



## Case Study: Leonie, 15

### Background

Family life wasn't easy for Leonie; mum and dad had separated following a difficult few years after her dad's personality and behaviour was affected by a brain injury. This put a lot of pressure on the family and Leonie and her brother were subjected to emotional abuse which made family life very difficult.

Her older brother was being unruly at school, and regularly getting into trouble. He had started bullying other children and becoming more aggressive and that was adding to the pressure at home.

As time passed, Leonie started to struggle more at school and refused to go, her mum explained:

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*"To get her to school, I had to drag her to the car and we were both crying. She used to hide away in her room, she was very unhappy."*

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Leonie was becoming more and more withdrawn and distanced from the other children in school when she did make it in, and was starting to be singled out and bullied. Mum had also discovered that Leonie had started self-harming and this was extremely upsetting for both of them.

### TAF process

Mum needed to act, and the school suggested that she and they fill out a Child And Family assessment form (CAF) together, as a step towards putting a Team Around the Family (TAF) in place. She had tried the process before for her son, but this wasn't fully engaged and

her son had shown signs of improvement at school so didn't carry on with it.

The meetings started with Leonie and her mum, and whilst mum felt she wasn't a strong partner in the process, the time spent together was very positive. The meetings developed a plan and the decision to involve the Youth Intervention Service was key in moving forward. Mum commented:

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*"Appointing the Youth Worker was the key to change. She was also our Family Contact and if Leonie or I have a problem, we can go to her and she tries to sort it out. She went well above the call of duty and her help was critical."*

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The Youth Worker was able to get both Leonie and mum on side, willing to listen to one another and being patient to one another's views. This also helped the whole family come together and talk things through either on their own, or as a family. She also became a link with the school and acted as 'their voice' as it gave mum more confidence that their views were listened to.

### Outcomes

The TAF intervention has helped shape the support that Leonie and her mum needed at such a crucial time. Leonie is dealing with her feelings better and her confidence and self-esteem is much higher. She is learning to cope better with bullies and attending school more often. Relationships at home have improved through the time spent talking and listening to one another with the Youth Worker. The future is now brighter for Leonie and her family.

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