

# Choices

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# 4U

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**Choices 4 U** works within South Gloucestershire Council's Public Health & Wellbeing Division. We are committed to improving the health and lives of people with learning difficulties by supporting them to become more connected to their community.

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# ADOPT A CHEF

During January and February members at all three of our venues will have the opportunity to participate in cookery sessions with a chef called Idris. Idris works as part of a project called **'Adopt a Chef'** and has worked in schools and with community groups. Idris has experience in working with young people and with people with learning disabilities. The cookery sessions will take place in community kitchens across South Gloucestershire where members will learn food preparation skills and the importance of healthy eating.

## JADE

## BRITISH HEART FOUNDATION VOLUNTEERING

*“ I have started doing a voluntary job at the British Heart Foundation in Kingswood. It is a charitable shop that take donations and sell furniture to support people with heart conditions and prevent heart disease. I am volunteering because I want to gain more skills to find a paid job. I volunteer at the shop two days a week and walk to my place of work. The Manager and Assistant Manager support me when I am working at the shop. In my job I put prices on items to be sold, we call this point of sale and sort items to be sold on the shop floor.*





## Sean said

*Boxercise is good and I enjoyed the sessions. I learned boxing skills using both the pads and the gloves. I also learned boxing exercise routines which is really good for my fitness.*

# BOXERCISE

During September and October members at our Kingswood service have been joining a boxercise session with instructor Lisa. Boxercise is an exercise class based on training exercises boxers

use to keep fit. Members of the group have taken part in shadow-boxing, skipping, hitting pads and kicking punch bags. The sessions never include hitting and is a fun and safe way of working out.

## KATE

## ST PETER'S HOSPICE VOLUNTEERING

*I work at St Peter's Hospice Charity Shop in Staple Hill and I have been working there for about six months. I work as a volunteer every Tuesday afternoon along with five other people who volunteer and work in the shop. I sort clothes to sell on the shop floor and place clothing in the order of their colour, size and age. I also do some of the cleaning in the shop at the end of my shift. I enjoy working at the shop, it's fun and I've met some really nice people who I work alongside with.*



## FLASHMOB

This year members of our Yate service who attend Choices 4 U on Tuesdays performed another 'Flash mob' dance on the 14 November in Yate Shopping Centre, to raise money for Children in Need. The group chose to work on a film theme and chose music from some of their favourite films including Star Wars, Rocky and Grease. The group arranged a routine using dance and acting, using props and costume changes during their dance. They performed the Flash Mob to members of the public, family and friends.



## FENCING

Members who attend our Friday service based at Yate have taken part in fencing sessions with fencing instructor John. Fencing was new to many of the group and so John taught the group basic skills, safety and how to duel using sabres. Four members of the group have now received their bronze fencing award. Other members of the group are working towards their silver fencing award.



# CALLUM

## CINEWORLD PAID EMPLOYMENT

Callum who is a member of our Yate service has been successful in getting a paid job at Cineworld in Yate. Choices 4 U has worked with Callum around building confidence and has supported Callum with interview skills. Callum is now working 16 hours a week.

**“ Callum says** *I'm a big film buff and it's fun working at Cineworld. I enjoy working on the tills and serving the customers, as well as going to watch the films at Cineworld in my own time.*



### Ritchie said

*It's good exercise for my arms, I liked using the electric kit and I'm really proud of my bronze certificate.*



## GREAT BRITISH SWIM AND GYM OFF

In September members at our Kingswood service chose to complete the challenge to raise money for Children In Need. The group chose to call the challenge the '**Great British Swim and Gym Off**'. Members decided they would cycle, swim, walk and run the total of 1284, this is the distance from Kingswood Leisure Centre to Berlin and back again!

# GARDENING AT CELESTINE ROAD

Earlier this year Choices 4 U were given the opportunity to work with Private Sector Housing and use space at a house in Yate. This is a great opportunity and gives members at Choices 4 U the chance to learn skills that are important for independent living and has given us a chance to change the look and feel of the garden at the property. South Gloucestershire Councils Streetcare team built raised beds that allowed Choices 4 U to grow some vegetables even when it was late into the season. Members in the groups dug soil, sowed seeds and planted fruit and vegetables. Staff who work in Private Sector Housing, Streetcare and Choices 4 U brought plants, cuttings and seeds including broccoli, sweet pea and strawberries. After a few months of looking after the produce, members harvested their crops



and everyone had the opportunity to take a bag of vegetables home. Over the winter months groups are planning to do different arts and crafts that can then be put up in the property. Choices 4 U want to say thank you for this opportunity!



# AVON SWIFTS

## SWIMMING GALA

On the 7 October Choices 4 U members Jade, Callum, Nikki, Greg, Tom and Matthew competed in the Swift Inclusive Swimming Gala. The Gala was held at Horfield Leisure Centre and Choices 4 U members competed against other teams during the gala. The team spent weeks practising for the gala which really paid off. Choices 4 U members won a total of 10 medals at the Gala including gold, silver and bronze awards.



## MENTAL WELLBEING

Every six months Choices 4 U Community Support Workers work with our members to find out how people are feeling, we call this mental wellbeing or what some people call happiness and feeling good. Choices 4 U use a questionnaire called the 'The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale' to work out how people are feeling. We completed questionnaires with everybody between April and July this year and we found out more than half of people at Choices 4 U are happier compared to the last time we asked them and that lots of people now have a healthier weight. Choices 4 U will be working with everyone again before the end of the year to complete questionnaires again.