



Registered Charitable Company  
Charity No. 1140812  
Company No. 7557636

# From Me2 U

## Newsletter Autumn 2011

Welcome to our Autumn Newsletter. It has been a very eventful and exciting few months at the Me2 Club with trips to Buckingham Palace and the Houses of Parliament, welcoming our new member of staff, our summer trip to TVAP and weekend away to Sayers Croft!

### Contact Details:

Me2Club  
1a Park House  
17 Headley Road  
Woodley, Berkshire  
RG5 4JB

info@me2club.org.uk

0118 969 6369

07821858852

www.me2club.org.uk

### Contents:

#### Me2 Club wins the Queens Award

##### Me2 Club News

*Goodbye to Kristina, Summer Trip photographs and Me2 goes to the Houses of Parliament.*

##### Me2 Club Developments

*Welcome to Jo, Inclusion Training and our Japanese visitors.*

##### Fundraising

*Thank you to all our recent supporters*

##### Can you help?

*What can you do to support the Me2 Club?*

##### Sunny Weekend Away

*Lots of photos and comments from our recent weekend trip*

##### Other News

*Fireworks events, events for carers and free gig tickets for volunteers*

##### Thank you

*A massive thank you to all our leaving volunteers*

## Me2 Club WINS the Queen's Award!

We are thrilled to announce that the Me2 Club was one of this year's winners of the Queens Award for Voluntary Service. This award is the equivalent of an MBE for charities and voluntary organisations.



This is a great honour for The Me2 Club and recognises the commitment of our volunteers, and the impact our work has on supporting children, families and activity leaders.

Emily, Amy, Bev (Chair of the committee) and Janine (one of our young volunteers) went to a garden party at Buckingham Palace on 19th July to celebrate. The party was also attended by the Queen and Prince Phillip, Prince Charles and Camilla, Princess Anne, Prince Edward and Sophie and Princess Alexandra! The Me2 team enjoyed walking through the palace, wandering around the gardens, listening to military bands, eating cucumber sandwiches and drinking tea. Even the rain did not spoil this wonderful occasion.

Later in the year a commemorative crystal and a certificate will be presented to us by the Lord Lieutenant of Berkshire, on behalf of The Queen. A small group of Me2 Club staff, children and volunteers will represent the charity at this event in November.



### Dates for the diary:

- FREE tickets to fireworks at Laurel Park (see pg 7) - 5th November
- AGM - Monday 7th November 2011 7pm in Woodley (venue TBC)
- Christmas Party - 11th December 3-5pm - Woodley

Please do not reproduce any of the photographs that appear in this publication without permission. Thank you.

# Me2 Club News

## Thank you & Goodbye to Kristina

Kristina left the Me2 Club in June after working with us for over a year. Kristina was a wonderful asset to the team and will be greatly missed by all those she worked with. We'd like to say a huge thank you to her for all her hard work, energy and enthusiasm during her time at the Me2 Club and would like to wish her well for her life as a new Mum to Olive - Congratulations from us all!



## Summer Trip

We had a wonderful (but slightly soggy) trip to Thames Valley Adventure Playground on the 16th July. Over 90 people attended including 36 children and young people along with their volunteers and some families. We all enjoyed a wide variety of activities including indoor soft play, sensory room, fancy dress, sand pit, swings, climbing frames, bikes and zip wire. We huddled together for a picnic before the sun shone in the afternoon and everyone enjoyed the outdoor activities. Parents even enjoyed their own session in the sensory room to get away for a few minutes peace and quiet! Thank you to everyone who came along and made it such an enjoyable day.



## Me2 Club goes to the Houses of Parliament



Emily, our Project Coordinator, joined over 150 MPs, peers and sector leaders at the annual Parliamentary Summer Reception at the House of Commons on July 5th. The event was organised by NCVO (National Council for Voluntary Organisations) as an opportunity to pay tribute to the important work undertaken by civil society organisations across the country. The address was given by the Minister for Civil Society, Nick Hurd MP and other speakers included former newscaster and Youthnet founder Martyn Lewis.

## Me2 Club Developments

It has been a really exciting few months at the Me2 Club. We have been awarded a grant from the Big Lottery Reaching Communities Fund which has enabled to employ a 3rd full time member of staff so that we can continue running inclusion training sessions for activity leaders and the weekends away.....lots more information below:

### Welcome to Jo



*“Hello, my name is Jo and I am the new Activities and Volunteers Coordinator. I started on Monday the 10<sup>th</sup> of October and I love it already! I completed a degree in English and Philosophy last year and since then I have been getting really stuck in volunteering for my local special needs charities and working, both on a voluntary basis and paid, in schools as special needs support. I feel passionately about increasing the opportunities and experiences of*

*children with additional needs and that lead me to the door of the Me2 Club as it was offering an incredible opportunity to make a difference and have lots of fun doing so.*

*A little bit about me...My home county is West Sussex so I am very new to the Wokingham and Reading area and all it has to offer but I am very excited about exploring all the activities and clubs it has. I love the outdoors, walking my dogs, kayaking and bike rides. I also love the creative side of life and you can often find me making cards and crafts, baking or at my sewing machine.*

*I feel very honoured to have been chosen for this role and cannot wait to get started and meet you all to help continue the amazing work The Me2 Club does!”*

### Weekends Away

The weekends away will continue to run, with 3 trips scheduled over the next year. The first of which was held on 1st-2nd October. Lots of photos can be found over the page!

### Japanese visitors!

The Me2 Club hosted Yuho and her parents for afternoon tea at the Me2 Club office. Yuho attended the Young Core Leaders for Civil Society Development Program along with Emily in Japan earlier this year and during her trip to England was keen to find out more about the Me2 Club and the work we do. We thoroughly enjoyed meeting them and felt privileged to be able to share a traditional afternoon tea with them, and in return learn all about Japanese tea ceremonies.



## Inclusion Training for Activity Leaders

We are really pleased to be able to continue offering our extremely popular inclusion training workshops to activity leaders (Scout/Guide leaders, youth workers, after school clubs, sports coaches, swim school staff etc). We offer a range of free workshops covering all sorts of topics useful in including children with disabilities - our training programme for the coming year is below. For more details on what these training sessions involve or to book a place please contact Emily Radford: [emily@me2club.org.uk](mailto:emily@me2club.org.uk) / 0118 969 6369 or visit our website: <http://www.me2club.org.uk/Inclusion.htm>

8th Nov 2011 **Supporting Behaviour Difficulties** = (5.30-8pm) - Wokingham

30th November 2011 - **Makaton** eve – Woodley

8th December 2011 – **Autism** - evening - venue tbc

21st Jan 2012 – **Makaton** - am – Wokingham

25th Jan 2012 – **Autism** - evening - Woodley

9th Feb 2012 - **Introducing Disability** - eve - Woodley

18th Feb 2012 - **Adapting Activities** (10am-12.30pm) - venue tbc

12th March 2012 - **Supporting Behaviour Difficulties** - Woodley

18th April 2012– **Epilepsy** - eve - Wokingham

We need your help publicising these, please pass on to any activities any of your children attend, and anyone else that may be interested.

## Fundraising...

Volunteers in Challenge of Management competition earn funds for Me2!

*"In July my school (The Holt) and Reading Boys took part in 'Challenge of Management'. This is where we are placed into groups and set the challenge of running our own business, pitching to banks for money etc. One of the tasks was to pitch to bank managers about a charity of our choice in order to compete for sponsorship of a hypothetical £10 000 for the charity. My group, and two others (in different competitions), chose the Me2 Club and all three groups won their competition. Resulting from this the Maiden Erleigh Rotary Club has decided to donate (a real) £100 to the Me2 club. I thought everyone at the Me2 Club would be pleased to know that there are so many people that support the work you are doing - and hopefully we have reached a few more people in the process of the competition."* **Lauren Hughes**

A massive thank you to all the students and volunteers involved in this project, and of course a huge thank you to the Rotary Club of Reading Maiden Erleigh. We are really grateful for all your support. Thank you.



## Alpine Adventure raises £1400

Mark Taylor, one of our supporters has raised a phenomenal £1400 for the Me2 Club by trekking across 7 alpine countries covering 1250km. He began his journey at Lake Geneva in Switzerland on the 4th June and finished on the 4th August at Lake Bled in Slovenia. The trek took him across Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Austria, Germany, Italy, Slovenia and touched on France.



Mark decided that after leaving work it was time to set himself a challenge, raise money for charity and get fit! He planned the journey in aid of Help for Heroes, and decided to raise money for a local charity too. He did the trip independently but was joined on phases of the journey by his sons, friends and family who gave him support and encouragement along the way. He said that it was an amazing experience, full of challenges (narrow unkept mountain paths in Italy) and lots of funny moments to keep him going (encountering a group of hells angels pumping out music on a

ghetto blaster on a mountain path practicing their line dancing!).

We are so grateful for Mark for choosing to support the Me2 Club, and would like to thank him and all his supporters for raising such an incredible amount of money for us.

## Plymouth Half Marathon

Keeley Oliver (Mum of a Me2 Club member) has raised £350 by completing the Plymouth half marathon. At the end of May Keeley ran 13.1 miles on a hilly course to raise money for us. *"I wanted to try to show our appreciation by running and raising a little, as you and Nick have made such a massive difference to Olivers' life."* All the hard work and training paid off and she raised a brilliant £350 for the Me2 Club in the process! Thank you.



## Charity Night raises funds for Me2 Club

Another family has been working hard to raise funds for the Me2 Club by organising a charity night at the Earley Home Guard Social Club. The night was organised by one of our parents, Jo Page-Major, and involved a disco, raffle and lots of fun raising an impressive £350 for the Me2 Club. We'd like to



say a massive thank you to Jo and her family (Elliott shown in photograph) for all their hardwork in organising such a successful event. Thank you also to all those who went along and supported the event and made it such an enjoyable evening.

## ...Can you help?

### Me2 Club needs your help.....

We are incredibly grateful for all the fundraising people have done for us, but we are always in need of more funds and are asking **Families and Volunteers to get involved in fundraising**. We were delighted to receive the grant from the Big Lottery Reaching Communities programme, however this only covers our new projects and it is essential that we raise money to cover our core work....matching volunteers to enable children to attend leisure activities.

We are working really hard to source these funds from grants, trusts and other sources, but in the current financial climate this is becoming more and more difficult. **We need your help** to ensure that the Me2 Club is able to continue offering the service we do. Please take a look at our suggestions for supporting us. Thank you.

### Reading Half Marathon

We are looking for people to join the Me2 Club team and run Reading Half Marathon and help us raise lots of money for our great cause!



**When?** Sunday 1st April 2012

**How far?** 13.1 miles (21 km)

**How do I sign up?** You need to sign up directly with the race organisers at: [www.readinghalfmarathon.com](http://www.readinghalfmarathon.com) The race costs £33.50 to enter (refundable—see below)

**How much do I need to raise?** There is no minimum sponsorship but if you raise over £200 we will refund your race entry.

**What will the Me2 Club do?** We will give you lots of encouragement and support, a training plan, a Me2 Club running top, and lots of tips and support for fundraising.



We already have 5 people signed up, so why not join us? Even if you're not a runner there is plenty of time to start from scratch and build up to this.....what better to motivate you than knowing you're making a massive difference to the Me2 Club and all the children and young people we support.

### Organise an event

Are you able to organise your own fundraising event to raise money for the Me2 Club? You could hold a cake sale, sponsored event, jumble sale, tea party, or get creative and come up with your own fundraising idea! Every little helps us continue supporting children to attend activities.

### Nominate us

Does your school, college, university or work place have a charity of the year or run fundraising events?

If so, please nominate us. Business fundraising can be a fantastic income for small charities and also helps raise awareness. We are happy to send information / fliers about the charity as well as give presentations if you can

### Online Shopping

**GIVE FREE CASH DONATIONS!**

You can help the Me2 Club raise money when you do any shopping online. All you need to do is sign



up at: [www.thegivingmachine.co.uk](http://www.thegivingmachine.co.uk), then go via this website whenever you go to your usual online shops (amazon, ebay, john lewis, tesco, m&s etc). It doesn't cost you anything! The online shop pays the donation on your behalf. Over the past year we have received over £65 from this scheme which is fantastic. So (dare I say it!) with Christmas shopping looming, why not sign up and help us raise even more money without it costing you a thing.

### Regular Giving

Having regular donors makes a massive difference to the ongoing sustainability of the Me2 Club, as it provides us with regular funding allowing our work to continue. It's really easy to set up a direct debit through the justgiving website: <http://www.justgiving.com/me2club/donate>

you can simply select your chosen amount and the regularity with which you would like to give. Justgiving also claims gift aid for us which means that a monthly donation of £5, would actually become £6.40. This is an easy, fuss free way to support the work we do, so why not sign up today to allow the charity to continue going from strength to strength.



# A sunny weekend away!

We were blessed with exceptionally good weather for our recent weekend away to Sayers Croft Field Centre in Surrey. On the 1st October we took 8 children and young people accompanied by their Me2 Club volunteers away for a 2 day trip to spend time with their volunteers and try lots of new activities! Everyone had a brilliant time playing in the sunshine and joining in with a wide range of activities including, archery, pond dipping, ropes course, maze, blind fold trail, adventure playground and a bonfire.

Well done and thank you to all our volunteers who made this trip possible and to all the Me2 Club members who came along and made it so much fun!



“I feel more confident in my volunteering, I want to come again next year!” **Volunteer**

“I would give it 1000 out of 10!!” **Me2 member**

“This is the best thing I’ve done in years!” **Me2 Member**

I loved all the activities, the food, the weather, and everything!  
**Volunteer**

“Wouldn’t it be great if we could stay here more days.....a whole year!” **Me2 Member**

“I love the volunteers!” **Me2 member**

“The extra responsibility had meant I know my child better, I have learnt a lot about her” **Volunteer**



## Other News

### Free entry to Laurel Park Firework Display



Woodley and Earley Lions have very generously offered us free entry for 20 Me2 Club members (and their carers) to attend their firework display:

When: **Saturday 5th November**

Where: **Laurel Park, Lower Earley**

Time: **Fireworks start at 7pm** (so best to arrive a little earlier!)

If you would like to attend please let us know by Wednesday 26th October so we can get your tickets to you in time.

### Volunteers - Get free gig tickets

**Sign up with Orange RockCorps and you can get free gig tickets.** All you need to do is join up and give four hours of your time to an Orange RockCorps project in your area (the Me2 Club). In return, you'll get a ticket to an exclusive gig with performances from big name artists. It's really simple to register...just visit: [www.orangerockcorps.co.uk/](http://www.orangerockcorps.co.uk/) to find out more.



### Fantastic Opportunity for young people with autism and their parents

Dean Beadle gives invaluable insight into life as a young person with autism in a humorous and inspirational manner. He will be speaking on the 19th November at a free event at the Council Chamber, Shute End from 1-4pm. This is will be a brilliant, not to be missed event. For more information contact Pam Breslin on: 01189 746882 or [pamela.breslin@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:pamela.breslin@wokingham.gov.uk)

### Camp Mohawk's

Annual  
bonfire and fireworks

Camp Mohawk are holding their annual bonfire and firework night on:



**Thursday 3rd November 6-9pm.**

Why not join them for an evening round the campfire followed by an exhilarating firework display.

£5 Adults and children over 12.

£3 under 3's

Tickets are likely to sell out so get them advance at: [musicfest@live.oc.uk](mailto:musicfest@live.oc.uk)

### Sensory Room

A sensory room has now opened at Academy Sport Leisure Centre, Reading. The room includes colour switching mode lights, bubble tubes, fibre optics, liquid effect wheels, soft seating, mirror ball, infinity tunnel and soothing music. The room is available for public sessions, private and group bookings.

Contact the centre for more information and to book a 15 minute complementary taster session: 0118 9370 270.



### 'Male' Carer Events organised by ASD Family Help

Bookings NOW being taken for Future Dates:

**Saturday 12 November - BOWL & Meal**

**Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> December - Over Night Hotel Break!**

Ideas for OVERNIGHT break are: London or Newbury or Brighton

Which place would you like?



The venue is **The Big Apple**, Wokingham Superbowl, Phoenix Plaza, Wellington Road, Wokingham RG40 2NJ. Arrive at 6.45pm for a 7pm start. Cost is **£6.95 for unlimited bowling. Optional meal afterwards.** *If anyone is interested in going, but would need financial assistance to attend, please contact ASD Family Help in confidence, as there is some funding available if you are a Parent/Carer of an adult with Complex and Severe needs -PMLD (subsided by WBC Learning Disability Partnership).*

**BOOK NOW! Booking is essential via:**

**email [contact@asdfamilyhelp.org](mailto:contact@asdfamilyhelp.org) or phone/text to 07707 660 599**

# Thank you to all our volunteers

A huge thank you to all our volunteers who have left us over the summer - good luck with everything you all go on to do and don't forget to stay in touch!



"I would just like to say thanks for the opportunity - I have learnt so much. He and his family are lovely and I am really glad I got the opportunity to help him to build his confidence."

**"I've had the most amazing time volunteering - I never thought it would be so much fun. When I thought about volunteering I knew it would be a 'good' thing to do, but I never realised how amazing it would be!"**



"I have really enjoyed volunteering for the Me2 Club, it has been such a valuable experience. I am applying to jobs to work with children with learning disabilities, I would especially like to work in special schools or as an LSA in a mainstream school. Working with Daniel has inspired me... I just think he is great!"



"I really enjoyed supporting Angus because every week was different and I began to know him really well. It was really rewarding to see the improvements Angus made throughout the sessions and the enjoyment he got out of the activities. I think that one of the biggest achievements was him learning how to cartwheel. I would volunteer for the me2 club again without any thought, it was a great experience and I miss it now."



**" I really enjoyed helping Kathryn because it was so rewarding to see her enjoying herself and getting stuck in with the activities. She did so many new activities with the Guides, she even sang in the talent show, and she loved them all! This experience has given me so much more confidence as well as being a lot of fun and I know I'll be back to do it again! "**