**Press Release**



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**Friendships continue to Flourish in the Covid19 Lockdown**

The Friendship Project for Children’s volunteers are continuing to keep their friendship’s blooming during the social distancing/isolation period of Coronavirus (Covid19).

The Friendship Project for Children operates throughout Warwickshire with the primary aim of helping children in need of some extra support. All children aged between 6 and 16 are referred to the charity through children’s social services and are then matched with an ‘Older Friend’ who takes them out and spends time with them for a few hours each week. In the current situation when so many people are in need of social contact and continuity, it is especially important that these friendships continue.

Cheryll Rawbone, Chairman of the Friendship Project said, “We are encouraging our Older Friends to maintain regular contact with their Younger Friend, using electronic means such as Facetime, Skype, email, or telephone. Additionally, we have asked that our volunteers take time to reassure their Younger Friend and let them talk about their worries and share their own coping skills”.

Our volunteers have been keeping in touch with their Younger Friends via telephone, FaceTime and WhatsApp. As well as cards, letters (the 'old fashioned' excitement of having something personal delivered by the postman) and recording themselves reading books out loud. Heather Shipley, Area Co-ordinator for the Stratford district, is keeping in touch with the families of our Younger Friends by sending them information packs for the children and checking to see if they need any supplies during this difficult time.

*'It's great to see my daughter's volunteer maintaining their friendship during this time. Many thanks for keeping in touch with the family, it is appreciated'.* Feedback from one of our families.

Since the charity started in 1986 it has supported nearly 1500 local children. The outstanding work of volunteers makes a huge difference within their community. There are many social reasons why children are in need of this kind of support, but experience has shown that a weekly visit by someone who cares makes a significant difference. The visit could be doing something as simple as a walking a dog or having a hot chocolate together; but could also include activities which the child would otherwise not get to experience, such as tenpin bowling, ice skating or horse riding.

For more information on The Friendship Project visit: [www.friendshipproject.co.uk](http://www.friendshipproject.co.uk), @FriendshipProj or call 0845 838 2098.