



Keeping Going

Secondary New Year Assembly

Resources

PowerPoint presentation

Backpack containing tins of food

Obstacles for the race

Faith in action video clip

(www.youtube.com/watch?v=HR-2A6PI6lc)

Aim:

To reflect on the year that is past and to think about what we all can do to keep going and keep giving our best in 2016

Introduction

Welcome the pupils to their New Year assembly and introduce yourself to the class

Activity

Ask for two volunteers. Explain that we are going to have a little race and that they will both be running the same distance, however, one of them will have a clear path and nothing to carry whilst the other will need to carry this backpack (containing some tins of food) and will need to get past the obstacles on their side. (Place a few things that the second volunteer has to climb over or under using chairs, tables or whatever else is available!)

When the pupils have completed the race, ask the second volunteer how they felt - was it fair? Did they want to give up?

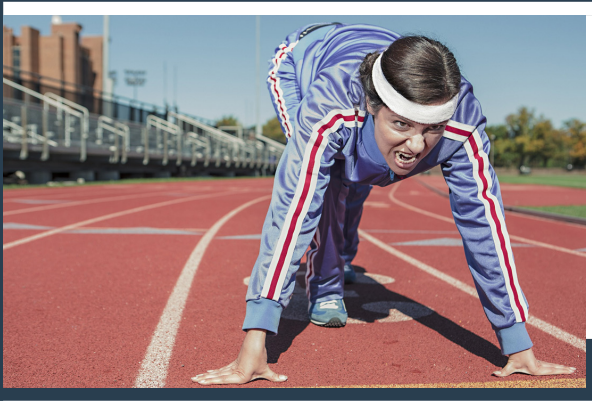
Story

All of our years have been different, we've done different things, we have different families and friends, and different circumstances. Some of you may feel like it's been a great year: you feel like the person in the race who's just been able to get on with stuff with very few obstacles or things to carry. But some of you might have felt weighed down when you're trying to run, it might have felt like one obstacle after another - it may have been a year you just want to forget.

Today is an opportunity to think about what we have learned from the year that is past. However it is also an opportunity to focus on how we can be determined to keep going in 2016 no matter what it throws at us.

The Salvation Army we tries to help people who feel like giving up. We do what we can to help people keep going. I'm going to show you a short clip that explains some of the ways that The Salvation Army helps people who are struggling. Show the clip and then ask the pupils some of the reasons the people we are helping may feel like they don't want to run their race anymore.





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Go on to explain that we all probably had times that we felt fed up, annoyed, let down or alone in the year that is gone and it is more than likely that in the year to come we will have those moments too. The Salvation Army believes that with the help of each other and God there is always hope and an opportunity to get up and start again when we fall. The important thing isn't that we don't have any falls in our race but that we keep going even when we do.

Paul the Apostle suffered a lot as he did his best to spread the news of who Jesus was in the first century - he went to prison a number of times, was been beaten up and once even stoned. But yet he still says this:

I don't know about you, but I'm running hard for the finish line. I'm giving it everything I've got. No sloppy living for me! I'm staying alert and in top condition. 1 Corinthians 9: 26 (MSG)

This is what we can all strive for this year - to give it all we've got. It might not be easy. there will be highs and lows but let's all decide to go into this year determined to keep going, to keep giving 100% in all areas of our lives - our relationships, our work, our passions, pursuing our dreams. Let's think about how we can help others do this too just as The Salvation Army tries to.

Reflection

Let's take a few minutes to think of one thing you learned from the last year that you want to take into 2016

Now let's take a moment to think about what we need to do to make sure we are giving everything we've got this year. Who do we need to support us? Are there things you need to stop doing? Are there things you need to start doing?

Finally let's reflect on how we can help others just as The Salvation Army helps people. Is there someone you know is struggling who you could find time for? Could you commit to helping someone or spending time with someone each week who needs a friend? What can you do to help someone else keep going this year and give it everything they've got?

Prayer

Dear God,

Thank you for this New Year, we pray that you would help us all to live in a way that makes the most of each day, help us to keep going with the things we are struggling with and support others around us. We pray that this year would be full of joy and adventure and that you would guide us in how to give this year everything we've got.

In Jesus' name,

Amen

