

Project report - 'I Love Fresh Air'

Thanks to a generous grant from the Nineveh Charitable trust, project 'I love fresh air' provided 120 children from poverty stricken, inner city Hackney much needed time out in the countryside during the summer months of 2022. These enabled children suffering from urban deprivation to enjoy a day of outdoor fun.

The children benefitted from the following exciting outdoor trips (split according to age);

- 1) Woburn Safari park – This trip provided children with a day packed with animal encounters and wonderful wildlife, where they got to see and explore over 80+ species of exotic and wild animals including lions, tigers and bears.
- 2) They also enjoyed a full day out in the countryside which included kayaking and a nature trail. One parent reported that experiencing the outdoors 'helped my child be calmer, smarter and happier'.
- 3) A third group were taken to a nearby farm where they got to spend time in a country-like environment and allowed them to discover a new world.

At each of these trips they enjoyed a variety of leisure and sports activities, recreational programmes and healthy menus outside of their pollution ridden city. A nutritious, healthy lunch was provided to all beneficiaries.

Being immersed in vibrant rural life gave these urban and disadvantaged children opportunities to enjoy many new sensory experiences. The sights, sounds and smells of the animals and nature around gave them the freedom to explore the wonderful world of nature and broadened their recreational horizons. School teachers also reported back that the exposure to nature helped the children do better at school and broadened their knowledge and collaborative activities.

Additionally, these trips also greatly improved the personal, emotional and social development of children through first hand contact with the weather, nature and animals and the expanded social opportunities these trips offered them. It motivated more children to create change in their lives and provide them with the solid foundations for happy and healthy living. They came back refreshed, invigorated and fuelled with a new drive to continue, succeed and persevere in spite of all the daily challenges they struggle with. Take Lea, age 9 who lives with her parents and 5 siblings in a cramped apartment in a densely populated area. Both her mother and father are earning minimum wage and are barely able to afford the basics, let alone a getaway once in a while. When Lea's Mum saw a flyer advertising Happy Kid's 'I Love Fresh Air' project she immediately signed her up. Lea joined the major outing to Woburn Safari as well as the revitalising countryside trip. In her own words 'the winds caressed my face and the fresh air made me feel as though I was in the swiss alps'. Thank you Activiteens for giving me opportunities to visit places I would otherwise not be able to. I know this has been made possible thank to the generous grant from the Nineveh Charitable Trust. Please thank them in my name.

Pictures of our beneficiaries in action:

