



YMCA
OPEN DOOR

Supported Lodgings for
homeless young people



NEWSLETTER

April 2020
Easter Edition



From Rachael

Dear Hosts,

I hope that you, your family and friends are safe and well.

As the effects of the coronavirus outbreak are starting to be felt more acutely across the UK, I do appreciate how difficult it is for Hosts being essentially locked up with their Young People for 24 hours a day and I want to reassure you again that we are still here to support you and your Young Person. The impact of the outbreak has made it difficult to maintain our normal service levels but we remain committed to being there for you. The team are all now working from home and are doing support meetings either on the phone or via Zoom. We have also started having Host forums via Zoom and I would urge you to try joining one of these meetings if you can. For those of you who are not confident with IT, I'm not either and I promise you, it is really straightforward.

I'd like to thank you again for the amazing work that you are continuing to do through the most challenging of circumstances. Please stay safe and well and do get in touch if you need additional support.

Love from Rachael x

Host Event Calendar

In the previous newsletter you would have seen a list of events that were due to take place this year, most of them unfortunately have had to be cancelled or re-scheduled to a later date.

Fortunately we live in a very modern world where technology has fast become our best friend! Without it many of us would not have any contact at all with friends or family outside of our own home.

As Rachael mentioned, YMCA have recently been using an App called 'Zoom', you may well have heard of it or already be using it, this has enabled the team to work from home where possible whilst still remaining in contact with each other, young people and Hosts.

You will have been invited to a Host Forum via Zoom either by email or in a text message, we had a few Hosts join in the last one and it was so lovely to see them and we want to encourage more to join in. It's so easy to do even if you are not very tech savvy normally, it doesn't matter.



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All you need to do is click a link and [THAT IS IT!](#)

If you want to join in but don't feel quite confident enough please call one of the team or if you have a placement – your Project Worker. Please don't be left out, the meetings are a great way of keeping in touch and it alleviates any feelings of boredom or isolation for a little while.

This is what we have coming up:

Wednesday 15th April at 7pm,
Host Forum, with a short 30 min interactive discussion with Ruth Martin about **Attachment** (which originally was meant to be her topic on a Host training event which was cancelled because of the early stages of the pandemic)

Tuesday 21st April at 7pm,
Host Forum, with a short 30 min taster from Jackie Banks (Host) about **sign language**.

Monday 27th April, this event is to be confirmed, Host Forum, with a 45 min interactive discussion with Sharon Jayne Davies (Walsall Council) about **mental health**

Friday 1st May, Time TBC - Host Forum, with a short 30 min interactive discussion with James Henderson (Transforming Communities Together) about **County Lines**

A few questions have been asked by Hosts which I am sharing here for your reference.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What happens if I or my Young Person have Covid 19 symptoms?

You and your Young person should follow the latest Government guidance on self-isolating. You should also notify your YMCA Project Worker.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

What happens if my Young Person becomes sick while they are stopping out at a friend's house?

In this instance, we would expect them to return to your property to self-isolate as it is their home. If this happens, please inform your Project Worker.

What do I do if my Young Person refuses to self-isolate?

If your Young Person refuses to self-isolate while they have symptoms or someone else in your household has symptoms; you should speak to your Project Worker or our Out of Hours Worker on 07840 448087 . We can suspend their license for 7/14 days if they refuse to self-isolate. We have written to all Young People to inform them that they can choose to isolate with a friend or family member if they prefer to do so. This will not affect their HB claim but they must let us know if they choose to do this. We are also speaking



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to them regularly and stressing the importance of following Government guidance on self-isolating, social distancing and the importance of hand-washing etc.

Are Hosts classed as Key Workers? *No, Hosts are not classed as Key Workers but YMCA Open Door staff are. We will continue to provide support throughout the crisis.*

Visitors and visiting others

Although we appreciate how difficult it must be asking and encouraging your young person not to allow visitors to your home and not to go out and visit family or friends; the team think you are doing really well!

Please keep on with this and continue to follow the government guidelines, by following those guidelines yourselves and not allowing visitors to your home or not visiting others you are setting the best example.

It is imperative to the welfare and safety of not only members of your household but the wider community as well as our wonderful NHS staff that we follow the guidelines almost to the letter where possible.

The guidelines can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

A little bit of fun

YMCA song – Home Edition

We miss seeing everyone's beautiful faces so we would love you to feature on our own YMCA music video! This is your moment to become a YouTube sensation or a TikTok smash! We'd love you to film yourselves singing, dancing and messing around to YMCA song

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CS9000S5w2k>.

You won't be heard, so don't worry about the audio!

Send us the whole song and we'll take your best bits and add with the others!

Film it on your smartphone and email it to jonathan.crust@ymcab.org.uk or whatsapp to 07850515604. (If e-mailing, you may need to send it through iCloud, [WeTransfer](#) or similar. Please send them in by **Friday 17th April** at the latest.

If you want some inspiration, check out some local churches which have been doing it to other songs:- [Let It Be Known](#)

<https://www.facebook.com/andrinad/videos/10157735573075033/UzpfSTewMDIxODU5OTY6MzA2MDYxMTI5NDk5NDE0Ojc1OjA6MTU4ODMxNjM5OTotNzk3NTUyNDAxMzkxOTgxODg/>



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Mental Health during Covid-19

Many people are struggling with their mental health at the moment due to the pandemic forcing us to remain indoors, away from family and friends and the shutting of schools, colleges and other education centres.

Being told that you **have** to stop doing everything that you are used to doing and not being able to mix with others can cause a lot of distress and increase the feeling of loneliness.

People affected are of all ages and backgrounds, mental health isn't choosy when it comes to who it affects and I believe it affects everyone at some point in their lives.

It really is **nothing to be ashamed of** and it's great to see it being talked about more openly in the media now.

If you or your young person are feeling a bit overwhelmed at the moment - don't panic! There is help available, as well as support from YMCA, there are a number of organisations online with some excellent tips and ideas to help break up the boredom and reduce the negative feelings you may be experiencing at the moment.



<https://www.mind.org.uk/>

0300 123 3393

"We provide advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem."



<https://www.thecalmzone.net/>

0800 58 58 58

"The Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM) is leading a movement against suicide, the single biggest killer of men under 45 in the UK and the cause of 18 deaths every day."



<https://youngminds.org.uk>

For urgent help text YM to 85258

"Social distancing and self-isolation can be really hard to deal with. It's normal to feel anxious, frustrated or bored, and if you're worried about the effect it will have on your mental health, you are not alone. Here are our tips for looking after your wellbeing during quarantine."



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YMCA

Christian Mission Coordinator

Phil Gray, YMCA Black Country Group's Christian Mission Coordinator is on hand to offer support to both young people and Hosts.

"This is a completely non-judgmental space to discuss, explore, pray, worship and generally unpack life's journey from a supportive Christian perspective"

You can call Phil on

01902 371 587, he'll be more than happy to hear from you.

He sent this prayer:

Father God, there is so much that we don't understand about the current situation that the world finds itself in, but help us to trust You even in the midst of this storm.

Thank You that You are not unconcerned about our fears and the things that adversely affect us.

Lord we pray that You would speak Your peace to us when the storm without tries to become the storm within, help us to realise that You are with us in our storm tossed boat and because You are with us we can receive hope in exchange for fear.

Amen



Psalm 121

1 I lift up my eyes to the mountains— where does my help come from?

2 My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth.

3 He will not let your foot slip— he who watches over you will not slumber;

4 indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.

5 The LORD watches over you— the LORD is your shade at your right hand;

6 the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night.

7 The LORD will keep you from all harm— he will watch over your life;

8 the LORD will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore.

When we have faith in Christ, however, we have hope not only in this life, but in the next.

The future, while uncertain, can be entrusted to God, and He will help us through.



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How to get in touch Contact Details

OUT OF HOURS: 07840 448 087

Rachael:

0121 524 1974 / 07854 928988

Stanley:

0121 524 1974 / 07710 085614

Alex:

0121 524 1957 / 07854 928944

Luci:

0121 524 1979 / 07545 428585

Diane:

0121 524 1961 / 07545 428585

Raj:

01902 371564 / 07736 880198

Jonathan:

0121 524 3255 / 07850 515604

Mandeep:

01384 862502 / 07772 488716

Lorraine:

01384 886017 / 07858 695110

**Out of Hours for Local
Authority (EDT)**

Dudley 0300 555 8574

Sandwell 0121 569 2355

Walsall 0300 555 2836

Wolves 01902 552 999



Cooking competition

The Open Door team are coming up with ideas to keep the young people entertained. Each week they are setting a new competition, last week was a cooking challenge. YP's were asked to prepare a meal and send a photo of it. Entries were judged by CEO, Steve Clay who had a very difficult decision to make.

After much deliberating it was decided that the winner was Jamie with his spaghetti bolognese. Well done Jamie!!



We also wanted to show you this fabulous cake that was made by Evelin, unfortunately it was sent to us after the deadline but would have been a strong contender.





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Ideas to break up the day

People have been sharing some great activities to help them get through the long days while we're in quarantine.

Rachael has spent more time in her garden, Jonathan has downloaded the Couch to 5k app and is doing really well. Steve Clay has started to learn German!

Here are a few more ideas,

Write a poem or short story

Use online recipes and learn to cook new meals.

Read a book, you can also access audio books and podcasts online.

Start a free online course.

Have a spring clean.

Take a virtual tour of a tourist attraction.

Start exercising with online training videos – youtube has loads!

Meditate, do yoga or other relaxing techniques.

Watch all of the Marvel movies in order.

Keep in touch with friends and family online.

Catch up on a boxset.

Download a free subscription service for a month, such as Netflix, Spotify or Prime. (Don't

forget to cancel at the end of the free period!).

Look online for different challenges such as keepy uppy.

Sort out your junk draw.

Visit sites that explore organising/cleaning such as Marie Kondo or Mrs Hinch.

Watch a zoo live cam.

Practice your version of the YMCA before sending the video to Jonathan!

And finally, appreciate how lucky we are that we can be quarantined and self-isolate if we need to...

A view from an Indian doctor:

"Social distancing is a privilege. It means you live in a house large enough to practise it. Hand washing is a privilege too. It means you have access to running water. Hand sanitisers are a privilege. It means you have money to buy them. Lockdowns are a privilege. It means you can afford to be at home. Most of the ways to ward the Corona off are accessible only to the affluent. In essence, a disease that was spread by the rich as they flew around the globe will now kill millions of the poor. All of us who are practising social distancing and have imposed a lockdown on ourselves must appreciate how privileged we are. Many Indians won't be able to do any of this."

#perspective #humanfamily