

## Working with JCP – drug abuse with associated issues

**Knowsley  
Lynne Robinson**

A lone parent, claiming Income Support, had a history of drug abuse and associated issues.

The children's centre timetable was circulated within the community; the parent received a copy and attended a session. She was shy, introvert, lacking in confidence and had low self-esteem.

She was encouraged by the Jobcentre Plus (JCP) Officer to access other, different activities for her child where she could learn more about the stages of her child's development / healthy eating / tantrums etc. and meet other mums who she could talk to. She was supported and encouraged by staff delivering the activities she attended.

The JCP Officer identified that the parent was interested in improving her maths and English and supported her to attend classes. As she gained confidence she often asked the JCP Officer for help and information and he signposted her to different agencies and activities that she accessed. He encouraged her to think about moving into more training and she expressed an interest in childcare. The officer was able to signpost her to a Classroom Assistants course and offered to support her to enrol on the training course, she said that she now had the confidence to enrol herself. The Children's Centre Multi Agency team to achieve continuously supported her.

She also moved into her own home and the JCP officer supported her to access a lone parent advisor who further supported her with information re family tax credit and 'better off' calculations.

She completed and passed the Classroom Assistant Course and although her confidence and self-esteem had grown, she still did not feel confident enough to move into employment. She continued to be supported by the Officer who encouraged her to try voluntary work as a way of taking gentler steps into employment, which she felt was appropriate for her and she was told of the volunteer scheme within the borough that would help her gain volunteer accreditation if she worked for 100hours. The officer gave her information and support about starting work and the affect on her benefits and clarified the alternatives for her.

As a result of her progress the parent is now working part time within a childcare setting, she is still claiming Income Support and as she gains confidence in this position she is accessing more training opportunities and working towards moving on from claiming Income Support to claiming Working Families Tax Credit.

Lynne Robinson  
[Lynne.Robinson@knowsley.gov.uk](mailto:Lynne.Robinson@knowsley.gov.uk)