

“Almost two years in the making, our dream to create a multi/interfaith National Citizen Service provision has become a reality!

We brought together young people from different faiths and cultural backgrounds in a unique NCS that better engages these young people to access high quality youth provision that does not compromise their individual cultural or religious beliefs and values.

We wanted to create an NCS programme that helped to remove barriers so that all young people could participate - but the NCS participants achieved so much more than that - they created a community!

United together after a week of adventure team building, social cohesion seminars and then empowered and enabled through skills development and social action planning, almost 90 young people used their new talents to make a tremendous impact and a positive contribution to their local community and have showed us all how young people can be true active citizens in our society.

This is not interfaith NCS, it is just NCS - how it should be!

Neil Martin,
JLGB Chief Executive



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A JLGB led NCS Programme



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**Independent
Review
of JLGB led
Interfaith
NCS Delivery**
Summer 2012



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Executive Summary

1. JLGB have offered and delivered NCS as an inclusive, multifaith, accessible, interfaith experience. They have built on their practice from running camps for over 118 years and extended this offer to young people of other faiths and of no faith.
2. Accessibility, inclusion and a welcoming atmosphere were not just elements of the programme, they were its key foundations which meant all practice was embedded with these qualities.
3. Building on a history of providing opportunities to young people with an appreciation of the spiritual means that their approach was subtle, complex and effective.
4. This resulted in them showing that accessibility is more complex than just providing faith sensitive packaged meals, it is a holistic embedded experience.
5. JLGB provided facilities for young people to observe Ramadan, had a programme that was sensitive to the Sabbaths of different faiths and had an effective way of asking young people what they needed to be included, comfortable and able to participate.
6. Honouring the cultural and religious tradition, even if young people are happy to 'sit lightly' or suspend their faith practice, brought huge benefits in setting up a culture of respect and learning.
7. The overt focus on faith and values brought a richer, deeper impact to the expected benefits of a residential and social action experience. This encouraged reflection, thought and more profound engagement from the young people which means that any transformation or growth is more deeply embedded.

8. The quality of friendships and commitment to each other was remarked upon by many of the young people, some of whom cited the inclusion of faith as being important in developing friendships at a deeper level.
9. As the social action projects were also undertaken with this base position of inclusion, sensitivity and respect, the young people interviewed were working from a deep sense of commitment and alignment. Those who spoke of doing NCS to put something on their UCAS form at the start of the NCS experience had changed their motivation by the end. They spoke much more about the relationships within their projects and the impact on the people in the organisations that they had worked with.

10. This deeper approach to volunteering is potentially longer lasting than people doing it to 'tick the box'. All young people interviewed expressed an intention of starting or increasing their volunteering, it will be interesting to see the impact of this after a year.
11. The 'fruit' of the NCS social action projects reflects the commitment and the achievement of the groups of young people.
12. In addition to the impact on young people, volunteers, partner agencies and the staff team learnt and developed inclusive working values and techniques.

“Almost two years in the making, our dream to create a multifaith National Citizen Service provision has become a reality! We have brought together young people from different faiths and cultural backgrounds in a unique NCS model which helps to remove the barriers faced by faith communities and that better engages young people to access high quality youth provision that does not compromise their individual cultural or religious beliefs and values.”

This is not an interfaith NCS, it is just NCS – how it should be!

Neil Martin, JLGB Chief Executive



→ → Recommendations

1. That NCS runs a smaller targeted, bespoke programme to cater for young people who have specific religious requirements run by experts in the field to prevent disadvantaging those with protected characteristics.

2. That NCS programmes have accessibility as a key foundation to ensure that young people from all faiths and from none are not stopped from taking part because of the programme structure and approach.

3. That NCS programmes make faith and values explicit within the experience as a way to develop a culture of understanding and respect.

4. That NCS programmes 'model' inclusivity and consequently set up a parallel process within the whole life of the project.

5. That NCS programmes develop discussions and sharing of values at the team building phase so that the consequential learning is at a deeper and more profound level.

6. That NCS programmes continue to help young people understand and develop their commitment to each other by making connections with others and with their own values and faiths.





Introduction

- 1.1. JLGB successfully won the tender to run the delivery of a National Citizen Service (NCS) project for the 2012 cohort of year 11s. As one of three providers working in the Redbridge area the specific offer of JLGB was to provide an interfaith, multifaith and environmentally friendly NCS provision.
- 1.2. The tender for running the programme was built upon some strong philosophical foundations which created the framework outlined above. Key foundation elements were inclusion, volunteering, partnership and young people's active participation.
- 1.3. JLGB have had successful camps for over 118 years which have incorporated stringent kosher requirements to enable Jewish young people to enjoy a residential experience within the parameters of their religious traditions. The challenge for JLGB was not to cater just for Jewish young people but to widen this to include other faith traditions with their own dietary and practice requirements.
- 1.4. In their tender document JLGB argue how failure to accommodate these religious requirements effectively builds barriers to participation for young people from particular faith backgrounds. The careful construction of this NCS

pilot as an inclusive experience illustrates how, by removing these barriers to participation, more young people are able to participate. Also, by paying particular attention to the individual needs of young people, it creates a culture of worth and respect.

- 1.5. The JLGB approach is focussed on creating community and connecting with the wider community. They work hard to build a culture where people help each other and create a cooperative environment. Friends of the JLGB community supported the NCS enterprise and provided volunteers at all levels.
- 1.6. Volunteering was not only part of the given structure of NCS but was modelled through the volunteers who participated at all levels. From peer volunteers who were a little older than the participants to the more experienced 'Dragons' who were part of the 'Dragon's Den' panel.
- 1.7. Young people were part of the planning at every stage and were not just consulted but were actively involved in planning and organisation, for example a small group organised, hosted and ran the graduation event attended by 250 people including Lee Scott MP for Ilford North and JLGB President The Lord Levy.
- 1.8. This evaluation takes the key foundation qualities and interrogates them to show how the plans have been implemented, where they have succeeded and areas to be developed and built on. (See Appendix 1 for methodology).



Learning catering and cooking skills

2

2.1 Overview

NCS has five phases

- ➔ **Phase 1**
Induction
- ➔ **Phase 2**
Team building and outdoor adventure activities
- ➔ **Phase 3**
Skills building
- ➔ **Phase 4**
Social action project planning
- ➔ **Phase 5**
Volunteering project delivery and celebration event

Outline of the NCS experience

- 2.2. By approval of the Cabinet Office, JLGB suggested amalgamating phases 3 and 4 so that in the local residential (held in Chigwell) the young people were able to develop their skills in relation to a social action project and complete these before they returned to school or college which helped with retention on the scheme, especially those at faith-based schools.
- 2.3. As well as working with participants on the five NCS phases JLGB had considerable contact with a range of people before the induction and have planned ongoing contact with the alumni after the scheme has finished.

2.4 Recruitment & Marketing

- 2.4.1. JLGB have a very positive relationship with Jewish young people who are involved with the organisation. Recruiting within this group was straightforward as far as contacting the young people, although there was some obvious initial parental apprehension about sending their children to a multi-faith programme, as for many, this was their first interfaith residential experience.



- 2.4.2. For recruitment of young people from different faiths JLGB used local contacts with schools and the community. However, they accepted that marketing a programme for the first time is more difficult than marketing a continuing opportunity, as there are no ambassadors from the previous years and examples of activities etc. have to be taken from similar rather than previous projects.
- 2.4.3. There was an added difficulty for JLGB in that there were three providers delivering in the Redbridge area. This meant that schools were contacted by three providers all offering NCS which proved confusing for teachers.
- 2.4.4. There was also confusion arising from how different NCS deliverers branded the NCS programme. A few young people not realising that 'The Challenge' was an NCS programme signed up for both The Challenge as well as the NCS programme delivered by JLGB. If the NCS brand is important to the overall programme it needs to be more specifically featured in advertising etc.
- 2.4.5. The JLGB staff consequently needed to adopt a very intense approach to the broader marketing which involved letters to schools, contacting school governors, getting councillors and local MPs to write to

schools. Where there was already a good relationship with the school there was no problem but other relationships took much longer than anticipated and were resistant to supporting recruitment if they were already working with another provider.

- 2.4.6. The high quality branded materials were effective in bringing in some young people directly who found out more through the website and applied online.
- 2.4.7. The recruitment phase took longer and required more resources than anticipated which had an impact on work with partners to develop resources. It is anticipated that recruitment for a further NCS course where there is a better coordinated approach to schools would be far easier.
- 2.4.8. This particular NCS pilot recruited with a wider catchment area to cater for a demographically spread constituency. Although some faith groups are clustered in different areas many young people with specific religious requirements are geographically spread. Consequently the programme received queries and recruited from Manchester, Liverpool and Birmingham (Jewish and Muslim young people).



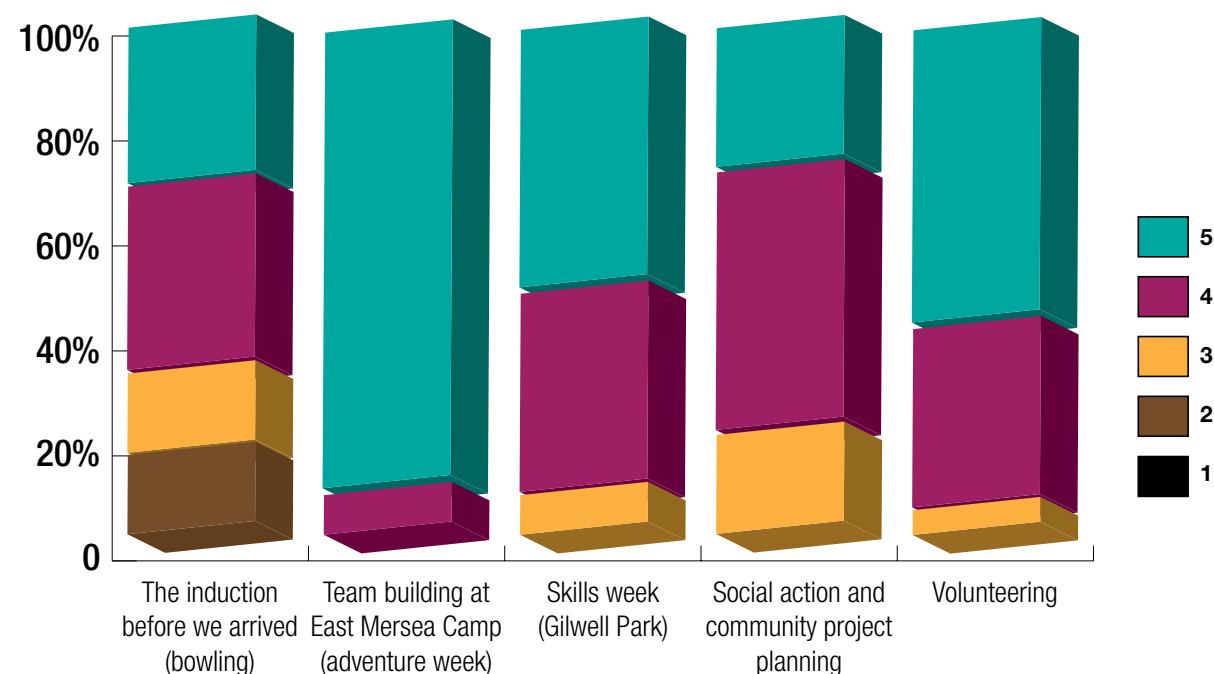
The Lord Levy at JLGB NCS Graduation



2.5 Overall Experience of NCS phases

Participants were asked to indicate which phase of the programme they enjoyed most. The most popular phase was the team building at East Mersea Camp but everyone surveyed rated the last four elements at least 3 out of 5 or above.

Rate your experience of NCS (out of 5)



* Survey taken before graduation ceremony

2.6 Phase 1 Induction

2.6.1. Induction was coupled with a bowling evening which worked very positively. Many of the young people said how it enabled them to really get to know each other and the staff team. The Jewish young people who were in Israel on tour with JLGB knew about the induction and appreciated how it had started the bonding process.

2.6.2. For some parents there was extensive communication with the staff team to check out that the experience was safe and culturally OK. For example the staff had about eight phone calls from the parents of one young person from an orthodox Jewish family who wanted to ensure that everything was strictly kosher.

2.6.3. Young people interviewed were very comfortable about the level of contact before the residential and were happy that they had enough information. The project leader said that if the project runs in year 2 they will provide a booklet with more information now that they had gone through one cycle and were clearer about how events worked through.

“The average contact went as follows:

1. Young person expressed an interest online/in person, so we called home to talk to them and parents asap
2. As soon as they applied they were given a 'Thanks for applying' email
3. We held two parents drop in evenings in April where we distributed parents' notes. Anyone who wasn't available had the notes posted
4. Parents were sent practical information about six weeks before
5. We dealt with phone calls and requests pretty speedily so parents were in the loop”

Rebecca Brookman,
Project Manager

2.6.4. There was discussion with the Government to enable some single sex NCS groups of young women. Without this provision several young women would have not been able to attend. This also generated extensive communication and negotiation.



2.7 Phase 2 Team building & outdoor adventure activities

- 2.7.1. Team building and outdoor activities were very scary for some of the participants. Many interviewed had never been camping before and were worried about bugs and spiders, and sharing a tent with lots of people they didn't know.
- 2.7.2. There was a very 'can do' atmosphere in the camp, generated by the confidence of the staff team, the East Mersea site team and the enthusiasm of the participants. So those who were expressing doubt and uncertainty were willing to 'give it a go'.
- 2.7.3. The teams were allocated according to the skills people had opted for. This was deliberate as it meant that they had at least one common interest.
- 2.7.4. As the activity residential fell in Ramadan, Muslim participants were consulted as to how they wanted to be supported during this time. There were particular considerations around prayer and the timetable and feeling weak or dehydrated which were discussed individually and as a group and managed by the Interact staff and the JLGB staff.



“Outdoor activities were scary but kind of cool. The Leap of Faith – I was really scared but in the end I made it – that was only because the people were cheering me on – I couldn't do it without them. Afterwards – I was proud of myself – I would never have thought I could have done that – I thought I would try and I did it.”

Female NCS participant

- 2.7.5. The challenging outdoor activities helped the team building and bonding as was planned. One young woman had never been on a bike before, another didn't know how she had made the 'Leap of Faith' where she had to climb up a ladder and pole and leap for a monkey bar.



Learning to ride a bike



Visiting BBC Television Centre



2.8 Phase 3 & 4

Skills building and social action project planning

- 2.8.1. The skills instructors had been carefully chosen through an interview process. Criteria included the ability to get a rapport with the young people, that they were good role models and that they had a proficiency in their area of expertise.
- 2.8.2. The skill training was also appreciated and the young people were surprised at how much they had learnt. The catering group were very impressed to have gained two qualifications which would enable them to work in restaurants.
- 2.8.3. The young people were very impressed with some of the visits that were laid on, for example to the Olympic Park with a meeting with one of the organisers. Other visits clearly moved the young people, especially the visit to Haven House Children's Hospice.
- 2.8.4. As the young people planned their social action project in conjunction with the skills it meant that the skills instructors and the team leaders had to work closely together.

“Coming up with a whole social action project in less than a week proved to be a massive challenge for me, as I've never really done anything remotely like this before. I particularly found the planning process for this project to be quite enjoyable, as it was a real test for whether my team could work together to produce a great outcome and at the end, everyone was proud of each other for making contributions. I have learnt that there's so much to think about when coming up with a project, especially during budgeting, as the attention to detail needed for that is unbelievable, for example money needed to be set aside for tape, frames and travel. In the end, I think we came up with a very unique and rewarding project and our event was to hold a photo gallery exhibition. I hope people are going to appreciate the photographs that are going to be showcased at the gallery. Overall, my volunteering experience with the NCS has been amazing!”

Female NCS participant

- 2.8.5. Planning their social action projects was described as 'stressful' but good, as the groups had to enter a Dragon's Den scenario to present their project and bid for funds to run it. There were parameters to the pitch including a budget, a powerpoint presentation and delivery using a microphone. Young people interviewed appreciated the responsibility and the 'real life' feel of this challenge.



2.9 Phase 5 Volunteering project delivery & celebration event

2.9.1. The projects were extraordinarily successful given the short time that the groups had to design, plan and deliver them.

2.9.2. All were able to come up with useful projects which made good contributions to the local community. The Sports and Fitness group raised over £1,500 for Haven House Children's Hospice and have done an audit of their donation boxes so that there will be more funds forthcoming over the next year.

Team **YOLO (You Only Live Once)**

Skill area
Sport and Fitness

Overview of project

Team YOLO decided to focus on helping Haven House, a local children's hospice. During the week they collected money from the 'Red House' collection boxes which Haven House place in local shops and businesses. They created a raffle, raised money by doing door to door collections and also completed a sponsored triathlon, raising money through an online Just Giving page. In just one week, Team YOLO raised over £1,500 for Haven House.

Individual achievements

Overcome fears of heights, completing personal challenges such as cycling from Wanstead to the London Eye and back (22 miles).

Group achievement

Raised over £1,500 for Haven House!

Team **BOLT**

Skill area
Catering

Overview of project

Team Bolt's social action project was inspired by a visit to the Vi and John Ruben Care Home in Gants Hill, Essex. Whilst visiting, members of the group saw the facilities and care available to the residents. They felt what was missing however, were volunteers and visitors that could give their time rather than financial support to the elderly people. The 'Baking Memories' project focused on spending time with the elderly people, aiming to brighten their day, create a memory and bridge the gap between the generations. Using their catering skills, Team Bolt baked and decorated cakes in order to break the ice. They also played games, shared stories and spent time with the elderly people. In total, the group visited five elderly care homes, a children's home and a home for people with disabilities to 'Bake a Memory'.

Individual achievements

- All of the group passed their Level 1 Food and Safety qualification
- Cooking skills and menu ideas
- Confidence in their ability to work with people other than their peers
- Organisation skills to arrive at the venues on time
- People skills to connect with groups of vulnerable people

Group achievement

- Residents were very pleased and happy to have people take an interest in their lives
- Residents were also pleased to see young people performing positively and caring for the older generation.

Team **BIG BANG** (Single gender – female)

Skill area
Photography

Overview of project

Team Big Bang decided to use their photography skills to photograph various aspects of life on London's streets. The group collectively decided on photos to be exhibited in "The Streets" exhibition which was held at Bow House Gallery. Photographic prints were mounted and framed, and sold to raise money for charity. Photos were divided into sub-categories including homelessness, street performers and musicians.

Individual achievements

The team members have gained confidence and event planning skills. Teamwork and coordination were particularly important, as it also required planning a photographic exhibition. Young people gained experience in communicating with charities, newspapers and organising appointments and viewings.

Group achievements

Hosting a photography exhibition, and in the process raising money for charity as well as awareness of the varied nature and street life many Londoners lead.

“Some of the parents of Muslim girls said that this is the first opportunity they have ever had where they can send their girls on residential. They hadn't been on residential as their religious requirements weren't met. We have been able to create an environment that was accessible to many faiths.”

Chief Executive JLGB interview

Team

TEAM ALPHA

Skill area

Film making

Overview of project

Team Alpha visited two local care homes and community centres that cater for elderly people. They spent the days talking with the residents or clients and helping with any activities. They made a documentary of interviews with the people they met called 'When I was 16'. The film can be viewed at: www.jlgb.org/teamalphafilm

Individual achievements

One of the participants was very quiet and introverted at the beginning of the project and at one point wanted to leave the group. By the end she had made close friends in the group. Her birthday was on one of the days during the social action week. She said that she would not have wanted to spend her birthday anywhere else apart from with her NCS team.

Another participant said that the experience was great for him because he got to spend time with people of other faiths, which he hadn't really done before. He has made friends from NCS that he hopes he will 'keep forever'.

Group achievements

They raised £70 for the care home partners, made a 25 minute film and held a screening.

Team

NAADES

(Single gender – female)

Skill area

Dance

Overview of project

Team NAADES spent the social action week travelling around Redbridge and London searching for affordable sports and arts activities for young people. They set up a stall in Ilford to promote these activities to young people from the borough. They ran a competition to help get people even more involved and had music, dance and refreshments to bring people in.

Individual achievements

Some of the less confident girls really came into their own and were happy to dance in public and talk confidently to strangers. They really believed in their cause and were very proud of their achievements, both over the last week and the two weeks prior.

Group achievements

Feedback from the day suggested that most young people in Redbridge were not aware of the range of activities available to them, and they found the stall informative. One member of the police thanked the girls for the information she had taken, which she hopes to pass on to some of the young people the police have had issues with in the past. The organisations spoken to were also thankful for the publicity.

Team

GRELLOW

Skill area

Graphic design

Overview of project

The social action project involved designing and printing a youth focussed magazine for the teenagers of Redbridge.

The team had planned and designed the magazine themselves splitting the work up amongst the team using their strengths in different areas. Once the magazine had been completed it was printed and uploaded online to make it an

E-book which can be found at www.jlgb.org/teamgrellovmagazine.

During the week the team also went to a shopping centre in Romford, to distribute the magazine as well as publicising it to the local youth community.

Individual achievements

Interview skills, graphic design skills, working as a group, negotiating with the printer, producing a professional product.

Group achievements

A magazine had been produced, which was also available online to download. The group designed and produced their own one-off youth led magazine full of advice and tips for careers, life and employment which was distributed in the local community.

“I've already got something planned as one of the old people said people say that they will come back but never do – so I will try and surprise her.”

Male NCS Participant

* Information taken from individual NCS Team Leaders' reports



- 2.9.3. Some young people were really positively affected by their contact and intergenerational activities with older people. The cup cake initiative with the catering group really had a big impact on some of the young people.
- 2.9.4. Following the scheme the young people were taken to Thorpe Park as a celebration and reward for their commitment and achievements. After this, a small group of participants, with project staff, planned and delivered a professional and entertaining evening held at the local cinema. The evening was attended by The Lord Levy, President of JLGB, Lee Scott, the local MP and other dignitaries as well as partners, parents and those involved in the community projects. There were over 250 people attending this event. As well as showcasing their achievements the young people received their NCS certificates and other awards.

2.10 Retention & ongoing contact

- 2.10.1. At the end of the NCS experience the young people talked about it all being good and how they had been surprised how much they had gained and enjoyed in doing the social action project. Although there were a few 'no shows' who did not turn up for the initial meeting, once the young people had started the NCS experience there was 100% retention throughout the course of the programme.
- 2.10.2. Several of the young people interviewed expressed a wish to volunteer for the NCS next year as peer leaders. The project leader and staff are developing a continuing alumni experience.

Lee Scott MP at
JLGB NCS Graduation



3 Inclusion - positively enabling diversity and faith

3.1 Retention

JLGB approached NCS by using their tried and tested work with orthodox Jewish young people and extending this to include the elements that needed to be addressed by a wider group of young people. In order for people to be included and welcomed the following areas were addressed:

- Recruiting and supporting different faith traditions
- Accessibility – enabling different cultures to operate sympathetically within the NCS framework
- Sabbath days, religious festivals and practice

3.2 Recruiting and supporting different faith traditions

- 3.2.1. There were several constituents with different needs that had to be addressed as part of recruitment. The first were Jewish young people who had an existing contact with JLGB, for them there was confidence and trust in the competence to run a camp and a programme. Questions that arose in this group were about the safety of a multifaith experience.

“Everything I do is Jewish based – I can count my non-Jewish friends, apart from here, on one hand – I think that this is a good way to get to know people from different religions and to understand them.

I think its positive to cater for other religions because I think it's a good way to get to know others and come out of your cultural bubble.”

Jewish female NCS participant
Interview



A second group were Jewish young people and families who had had some contact with JLGB usually through a Jewish school but no direct experience of a programme. For this group there needed to be additional assurance that the camp was safe and supported the religious practice of the more orthodox.

A third group was those contacted through schools in the Redbridge area who were of different faiths or no faith. Some young people said how they had thought it was a Jewish camp initially and were not sure if they could attend, but through the talks and information on the website soon realised that it was open and inclusive to all.

- 3.2.2. The team put a large emphasis on being 'open to all' in their publicity and when speaking to potential participants, schools and parents.
- 3.2.3. JLGB had two partners who helped them to support other faiths, namely Interact and Three Faiths Forum (3FF). They also recruited Christian, Hindu and Agnostic staff as part of the delivery team.

3.2.4. Interact's role was to be proactive in welcoming different faiths and also to be present to address any issues as an 'honest broker' if any disagreements or disturbances arose. They particularly supported the young Muslim participants who were observing Ramadan.

3.2.5. JLGB and Interact reviewed potential inter-religious difficulty through risk assessment and had strategies in place to defuse and manage disagreements. However, the degree of cohesion and positive feelings of community meant that these strategies were not needed as bonding had occurred across faiths and an atmosphere of mutual respect had been established.

3.2.6. 3FF ran sessions over the course of the first residential week where young people explored different faiths using three aspects, Feel, Fear and Finding Out.

Social Cohesion Sessions by 3FF

Plotting my journey.... Finding out
Day 2 'How to transform an 'oops'/'ouch' question into a nice question'

Day 6 'Realised what an amazing generation I belong to...
We can really make a difference'

Plotting my journey.... Finding out
Day 4 'I have found out about the different stages in Christianity and have understood Ramadan'

Day 5 'I have learnt that we are all interested in finding out about others and its not just me'

Plotting my journey.... Finding out

Day 6 'I've learnt something new about people and got to know them better'

Plotting my journey.... Feel

Day 5 'I feel motivated to take what I have learnt from all the sessions, confident with my public speaking skills'



Social Cohesion Sessions with 3FF

“In the tender we wrote 'Let's remove the barriers for Jewish young people', what we have arrived at is even better than that - 'Let's remove the barriers for everybody'.

Our premise and argument is that the foundation is key - you can't add it on afterwards.

Chief Executive JLGB

"I like the fact that they have a praying room – because I'm quite religious and I like to take time out to pray."

Christian female
NCS participant

3.3 Accessibility - enabling different cultures to operate sympathetically within the NCS framework

- 3.3.1. JLGB recognised three key events which affected possible attendees. The first two affecting everyone were exam results and the Olympics; the third affecting many of the Jewish young people was the trip to Israel many make at the age of 16. These elements were accommodated into the programme so all could attend.
- 3.3.2. Another key factor which affects accessibility is religious food requirements. The close and sympathetic partnership of JLGB and Caterplus was very helpful in ensuring that a wide range of dietary and religious requirements were catered for. As JLGB are very used to providing food prepared and delivered in accordance with kosher rules, they have a strong understanding of the range of considerations which need to be addressed in supporting religious requirements. Consequently, feeding young people who needed halal, vegetarian or non-beef food was an extension of the usual kitchen requirements and accommodated with ease.

The JLGB Chief Executive said how important it was that people ate together and were not just given 'airline

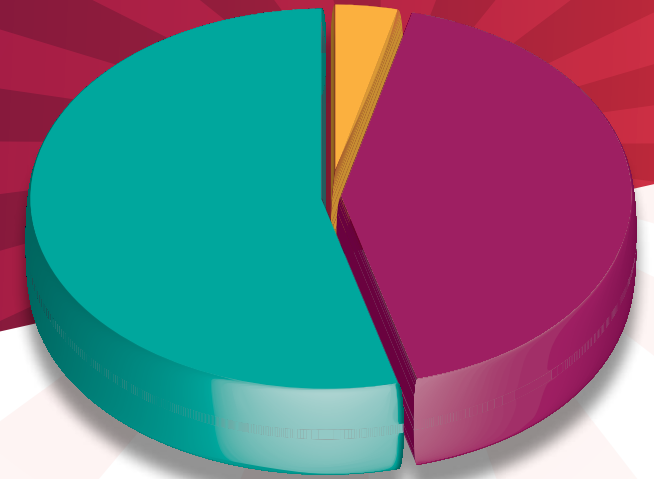
“I really wanted to find ways of making this model even more inclusive and successful as I knew how easy it could be. Because of my own interest in interfaith, I knew that with a little more effort on our part we could make the whole experience even more interfaith. For example, with a little planning and research it was easy to find out prayer times and schedule meals to break fast after Ramadan. Many other providers may not have thought of this. It meant that young people felt much more included and like everyone else because there was no fuss, they just knew they would be taken care of and treated like everyone else. I think the most important things with regards to faith is just understanding and a little forward planning – once teachers and parents are convinced that we understand where they are coming from, the rest flows easily.”

Rebecca Brookman,
Project Manager

tray food'. Young people reported that the food and eating together was good and their many dietary needs were met. It is a compliment to the staff and the caterers that a whole range of different food was prepared and yet the service was seamless and natural.



During NCS I have learnt about different faiths:



“They shouldn't have to come into a dining hall and think 'is there anything I can eat?' Participants who are observing Ramadan shouldn't feel different – it's nice when they are breaking fast that they can sit down with staff and share food and it's not a big deal.”

Rebecca Brookman,
Project Manager

3.3.3. Although different faiths had a range of religious requirements, the Jewish Orthodox laws required the most attention as they extended beyond the food itself and included crockery, cutlery and religious oversight of the kitchen. JLGB and Caterplus were familiar with managing these complex rules and this enabled them to accommodate practices from other faiths with understanding and sensitivity.

3.3.4. JLGB increased accessibility by taking into account the Sabbath days of different faiths. Many similar

programmes run over Friday, Saturday or Sunday and do not take into account the impact on some young people who are consequently excluded from taking part in either this element or of the whole programme. Conversely, the practice of showing how the Sabbath is accommodated and honoured instigates a sense of respect and worth to the faith of the participants and the participants themselves. This is one way that the inclusive, accepting and respectful atmosphere was established. The young people had to factor this into their planning for the social action projects and although they recognised that it made things more difficult to manage, they reported how important it was that people's faiths were accommodated.

3.3.5. Similarly religious practice was taken into account. The activity week fell in the last week of Ramadan. There was particular attention paid to supporting young people in their observance of Ramadan. All Muslim young people observing Ramadan met with staff from Interact to discuss what would help them and how they could provide support. There was a prayer room

available to them (and others who wished to pray) and washing facilities, dried dates and water provided to break the fast. In the morning at 3 a.m. a member of staff from Interact provided food and drink for the participants to eat before the fast started. The programme during the residential was planned so that the evening meal was after the end of fasting so that participants could eat together.

3.3.6. A culture of acceptance was also helped through social cohesion sessions, the decision to discuss different faiths and from the work that 3FF and Interact did. The tender

said that they would create an atmosphere where there was 'no such thing as a silly question'. They managed to do this by various means which contributed to an environment where everyone was learning.

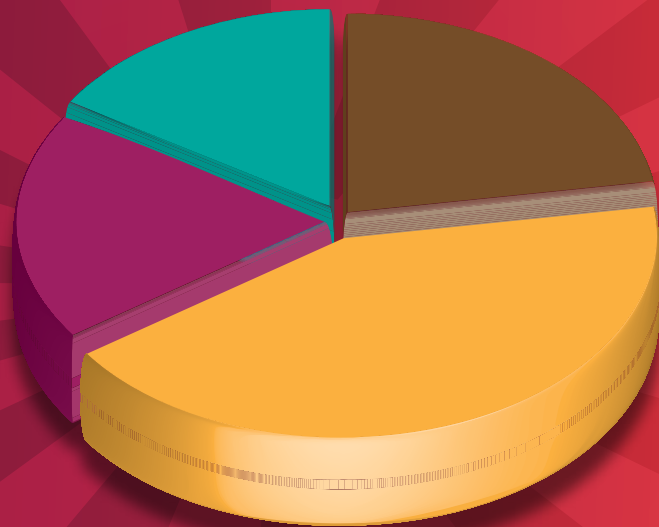
3.3.7. The inclusion of faith as an active topic of discussion not only enabled questions about religion and belief to be openly talked through, it also created a culture which allowed other matters of deeper importance to be discussed.



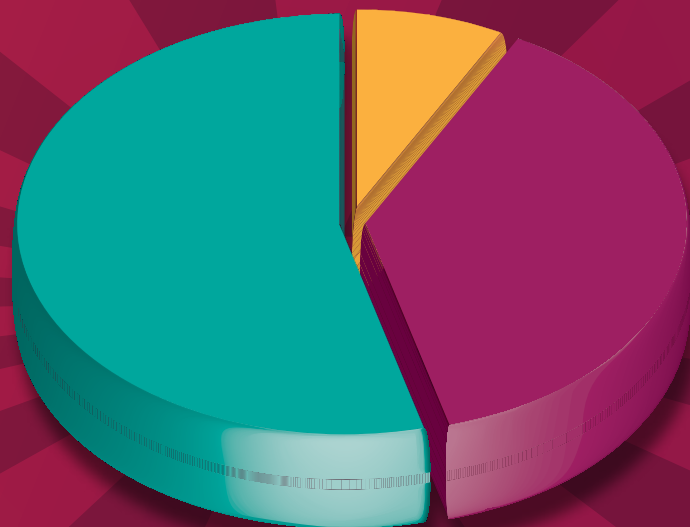


Friends of Different Faiths:

Before NCS



After NCS



3.3.8. Parents were also consulted so that they felt comfortable about their children attending the programme. A Tamil young woman said that her father was initially concerned about her safety and the quality of supervision at the camp. The parents meetings and information provided helped to make him and his wife feel comfortable and allow her to attend. Factors that helped were the absence of alcohol and the 'female only groups'. There was also confidence in the staff and that the full programme would make sure that there was a high level of supervision.

3.3.9. At the final graduation ceremony parents were extremely positive about their children's experience and were impressed at the professionalism and commitment of JLGB. At the graduation there were people from a wide range of faiths and of no faith who were comfortable to mix together and to eat and drink the food provided. An orthodox Jewish man who was at the event held in a cinema was comfortable enough to pray and to allow all of his family to eat the food provided by Caterplus. This evidenced a level of trust in the religious observance of the caterers and JLGB.

“The information and texts were good to reassure parents. I've texted my mother to tell her that I can fast.

I knew it was interfaith but I didn't know it would be so accommodating – I didn't believe that they would lay on food at 3 am.”

Muslim female NCS participant at East Mersea camp



Cultural identity & values



4

Volunteering

4.1 Building a community approach

- 4.1.1. Volunteering was a key focus of the experience, this started with building a cooperative group atmosphere at the induction and was built on through the course of the NCS programme. The collective support needed to take the team through the activity week was very powerful in encouraging the young people to look out for each other.

“Whilst handing the cakes out, we chatted and played games with the residents. It was amazing to see how something as simple as a chat brightened up someone's day. I really felt like I was doing something worthwhile when some of the elderly people said to me: 'it was really lovely chatting to you; I hope to see you again soon'.”

Female NCS participant in the catering group

- 4.1.2. The skill groups were also highly supportive of each other, in the social action week over forty of the young people turned out to see the cyclists start off on the last section of the triathlon. This building of community is a subtle process which JLGB have been crafting for over a hundred years and have adopted and adapted to the NCS context.

4.2 Modelling volunteering

- 4.2.1. JLGB has a wide community of students and adults who volunteer freely to support



Sponsored cycle to the London Eye

What I learned from volunteering is that it doesn't take much to make a difference. This is because we were all doing fun sports activities that we all love doing and we were raising money for an amazing charity at the same time.

Female NCS participant in the sports and fitness group

camps and activities. These members were invited to volunteer for the NCS camps and for many it was part of their progression of volunteering and building up skills. Volunteers within the camp were well treated, the programme leaders and others were very knowledgeable about what skills they were able to provide and the tasks asked of them. This modelling was another feature which built the community ethic.

- 4.2.2. The young people attending the camp were aware that they would be eligible to volunteer as peer leaders for any NCS or interfaith opportunities in the future. Many young people interviewed are keen to be considered for this.
- 4.2.3. The volunteers were not just to support camp activities, there were two young women who helped with the administration of the camp alongside the intern. There were also older people who supported the camp in different ways, for example those who were 'dragons' in the tender exercise preceding the social action projects. Having older people involved in this way gives a broader understanding of volunteering as something long term and natural. Altogether volunteers gave over 1,500 hours to the programme.

4.3 The place of volunteering in the NCS programme

- 4.3.1. The introduction of the social action project within the same residential week as skill training had some interesting outcomes. The skill development was seen within a community context rather than as an individual personal bonus. Also, by having the two as a parallel process the participants were able to see how much more useful they were to the community when they were able to offer skills as well as time. For example the photography group were able to produce some high quality photographs which would be very useful to the homeless charities they were working with. Young people interviewed valued being able to offer something different and useful in their volunteering.
- 4.3.2. Another outcome reported by several of the young people was that they didn't realise how easy volunteering is. For many, their experience of volunteering has been within a context such as 'Duke of Edinburgh Award' which they value but has to be formally set up and recorded. Being able to offer time spontaneously and make a difference was a new and positive experience.

Welcome
B...

The number of volunteer hours that went into this project is well over 1,500 hours from volunteer staff – pretty impressive!

All of the charity and business visits were led by professional staff who agreed to lead talks/ sessions.

Our panel of 'Dragons' included Liz Pearce from Redbridge CVS, Amy Braier, Director of the Pears Foundation, and Lucy Champion from LOCOG, all who gave up their time very readily to help out.

Programme Leader



Young People's Participation

“My visit to the JLGB interfaith based NCS programme left me impressed, inspired and in touch with the original vision for the programme. With their challenging, fun and thought-provoking programme, I believe that any parent would be delighted to have their son or daughter on this programme.”

Paul Oginsky,
Government Adviser
to NCS

- 5.1. The NCS programme challenges young people to take part and be active in the different phases. JLGB's programme reinforced this aspect and enabled young people to take responsibility for themselves, for each other and for those in the community they worked with in the social action project. In addition, all young people were invited to help plan the programme.
- 5.2. The Programme Leader visited the Redbridge Youth Forum to check out young people's responses to a draft programme, and there were young volunteers and an 18 year old intern who were able to give ideas and feedback as the planning progressed.
- 5.3. As soon as the group had gelled young people were planning and taking responsibility for their social action projects, they were also invited to help with the central activities and the main programme. For example a group volunteered to work with the Programme Leader and staff on designing and running the graduation event.
- 5.4. The peer leaders who were volunteers were good role

models on active participation and planning. Not only did they volunteer and get involved themselves they suggested and cajoled others to join them. This had the added advantage of making the various tasks seem cool.

“This experience has changed my son's life.”

Parent at the graduation ceremony



6

Partnership & Community Approach

Photography skills

“In our busy teenage lives, we rarely get the chance to stop and reflect on our actions and we are seldom interested in anyone but ourselves. This last week has given me the ability to develop my patience and listening skills as many of the people that I spoke to were deaf or spoke with a speech impediment so I had to listen more carefully than usual.”

Female NCS participant

- 6.1. JLGB is extremely well networked within the Jewish community and with a range of other organisations. Consequently, partners such as Caterplus have a history of working alongside JLGB and the relationship is stronger and more resilient than one that is simply a monetary transaction for services. This meant that Caterplus were able to be extremely flexible and accommodating in meeting the whole range of religious food requirements.
- 6.2. Other organisations were approached to support JLGB and responded positively. The staff said that it would be easier in the future to communicate what NCS is, and what it offers to young people following the successful running of the programme.



7

Building the experience and the legacy

A gateway to volunteering

7.1 Did the experience do what it said it would for participants?

- 7.1.1. The marketing information said that the NCS experience would offer the following:-
 - ➔ Gain confidence,
 - ➔ Expand your talents,
 - ➔ Meet new friends,
 - ➔ Challenge yourself
- 7.1.2. Gain confidence – young people reported that they had gained confidence from the experience, which they can use directly in life or when they make the next step to leave home.
- 7.1.3. Expand your talents – young people interviewed were able to identify a range of skills and talents that they had developed over the course of the programme. As well as the formal skills acquired in the skill training sessions they were able to appreciate more subtle skills such as learning to lead peers and how to remember everything when working out a budget.
- 7.1.4. Make friends – the Chief Executive said how a young woman was having a chat with him about going to university and how she was questioning whether she would make friends there. When she had started secondary school she had made friends but had kept in the same friendship group since that time. The NCS experience has shown her that she can make friends, and from other faiths and cultural backgrounds. The faith dialogue

“It was a way to get you ready for living away from home – for some people they may be a year away from going to university so it's like a little taster of what university life will be like if you are living away from home.”

Male NCS participant



“Coming to NCS was the best decision I have ever made. I was able to make an impact on a community and society as a whole.”

Male NCS participant

also seems to have opened a wider and more profound level within relationships formed during the programme.

7.1.5. Challenge yourself – the challenge of going camping, getting on with a group of other young people and not having the safety of family, friends and your own

room cannot be underestimated. This was compounded at the activity week residential with very poor mobile reception and strong outdoor education challenges. There were also some unexpected personal challenges such as talking to elderly people or working for and with children in a hospice.



7.1.6 Overview of the offer to the schools

Each young person will have a different NCS experience. Some of the ways JLGB feels schools will benefit are:-

- ➔ Young people will return with a real understanding of what they are capable of, taking greater pride in their achievements.
- ➔ Pupils will discover new talents - which will be useful not only for UCAS and job applications, but for their whole lives!

➔ They will gain first-hand experience of what it means to be a more responsible, active and caring member of their community.

➔ This is a unique chance for young people to learn to work with others from different faiths and backgrounds and will help them to confront any prejudices and misconceptions in a constructive and positive manner.

* Taken from information sent to schools

“Religion made us closer – if we were just hanging out we wouldn't have talked about it.”

“The interest in religion brought us together and helped us to discuss other things.”

Small group interview



So many laughs!



7.1.7. In the closing interviews the young people were effusive in their praise of the impact of the NCS experience on them as people, potential volunteers and for their futures. This was echoed by the team leaders and the programme staff who gave very specific examples of growth, development and achievements of the young people.

“I have learnt that there's so much to think about when coming up with a project, especially during budgeting, as the attention to detail needed for that is unbelievable....”

Female NCS participant

Appendix Methodology



Literature search

The literature search and review included :-

- ➔ General NCS documents on the website and from other providers
- ➔ JLGB tender document
- ➔ Marketing information and publicity
- ➔ Partner planning information e.g. 3FF's programme
- ➔ Programme materials
- ➔ Articles produced by Neil Martin, JLGB Chief Executive, to give background reading about the philosophy and approach to JLGB NCS pilot.

Interviews with young people

Before and after semi-structured interviews (recorded and transcribed) with eight young people with faith and cultural backgrounds including :-

- ➔ Judaism
- ➔ Islam
- ➔ Sikhism
- ➔ Christianity
- ➔ Hinduism
- ➔ Chinese culture
- ➔ Agnosticism

Informal conversations with young people during a day spent at the East Mersea camp and a day spent during the Social action week.

Interviews with staff team

Semi-structured interview recorded and transcribed with :-

- ➔ Neil Martin – Chief Executive
- ➔ Rebecca Brookman – Project Manager
- ➔ Volunteer leader

Informal conversations with team leaders at various points

Interviews with partners

Semi-structured interview with Richard Wilson of Interact with follow up questions answered by email.

Informal interviews with Caterplus and East Mersea staff.

Faith and inclusion focus

One group leader fed back the faith journey of his faith group in a short report.

Report from 3FF with details of individuals journeys relating to the cohesion sessions

Questionnaire

Short post NCS questionnaire completed on the last day of the social action project.

Follow up questions/ interviews

With Team Leaders, Chief Executive, Project Manager and Parents

“I'm definitely braver – I feel I can approach people and am more confident to say hi.

I talked to my team leader about volunteering next year as one of the leaders.”

Female NCS participant

“I knew that I would get confidence, I knew the stuff that I would get (from NCS), the only difference is that I've actually got them.”

Male NCS participant





Our sponsored swimathon

Example of the NCS activities programme



| NCS ADVENTURE WEEK TIMETABLE WEEK ONE | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Day 2 | Day 3 | Day 4 | Day 5 | |
| Fast begins | Fast begins | Fast begins | Fast begins | |
| Team Leader Wake up | Team Leader Wake up | Team Leader Wake up | Team Leader Wake up | |
| Wake up | Wake up | Wake up | Wake up (& packing) | |
| Team Leader Breakfast | Team Leader Breakfast | Team Leader Breakfast | Team Leader Breakfast | |
| Breakfast | Breakfast | Breakfast | Breakfast | |
| Team meetings | Team meetings | Team meetings | Camp Clearing | |
| ADVENTURE ACTIVITY 1 (HIGH ROPES) | ADVENTURE ACTIVITY 3 (ASSAULT COURSE) | ADVENTURE ACTIVITY 5 (CLIMBING) | Team Meeting & Feedback | |
| BREAK | BREAK | BREAK | Prepare to Leave | |
| SOCIAL COHESION SESSIONS | SOCIAL COHESION SESSIONS | SOCIAL COHESION SESSIONS | GOODBYE! SEE YOU NEXT WEEK FOR WEEK TWO! | |
| Lunch | Lunch with Guests | Lunch | Coaches Leave | |
| GUIDED REFLECTION | GUIDED REFLECTION | GUIDED REFLECTION | | |
| Afternoon Tea | Afternoon Tea | Afternoon Tea | | |
| IT'S A KNOCKOUT! | ADVENTURE ACTIVITY 2 (ARCHERY) | ADVENTURE ACTIVITY 4 (OFF-ROAD BIKING) | ADVENTURE ACTIVITY 6 (AERIAL RUNWAY) | |
| GETTING TO KNOW YOU | FREE TIME | FREE TIME | FREE TIME | |
| Dinner | Dinner | Dinner | Dinner | |
| QUESTIONNAIRE (AND GOAL SETTING) | SWIMMING (SINGLE GENDER - OPTIONAL) | SCAVENGER HUNT | SKILLS BUILDING INTRO | |
| AFRICAN DRUMMING WORKSHOP | Free time | Free time | Free time | |
| Hot Chocolate | Quiz Night | Chill-out Night | Silent Disco | |
| STAFF DAILY DEBRIEF | Hot Chocolate | Hot Chocolate | Hot Chocolate | |
| Bed Time | STAFF DAILY DEBRIEF | STAFF DAILY DEBRIEF | STAFF DAILY DEBRIEF | |
| | Bed Time | Bed Time | Bed Time | |

| NCS SKILLS & SOCIAL ACTION WEEK TIMETABLE WEEK TWO | | | | |
|---|------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Day 2 | Day 3 | Day 4 | Day 5 | |
| ALL WAKE UP | TEAM LEADER WAKE UP | TEAM LEADER WAKE UP | TEAM LEADER WAKE UP | |
| | PARTICIPANTS WAKE UP | PARTICIPANTS WAKE UP | PARTICIPANTS WAKE UP | |
| | Team Leaders Meeting | Team Leaders Meeting | Team Leaders Meeting | |
| | ALL BREAKFAST | ALL BREAKFAST | ALL BREAKFAST | |
| | TEAM MEETINGS | TEAM MEETINGS | TEAM MEETINGS | |
| | SKILLS BUILDING SESSION | SKILLS BUILDING SESSION | SKILLS BUILDING SESSION | |
| | BREAK | BREAK | BREAK | |
| | SKILLS BUILDING SESSION | SKILLS BUILDING SESSION | SKILLS BUILDING SESSION | |
| | BREAK | BREAK | BREAK | |
| | SOCIAL COHESION SESSION | SOCIAL COHESION SESSION | SOCIAL COHESION SESSION | |
| | LUNCH (AND READY FOR VISITS) | LUNCH | LUNCH | |
| | SKILLS BUILDING SESSION | | | |
| | BREAK | | | |
| | SOCIAL COHESION SESSION | | | |
| | BREAK | | | |
| | SOCIAL COHESION SESSION | | | |
| | FREE TIME | | | |
| | DINNER | | | |
| | SOCIAL ACTION PLANNING | | | |
| | BREAK | | | |
| | SOCIAL ACTION PLANNING | | | |
| | BREAK | | | |
| | GUIDED REFLECTION | | | |
| | FUN TIME | | | |
| | HOT CHOCOLATE | | | |
| | STAFF DAILY DEBRIEF | | | |
| | Bed Time | | | |

| Day 1 | Day 2 | Day 3 | Day 4 |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| All Arrive | SOCIAL COHESION SESSIONS | SOCIAL COHESION SESSIONS | SOCIAL COHESION SESSIONS |
| Lunch (and settling in time) | Lunch | Lunch with Guests | Lunch |
| Welcome & Intro | GUIDED REFLECTION | GUIDED REFLECTION | GUIDED REFLECTION |
| IT'S A KNOCKOUT! | ADVENTURE ACTIVITY 2 (ARCHERY) | ADVENTURE ACTIVITY 4 (OFF-ROAD BIKING) | ADVENTURE ACTIVITY 6 (AERIAL RUNWAY) |
| GETTING TO KNOW YOU | FREE TIME | FREE TIME | FREE TIME |
| Dinner | Dinner | Dinner | Dinner |
| QUESTIONNAIRE (AND GOAL SETTING) | SWIMMING (SINGLE GENDER - OPTIONAL) | SCAVENGER HUNT | SKILLS BUILDING INTRO |
| AFRICAN DRUMMING WORKSHOP | Free time | Free time | Free time |
| Hot Chocolate | Quiz Night | Chill-out Night | Silent Disco |
| STAFF DAILY DEBRIEF | Hot Chocolate | Hot Chocolate | Hot Chocolate |
| Bed Time | STAFF DAILY DEBRIEF | STAFF DAILY DEBRIEF | STAFF DAILY DEBRIEF |
| | Bed Time | Bed Time | Bed Time |

| Day 1 | Day 2 | Day 3 | Day 4 |
|---|--|--|--|
| ALL ARRIVE | CHARITY VISITS | CHARITY VISITS | CHARITY VISITS |
| WELCOME | including: Jewish Care, Haven House, Food Bank, Drugline | including: Jewish Care, Haven House, Food Bank, Drugline | including: Jewish Care, Haven House, Food Bank, Drugline |
| TEAM CATCH UP | | | |
| FREE TIME | | | |
| DINNER | | | |
| SIX STEPS TO SOCIAL ACTION (Fast Ends 8:10pm) | | | |
| BREAK | | | |
| GUIDED REFLECTION | | | |
| FUN TIME | | | |
| HOT CHOCOLATE | | | |
| STAFF DAILY DEBRIEF | | | |
| Bed Time | | | |

| Day 1 | Day 2 | Day 3 | Day 4 |
|---|--|--|--|
| ALL ARRIVE | CHARITY VISITS | CHARITY VISITS | CHARITY VISITS |
| WELCOME | including: Jewish Care, Haven House, Food Bank, Drugline | including: Jewish Care, Haven House, Food Bank, Drugline | including: Jewish Care, Haven House, Food Bank, Drugline |
| TEAM CATCH UP | | | |
| FREE TIME | | | |
| DINNER | | | |
| SIX STEPS TO SOCIAL ACTION (Fast Ends 8:10pm) | | | |
| BREAK | | | |
| GUIDED REFLECTION | | | |
| FUN TIME | | | |
| HOT CHOCOLATE | | | |
| STAFF DAILY DEBRIEF | | | |
| Bed Time | | | |

| Day 5 |
|---|
| TEAM LEADER WAKE UP |
| PARTICIPANTS WAKE UP |
| Team Leaders Meeting |
| ALL BREAKFAST |
| CAMP CLEARING |
| TEAM MEETING AND FEEDBACK |
| PARENTS ARRIVE TO COLLECT |
| GOODBYE! SEE YOU NEXT WEEK FOR WEEK THREE! |