



PERSONAL IMPACT STORIES

YOUTH LEAGUE UK

CONFRONTING WAR

J is a 13 year old girl in a local school and a new arrival to the country. It has not been easy for her to settle in school.

The school invited us to assist in supporting J who was very isolated, exhibited challenging behaviour and was not interested in school. We established that she was traumatised by civil war experiences in Africa.

Through culturally sensitive, intensive one-to-one pastoral support, J started to improve her behaviour, and became more confident in building social relationships. She particularly enjoyed our recreational activities, which reminded her of her time in Africa. In school, teachers observed that the number of times J spent in the inclusion unit reduced, and she was more attentive in class.

J said that she enjoyed the one-to-one support we provided. She stated that before, she did not have the confidence to speak about her needs, concerns, and challenges, but now she can speak confidently to other people about her feelings and get support.

OVERCOMING TRAUMA

M is a young female aged 19 years, who was NEET. Her father was never in her life and she experienced domestic abuse from her mother. This caused anxiety issues and lack of confidence, amongst other challenges.

She wanted to attend Barking College to study a Level 3 Diploma in Health and Social care, but she gave up last-minute due to crippling anxiety. She fled home due to domestic abuse and was homeless, living with friends or boyfriends. She was on welfare benefits, experiencing financial hardship, and loneliness.

M was introduced to the organisation by a friend, who brought her to one of our social networking events. The personal advisor scheduled an appointment, which M attended. He assessed her needs, and she started attending regular support sessions. We built trust with her and she started spending time at our youth centre, attending regular support sessions. We provided a referral to further counselling at her request. We also gave her information on local jobs, volunteering opportunities and she was invited to attend our employability skills workshops.

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The employability/business support worker supported M to determine her skills, build her CV, conduct job searches, and apply for jobs. M was invited to attend interviews by employers and recruitment agencies, but she did not perform well due to lack of confidence and poor interview skills. The employability/support worker conducted mock interviews with M and gave her feedback which helped improve. Through this support, M found out she had a passion for health and social care.

Due to long gaps in her employment history, the support worker encouraged M to volunteer at a local partner charity, where she worked with people from different backgrounds. This boosted her confidence, teamwork, interpersonal, communication and work experience. M was eventually offered a part-time job as a health care assistant through a recruitment agency. The employability/business skills worker continues to provide support to M to ensure that she remains in employment and undertakes appropriate training.

MOTHER-DAUGHTER SUPPORT

A young single mother, aged 24, whose life had been completely disrupted came to us. She had recently separated from her husband due to relationship incompatibilities and domestic abuse. She had trouble raising her child all on her own with no support from family and no support from her separated husband because they were not talking. She had a low-income, front-line job and was not able to provide much support to her child. The child behaved poorly, did badly at school and was even on the police's radar for being at risk of offending. He often disappeared from home for days before coming back. All of this caused the mother to fall into a depression, which led to regular alcohol abuse.

We assigned her to one of our parents' buddies who was able to act as a mediator for her relationship with her separated husband. The buddy is from the same culture as her, so he was able to better understand what she was going through and how to approach the situation to remedy it. The buddy was able to reopen the conversation between her and her husband. Together, they were able to figure out how to better support their child together now that they are separated. They created a weekly schedule to split their time.

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The buddy provided emotional support to the mother to help improve her mental health. She said that having someone who has gone through similar challenges listen to her issues and offer ways to address them was immensely helpful.

We provided both the mother and the father with tips and advice on how to better support their child's development. This included advice on discipline, managing time to ensure quality time is spent, helping him with homework, providing emotional support and more. Finally, we referred the mother to other more specialist support programmes to deal with her alcohol abuse problem.

Several months later, their child is doing much better. He does not disappear anymore. He is no longer at risk of offending, and he is not on the police's radar. He is doing much better at school and can stay focused more.

The mother's mental health has improved dramatically. She feels more supported and more capable as a mother and as a professional. She no longer abuses alcohol and is more productive and focused at work. Most importantly, she no longer feels depressed, feels confident in her ability to successfully raise her child and has a positive relationship with her separated husband.