

CASE STUDY ONE - Tracey

Female

Age on admission: 15 years

Age on discharge: 17 years

Length of stay: 18 months at Companions, 8 weeks outreach support in the community

Reason for admission: Attachment & Conduct Disorder; Self-harm; Suicidal ideation, Serious attempt to take own life.

Background Information

Involvement with CAHMS 12 months,

Referral order, ASBO

Admission to Psychiatric Unit under Section 3 of the Mental Health Act.

Accommodated under section 20 of the Children's Act (1989)

Learning disability – out of school for more than 1 year

Secure Unit prior to admission to Companions

Medication for behaviour.

Out of County placement

Aims of placement at Companions

Address mental health issues and attachment disorder

Access full time education

Encourage independent skills

Promote self worth by facilitating her acknowledgement of strengths of character and skills

Allow her to learn from her own experiences in a safe environment

Reduce the risks of successful suicide

Empower her to access social groups allowing her to learn acceptable behaviour / social etiquette within various settings.

Provide her with coping mechanisms in order for her to learn to manage own behaviour

Prior to admission to Companions

Tracey received a visit from the Registered provider and manager of Companions whilst still in secure. The aim of the visit was to ensure she was familiar with the home prior to arrival, aware of what to expect from Companions and also what would be expected from her.

Companions staff team were briefed on Tracey's background. Boundaries, routine, clear consequences and the staff working as an impenetrable team would ensure a better outcome for her.

At Companions.

The first few months were difficult as Tracy tested staff strengths and weaknesses. Initial risk assessments assessed her as high risk and following consultation with Tracey it was agreed to ensure all was being done to reduce risk we would implement regular monitoring during the night, random room searches, 1-1 staff ratio on-site, 2-1 off-site. The risk assessments were carefully monitored and adapted when necessary. Education commenced and it soon became apparent Tracey had a natural flair for playing the piano and writing poems. During the many months she learned how to express her feelings and state of mind in music, art and poetry writing. She found calmness in tending to her fish and hamster which she acquired whilst at Companions. she also attended the local riding stables where she learnt how to ride, did voluntary work and

discovered her niche. This resulted in her attending agricultural college for equine studies.

Regular counseling sessions, aromatherapy, music and pets as therapy all assisted greatly to her progress. At the request of her local authority a psychologist was commissioned to do a report on her. The report stated she appeared to be happy, content and settled and would not need the services of a psychologist.

At Companions she:

- ❖ Gained acceptance and membership in the youth drama group at the local theatre.
- ❖ Qualifications in equine studies from Agricultural College
- ❖ Attended evening class at the local college for French language to-which a certificate was gained.
- ❖ Gained an up-to date music assessment- piano & African drums
- ❖ Learnt coping strategies for behaviour and was taken off medication
- ❖ Developed independent skills including self-discipline and self-control to enable her to function successfully in society.
- ❖ Learnt how to form appropriate relationships, how to disengage and cope with rejection.
- ❖ Learnt a positive sense of self and self in relation to the world.
- ❖ Developed positive relationships with the staff team and other young people living in the home.
- ❖ Achieved positive relationships with birth family.
- ❖ Work experience at riding stables.
- ❖ Attended and contributed to all therapy sessions,

Tracey's appearance and confidence significantly improved and was recognized by all who knew her prior to the admission to Companions. Her diet and fitness also improved as she regularly attended a local gym and ate a healthy nutritious balanced diet.

Towards the end of the placement an independence program was implemented which entitled her to receive a weekly budget and take responsibility for purchasing food and items to meet basic care needs, she also contributed towards the house hold chores.

Outreach support

As part of her exit plan it was agreed that she would continue to receive support from Companions, to enable a smooth transition into independent living.

During this time through no fault of her own she did experience some problems and asked for extra support, which was given by Companions.

Outcome

Tracey eventually returned to the family home and continued on the next level of equine studies at the local agricultural college, found paid and voluntary work and relationships with family remain positive.

Tracey regularly contacts Companions to chat to staff, and has visited the home as a very welcome guest.

Names have been changed to protect identity