

Testimonail from Amelia's mum

Amelias mum was able to refer herself and her family after a phone call to see if the service was suitable. They have worked very hard as a family and have continued to progress throughout the challenges of lockdown and life. Amelias mum completed the foundation work and Amelia was receiving some 1-1 sessions before the present Lockdown (January 2021). Their support worker is maintaining contact.



"I can't begin to thank you enough for the support you've given and for the difference it's made to me, and to my family.

I contacted you at first because I'd heard good things about you. I'd been struggling and unhappy with the way things were going for a long time and could see Amelia was unhappy too. Our clashes were getting more frequent and more serious, and I worried about how bad it might get as the teenage years and all the difficulties that come with it went on. I wanted us to be closer with each other, to be able to communicate better, and wanted Amelia to feel happier. I called to ask if I could get some help, and was asked some background questions, and offered support. Amelia refused to meet with any worker. She takes time to trust people. I'd tried to get support before from Cedar, from school about support, and other places but no other place I contacted would help unless Amelia engaged directly with them.

Mandy began supporting me, and helping Amelia in turn, going through the Foundation course. Lockdown happened and we paused the course for a while because I chose, preferring to me meet face to face. Support by phone continued. This helped immensely, because I felt and was so isolated, and so was Amelia. We were given packs to keep us entertained, informed, given ideas about how to keep healthy and, information that was helpful in preparing for and considering things I'd not have thought about myself, so these things made a difference to how we coped during the lockdown and months following. We received financial help too, with a gift for Amelia of a Food Processor and stationery, and food and an Asda voucher, which helped with the higher cost of being at home and trying to relieve the boredom. I used the Asda voucher to buy food and used my food budget to buy Swingball, so I was able to temp Amelia from her room to spend time together outside and have did actually have fun, more than once! We felt cared about and supported, by the kind gestures, even Amelia liked John's kind face when he dropped off survival packs to us.

My older son, who lives on his own, began having serious problems due to his condition. This put more pressure on me and every aspect of my life. I tried to access support for him but every door that opened quickly closed again or was no use. Mandy sourced and referred me to excellent support for his specific needs.

Doing the Foundation course with Mandy, and reflecting over the previous weeks, Mandy managed to unpick different strands that made life so messy and overwhelming, and supported me to work through these using the foundation steps. I was able to react and respond differently (sometimes) with Amelia, and able to share with Amelia I was trying

stuff Mandy suggested. Amelia could see it helped, that I wanted to understand and make things better. Mandy helped me strip back the layers of real scenarios we were having, gave me more understanding of Amelia's behaviour, ideas and suggestions about ways to manage situations, more understanding of my own behaviour, then we'd discuss how things had gone, and reflect on what had worked and what had been unhelpful. She praised me for my efforts. This has given me more confidence in my parenting. I think this has helped Amelia see I am more in control and she feels more secure. Support with Mandy is actually very structured, she is very skilled and knowledgeable, but it feels very relaxed and comfortable.

From the first Lockdown, Amelia really started struggling with anxiety, losing her way with school work, worried about her future, and adults at school and me just not getting how she was feeling. After a few months, she agreed to meet with Mandy. She felt supported, taken seriously, understood, and actually wants to engage because she gets so much from the support from Mandy.

Mandy became involved with school to support Amelia and me, when we were really being ignored, and this has meant the difference in the school taking notice. This too has made a huge difference to the outlook for the future.

All through this time, the support my son has needed intensified and became overwhelming for him and for me. I hate to think of what situation we would be in now if not for support from MOP. They've supported me with every aspect of my life, to enable me more focus on Amelia and me. I've learned coping strategies, I'm more aware of my own needs, limitations and boundaries; I better understand Amelia and have more realistic expectations, we get along better more of the time, and don't feel so hopeless and fed up. I know of other support services being short and being too rushed, and that is off putting, when the last thing you need is pressure to achieve something at someone else's pace, and to fit in with them. I feel I've got a deeper level of skill because of this, that I use, that I'll keep using, rather than just forget.

I've recommended MOP to other folk, family and through work, and been able to share useful things that have helped us.

Thank you so much for all the work you, and every member of your team do."