



**CASE STUDY
STORIES FOR**
Little Smugglers...

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Charlie's Success Story

Charlie, a 34-year old man with a learning disability and autism moved to Little Smugglers, a residential learning disability service in West Sussex from a hospital setting four years ago.

Little Smugglers is a five-bedroom detached house with spacious grounds based in the rural village of Crawley Down. The setting focuses on providing open, inclusive and empowering person-centred support that enables adults with learning disabilities, autism and complex needs to enjoy greater independence and a good quality of life.

When Charlie first arrived, he was very withdrawn, he didn't like to venture out of the service and would refuse personal care - sometimes for days. His diet was also poor and he was incontinent. Some of the support team were quite wary of Charlie and had

taken to wearing denim jackets when supporting him as there were several incidents where Charlie had bitten staff.

Consensus has an in-house Positive Behaviour Intervention Team (PBIT) consisting of specialist Behaviour Practitioners who work with support teams to identify and understand behavioural triggers and devise Positive Behaviour Strategies that the team can use to support individuals to minimise behaviours and improve their quality of life.

Jenny from the PBIT team worked with Service Manager, Tracy Dingle and the team on a Positive Behavioural Support plan for Charlie and once the plan was complete everyone received training so they understood exactly how to support him moving forward.

Adapting Charlie's support

Charlie had previously been supported on a two to one basis however, what they discovered was that this was actually having a detrimental effect on Charlie's wellbeing. He didn't like having two people supporting him at the same time as he found it overbearing. When his support was changed to one to one Charlie responded much better. He enjoyed interacting with one

person at a time and building a relationship and rapport with them on an individual basis.

Person-centred planning and routine

The team also put together a person-centred plan detailing his likes, dislikes, the things that are important to him. Charlie loves the service's car and holds on to the key at all times. Previously, he would become very anxious if anyone else needed to use it. To help Charlie to reduce his anxiety the team now take him on a daily drive in the car. Because he is now confident that he will have this time as part of his daily routine he is much less anxious about letting the car key go and someone else using the car.

Communicating with Charlie

Previously, Charlie was unable to communicate well verbally so the team would use picture boards and 'Now and Next' boards to explain what activity was happening now and what was coming after, however Charlie would take the boards and try and hide them. What they



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discovered was that because Charlie is an intelligent person, he perceived being shown a picture of an activity as 'insulting' and therefore would refuse to engage. When they changed their strategy and started to discuss things verbally with Charlie, they began to get a much better response from him.

Positive outcomes

12 months on the team are delighted by the positive progression Charlie has made and the positive outcomes he has enjoyed as a result.

Where previously Charlie would barely speak, and his vocabulary was limited, he is now much more talkative and speaking in full sentences. His family can't believe some of the phrases that he is using, such as "Who is coming later?" and "Where am I going today?" and are delighted at just how much more inquisitive and engaged he is.

Charlie is also much more sociable and enjoys mixing with friends within the service. He is now willing to share with his peers which is something he was unable to do before. He also enjoys taking part in activities in the wider community. He likes going to the cinema and loves visiting the local pub with one of his friends where he likes to enjoy a glass of coke or tuck into an Indian meal.

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Another positive change for Charlie is that he has become much more in tune and

expressive with his feelings. Following the Covid-19 outbreak, his family were no longer able to visit him in the service so he kept in touch with them by Skype and for the first time he was able to recognise and talk about his feelings, expressing to the support team just how much he was missing his family.

Reflecting on the positive differences in Charlie, Manager, Tracy said, "One of the most positive changes we have seen in Charlie is the trust that he now has in the support team, which is amazing and something we have all been working really hard to build with him. It is this trust and the continuity of support that has laid the foundation for all the other positive outcomes we have been able to support Charlie to achieve. We are all very proud of him and look forward to continuing to support him to grow in independence and live a happy and fulfilling life."



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