

Suzie's Experiences

A friend went along to one of the PCP awareness days in Stockport and was really encouraged by the parent who was talking about her son, his plan and what had been achieved through it so we decided to go on the family training course to learn more about PCP and start making plans for our children.

I felt quite sceptical when I first heard about PCP, was it just another 'idea' to come from America? But the more I learned about PCP the more I realised the value and importance of it for individuals in planning their lives. I knew PCP had been used in adult services for some time but never in children's and as my daughter is 13 I wanted to get everyone working and planning together as she moves towards adulthood and thought it was a really good time to start. However, I was worried that the needs of our family wouldn't be reflected in my daughters plan, as we all require support to care for her so I'm pleased that Family Centred Planning is being considered for those who still live at home.

The 4-day training course was spread out over a few months but was quite a commitment to make and I soon began to realise what a huge job it was going to be to gather the information from everyone in my daughter's life and start making her first plan. It was nice to be able to share experiences with the other families on the course and support each other. The pack provided was clear and well thought out so people could work through it at their own pace, or alone if they couldn't attend the course.

It took a considerable amount of organisation, time and gentle encouragement to gather all the information sheets from everyone but I had a fantastic response and was really touched by the thought and effort people had put in to completing the forms. This information formed the basis of the draft plan and was really important that it truly reflected my daughter's needs and was accurate as she has great difficulty expressing herself.

The people running the course were very helpful and available for support at any time. They kept me pointed in the right direction and offered guidance and encouragement to get my daughter's plan checked through and eventually being used to support her appropriately and consistently by everyone in her life. The next step is to design a visual plan my daughter can understand and help her to become involved in planning the type of services she wants now and in the future.