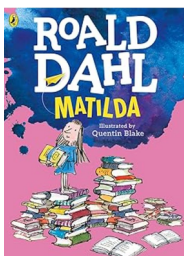
Parents have noticed the difference too. One shared that their child's reduced anxiety has improved their sleep and reduced stress at home, helping the whole family.



Schools have told us that they value Families First as a trusted bridge between home and school, helping families communicate confidently and build stronger relationships with staff.

Our flexible approach ensures every child receives support that meets their individual needs. Children are always actively involved in planning their support, ensuring they feel listened to, empowered, and ready to re-engage with learning.

This was demonstrated recently when a child at Befriending told their volunteer that they would like to improve their reading skills. The volunteer, an ex-teacher, is now meeting the child for an extra session every fortnight to focus on reading - they are both really enjoying sitting together in the local library and reading as much Roald Dahl as possible!



COME AND JOIN IN THE FUN!

If you have a couple of hours spare every fortnight, we would love to hear from you! We are always happy to welcome new volunteers who would like to work with our children, parents or, especially, anyone able to drive children and young people to and from our sessions. It is very important that no child is prevented from accessing our services due to a lack of transport, but as we cover the whole of North East Fife, this is quite a logistical challenge!



To find out more or volunteer, you can visit www.familiesfirststandrews.org.uk, send an email to oa@familiesfirststandrews.org.uk, or phone 01334 208086.



Please scan here to donate and help us support local families!!

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

VOLUNTEER CELEBRATION - 20th February, 7.30-8.30pm, St Andrews Baptist Church.
Volunteer Awards and party food!

This is a good example of our collaborative work with schools, as the child's teacher has given suggestions of how best to help them develop their reading ability.

We aim to help children feel safe, confident, and included while strengthening connections between families, schools, and the young people themselves, helping them reach their potential and have a positive future.

One child told me "I feel less anxious – way less worried about school" which shows that we really do make a difference.

- Alison Falls, Services Manager