

Make a difference by being a friend

We all need friends. It is the New Year. Starting something new can be overwhelming and exciting. Where to start?! Simple - Do you feel you can be a friend? Are you able to be patient and caring? You might be busy, but for as little as one evening per month, you can give so much to a person's life. The people who use our services have learning disabilities and appreciate friendship.

In Dorchester, we have a number of people who would like to have volunteer befrienders help out with outings or activities. Once a month there is a need for people to help take people who use our services to a local friendship club for skittle, discos or karaoke. We also roles based in houses, for example we need a person to help a woman with crafts or cooking once a fortnight. We also need a keen swimmer to help out with visits to the local swimming pool.

Michael, a befriender for us says 'I love being a friend to different service users. I was a little anxious to begin with as I had not any experience of spending time with a person with learning disabilities. Once you start talking or doing an activity and you see how much the person is enjoying your company, it becomes so rewarding and then the anxiety just goes! Sometimes all I do is listen to the person. Other times, I might do an activity or go out for a coffee. It really is worth trying.'

Training and support is given. Volunteers are highly valued in Leonard Cheshire Disability. Working with a person who has learning disabilities can be highly satisfying and can really make you feel you are doing something important and worthwhile. Do call and have a chat about how you can help.

Please contact Hilary Campbell, Volunteer Co-ordinator on 01305 213815.
Or email hilary.campbell@leonardcheshire.org

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Editors Note:- Leonard Cheshire Disability supports thousands of disabled people in the UK and works in over 50 countries worldwide. We campaign for change and provide services that give disabled people the opportunity to live life their way. Visit www.LCDisability.org.

For more information:- Please call Hilary Campbell on 01305 213815.