

Youth and Children's Newsletter September -18

Its 4:33am on the day we head off to Soul Survivor, my alarm isn't due to go off until 6am but I wake up with everything running through my mind. The first day of Soul Survivor is by far the most stressful, mainly around all the setting up we have to do when we get to the site. It's 1:02am and I've finally got into my tent to get some sleep on the first day. Before dozing off I get the chance to reflect on the day. As usual the young people excelled themselves in how they helped set up our little camp site, they went above and beyond to serve others and for this I'm so grateful, Zzzzzzzz.

Soul Survivor report

This year we took 28 of our young people to the festival, I could honestly write for days about how amazing our week was. The week was full of laughter, friendships, learning, worship and late nights.



From the first day till the last the young people were happy to roll up their sleeves and serve in whatever way was needed, including a 6:30am start to prepare food in the kitchen. They continue to inspire me with the care and love they show each other. As a youth leader there is nothing more beautiful than to see your young people worship, choose to follow Jesus, pray for each other and play practical jokes on their youth leader!! (you will have to ask me to find out about this

story!) It was a genuine pleasure and privilege to lead this trip and serve the young people.



Why Schools work?

After a recent conversation with someone I started doing some thinking and reflecting on why I love schools work so much and really believe in it as the best way to reach out to those young people who we otherwise wouldn't get to meet. When I was doing my schools work course a few years ago I met Jenni Osborn who was one of my tutors, Jenni is highly respected in the youth work community and has a column in the biggest youth work magazine dedicated to schools work. I asked Jenni to write a few words about schools work and why it's so important.

"Is Schools Work Outreach?"

When Josh asked me to write about schools work I was definitely up for the challenge. I have worked in schools both as teaching staff and schools worker for much of my working life, my current involvement is as a school governor, which just might be the most challenging of all the ways a person can be involved!

So why do we do schools work? Well, if we believe that Jesus lived as a man who spent his time with ordinary people outside of the established religious structures of the day, who spent time patiently sharing with these people the teaching and wisdom of the Kingdom of God, sharing also in the troubles and joys

of their lives, loving them no matter how difficult the circumstances, then for those of us with a heart for young people, school is the place for us! It gives us the privilege of building relationships with young people we might never otherwise come across, it enables us to demonstrate our likeness to Jesus in spending time with young people and celebrating their highs and lows.

Is it 'outreach'? Well, yes and no. In this day and age we should not be proselytising or evangelising in school, this is deeply inappropriate and is likely to result in us being asked to leave. But if we were to decide that because we can't tell a young person the gospel and ask them to convert then we won't bother with schools work then we would miss a valuable opportunity to 'reach out' to young people in our own community who don't come to our programmes. We may not be evangelising, but we are facing outwards from our church, we may not see more young people on a Sunday morning but we are making a difference to the lives of young people in our community. And if your mission is Living like Jesus and sharing him with others as we seek first the Kingdom of God. I'd argue schools work is a key part of your mission as a church."

A huge thanks to Jenni for taking the time to write this for us and provide an insight as to why we believe Schools work is a vital part of youth work today.

Coming up

In just a few short weeks we will be taking about 20 children away for our "By The Beach" trip. This is for those in school years 3-6, and this year the trip involves playing games, boat building, bowling,

teaching from the Bible and a whole lot of fun.



For our young people this term we have a trip to the "Reboot" event which is an apologetics day in London where no questions are off limits! Also after much nagging from the youth we will be visiting Thorpe Park again this term, to find out more do grab a copy of the term card to see our topics for the term.

Short Thought

When I was an older young person around the ages of 16-21 I spent a good deal of my time worrying about what I was going to do with my life, what job would I have, what would my purpose be in life. Big questions I know! Someone who I miss dearly once said to me "It's all about what's in here" and as they said this they pointed at my heart. This piece of wisdom spoke powerfully to me, we can spend all our time thinking about what we will do in life and what job/role we will pursue and no time thinking about what sort of person we want to be. Don't get me wrong, what we do in our lives is important but I think more important is how we do them. Check out Matthew 5, I think the beatitudes show us a radical way of how we should live.

Josh