

Mentoring Case Study – Youth Start Mentoring Project, My Voice London

Lucas is a 16-year old white Irish male. He was referred to the mentoring project as he had a troubled family background. He has a poor relationship with his mother who left the family when he was younger, and now lives back with them; and the family has a general history of aggressive and violent behaviour. As a result of this, Lucas himself struggled with anger issues. Lucas was having difficulty focusing in school and needed some support to help him move forward.

He was matched with a white female mentor, who was a retired school teacher and has 3 grandchildren between the ages of 5 and 16.

In the mentoring sessions, Lucas' mentor worked with Lucas on his anger issues. They completed worksheets together, which helped Lucas to assess his nature and look at strategies to help him control his temper. He was showing improvements in this area, and showed he was self-aware and also developed his own ideas on how to manage his anger.

Unfortunately, Lucas lost a cousin with whom he was very close; as close as a brother could be. His cousin committed suicide, and this had an enormous impact on Lucas. His attendance at school became poor, his attitude towards teachers became negative and he shared with his mentor that he had quite negative and dark thoughts. He also self-harmed.

As well as seeing a bereavement counsellor, Lucas continued to see his mentor. She was able to provide a sounding board for Lucas, so that he could share his anger, frustrations, anxieties surrounding his cousin's death, and continue to get one-to-one support to cope with the challenges of his anger issues.

Through the commitment of his mentor, who continued to support him through these difficult times, he was able to come to terms with the tragedy and begin to think about his own needs and what was important for him and for his future. He re-engaged in school to the extent that he even took part in a school performance which he did in front of his whole form group. It was a real confidence-boost for him. In addition, his mentor helped him to apply to a few local colleges, which he had been very keen to do. He was offered a place in one of the colleges and was very happy about this.

He reported that he found mentoring to be very helpful to him, as he liked to have someone to talk to.

His Head of Year reported that the mentoring had been beneficial through the time of his bereavement, and that he was likely to go on and achieve more in school than he had been doing previously.