

Scottish Families

The latest news and updates from the team

SUMMER

August 2022
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Staff Day at the Safari Park

In June, Scottish Families staff had a full day of safari park fun for our first ever staff conference!

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Reporting of Substance Toolkit

Our online resource for journalists looking to report on alcohol and drugs with dignity and respect.

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Claire is Employee of the Year!

'What I really wanted to say is that winning the award...was the proudest moment of my career.'

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Hour by Hour with Holding On

We marked the release of the 2021 Drug Death Statistics on 28 July 2022 by sharing three family member stories. All are supported by our Holding On service which works with families at high risk of experiencing drug related death. Each story reflects the level of complexity that comes with supporting a loved one with a drug problem. The complexity spreads across the whole family.

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Word from the CEO

Working with Scottish Families often feels like a bit of an emotional rollercoaster (although I'm sure in part that is also down to my lifestage ...) and when I reflect back on the last few months that pretty much sums it up.

Last week included the release of the latest drug related death statistics (now renamed drug misuse statistics, which is a bit out of step with all the previous work on language and stigma). Every day is difficult for families who have lost a loved one, but that day particularly so with so very many stories shared of lives lost, and such frustration at so little changing over time. We have now called for a zero drug deaths target – given we all agree that these are preventable deaths, then a zero target is achievable. We cannot accept anything less, but it will only happen if we see more of a focus on implementation and accountability in the system. Every day we hear what can only be described as horror stories from families about their loved ones trying in vain to access the treatment, care and support they desperately need.

You will see more on our first ever Scottish Families staff conference later in this newsletter – just brilliant to get (almost) all the team together in one place for the first time in a long, long time, and the first chance for many staff to meet face to face. I enjoyed embarrassing Claire W by making her show off her SCVO Charity Awards 'Employee of the Year' award (which she had hidden in her car), so that the whole team could whoop and holler and cheer some more. So well deserved!

I was bursting with excitement in June to get a wee trip down to London with Sarah our Fundraising Manager, Colin our Chair, and his wife Rosie, to collect our GSK Impact Award. Sarah and I also took part in a three-day leadership development programme at the Kings Fund as part of our award, along with leaders from the other nine winning charities.

The word 'inspirational' just does not capture how amazing and motivating this group of third sector leaders were. We returned exhausted but fired up all at the same time.

Since the last newsletter, we have welcomed a bumper intake to our staff team with the growth of our Fife, Inverclyde and Routes teams. It already feels like Angela, Charli, Jess, Yvonne, Maria and Candice have been with us for years – so lovely to have them on board. We know there are so many more families out there than we are managing to reach, so very welcome to be able to increase our reach. It is still frustrating however to see so little investment in family support services around the country – particularly for affected young people and adult family members. Ourselves and our partners have not achieved anything like parity of investment for families, compared to the level of new and existing funding targeted on other parts of the system. So much still to do!

- Justina Murray, Chief Executive Officer



Hour by Hour with Holding On

I isolate myself from family and friends because my life is consumed by my son's drug problem and the chaos it brings every day.

We marked the release of the 2021 Scottish Drug Death Statistics on 28 July 2022 by sharing three family member stories. All are supported by our Holding On service which works with families at high risk of experiencing drug-related death.

'Hour by Hour with Holding On' reflects the level of complexity that comes with supporting a loved one with a drug problem. The stories reveal the severe and debilitating consequences that family members face through every aspect of their lives. This includes lack of sleep, financial issues, witnessing non-fatal overdoses, breakdown of relationships, unresolved trauma, physical and mental health issues, and more.

We have shared three family stories, but these echo the words of thousands of families across Scotland who are affected

by a loved one's drug use, including those whose loved ones have died in the past year.

The stories from 'Hour by Hour with Holding On' are distressing and concerning:

'My son lives with me because I don't want him to die in the street. I isolate myself from family and friends because my life is consumed by my son's drug problem and the chaos it brings every day. I sometimes wish one of us would die because at least one of us would find some peace.'

But there is also hope when family members are supported and listened to:

'I now attend a weekly group with other people in similar situations. I don't feel so alone, and I feel stronger. My son is still using drugs and is not getting support but there are less arguments. ... I know moving

forward I will be okay as I am no longer alone on this journey.'

Justina Murray, CEO of Scottish Families, said:

"The ongoing drug death toll in Scotland is heart-breaking. Despite the expressions of sympathy and condolence over the years, and the growing collection of reports and strategies calling for urgent change, we continue to hear the same stories about

families' desperate attempts to keep their loved ones alive with little support or recognition.

We are calling for a zero target for drug related deaths in Scotland, recognising that every single one of these deaths is preventable. Anything less than a zero target is an insult to the thousands of families who have lost loved ones over the years, and to those who continue to struggle hour by hour to keep their loved ones safe and alive."

Addiction does not only affect the addict, it also significantly affects everyone in their family.

To hear all the stories in Hour by Hour with Holding On, [please visit our website here.](#)

Please share these stories if you can – stories are powerful messages for change.

Staff Day at Blair Drummond Safari Park

In June, Scottish Families staff had a full day of safari park fun for our first ever staff conference. We descended on Blair Drummond Safari Park, all wearing our bright teal t-shirts, ready to meet in person (some of us for the first time), talk about the upcoming year, and of course go spend some time with the animals!

The day started with coffee and breakfast rolls and we had some time to sit and catch up with teams we don't get to see that often due to being dotted all over Scotland.



There's something so great about chatting to your colleagues face to face after speaking via a computer screen for two years! After breakfast, the conference got started, with a warm welcome from our CEO Justina, who, like most of us, was so excited to have all of us in one room (or marquee).

We were lucky enough to have speakers from three other organisations come along to this staff conference. Kicking us off was Nicola and Marc from Alcohol Focus Scotland talking all about their research into



the harm caused by everyday alcohol and alcohol marketing in Scotland. It was a great opportunity to discuss how families and their loved ones are affected by constant, irresponsible alcohol marketing and how just noticing and talking about it is the first step to making change.

Next up we had Rowan from Corra Foundation, talking all about their funding opportunities and planning for 2022/23. The funding we have received from Corra Foundation has played a huge part in the development of our Routes Young Person Programme, so it was great to hear more about what Rowan and Corra have planned for the future. Lastly, Crew were up to talk about their summer festival schedule and drug testing for harm reduction. With lots of quizzes to test our drug knowledge, Crew brought a fun and interactive approach to discussing harm reduction and ways of making access to drug testing easier for everyone. You can catch Crew at pretty much every festival in Scotland this summer, they offer safe spaces for festival goers as well as a plethora of information of drug safety.



We ended our morning discussing our Change Will Come 2022/23 strategy, sharing ideas for the upcoming year, including our 20th birthday in 2023, and ways we can continue developing whilst still providing vital support to families across Scotland. It's one of the first opportunities all 35 of us have had to brainstorm ideas like this in person, moving around tables and writing our ideas was a great way of opening up discussion and sharing our thoughts. After this, it's safe to say we've got an exciting few months ahead of us!

As great as the morning was, finally it was lunch time, which meant we didn't have long to wait before we set off on our safari tour! We all quickly ate, split into 3 groups and off we went to find all our favourite animals! We got to meet giraffes, elephants, rhinos and

tigers... albeit the saddest tigers we've ever seen. But, it was fun nonetheless, the seals were a personal highlight, I could've watch them swimming around for hours!

Surrounded by school trips, we definitely stood out like sore thumbs, 35 grown adults, all wearing bright teal hoodies, running



around the safari 'ooing' and 'ahhhhing' at the animals! But that wouldn't stop us, we even took the opportunity to get on the play park rides, some of us racing ahead of young children to get a shot of the slide.

We had such a great day at Blair Drummond, a welcome change from working in our houses and not being able to see each other for so long. Here's to next year's in person staff conference!



Reporting of Substance Media Toolkit



At the end of June, we launched our 'Reporting of Substance Toolkit' – an online resource for journalists and editors who are looking to report on alcohol and drugs with dignity and respect. We created the toolkit in partnership with Adfam and a working group that included a family member, a person in recovery, a journalist, Drink and Drug News and Alcohol Health Alliance UK.

The toolkit encourages journalists to follow key recommendations such as appropriate imagery and avoiding stigmatising language such as 'user' and 'addict'. There is also the recommendation of including support information in every article that reports on alcohol and drugs – a recommendation that is asking for the same treatment mental health articles receive where helpline numbers are included for people who may be in a similar situation.

A family member who has experience of being interviewed by journalists and sharing her story as a mum supporting her daughters with their recovery says: '...these showing needles, spoons and paraphernalia...that's what really upsets me. To see that they've never moved away from that over the years...that's the first thing they put up. Behind the story of that paraphernalia is always very sad, it's very upsetting to people to see how addiction affects our loved ones and the family...but before people have got to that bit of the story, they've judged it already.'

Talking about the toolkit, our CEO Justina Murray said:

'We've seen fantastic progress over the years around reporting of mental health issues, including support information being included at the end of every article, stigmatising language decreasing, and the use of positive and educational images. We want to see the same progressive approach in the reporting of alcohol and drug issues. We still see too many pictures of broken bottles and needles, rather than images showing the human side of these stories. We know the media can play a huge part in sharing the voices and experiences of family members and in encouraging people into recovery. We hope this toolkit will help make the changes in the media that families want to see.'

Some feedback we've had over Twitter:

'This valuable resource will hopefully mean less articles illustrated with pictures of syringes.'

'This stuff is so important! Well done to @ScotFamADrugs and @AdfamUK for providing simple, practical advice on language and framing. Hopefully it will make a difference.'

By following the recommendations and reporting respectfully, we can all play our role in ending stigma.

5 Key Recommendations for Journalists and Editors – Reporting of Substance

Imagery

Images of alcohol and drugs should only be used where appropriate in articles. Images of people in vulnerable conditions – including whilst drunk or unconscious – are stigmatising. These images should always be avoided. Articles about alcohol harm should not contain images which make drinking seem glamorous, sociable, or appealing. Drug paraphernalia should only be used where the context is informative.

Images should tell the human side of the story in a positive and responsible way. Photos of interview subjects, support services, and/or the community featured in the report should be used instead.

Language

Stigmatising language such as ‘user’, ‘addict’ and ‘alcoholic’ should be kept to a minimum. Journalists and editors should use language appropriately, referencing interview subjects as parents, professionals and so forth. Interview subjects should be asked how they would prefer to be described. Examples of best practice include saying ‘substance use’ instead of ‘substance abuse’. Words like ‘druggie’ or ‘junkie’ should always be avoided.

Case Studies

There are many people who are happy to share their stories in a bid to help others to find support. Some people may prefer to share their experiences anonymous and this should be respected by the journalist.

Journalists and editors should spend time getting to know people and learning more about their experiences. Interview subjects deserve to be treated as humans. A person’s story might be ignored because it is not ‘interesting enough’, but all stories are worth telling if they can help others into recovery.

Interview subjects should be offered copy approval of their own quotes and contributions.

Support Information

Support information should always be included in any article that is reporting on alcohol and/or drugs.

Education and Stigma

Lived experience stories will not only be more compelling for readers but will actually help others. By including honest accounts of alcohol/drug use and recovery you can promote the message that people can and do recover. People usually remember a story more vividly if it reflects the human experience, helping readers to relate and empathise more with those involved.

There are many support groups and recovery communities that are happy and willing to speak to journalists. We recommend that journalists and editors reach out to groups and communities to learn more about their work.

Caithness Family Support Group

With Nancy

How and when did the Caithness Family Support Group start?

Well, I've got a son who has drug problems. He's coming up for 40 and I've had problems with him since he was 15. We've had good times and bad times. I tried when I was living in Inverness to start up a group, but then I moved to Thurso and got a new job and a new partner, and I just didn't have enough time to give it the commitment it needed.

I finished up work in October (last year), I was a nurse. I was looking for something to do and a friend sent me a link to a lived experience panel with LEAP. I put my name forward for that. During the first meeting, I said I would love to start-up a family support group in Caithness because nobody knows how it is unless you live it or have lived it. One of the ladies in the group who lives in Inverness said we had to talk because she runs a family support group. So, we met, and I'd already printed out leaflets, phoned the local ADP (Alcohol and Drug Partnership) – didn't get a very warm welcome, but I wasn't going to give up. I also emailed local counsellors because there is a big drug problem up here. About half of them got back to me, and through the family member from the group I was put in touch with another family member who runs Families Campaign for Change. With all their support I thought right, I'm just going to go for it. I met another family member in the area and she came on board, and we started the Caithness Family Support Group.

The group hasn't been the success I wanted it to be due to low numbers attending. There are a few of us that go, but I think part of the problem is we're in the Highlands, people don't want to admit they've got a problem in their family. From my part, I'm very open about it and always have been – I feel

there's not enough help for people with drug issues, there certainly isn't for their families, and I'm quite passionate around it. I'm not going to give up.

I'm not quite disappointed but I know how difficult it is for families. I think going back many moons ago, I had to phone one of my son's friends' houses to let them know he was in police custody, and I got the father. I explained who I was and why I was phoning, and he blethered for about 20 minutes about how it is and 'will they ever grow up'. When he finished, he said 'do you know I feel so much better' because honestly, speaking to somebody who knows what it's like makes you feel so much better. I let him know I was always here if he needed to talk. I've always had it in the back of my mind that if I can help just one person, I'd be more than happy. And that's how this started. A lot of getting people to the group is through word of mouth and that it what's hard about it – promoting it. I managed to get an article in a local newspaper, and I got a lot of text messages after it from people I know who would say 'you're so brave' and I thought no, really, I'm just honest. Because what my son does is not my doing, I certainly don't want that for him, but it's the choices he's made. But promoting it and getting people along to the group, that's the hardest thing.

It can be difficult running a support group when you are going through similar problems, how is it for you?

I try to leave my problems at the door but then when we have our group and the other family members are talking, I share with them because then they know that I do know what it's like. And I think in some ways we all support each other and obviously with Families Campaign for Change we have the meetings each week, it's a comfort to know that they are there if I need to offload. I'm very open and honest and maybe too open,

I don't know. And I would hope that the other family members that come are...well, it's not cloak and dagger in any manner of means but I explain to them what is said in here stays here. I remind them they can phone me or text me at any time. If I don't pick up the text right away, that I always check my phone a couple of times a day and I'll always get back to them. This will sound silly, but I always feel I can deal with other people's problems more than I can deal with my own and I've got a lot of good friends and they always say to me 'how do you manage to cope with all that?' and I say you just get on with it. You can't bury your head in the sand, this is life.

We always like to ask this question, what does family mean to you?

I would like the family to be one. But because of what's going on, it isn't. My son that has the problems realised what he's missing out on because there's obviously grandchildren and he hasn't seen them. But I agree with my

other son who says he can't have his brother in their lives and then out their lives again and again, and I totally appreciate that and agree with that. But I just feel my other son has missed out on so much. A family is a unit where everyone should support each other in the ideal world, but we're not in the ideal world and for people that have issues, they don't realise that their issues hurt so many other people that are part of their own family. Also being part of family support and Families Campaign for Change... they're like an extended family because they know what it's like.

How can people get in touch with the Caithness Family Support Group?

We have weekly meetings, so you can phone me and have a chat if you're wanting to attend the group. We also have a Facebook page if you need information.

<https://www.facebook.com/CaithnessFSG>

A vertical poster for the Caithness Family Support Group. The background is a photograph of a row of bare trees in a field, with a bright sun low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow. The text is overlaid on this image. At the top, the title 'Caithness Family Support Group' is written in large, bold letters, with 'Caithness Family' in white and 'Support Group' in bright cyan. Below the title, there are three paragraphs of text in white, followed by a call to action in cyan, and finally the telephone number and confidentiality statement in white.

**Caithness Family
Support Group**

Living with a loved ones problematic substance use can cause stress, anxiety and distress within the home

It's vital that you get support for yourself to help you cope with the situation that you find yourself in.

We are family members who have experienced addiction in our families and we are here to support you and offer information and guidance.

If you would like to know more get in touch.

Telephone: 07754763950
Confidentiality Assured

Edinburgh Marathon 2022



By Shana Lord, Communications Assistant

Back in May we were in the capitol for a busy day of chasing marathon runners and cheering on Scottish Families fundraisers. Edinburgh Marathon saw 40,000 people head to Holyrood Park on Sunday 29th of May for the start of the 26.2 mile race, making it the largest sporting event in Scottish history! We were lucky enough to have some amazing Scottish Families fundraisers running both the full and half marathon, and their fundraising efforts before the race were incredible.

Runners were set off by Mary Berry of Great British Bake Off fame (no, we don't really know why either...), and were soon weaving their way through the historic streets of Edinburgh whilst the crowds cheered them on. The weather was perfect for running long distance, a nice breeze with just a wee bit of sun, nothing to complain about when you're



running for over 3 hours!

It was also ideal weather for standing on the side of the road cheering whilst trying to spot Scottish Families teal t-shirts appearing in the distance... which is exactly what I was doing all day! Bagging a good viewing spot at the busy start line, I was ready with my camera, hoping to spot at least one of our runners crossing the line. It didn't take long before I saw the logo I know so well, and our runner Steven was starting his first ever marathon, looking pretty relaxed in the process! The next stop was the half way point, not as easy to get to as I thought when pretty much every road in Edinburgh was closed for this huge event. I eventually made it back to my car, after crossing the running route more times than probably allowed, and headed straight for Prestongrange (near Musselburgh) to get a good supporting spot at the 13 mile mark.

Not only was I able to cheer on all the runners approaching the half way point, I was also cheering on the elite runners coming up to the 25 mile point and nearing the end of their race. The fastest runner of the day, Matthew Gillette, finished his race in 2 hours, 17 minutes and 57 seconds... and didn't even break a sweat! Two Scottish Families runners spotted me cheering at mile 13 and after a few words of encouragement sped off over the hill to smash the final half of their marathon.

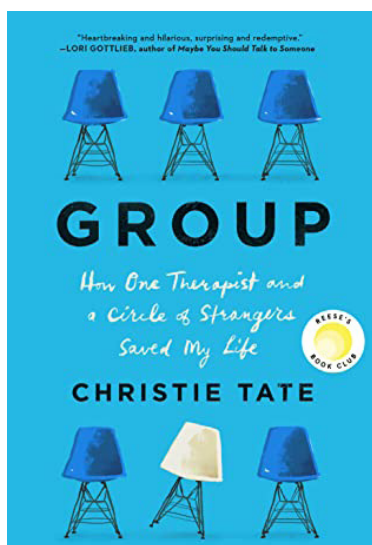
Back in the car again, I was whizzing to Musselburgh to get a spot at the finish line! With a choir, food stalls and hundreds of

people waiting for their loved ones to cross the finish line, the atmosphere here was electric! Although I didn't get to see any Scottish Families runners cross the line, they all had enough to focus on without me jumping up in front of them when they finish, I did get to soak up the atmosphere and feel the celebratory vibes that all the runners were creating.

Our fundraisers raised an incredible total of £4656 and achieved something amazing on that day, so we want to continue saying a huge well done and thank you for your continued support. We can't wait to cheer you on at your next fundraising event!



June Book Review: 'Group' by Christie Tate



- By Lena McMillan, Forth Valley Family Support Development Officer

June's book choice for our group was 'Group' by Christie Tate.

'Group' is a searingly honest memoir of the author's experiences of being part of a psychotherapy group in America and led to one of the most fruitful discussions we have had as a group.

Successful in her studies, having just achieved top student status in her law class, and with her eating disorder under control, Tate seems to the outside world to be doing well. However, internally, she is struggling and reaches out to the group for support, with her relationships. As she shows more of her vulnerabilities to the group, change starts to happen for her.

Our group gave 'Group' a rating of 6.5 out of 10. Some readers found it an easy, lighter read with humour in it while others felt it lacked depth and was a bit cryptic in places.

We talked about what our readers saw as the positives and the negatives of this book: the positives included the support she got from the group; her commitment to the

therapy that was, at times, incredibly challenging for her and the very real descriptions of loneliness and isolation, with one reader in particular sharing that this was something they could identify with.

The negatives discussed included the role and style of the therapist, with several people saying they expected more from a professional and felt his practice was unethical in places. Many felt his methods were questionable, almost verging on cult-like status, while one member of group felt that for therapy to make a difference, it needs to be 'provocative.'

This led to a discussion of differing attitudes towards therapy in America and the UK. The group considered the author's role in the group, questioning whether she was able to give support to others, as well as receive it. The ending of the book gave way to great discussion too, with Tate's ongoing participation in the group seen as a lifeline by some, who likened it to people in recovery attending fellowship meetings regularly and suggested the attachments she had made in the group allowed her to grow and open up more. Others, however, saw her continuing participation as evidence of her 'stuckness' with some questioning whether she needed the therapy to make the changes she did, or would these have happened organically, anyway?

Some comments from our readers:

'It was quick to read, I wanted to keep reading it, but I found it a bit weird.'

'...honest, brutal, good read, if you've already got an understanding of group therapy.'

'Brilliant... language was hard sometimes – mirroring sometimes the brutality of the sessions.'

SCVO Employee of the Year



By Claire Wadsworth - Senior Development Officer for Routes

Sarah Campbell, our Fundraising Manager, asked me a few months ago if she could put my name forward for the SCVO “Employee of the Year” category, I was flattered but gobsmacked. I felt very undeserving of it and was so embarrassed at being singled out, especially when I work with so many amazing colleagues. However, I knew it could raise the profile of our pilot young person’s project, Routes, which I believe in so much but more importantly, I knew there was no chance of me getting to the final so I accepted graciously!

To my horror, (I know, I’m a drama queen) I got through to the final and Sarah emailed me just before the event to ask if I wanted help to write an acceptance speech. I had a little giggle to myself at Sarah’s misplaced optimism and politely declined her kind offer, not thinking for a second I would win.

I had a great evening at the awards. I enjoyed a lovely meal and the company at my table. As the presentations approached, people asked me if I was nervous, I wasn’t at all because I was certain my name wouldn’t be called out. I remember saying to Callum, who was sitting next to me, “Please don’t feel sorry for me when my name isn’t called out because I couldn’t think of anything worse than walking up on that stage in front of all those people.”

There were 3 awards presented before my category and all 3 winners spoke so brilliantly and articulately about their projects. It was only at that point that I had a brief panic thinking, “Oh my God, imagine if I have to follow them and I haven’t a clue what to say” but then I gave myself a shake and relaxed again, knowing there was no chance. Then when my category was read out and Sally Magnusson called out my name, I couldn’t believe it. I think it was the most shocked I have ever been in my life.

My mind went blank, I was in a daze as I

wobbled up to the stage (shock and high heels for the first time since before Covid are not a good combo!). It felt like the longest walk ever and probably was, it must have looked like I was doing a lap of honour, zig zagging my way around the tables to the front. My brain wasn't working, the whole time I was thinking "please don't cry, please don't cry."

Of course, as soon as I got on stage I started crying. Poor Sally Magnusson was so lovely, she could see I was shell shocked and said she would ask a long question so that I could gather myself. Little did she know, there was no chance of that. I blubbered my way through her questions, a snotty nosed mess. Luckily, I haven't a clue what I said so can't relive the humiliation.

What I really wanted to say is that winning the award, although absolutely mortifying, was

the proudest moment of my career. It is an award for the whole Routes team, they are amazing and not just for putting up with my chaos and control-freakness (I'm working on both).

It's also for Scottish Families for being a charity which encourages innovative and creative practice and puts the relational wealth of children and families affected at the heart of everything we do.

Most of all, it's for the Routes young people (oh no, more tears...luckily on my own in my kitchen this time, not on stage in front of hundreds of people). I can't talk (or write, it would appear!) about them without welling up because they are all so amazing. Their resilience and humour blow me away every day. It's a privilege to make a difference to their young and difficult lives, which is why the award is really for them.



Bound Together 2022 Events



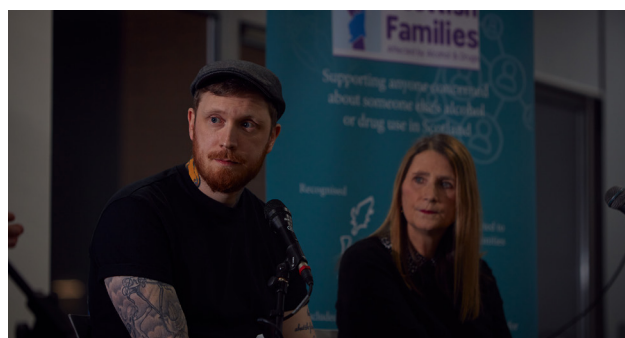
*By Tich Watson, Connecting Families
Development Officer*

Bound Together celebrates how books are a great medium for exploring the impact of substances on families. Books can offer a discreet and unassuming starting point for many people to understand the challenges of supporting, living with, or loving someone with a substance problem.

The aim of this project is to encourage conversation, raise awareness of family recovery and challenge stigma by normalising the subject of alcohol and drug use. Bound Together has hosted 4 reading events so far this year.

The first event was held at Outwith Books in the southside of Glasgow and featured seasoned broadcaster, author, and journalist Liz Fraser. Her book 'Coming Clean' takes the reader on a journey through several countries, her pregnancy, and several tragic flashpoints as the father of her child struggled with an alcohol problem. The book has a positive ending with a message of hope for the future, but during the event we were reminded of how difficult it is for family members as Liz spoke of the family's ongoing challenges because of alcohol.

The second event we were able to scale up and invite over 50 people to hear Aidan Martin and his mother discuss his memoir and what his family have been through. His debut book,



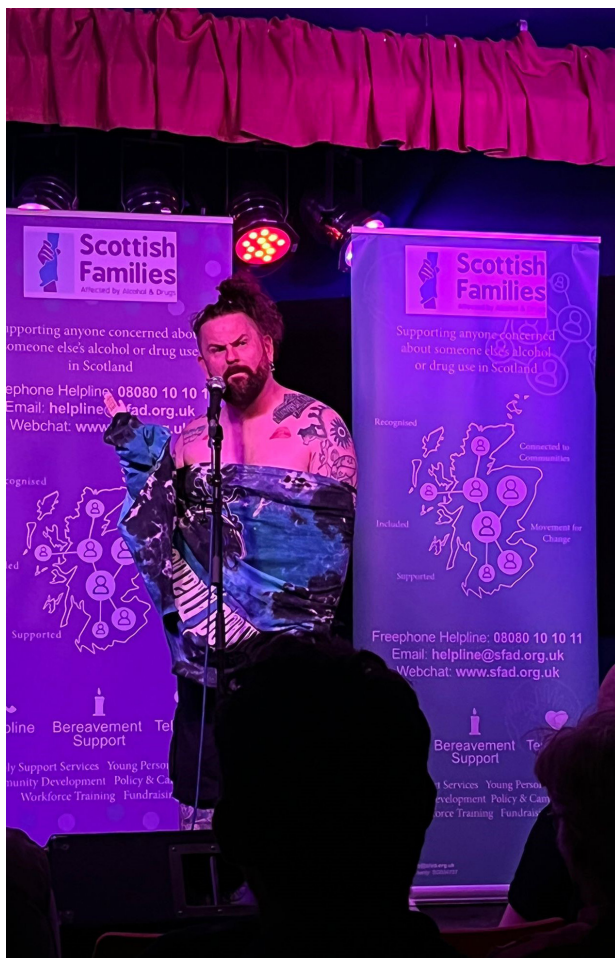
'Euphoric Recall', discusses his life growing up and discovering sex, drugs and the dance scene. He lets the audience see how his addictions manifested and how he recovered. Family bereavement is also at the core of this book. It was wonderful for the audience to meet Aidan's mother Shirley and hear her perspective as well as getting to ask questions as she is a key feature in the book along with many other family members.

Bound Together's most recent events were both with John Taylor as he launched his own debut novel, 'Alcohol Stole My Mum'. Traveling up from London where John works as a Family Addiction Support Worker, he returned to East Dumbartonshire where he once had to flee as a child due to his mother's alcohol problem impacting him and his sister. His vivid descriptions recall his mum and the drinking den that was his home that stunned the audience but resonated with many who attended the events.

Waterstones in Glasgow's Sauchiehall Street also hosted an event where a new audience heard how John managed to halt the cycle of addiction and trauma by getting himself into treatment.

Bound Together is continuing to explore how we can use books to help introduce or recognise the importance of family recovery and we are looking at presenting more award winning authors through new and innovative platforms in the future.

Belly Laughs in the Southside of Glasgow



By Clare Morrison, Community Fundraiser

Thursday 14th July saw Scottish Families host their first ever comedy night at The Glad Café in Shawlands in Glasgow. With a variety of comedians to suit everyone, the night was a roaring success and raised over £600!

Billy Kirkwood had the audience in hysterics from the get-go. Billy's high-energy and quick-witted interaction with the crowd was well received before introducing the talented comedians. Billy continued to hold his presence and engage with the audience throughout the night. A real crowd pleaser.

All comedians had a 15-minute set to win the crowd over. The first half of the show featured Christopher Macarthur-Boyd and Brain Kavangh. Both eased into their set,



speaking about relationships, past and present.

After a short break, Ross Daly and Ruth Hunter took to the stage. Ross had the crowd belly laughing with his re-enacting of some bizarre yet hilarious sights he had seen on his latest holiday to Benidorm. Ruth, an Irish comedian living in Glasgow had a more laid-back hilarity approach which the packed venue seemed to appreciate. Headliner, Thomas Elvin finished the night on a high with his superb set.

The night was rounded off nicely with a raffle and 5 lucky audience members won some prizes donated by various businesses including Thunder Cat, Hannah Jane Perfumery and Lucali.

Waggin' Walk in Falkirk



By Jade Harley, Forth Valley Family Support Assistant

Getting 'outside' and spending time in nature can have a positive impact on our wellbeing and state of mind. Part of the support we offer is helping families find a way to regain control of their lives and empowering them to be able to make that time for themselves - which is why we put together an Oot & Aboot Summer pack. The pack has a combination of group session dates led by a family support assistant and activities/challenges they can do in their own time either by themselves or with their families; the choice is completely theirs and they can decide what they want to get involved in.

Our first family support assistant-led session was our Waggin' Walk. It was open to all our family members across the organisation, whether they had a dog or not, as well as other people in the community. Our Community Fundraiser Clare came armed with some Scottish Families pet bandanas and some of us in attendance were able to

get our dogs lined up for a group picture, but it did not last long as they were eager to run about and play, which caused many crossed-lead moments, but it gave us all a huge laugh. We even laughed as the rain descended upon us. We expected a drizzle, but we were not entirely prepared for the floodgates that opened however we persevered through the rain, despite being completely soaked through - there were some great conversations had amongst the group.

Supporters from the community meeting some of the wider team and engaging with other walkers out in the community allowed the opportunity for people to ask questions about who we were as an organisation, also bringing awareness to the services we provide. Our family members were able to share their experiences and talk about their situation with a member of the Forth Valley Recovery Community too – so we had a brilliant time building connections, being out in the community and enjoying a traditional Scottish summer in the rain.

Upcoming Events

Afternoon Tea with Scottish Families

@ Stirling Highland Hotel
2 - 4pm on
Saturday 10th September

Join us for an afternoon of delicious
food and great entertainment.

£22 pp or purchase a full table!

Contact clareM@sfd.org.uk
to purchase your ticket!



If you are interested in any of the events below, please get in touch with Clare Morrison clareM@sfd.org.uk.

Afternoon Tea – 10th September

Stirling Highland Hotel from 2pm till 4pm.

Join us at Stirling Highland Hotel for an afternoon of incredible food and some great entertainment. This will be Scottish Families' first ever afternoon tea, and we're so excited to be hosting it in this stunning location. Tickets are on sale now, at £22 per person, as well as the option to purchase a full table of ten for all of your guests! We can't wait to see you there.

Loch Ness Marathon – 2nd October

There's still time to enter the spectacular Loch Ness Marathon. The race follows a route alongside world-famous Loch Ness, starting in an atmospheric moorland setting and continues through stunning Highland scenery, taking you along the south-eastern shores of Loch Ness, across the River Ness, to finish in Inverness, the capital city of the Highlands.

Arguably one of the most scenic marathons in the world the course is a must-see.

We offer a reduced charity rate of £35 for all marathon runners, all we ask is that you pledge to raise a minimum sponsorship of £100.

Virtual London Marathon – 2nd October

Be part of the most iconic event in the running calendar and join the TSC London Marathon virtually by completing the 26.2 miles anywhere in the world, on a route of your choice. You'll have 24 hours to walk, jog or run the full marathon distance. Go for a personal best or do it in stages, it's up to you! Why not get others involved? Encourage friends and family to join you at different sections of your route to cheer you on.

An official TSC London Marathon app will track your distance and time. You will receive the exclusive London Marathon finisher t-shirt and medal. We have charity spaces available and would love to have you join the team. If you wish to run as a Charity Entry with a FREE place, you will be asked to raise a minimum sponsorship target of £100.

Edinburgh 10k – 23rd October

Take on the Men's or Women's 10k in Edinburgh this October. Both start at the historic Royal Mile, experience the city as you run past famous landmarks including Princes Street Gardens. The buzzing atmosphere and cheering crowds will help you to the finish line at the BT Murrayfield Stadium. With spectacular views of Edinburgh Castle and Arthur's Seat, this is one not to be missed.

We have charity spaces available and would love to have you join the team. If you wish to run as a Charity Entry with a FREE place, you will be asked to raise a minimum sponsorship target of £100.

'Alcohol Stole My Mum' - Book Review



By Stephen Bartlett, Run Revival

Alcohol Stole My Mum takes us on a journey with John Taylor (author of the book), detailing his childhood growing up with an alcoholic mother.

As the book progresses, we learn about the lasting impact of childhood trauma and how this can linger long into adulthood. The title of this book is as harrowing as it is amazing. Instantly you feel spoken to, and it gets your mind racing. "Hang on a minute, alcohol stole my mum too..."

That was my first reaction, I had never known anyone else who has grown up with an alcoholic mum. Of course, I knew this happened, but nobody talks about it. Why don't my friend's parents drink vodka every day? I would ask myself.

That's why this book is so timely and important. Not just on a personal level, but for the children and families of now and the future. I wish I had the pleasure to hear John's story years ago, but I know that many will now benefit and that makes me hopeful. John's openness can be at the forefront of that.

Instantly, I knew I had to attend John's book reading, set up by Scottish Families as part of their Bound Together project. As I took my seat at Waterstones on Sauchiehall Street, I was not disappointed.

It felt very empowering to be in the room with John as he shared his story. It felt like a safe space to share and ask questions. No matter how big or small the crowd, events like these are so important and will help to break down the stigma involved in communities when it comes to alcohol addiction. After all, so many of us experience the havoc alcohol can reap on families. I will attend more of these in the future. As someone that has grown up with an alcoholic mother, I felt spoken to while reading John's terribly sad but hopeful account.

The book is written in a way that makes you want to keep reading, I found it very difficult to put down. I was always desperate to know what was next for young John. I put this down to the fact that amongst the pain, it was laced with humour and wit.

One of the biggest compliments I can pay to the writing is that you want to be John's friend. I was able to vividly imagine the streets, the football grounds, the houses and family members. I was able to summon my own childhood feelings and relive them as I read. John is very honest and open about his experiences and in doing so I believe will help many people process emotions and feel less alone and alienated.

This book is essential reading for any child of an alcoholic, even if you aren't, it sheds light on many social issues that are too often not addressed in our society. The power of these pages made me cry a lot, but my overwhelming feeling when closing this book was hope. 'Alcohol Stole My Mum' filled a puzzle piece inside me that I didn't know needed to be filled.

This book is a great example of how the power of talking can help so many of us.

We Are Winners – What It Means To Be Recognised by the GSK Impact Awards



This year Scottish Families was chosen from more than 350 charities across the UK as one of the 10 winners of the 2022 GSK Impact Awards. As the only Scottish winner we are very proud to represent families and everything we have achieved as a team.

In June, CEO Justina Murray and Fundraising Manager Sarah Campbell travelled to London for a three-day training and development programme followed by an award ceremony celebrating all 10 winners, as well as announcing one overall winner.

The awards focus is to celebrate the work of small to medium size charities who go beyond just providing services. The goal is to recognise and celebrate charities as the experts at what they do – and offer training on how to better use their voices and knowledge to influence the wider health field.

All winning charities received £40,000, a professionally made short film showcasing each organisations work and ongoing

opportunities for training and development. As a smaller charity we wouldn't normally be able to invest in these so we are delighted and will use these opportunities to continue championing families.

Justina Murray, CEO, said "We are a small charity, but we like to make a lot of noise - our GSK Impact Award will help us amplify our voice and let families know they are seen and they are heard."

It is hard not be inspired by what our fellow award winners have achieved. Each charity does amazing work – whether helping families living with dementia, supporting survivors of domestic violence or championing vulnerable young people. We are honoured to be one of the 2022 winners.

You can learn more about the other winners and see our GSK video [here!](#)

Are you worried about someone else's alcohol and/ or other drug use?

We are here to support you. We can chat, offer advice and information, and link you either into our own services or services local to you.

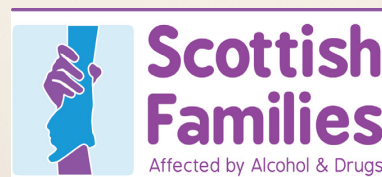


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Registered Scottish charity: SC034737



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