



**FRONTIER
YOUTH TRUST**
MISSION WITH YOUNG
PEOPLE AT RISK

/News

SUMMER 2019



SUMMER GREETINGS!

As I type this the GCSE & A-level season is coming to an end for 2019. Across the country many young people will be breathing a sigh of relief, looking forward to the slower pace offered by the school summer holidays. But for many others the end of exams is just one thing less as they continue to face other, daily, life challenges. Headlines remind us daily of the lived experience of many young people; mental health, austerity, violence & knife crime. The faces attached to the headlines are real young people, connected to real communities.

But that is not the end of the story. As I meet youth workers across the UK, I am privileged to hear an abundance of good news stories. Young people joining together to make a difference in their communities, standing alongside those who are oppressed and finding ways to use their voices to speak to systems and structures. I have been inspired by young people engaging with Climate Change, encouraged by the use of constructive disruption in Bristol and excited by young people and youth workers co founding social enterprises together in Birmingham. There are so many heroes!

That is why it is important for us to unite as a movement, a family of people and projects seeking a better world for young people: a movement made up of supporters, pray-ers, youth workers, and pioneers all making a difference to the lives of young people. We want to keep on equipping and encouraging youth workers and churches to take the kinds of risks that mean young people have opportunities to play their part in transforming both their communities and their country. Work that continues to take young people on real and meaningful journeys with the Gospel story. We are seeking to curate change in the here and now as we continue to pray 'your kingdom come, Lord, your will be done, on earth (now) as it is in heaven'.

May this summer be full of good news for you and your community.

Gemma Dunning - FYT Movement Advocate

content



HOME

2



RISK

4



VOICE

6



SEE YOU SOON

5



PRAYERS FROM THE CHAIR

8



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THE GATHERING

This year we were back in Northampton for our annual StreetSpace Gathering - in fact, our final StreetSpace Gathering as we look to new things (but more on that later).

Pioneers from all four corners of the country came to share their experiences of working with young people outside the church. We welcomed new members to our community who have just started their pioneer journey, as well as old friends who came to re-connect. Over the course of the weekend, there was a space for projects to tell stories of struggle and success - as well as listen to, be inspired by and challenge each other. We hosted a variety of conversations to learn from one another covering themes and issues identified by the projects who came. These included:

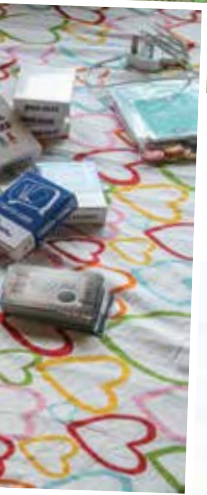
- how we might grow and future proof our work with young people (as well as the but sector);
- how to engage in better participative practices with young people so that they become leaders and decision-makers in our projects; and
- how we might deepen relationships with young people by taking risks with, and being aware of, the language we use.

The theme of disruption emerged throughout the weekend. How might we disrupt the systems that both young people and youth workers find challenging? How might we work together in solidarity to make change happen? We heard (via video link) from a project in Knowle West, Bristol, about how they had been using art installations to disrupt young peoples' perceptions of their community.





From pilgrimages and prayers to paddling pools and pub quizzes, this year we celebrated ten years of the Streetspace community (and nine years of the Annual Gathering)! A



community of sharing, learning and mutual support. We celebrated with a birthday, raised glasses and thankful hearts for all the energy that had been put in over the years. From an idea and a few projects, we have grown into a movement.

And so we looked to the future... as a movement we are laying down the Gathering in its current format. We hope that you, our supporters, will join with us in prayer as we imagine what we do next. We want to be home for all those who are doing pioneering youth work on the margins; and it's time to open our doors to widen the movement.

RISK

TAKING A BIGGER RISK

An interview with FYT Community member, Mike Gower, in Sandhurst.

Tell us what you are doing...

I am a community youth worker at the newly formed charity Sandhurst Youth, run out of St Michael's & All Angel's parish church. Sandhurst is a small town. It's not very urbanised, and the local issues don't make national headlines. But youth provision in the area has been cut back to the bone. St Michael's is a small (ish), middle-of-the-road, Anglican church that are trying to do things differently. The congregation here had a desire to care for young people in our town, and so they set up a partnership with the town council to run a community youth project.

I split my week, one-third looking after young people in the local church, and two-thirds in the community. I run an open youth club, an in-school programme for young people on the margins, a detached (street-based) project, and we are setting

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SEE YOU SOON



up a mentoring scheme connecting adults from within the church with young people in the community.

What drives you?

Frankly, church is boring! What is there at church that speaks to the ordinary young person? It's completely alien. For me the Gospel can be exciting for young people, but it's got to be presented and rooted in young people's culture. For Sandhurst Youth, we want to see every young person equipped with a dream. Sometimes this is practical, and sometimes this is spiritual. Young people are part of the church today. We have to build something that is fit for the whole of God's family.

Where do you get your support?

Being part of the FYT community for me means being able to be honest and share with people who understand what I'm trying to achieve. It is refreshing to be open with things that I struggle with as well as the successes - and know that I won't be judged. It's good to get support from others on the same journey.

Frontier Youth Trust is a movement of pioneering youth workers and projects. We are equipping churches - like St Michaels in Sandhurst - to take pioneering risks to reach young people in their neighbourhood.

AT SOUL SURVIVOR



This Summer the FYT leadership team will be out and about meeting youth workers and young people at Soul Survivor across weeks A, B & C.

Dylan, Gemma and John would love to connect with you and to hear what you are upto so please do come find us in the Toolshed, look out for the FYT stand!

IN SCOTLAND

Calling all pioneer youth workers in Scotland.

Gemma will be hosting a gathering for pioneer youth workers across Scotland on Wednesday 4th September 12:30pm - 2:30pm at St George's Tron Church, 163 Buchanan Street, Glasgow, GL1 2JX.



Contact Gemma via gemma.dunning@fyt.org.uk to reserve your spot.

CAN YOUTH VIOLENCE AND KNIFE CRIME REALLY BE ENDED?

Andrew Jackson from Chips, an FYT movement member, tells us about their work with young people.

The news has been full of reports and debate on violence and knife crime. Can they really be ended? We believe they can and that peacemaking is the key.

Glendon Spence, a 23 year old young man, was killed at the Marcus Lipton Youth Club, close to our offices in Brixton. The attack happened in

the early part of a Thursday evening and many young people and children witnessed what happened. The police have said they believe Glendon was targeted and attacked deliberately.

Alongside the tragic deaths, there are many young people being injured and traumatised in incidents that don't make the headlines and may



not even be reported. We see first hand the impact this violence has on a community. The trauma for those who were there and saw the attack. The

devastation for the family and friends of the victim. The fear of further attacks. The anger and frustration that nothing seems to change.

A whole range of solutions are proposed and debated – from greater police numbers to increased stop and search to more public spending – anything which will work quickly to prevent any more young people being killed or injured and their families, friends and communities devastated.

But we know from our own experience that building peace and ending violence takes time. Youth violence and knife crime will not end overnight. That's why we're committed to live and work in an area for the long term. Short term interventions may tackle some of the symptoms of violence but they won't tackle the root causes. Those root causes are multiple and complex and revolve around deprivation, a lack of opportunity and the anger and frustration that result.

Our peacemaking work is relational and practical. We believe the levels of violence will reduce as we empower the community to cross divides, to build relationships and to work together to bring about the changes that are needed. We are using community organising to develop and equip community leaders and groups



who are then mobilised to bring about change.

Many young people we know and work with closely have been directly affected by the recent attack in

our community. They have also faced other huge challenges in their lives. Some have lost friends or family members to violence, had those they are close to go to prison, been excluded from school, had parents working all hours on minimum wage trying their hardest to provide, have families who have suffered the instability caused by benefit sanctions, suffered racism or lived in terrible housing.

Yet many of these young people show incredible resilience in the face of these challenges. They should be celebrated and they should also be supported so that, rather than leading them down a path towards violence and more suffering, their experiences lead to more hopeful and fulfilled lives.

Our role is to come alongside and provide that support – building deep, meaningful and healing relationships, to work together to create more opportunities for these relationships to grow and develop and to look at what actions can be taken by these young people and their families to tackle the injustices they experience. All this happens through simple activities like making pancakes together or games nights, 121 mentoring, school group sessions or community meals. Unexpected places of healing, celebration and hope.

As we work together, change is happening. The situation remains extremely challenging and the path may be long but with new relationships crossing divides, anger turned into powerful action for change and a lot of love and time, we are on a journey of peace.

Find out more about CHIPS over at www.chipspeace.org





PRAYERS FROM THE CHAIR, MARY

I have been a trustee of FYT for many years now and feel blessed to have contributed a small part to this amazing movement. I retire from this role in September but was humbled to be asked to take on the position of Chair, as an interim, for my last year – the first female to hold this role in well over 50 years.

I should like to take this opportunity to thank the staff I have had the pleasure of working with, both current and over the years, as well as fellow trustees and volunteers, who all make such incredible contributions to bringing God's kingdom closer to so many young people and youth workers.

PLEASE JOIN ME IN PRAYING FOR:

- We give thanks for the recent Gathering of staff and volunteers from projects around the country who form part of the FYT Movement; we pray that they continue to be inspired and sustained in their pioneering mission with vulnerable young people on the margins, to build a better world for all.
- We give thanks for the work of AIM Community in Bournemouth and Poole, working through creative arts and mentoring, to help young people reach their potential; we pray for wisdom, guidance and support over the next few months for Richard, the Steering Group and staff team as AIM community moves towards independence as a new charity.
- We give thanks for the many people over the years who have served FYT as trustees and thank them for their many gifts, time and discernment; we pray that, along with our newer trustees, they continue to provide good governance and support to the Leadership Team and the wider Movement and that the right person will be identified to take on leadership of the Board.
- We give thanks for our Leadership Team and Core staff who provide so much inspiration, dedication and commitment; we pray that their contributions to the Summer Festivals is fruitful in sharing our vision for pioneering mission with more youth workers and young people.
- We give thanks to the many individuals, trusts and funding bodies that provide the financial support to FYT and the many smaller projects who are part of our Community; we pray that, in this uncertain climate, these people and organisations will continue to value the work and provide these essential resources so that young people 'may have life and have it abundantly' (John 10:10).

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