

The Arts Society Moor Park, Young Arts 2021

Body & Soul transform the life-threatening effects of childhood adversity and trauma in the lives of children, young people, and families. Whether someone has been neglected or abused, trafficked, attempted suicide, or stigmatised because of HIV, Body & Soul has helped liberate thousands of people from the trauma of their past.

Members can access a wide range of resources to take immediate steps to manage the most difficult aspects of their lives right now whilst also nurturing practical, social, and psychological factors that will protect them in the future. We work with people from some of the most deprived communities in the UK. Our membership is 90% BIPOC 81% are living in poverty and 70% are socially isolated, making access to creative opportunities limited.

The Arts Society Moor Park's generous donation has been dedicated to supporting members of our Young Explorers programme, a therapeutic service providing focused support to children aged 6 -12 adopted from the care system or under special guardianship. Your support has increased members access to the healing power of the arts. Through accessing creative workshops members have gained support with developing their sense of self, been given space to explore emotions around adoption and special guardianship and learn tools to navigate how to manage the impacts of adversity in their daily lives. By providing access to a wide selection of high-quality art materials for these workshops we have been able to encourage engagement, ensure that members feel valued and been able to emphasise that what they create is important. The Art Society Moor Park's support has contributed to transforming the lives of over 40 children who are living with the devastating effects of childhood trauma and adversity. Your support has helped us make sure that someone's past does not define who they become.



Thanks to your generosity we were able to provide art materials that supported:

- ♥ 41 Young Explorers to access creative workshops
- ♥ A 3-day creative summer project called 'SoulFest' that 21 young people from all of Body & Soul's youth programmes attended
- ♥ 2x 3 week 'Connect' projects for all existing Young Explorer members that 32 members attended
- ♥ 1x 4 week 'Beginnings' project for new Young Explorer members that 6 children attended



Some project examples...

SoulFest – August 2021

SoulFest was a three-day creative festival that brought together young people from all of our programmes in an exploration and celebration of the power of connection. Over the course of the festival a group of 21 young people engaged in a series of art, drama and dance workshops led by the Body & Soul team and guest dance artist Zoe Elliott. The project was devised to use creativity as a tool to give members an opportunity to reconnect with themselves, others, and the Body & Soul community as a whole.

Among three days full of many creative activities' members engaged in an art workshop where they explored and created an animal representation of themselves, they took part in movement workshops that celebrated freedom of expression through using ribbons and scarves and they participated in drama activities that focused on getting to know each other and enhancing group cohesion.

In the face of a time full of disruption and uncertainty for us all, young people have had to navigate increased anxieties regarding their futures, a reduction in opportunities to connect with their peers and engage in extra-curricular activities and a heightened fear for the health of older parents and carers. SoulFest was designed to recognise and explore these profound struggles but also provide counteractive opportunities for play, joy, and freedom.



Meet Michael*

Before joining SoulFest Michael* had been removed from school for disruptive behaviour due to finding his changing home circumstances destabilising according to his Auntie. Given that SoulFest project incorporated young people from across programmes, Michael* had not met a lot of the other young people in the space before and has previously struggled to connect with peers when starting a new group. Despite his initial reservations in the first morning, he found his voice and confidence within the role of supporting with the handing out of lunch food. The joy he found in this role, aided a moment of confidence when he reached out and approached a table of members who were a similar age to him and sat down to eat with them. They then continued to spend the whole lunchtime laughing about mutual interests. These friendships continued for Michael* across the project and he flourished when engaging in the art activities with these members. He showed great pride in the animal placard he created and consequently carried his animal around the building so that the staff could see what he'd created. In the final sharing- he partook with confidence and passed his animal straight to his auntie as part of the closing scene. After the project his auntie expressed how special it had been for her to witness his engagement in the show and said that she felt he had responded particularly positively to the consistency of the 3-day project given his recently isolation from his peers.



Connect - December

A group of 16 Young Explorer's embarked on a 3-week project based on Superheroes! This theme allowed the children to express parts of their reality and celebrate their imaginations. Each child developed their own superhero based on what they valued and celebrated within themselves. They also created villains, which posed threat, challenge or even danger to their superheroes. The group explored the theme through different creative mediums, art, dance, drama, and film. The project was designed to encourage young people to explore their identity, celebrate individuality, and harness their own powers. One child developed a superhero which was able to communicate with animals and her motto was 'If it is to be, it is up to me.'

At the end of the project the group shared their creations with their adoptive parents and the wider Body & Soul community too. This included masks and costumes they had created, a dance sequence they had learnt, and a short film based of a series of questions the children were asked as their superhero characters, exploring their powers, their lives, reasons for becoming a superhero. The project was a real celebration of creativity, individuality, and community. The project saw vital new connections and friendships being made within the group alongside these outcomes:

- ♥ 80% of the children attending the Connect project reported they had felt very good being part of the group over the 3 weeks
- ♥ 80% of the children attending the Connect project reported feeling confident this was an increase of 10% from when the project started, where 70% reported feeling confident in the group
- ♥ 80% of the children in the Connect group were able to name something they were proud of themselves for over the past 3 weeks

Young Explorers adoptive parents shared this feedback on the programme...

'Thank you to the team for creating a space for my son to talk about his experiences and learn skills, he loves it and is always excited to come back.'

'Body & Soul is a place where Robert can come, be himself and not feel judged, he can't do that anywhere else, you get him and the kids get him.'

'Thank you for all your support, we didn't know there was anything like this out there and now we do, and we are so happy to be part of Body & Soul.'



Thank you

We are so grateful for The Arts Society Moor Park's generous support. By accessing creative workshops members have gained the foundations to stay creatively curious and taken steps on their journey of healing from the trauma of their past. Thank you for making our work possible.