

SEPTEMBER 2019-2020

SOCIAL IMPACT REPORT



Your adventure, our passion...
Your **Journey of Change.**



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SEPTEMBER 2019-2020

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Back Cover - Thank You's



Introduction

I am delighted to be writing the introduction to BF Adventure's Social Impact Report for 2019 - 2020. At its core, impact measurement seeks to gather crucial information about an organisation's activities and use it to relate the overall change brought about to people's lives over a particular period of time.

This report, through young people and families' stories, clearly shows the significant difference the BF Adventure Team has made and is truly remarkable and heart-warming. As a young person says in this report, "... I feel like before I started, I wasn't myself, but it's helped me to get back to where I was before and be more confident. I want to come back and volunteer when I'm old enough".

None of us could have imagined what 2020 would bring with the world-wide coronavirus pandemic and the profound effect this would have on our lives. We know that this is having a big impact on young people and those that support them. This, coupled with severe reductions in funding, have put young people's services in an extremely precarious state.

Organisations like BF Adventure supporting the most vulnerable young people and communities have been quick to adapt and are determined to do everything it takes to maintain high quality services for our young people and families in Cornwall.

On behalf of BF Adventure, it's team and the young people and families who enjoy and have benefitted from taking part in their programme of activities, I thank you for taking the time to read this report which reflects the amazing work that BF Adventure do.

-Angela Andrews
Head of Commissioning, Children and Family Services,
Together for Families Directorate, Cornwall Council

Summary of the Year

I don't think many people could have predicted the events of this last academic year and the impact that the pandemic has wrought across the globe, bringing grief, financial hardship and uncertainty about the future to so many. Long before the word 'bubble' hit the mainstream, we used to talk about the 'BF Bubble' – an idyllic place, that pulls you in and holds you but requires huge energy and commitment to keep flying. Since March we have nurtured that bubble more than ever; the commitment from the whole team has been humbling as people made real personal sacrifices to keep the charity solvent. We are hugely grateful to Cornwall Council and our programme funders for the financial support they provided that gave us the boost we needed to keep going. The demand for our provision is greater than ever as more families across Cornwall face economic uncertainty and more children and young people struggle with their mental health and well-being. We know from our work that poverty impacts on family life in a myriad of complexities and is a key factor in Adverse Childhood Experiences. We are already seeing signs that the impact of Covid 19 is further increasing poverty and deprivation across the County as the service industry, the main income for so many families, is decimated. We have had to adapt our provision to meet this need. As a provider of alternative education to vulnerable children and young people, our Skills for Life provision was deemed an essential service and has remained open throughout. However, our Activity Centre, which provides schools with educational visits and residential experiences temporarily closed and staff were placed on furlough.

Overall, we furloughed more than half our team but were able to get everyone back to work due to the increased demand.

This year's Social Impact Report will highlight clearly the real difference that our team make. The very nature of our work means that many of our children and young people find it difficult to understand why they are referred to us and this makes it a real challenge to scientifically measure our impact, or 'distance travelled' while they are with us. To define our impact, we collate feedback from young people, instructors, parents/carers and referrers to tell their stories.

We hope you enjoy reading about our work and please feel free to contact us with your story, or for more information.

– El Warren, Charity Business Manager

All of the staff at BF are amazing. Myself & my family really appreciate all the help the staff have given us. They have gone above & beyond to help a very troubled little boy. Thank you.

–Parent of young person attending BF

The instructors intro...

Dan has been attending BF Adventure for just over a year, twice a week. Initially there were incidents towards the end of every session when it was time to go home, he would put himself in an unsafe position - often by climbing high. These behaviours have reduced greatly and rarely occur now. There has also been a lot of progress in socialising and learning that Dan can't always get his own way. This has been through lots of wide games and team sports. Dan has excelled at learning new skills and in particular climbing where he shows a natural ability.

DAN'S STORY



In Dan's words...

I loved BF and I am really sad to be leaving it has helped me so much I will miss all the instructors & everyone at BF who has helped me thank you: I feel more confident I can get on with people more easily I am better at communicating with other people I feel better about myself...Definitely 5/5 for everything 😊

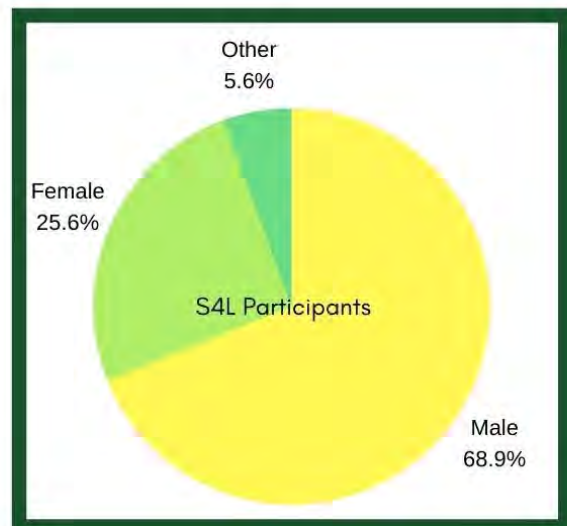
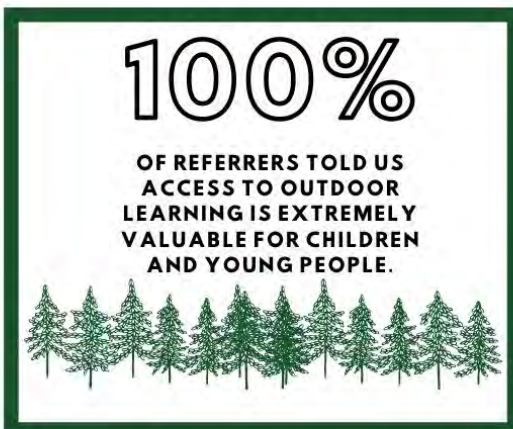
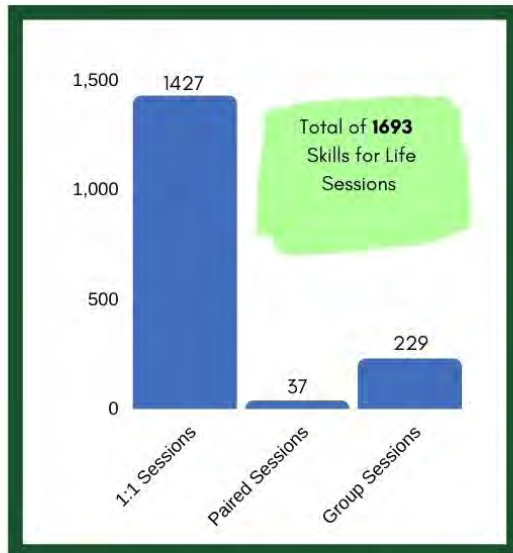


Dan's carer says...

I noticed a real change in Dan. His confidence level went up and he was happier to try new things. He felt safe at BF and it didn't upset him too much when he had a wobbly because he knew you would understand. Dan has such a high level of trauma & I found all the staff to be very empathic and not judging him on his behaviour, even when he had a bad day. He was able to tell me if he had a bad day which was a big step forward. Dan loved all the activities and tricks that he learnt whilst at BF. Hopefully his next journey will help him deal with his past. Then get him home again. Thank you for the help & support.



Statistics

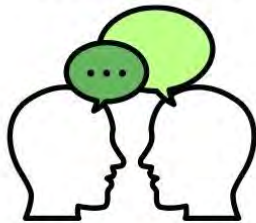


100% of parents told us that the provision made a positive difference to their child.

Statistics

100%

of parents told us that we communicated extremely effectively through provision.



11.87



S4L AVERAGE AGE

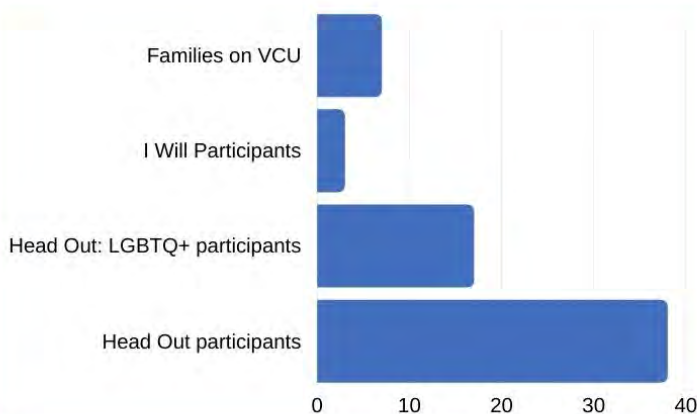
84%

of referrers told us the provision made a great difference to their child / young person.



100%

of referrers told us they would recommend BF to another professional.



2320

=

Total number of attendances across S4L

About us

Our mission is to inspire, challenge and empower people, especially young people, to develop their life skills and to bring about positive change – at BF Adventure we are committed to empowering children and young people to learn differently in the outdoors. It's the unique outdoor setting at BF Adventure that provides the perfect backdrop for our work, enabling our visitors to immerse themselves in nature. Our site comprises of 60 acres of heathland, woodland and five flooded granite quarries providing a habitat for a rich variety of flora and fauna, insects, reptiles and larger species of wildlife. Over the years we have conscientiously developed the site to enable us to deliver a huge range of activities including paddle sports, outdoor climbing, archery, quarry steering, zip wire, abseiling, low ropes and problem solving.

Throughout the site there are bush-craft areas, perfect for campfires, den building and conservation. We strive hard to ensure our activities are accessible to all and we have a purpose-built wheelchair abseil ramp, kite harness and all-terrain wheelchair. We also have a "Changing Places" facility.



"Every day you change lives.
You make my day every time I
come here. You are my hero's
for courage, self-esteem and
confidence. Thank you all BF
staff"

-Young person

Our Values

We work in line with a set of core organisational values. To deliver our mission, we focus on two key areas; the Adventure Centre and our Core Charity. Our Adventure Centre team supports schools, colleges, uniformed organisations, individuals and families to access our activities, led by qualified and experienced instructors through day visits and residentials. This team also lead our birthday party bookings and Holiday Activity Days. All profits from our Adventure Centre support our core charitable programmes. Due to Covid-19 we were unable to run the majority of our Adventure Centre groups this year.

This social impact report will highlight the work of our Core Charity. Branded under "Skills for Life", these programmes primarily support children and young people who face challenges in engaging with mainstream education. We also work with adults and families within some of our programmes.

BF ADVENTURE VALUES

JOURNEY OF CHANGE

CHANGING PERSPECTIVES



We embrace diversity and recognise everyone has a part to play in life. No one should face discrimination and we challenge both its roots and its impact.



TRUST

At BF Adventure we believe that our environment, should be a safe space for all, igniting positive relationships based on trust and respect.

EMPOWERING

We listen to you and value your opinion. We enable you to face challenges and make informed decisions.



COLLABORATING

We believe working together achieves the best results. We actively explore new partnerships with those who share our values.



INTEGRITY

We welcome a culture of honesty and openness that allows us to learn and grow together. We do what we say!



SUSTAINABILITY

We seek to create lasting change and to consider future generations in all of our decision making.



The School reported.....

She has lots going on at home and suffers from high levels of anxiety. Her time at BF has given her a safe space and positive social interactions in a stress-free environment. The change in school is really noticeable and Poppy is more confident in class.

The Family Worker said...

When I first met Poppy, she struggled with anxiety. This meant that she found it difficult to stay in her lessons at school and to meet and interact with new people. However, after attending the Head Out programme at BF Adventure she has completely transformed! Poppy now shines brightly with confidence and stands in her own power. This new found confidence, paired with her natural empathic nature means that she is now able to mix and socialise, whilst inspiring others to do the same. Poppy has gone from strength to strength over the past few months - The Head Out programme was a catalyst for Poppy to spread her wings and fly!

POPPY'S STORY



Poppy told us...

I felt like before I started I wasn't myself but it helped me to get back to where I was before and be more confident. I want to come back and volunteer when I am old enough. I enjoyed all of it, but I liked meeting new people and lighting my own fire. I have never been anywhere where everyone is so friendly, happy and smiling. It made me feel part of the community.



What we do...

We use our pictorial Journey of Change to enable our children, young people and families to develop improved understanding of their own journey, where they are at and where they want to be. We use it as a basis for conversation to listen to them and to design a programme that meets their needs. We use our activities to engage children, young people and families in opportunities to learn about themselves, others and the world around them. Our challenge-based activities enable them to step outside their comfort zone, build their confidence and communication skills and we support them to transfer these skills in to their everyday lives.

We use the challenge of activities and facilitative conversation to enable them to develop:



We measure this development through discussions with young people, our session reports, through young people's learning journals and through feedback from referrers and families.

We recognise the synergy between personal development and its wider impact on the world around us. As such, we want to encourage all our clients to have the opportunity to develop a love of education, a passion for the environment, the opportunity to give something back to society and an understanding of the importance of positive social change.

The core of our work is building trusting relationships with children and young people; we are clear about our confidentiality procedures and how we share information with parents/carers, schools and/or other professionals, enabling young people to make informed choices about how their information is shared and when we have to pass on information to keep them safe.



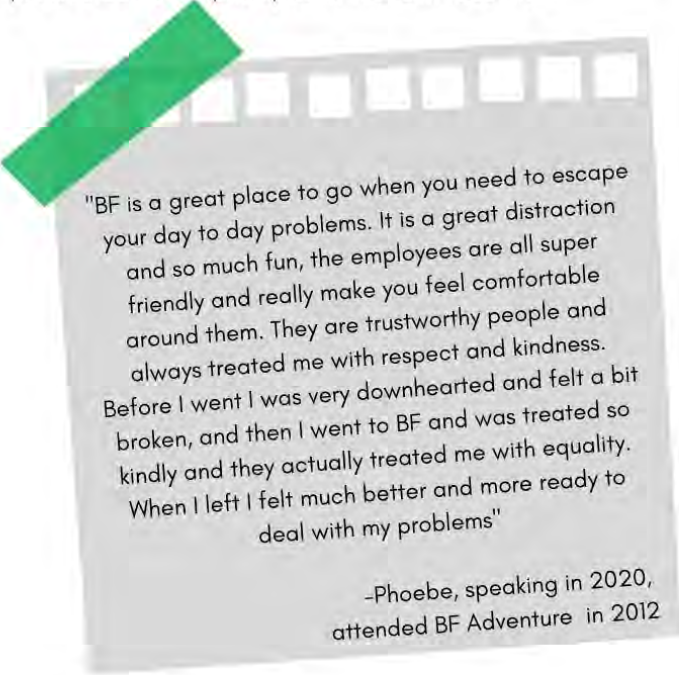
Who we work with...

Most of the children and young people we work with are referred to our programmes through social work, early help or schools and are usually already engaged in specialist supportive services. This year saw a rise in new referrals during lockdown.

The needs of our client group are multiple and complex; broadly speaking the majority of children and young people we work with experience challenging home lives exacerbated by poverty. Some have experienced significant trauma through abuse, others have disabilities that make it difficult for them to understand the complexities of society and many have significant mental health concerns that prevent them from fully engaging with their education setting, families and peers.

Most of the children and young people we work with struggle to regulate their emotions and these manifest in presenting challenging behaviour. During adolescence this dis-regulation can generate further risk as they become vulnerable to further mental ill health, increased levels of exploitation and risk-taking behaviour (substances, sexual relationships, violence).

We are trained to use Pivotal MAPA as an approach in keeping young people safe. This approach is key in providing care and welfare, whilst maintaining the safety and security for the young people we work with and also for our team. The MAPA programme was created by the Crisis Prevention Institute and is predicated on the principles of restraint reduction.



"BF is a great place to go when you need to escape your day to day problems. It is a great distraction and so much fun, the employees are all super friendly and really make you feel comfortable around them. They are trustworthy people and always treated me with respect and kindness. Before I went I was very downhearted and felt a bit broken, and then I went to BF and was treated so kindly and they actually treated me with equality. When I left I felt much better and more ready to deal with my problems"

-Phoebe, speaking in 2020,
attended BF Adventure in 2012



"Such a great place for us
all to connect with no
judgement and so much
positivity!"

-Family attending
BF Adventure

Our Instructors said...

Jasper came to BF Adventure at the age of 9 having been excluded from school due to his sensory seeking behaviour which was having an effect on other pupils. On first accessing BF, Jasper presented as an anxious young person. Being excluded made him feel ashamed and confused as he had always followed the rules; he felt that he was different, but he didn't know why and this upset him. Whilst at BF, sometimes it would be too much for him resulting in some risky behaviour that put everyone at risk...

JASPER'S STORY



...His interactions with other young people were often difficult for him too. Gradually, over time, he came to accept himself as he grew familiar with the centre, our staff, and some of the challenging activities that allowed him to express his energies in a different way. In the early days of his provision at BF Jasper was diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome. From this point on, Jasper settled down even further and the risky behaviour stopped. He started to change in other ways too. He has learnt to become more independent and is proud of doing things for himself. Like most young people Jasper needs encouragement; as one of the young people who has been here the longest, he has quite a collection of certificates! Jasper has become more confident over the 2½ years he has been coming to us and as a result there has been marked rise in his self-esteem. He is not afraid to challenge someone if he thinks they are wrong, whether this person is an instructor working with him or an older young person. Jasper is now at his new secondary school in a class that caters for his needs and feels like he is back on track. Jasper told us that his proudest achievement at BF is jumping from the highest platform during Quarrysteering. He says he feels better about himself since coming to BF and that his confidence and communication have improved. Watching Jasper grow from strength to strength has been brilliant and everyone at BF is proud of the achievements he has made.

Jasper's Dad told us...

I would like to take the opportunity to say how grateful we are for all that you have done for Jasper over the last few years. Jasper has really benefited from his time at BF and from your support in particular. Your advocacy for Jasper at TAC meetings and the like has also been tremendously helpful in persuading others to give him a proper chance as well as a lifeline for Katie and I. Thank you so much!



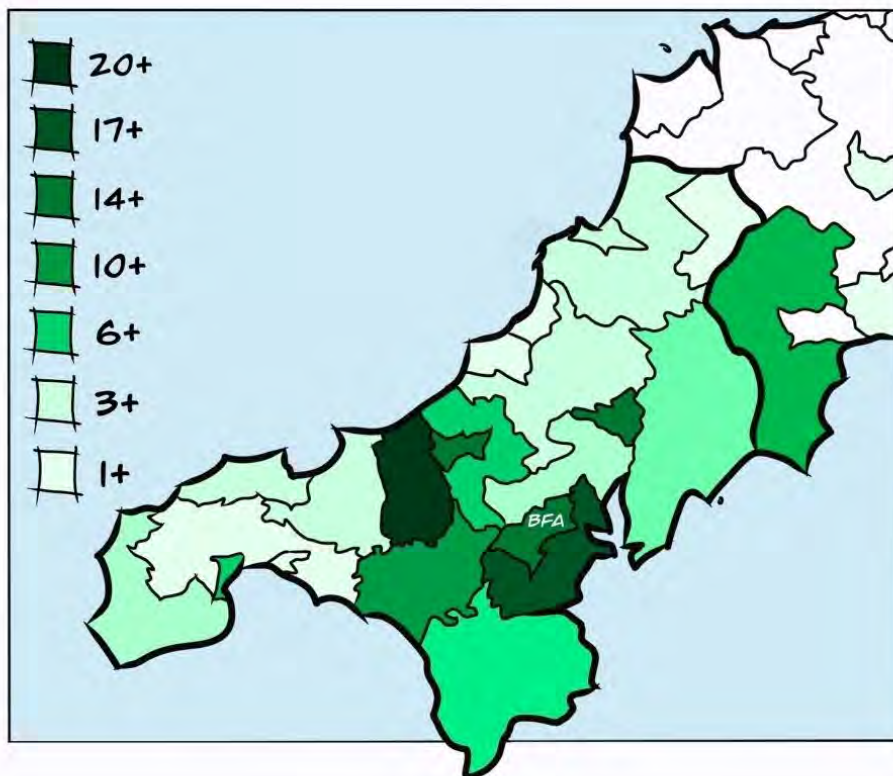
Where they live...

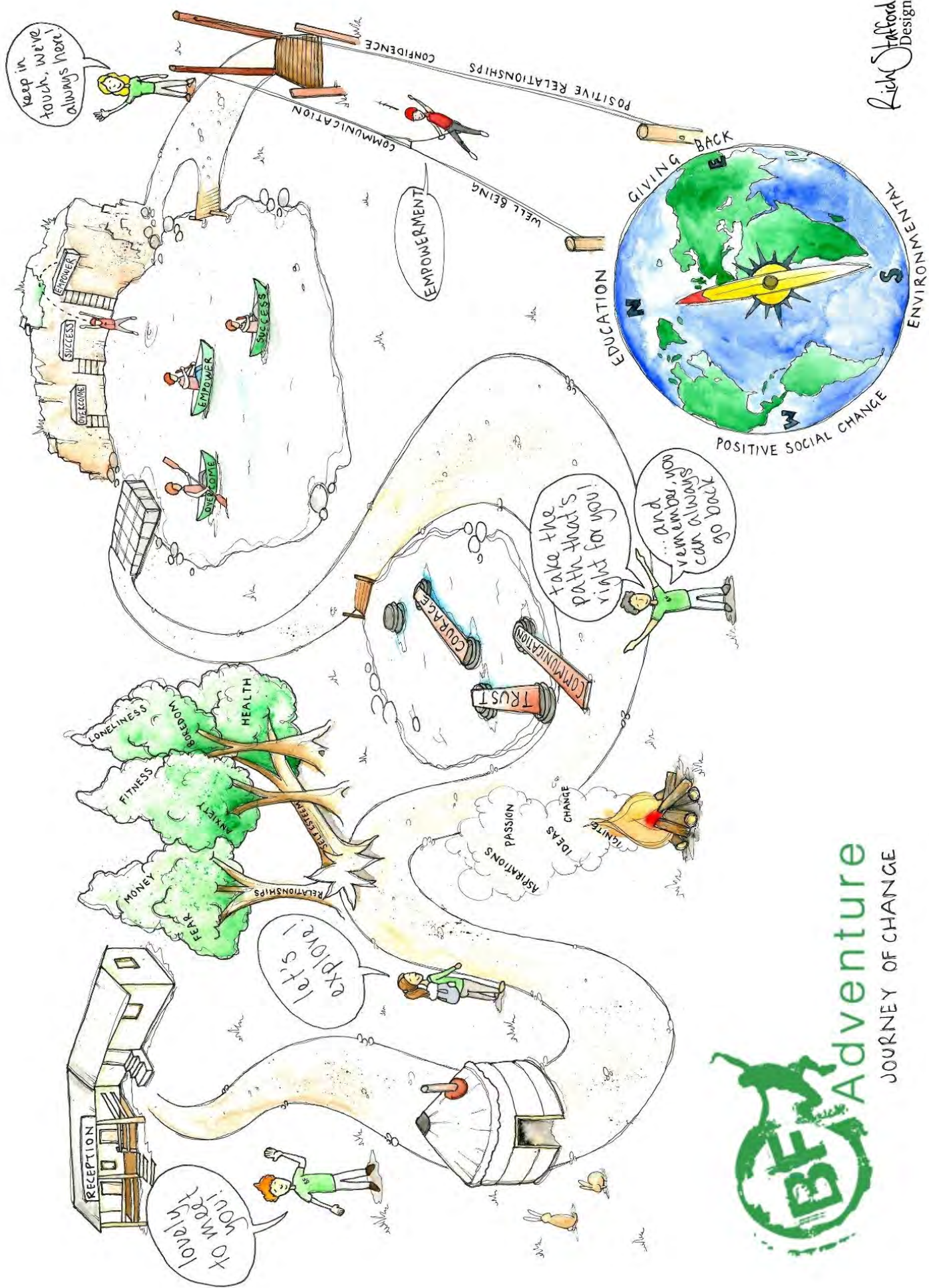
We work with children and young people from across Cornwall. Cornwall continues to have 17 neighbourhoods in the top 10% most deprived areas in England; the majority of children referred to our Skills for Life programmes reside in these areas. The IMD domains of income, unemployment and skills and education have seen a sizeable drop in national ranking since 2015. Additionally, the 2019 Children's Society report evidences that 30% of children in Cornwall live in poverty, with insufficient food, clothes and warmth.

The map below shows where the children and young people who access our provision live:

"If I have a bad week, I just forget about it because I come here...gives me a place to come and to get out"

-Young person attending
BF Adventure





Rich Jafford
Design

BE Adventure
JOURNEY OF CHANGE

The Instructors intro...

Life for Ashley hasn't been straight forward, having been diagnosed from an early age with Foetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD). The effects of this are varied and unique to the individual, but can include a combination of physical problems and problems with behaviour and learning. The school environment provoked anxiety for her due partly to the sensory overload that it caused. From busy classrooms to noisy lunch halls and brightly coloured displays, schools can be very overwhelming. The school created a bespoke timetable to try and ease some of her anxieties including a day a week at BF. Ashley arrived at BF on the Head Out programme but was unable to join in at first and spent time 1:1 away from the group. As the weeks went on, although still shy, she was able to make friends within the group and gave some of the activities a try. When Head Out came to an end, the provision evolved and Ashley attended up to 3 times per week.

Ashley's Mum said...

School was overwhelming. Ashley was struggling socially and emotionally in all areas of her life and it was almost impossible to engage her in anything positive, either in school or out. At BF you understand the need to be adaptable in your provision and this was vital for her at that time and throughout her time with you. I can't thank you enough for your patience, care and professionalism in all the work that you did in supporting her through your activities and in working around her other tuition. Throughout, the skills and professionalism of all of your staff (but Georgie in particular) was fantastic and we can't thank you enough. The support from BF has contributed significantly to help her return to full time education; thank you for everything.

Ashley's Instructor commented...

By exposing Ashley to positive role models in an accepting and non-judgmental environment, it enabled her to relax and be herself. This, in itself, was a hugely powerful tool. From this foundation, she was empowered to try new things, challenge herself through activities, gain awards and experience positive social interactions. Friendships were formed and boundaries learnt, increasing her self-worth. The relationships she built with instructors provided a safe space to talk through challenges and receive advice. Towards the end of her provision, Ashley single handedly organised a sports day for all the young people to participate in. This highlighted how far Ashley has come in her journey and the numerous skills that showcased in running a week long event. From food and drink preparation to creating scorecards and medals, planning the timing of events and the closing ceremony. Furthermore, throughout this process Ashley demonstrated high levels of patience, concentration, resilience and creativity. The transformation from week one to week seventy two is astounding.

Ashley's Mum told us...

Ashley was with you for over a year. In that time you nurtured her, calmed her and gently developed many emotional areas that were so needy. The 18 months certainly had its ups and downs, one period in particular being extremely challenging. But every single day Ashley was greeted with acceptance. She always felt liked with you. That sounds like a nothing statement but to a child with such a broken inner working model actually it is enormous. Georgie, her main worker has been outstanding. She has impressive knowledge of cognitive disabilities, which together with her calm, unflappable and motivated demeanour makes her an invaluable staff member. She was always so supportive of us as a family too and attended many meetings where her professional input was always gratefully received. It took a long time to move Ashley on from mainstream education to the specialist provision she is in now. This was frustrating but on reflection I think it was necessary. She had many years of built up stress from an educational system that didn't meet her needs, Ashley needed to heal. That is exactly what she did so beautifully with you, in all the many activities, but mainly through the relationships you were all so adept at building with her. She will always look back on BF with affection. The messages you all wrote in her book will be treasured and re-read many times. I will just tearfully add, we can never thank you all enough or praise you enough. The service you provide is outstanding.

ASHLEY'S STORY



Ashley told us...

...Finally I finished my first week at my new school. I think every school should be like mine...Its not all about getting grades and pushing you to be something you are not. It builds confidence in other areas thats not always academic but makes you feel like you've achieved something, instead of making you have low self esteem. For example, I've picked D of E as one of my GSCE options and I get to do mountain biking and do Jump4 for it. I've also picked a music course where I can do a singer songwriter course and access a studio! It shouldn't always be about grades, you need to have fun as well.

Our Unique Approach

The team at BF Adventure brings a huge range of skills and experience to our provision which has enabled us to develop a unique approach to our delivery; combining trauma informed delivery with youth work in the outdoors. Solid shared values, professional development opportunities, placement students and our partners enable us to reflect and inform our quality improvement.



"I like it all. BF is really peaceful and good for my mental health"

-Young person attending BF Adventure

Youth work – Informal education

At the core of a youth work approach are the professional skills to build trusting relationships with young people and empower them to enhance their personal, social and educational development. Youth work uses an informal educative process, a process underpinned by inspiring curiosity to bring about wider change. Within this, young people are equal partners in their own learning; they are enabled to start from where they are at, go forward at their own pace and develop their own voice along the journey.

At BF Adventure we use conversation and activities to build relationships with our children and young people. We enable them to determine their own programme of learning through activities, making sense of the world around them (both environmentally and socially) and learn more about themselves through the process. We support them to tell others about their personal developments and achievements and to celebrate the journey.



Our Unique Approach

Child development – a trauma informed approach

Studies show that the main difference in promoting positive outcomes for young people who experience Adverse Childhood Experiences is building key relationships with trusted adults. At BF Adventure we delegate a key worker to develop a relationship with each child. We ensure that our children and young people have safe boundaries, we listen, both to their spoken needs



and those that manifest through their behaviours. We engage with them through positive shared experiences and use a PLACE approach, using attunement and co-regulation to help them feel safe, modelling self-regulation and supporting them to develop this skill themselves. This approach reduces the impact of toxic stress; studies have evidenced that the build up of toxic stress impacts negatively on the future mental and physical health of the child.

Outdoor education and green spaces

There have been a growing number of studies in recent years linking the benefits of the outdoors and 'green spaces' to improved health and well-being. It is believed that contact with nature plays a crucial and irreplaceable role in brain development. Simply walking through a natural environment can reduce blood pressure, reduce stress chemicals such as cortisol and support with overall wellbeing (Van den Berg 2017). With so many people leading sedentary lifestyles we know that all forms of exercise are good, raising fitness, releasing endorphins and promoting a sense of calm.

At BF Adventure we encourage children and young people to appreciate the natural environment around them, from sensory journeys and pond dipping to wild swimming, quarry-steering and the zip-wire. We enable children and young people to immerse themselves in the outdoors.





Connor's Instructor said...

Connor has been coming to BF for 3 years now. He was referred to BF after struggling to engage in school. For the last 6 months I have been working with Connor 1:1. He has been attending twice a week so has also worked with other instructors. I have seen him grow as an individual into a caring and considerate person. He has also become a positive role model for the younger children. Connor has been able to openly talk about his past and what he wants to be able to achieve in the future, including showing an interest in potential college courses and apprenticeships he could undertake.

CONNOR'S STORY



Connor's Carers have said...

BF has helped Connor to become more confident in himself. Connor loves coming to BF, and is a lot happier since coming. We are happy that he is now getting tuition and people are helping him.



Connor said...

BF has helped me to become a calmer person and makes me feel welcomed and safe.



Our Skills for Life Programmes:

We have developed our Skills for Life programmes to meet needs identified through our clients, referrers and partners; as a learning organisation committed to delivering change, we are able to adapt our provision as demand changes. During the 2019-2020 academic year we **delivered 1693 Skills for Life sessions** across our range of programmes. Our current programmes include:

SKILLS FOR LIFE -

LEARN DIFFERENTLY

AN ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAMME FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AGED 5-16 YEARS

SKILLS FOR LIFE -

FAMILIES

BESPOKE PROGRAMMES TO SUPPORT COMMUNICATION AND POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITHIN FAMILIES.

SKILLS FOR LIFE -

ACCESS TO ADVENTURE

FULLY INCLUSIVE ACTIVITY PROGRAMMES FOR CHILDREN, ADULTS AND FAMILIES WITH PHYSICAL AND/OR LEARNING DISABILITIES

SKILLS FOR LIFE -

HEAD OUT

10 WEEK WELL-BEING PROGRAMME FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE EXPERIENCING LOW LEVEL MENTAL ILL HEALTH

SKILLS FOR LIFE -

HEAD OUT LGBTQ+

10 WEEK WELL-BEING PROGRAMME FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WHO IDENTIFY AS LGBTQ+

Our Skills for Life Programmes

LEARN DIFFERENTLY

Funded by: Referrers and bursary grants



An alternative education programme for children and young people aged 5-16 years who are struggling to manage mainstream education provision; we often form part of a part-time timetable and work with children in small groups, pairs or 1:1. The Learn Differently programme makes up the core of our delivery.

Beginnings...

Building trusting relationships with children and young people is our number one priority at BF Adventure and the cornerstone of all the work that we do. Our Service Request form is designed to be completed by the referrer and the young person, enabling the young person to have a say in what information is shared about them from the beginning, giving them a sense of ownership and shared power. We trust that this process also enables the young person to play a key role in their own learning, to gain an understanding of why they are coming to BF and what they want to achieve here. Each young person is offered the opportunity to complete a journal during their time with us; a creative tool they can use to capture their feelings, achievements and ultimately their own Journey of Change.

Middles....

We complete sessional reports for each of the young people on programme. We are able to share these reports with referral agencies and parents/carers as appropriate, including relevant photos with consent. We aim to create a picture of the young person's progress on provision and enable referrers to have information to inform their own conversations with the young person...

Endings...

We believe that a planned and successful ending is hugely important, particularly for children and young people who have experienced Adverse Childhood Experiences. We have recently reviewed our process of 'closure' and discussed our thoughts with a number of young people on provision with us. To ensure a meaningful ending, we will now aim to include a handover meeting as part of our Learn Differently programme. During this meeting we will enable the young person to speak about their experience at BF, address any outstanding concerns and share their journal if applicable. We recognise that endings are also important for the referring agencies and we will request feedback on their experience of our provision and will use this feedback to inform our quality improvements and ideas for future provision.

RJ'S STORY



Rj's Instructor said...

When RJ started with us at BF, a typical week would include no time out doors at all, and very little time outside of his room with his curtains closed. Additionally, his contact with others including those in his family was very limited and rarely positive. We have supported RJ through many changes in his home and school life, where at times we have been his sole service provider. We have consistently adapted to suit the needs of RJ, facilitating overnight stays on site, which were an opportunity for him to gain some independence and spend nights away from home for the first time in his life. RJ has worked his way through all the activities at BF, despite having firm reservations, and flat refusals about doing many of them in the beginning. A shared highlight among staff is the scene where RJ went into the canoe quarry for a swim for the first time. Something that was unthinkable for a long time previously...

... He didn't stop there, jumping off all of the platforms in quarry steering. Through a long process of building a safe and supportive group of instructors (including a key worker) around RJ, we have seen a huge change in him in terms of his willingness to open up, share some thoughts and feelings which would have been hard to imagine at the beginning. An unexpected and wonderful outcome was witnessing RJ's gentle, nurturing and caring side coming out coupled with his deep appreciation of nature. Instructors have had the pleasure of watching RJ become a more smiley, chatty, more outgoing and engaging young man.

Rj told us...

BF has helped me get outside and speak to more people.

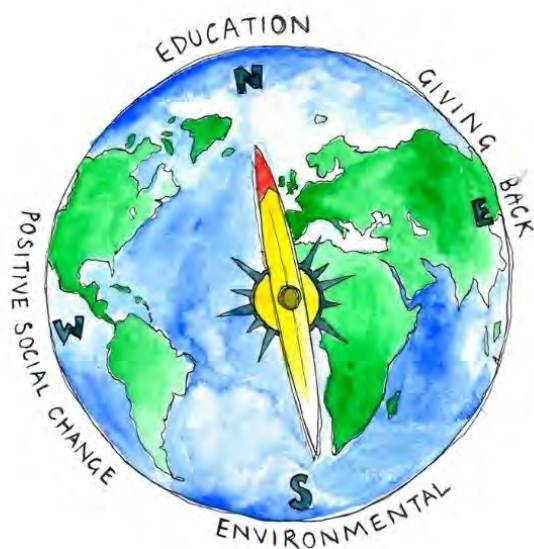


Our Skills for Life Programmes:

HEAD OUT

Funded by: Children in Need, Worval Foundation

Our 8 week trauma-informed approach blends one-to-one outreach support with small group skills sessions and outdoor education activities, all set within our uniquely 'green' learning environment. Each individual young person benefits through building a trusted relationship with one dedicated key worker who listens to their spoken needs, as well as those unspoken that manifest through their behaviours. Within safe boundaries young people are engaged and empowered through positive shared experiences in therapeutic natural settings to promote self-regulation and reduce toxic stress. Head Out was developed as a pilot project in 2016 with funding from the Duchy Health Charity as a response to our recognition that an increasing number of the children and young people accessing our services faced mental ill health challenges. The 8-week programmes run on a half-termly basis and include 1:1 outreach and transition phases alongside group work on site. We have expanded the initial term time provision to include group work throughout the summer holidays. This year we have supported 30 young people during 5 programmes. We have been fortunate to receive funding through the Worval Foundation (a local charity) and Children in Need to enable us to provide fully funded programmes. This level of funding ensures that we can offer early intervention, preventative, support to those young people who schools may not have the capacity to fund.



"Thank you for giving BF the money for me to come, I feel like before I started, I wasn't myself but it's helped me to get back to where I was before and be more confident. I want to come back and volunteer when I'm old enough"

- Young person after attending our Head Out Programme

Our Skills for Life Programmes:

Head Out: LGBTQ+

Funded by: Private donor

This programme was devised in partnership with a private donor, the Intercom Trust and groups of LGBTQ+ young people. It follows a similar model to our Head Out provision with a combination of workshops and outdoor activities. Each group plans their own themes for workshops and the groups have covered confidence building, identity, sexuality and reducing isolation. Since September 2019 we have supported 18 young people.

We asked some of the young people attending the programme how they felt....

Q: What did you most enjoy about the programme?

The range of activities, meeting others who are accepting, and the general nice atmosphere.

Q: What have you learnt from the programme?

Everything will be ok, you'll not be afraid, it's safe, you'll make friends.

Q: How has the programme helped you?

Life at home has been easier and more positive because of the way I can be open and be myself - it has relieved some stress.

The experience of being able to mix with likeminded young people with no restraint has been invaluable, they all report to having enjoyed it immensely. They have had the opportunity to test and push themselves in directions they perhaps would otherwise not have done, thus, gaining confidence and a learning that anything can be possible with the right encouragement and support. They have learned to work in teams and built friendships that have continued after the project finished and grown in personality, self-belief and self-worth.

-Pastoral Support Worker

Bob's Story...

Bob was referred to our LGBTQ+ programme, he was finding it difficult to manage his emotions at college and was facing exclusion. Within the group he sometimes struggled, occasionally leaving the group and generally disengaging. He had been out of mainstream education for two years and has often referred to himself as being "naughty" or a problem or for his teachers and parents. He asked to come back to BF and volunteer through the #IWILL programme which we initially had some reservations about. However, when we talked with him, he was very keen so we agreed he could try it...

...Over lockdown, he struggled with his mental health but he continued to support other young people as a volunteer and was also offered a place on our Head Out programme to have some time for himself. There was a notable improvement in his behaviour compared with the prior programme. This time he was able to ask for support from his instructor when he needed it rather than getting this through disengaging. He was also really supportive of peers and remained responsible even when others were not engaging well. He is now able to reflect on his behaviours and emotions and ask to talk to instructors about this. In September Bob decided to return to college and is doing Maths and English there while continuing to volunteer as part of his week. He is a reliable and helpful volunteer...

Bob says...

Having a day or two where I don't have to think about life feels like a break, this helps me manage college and gives me something to look forward to.

BOB'S STORY



...He has now been supporting our Skills for Life sessions in a work experience capacity and once he was given this responsibility he excelled. He has loved playing games with young people, has communicated well with staff and has been able to be really honest about how nervous he felt on his first day - a huge step for him as he has said he struggles to admit anything he feels others may see as a weakness. It has been lovely to create opportunities for him to excel and where he can be praised and supported to recognise his strengths.

Our Skills for Life Programmes:

Access to Adventure

Funded by: Bailey Thomas and The CLA Charitable Trust

Our Access to Adventure programmes cross a wide spectrum of support for disabled children, young people, adults and their families. We have weekly 1:1 and group sessions, funded through personal direct payments where participants are enabled to take part in a range of activities and projects. An essential element of our A2A provision is to strive to reduce inequality for families impacted by disability and the associated social isolation.

We were delighted to receive funding from Baily Thomas and the CLA Charitable Trust to deliver 'Adventure Challenge' activity days, for disabled children, young people and their families during Summer 2020. Our Adventure Challenge days enable children and young people with learning disabilities, and their families, to engage in fun, accessible activities on our site. Due to Covid-19 we changed the format of our delivery to ensure everyone's safety. The activities were adapted to meet participants individual needs and abilities. The days were set up to allow families to be in their individual bubbles and instructors could facilitate learning and safety.



Summer 2020

11 Families, with young people aged between 5 and 20.

Families took part in sessions together, to reduce isolation and facilitate the creation of a supportive network for the future.

Each day consisted of a morning of bushcraft (den building and fire lighting) and an afternoon in the quarry (swimming, quarrysteering and kayaking).

A large proportion had ASD and/or processing difficulties, learning difficulties, limited speech or ADHD. A lot of these coexist with of anxiety, low self-esteem and mental ill health. Many of the children also had multiple adverse child experiences.

Our Skills for Life Programmes:

Family Work

Funded by: Together for Families / Victim Care Unit

At BF Adventure we love to work with whole families and support the development of positive communication and relationships where there may have been a breakdown for some reason. During this year we have supported 7 families through our contract with Safer Stronger Consortium to deliver under the Victim Care Unit Contract and 3 families through Together for Families funded provision.



Our Skills for Life Programmes:

Peer Mentors

Funded by: I WILL



2018/2019 gave us an opportunity to formalise our peer mentoring provision. This year we have once again received funding through #IWILL to support 4 young people through a process of social action, enabling them to build their confidence, support other young people and gain work-based skills.

Supporting other young people

Growing confidence



Gaining work based skills



"Ever since I first came to BF when I was very nervous and needed my mum there to help me, the instructors have helped me so much throughout my life and continue helping me gain confidence and experience, trying new things in a safe environment. I love spending time at BF! It's my favourite place to go to. I also love volunteering."

-BF Programme participant and volunteer

SEPTEMBER 2019-2020

Skills for Life Programme Funding:

Places on our Skills for Life Learn Differently programmes are usually funded through referral pathways. For some young people, particularly those who are home educated or who struggle to attend school, this funding is hard to secure. We are incredibly indebted to the support that funders have made through this particularly challenging year, enabling us to work with children and young people who have faced crisis but do not necessarily meet the threshold for statutory support.



Whats new?

In July, we saw the opening of Via Ferrata Cornwall, a CIC set up to offer the public an opportunity to engage in a high adrenaline activity on the BF site. Journeying through our historic granite quarries in an epic adventure, participants get to make amazing memories and conquer their fears as they scale cliff faces, wobble across our 70m long High Wire Bridge and soar through the air on one of Cornwall's most scenic zip-lines.

All profits from the company will go to supporting the work of the charity. Thankfully Via Ferrata is naturally a socially distanced activity and has enjoyed a very busy first summer, exceeding expectations given the circumstances. Young people attending BF Adventure also have the opportunity to use this facility.

We are also blessed with a new Café, run by the Cornish Barista and offering us the development of training opportunities for young people in the near future.



www.viaferratacornwall.co.uk



