

MEDIA RELEASE

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Announcing the winners of SCCYP's

Children's Choice Awards 2008

The winners of this year's Children's Choice Awards are Jacqueline Gordon, special education needs auxiliary at Lilybank School in Port Glasgow, and Sian Anderson, a youth worker at the Escape Youth Café in Hawick.

The awards were presented by Kathleen Marshall, Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People, and Bronwen Cohen, chief executive of Children in Scotland, at a special event at the CCA in Glasgow on Thursday evening.

Jacqueline, who won in the under-12s category, was nominated by her niece, ten-year-old Amy Hughes. Looking after children with a range of needs, Jacqueline's job changes according to which class she is working with. "Some of the pupils have learning difficulties, and some have challenging behaviour," explained Amy, "but even though she can have some challenging days, she loves the children very much and finds her job rewarding."

Sian, who came out top in the 12 and over category, was nominated by 15-year-old brothers David and Andrew Sheilds. Explaining his reason for putting Sian forward, David said, "She has made a difference to the Hawick environment by trying to keep children out of trouble. Hawick hasn't got a lot of facilities that young people can use, but by opening the café for us, Sian has given us lots." Andrew added: "Sian gives us lots of support. She comes to the café because she cares about young people."

The two winners were chosen from a shortlist of 12 outstanding nominees, after over 250 entries were received.

The awards, run by the office of Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People (SCCYP), with Children in Scotland, celebrate the role many adults play in helping and supporting children and young people in Scotland. The nominations and the final selection of a shortlist and winners were made entirely by children and young people.

Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People, Kathleen Marshall, said: "Tonight has been a fantastic celebration of the positive relationships that children and young people have with the adults in their lives. All too often we hear negative stories about how deep the divide is between the generations. The Children's

Choice Award focuses on the good; on what children and young people value in adults, and helps them say thanks for their commitment and support.”

“Every single adult who was nominated has been sent a certificate as a thank you from my office on behalf of the child or young person who nominated them. I also want to extend a particular thank you, to all the children and young people involved in the judging process.”

Bronwen Cohen, chief executive of Children in Scotland, said: “These awards shows how much children are enriched by meaningful contact with adults – and how the shared experiences between generations can be mutually beneficial.”

Images from the awards event will be available from Friday 14 March.

For more information and to request images please contact Ezmie McCutcheon: tel 0131 558 3733 / email Ezmie.McCutcheon@sccyp.org.uk

Notes for editors:

- SCCYP promotes and safeguards the rights of children and young people living in Scotland. Kathleen Marshall, Scotland's first Commissioner, is committed to ensuring that all children have their rights respected.
- Children in Scotland is a partner organisation in the Children’s Choice Awards. Children in Scotland is Scotland’s national children’s agency, bringing together voluntary, statutory and professional organisations and individuals to improve the lives of Scotland’s children and their families.