

THE KIDS ARE ALRIGHT

Oli dives into fund raising!

Sixteen year old Oli Milroy really does turn some of our perceptions of young people on their heads.

Oli recently won an award from *The Kids Are Alright* campaign for his outstanding contribution to charity work and voluntary community work. Currently studying four A levels at Plymstock School, in his 'spare' time Oli carries out a wide range of voluntary activities, including sky diving from 15,000 feet, for charity!

"The sky dive was incredible," said Oli, "it was a massive adrenaline rush. I'm not very keen on heights, so it was good to help me overcome that fear." The sky dive was in aid of the Drake Foundation, a local charity which provides a fund for community projects in Plymouth, and took place at Dunkeswell airfield.

So far, the sky dive has raised £600 with money still coming in. The funds raised will be matched by the government's Grass Roots funding, so the final total will be over £1,200.

Oli has done a number of stunts to raise funds for the Drake Foundation, including having his legs waxed. "That really brought tears to



my eyes, but I did it twice," he added.

Nowadays, he is more involved in organising fundraising events, but has plans for the future. "I'd love to cycle from John O' Groat's to Lands End, or walk from Newquay to Plymouth, to raise more money," said Oli.

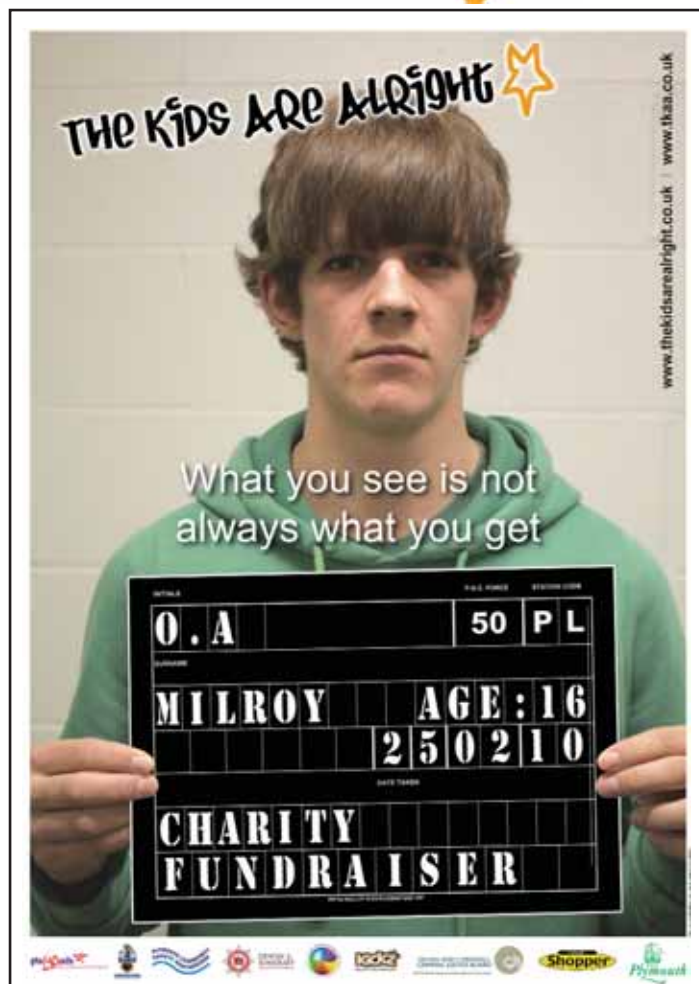
Oli loves long distance walking, using skills he has learned as a Scout (he is now an Explorer). Having himself completed both the 35 and 45 mile Ten Tors challenges, he also helps to train the junior Ten Tors team at Dunstone Primary school.

Another string to Oli's voluntary bow is working as a volunteer for the Police, from whom he has received a Good Citizenship award for involvement with a Week of Action and also the 'Don't Get Plastered' campaign, which aimed to reduce the incidence of teenage drunkenness.

So what's next for Oli? "In April, I'm going to Auschwitz with the charity 'Lessons from Auschwitz'. The idea is to learn from being there, then come back to Plymouth and organise presentations to raise awareness of the horrors that happened there, so that we can learn from history and not repeat the same mistakes ever again."

Like many people, Oli believes that the perception of young people is often negative because of two main things: the actions of a small minority, and the way that the media portrays the problems of youth more than their good side.

"The Kids Are Alright is a brilliant campaign," said Oli, "we're not all bad!"



Oli (above) as he appears in the campaign 'wanted' posters and (left) sky diving for charity

For more information on The Kids Are Alright campaign, or to take the online survey and record your views of young people, visit www.tkaa.co.uk

Do you know some 'Alright' Kids?

The Kids Are Alright is a thought-provoking new campaign aimed at challenging stereotypes about young people and particularly teenagers.

It is being run for one year and aims to improve the image of local young people by measuring what people think of them now, then comparing it with views in a year's time after the campaign has done its work.

The campaign was introduced to the general public of Plymouth via a concert that took place under the Big Screen in Plymouth's city centre and passers-by were asked to fill out surveys saying what they thought about young people today.

They were also given the chance to stop off on the

'sound off sofa' where they could sit down and record themselves saying what they think about young people.

The event also featured activities for young and old alike including surfing on a simulator, skate-boarding on a custom-built skate park and playing footie on a MUGA (a small sized football pitch) with Argyle's Kickz project.

There was a marquee featuring wanted posters of local young people meant to challenge stereotypical views, as well as entertainment from highly successful bands including Joker, Weapons of Sound, Lipson Community College jazz band and Ruptors, plus break dancing from local project 'Break'.

At the launch event over 500 questionnaires were completed and two lucky winners received shopping

vouchers for completing the questionnaire on the day.

However, now the real work begins, the project would like to receive regular nominations about all the positive things young people are doing in their communities. By visiting the website: www.thekidsarealright.co.uk or www.tkaa.co.uk anyone can put forward a nomination and each month an individual or group who has been put forward will get the opportunity to win vouchers and a certificate for their achievement.

The story will also be published on the website and via the local media. Towards the end of the year a celebration event will be held where all those nominated will be invited to attend.

So if you know someone who deserves recognition for their achievements, get in touch.

Complete the online survey and you could win £50 worth of M&S vouchers

Take our Survey and you could win £50 worth of M&S vouchers!

Your views are really important to the Kids Are Alright campaign, and this is a great opportunity for you to let us know how you feel about young people in Plymouth.

The Kids Are Alright survey has been designed with assistance from the Office for Criminal Justice Reform, a cross-departmental government organisation reporting to the Ministry of Justice, the Home Office and the Attorney General's office.

It is designed to measure perceptions of young people in Plymouth before and after the campaign. There is a prize draw where you have the chance to win £50 worth of M&S vouchers, so make sure you fill out the online survey as soon as you can to be in with a chance of winning!