Carphone Warehouse challenge raises vital cash to support young people in crisis

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1,600 people took up an epic challenge last weekend to run, jog or walk 100km for the Race to the Stones 'ultramarathon', sponsored by Carphone Warehouse, with charity partner Get Connected. Participants have been raising money for Get Connected, the UK's free, confidential helpline service supporting vulnerable young people in the UK.

Fundraisers were trekking the Ridgeway, Britain's oldest recognised pathway, beginning at Chinnor in Oxfordshire and ending at Europe's largest stone circle in Avebury. Travelling from all over the world and armed with nothing but their sturdiest walking shoes and a waterproof, they pitted themselves against hardy terrain to complete the challenge in stages, with some people finishing in as little as 10 hours!

Jessica Taplin, CEO at Get Connected, says: "*The team and I have been completely bowled over by the determination and dedication of our fundraisers for this hugely challenging event. I cannot thank our supporters enough, I hope everyone has enjoyed the training despite the sore muscles. Together with the longstanding support of Carphone Warehouse, our corporate partner, this means we'll be here to help the 250,000 children & young people who'll turn to us for emotional support this year, enabling them to find the help they need for any issue from depression, self-harm to money worries, bullying or homelessness."*

Kesah Trowell, Corporate Social Responsibility Lead at Carphone Warehouse, says: "*Over 130 colleagues from Carphone Warehouse took part in support of our charity partner, Get Connected. I don't think any of us were prepared for how tough this challenge was and how deep we would have to dig to complete it. Our pain was made a little easier thanks to the generous people who dug deep into their pockets to help us help young people in need. We've been truly awed by colleagues' grit and determination, overwhelmed by their personal stories and absolutely astounded that so many actually finished, or even had a go. It has been amazing.*"

Get Connected volunteer Anna Jessiman celebrated her first year on the helpline by taking part in Race to the Stones. Anna says: *"It's been a fantastic experience and I'm so glad I had the opportunity to take part! I've never done anything like this before so it was a challenge, but I'm so happy I could make even more of a difference to Get Connected and help them to provide a much needed service."*

Joanna Lia worked with colleagues at Carphone Warehouse to raise money for Get Connected and has also taken part in amazing fitness challenge 'Average to Awesome' with professional running coach, marathon runner and multi-world record holder, Rory Coleman.

Joanna says: *"I've had amazing support to complete this challenge, both from my colleagues, friends and family and from Rory. I'm getting married this year so I set myself the challenge to get fitter and look my best, but I also wanted to do something that could help other people. I've never raised money for anyone before, but Get Connected are such a great resource for young people I was glad to pitch in."*

Check out other challenges which could help young people reach out to Get Connected at www.getconnected.org.uk/support_us/events

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