

## Preparation For Adulthood Stories of Difference

**Name:** Kerry Grainger

**Team:** PFA ITT

**Please describe your case:**

S is an 18-year-old Birmingham young person, who suffers from anxiety, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Irritable Bowel Syndrome, Borderline Personality Disorder and hypermobile syndrome (physical and arthritis); multiple prescribed medications plus additional herbal medications. Previously had been in employment as a support worker in ASD but lost her job due to health and well-being deteriorating. Has now applied for a care assistant job in Leeds.

S lived with mum and was her main carer. Mum has significant mental health related needs that S would cater for daily.

S has a Boyfriend who also has significant health needs and has re-settled in Leeds and S is looking to resettle there with him when she has got appropriate support for mom in place.

Situation changed within the first week of supporting S, as she then shared that she was “kicked out” of mum’s home due to an altercation between herself and mum ending in S moving to Leeds with boyfriend and not returning home. Needs and support changed and became apparent that S needed support with her mental health and health needs because she no longer was receiving the support she had in Birmingham.

Interview for employment had been organised independently by S and she wanted support with how to prepare for this.

**What went well?**

**Overall:**

**The PFA team continued to support S upon her decision to move to Leeds, often services would cease involvement if a child moves out of the home LA. This investment has proved successful at present for S; should she return to Birmingham she is aware of the support available to her during her transition years.**

**Health:**

- Referred to Leeds social care for support with mental health.
- Encouraged S to choose a GP she would like to attend to and register to resolve medication issues.

**Employment:**

- Provided S with interview tips, help in deciding an outfit that she felt comfortable and confident in.
- Provided employee rights in terms of her health condition.
- Prepped for interview, giving encouragement and building confidence prior to interview.

**Relationship, Friendships & Community:**

- Supported S through a difficult time in her relationship with her boyfriend and was able to work with S around what a good and bad relationship is.
- Problem solving discussions to build resilience
- Work was completed around trust and maintaining trust.
- Her accommodation and job would have been impacted without the support around the relationship

**What could have been better?**

Due to S moving to Leeds a week after I was allocated to her, I was not able to meet with her face to face.



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### What difference do you feel you have made to the Young Person's life?

"K has given me more confidence and independence. There has been so many things I didn't think I would be able to do it myself but with K being there has gave me that push. I have not had a Job interview for a very long time because the thought of it always made me feel anxious. I was very anxious about it and told K I was not going, and K calmed me down, giving me pointers to cope with. She spent her time going through interview tips with me making sure I felt confidence before I had to attend the interview. Talking to someone like K is very different to having to talk to other professionals. It is very easy to speak to her and I know that K would not tell anyone my business if I did not ask her too unless it was something important. K has been someone I can rely on and has been there every time I have phoned her and texted her regardless of time, day, even on the weekends. She has taught me what trust is and how much professionals can support me in a good way. Even though I have not been able to meet with K, that has not mattered because the relationship has been just as good".

## Preparation For Adulthood Project Report

**Name: Carmel Corrigan**

**Team: Integrated Transitions Team**

### **Please describe your case:**

D is a young man with global developmental delay who is at the beginning of his transitioning journey. He lives with his twin sister and his grandmother, who he has lived with since aged 5. He is very socially isolated with no friends and no community connection. He currently attends college doing two GCSE courses as his supported apprenticeship has been suspended as a result of COVID. He struggles with friendships and has had negative experiences in the past with people he thought were friends. He and his sister were bullied at secondary school 'because we're different'.

He is very close to his grandmother who is supportive of his transitioning but struggling to understand why he wishes to transition. He likes helping his grandmother in the house and garden, role play with his sister, creating videos, photography, music especially K Pop.

D is lacking in confidence and needs a lot of reassurance in unfamiliar settings. He presents as anxious and unsure of himself and relies heavily on his grandmother for support.

### **What went well?**

D has been introduced to the young people's group, with his PFA worker attending, which is working with PFA staff to advise, guide and co-produce a range of communications and strategies. This group are making a real contribution to the work of PFA, and they are growing in confidence and working well together.

### **Health:**

D has anxiety issues and gets agitated about how he is viewed. Attending this group where there are several young people with both physical and learning disability including autism, he is accepted for who he is and isn't judged, this is helping to reduce anxiety about trying new things and increasing his confidence.

### **Employment:**

Being part of this group is helping him to gain self confidence and practice speaking to a group and answering questions which will help with future work-related interviews. This is an experience to put on his CV with evidence of his contributions.



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### **Friends, Relationships and Community:**

Making and maintaining friendships has been an ongoing issue for D. In the group he can get to know people and start to explore what a good friend looks like and what expectations of friendship can be. He is warmly greeted, and his contributions welcomed and acted on and this is creating a very positive community for him to be part of. He is readily volunteering to take part in some of the smaller groups set up to look at specific tasks where his suggestions are being implemented.

### **What could have been better?**

The meetings are currently taking place virtually. Whilst this works well at present, I think D would get even more out of it if he could meet people face to face. His laptop is quite old so sometimes his connectivity is compromised, making participation and following the thread of the discussion challenging.

### **What difference do you feel you have made to the Young Person's life?**

D's life is very much focussed on his grandmother and sister, with no friendship network or community connection. It is evident how much D enjoys the group and his contributions are thoughtful and considered. D has had a negative experience of friendship to date and a very difficult secondary school experience in respect of friendships. It is wonderful to see him blossoming within this group, having people be so positive about his contributions and so pleased to see him when he joins. This is making a difference in terms of his confidence to try new things and to see that whilst you can feel nervous about participating, how important it is to give different things a chance. It also is helping him to see what a valuable contribution he can make and helping him form new friendships in a group who are very accepting of everyone, where judgement is suspended, increasing his confidence about starting to build more positive friendships. When asked about the group, he said 'I don't just like it, I love it!'

### **What are the next steps for D and PFA in his transition journey?**

D will continue to contribute to the work of the young people's group, now called YES! (Youth Empowerment Squad). The confidence he is building as a result of his involvement is helping him to think about joining in sessions organised by a national charity, Mermaids, that supports young people transitioning. This would provide him opportunities to share experiences with other young people and get support and advice.

He is also more open now to exploring local support that might be available and PFA have contacted the Birmingham LGBT centre to investigate what is available.

D continues to feel very anxious when connectivity issue arise as YES! are meeting, this is causing him to become very agitated. Our Employment Officer, Antoe Walter, has been able to secure a donation of laptops for the young people connected with PFA. The plan is that D will be able to have one of these donated laptops which will support with college work, YES! group activities and projects and his interest in photography and video production.

An application is underway for the Personal Budget Pilot around his interest in photography and video production, enabling him to increase his employability skills, be able to participate in local photography groups, building friendships and to contribute to the work of YES!

Citizen Involvement have been supporting YES! and this is potentially providing the young people involved to be part of contributing to the wider adult social care agenda in the council. D could be a part of these wider discussions.



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A volunteer has been identified and connected to D's grandmother. This lady is the mother of a young man transitioning, to share experiences and discuss feelings. This young man is further along in his transitioning journey and therefore a lot of the issues that are present for D and his grandmother are ones this lady and her son have already worked their way through. Grandmother has found this very helpful and they plan to maintain regular contact. This lady already is a Home Start volunteer so is DBS checked and aware of confidentiality.



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