

Project 2 – Community Farm

Children and young people visit Living Springs or stay on a regular basis, and at times they are not supported as they should be by their own family. This can be very hard, especially when they have looked forward to seeing Mom, Dad or family and they do not arrive; this can lead to disappointment. The farm project will enhance our facilities so that children have more to enjoy and occupy them, and family visits can be looked forward to with less apprehension.



From the early days, we have envisioned a mini farm to be located at the front of the Centre. On occasion we have taken sheep on short term 'loan' from the adjacent farm and these have always proved popular with visiting children, together with the ducks which make their home on the small pond. Our aim now is to significantly develop this aspect of the work into a mini farm, comprising the key elements below. An exploratory meeting was held recently with interested local people keen to help on a voluntary basis, with a very positive outcome.

Benefits:

- To provide a “safe place” where children can “park” their thoughts of other issues and evoke happy memories in times of stress
- Focusing on children and young people who have been excluded or are on the brink of exclusion from school
- Encouraging and developing inter-personal and family relationships which excluded children often find difficult
- Of additional benefit to the many families and children who visit Living Springs on family contact / assessment

Comprising:

- Mini farm
- Chickens, goats, sheep, pony, rabbits, ducks
- Shelters / hutches / fencing
- Organic vegetable garden
- Sensory garden
- Model Rabbit village
- Other plantings / general landscaping
- Meeting room/centre



Context:

- Research suggests that children and young people benefit physically, emotionally and socially from living with, caring for, or having regular contact with companion animals
- Activities involving animals help to teach children about responsibility, and build their self-esteem by enabling them to feel competent

Outcomes

- To re-engage and to create children who see that achievement can be measured by different things
- To achieve breakdown of barriers and meet the real child or the disconnected youth
- To improve the well being of children

Costs:

Animals	£1,500
Shelters / hutches / fencing	£3,800
Organic and sensory garden	£2,340
Model rabbit village	£500
Plantings / general landscaping	£1,000
Wooden structure of meeting room	£1,800

Total **£10,940**

Living Springs Family Centre, Bridgnorth Road, Stourton, Stourbridge DY7 6QY

t & f: 01384 872817 e: info@livingsprings.co.uk www.livingsprings.co.uk

Living Springs is a registered charitable company Charity N^o: 1082726 Company N^o: 4014173