

Family Worker Case Studies

Please use jargon-free, easy to understand language!

Family Composition (please do not use real names of family members)

Mum – Jenny, 41
Son 1- Sam 15

Not living within the household
Son 2 - John 24
Son 3 James 20
Daughter - Laura 19

Criteria matched for troubled families programme

National Criteria

| | | | | |
|---------------|-----|-------------------------------------|----|--------------------------|
| (a) Crime/ASB | Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (b) Education | Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (c) Benefits | Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Local Criteria

Summary of the problems the family faced

- Previous history of domestic violence within the home
- Jenny had significant mental health problems
- Sam was committing anti-social behaviour
- Jenny would not leave the house unless it was with her mum
- Jenny unable to successfully parent Sam.
- Unkempt and overgrown garden resulting in complaints from neighbours and social landlord
- Mum not communicating with school
- Family faced eviction due to rent arrears.
- Sam displaying signs of abusive behaviour towards mum as a result of witnessing abusive behaviour & events.

Description of the situation before intervention

Jenny is a single mum of four, she has been a victim of domestic abuse twice by two different partners, she had suffered years of violence and verbal abuse, often hospitalised until she had the courage to leave her partner. Jenny now suffers from severe depression and anxiety, some days she cannot get out of bed or leave the house. Her children witnessed the domestic abuse and therefore this has led to them having their own personal challenges, which has been extremely difficult for the family and Jenny. Jenny had one counselling session previously after the domestic abuse but would not go without her mum. She only ever went to one session.

When I first met Jenny, her eldest son had just come out of prison for drug dealing from her house. The home was put on a 12 month trial. As well as this she had received eviction warning notices about the state of the garden, Jenny reported she'd lost heart in her home and garden and that's why the garden has become out of control.

Sam her youngest son has ADHD and his CAMHS doctor was aware how difficult things were at home for Jenny and asked her to go on an ADHD parenting course, due to Jenny's anxiety she always refused to

go. Sam would be aggressive in the home punching holes in walls and doors. Sam was displaying signs of abusive behaviour towards mum as a result of witnessing domestic abusive. He would call mum names and was very demanding within the home. When Jenny tried to parent Sam he would ignore her. Sam's attendance was extremely low and he just refused to go to school. Mum had received a fine from the local authority because of his low attendance. Mum struggled to get him there and when school tried to help and communicate she would not engage.

Jenny would not leave the house without her mum, so when her mum moved away it meant Jenny didn't go out of the house meaning her rent wasn't getting paid, resulting in an eviction notice put in place.

Description of the intervention

Date intervention began...21/01/2012.....

Date results achieved.....Ongoing

Type of/ intensity of intervention

Intensive

Jenny would vary rarely open the door to anyone and never answer phone calls. After three unsuccessful home visits, and three phone calls which she didn't answer I finally managed to engage Jenny. I got to know her and she opened up about the struggles that she had faced in the past and challenges she was facing now. I listened to her and gained her trust. It was then, I was able to work with Jenny to look at the needs of the family and to be able to decide a clear support plan that we could work through together.

The state of the garden was apparent; litter, dog mess, old bricks, and garden waste consumed the garden. A Way Out managed to recruit a team of 7 volunteers from Barclaycard who spent a day transforming the garden into a space where her grandchildren could play out in the summer, a place for the dogs and a space where Jenny could hang her washing out. It was a visual representation of how things could be changed and even transformed.

I completed a CAF for Sam and a TAC process began having regular meetings with the school. With support, mum attended the meetings. I visit the home twice a week. A session with mum looking at offering emotional support and looking different parenting techniques including introducing boundaries which she was wasn't doing. I also did a session a week with Sam and Jenny looking at ways of improving their relationship for example using strength cards to look at what they appreciated about each other. I would complete early morning visits to make sure Sam went to school and made sure Mum was using the consequences we discussed if he was refusing to go. Sam's attendance hasn't yet improved as much as we would have hoped however mum is now confident enough to put consequences in place and he is treating his mum with more respect.

When Jenny received the eviction notice for not paying her rent I was able to liaise with the landlord company explained the situation. They took her mental health into account and put the eviction notice on hold. She was able to keep her home and didn't become homeless!

With the relationship I built with the family I was able to refer them to specialist agencies I think could help. I referred Sam to Harbour Children's Service to hopefully prevent him repeating abusive behaviour he has witnessed in future relationships and we are awaiting an allocation for that. I also referred to a young carer's project that works with young people who have a parent with mental health problems. Sam is waiting for a place on the Harbour programme and he has been accepted on to the young carer's project and work should begin soon.

Jenny and I attended the ADHD parenting course together, and there she learnt what is ADHD and ways to parent a child with ADHD.

Jenny always refused to have counselling but I could clearly see this would be a huge benefit for her, after some time she finally agreed and was referred to one of our counsellors and attended every week. She reported the counsellor worked on her confidence and she finally felt able to go places on her own; now Jenny pays her rent every month and she attends doctors appointments without the support from her mum.

Jenny would often stay in her pyjamas all day and not leave the house. I gave her 'Daily Tasks' which included take the dogs for a walk, do some housework and pick up the dog mess and litter from the garden. Jenny is now on top of her housework and she leaves the house daily. Something she thought she would never do 6 months ago.

Result of intervention

- Mum was referred to counselling which she accessed weekly.
- Mum can now go places on her own including paying her rent and doing the weekly shop.
- Mum's garden is now cleared and tidy ready for the summer.
- Mum reports Sam's attitude towards her has improved
- Mum is stronger in her parenting, using boundaries and consequences when Sam refuses to go to school and when he mistreats her.
- The rent is getting paid and no threat of eviction.

Statement of Outcomes.

Which *Payment by Results* indicator was met?

| | | | | |
|-------------------------|-----|-------------------------------------|----|--------------------------|
| (a) Crime/ASB reduction | Yes | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (b) School attendance | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| (c) Employment | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Have you continued to work with the family?

Yes

Have any progress been made against wider outcomes (including local criteria)?

See results of intervention

Additional info/ service user feedback

Case remains active and all though great improvements have been made there is still a long way to go. We will continue to work with the family and as Sam is in his last year of school we will work with relevant agencies to make sure he doesn't become NEET.

Estimated cost savings due to intervention (per annum)

Please provide this information if available

Media

Would the family or key worker be willing to talk about their experiences (anonymously if necessary)?

Yes

No

Area and contact number for case study author

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