

## Smart Start Project Case Study

### Case Study Title

HY<sup>2</sup> Helping You Help Yourself

### Background

What is the background to the case study?

Amanda and James are a married couple in their late 20s. They have four children; a 9yr old daughter, 7yr old daughter, 5yr old son and 6 month old son. The three oldest children are from Amanda's previous relationship. They live in a Housing Association property and are experiencing anti-social behaviour in the area.

Amanda was in a Domestic Abuse relationship with the father of her three eldest children. This abuse was continuing through contact with the children.

The 7yr old daughter and 5yr old son both have additional needs. Their 7yr daughter has a diagnosis of Autism and their 5yr old son has additional needs but no current diagnosis. Amanda and James had struggled to work with their son's school to address his needs which impacted on their communication and at one point resulted in them not sending him to school for a week.

The family are isolated. Amanda's family do not approve of James as they feel she should have remained with the father of her oldest children. James has moved to Rugby from Yorkshire to be with Amanda and has not developed support network in the area. His family are in Yorkshire.

As a result of the Needs and Risk Assessment, Amanda and James identified that they would like support from the service with the following areas:

- Housing
- Managing emotions
- Accessing appropriate support for their children
- Improving their relationship
- Managing contact

### Activity

What was involved? Who? Where?

The service has worked with Amanda and James to develop an action plan for the areas they identified they needed support with:

Housing:

- Identify an appropriate house swap
- Working with the Housing Association regarding a house swap

#### Managing Emotions:

- Coping strategies

#### Support for Children:

- Accessing a CAF
- Work with the school and relevant Professionals to identify appropriate support
- Identify appropriate alternative school dependent on house swap

#### Relationship:

- Improving communication

#### Managing Contact:

- Accessing legal advice
- Understanding Domestic Abuse

### Outcomes

What were the outcomes or learning points?

#### Housing:

- House Swap:
  - Worked with the Housing Association to secure a swap
  - Now moved to a new tenancy

#### Managing Emotions:

- Coping Strategies:
  - Exploring strategies for both Amanda and James to manage their emotions and understand each other
- Assertiveness:
  - James - managing to be assertive rather than aggressive when communicating with the school

#### Improving Relationship:

- Communication:
  - Amanda and James are taking time to talk to each other about how they are feeling
- Exercises around relationship building
- Understanding around Domestic Abuse

#### Support for Children:

- CAF:
  - Agreed to a CAF being initiated
  - Attending meetings and both parents able to express their views

- Improved communication with their son's school
- Working with relevant Professionals

#### Managing Contact:

- Explored Domestic Abuse and the impact on the children along with choices around contact. Amanda had been concerned about the implications if she did not allow contact or didn't allow her ex-partner to take them to where he was living.
- Reported her concerns around contact to Social Care
- Accessed legal advice:
  - Stopped contact due to concerns for the children's welfare
  - Going through Court process with the view to supervised contact.
- Police:
  - Reported concerns that their eldest daughter had shared. Police took a statement.
  - Continue to report any further incidents – phone calls/text messages to the Police.
- Amanda and James have state that their children's emotional well-being has improved since contact has stopped.