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A message from our Chairperson

When we closed the doors of Street Level on 20th March due to the Covid 19 pandemic and we said cheerio to the kids not knowing for sure when we would see them again, it was hard. Some of these kids had been coming to Street Level every day. It was a huge part of their lives, and now it was gone! Or so it appeared. But the work goes on, making use of social media platforms to keep in touch, and

to enable conversations online with the young people. As you will read, we have also been developing relationships with parents as well as maintaining the links with the young people. I have been hugely impressed by the energy, innovation and commitment of the team that has been forged between Street Level and Universal Connections. All this is possible because unlike some other charities

our funding is mostly secure. So a big thank you to those who give regularly through standing order, to Choices charity shop and to South Lanarkshire Council for grant support.

John Wilcox - Chair



Staying connected aka "Drop-in for Zoomers"

Question. What do you get if you cross a mobile phone with a tablet?
Answer. A Phablet

No, it's not a bad joke, it's an actual thing! I discovered that they are a cross between a phone and a tablet (every day's a school day even when they're closed) Thanks to a speedy grant from STV's Children's appeal and Scottish Government's Wellbeing fund, we were able to purchase and distribute a few of these to some of our young people. This enabled them to keep in touch with us through our twice-daily Zoom drop-ins and our messenger app. It also lets them access the internet for other reasons – keeping in touch with

friends, getting useful information or just playing games. Our messenger app is staffed almost constantly from 12 noon until 10pm Monday to Friday and a bit more sporadically over the weekend. It is not unusual to have several "chats" going on concurrently, which can be a bit confusing at times! Our Zoom drop-ins are on at 5pm and 8pm where the young people can pop in for a chat, take part in games and quizzes or sometimes just "be there" and enjoy the company and chaos that they were used to when Street Level was open. There are always at least two members of staff on the Zoom calls. Thankfully, it's not ALL about technology. We were also able to purchase loads of

arts and crafts materials, games, toys and activities to deliver to some of the young people to keep them busy and amused during the lockdown. We even delivered some high powered water pistols – but don't tell their parents!

Young Carers' Group

Prior to the lock-down, our young carers met up every fortnight at Street Level. Since we closed the building we now meet via a Zoom meeting every week on Wednesdays at 7.30 p.m. where we chat, catch up, share stories and play games such as "Pictionary" "Stop the Bus" and have quizzes and competitions.

“Its nice to be able to do that”

My son feels all important doing it”

Every single bit was utilized”

With the help of a solar powered irrigation system, and regular visits the seeds and plants that the young people planted are being tended to. So hopefully we can look forward to harvesting peas, beans, carrots, beetroot, rhubarb, blackcurrants, raspberries, strawberries, cherries, apples, potatoes and a variety of herbs



Since the Council's expansion of youth services to include Family & Community learning, activities, Street Level has more to offer

A text message from a parent

“Street Level/Universal Connections – A SMALL GIFT FROM GOD During this tough time of isolation I wanted to stop and just take a moment to say a big thank you to all the staff and workers. You are a group of dedicated individuals who take time to provide help and support for families like myself, who sometimes face a struggle in day-to-day living. Not only have you been generous enough to be making deliveries of essential foods, but personally for my own son, you

have recognised and encouraged his artistic capabilities by providing him with a keyboard to play music, and arts and crafts materials to allow his artwork.

I think, above all of this though, is the support network you have provided for the children by setting up online, face-to-face interaction; even providing the kids with the necessary electronics, allowing the children to still be connected with each other. Yesterday we got four big giant bagfuls of food and

my son and I bagged up individual bags for the neighbours with what we thought they'd prefer and use. Every single bit was utilised and my son will be having fresh fruit platters coming out of his ears for the next couple of days, lol. Neighbours are all really nice and thankful too. It's nice to be able to do that. My son feels all important doing it, it's great! A huge thank you from myself and my son for all you have done and continue to do.”

Fareshare - food distribution

Before lock-down, as members of the Fareshare scheme, we collected excess food from local supermarkets and used it for the young people who attended Street Level. Since then, however, after contacting parents using details from our parental consent forms, and also discretely through our Facebook and messenger apps, we have a list of people who we can distribute food to. We can still make referrals to the foodbank and other services, but being able to take food to

the families of our own young people is a great way of maintaining the relationships we had built up with them. It is also a good way of building up relationships with the parents – which is always a good thing. Just the other day when I was collecting from Tesco bakery dept. the lovely Tesco lady pointed to a large birthday cake and said “do you want that?” I was going to say no, but I took it anyway. Next day,

at my first food drop-off, the lady came to the door and gratefully accepted the big bag of food. She had a young child in her arms. I said “hello, how are you?” And mum replied “It was her birthday yesterday – she was two.” “Oh” said I, “Did you have a birthday cake?” “No” said mum, “I can't get out.” “Well, just hold on a wee minute.” When I handed her the birthday cake, she burst into tears – I almost joined her!

Street Level's Partners in Youth, Family & Community Learning service

The service adopts a needs led approach, and whilst it is open to all, vulnerable groups are targeted. A range of IT activities have been on offer to members of the community. They are aimed at those looking to improve their skills, update CV's and keep safe online. Healthy cooking on a budget, holistic therapies and personal, and social development are some of

the other learning opportunities that have been carried out. The service also supports those with specific needs. An adult literacy and numeracy class runs on a regular basis, while support is provided to English speakers of other languages. The COVID 19 has led to a temporary change in direction. Working remotely, parent/carers and previous

learner's needs are supported through telephone and social media. Plans are also underway to provide online adult learning courses to the local community. When the centre –opens, most of the past activities will resume, however additional ones will be put in place to support those adversely affected by this period of hardship and uncertainty.