

THERESE CROSSAN

Name: **Therese Crossan**

Age: **15**

Where I Live: **County Antrim**

“Volunteering has helped me become more involved and make a difference in my community.”



Gymnastics is a real passion of mine. I'm a regular at the City of Belfast Gymnastics Club, where I coach children in gymnastics. I noticed that children with autism face extra difficulties, so I focus on coaching those with high-dependency autism in different types of gymnastics including trampolining, beam and horse. It helps them to improve their skills, like hand-eye coordination and balance, and have fun, all in a safe environment. I've also benefitted a lot from my work, developing strong bonds with the children, improving communication skills – especially non-verbal communication – and learning more about autism. I try to share what I'm doing to encourage others to get involved too, writing a piece about my volunteering for my school website and making a pledge on the Giving Northern Ireland pledge wall.

Volunteering at the gymnastics club has been such a rewarding experience, and something I know I'll keep doing in the future. Every week I'm reminded of why I'm there, not only by the children but also by their parents, who recently told me that my sessions have been a lifeline for them – that makes me feel really proud.

Organisations I've Participated With

- City of Belfast Gymnastics Club
- Giving Northern Ireland



#iwill continue to promote my social action in both my school and wider community through the use of social media.