

## Case Study FP3



**families@familycare**

### **Case Study (Peter) – Residential Care leading to Foster Care and ultimately independence**

P is a remarkable young man to whom one cannot do justice in a few words. He was initially placed residentially with Family Care Associates Ltd. in 2001. He had been subjected to a number of abusive experiences which led to imprisonment for at least one of the perpetrators. Over the course of the next five years he made very considerable progress in most respects but his tendency towards arrogance, a reluctance to accept any responsibility for his actions and an intolerance of the failings or inadequacies (as P would see it) of others was constant. His intolerance in fact led him to being moved between children's homes on three occasions because of assaults on other children - always those younger or more vulnerable emotionally and physically than himself. He is also an incredibly able and affable young man with an array of admirable qualities including his intelligence, compassion for animals, loyalty to adults in whom he trusts, physical abilities and resilience.

His family is dysfunctional and until comparatively recently P had not had meaningful contact with his (separated) parents each of whom has acute dependency problems.

Through the course of 2004 P tracked the development of 'Families@FamilyCare Ltd.' (he has always had a sense of ownership in relation to Family Care Associates Ltd.) as the service was created and made it very clear that he expected to have the opportunity to move to a foster placement as soon as a suitable family became available. By this time P had already started what was to become a successful re-integration into mainstream education and when we began to search for potential carers we had to ensure that this would not interfere with his continuing study on the GCSE curriculum. A family meeting all of the matching criteria were identified in the early part of 2005 and a transition commenced which led to his placement with J and K in April of that year. Subsequent to his placement P continued to progress in school both in academic terms - he eventually obtained 15 GCSE's (5 at 'A' Grade, 9 at 'B' Grade and 1 at 'C' grade) - and extra curricular activities - for example he designed, coordinated and operated the lighting for a school dance concert. His occasional behavioural outburst continued to be evident from time to time and had it not been for the actions of his foster carers, the Registered Manager of 'Families@FamilyCare Ltd.' and an exceptionally committed teacher then M may well have been permanently rather than temporarily excluded on a number of occasions when it was necessary to negotiate on his behalf with the Head Teacher following various misdemeanours.

At 'home' excellent progress was made. M who had always demonstrated a rather sexist attitude toward women began to respect his foster mother as someone who was committed to helping him - even accepting advice from her in respect of having the recommended vaccinations that he had previously refused and attending a dentist where he had a brace fitted to rectify misaligned teeth. In respect of his own personal history he engaged in Life Story Work and accepted additional input that we arranged to trace the passage of his early years - although the latter process was interrupted as M- against the wishes of all concerned decided to re-establish contact with his father - an alcoholic living in the Midlands.

After discussion it was considered that seeking to prohibit contact would be futile so 'Families@FamilyCare Ltd.' staff went to meet M's father and his partner in an effort to engage him in his son's care planning. Whilst keeping his father 'on board' has proved almost impossible we have managed to retain contact apart from a period of imprisonment.

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The contact that M established with his father did however prove to be disruptive. He found a need to counter the caution suggested to him about relying on his father - who is as a matter of record an occasionally violent, alcoholic who was in a relationship with an alcoholic woman - by deprecating his foster carers and life in X town. He threatened on a number of occasions to move permanently to his father's home and only the most skilful negotiation by 'Families@FamilyCare Ltd.' personnel avoided this happening. He was frequently 'stranded' in the nearest city in the early hours of the morning following incidents at his father's home requiring us to collect him and help him come to terms with whatever trauma had occurred.

Eventually yet another compromise solution was required when M seemed determined to move to his father's home and we arranged a short term respite care placement in July 2007. At a LAC review the following month it was clear that M would not return to X town and he had in fact given up his place at college in favour of seeking employment - which he obtained with a photographic business in the city (at the time of writing) he remains in this employment). It was concluded that this placement would be more viable in terms of keeping M engaged thus avoiding him returning to his father's home. Whilst he had been critical of his existing carers we knew that this was, as it were, a tactic on his part - perhaps the fact that he remains in contact with them to date and has recently accepted an invitation to spend Christmas with them is testimony to that. Unfortunately he had no Pathway Plan - as noted in the review but all were agreed that we should be working towards him being equipped for independent living.

M remained placed with the C's until he recently obtained his own accommodation in the city. In the intervening period he has had to cope with a range of difficulties. He was arrested and charged with an offence of assault, his father's partner died suddenly as a consequence of her drinking and M had to support his father through this, making most of the funeral arrangements - again supported by 'Families@FamilyCare personnel. His father was imprisoned and his home had to be cleared; M did so, again with our help. He has moved into a high rise flat with minimal support from Leaving Care Services - I believe one visit in a three month period. His flat has been cleaned, furnished and decorated by his foster carers and staff from 'Families@FamilyCare Ltd.' - this remains work in progress despite the fact that M is over 18 and formally we have no involvement.

We are immensely proud of M and his achievements. He has achieved a great deal in terms of his education, He has enduring relationships with many of his workers and carers and whilst some may criticise this as being unprofessional frankly he has no-one else - his birthdays and special occasions are invariably spent with those people he has known and come to trust over the last seven years - and we will provide services and support to him for as long as he needs them.