

Evaluation of Intensive Intervention Projects

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Annex A. Narratives of young people's journeys

Amy and Isaac

Background

Amy and Isaac's parents are separated and they live between their mother's and father's homes. They were referred to the IIP in May 2009 by social services. At the time of the referral Amy was 15 years old and Isaac was aged eleven. The family were known to the police and other agencies and had a high profile and poor reputation in the local area.

The family had been accused on numerous occasions of anti-social behaviour at both the mother's and father's address and had been reported to the police. At the point of referral Amy had been arrested on two occasions, for criminal damage and harassment. She was on bail for both offences and had signed an Acceptable Behaviour Contract with the police. She had often been brought home by the police as she would regularly disappear from home late at night and would be found walking the streets alone. Isaac had been charged with three arson offences and was subject to an Anti-Social Behaviour Order from October 2009, with conditions including that he had to be at home from 8pm.

Neither Amy nor Isaac were attending school and had not done so for some time, in Amy's case for two years, although neither had been permanently excluded. The IIP worker believed that Amy's non-attendance had influenced Isaac. The children's mother had signed a parenting contract in April 2009 but the education authority began enforcement action against her due to the children's continuing poor attendance.

Amy was deemed to be very vulnerable and quite immature for her age, with low self-esteem. Her personal safety and health were at risk due to inappropriate sexual relationships with older men, which were reported to be encouraged by her mother. Amy was sexually assaulted a few weeks prior to the referral to the IIP and the perpetrator was charged. The assault had a significant impact on Amy and she became very withdrawn and would rarely leave her mother's house. Isaac had anger management problems and would display threatening and violent behaviour towards members of the general public as well as both of his parents. His mother struggled to enforce boundaries and control Isaac's behaviour and felt unable to make him attend school. Both children were placed on the Child Protection Register under the category of neglect in July 2009.

The family struggled to manage their finances and had a significant amount of debt. The children's mother suffered from mental health issues including obsessive compulsive disorder and depression and was on medication. She was very socially isolated and was reported to engage in inappropriate and high risk sexual relationships.

Amy and Isaac's father also suffered from depression and was unable to implement and maintain rules and boundaries with the children. The children's parents had a difficult relationship and regularly argued in front of Amy and Isaac about the best way to parent them.

The IIP intervention aimed to reduce the children's involvement in anti-social behaviour and offending, reintegrate Isaac into mainstream education and reintegrate Amy into mainstream

education or alternative provision. In addition, the intervention sought to improve Amy's personal safety, reduce her vulnerability and address her mental and emotional health needs.

The IIP interventions included one to one work with Amy (including mentoring and befriending work and structured activities such as the use of worksheets), and for both children, liaison with educational welfare officers and Child Protection social workers. Additional interventions for Amy included liaison with education and other agencies to identify alternative provision, her participation in the IIP film project and accessing sexual health advice and information. There was an additional focus on providing constructive leisure activities for Isaac. Rewards and incentivised activities were used as a technique with both children.

The IIP also undertook one to one work with both parents to improve their parenting skills and help them create a stable environment. The IIP workers attended child protection core group meetings, provided emotional support to the children's mother and, helped with her financial and debt problems. The IIP workers also provided practical support such as taking family members to appointments with solicitors, the Youth Offending Team, Jobcentre Plus and health care professionals. The IIP helped the children's mother secure a new property and the family moved away from the area where they had been living.

The IIP aimed to have face-to-face contact with both Amy and Isaac three times a week. As Amy made progress, more work was undertaken by a sessional worker who focused primarily on Amy's educational needs. From May 2010 Isaac's main contact was with a sessional worker, focused on providing semi-educational and constructive leisure activities. Isaac developed a very good relationship with his sessional worker and it was felt that the use of sessional workers had been beneficial to both the family and the IIP. The IIP worker also had a lot of contact with the children's mother, both face-to-face and over the phone, and, to a lesser extent, with their father. This meant that the IIP often had contact with the family on a daily basis.

Progress and interventions (from March 2010)

Amy

Amy's IIP worker spent a lot of time talking to her in an attempt to build a strong and supportive relationship of trust so that Amy would engage, express her feelings and be receptive to help. Progress was initially slow, as Amy was very introverted and withdrawn as a result of the sexual assault. The IIP worker reported that it had taken four months to establish an open and trusting relationship. Amy strongly resisted all of the IIP's attempts to encourage her to attend formal education provision. Amy was eventually persuaded to take part in the IIP film project, which she attended regularly and was perceived to have had a significant positive impact in terms of enabling Amy to combat her fear of leaving the house, raising her self-esteem, engaging with age-appropriate friends and taking part in a constructive learning activity in the absence of formal schooling. In April, the IIP and the Youth Service supported Amy to obtain a nationally recognised Youth Achievement Award in respect of the work that she had done on the film project.

Following her positive engagement with the film project, Amy began to attend a specialist education centre but this was deemed to be inappropriate by the IIP worker due to potential negative peer group influences and it failing to address Amy's needs which were not related to poor behaviour. In contrast, an IIP worker believed that the film project had worked for Amy *"because we picked who went on it, the types of people, the types of offences that they'd committed so it wasn't unsafe, it wasn't nasty."*

The IIP encouraged Amy to enrol on a college course through the sessional worker. Amy indicated that the sessional worker had helped her to access college; ideally to undertake a travel and tourism course. However, Amy was reluctant to attend college as she had little confidence and was worried about mixing with people that she didn't know. In April 2010, Amy began working on a Connexions E2E (Entry to Employment) course to help her obtain the necessary qualifications for a college course. Amy participated in horse-riding and martial arts classes as a reward for visiting Connexions. At the end of September Amy had accessed a foundation learning programme.

In May 2010, Amy began attending a local youth club where she undertook a Key Stone award which involved her planning a youth celebration. This was regarded as a big step for her given her reluctance to socialise and her lack of self-confidence. Amy was very positive about the IIP and recognised that it was the IIP workers who had built her confidence and helped her 'get out' of the house which she described as being the best thing about the IIP.

The IIP sought to ensure that Amy received advice and information regarding her sexual health. The IIP workers accompanied Amy to a sexual health screening and to a doctor to discuss various options for contraception. Concerns about Amy's immaturity with regard to sex and her stated desire to have a baby remained a concern for the IIP and it was felt that Amy's mother's influence could negate the impacts that the IIP's interventions may have.

In May 2010, IIP workers became very worried about Amy's mother's plans to take Amy on a foreign holiday, due to her mother's failure to provide for Amy's safety and the perceived heightened risks abroad, particularly related to sexual activities. The IIP reported these concerns to Child Protection social workers in the hope that they may be able to prevent the holiday, but the social workers argued that Amy would have her 16th birthday whilst on holiday and the situation did not merit any additional intervention. Amy became ill during the holiday and required hospital treatment. The IIP helped to organise the insurance and health care arrangements for the family whilst they were abroad. Amy had been diagnosed with Chlamydia and Pelvic Inflammatory Disease.

Amy appeared in Court in May in relation to the charge of harassment. She found the experience very difficult but pleaded guilty and was sentenced to a six month referral order. As part of the order, Amy was required to work in a local charity shop, which she did not enjoy but she was given a very good report by the shop manager.

Despite some improvements in Amy's mental and emotional health, the IIP had continuing concerns and had tried accessing counselling for her. However, she was not able to participate in the counselling sessions until the sexual assault trial was completed.

The IIP worker believed that Amy had made a lot of progress. She was not engaged into anti-social behaviour and was socialising with an appropriate peer group and participating in

structured activities including the IIP film project. The IIP worker believed that Amy had benefitted from the influence of a positive female role model:

"[Amy's] mum's lovely but... she never taught Amy what's right, what self respect is, how to behave around men... So I spent a lot of time with Amy showing her different ways of how women should behave and what you can expect as a woman and, you know, the real basics that mums do with you, her mum hasn't quite got the skills to do at the moment and encouraging her to leave the house."

The film project was also identified as being one of the most successful aspects of the IIP intervention for Amy, providing her with a 'lifeline'. The IIP worker said: *"I think that really got her out to somewhere that she felt safe with us and our colleagues and other young people."*

Isaac

Isaac's behaviour improved following the family moving home and he was not involved in any further incidents of anti-social behaviour. The IIP worker believed that one to one work combined with rewards based techniques with had been important in effecting a positive change in Isaac's behaviour, enabling him to understand the impact of his behaviour and the consequences that may follow should he engage in anti-social or criminal conduct.

During April and May 2010, Isaac underwent numerous psychological assessments to establish whether he was fit to plead in court in relation to arson and breach of Anti-social Behaviour Order offences. One report suggested that some elements of his understanding were at the level of a six or seven year old. However, Isaac did appear in court; he was sentenced to a 12 month referral order and his mother was ordered to pay around £700 in compensation.

Isaac refused to attend any mainstream school or specialist provision. During April and May, the IIP supported Isaac's father in looking into providing homeschooling, although his mother was extremely hostile to this idea and the Child Protection social worker did not believe it to be viable. At a Child Protection Core Group meeting it was suggested that Isaac should be accommodated by the local authority for a short period of up to three months in an attempt to get him back into educational provision. Isaac's IIP worker was concerned about Isaac's vulnerability and his susceptibility to being influenced by older peers. However, it was considered unlikely that this option would be advanced, even if his parents were supportive. The Education Welfare Officers had been unable to find alternatives to mainstream schooling for Isaac. The IIP arranged for Isaac to attend education provision organised by the Youth Offending Team. Isaac engaged positively with this and attended weekly sessions focusing on literacy and numeracy, and cooking. Isaac's sessional worker has also taken Isaac on weekly activities, which the IIP tried to make semi-educational. The relationship that Isaac established with his sessional worker was understood by both project staff and his mother as being a key part of the positive changes that Isaac had made during his time with the IIP.

In September, the IIP attempted to help reintegrate Isaac into a mainstream school. A new Education Welfare Officer had spent a lot of time with Isaac and a positive meeting with a school had taken place. Isaac was reported to have shown some willingness to consider

returning to school, although the family dynamics and his mother's relationships had remained a barrier, as an IIP worker explained: *"We both think it's some sort of attachment thing that Isaac has a fear about going to school because he doesn't know what mum's going to do when he's at school."*

Isaac had also been badly affected by the events that occurred during the family holiday abroad and this had impacted on his willingness to return to school.

Other family members

The IIP spent a lot of time attempting to ensure that the children's mother maintained a stable family environment. These interventions were usually reactive and in response to day to day crises. The IIP had also attempted to engage with Amy's and Isaac's grandparents who were involved with their grandchildren and who attended the Child Protection Core Group meetings. The IIP had sought to improve their relationship with the children's mother so that they could be a source of further support that would be sustainable beyond the IIP. However, the IIP workers were unable to effect real change in these wider familial relations and had been unable to establish any causal factors from the children's mother's past.

The IIP supported the children's mother to manage her finances and debt problems, including arranging the instalment of a pre-payment meter and meetings with the Citizens Advice Bureau. These were felt to be important steps as previously the children's mother would not engage in financial concerns at all.

Amy's and Isaac's mother had a positive relationship with the IIP worker and this had been important to her given her social isolation and vulnerability. This has meant however that she had become somewhat dependent on the IIP for emotional support and reassurance:

"Having people there at the end of the phone, having people that listen, that understand, not feeling so lonely, just everything, they've been really helpful and I'd not be still sitting here today if it weren't for them, they've done... this is why I get really upset when I hear [Key worker] saying it can't go on forever, we're going to have to withdraw at some stage and I'm panicky when he says that and I get quite upset... Perhaps I rely on them too much but I can't help that."

The IIP workers believed that the children's mother had serious mental health concerns that had not been addressed by other agencies and that are beyond the expertise of IIP workers to address. They had tried on numerous occasions to get support from mental health services but had been unable to do so:

"We've had the health people out, the well being team trying to support her, everyone that could potentially look after mum we've arranged it and then they come back and tell us there's nothing wrong with her. You can see the damage and if there is something wrong with her she should be medicated or the support given to her which would enable the children to do much better... my biggest frustration is the lack of support from other agencies."

IIP workers had also accompanied the children's mother to appointments, which she viewed very positively:

"When all the court things were going through with both of them they came to pick us up, took us home, just the support there, cos sometimes I don't like going to appointments on my own."

However, the IIP workers believed that neither parent was making progress in their parenting approaches and were still unable to meet Amy's and Isaac's needs. The IIP workers had become increasingly concerned that they were now fulfilling a parenting role and that Amy and Isaac understood that their mother was unwilling to assume parental responsibility. This was having a detrimental impact and reducing any chance of the family environment becoming stabilised.

Reflections (at September 2010)

It was felt by the IIP workers that the risk factors identified at the point when the family were referred had been reduced and in some cases eliminated:

"I can remember when those two were first referred to us and reading the forms and it was all anti-social behaviour, it was offending... and they were really high profile then on the forums that police and everybody sits on, so I suppose that was the initial objective and that seems to have been resolved, then there were the things about the risk factors that they were presenting then and their vulnerability and again I think those have largely been met."

Amy and her mother also agreed that the IIP had improved things for their family and praised the attitude and approach of the IIP workers:

"I mean [key worker's] seen me at my worst, I'm pulling me hair out, he's seen me and they don't judge you, you look rough, you look like this, but they still treat you like, you know some people think 'look at her she's gone round the twist' but they don't make me feel, they just make me feel better. And you [to Amy] enjoy going out and Isaac loves going out with [sessional worker] so very good, couldn't have coped without them and want to carry on."

The children's mother perceived that Amy and Isaac were treated differently by their respective sessional workers, a key being whether a meal was provided for them during contact time. She was also disappointed that an IIP parenting group had not continued.

The IIP workers acknowledged some barriers and unresolved issues. This included the response of social services to the children being on the Child Protection Register. The IIP acknowledged their intensive level of support to the family and were willing play a leading role in terms of co-ordinating interventions to help the family address their multiple needs. But they are also aware of their limitations and the need for support from other agencies:

"Really it's a small new, relatively inexperienced team that's been put together and I'm not saying it's the most high profile case but it's two fairly complex kids and complex parents that they just let us say 'get on with it' which has been all right, I'm quite happy to do that but when you want that backing it's not been there... I just want social care to come in and take the pressure off us a bit and so it's not just us always saying it, it's them dealing with some sort of issue as well."

An indication of this was that Child Protection Core Group Meetings had not always taken place and child care teams were not always seeing Amy and Isaac as required. The children's mother also believed that the IIP offered her more support than her social worker. On this basis, the IIP were attempting to replicate required statutory or specialist support, rather than providing additional or complementary support.

The IIP workers were concerned that the level of intensive support provided may be resulting in both parents becoming less involved and taking less responsibility for parenting their children. However, it had been difficult to address this issue particularly in the context of the children's mother's social isolation and social isolation and mental health: The IIP had attempted to reduce contact time with Amy's and Isaac's mother and to broach the subject of the IIP withdrawing support in the future. However, the response to this had been problematic, as both an IIP worker and the children's mother acknowledged:

"[mum], if anybody starts to mention things like that will go hysterical, at the last [child protection] conference I had to say to her [name] we're only funded technically until...' and she can't grasp that, that at some point we're not going to be there." [IIP worker]

"Yes with a capital Y. For as long as possible. I do get very very upset when [Key worker] says 'we've got to pull out eventually, it can't go on forever' but I get really panicky and say 'don't take him away at the moment, don't stop me...' 'no we're not going to' I need reassurance cos I'm very insecure myself and I suppose he gets fed up but I do love to keep hearing it... especially when Isaac's, they're expecting him to go to school, it hasn't happened in how many years, he's not just going to get up and go to school." [Mother]

The IIP workers believed that the children's mother required intervention beyond their expertise, especially in relation to her mental health, although these needs had not been formally acknowledged in official assessments:

"My worry is where they go because mum is just as poorly as, and damaged, and dad as well, the children make leaps, you see leaps where the children have gone and from where they were when we first had them to where they are now, I just feel it sometimes gets unpicked a little bit cos there's no real support for mum as in the support that she needs, like mental health support."

These perceived unmet mental health needs meant that IIP workers felt that they were unable to make further progress on parenting and keeping Amy in particular from future risk and harm.

Update: December 2010

The family were still involved with the IIP and still subject to Child Protection Plans. Both children had continued to make progress. Isaac had returned to mainstream school with the assistance of an IIP sessional worker who would go the home and get Isaac up for school, and then take him into school each day. This was reported to be working well and the support from the sessional worker was gradually being withdrawn. However, the children were taken on another foreign holiday and Isaac was withdrawn from school just as he was

beginning to make significant progress. The IIP had liaised with Social Care and were attending a Core Group meeting to determine an appropriate response to this development. Isaac was still subject to a Referral Order and attended appointments at the Youth Offending Team with support from the IIP. The other risk factors that originally presented in terms of his offending and anti-social behaviour appeared to have been greatly reduced and there had been no incidents of this nature for over 18 months. The IIP envisaged continuing to work with Isaac for the foreseeable future. There was a planned review of the Child Protection case in January.

Amy had been engaging particularly well with a female sessional worker from the IIP who was looking at confidence, self-esteem and educational opportunities. However, this had also been affected by the recent holiday and the IIP continued to have concerns about Amy's sexualised behaviour when on holiday.

Ash

Note: It was recommended by the IIP that it would not be appropriate to undertake tracking interviews with Ash or other family members. This narrative is therefore based on one meeting between the researcher and Ash and interviews with the IIP worker.

Background

Ash was born in Sierra Leone in 1996 and came to England with his mother and older sister when he was six years old. Ash was living at home with his mother, step-father and a younger brother aged five and his older sister, aged 19. Ash was thirteen years old when he was referred to the Youth Inclusion Team in early 2009 and as a result of general concerns around school attendance. Family relationships, particularly Ash's relationship with his mother and step father were also viewed as being fragile.

With the support of his Youth Inclusion worker initially Ash made good progress on the Youth Inclusion Programme and by late spring 2009 there were plans to exit him from the programme. However, at this time he started to associate with a group of older African males who were considered to be a bad influence and concerns for his well being increased. The group were well known to the police and Ash became involved in offending behaviour, including allegations of petty theft and cannabis use. Subsequently he was convicted of a burglary offence, as a result of which Ash was issued with an electronic tag and was allocated a Youth Offending Team worker. Linked to this behaviour change, Ash was reported to be spending prolonged periods of time away from home and was regularly absent for up to seven days at a time. As a result of rising safeguarding concerns focussing on his frequent absence from home Ash was allocated an IIP worker in July 2009.

At the point Ash moved on to the IIP programme he was reported to be reluctant to engage with either his project worker or project activities. This situation changed dramatically when during the summer 2009 Ash and some of his friends were the subjects of an allegation of rape. Due to the seriousness of the allegations combined with concerns about Ash's wellbeing, he was placed in a secure unit pending investigations. No charges were brought due to lack of evidence and in November 2009 he was released. Ash had however, been identified by the police as being the ring leader of a group of African youths. Thus in November 2009 following Ash's release from the secure unit, a multi-agency meeting was called to discuss how to manage Ash and his role in what was perceived to be an emerging gang culture in the city's central area. It was agreed to take action to prohibit Ash from association with named members of the gang and in late November 2009 Ash was issued with an interim Anti-social Behaviour Order (ASBO), which in January 2010 was converted to a full ASBO. The terms of the order prohibited Ash from going into the city centre and from associating with six named individuals for three years. At the same time Ash was issued with an Individual Support Order managed by his Youth Offending Team worker, involving three contacts a week, one of which was delegated to the IIP worker.

The IIP Support Plan established in January 2010 and identified the following objectives for Ash:

- to help him avoid gang involvement and criminal activity
- to change his lifestyle, raise his self esteem and perception of self and improve his thinking behaviour
- to improve his relationship with family members
- to ensure that he was able to regain entry to mainstream educational provision
- to assist Ash's mother to engage with the Family Intervention Project (FIP) over parenting issues

The agreed interventions included one to one work with Ash, including building his self-esteem and addressing inappropriate sexual conduct, coordination of out of school activities and referring his mother to the FIP for parenting support.

Initially the IIP worker aimed to have at least one group contact and a one to one contact with Ash per week, although in practice the IIP worker reported seeing Ash more frequently than this; often arranging to take him to and from out of school activities and regularly talking to him on the phone. The IIP worker also undertook the co-ordination of regular Child Action Meetings, which were usually attended by Ash and his mother in addition to the Youth Offending Team worker, a 360 Drugs worker, a Family Intervention Project worker and representatives from the Social Services and the Education departments.

When the IIP worker took over Ash's case in the summer of 2009 she had found it very difficult to engage with Ash:

"He always struck me at that point in his life to be a very, very, deeply unhappy young man, just untouchable if you like, just switched off. I couldn't get eye contact off him...he was really vacant, wasn't ready to talk to you. Wasn't ready to even let me try and discuss the issues with him. That was where I started from I suppose."

The situation changed dramatically when Ash was referred to the secure unit pending the rape investigation. The terms of his ASBO on his release from the unit were described by the IIP worker as being very difficult for Ash to adhere to. His geographical exclusion from the city centre meant that it was impossible for him to maintain weekly visits to his Youth Offending Team worker without breaching the terms of his ASBO. Initially the IIP worker was critical of the decision to employ this form of enforcement action and felt that Ash might have been discriminated against as a result of his gender and ethnicity. Over time however, she had revised her views and thought that the ASBO had proved instrumental in helping Ash to change his lifestyle:

"The beauty of the ASBO which we can see on reflection was it gave him the opportunity to say no, it limited his movement which he needed, he totally needed a way...because he was young, cos he had poor self esteem, all those reasons...The ASBO meant he couldn't hang around with these people, couldn't go into the city centre, the tag meant he had to be home by seven so he couldn't go missing from home, it changed things."

Moreover, the IIP worker felt that the experience of being in a secure unit had been pivotal in stimulating a significant change in Ash's attitude and willingness to engage with activities:

"The experience of being held in a secure unit, possibly facing a sentence for an act he didn't do, shocked him. [Now] he is really chatty, really friendly, really polite, really engaging, willing to do stuff and to try stuff. He's a fun young man, he's great to get along with and in some ways mature as well through everything that has happened."

Ash was not attending full time education as the school he had been attending prior to his referral to secure accommodation was no longer prepared to readmit him, due to fears of potential bullying and difficulties Ash might face in re-establishing relationships with his peers. As an interim measure the IIP worker arranged a series of activities for Ash to help raise his self-esteem and to try to help him build relationships with others. These included the provision of one to one boxing tuition and attendance at a gardening project providing assistance to people unable to care for their gardens due to age or physical disability. Ash reported enjoying both of these activities but clearly preferred the boxing which he described as being the best thing in his life because it *"keeps me out of trouble."* He also attended a fire setting prevention course. The IIP worker undertook a series of more therapeutic one to one sessions with Ash and arranged for him to attend a group drama-based activity to explore offending behaviour.

By February 2010 Ash had been out of mainstream schooling for over six months and the IIP worker felt that it was imperative that this issue be addressed. Following negotiations with Ash's old school it was agreed that he could return, but only on the condition that he agree to be segregated from other pupils during lessons and break periods. Initially this arrangement worked reasonably well and Ash attended school on a regular basis but following the February half term he became very frustrated at *"being caged for what he felt was too long"* and he stopped attending.

Progress and interventions (from March 2010)

By March, both Ash and his IIP worker believed that significant progress had been achieved, with Ash now fully engaged with both group and one to one IIP sessions. The IIP worker did however, have ongoing concerns about meeting Ash's educational and well-being needs. Following his non-attendance it was agreed that he should be withdrawn from mainstream schooling and was he referred to a pupil referral unit for two days a week, supplemented by provision from a local third sector-delivered centre which provides programmes for young people aged 14-16 who are not in mainstream education. The IIP worker expressed concerns about the standard of training provided by the centre and thought that Ash was not being challenged academically by the course which she described as *"a babysitting service to some extent for poorly behaved pupils."* These concerns were shared by Ash, who went from initial 100 per cent attendance to increasingly disengaging from the provision. During April and May the breakdown in Ash's living arrangements and on-going conflict with his family further affected Ash's engagement with educational activities.

By June 2010 Ash was still not in mainstream schooling which was a source of increasing anxiety to both Ash and his mother who recognised the importance of education and was anxious to get Ash back to school. Pending an offer of a school place Ash and his mother had, rather reluctantly, agreed for the IIP worker to arrange for a place on a local Youth Challenge course run by the Pupil Referral Unit commencing in September 2010. However, it subsequently emerged that, as Ash had not been formally excluded from school he was not deemed to be eligible for a place on the course. During June, as an interim solution Ash's old school agreed to fund limited (four hours per week) one to one tutoring to take place at the IIP offices. In addition the IIP worker arranged for Ash to attend a short term course delivered by a voluntary sector organisation providing alternative educational activities.

In September, following the summer holidays no further progress had been made in finding Ash a permanent mainstream school place. Ash by this time had been out of mainstream educational provision for over 12 months. By October Ash was still waiting for an offer of a full time school place. The IIP worker was very critical of this result and felt that the system had failed Ash:

"I know Ash is no angel, but I know that he is a very likeable lad and in a way I just blame the system because if he was given a fresh start from the minute he left the [secure unit] he could have integrated into a mainstream school by now. Unfortunately the paper work and system that's in place has not allowed that to happen."

Concerns over parenting were identified as one of the key risk factors prompting the IIP referral, with the IIP worker reporting that:

"There was evidence that mum and step dad were using cultural ways of disciplining Ash, you know OK for their culture, not OK for British culture, making him stand on one leg and holding books out, hitting him with some kind of cane instruments."

There were also major concerns about Ash staying away from home for up to a week at a time. In March 2010 the IIP arranged for a set of family-based activities. However, Ash's use of cannabis was thought to have escalated and he continued to regularly stay at a friend's house for three to four days at a time. Ash's mother was reported as being very resistant to contacting the police when Ash failed to return home at night and took the view that unless Ash was prepared to come home before nine o'clock in the evening and abide by the house rules he must look after himself. The project worker described Mum's position as very clearly thought through:

"She simply feels that Ash must learn to take responsibility for his actions. If he is not prepared to take part in family life and abide by her rules then he must fend for himself."

Social services were extremely concerned about the situation and had considered whether care proceedings should be taken. The main problem however, was constructed as a failure of parenting with Ash's mother actions being viewed as a form of child abandonment. Ash's mother had a different perspective and framed the problem in terms of Ash's refusal to become a responsible member of the family. She had expressed the view that he was old

enough to take responsibility for his own actions and that the real problem was that he had little respect for the people working with him and believed them to be wasting their time.

In response to these safeguarding concerns, in April 2010, Ash's mother was referred to the FIP for parenting advice. Initially the IIP worker requested that this work be carried out by a BME practitioner in order to reflect Ash's mother's strongly-held cultural and ethical views on parenting. However, this option was not pursued. At the point of referral, Ash's mother was very reluctant to engage with the FIP and expressed the view that rather than parenting support, she would like social services to take Ash into care. She felt that he was out of her control and that she could no longer take responsibility for his behaviour. The IIP worker reflected that in this instance there may have been a failure by support agencies to take Ash's mother's ethnic and cultural concerns into account.

Between mid April to the end of June, Ash's relationship with his mother continued to deteriorate. Ash spent most of his time at a friend's house smoking cannabis and he stopped attending either the school or IIP group activities. Social Services expressed great concern about this development, stating that the family Ash was staying with were not suitable for, or capable of, taking care of him, due to alcohol misuse and the family being on the child protection register. Ash returned to his family home during the day to collect clothes and was suspected by his mother of stealing money and his step-father's watch. These incidents served to strengthened Ash's mother's decision not to allow him back home.

Over this period of time the IIP worker had little contact with Ash apart from a couple of incidents. On one occasion she was asked by Ash's mother to collect him from an Accident and Emergency department following an accident and injury to Ash. At this meeting Ash was reluctant to discuss what had happened with the IIP worker, who did not recognise any of the friends he was with. On another occasion in June the IIP worker were contacted by police in Liverpool informing her that Ash had been arrested for possession of Methadone. Charges in relation to this incident were subsequently dropped. However, in June Ash was taken back to court for breach of the terms of his ASBO and as a result was issued with a curfew and tag, conditional on him living at the family home.

By the beginning of July it was apparent that Ash was not living at the family home which meant he was in breach of his ASBO terms and the curfew condition. The situation reached crisis point when the family Ash was staying with were referred to FIP core accommodation. In response to Ash's impending homelessness Social Services called a Child Action Meeting and it was agreed that a formal letter be sent to Ash's mother advising her that unless she was prepared to provide a home for Ash, she would be the subject of a prosecution for abandonment. At this point Ash's mother reluctantly agreed to let him return to the family home but the IIP worker felt that this arrangement was likely to break down in the short to medium term as she explained:

"He's 14 but he's got the independence of someone much older, is he going to be able to sustain living at mum's house for another two years? He's not really sustained it for the last two years so I doubt whether it's going to be sustainable for the next two."

Despite frequent breaches of both his ASBO terms and the curfew order no action had been taken to enforce the terms of these orders. While the IIP worker felt that this failure to act was a result of 'fatigue' amongst all the agencies working with Ash she also recognised that

the sharing of information at the Child Action meetings had resulted in statutory agencies becoming more sympathetic to the challenges faced by Ash:

"The Youth Offending Team have been attending the meetings saying 'how can we criminalise this kid any further when a) being at home isn't really the nicest place for him to be and b) he might be being denied access to the home, how can we breach him in these circumstances?"

Due to the high level of concerns about Ash's well being, his continuing drug misuse and offending behaviour and the breakdown in family relationships, in July 2010 Ash was referred to Resettlement Aftercare Provision (RAP). This is an intensive intervention aimed at young people who offend and who also have a range of complex needs requiring help for issues including substance misuse, mental health, accommodation, education, training and employment. The RAP worker's role is very similar to that of the IIP worker with a focus on acting as a caring advocate and role model for the young person.

During July and August it was reported that the local FIP project was providing intensive support to Ash's mother. Although there were ongoing issues about the extent to which she was prepared to engage in activities, it was felt that some progress had been made and Ash's mother had agreed to do some work around emotional health. In light of these developments at the end of August it was decided to exit Ash from the IIP.

Reflections (at October 2010)

Ash's level of engagement with the IIP over the 13 month period between July 2009 and August 2010 fluctuated considerably. For the period November 2009 - May 2010 the IIP worked relatively intensively with Ash, providing both one to one support and group activities involving up to six hours contact a week. However, since May 2010, contact has been less consistent, in part reflecting Ash's disengagement and in part a consequence of the increase in other agencies working with Ash and his family. At the point of exit the IIP worker identified ongoing major concerns about Ash's education and well being - since being referred to the IIP project he has been out of mainstream education for over 12 months. On a more positive note when asked to reflect on the case she summarised that due to the involvement of RAP she felt confident that Ash would be supported to deal with the considerable challenges that he continued to face.

Ash's journey during the course of the IIP intervention was one marked by periods of relative stability interspersed with ongoing crisis and setbacks. However, the IIP may have had a positive impact on raising Ash's confidence and self esteem through his engagement in leisure and sporting activities and may have achieved a reduction in risk and a stabilisation of circumstances contributing to the avoidance of extremely negative consequences e.g. further offending leading to a custodial sentence or formal care or abandonment proceedings. There had also been the development of relationships of trust between the IIP worker and Ash and his mother achieved as a result of the IIP worker's tenacity and commitment and the engagement of a range of agencies to provide on-going support at the point that Ash exited the IIP.

Claire

Background

Claire's parents are separated and she lives with her mother. She has an older sister who lives away from home in another city. Claire was fourteen years old when she was referred to the IIP by the Anti-social Behaviour Unit in July 2009, due to a number of risk factors, including: her absconding from home; not being in education; negative friendships; self-neglect; and poor family relationships. Claire was frequently failing to return home at night, often without informing her mother where she was. On some occasions she had stayed away from home for up to five days. Her mother was unable to contact her during these periods and had, on several occasions, reported Claire as missing to the police.

Claire had a history of being disruptive in school, not following teachers' instructions, and truanting. Prior to the IIP referral she had been excluded on several occasions and her attendance record was less than 70 per cent. By March 2010 Claire had stopped attending school altogether and had effectively been out of mainstream education for a year. At the point of IIP referral, Claire was associating with older teenage boys who were known to the police and Youth Offending Team as prolific offenders. Claire was reported to have been present when these friends had committed offences and they were alleged to have encouraged Claire to participate. Claire did not, however, have a criminal record. Claire acknowledged that some of her peers were or had been in prison, but was determined that she 'would not go down the same route.' Claire was described as having low self-esteem together with a need to be accepted and, as such, there was a concern that she was at risk of being drawn into offending behaviour. Claire was also perceived to be at risk due to a friendship with an older female, at whose house Claire regularly stayed. This friendship was considered to be inappropriate and her home unsafe for Claire given that the older friend was suspected of being a drug user and sex worker whose children had been taken into care. The friend's property had also been seriously damaged as a result of conflicts with others in the neighbourhood.

Claire was believed to abuse alcohol. This put her in dangerous situations and was a contributory factor of her non-attendance at school. Claire was also believed to be engaged in risky sexual behaviour, although she had sought the help of a family planning nurse in the past.

Claire had a very difficult relationship with her mother and would not adhere to boundaries set. Claire's mother felt unable to cope with Claire or keep her safe and had contacted social services in the past for help. It was for these reasons that Claire's mum was keen for the IIP to become involved: *"To be honest I was a bit at the end of my tether with her, I didn't know what else to do with her and I didn't want her just sat here day after day getting into trouble or doing things that she's not supposed to."* Claire's mother hoped that the IIP would be able to change Claire's behaviour and get her to accept the need for rules and routines in her life.

There were a number of other issues in Claire's personal history that have made her vulnerable and that her IIP worker theorised as underpinning much of her problematic behaviour: *"There's an awful lot really, she had quite a disrupted childhood, she's gone through an awful lot for her age and that shows in her behaviour."*

Both Claire's parents were or had been drug users although her mother was no longer believed to be using drugs and had a part time job. Claire's mother had recently been in hospital with pneumonia, which had traumatised Claire. Claire had no relationship with her father despite the fact that he lived nearby and she saw him regularly around the neighbourhood. He was a heavy drug user and refused to acknowledge his daughter. Claire had received counselling in the past in an attempt to help her deal with some of these issues. These interventions were reported as having been quite successful initially but Claire failed to keep appointments due to her 'chaotic lifestyle' and the sessions were ended.

The IIP aimed to ensure that Claire kept herself safe and returned home every night, to re-integrate Claire into mainstream education, reduce her risky behaviours, to involve Claire in constructive activities and making positive friendships and improve Claire's self-esteem. IIP interventions included one to one work with Claire (emotional support, structured activities around e.g. risk assessment, keeping safe, decision-making; assistance with homeschooling, informal guidance and advice, maintaining contact with Claire to establish her whereabouts/safety). IIP workers provided company and support to Claire in attending doctor or hospital appointments and liaised with her school and education services to attempt to secure Claire a permanent place in a new school. Claire was referred to specialist services including Children's and Young People's Services, counselling, a sexual health nurse, and later, a teenage pregnancy support worker. Claire was involved in the IIP film project and rewards were used as a mechanism for encouraging engagement and progress.

The IIP worker aimed to see Claire three times a week, including direct one to one sessions and accompanying Claire when she attended educational provision. Between face to face contact times, the IIP key worker had telephone contact with both Claire and her mother. Claire's mother acknowledged this contact: *"I do talk to [IIP worker] and that yeah and she does keep me updated with things and I keep her updated with anything that Claire's not doing right or doing wrong I always let her know where she is and things like that."* The IIP worker explained that much of her work with Claire had to be responsive to whatever was happening in Claire's life at that moment and that these sessions might take place in various settings and address a range of different issues depending on what concerns were current.

Progress and interventions (from March 2010)

A key priority for the IIP was to support Claire's reintegration into mainstream school or to ensure that while she was out of school she took part in alternative provision. A number of interventions were organised by the IIP. These included a cookery course run by the Youth Offending Team, and a cookery and mechanics course provided by the local college which the IIP worker attended with Claire as she could be disruptive in class and the IIP worker's presence enabled her to keep Claire's behaviour in check. The IIP worker also carried out some homeschooling using materials supplied by the school. The IIP worker explained that teachers from Claire's previous school had been extremely cooperative and helped arrange

alternative provision for Claire including a reduced timetable, home-schooling and a college course. Claire also had some involvement with Connexions although this was withdrawn due to non-attendance. The IIP worker assisted Claire in making plans to gain the appropriate qualifications to enable her to become a prison officer, including a visit to a secure unit. In addition, Claire took part in the IIP film project, playing the lead role in two of the films produced.

In March 2010, the IIP key worker liaised with a local school to secure a permanent place for Claire and a managed move there began after the Easter holidays in April 2010. The plan was for Claire to attend this mainstream school for four days a week and receive alternative provision on the fifth day. The IIP worker felt that, thus far, the work around providing Claire with some alternative educational provision had been the most successful aspect of the intervention and that this was a result of good inter-agency working between the IIP, teachers at both Claire's previous and new schools, and the Youth Offending Team. However, Claire's mother felt that, although the school helped arrange alternative provision for Claire, they should have done more to ensure that Claire remained in mainstream education.

Before starting her new school, Claire said that she had mixed feelings and was particularly worried about the need to get into a routine. Claire started at the school following the Easter holidays in April on a six week managed reintegration trial. To ensure Claire's attendance, the IIP worker helped with the morning routine, including taking Claire to school and Claire's mother to her work place. An agreement was made that if Claire completed the six weeks without problem then she would possibly be able to return to the school that she previously attended. Claire made a positive start with full attendance and behaved appropriately in class. However, the IIP worker said that Claire's attitude was very negative and that she was not happy at the new school.

In April, Claire's mother explained how she had been pleased with Claire's progress over the previous few weeks, particularly in terms of her beginning school again. She hoped that attending school could positively influence Claire's behaviour in terms of her mixing with other young people her own age, not staying out at night and having something to keep her out of trouble.

Since Claire had been referred, her IIP worker had spent a great deal of time trying to access specialist services for Claire and had 'battled' to get social services involved. After approaching a senior manager with the case, the IIP worker's efforts resulted in the family being allocated two social workers (one for Claire and one for her mother) for a 12-week period. Claire's mother's social worker intervention comprised an intensive parenting course delivered in the home. However, Claire's mother did not believe that this was effective and she felt that she was being blamed for Claire's behaviour. She explained that it was one thing for the parenting worker to 'preach' about how she should parent and what she should do to manage Claire's behaviour, but that the parenting worker failed to understand that trying to implement these ideas was something very different and that teenagers' behaviour was not all about the failure of the parents.

In April 2010, the key worker attended a Local Operational Team meeting in relation to Claire, which considers the needs of young people specifically in vulnerable families, complex issues or where there are barriers to accessing services. There were over 20

individuals representing a wide range of agencies involved at the meeting. A referral was made to an exploitation worker although Claire refused to see her as she felt that she had not been exploited. The IIP worker had also tried to encourage Claire to attend counselling and mental health services and had accessed a Youth Offending Team mental health worker for this reason but Claire persistently refused to engage with this provision. When appropriate, the IIP worker had rewarded Claire with trips out, for example, to the cinema.

The IIP worker believed that, although there had been a generalised improvement in Claire's situation, the trajectory of change was not a linear, but characterised by periods of stability and rapid crisis. For instance, although it was felt that some progress had been made by March with regard to Claire staying out at night, in April Claire began failing to return home again and had been staying at various addresses. The police were called on occasion and at other times the IIP worker picked her up to bring her home. In April, Claire had been the victim of harassment after an individual set up an offensive Facebook profile in Claire's name which included a photograph of her. The individual also made threatening phone calls to the family home. Around the same time, Claire was assaulted by a group of young females and suffered serious injuries.

In April 2010 Claire found out that she was pregnant. Initially, Claire's mother was very upset about the pregnancy and said that she would not support Claire if chose to have the baby. The pregnancy also acted as a catalyst for Claire's dad to contact her and become involved with Claire. In May 2010, Claire had not made a decision about whether to keep the baby but her IIP worker reported that her parents and a grandparent putting a lot of pressure on her to have a termination and were using both threats and bribes to influence her decision. During this period Claire's IIP worker spent a lot of time with her offering her emotional support while she came to a decision. Claire decided to keep the baby and, her mother had been supportive and agreed that Claire would remain living at home when the baby was born. Claire's father failed to maintain contact with her.

Since finding out that she was pregnant, Claire had stopped attending school. Up until that point she had been doing really well and completing all of her work to a high standard. She was reluctant to go back to school, in part because a pupil at the school had posted offensive messages about Claire on her Facebook site regarding the pregnancy. In June, Claire's IIP worker spent a lot of time liaising with the school, who wished to withdraw from the move due to Claire's lack of attendance. The IIP worker and Claire's social worker persuaded the school to give Claire another chance. However, Claire failed to attend regularly and eventually stopped going to school altogether before the end of the summer term. Claire accessed a place at a school for pregnant teenagers, which she began attending in September 2010. Throughout this period Claire has continued to attend the IIP film project, which was regarded by the IIP worker as having been successful in engaging Claire, raising her self-esteem and keeping her engaged in a structured and constructive activity:

"If you'd asked me when you first met Claire if she'd go to that film project I would have said no, you couldn't even get a grunt out of her, nothing...I think it's given her a bit of confidence, she's quite scared of girls so for [other girls] to be in that group has been really good for her."

The IIP worker spent a lot of time accessing teenage pregnancy support services for Claire, attending doctors and hospital appointments with Claire, and providing emotional support. Throughout Claire's pregnancy, reflecting patterns in Claire's behaviour more generally, there were peaks and troughs in terms of Claire's personal safety. In the early days of Claire's pregnancy, Claire was still perceived to be putting herself at risk by staying out at night but by June, Claire was described by her IIP worker as being the least vulnerable she had been since working with the IIP - despite being pregnant. Claire was no longer staying out at night and/ was keeping in touch with her mother to let her know where she was. However by July, Claire had again been involved in some situations that had put her safety at risk. In September, her IIP worker explained that Claire was still having a sexual relationship with the father of the baby (who had a new girlfriend) who had encouraged her to have an abortion and had been physically and verbally abusive to Claire. They failed to use contraception and Claire was diagnosed with Chlamydia. Claire's IIP worker explained that there had been a bit of an issue about duplication of work between herself and Claire's pregnancy support worker. She therefore came up with a new intervention plan that wasn't focussed on dealing with the pregnancy but was focused on Claire accessing education and keeping safe.

There are no plans for the IIP to close the case as Claire was viewed as remaining vulnerable and lacking in self-confidence, evidenced by her refusal to communicate with midwives over the phone and her lack of confidence in any kind of formal encounter, such as setting up a bank account. Claire remained reliant upon the IIP worker, despite attempts to encourage Claire to become more independent.

Reflections (at September 2010)

Claire's IIP worker believed that Claire still needed the support of the IIP and that there were still risk factors with regard to Claire's behaviour that needed to be addressed. Notwithstanding this, it was acknowledged that Claire has made significant progress since being referred to the IIP and that positive changes have been made. For example Claire was now associating with a more appropriate and positive peer group and was less inclined to seek out or become embroiled in risky situations. Other IIP workers commented on the impact they felt that the IIP had had on Claire:

"I really don't believe if you weren't there I don't think Claire would be anywhere near the girl she is now from that first time that we knew Claire...she was an angry girl, damaged, vulnerable girl who hated the world. Not to give her any credit cos she's made some good decisions herself but I really don't believe without [IIP worker] involvement she'd be anywhere near the place she is now."

"She was on the edge of a lot of stuff, offending, and anti-social behaviour. She could have gone into some quite heavy offending I think."

The IIP worker felt that the positive relationship with Claire had been a factor in bringing about some of the successful outcomes that Claire had achieved and that an important part of their relationship was built on a form of friendship such that was not all about a one-way flow of information from Claire to her:

"We do have a bit of a friendship though, and I think that's a very important part of why it's worked...we end up talking about make up, seriously, when she was young and she asks about my life as well and I want to be honest with her because I ask a lot about her."

The IIP worker also suggested that being non-judgemental was very important, as Claire had receives a lot of criticism from others including her family and teachers. In contrast, the IIP worker sought to encourage her and tell her when she had done well as a catalyst to motivate her to make further positive changes. However, the key worker also acknowledged that because of this close relationship maintaining professional boundaries had sometimes been challenging:

"What's been quite difficult is when... I'd get a phone call from [Claire] saying 'I want to go home, can we meet up please?' and that's been at 10 o'clock at night and it's difficult because she won't get any help from anyone else but there needs to be that separation really...I don't want to let her down but then I can't be on call 24 hours a day."

Claire's mother consistently stated that Claire's involvement in the IIP had been beneficial and that Claire had made progress as a result. She felt that it had helped Claire 'mature' and that the film project in particular as well as the one-to-one work that her IIP worker had engaged Claire in had had a positive impact:

"[Claire's] not got many interests, she's not one of them children that watch films or you know is into music really... so I think it made her more interested in actually doing the film because she'd come back and talk about it, more than a lot of things because she doesn't really talk about a lot."

"That's the main thing [film project] and just having like somebody there to give her a bit of a kick up the backside, it's all right me doing it but I'm her mum and she wouldn't, she'd probably rather sit in McDonalds with [IIP worker] than she would me, or go to the pictures with [IIP worker] more than me, it's certain things I think she'd rather do with her than with me to be honest, and because [IIP worker's] young as well."

Claire's mother suggested that, because their relationship was based on a kind of friendship, it had enabled the IIP worker to engage Claire successfully:

"I think it's helped her discuss things without talking to me 'cause some things you don't want to say to your mum and you can sometimes trust somebody else a lot better and I think that's a good thing, especially in your teens 'cause it's quite a tricky age, you're quite confused at that age, you don't know what you want or where you want to go[...]they don't want to go home and tell their mums things, everything they're doing...it's just something you don't do and I think it was good that you [to Claire] could trust somebody else for you and she had someone else to go to."

She compared the approach that Claire's key worker took to that of Claire's social worker, who she stated often "talked down" to Claire in a patronising manner.

However, there were times when Claire wanted to end her involvement with the IIP. Although Claire acknowledged that her IIP worker had been very helpful and gave her

support when she needed it, she also found the IIP worker quite intrusive and "nosy": *"she gets on my nerves because she asks too many questions."* Claire described being frustrated at having to account for her whereabouts all the time to the IIP worker, who she believed, wanted to know too much about her private life. Claire also felt that that what she told her key worker was not always confidential and the IIP worker would always act on information she provided, for example by going to the police.

Claire suggested that she preferred the approach of her teenage pregnancy support worker who was described as more forthright terms than her IIP key worker, whose approach was viewed as being softer. Claire and her mother both believed that a more assertive approach from the IIP may have been beneficial, such as that of the 'down to earth' teenage pregnancy support worker:

"She won't have no messing around... I was quite shocked at first, when I first met her I was like whoa 'cause it's different, usually when you have people like that they never swear and they do things all right but I think her approach is her way with, obviously girls like her [Claire] cause she's very likeable lady and she's not silly, she won't let anything pull the wool over her eyes, she knows all the tricks and everything, she knows all the little lies...she'll just say 'well you know what's going to happen, he'll be put in care' she's great isn't she?"

However, Claire stated that she had benefitted from the IIP and that she may have been in prison had the IIP not been involved, although her mother disputed this second point. Claire felt that the most useful thing the IIP had done for her was to get her back into school. Both Claire and her mother agreed that Claire would need the support of the IIP in the future and they wanted the IIP worker to remain involved with them.

Update: December 2010

Claire was due to give birth at the end of December. Claire continued to put herself at risk because of the people she associated with, including older males and offenders etc and the situations she found herself in. She had been placed at a specialist education unit for pregnant teenagers and has engaged extremely well there. Claire had maintained extremely high levels of contact with her IIP worker. Because of the risk factors there were concerns about the unborn child and a Child Protection Conference was due to take place. An IIP worker commented that this seemed extremely 'last minute' and would not appear to give sufficient time to implement any plans or strategies that were agreed. Claire's IIP worker would attend the conference and was encouraging Claire to also attend. Claire was finding this process extremely daunting and intimidating, particularly as it was so close to the expected date for the birth of her child delivery. Whatever the outcome of the conference, the IIP envisaged continuing to provide high levels of support to Claire in the coming weeks.

Daniel

Background

Daniel was twelve years old when he was referred to the IIP in May 2009. He lived with his mother Doreen and father Derek and his five brothers (aged fifteen, nine, six, three and ten months and his sister, aged eight). The family had historically been difficult to engage with and had avoided interaction with the YOT, health, Sure Start, social work, education and housing services for a number of years. Prior to the IIP intervention, no agency had meaningfully or successfully engaged with Daniel or his family. The family lived in four-bedroom social rented accommodation next to a major transport interchange and Daniel was the identified leader of a group of young people, of mixed ages, who were involved in almost daily anti-social behaviour in the interchange.

Reports from the social landlord and police to a multi-agency meeting in February 2008 and subsequently at the time of referral to the IIP stated that Daniel was the subject of regular police and street warden community concern meetings related to almost daily anti-social behaviour and police incidents on the estate and transport interchange. There were also concerns about Daniel associating with a much older peer-group and participating in alcohol consumption. Daniel's older brother had also been involved in serious anti-social behaviour, including harassment and damage to property. Daniel was subject to an Acceptable Behaviour Agreement from April 2009 initiated by the social landlord but a report stated that he failed 'on an almost daily basis' to adhere to the conditions of the Agreement due to his conduct at the transport interchange and he was banned and had been threatened with prosecution by the private company managing the transport interchange. Their social landlord was also threatening the tenancy due to anti-social behaviour and the condition of the property. Derek was reported to be supportive of agency interventions.

Daniel had previously been in a special educational needs school but was now enrolled in a local mainstream secondary school. Both Daniel and his older brother had low attendance rates and Educational Welfare Services had commenced non-attendance proceedings. There were no attendance issues with the three younger siblings attending junior school. Although Daniel's behaviour had not previously been a concern, he was reported to be refusing to attend lessons or follow instructions from school staff. An individual education plan developed in February 2010 had eight objectives, including a target to improve Daniel's attendance rate to ninety per cent and for him to engage more appropriately with peers and adults and to follow teachers' instructions.

It had taken considerable effort to achieve the engagement and trust of Daniel and the other family members. The IIP decided to allocate two workers to the family, one worker to undertake parenting work with both Doreen and Derek and another worker to engage with Daniel. It was also decided to allocate a male and female worker to the family as Derek had displayed negative and discriminatory attitudes towards women, which Daniel had also started to replicate. It also became apparent at an early stage in the case that Derek, who worked night shifts, was not supporting Doreen in undertaking parenting, domestic labour and household management tasks and the home was described as being 'overcrowded and in chaos physically, emotionally and mentally.'

Once engaged, the family were reported to have cooperated with the IIP extremely positively and a large number of significant changes had been achieved for Daniel and his family. Daniel was no longer engaged in anti-social behaviour and was participating in a range of positive activities and his parents had become much more open with all other agencies and were actively communicating with these agencies. The IIP had referred the younger children to Sure Start and Children's Centre services and the parents had been referred to IIP parenting courses, Lets Talk (focused on managing and challenging behaviour) and family nurturing. The male IIP worker had also undertaken cooking activities with the family which they had enjoyed. The family were reported to have 'got through' the summer of 2009. However, problems re-emerged when the children returned to school and there were difficulties between October and December 2009. However, Daniel completed his Acceptable Behaviour Agreement and there were no reported incidents of anti-social behaviour between October 2009 and March 2010.

It was reported that Derek had become more involved in the daily life of the family and that there was a better division of labour within the house. Doreen and Derek were reported to be discussing parenting and domestic management issues, there were more consequences being put in place for the children's behaviour and the children's attitudes and conduct had improved and there was a calmer atmosphere in the home. Both parents were continuing to attend the once weekly two-hour parenting courses delivered directly by IIP workers, which were attended on a group basis by other parents and focused upon emotional literacy, looking after yourself and providing a model for children. The IIP workers believed that these were effective courses and Doreen and Derek were reported to be 'soaking it up', 'doing really well' and being 'the stars of their group.' Support had also been provided to the parents to address peer group influences and Daniel's school attendance had improved. Doreen's perspective on the IIP was articulated in a letter written to the project worker:

"We owe you a huge favour for what you have done for us in the last few weeks... the trip to Flamingo Land was the first time we have ever been together somewhere as a family...we are getting on better as a family and dad is now helping...better dealing with children...God only knows how things would be with us if you hadn't come along. You [project worker] are a friend and not just someone with a job to do...we don't like to put onto others because no matter how hard things get or how much we've struggled to get by we've always managed somehow."

Progress and interventions (from March 2010)

March

One of the IIP workers had been on sick leave and there had been no direct contact with the family, although a 'team around the family' meeting had been convened for workers. Daniel's school attendance had declined and the family were reported to be avoiding contact with the educational social worker, with whom they had a difficult relationship. Derek had stated that he would personally take Daniel to school and Doreen had been phoning the school in the morning to ensure that Daniel was attending. When Daniel was in school his behaviour was reported to be better and more cooperative. The project worker stated that the family appeared to be more settled, there had been no reported incidents of anti-social behaviour

and Daniel was coming home at the time requested by his parents in the evening. The IIP workers were trying to arrange a house swap for the family with their social landlord, in order to address the overcrowding issue and to enable the family to move away from the negative relationships with neighbours and problematic peer group influences on the children. Both parents were very positive about the IIP intervention, saying *"they could not praise the project enough."*

April

There had been no incidents of anti-social behaviour, but Daniel and his older brother had continued to have very poor school attendance rates prior to the Easter holiday. Daniel was missing particular classes and his non-attendance was believed to be linked to his friendship with a peer on the estate. The younger children in the household were doing well. Daniel was engaging positively with the IIP and had taken up an interest in golf.

The family were desperate to move from the estate due to difficult relations with other adult neighbours and they believed that their children were unsafe and had experienced intimidation, including one alleged incident involving a knife. However, the family refused to contact the police so not record or pattern of events could be officially established. The family did contact the police on one occasion but refused to pursue the complaint as statements would be required from the children. The social landlord were reported to be reluctant to sanction a move for the family, stating that the requested move was too close to the vicinity of the existing home and that no large properties were currently available. The IIP workers were frustrated with this response, given the progress the family had made and the social landlords' behaviour file on the family reportedly being closed for the previous six months. An IIP worker stated: *"This is a family that no agency could get in the door with and our project has managed to engage, address anti-social behaviour and education and provide parenting classes but there is no flexibility from housing, despite their emphasis on Family Intervention Tenancies."* The IIP workers were pursuing the housing transfer request with the regional director of housing and they were concerned that the family would become disillusioned that their progress was not resulting in a positive outcome in relation to their housing circumstances.

The IIP workers were providing family members with a lot of praise and were attempting to move from intensive one to one work with family members towards equipping and enabling Doreen and Derek to do things for themselves and the IIP workers suggested that this approach appeared to be working.

The parent group that Doreen and Derek attended had reconvened and project workers reported that both parents were continuing to make *"excellent progress"* on the course: *"Derek would not entertain anyone and now he is a leader in the group and comes up with great ideas."* Doreen stated that circumstances were *"fine"* and there had been no problems. The IIP worker had attended a meeting at school about Daniel on Doreen's behalf. The school had been positive about Daniel's progress and Doreen was very pleased with this outcome. Doreen said that she had missed the parenting courses and *"couldn't wait for them to start again."*

May

There continued to be a lot of concern about the housing circumstances of the family, with no progress from the housing department and the IIP workers investigated a move into private rented accommodation. The attendance of Daniel and his older brother at school had fallen and this was believed to be linked to events on the estate, including some new negative peer group influences. Doreen and Derek had completed the parenting courses. Although the courses had gone well, there were concerns that learning was not being translated into actions in the home, particularly by Derek. The younger children continued to do well. The one to one work with Daniel and his older brother had been intensified as the IIP workers wished to divert them from becoming involved in trouble on the estate, given that the brothers had managed to avoid involvement in anti-social behaviour for the previous nine months.

Daniel reported that school was *"alright"*; and that he was *"trying to stick in"* at school. He said that nothing much had happened and that he liked living on the estate. He was continuing to enjoy playing golf. Daniel said that the project workers visited his home or sometimes took him out to places like MacDonalds, chatted to him and listened to him. He said *"the project workers are good people, they take me places and they try to help me."* Derek said that *"things are better than ever at home, but housing is a real problem."* Doreen said that things were good but she was *"fed up"* with the housing situation and was looking at private renting. She felt that all the hard work and progress would go to waste if the family could not secure a house move. She reported that Daniel's school attendance had *"picked up."* She said that the parenting course had now finished but that she and Derek were going to swap and do the other course. They were both also involved in a new family support group that had been established.

Doreen said *"The workers are the best thing about the parenting course. They make you feel confident and relaxed. It is also good to work with the other parents."* Doreen believed that the course had taught her to listen to her children more and to work around an agreed set of rules. Derek said *"the workers on the parenting course know what they are talking about and you learn a lot of things and learn that you can do things."* He believed that the course had made things *"ninety per cent different"*, including making Derek listen to the children and become involved in things. He always tried to follow what he had been told on the course and to put this into practice at home. He said that the IIP workers were always willing to help and *"had made a massive difference."* Doreen stated that the IIP workers were in touch *"every other day"* and that they were always willing to help with problems and they were *"constantly"* supporting her family. She said that the workers were *"brilliant"* and that she could take any issue to them and they *"will go to the ends"* to try to resolve it.

June

There was a family conference to discuss the case. It emerged that the family had not paid any rent to the social landlord since January. The IIP workers had not been aware of, or made aware of Daniel and his older brother attending school for a half day and one day respectively in the six week period since the Easter holidays. The IIP workers believed that consequences now had to be put in place, as the IIP had *"kept the pressure off"* the family (for example from educational welfare officers) and had provided intensive support, including lifts, ensuring children were awake and dressed on time, but at this stage of the intervention

there was a need for the older children and their parents to assume control and responsibility. Doreen had escorted Daniel to school but he still did not attend and denied his absence to his mother and senior teachers. Derek has physically taken the boys to school and into the classroom, but the IIP workers believed that he was reluctant to do this and was *"doing the minimum to get by."* The IIP workers had requested the school detain Daniel and his older brother at lunchtimes to prevent them leaving the school premises but this had not proved possible. The IIP workers stated that it was difficult to give attention to the two older boys when there were younger children involved and that the older boys needed to assume more responsibility.

The IIP workers felt that the family could and should not be protected from the consequences of their actions indefinitely. Although the IIP workers would *"walk by their side"*, the family had to face the consequences of their action and could not be protected from legal and other forms of action. The IIP workers believed that the family had received a great deal of support and that they needed to acknowledge that it was their own actions which had resulted in the current circumstances. The IIP worker had a constructive home visit focused on the younger children.

The IIP workers had shown the family some private rented properties in the area. The local authority would not consider the family for Band A status and there was no possibility of an Intensive Support Tenancy, which project workers believed would provide a *"carrot and stick"* approach which may be effective with the family. Consideration had also been given to moving the older boys to a new school to attempt to resolve attendance and bullying issues but no local school were willing to accept the boys because of their truancy records.

There had been alleged incidents of anti-social behaviour, including of Daniel being involved in fire raising and breaking windows. IIP workers believed that this was possible, given his truanting and his association with a negative older peer group involved in the criminal justice system, but the workers also believed that the family had a poor reputation on the estate which led to them being accused of incidents by default and none of the allegations had resulted in further proceedings. Despite the difficulties that the family had recently experienced, and in recognition and reward of the progress that had been made in terms of reduced anti-social behaviour, intermittent improvement in school attendance and that the parents had attempted to use boundary and consequences strategies and put in place structured evening activities, the IIP had organised a family caravan holiday. However, this was being reviewed. Derek had suggested that the two older boys were excluded from the holiday but the IIP workers did not think that this was appropriate.

It was reported that there had been continuing progress on domestic labour, where Doreen was now being assisted by Derek and the children and Derek was now undertaking all the cooking. The workers had focused on chores such as taking bins out, gardening and clothes washing and had also sought to emphasise the importance of manners in family interactions. The family were reported to be *"still at some level buying into what they are being asked to do."* It was intended that both parents would participate in new parenting courses commencing in September. The IIP workers had sought to maintain Daniel's interest in clubs and to think about vocational education routes for him. The IIP workers were undertaking a lot of communication with the school. The intensity of contact had been reduced and it had been hoped to move towards an exit strategy, but the new problems had

led to intensity of contact being increased and the commencement of exit strategies being postponed.

Doreen said that there had been a real difficulty in getting Daniel to attend school and that she and Derek were required to accompany him. Although meetings had been held with the school, the issue had not been resolved and Daniel would not disclose the problem, although Doreen believed that it was related to older boys. Doreen reported seeing a lot of the IIP workers and that the workers had taken them to view a private rented property, which she had liked. She said that she was still enjoying working with the IIP and that the workers were really helpful and supportive. She particularly appreciated their help in arranging the family holiday.

July

There had been a further Team Around the Family meeting. The family had disengaged for three weeks, not being home and not returning phone calls or text messages. The IIP workers detected a 'bad atmosphere' in the home when they did manage to undertake a visit and clear tension between Doreen and Derek. Daniel's school attendance had been very poor and Derek had not always taken him to school. The attendance of the younger children at school was also becoming problematic. Daniel was reported to spend a lot of time "*hanging around*" with a problematic peer group and he was regularly referred to in reports of neighbourhood order, although no formal action had been taken by the police or other agencies. Derek's relationship with the children, including Daniel, had deteriorated and Daniel had stated his negative feelings towards his father. The IIP workers had spent a lot of after school time with Daniel to assist in coping with the situation and had also informed the Emergency Duty Team about the threat and risk now evident in the home, linked to escalating tension and the presence of so many children. The IIP workers now believed that the case was "*borderline Child Protection*", although there was not uniform agreement about how to proceed. There was a Child Safety/SWOT analysis meeting and the development of a multi-agency Child Safety Plan although the family were adamant that they did not want this. Derek did not engage positively with the meeting, although Doreen did.

September

IIP workers had challenged Derek about his interactions with the children and his refusal to engage with IIP and social workers. Doreen and Derek's relationship deteriorated and there was a very serious incident of domestic violence, witnessed by Daniel and some of his siblings. An IIP worker was directly involved in the immediate aftermath of the incident, including a dialogue with Derek who reported being suicidal. There were also issues about him becoming homeless and the IIP worked with the Safer Families and Child Protection Teams. Charges were pressed and the police, domestic violence and MARAP became involved in the case. Derek was banned from the locality and from contact with the family as part of the bail conditions. A risk assessment for child protection was undertaken. The extent of the previous financial and emotional abuse that Doreen had suffered became more evident.

Doreen and the children appeared to be happier in their current circumstances and Daniel had been very supportive of his mother. The home was reported to be tidier, cleaner and brighter and the family had some positive days out during the summer, facilitated by the IIP

workers. However, Daniel was arrested for involvement in a burglary and was due to appear in court in October. The IIP was focusing its work on reintegrating the children into school. It was reported that the domestic violence incident had dramatically transformed other agencies attitudes towards the family, who had previously been viewed very negatively. Re-housing the family was now regarded by other agencies as a priority and the Safer Families team were working with the family.

Reflections (at September 2010)

The domestic violence incident was regarded as perversely, 'opening doors' and changing agency attitudes and finally providing progress on housing. The IIP secured mentoring support for Daniel and his older brother.

The IIP workers reflected that it was IIP workers who really got to understand the family dynamics and issues and get beyond initial assessments and "*the front*" that families may present. However, it was difficult for other agencies to accept what project workers say and project workers subsequently doubted their own perceptions of the level of risks evident or the support needs required.

Doreen said that she had enjoyed working with the project very much, especially the two IIP workers, who had, in her words "*been brilliant.*" The IIP had "*helped with everything*", including providing someone to talk to and providing support whenever it was needed. The IIP had improved things for Doreen and her family. She had noticed the differences in dealing with the children and learning about providing rules and boundaries. The IIP had also tried to help with housing and had been very good in the recent crisis. The most important thing that the IIP had achieved was providing Doreen with more confidence in herself and giving her the skills to deal with things when the IIP workers were not present. Doreen also said that she very much enjoyed the parenting classes and she had signed up to another course. The best thing about these classes had been meeting and working with other parents, learning from them and being able to share experiences with others in the same situation. Doreen believed that the IIP had done "*everything that it possibly could.*" They weren't able to re-house her family "*but they couldn't have done more.*" The family required a four bedroom house and Doreen stated that such properties were "*like hot cakes*" in the area. Doreen said that she would recommend the IIP to other parents and that she had written up a diary which shows how much the project means to her and how much she values the two IIP workers.

Update: December 2010

Derek was still excluded from the family home and a trial date (for assault) has been set for January. Daniel and his older brother had missed a lot of school, with attendances of 30 and 50 per cent respectively. The IIP workers were trying to get this accepted as a safety issue, involving the community police etc. Daniel was subject to a new referral order and was complying well with this. Doreen was receiving support from domestic violence services and was engaging well with these. She had undertaken course on parenting teenagers and a Freedom Course (for victims of domestic violence). The family had moved house to a nearby

area and Doreen loved the new house - she had wanted to get away from the old house (for its memories and also due to problems with neighbours). The house was private-rented but the housing company had experience of dealing with vulnerable tenants and after a delay in accepting Doreen, were very positive about her. The IIP workers had to "*beg, bribe and shout etc.*" to achieve this housing move for the family. The family were reported to be now happier but there was the issue of Doreen being the single parent of seven children and there were concerns about whether the needs of the younger children were being met. The project workers believed that what had happened was "*testament to Doreen's strength.*" There was a package of support, including Sure Start, in place, although there was limited social work involvement. The IIP worker continued to see the family once a week, focusing on school attendance. It was acknowledged that there was "*was long way to go*" with the family.

Eddie

Note: The researcher had an initial meeting with Eddie and Diane and a subsequent telephone call with Diane. However, most of the information in this narrative is based on the perspectives of the IIP worker.

Background

Eddie was aged 14 and lived in foster care organised by the local authority with the agreement of his mother, although Eddie wished to return to live with his family when suitable accommodation became available. Eddie and other children in his family had been taken into foster care as the existing private-rented family home was deemed unfit to live in due to flooding and serious structural damage. Securing another home for the family had been problematic as, in the words of the IIP worker "*they were a well known family*" and private landlords were reluctant to grant them a tenancy. The family have been bidding on several Council properties but have been unsuccessful. The family were subject to an eviction notice in March 2010.

Eddie is a member of a close-knit travelling family, which he was very proud of. Prior to going into care he lived in the family home with his mother Diane, his four brothers and two sisters and his sister's two children. Eddie had a total of 21 brothers and sisters. In July 2009 two of Eddie's siblings and two of his cousins were taken into local authority care on Interim Care Orders and the following month Eddie's father died. Eddie had been traumatised by these events. Eddie spoke negatively about his foster mother, who he felt wouldn't let him do things, particularly using internet sites which Eddie viewed as an important means for keeping in touch with his family. Eddie had contact visits with his mother three times a week and really valued this. He also had a girlfriend, Katie.

Eddie was aged 14 when he was referred to the IIP in December 2009 by Social Services due to his involvement anti social behaviour and offences of criminal damage and he began to work with the IIP at the end of January 2010. Eddie attended a Special Educational Needs school and was on a part-time timetable due to behavioural issues. Eddie's family was reported to be very protective and also suspicious of "*authority figures*", especially social workers.

Diane, Eddie's mother, spent most of her time visiting her children who were placed in various homes across the county. She was trying to secure a family home to enable the family to be together again. When asked about Eddie, Diane wanted him to have something to do everyday to stop him wandering about and getting into trouble. She was very concerned about a recent incident when Eddie had got into a car with an adult and this incident had been reported to the police. Diane felt that she was alone and had not received help from anyone. Despite all the challenges, Diane was maintaining contact with Eddie on a regular basis.

The IIP support plan for Eddie aimed to address issues of anger management, school attendance, reducing anti-social or violent behaviour and coping with his bereavement. The

IIP aimed to encourage positive actions, to enhance Eddie's understanding of the consequences of his actions on others and to improve his self-confidence. Eddie's areas of strengths were identified as including a positive initial engagement with the IIP, a willingness to be honest and open and a recognition that his behaviour at school needed to improve. The IIP sought to address these issues and objectives through the use of motivational techniques such as work and goal sheets, liaison with Eddie's school and working on the barriers to his attendance, exploring Eddie's feelings about the loss of his father and working on anger management and conflict resolution. A case review indicated that there had been no reports of anti-social behaviour, although there were continuing issues at school.

Eddie saw his IIP worker two or three times per week with telephone contact on other days when necessary. This was built around his contact sessions with his family which were very important to him. Eddie has been attending the project regularly, with no problems. The IIP worker wanted to attempt some anger management sessions with Eddie and to attempt to address more deep rooted problems, but at present had been required to focus on 'emergency' issues that needed to be dealt with on a daily basis. Eddie also seemed reluctant to engage with these sessions, mainly because the IIP worker had tried to deliver them immediately prior to contact time with his mother. The IIP worker had undertaken some anger management work with Eddie, particularly around his brothers being taken into care, for which he blamed himself for not being able to prevent this situation.

Eddie reported liking the IIP and getting on well with his IIP worker. He had participated in several IIP activities including a team building exercise and bowling, although he had missed some activities as they coincided with access visits with his mother. Eddie was due to participate in Easter holiday activities including go-karting, canoeing and visiting a theme park.

Progress and interventions (from March 2010)

March, April and May

The IIP worker has very limited contact with Eddie throughout March but had undertaken some work around his anger issues, particularly his guilt about his brothers being in care and blaming himself for not being able to prevent the Police and Social Services from removing them. Eddie was also angry that the court hearing about the status of his brothers has been delayed until June as he wanted the situation resolved so that he could move back home. The IIP worker suggested that the postponement of the hearing may give Diane more time to resolve her housing issues. Eddie had enjoyed the IIP Easter activities- go karting and the paintballing and an assault course. However, due to his disappearance for two days prior to a planned trip to a theme Park, the IIP workers took the decision to stop him going. Eddie was abusive but apologised to the IIP worker afterwards. Eddie was reported to be continually worried about not being able to live with Diane. Eddie was now in school on a full time basis but he reported not enjoying the lessons. He was concerned about this mother, who had an incident of fainting. Eddie had a new girlfriend.

June

The IIP worker reported that things had been more settled with Eddie. He had visited his father's grave which was something he had wanted to do for some time. Eddie continued to feel angry at the social workers who were involved in the removal of his brothers and cousins and brothers talked to the IIP worker a lot about the court case which was scheduled 12th July. His behaviour has been more settled both in and out of school. The IIP worker was considering reducing the frequency of contacts with Eddie because he had not been involved in any incidents of anti-social or offending behaviour.

July

The court case for the family had been delayed again until October as more information needed to be gathered. The IIP worker attended a multi-agency local authority care review meeting for Eddie which had generally been positive, although there have been a few issues with his foster placement. Eddie had also been excluded from school for the last few days of term following an incident. He would be allowed to return to the school in September.

Diane and her family had moved to a new property in a different area of the town. At the review meeting it was agreed that Children's Services would visit the new property and, if it is thought to be suitable, then Eddie may be allowed to stay there for one weekday night and at weekends.

Reflections (at September 2010)

Eddie had not reoffended. He was learning to deal with and come to terms with issues of bereavement and his brothers being in care although the IIP worker acknowledged that there was *"still a long way to go."* He had reluctantly engaged in anger management sessions which had been *"partly successful"* in addressing his feelings of guilt and he was slowly understanding the consequences of his actions on others. It was important that he attended school *"if he wants to ensure that he gets to where he wants to be."* His progress had been slow and he had used diversionary tactics to avoid formal or group sessions. He had engaged well in some one to one sessions but, although he enjoyed IIP group activities, he struggled in them and he had to be removed from some of them due to incidents of violent behaviour. He had responded well to the use or withholding of rewards, such as phone credit or access to activities, which the IIP worker believed had been *"instrumental"* in him becoming more reflective. Eddie still had problems with violent behaviour, related to the influence of some other members of his family, and the approaches advocated by the IIP and the school. The IIP worker believed that Eddie needed to access specialist bereavement counselling, although Eddie was reluctant to pursue this. The school had been supportive and had assigned Eddie a designated teacher who he could approach *"if he was feeling under pressure."*

Update: December 2010

Eddie was no longer in foster care and in late October 2010 went to live with one of his older brothers and his girlfriend at their property which was close to Diane's and Eddie continued to spend weekends with her.

Eddie was excluded from school in September after attacking the head teacher. In early October 2010 he secured a place at a new school. Since living with his brother, Eddie has attended school everyday and appeared to be happy there. The IIP worker stated that Eddie's brother ensured that he attended and is keen that Eddie continues his schooling. There are routines in place and the IIP worker considered Eddie's brother to be a good influence. The IIP had provided a set of drawers, a lamp shade and blinds for Eddie. Eddie has been staying weekends with his mother and initially one night per week. However, this proved problematic when Eddie changed schools and a taxi was required to take him so it was decided to discontinue week night contact.

Diane had now secured a flat and was managing to keep it clean and tidy. She had expressed concerns about having Eddie to live with her and thought that she might manage better and demonstrate her ability to cope and be responsible if Eddie was not living with her. Diane was reported to be trying very hard to demonstrate her ability to manage and cope with the flat to secure a positive outcome of the court case later in December as she would like to have her two children returned to her as soon as possible. The IIP worker had suggested to Diane that it may be better to have Eddie live with her as that would demonstrate an ability to cope but Diane had resisted this.

Eddie continued to be engaged with the IIP, but with reduced contact. The IIP worker had attempted to exit Eddie from the IIP, but he had requested to remain with the project. The IIP worker had agreed to continue contact with Eddie due to the pending court case but would exit Eddie in January 2011. Eddie was proactive in contacting the IIP worker if he has concerns.

Eddie had not been involved in any incidents of anti-social behaviour or offending. The IIP worker stated that Eddie *"had turned a corner"* and now *"presents clean and tidy."* Eddie had been willing to meet with the family social worker, which was regarded as a big step forward, although since Eddie was now living with his brother social worker contact was minimal. Eddie was reported to be able to deal much better with his anger and had continued to work through the anger management sessions with the IIP worker. He was now able to *"take time out"* and think about his behaviour and deal with things in a different way. However, Eddie's main issues were related to the foster care of his siblings. The IIP project worker thought it was likely that the children would remain in foster care and not be returned to Diane and expressed concerns about how Eddie might react to this outcome.

Jake

Background

Jake lived with his mum Christine and brother Joe. His father was in prison for murder and has nothing to do with the family, and Jake also witnessed domestic violence by his father towards his mother. Jake was seventeen years old when he was referred to the IIP in November 2009 by the Anti-social Behaviour Team and the police due to nuisance behaviour in the community including criminal damage, abuse towards some individuals and putting the family at risk of losing their social housing tenancy. Jake had attended a special educational needs residential boarding school until the age of sixteen and then attended college. Jake found it difficult to adjust to the unstructured environment outside boarding school and began to engage in anti-social behaviour. He had received a final warning for an assault on another young person which resulted in him being temporarily excluded from the college. Jake was now attending a cookery and horticultural course at the college. Jake enjoyed the cookery element of the course, but not horticulture studies and he was due to drop this element at the end of the first year. Jake had learning difficulties which affected his abilities in decision making and forming appropriate friendships. He also had problems with anger management which his mother found difficult to cope with and Christine expressed concern about leaving Jake alone in the house. The family was at risk of losing their home; with the latest incident involving Jake playing music very loudly. Jake did not appear to understand the impact of these actions on his neighbours.

Jake was very interested in cooking for his family and watching cookery programmes on television. He was also very interested in fishing, which he participated in with his grandfather. He was constructing a fish pond in his back garden. Jake was a keen lawn bowler and attended a local bowling club.

The IIP support plan (reviewed in February 2010) aimed to address anti-social behaviour, behaviour within the family home, social skills and engagement in more positive activities. The key issues to be addressed included abusive behaviour towards some neighbours, inappropriate behaviour and language within the community as well as the family home, poor social skills and a lack of participation in meaningful activities and interests. Identified areas of strength for Jake included his willingness to engage with and utilise IIP support, his recognition when his behaviour was inappropriate and understanding the difference between right and wrong and his eagerness to progress academically. His behaviour and attitude at college had been excellent.

Jake had direct contact with the IIP worker for at least three hours per week, combined with telephone contact where necessary. By February 2010, Jake had received one to one sessions with his IIP worker on anti-social behaviour and its consequences, how to deal with difficult situations and perceptions and perceptions of self and others and manners and appropriate methods for gaining attention. Jake had received one to one sessions on anger management, including simple breathing techniques, using worksheets and Cognitive Behavioural Therapy techniques using tools from CAMHS. The IIP worker was also encouraging Jake to develop activities that have positive effects and to formulate appropriate friendships.

There had been no further reported incidents of anti-social behaviour. However, Jake admitted that he found it difficult to control his temper and continued to do so with Christine and Joe. He acknowledged that he could lose his temper very easily and could snap at his mother. The IIP worker believed that Jake was keen to address this issue and that he was able to recognise when he has behaved inappropriately. The IIP worker had utilised goals sheets which sought to reduce behaviour such as swearing, punching walls and to encourage Jake to improve his relationship with Joe. Positive activities or actions were undertaken with Jake once certain targets have been reached, for example the provision of fishing equipment as an incentive. The IIP worker was compiling an anger management booklet and Jake has agreed to look at this. The IIP worker was also attempting to increase the structured activities into Jake's routine.

The IIP worker accompanied Jake on a trip to the orthodontist. Jake had participated in holidays activities including go-karting, canoeing, a theme park trip, paint balling, and quad biking. A healthy eating plan had also been devised for Jake, covering what makes good and bad food and the calorific value of foodstuffs. The IIP worker was attempting to get an appointment with a dietician for Jake. Jake had expressed an interest in becoming a butcher and the IIP worker was seeking a work placement for him. Jake had also attended an interview for a general foundation course at college, starting in September 2010.

The IIP worker introduced a series of monthly goals for Jake, developed in partnership with Jake and his mother. Jake spoke positively about these and explained that they gave him something to work towards. He had achieved maximum scores, including points awarded by his mother to reflect his behaviour and we was pleased with this outcome. Christine spoke very positively about the 'goals sheet' and thought that it had a positive impact on Jake's behaviour, as Jake liked structure and the goals sheet provided a form of this.

In March three new goals were added, including playing music at a lower volume, make Joe's bed and making Christine a coffee in the morning. Although Jake was using the goals sheet as a benchmark, the IIP worker was concerned that Jake may be using it as an excuse not to do something; for example "*it is not on the sheet.*" The IIP worker was therefore attempting to ensure that Jake did not become dependent on the goals sheet to change his behaviour. Although Jake engaged positively and proactively with the IIP and was always on time for appointments and polite, The IIP worker expressed concern that Jake was not necessarily taking appropriate responsibility for his actions.

In March it was discovered that Jake had been smoking cannabis at home. This had been problematic for his mother as Jake became moody afterwards. Jake had also been suspended from college for being with a young person who was smoking cannabis. There was a hearing at college, at which the IIP worker supported Jake and Jake had returned to college. The IIP worker has been trying to get Jake to think about the negatives of smoking cannabis, his choice of friends, his ability to say no and what make a good or bad friend.

Progress and Interventions (from March 2010)

April

The IIP worker reported that Christine had explained that Jake had a bad attitude over Easter weekend, being rude and verbally abusive towards her even when her friends were in the house. She said that Jake had *"lost it"* and had tried to punch the cabinet but then punched the glass door, so needed to go to hospital. Jake had also come home very drunk and had smashed up his iphone. Jo was extremely upset and scared and Christine was concerned for Jake as his behaviour reminded her of her ex husband. Christine was concerned about Jake's choice of friends and his ability to resist peer group influences. Jake had been referred to Social Services on mental health grounds. The IIP worker reported deterioration in Jake's behaviour and had suggested to Jake that he consider five things that Jake could do to make up for this. Jake suggested attending an alcohol awareness projects, cooking a family meal, undertaking an activity with Joe, joining a boxing club and developing a budget sheet to calculate how he could pay for repairs to the window and iphone. The IIP worker believed that Jake was genuinely remorseful for his actions. Jake attended a planned IIP raft building activity.

May

Jake's behaviour had improved and he had continued to work positively towards his goals sheet. Jake was subsequently rewarded with some additions to his fishing equipment. Jake was making positive steps at college and had submitted his college work to the exam board. Jake was being considered for referral to a residential college and he had been undertaking interview skills training to enable him to pass the interview for the college. Jake explained that he found this a challenge but that he was enjoying it. He was positive about the referral to the college

Jake attended the Easter activities organised by the IIP. Jake commented that the key worker had *"been quite strict with him"* after his violent episode. The key worker had pointed out that Jake's behaviour was unacceptable and had consequences for others. Jake understood why his key worker was being very strict with him about his behaviour over the Easter holidays and understood that he could not have rewards if he behaved badly. Jake continued to enjoy the contact time with his IIP worker and was pursuing his fishing, bowling and culinary activities. Jake welcomed the introduction of his healthy eating plan and believed that it had been *"going well."*

Christine was disappointed with Jake's behaviour during Easter but explained that things were going well and that Jake had been less violent. Christine was very pleased that Jake has been referred to the College as *"it's what Jake wants"*. Christine still got frustrated with the arguments between Jake and Jo although there have been no major arguments since Jake's violent episode at Easter.

June

The IIP worker attended a review at college with Jake and indicated that Jake had made good progress and improved his attitude to work. They discussed options for September as Jake had also been accepted for another year at his existing college to progress to the intermediate level on his course. The IIP worker encouraged and assisted Jake to complete

a copy of the new college's application form. The IIP believed that self completion would demonstrate that Jake was motivated and capable with some support of achieving work set. The IIP worker also undertook some interview practice with Jake in readiness for this interview for the new college and Jake found this really useful. Jake had a mock interview at the college, with the formal interview set for July. Jake had decided to change course from catering to ground keeping.

Jake has participated in a week of work experience at a local butcher's shop, which he enjoyed and where he learnt new skills and received good reports from. He attended everyday and on time. The IIP worker remained keen to encourage Jake to take responsibility for himself and to become much more independent, for example by using the self service check out when buying some toiletries. The key worker was also assisting Jake complete an application form for a shelf stacking job with a major supermarket during the summer holidays.

Jake's diet remained a concern and the IIP worker encouraged Jake to take some responsibility for this. Jake had seen a dietician and begun a new diet for 3 days so far, which he was finding difficult, although the whole family were also trying to follow this diet and Jake had been cooking healthy meals. The key worker was investigating a gym membership for Jake.

Jake's behaviour was described by his mother as *"up and down."* Christine *"takes everyday as it comes."* Christine explained that she was *"dreading the summer holidays when Jake will be at home for nine weeks and his brother for six."* Physical violence had escalated between the brothers, with knives and broom handle sometimes being brandished. Christine was concerned about her lack of money to keep the boys active (and apart) during the summer holidays. Christine hoped that the IIP worker would have some activities planned for Jake during the summer holidays. Jake continued to go fishing and Christine *"breaths a sigh of relief"* when this happened as it enabled her to have a break.

Jake said that his behaviour had improved over the last few weeks and that he had no major arguments with his Mum or his brother (contradicting his mother's account). Jake continued to value his meetings and conversations with the IIP worker.

July

Jake has secured a place at the new college and been offered a place at his existing college. He was due to start a grounds maintenance course at the new college in September. His interview at the college went well and Jake spoke very positively about the skills he had learnt from the IIP worker in this period. Jake *"could not praise the IIP worker enough"* for all the help he had given him, from completing the forms for the college in the first instance, to helping with interview practice.

Jake was nervous about attending the new college and described it as *"a massive building with huge grounds."* The college provided residential opportunities and Jake was keen to take advantage of this, intending to stay Monday to Friday and return home at weekends. Jake also wanted very much to take up the opportunity of earning extra cash at the weekend, by putting his grounds maintenance knowledge into practice around the college grounds.

Jake was persisting with his healthy eating but found it extremely difficult in the first month and didn't stick to the healthy eating plan. He commented that there was too much going on in his life and he found it difficult to cope with everything at one time. However, from the beginning of July, Jake had resumed the healthy eating plan again and was managing to follow it. He was due to see the dietician in August.

Jake explained that relationships at home were still strained, particularly between Jake and Joe, although his relationship with his mother had improved substantially. Jake viewed college as an opportunity to be away from his family and to gain some independence. Jake believed that he had now been "*so well behaved*" that the goal sheet had not been used for some time. Jake spent a lot of the summer holiday fishing.

Jake expected to exit the IIP in the near future, around the time of starting at college. He wanted to continue his contact with IIP worker by phone and less intensely, and described the IIP worker as "*a friend*." Jake thought he had become much more autonomous since his involvement with the IIP and stated "*now I know I'm independent*." Jake was now applying for a driving licence and the IIP worker was assisting with this.

Christine was pleased about Jake's college course but expressed concerns about Jake's ability to cope in a different place and that he had a tendency to "*follow the crowd*" which may lead him into trouble. Christine expressed concern that Jake would receive a payment of £100 per week and a lump sum every four weeks, as he was not used to having so much money and had very little experience of budgeting. She did not want him to "*go clubbing and get into a fight*." Despite her worries she acknowledged she had to trust him but would find this very difficult. She spoke positively about the work the IIP worker had undertaken with Jake particularly around making his own decisions, saying no and taking responsibility for himself. Christine hopes this would help Jake to manage.

Christine was also worried about the wider financial implications, particularly on her care allowance and the knock on effects on other benefits she receives. She believed that she may lose the care allowance for Jake and have to sign on Job Seekers Allowance, as she had not worked for 20 years. She described Jake's departure as "*a life changing situation*" for all the family; "*it will be a different atmosphere*", but believed that it would "*make life easier*." Christine likened the situation to previous experiences when Jake had attended other residential schools; believing that their relationship would improve as they would have more to talk about and Jake would be able to share his experiences.

August

Jake attended the new college but felt very isolated and reported being subject to bullying. Jake could not access support from the IIP worker and believed that he was at risk of getting into trouble, so requested to return home. Christine was proud of him for attempting the move to the college and hoped that it would make Jake value his family, home environment and the need to live by a set of rules. Jake was due to commence a college course on basic literacy and numeracy skills in September, which was a requirement of him undertaking a catering course at the college where he was previously excluded. Jake had undertaken and enjoyed a range of activities with the IIP worker during the summer holidays, including go-karting and golf. Jake's relationship with his brother remained difficult. Jake had refrained from smoking cannabis and there had been no further incidents of anti-social behaviour. The

IIP worker was aiming to exit Jake from the IIP in September when he started at college. The IIP worker had accessed the home improvement scheme provided by the third sector organisation delivering the IIP to decorate Jake's bedroom, replace doors and fix locks. Christine was concerned about this as she felt Jake had really bonded with the IIP worker and she was in the process of contacting a mental health charity to see if an alternative adult mentor for Jake could be provided. Christine was hoping to start a part time job, which was dependent upon completion of a CRB check.

Reflections (at September 2010)

Jake enjoyed participating in the IIP, including the one to one sessions and the group activities. He said that the IIP worker had *"helped with everything"* and had *"helped me change the way I behave."* Jake particularly appreciated the support provided in making choices about going to college and believed that he was more independent and responsible as a result of the intervention, including being *"better to my mum."* Jake understood that *"you have got to have rules"* and believed that the IIP had helped ensure that the family had not lost their tenancy. Jake spoke positively about *"the strictness"* of the IIP and the rewards linked to reaching goals. Jake believed that he was more confident and less aggressive and that he now knew how to shop independently and manage money.

Christine believed that the IIP had provided someone for all members of the families to talk to, including her and Joe. The IIP had also provided *"breathing space"* for Christine by spending time with Jake. She believed that the IIP worker had been able to gather information about Jake's options and to act as a mediator, diffusing family tensions and that the IIP worker was able to influence Jake as *"it is different coming from someone else other than the family."* For example, the IIP worker was able to persuade Jake to play his music less loudly, which had represented a risk to the family tenancy. She valued the IIP worker *"always being at the end of the phone"* and providing advice about health, drugs, alcohol and exercise. Jake had responded positively to the reward system; he was more independent and now understood the consequences of his behaviour, although his behaviour could still be challenging. Christine believed that *"little rules make the difference"*, for example managing the brothers entering each others' bedrooms and Jake being more polite. The IIP worker had provided friendship for Jake and support to the family and had been instrumental in securing Jake's college places. Christine said *"it's good that Jake has contact with a man instead of just a woman"* and that she *"would not be without the key worker"* as *"he was the only influence Jake has."*

The IIP worker believed that the intensive nature of the support to Jake had been crucial in gaining Jake's trust and fostering an open and honest relationship with him. Jake also wanted to change and to take advice on board and was motivated to stay out of trouble. Being non-threatening and non-judgemental had been important and Jake had also benefited from learning about other young people through the group activities, which broadened his social circle and also improved his social skills and interaction with others. It had been important to ensure that moments of crisis did not escalate. It had also been important to ensure that Jake's family did not limit his potential or aspirations and that he received due credit for his achievements and progress. Goal setting had been crucial in

establishing a routine but it had then been important to move beyond the goals sheets in order that Jake behaved responsibly and positively without the need for this mechanism.

Update: December 2010

Jake remained engaged with the IIP project. He had an attendance rate of 98 per cent for his college course. The IIP worker reported that Jake had gained confidence to travel to college independently has received some help with funding for travel costs, which had reduced the pressure on the family budget. The IIP worker continued to engage with Jake on a regular basis, with weekly telephone and face to face contact. The IIP worker had assisted Jake with updating his CV and practicing his interview skills. Jake's younger brother had been the victim of bullying at school and reported that Jake also bullied him at home. This was reported to Children's Services but no action was taken.

The IIP worker continued to try and secure help for Jake post-IIP but had been unable to put anything in place to date. The IIP worker had contacted a housing-related support service that helps vulnerable people keep their accommodation or successfully move into new accommodation. The service is focused on preventative work, promoting independence, promoting social inclusion and community safety. There had been no response yet to this contact. The IIP worker was reluctant to exit Jake from the IIP without future help and support in place, but given the imminent end of the IIP, hoped that this housing service would offer support to Jake in the near future.

Julia

Background

Julia was 15 years old when she was referred to the IIP in August 2009 by her Education Welfare Officer because she had not attended school since May 2008. Julia's mother had been prosecuted in May 2009 for Julia's non-attendance and had also signed a parenting contract with the school. It was unclear why Julia refused to go to school as she was described as being very bright and did not struggle with the work. Julia's mother believed that Julia's refusal to attend school was initially due to the influence of friends who Julia used to associate with. Her non-attendance at school was viewed as putting her at risk of further involvement in anti-social behaviour or offending. In 2007 Julia had assaulted a police officer and received a final warning. She had also been arrested for criminal damage for smashing a television in her home. The problems with Julia's behaviour were thought to be caused, in part, by her association with a group of friends who were involved in offending behaviour and were considered to be a particularly bad influence on her. At the point of her referral to the IIP Julia had severed her contact with these peers and had not had any recent contact with the police.

Julia was described by her IIP worker as being very "*streetwise*" and extremely bright. She was reported as having some mental health problems including feelings of anger and she had deliberately self-harmed in the past. She had been admitted to hospital in 2008 because of a suspected overdose, although no treatment was needed. She had also taken an overdose on a previous occasion. Julia's mental health problems were believed to be connected to her witnessing the domestic violence that her mother had been subjected to by her father when Julia was a young child. It was due to this violence that her mother left the family home with Julia when she was about six years old. They subsequently lived temporarily in a women's hostel before settling at their current address where they have been for nine years. Julia's father and grandfather both died when she was eleven and these bereavement issues had also affected Julia's mental and emotional health. Julia had previously received support from a child psychiatrist and CAMHS but these interventions had now ended as Julia was no longer self-harming.

The IIP worker stated that Julia's mother was very caring and "*not at all a bad parent*", but at the point of referral to the IIP she was struggling to set and enforce boundaries for Julia, who tended to rebel against any rules her mother attempted to impose. Julia's mother stated that Julia became very angry and abusive to her and on one occasion had been physically violent towards her. The mother had called the police and Julia received a caution. It was because of Julia's explosive temper that her mother found it very challenging to put pressure on Julia to attend school.

The IIP aimed to reintegrate Julia into mainstream education or alternative provision, improve her mental, emotional and sexual health, assist her mother in developing skills and strategies to manage Julia's behaviour and improve the relationship between Julia and her mother. The IIP interventions had included Julia's involvement in a film project, one to one work with Julia and her mother, providing support to Julia Support in gaining entry qualifications and accessing college and referral to specialist sexual health and counselling

services. Julia participated in the film project once a week, saw her IIP worker once a week and was also visited by a sessional worker with education expertise on a weekly basis. The number of contact hours had been reduced as Julia made significant progress.

Progress and interventions (from March 2010)

Following a referral from the IIP, Julia attended an assessment for counselling. Although her attendance was viewed as a positive achievement, she did not feel ready to access support from the service. As the IIP intervention developed it was felt that Julia no longer required any mental health intervention as she was no longer self-harming.

The IIP worker had attempted to facilitate Julia's attendance at school, including early morning visits to get her up, dressed and out of the house and liaising with the school to develop a reduced timetable. However, these had not been successful. Julia's mother removed her from the school roll in an attempt to avoid threats of further enforcement action because of Julia's non-attendance.

In order to provide Julia with some kind of constructive activity, the IIP worker managed to persuade her to take part in the IIP film project. Despite not being willing to engage with any sort of formal educational provision, Julia had attended this course every week and engaged fully: *"For a girl who wouldn't get out of bed and wouldn't do anything she's completed every single day... mum still now can't believe that Julia gets up and goes to the film project because that would never have happened."* Julia said that she enjoyed this element of the IIP *"cause it gives you summat to do instead of being bored and going out and getting into trouble."* She had become a peer supporter for young people joining the film project group for the first time. Julia's mother believed that Julia was enjoying this role because it made her feel *"important"* and that she enjoyed helping the other young people.

Although not attending school, Julia was provided with home schooling resources and she completed a record of work (for example, books that she has read) in her own time. The IIP devoted a lot of effort to encouraging Julia to think about going to college. In March 2010, the IIP worker suggested this and although reluctant at first, Julia had come around to the idea and became very keen to start a course in September 2010. In April 2010, one of the IIP sessional workers who taught at a complementary education centre also began working with Julia to go through the college prospectus and ensure that she applied for the right course. Julia had suggested that she would like to be a professional chef and planned to study catering at college.

In order to gain some entry qualifications, in May 2010, Julia began an eight week entry to employment course which would enable her to qualify for a college course. However, both Julia and her IIP worker expressed concerns about the course and Julia did not complete it. The IIP workers attempted to access alternative mechanisms for Julia to obtain qualifications to support her college application, such as through the Princes Trust or Learn Direct. Julia completed a Youth Achievement Award through the film project and had also received a college reference from those running the project. The IIP assisted Julia in compiling a portfolio and Julia attended a college interview in June 2010 and was offered a place. Julia

confirmed that she was looking forward to starting college and that the visits by the sessional worker had been helpful to her. Julia's mother suggested that without the support of the IIP, Julia would not have applied for college.

The IIP worker spent a lot of time with both Julia and mum trying to build their relationship: *"When we first went there mum and her were at each other's throats and they were crying together, they were just going through a bad time together."* The IIP worker also attempted to build Julia's mother's self-confidence and self-esteem, which were low, in part because she had low level literacy skills, and felt unable to apply for jobs despite wanting to earn some extra money.

The IIP ensured that Julia received information and advice from a sexual health nurse. This was in an attempt to delay parenthood as, when initially referred, Julia would talk frequently about wanting to have a baby. In March, the key worker said that Julia had starting using contraception and had decided that she did not want a baby at the present time.

In March 2010, the IIP were already moving towards an exit strategy for Julia, as other than ensuring that Julia settled in college, it was believed that there was nothing more that the IIP could or needed to do in the case. In May, Julia's mother confirmed that the IIP worker had talked to her and Julia about gradually withdrawing support. Julia's mother said that, although they would miss having IIP involvement she understood that Julia had made lots of progress and didn't really need the support any longer. She did however say that she wanted the IIP to remain involved until Julia was settled in college.

Julia's circumstances changed in June 2010 when she became pregnant. She decided to have the baby and moved in with her boyfriend at his parent's house. She therefore put her plans to go to college on hold, deferring rather than cancelled her college place. Julia was planning to attend a school for pregnant teenagers and hoped to gain some GCSEs:

"I don't want to go to collage and then have to miss time off from it while I have the baby so were going to leave it a while so I can spend time with the baby and go to a school for pregnant teens and hopefully get my maths and English GCSE's."

Since June 2010, the IIP has been helping access pregnancy support services for Julia. The IIP worker believed that the pregnancy was not ideal and was something the IIP had sought to prevent happening. However, the IIP worker was confident that Julia had the best chance of *"making it work"* given that both her and her boyfriend's family were supportive. Her boyfriend was completing college and was viewed as being a good influence on Julia. Given the relative stability of situation, the IIP project reaffirmed their decision to close the case, as the IIP worker described:

"We wouldn't wish that she would have a baby but the reality is mum, sisters are very supportive, the father and his parents are very supportive, the teenage pregnancy people and the midwife are all involved and Julia's achieved. I said to her 'you're not in the place you was before, not doing anything wrong any more, your issue now is your baby and that's what you want, to look after your baby and have a nice life, you've got the people, the specialists that we've got in and midwife and the teenage..'. and she doesn't like it. So I went round again to try and explain to her again: 'it's not

that we don't want to work with you, you don't need us any more' and I tried to explain that she could still ring informally if she needed to, if there was something that was really wrong...In the next few weeks we'll be drilling it into her that the reason we don't work with her any more is because she has achieved and is fine."

Reflections (at September 2010)

Julia's commitment to working with the IIP was reported to have been very good and a marked improvement in her behaviour was noted by her IIP worker and mother. Julia's mother's relationship with her mother had also improved and there had been no further police involvement.

The IIP and sessional workers believed that the positive changes that Julia has made were a result of the IIP intervention. They evidenced this by the fact that other agencies had been involved before the family in the past and had failed to help. In terms of what "worked" with Julia and why, it was felt that Julia did not have the same levels of vulnerability as other young people that the IIP supported, but had been coping with bereavement issues and self-harm, and that her relationship with her mother had reached a crisis. The IIP worker believed that the one to one support and amount of consistent and persistent contact provided to Julia and her mother had been crucial: "*Julia knew that I would be there, I'd be telling her off if she wasn't in the car to go and cos I had her for quite a long time and she did things that she didn't want to do.*"

Although the IIP worker emphasised that she would rather Julia had not got pregnant and had gone to college this year, Julia's situation was still relatively stable and the IIP worker believed that Julia had a good chance of maintaining this stability:

"When we was there the other day it's very different listening to her, I said to her 'sitting here from a year ago it's so different listening to you' he'd [boyfriend] got an interview doing the twilight shift at a warehouse cos they needed to make sure they've got enough money and I know they won't have much money and they're young but who's me to tell them they're not going to do it all right and at the minute they're doing everything the right way. They're not peeing about and they're taking it seriously."

"She's probably one of [my cases] that I near enough know will be all right, she's not going to commit any crime, she's not going to get into anti-social behaviour. My only hope is that she goes back to college, for her benefit, to better herself, that at some point in the future she'll do something educational but she's got a head on her shoulders, she'll look after that baby perfectly fine, she'll have the support from mum, mum's in a better place."

Julia's mother explained that she was initially quite concerned about the family getting involved with the IIP as she had previously felt let down by other agencies that had been involved with the family; in particular, teachers who she felt had not provided her with the support she needed around Julia not attending school:

"They just kept telling me to get her out of bed: 'if you have to tip the mattress up, tip water on her'. I thought well it's easy for them to say, they don't have to handle it, they don't have to handle what happens if you do summat like that."

However, once she began working with the IIP, Julia's mother was reassured and felt that the IIP worker's approach was different and that she could be relied upon. Julia's mother suggested that since working with the IIP, Julia had made significant progress with regard to her school attendance and 'attitude.' She explained how, before the IIP got involved, Julia was unable to communicate in a calm manner and would lose her temper easily. Since working with the IIP worker Julia now managed her emotions much better and was able to talk calmly: *"Now she's brilliant, I can sit her down and say 'look I don't like this, I don't like that, we need to talk about this, we need to sort summat out' and she'll put her side across, I'll put my side across and then we'll try to come to a happy medium."*

Although Julia's mother was certain that it is was *"definitely"* the intervention of the IIP that had triggered these positive changes, she was not sure exactly what specific intervention or activity had produced it: *"whatever they've done it's been good."* Julia agreed that her attitude had improved and that her and her mother got along much better now.

Julia's mother also believed that she herself had benefitted directly from the IIP. She particularly appreciated the emotional support and access to someone to talk to that the IIP worker provided her with. Julia's mother also enjoyed the parents coffee mornings that the IIP organised for parents, explaining that it was a good way for her to meet new people and helped to get her out of the house.

Julia had enjoyed the IIP and believed that it was *"good and keeps us out of trouble"* and away from *'the wrong sort of people':*

"[The IIP] made me realise I'd actually got it a bit wrong, cos I was fifteen going out with a twenty-year old, they must be pretty sick, there's something wrong with them if they're going out with a fifteen-year old."

Julia said that the IIP workers were *"always there to listen"* while Julia's mother emphasised how the IIP workers' approach differed to that of other professionals:

"They're not as formal as some people, you get some people that sit there and go like this and look at bits of paper and they're writing everything down, you feel you can't get on with somebody when they're doing that where [key worker] and [sessional worker] you can relax, [key worker]'ll come to house and have tea and biscuits and take her shoes off, put her feet up on couch, it's a relaxed thing and that's what I've liked about it cos I think if it hadn't been as relaxed me and [Julia] wouldn't have got anywhere."

Julia and her mother would feel reassured if they could contact the IIP in the future should they needed some support. Asked if they would recommend that IIP to other families Julia replied 'yes definitely, cos it does help' and Julia's mother said: *"Yeah if I saw somebody in the same situation as me I'd say 'ring this number, speak to these cos they helped us...I'm so grateful for everything they've done."*

Update: December 2010

Julia remained in an extremely stable and settled relationship with her boyfriend, who is in employment. Both families were providing significant support. The case had just been formally closed. The IIP would maintain some level of contact with Julia, including through a volunteer from the third sector organisation delivering the IIP.

Kate

Background

Kate was fourteen years old when she was referred to the IIP by social services in October 2009. Kate lives with her mother, Denise, Denise's partner, and her older brother in a social rented property. Kate has an older brother and sister who live together in another property. Kate is also in regular contact with her father who separated from Denise several years ago and lives with his new partner.

At the time of referral, education, social services (Children and Families Team) and the Youth Offending Team were involved with the family. Kate and her sister were sexually abused in 2005 and subsequently spent time in the care of social services before living with their aunt (Denise's sister) for approximately two years before moving back into her mother's home. Kate's father separated from Denise when Kate was in care. Denise has low levels of cognitive ability and basic skills and has been prescribed anti-depressants. Both Denise and Kate had a lack of basic numeracy and literacy skills.

Kate had completed a five month supervision order from July 2009 to December 2009 following convictions for a number of shop lifting offences and a low level assault. At the time of referral, the police indicated that there were no anti-social behaviour problems with the household in general. However, there were concerns that Kate was "*in danger*" of becoming involved in further problematic behaviour. Kate completed the supervision order without breach and was given an absolute discharge.

Kate had a school attendance rate of 26 per cent for the year prior to the IIP intervention. Although this had recently increased to 73 per cent as a result of intensive support from the Youth Offending Team, Kate regularly missed classes and exhibited disruptive behaviour when she was in school. She had attended school on only three occasions since November 2009. Denise did not ensure that Kate attended school and Kate sometimes stayed at her older siblings' home during the week, which was considered inappropriate due to concerns over alcohol misuse. Denise was subject to a Parenting Order but had failed to attend most of the required sessions (as she felt that she had learned the content of the sessions before). A £50 penalty notice for non-school attendance had been applied but had not been paid. The family had financial difficulties and were in arrears of approximately £1,000 for their previous tenancy.

Initial IIP assessments identified a lack of child-centred time and positive activities in the home. Denise and Kate struggled to manage conflict appropriately, there were no parental structures or boundaries in place and challenging of inappropriate behaviour was inconsistent. Denise was unable to control, or to have knowledge of, Kate's whereabouts and she had called the police to deal with what IIP workers termed "*normal*" behaviour by Kate. Kate was described as "*easily led*" and subject to negative influences from a peer group. Kate had reported problems in her relationship with Denise's partner and also her father's partner. There were also bonding issues between Kate and Denise.

The IIP intervention was focused on improving Kate's attendance at school, her offending behaviour, negative peer group influences and improving Kate's self-esteem.

The project worker initially found it difficult to engage with Kate and Kate missed several appointments. Kate's relationship with Denise's partner had continued to deteriorate, she had witnessed violence in the home and she also had a difficult relationship with her father's partner. Kate was reported not to mix socially with neighbouring children as her peers were from a different area, where she tended to spend a lot of time. In February 2010 Kate had shown significant improvement in school attendance and the IIP worker had met with education officers to discuss Kate's situation. The family moved to a new home in March 2010 which was nearer (within walking distance of) Kate's new school, previously Kate had required to get a bus to attend school.

Progress and interventions (from March 2010)

March

The IIP worker had focused upon re-integrating Kate into selected lessons at school (half-day sessions everyday) and building Kate's self-esteem and motivation through spending time with her, including taking Kate to activities that she enjoyed including swimming, hip hop dancing, picnics and bowling. The IIP made a referral for Kate to access a placement with a hairdressing firm. A potential transfer to a special educational needs school and providing additional support was discussed through the IIP delivery organisation's parenting service, but was not subsequently pursued. The IIP worker believed that the house and school moves resulted in detrimental impacts for Kate: *"It's like ten steps back."* It was difficult to motivate Kate and she was socially isolated in her new school, which exacerbated her tendency to gravitate to her previous peer group.

Denise reported that the house move had gone well. The project worker was taking Kate to school regularly and had also arranged a meeting for Denise with the school. The project worker was also spending time with Kate and taking her out to activities. Denise said that the focus was on getting Kate to attend school and that *"things were going alright"*, although *"Kate has had a bit of an attitude since starting school"* and a friend had also stolen Kate's memory card. Denise thought that the project was *"good."*

April

Kate reported that *"things were okay."* She had been attending school and she believed that the school were happy with her. Kate believed that the house move had gone *"okay"*. She had seen the project worker but could not remember how often. She thought the IIP was *"alright"* and she was looking forward to seeing the project worker again. Denise reported that, during helping her sister to move house, her sister had accused her and Kate of stealing a large sum of money. The police were likely to be involved, which she had requested. She was very upset and stated that although Kate had been involved in shoplifting in the past and was *"no angel"*, she was being unfairly accused in this instance. Denise reported that the school holidays had gone well. Denise had kept Kate off school on the first day after the holidays in case the police called in relation to the alleged theft. The project worker had provided advice about dealing with the alleged theft incident and had also taken Kate out on activities, such as trip to the cinema, which Kate really enjoyed.

The project worker had challenged Denise about keeping Kate off school and the project worker took Kate to school the following day but Kate's attendance had been sporadic since, which the project worker was communicating with the school about. The project worker stated that although Kate "*seems okay within herself*", the house move and the move to a new school had had a detrimental and regressive effect. Kate was isolated in the new school and home and this had led her to gravitate towards a former and negative peer group. The project worker was finding it difficult to motivate Kate. There was also an issue with Denise's partner and there were concerns about Denise's vulnerability, the fact that she did not appear to hold the tenancy and her difficulty in parenting Kate. The project worker identified a need for Kate to take some responsibility for her behaviour and to show some motivation. The project worker had secured a place for Kate on a once a week placement at a hairdressing school and Kate had loved this, but continuing the placement was dependent upon Kate attending school. Contact with the family varied but could be up to three times a week.

May

Kate reported that "*things were alright*" at home and at school and she was pleased that the school seemed happy with her. Kate had seen the project worker and had undertaken activities such as going to a leisure centre, with her. Kate reported that she was enjoying working with the project worker and was able to talk to her about things. The project worker reported that Denise had recognised the negative impacts of the house move. Denise was fined £600 for Kate's non-attendance at school and was very upset about this. Kate's school attendance was poor but she did attend for three days one week.

The project worker reported that Kate had taken more responsibility within school, for example going independently to each classroom and that her behaviour had improved very significantly compared to a previous period when she continually involved in incidents, such as regularly setting off fire alarms. There had been no police involvement in relation to the theft accusation but Denise was still distraught about the breakdown in the relationship with her sister. Kate and two of her friends were arrested and questioned by the police about a stabbing incident at which Kate was present but not directly involved. There had been some complaints from a downstairs neighbour about noise but this was viewed as being somewhat inevitable given the wooden flooring and the presence of several children in the home.

The project worker had negotiated a delay and means test for the school non-attendance fine and had continued to meet with the school about Kate's attendance. She was also facilitating Kate's continuing participation and attendance at the hairdressing course.

The project worker believed that the family structure and dynamics were very negative at this time and that it was difficult to identify progress, although Kate had made some improvements in school. Denise was not ensuring that Kate attended school. The project worker was trying to address this by establishing some conditions, for example Kate only being taken swimming if her attendance at school increases. Kate was associating with a very negative peer group and there were concerns that, as she was easily led and submissive, this could result in her involvement in a serious or harmful incident. It was difficult to address these issues given the situation with Denise, the house and the peer

influence of those Kate regarded as her friends. The project worker was continuing to try to motivate Kate and to increase her responsibility for her own behaviour.

June

Kate had attended school every day (bar one) for the three weeks prior to the half-term holiday. The project worker believed that this represented real progress and Kate had also sat an exam which was a real achievement. However, Kate's behaviour in school still needed to improve and she needed to be reintegrated into full class lessons, but this was now an internal school management issue. Kate's attitude to school was also reported to be positive. The project worker had deliberately reduced the number of times she took Kate to school (from three times a week to once a week) in order to encourage Kate to be more independent and this seemed to be working. Kate was continuing to attend the hairdressing course which she really enjoyed and she had received positive feedback on this. There were concerns about Kate associating with a negative and offending peer group and her being pressurised into risky and negative behaviour. Kate had been spending a lot of time at her father's. Although this was viewed positively as a strategy to disassociate herself from her peers, there were concerns about her father's partner's alleged involvement in shoplifting offences.

The project worker was still working once or twice a week with Kate in one to one sessions. These had been used to support her literacy and numeracy skills and boost her confidence in school and also to talk about a range of issues. The project worker believed that Kate had become much more self-aware about her being overly submissive and easily led. The sessions had progressed to focus on the promotion and implementation of strategies to improve Kate's assertiveness. Kate had clearly taken on board some of the strategies for avoiding risky situations and disassociating herself from problematic behaviour, including that of her peers and her father's partner. She was also able to articulate why she should avoid certain situations. The project worker also believed that Kate was generally managing well, and better, with a range of circumstances beyond her control, including the home and school move and difficult family relations. There was also evidence that Kate was putting into place these strategies and skills when the project worker was not present or had not seen Kate for a period of time. The project worker believed that Kate was far more motivated.

July

Kate was doing very well in relation to her support plan. There had been a task meeting to review the case. Kate was attending the Learning Support Unit every morning and had been in school almost every day for six weeks, with her overall attendance rising from 34 per cent to 68 per cent. The fact that Kate could walk to school helped and she was now attending completely independently. Kate had also sat four exams, which the project worker believed "*would have been unheard of a few months ago.*" Kate had disassociated herself from the negative peer group and was managing her relationships with both her parents and their partners well.

The project worker had deliberately reduced contact with Kate and had considered closing the case, but decided that Kate needed support over the school holidays and wanted to ensure that Kate returned to school after the holiday period. The project worker spent her time with Kate at her home or on trips out and these interactions involved reflecting on

incidents during the week, motivation, self-confidence, consequences, attitudes and short-term and future goals.

Kate successfully completed a week work placement at a care home, which she really enjoyed. Kate had continued her placement at the hairdressers which had been progressing positively apart from one alleged incident of her defacing some work books, which required the school to negotiate to keep her on the placement. Kate had signed up for a week's summer camp in August at a dance academy. The project worker believed that Kate was *"far more confident and glowing within herself."* She was taking more care in her appearance (washing her hair, make up, clothes) and that she was *"transformed from where she was a year ago...she is a different person and the change is massive."*

September

Kate has been arrested twice (in August) in relation to shoplifting and hoax phone calls to the police. Kate received a Youth Rehabilitation Order and was working with the Youth Offending Team (YOT). The project worker believed that she had provided more support to Kate but it was very difficult to address the environmental factors in her life, including her peer group. Kate was participating in a twelve-week numeracy and literacy course, working in small groups. Her hairdressing placement was still going well and she was attending two times a week. There was a tailored plan within this placement to attempt to build Kate's self-confidence. The project worker had sought to explain the consequences of the Youth Rehabilitation Order and the need for Kate to engage with the YOT. The project worker also believed that the Order may facilitate more support being provided to Kate and crucially, support for her in the wider community environment. The project worker was reducing contact and considering closing the case. Kate would continue to be supported by the YOT and educational workers.

Reflections (at September 2010)

Denise had really enjoyed working with the project and in particular the project worker's assistance in getting Kate to attend school, which Denise thought had been the most important contribution the IIP had made. Denise did not believe that this progress would have been made without the IIP. She would recommend the IIP to other parents and did not have any criticisms or other suggested ways of working.

The project worker believed that Kate had made significant progress in the last 12 months. The project worker had undertaken a lot of work with Denise around parenting, ensuring that Kate was required to get up in the morning and attend school. Kate was still feeling positive about herself and the project worker had reduced contact, although Kate's progress needed to be monitored on a day to day basis. It was very difficult to control external factors, for example offending behaviour by other family members. The project worker believed that the IIP had been responsible for some positive changes, including improved self-confidence and social skills, providing opportunities for days out and leisure activities but also contexts for discussion and reflection. The project had also provided positive role models and a degree of consistency. None of these things had been provided by Kate's family or peer group. The fact that Kate was able to put some of these new skills and strategies into practice had a huge impact on her life and opportunities. The IIP had also ensured that other services

played a role in supporting Kate. This case demonstrated how progress was not necessarily linear and how a wide range of factors impacted, meaning that each individual young person had to have their own pathways to change.

Update: December 2010

Kate's case was closed at the end of October. She was engaging well with school and attending regularly on a part-time timetable and she was attending her hairdressing placement twice a week. She had sat a couple of exams. Kate had received a Youth Rehabilitation Order in relation to her offending. She had attended all of the appointments for this and was engaging with the YOT. She had also completed a programme with Fairbridge (a voluntary organisation working with young people). There were no issues and there been no incidents since the case was closed. Kate was receiving on-going support from the YOT and the school.

Lenny

Note: Although the researcher met Lenny at the start of the study period, it was not possible to maintain direct contact with him throughout. This narrative is therefore based on the accounts of his mother and the project worker.

Background

Lenny was fourteen years old when he was referred to the IIP by the Youth Offending Team, via social services, in March 2009. The housing department were also involved in the case. His referral was accepted at the end of April 2009 and a contract was signed in June 2009. Lenny lives with his mother (Ellen) and father (Jack) and his adult sister, aged 25 at the time of referral). He has three other older sisters, all of whom live within walking distance of the family home. One of his sisters lives with her two children (aged eight and five at the time of the referral) in the house next door.

Lenny had attended special schools in the past. He was enrolled at a local school providing education to secondary age children with behaviour difficulties but his non-attendance had led to a home tuition package being put in place, although this had not been successful. He had been involved in an alleged robbery, with a forthcoming court case. In February 2010 Lenny was diagnosed as having a learning difficulty and low IQ by the local authority's Child and Family Unit. Prior to this, although Lenny evidently had difficulties in managing, remembering and learning from his behaviour and it was recognised that he had delayed and disordered speech and language skills and a reading and writing age of seven, there had been no formal diagnosis. Both Lenny's parents and his local school had argued that Lenny required further specialist educational provision.

Lenny's presenting problems on referral included high levels of aggression, including verbal and physical abuse and false allegations, towards all family members, especially his mother and including his young niece and nephew living next door. His father Jack and sister Karen were both medicated for depression. Lenny was constantly behaving in an anti-social or inappropriate manner in the local neighbourhood and became a target for others in the locality. He was easily led by peers and had become involved in offending behaviour and had damaged the family property on several occasions. He travelled widely across the local area on public transport but was regularly exploited by others in financial transactions. He had very low self-confidence and esteem. He had a strong interest in keeping and looking after animals (which created problems with some, but not all, neighbours) and, when relaxed was very loving, kind, thoughtful and engaging.

The parents were described as being "*dedicated to Lenny*" and had done a lot of work with the IIP in attempting to manage his behaviour. They were confined to the home as they could not risk leaving Lenny on his own and he refused to accompany them elsewhere. There were identified risks of family breakdown and Lenny being placed in care, a break down in the parents' relationship, a complete disengagement from education and continuing involvement in anti-social behaviour in the neighbourhood.

In the period prior to the research commencing, Lenny's engagement with the IIP worker had been sporadic, although he had requested that the worker maintain her (at least weekly) home visits. The parents were fully engaged with the IIP.

Progress and interventions (from March 2010)

March

The local authority Learning Disabilities Team refused a referral for Lenny, stating that he did not meet the criteria. The project worker was challenging this decision on the grounds that she had a letter stating that the referral would be accepted. There had been a lot of conflict in the home. Jack was reported to be "*beside himself*" with worry and had refused to attend hospital for a serious medical condition as he would not leave Ellen in the house on her own with Lenny. The project worker was visiting the family twice weekly. She was able to take Lenny to a Child and Family assessment (he had refused to go with his parents) but he refused to attend a speech assessment. Lenny had been attending twice-weekly education tutorials but the tutor had been off work and the position was unclear. Lenny had allowed Jack to assist him in looking after his animals.

Ellen said that although things "*had not been too bad*" Lenny "*had been a handful.*" The project worker was visiting twice a week. Lenny had got rid of some of his animals. Ellen said: "*It's hard to get Lenny out of the house, even for pool or bowling. We can't leave him here so we are stuck here 24/7.*" Ellen said: "*The project worker is a real help, even though Lenny does not always do what she says. She is someone to talk to and she also gave us a lift to the hospital and persuaded Lenny to go- we couldn't have taken on the bus so we couldn't have gone otherwise.*"

The project worker was focused on maintaining a relationship with Lenny, providing emotional support to his parents and fighting the referral criteria to the Learning Disabilities team. The project worker was also trying to encourage and empower the family to take a decision about a Protection of Vulnerable Adults or Child Protection referral.

April

Ellen stated that the situation in the home had been "*okay*" and Lenny's behaviour had "*not been too bad.*" He had also been taken out by an adult neighbour. But he had been refusing to get up some mornings and was not attending school. The project worker had managed to establish that there was a lot of conflict amongst the three adults in the home about how to manage Lenny's behaviour and there was no consistent approach being taken. It also became evident how much the situation was impacting on the wellbeing of all household members, including Karen. The project worker had attempted to focus work with Ellen and Jack about establishing expectations of themselves and others and being empowered to say no and establish boundaries. The parents had got rid of a new dog that Lenny had acquired without their permission. The project worker was very pleased that the parents had maintained their ground despite Lenny reacting very violently. Lenny later apologised to Jack and they went for a bike ride together. The parents reported that they had been arguing less frequently. The project worker provided a lot of praise and attempted to focus on positive elements, such as the evident love within the family.

May

Lenny's behaviour had continued to fluctuate, as had the level of conflict within the home. Lenny had attended his education tuition sporadically after a period of refusing to attend. The parents were communicating more with each other and were checking each other for consistency in managing Lenny's behaviour. Lenny was nervous about the forthcoming robbery case and the degree of police investigation activity, although the circumstances of the case remained very unclear.

The project worker had acted as a mediator between Lenny and his tutor and Lenny then attended the next session. The project worker had informed social services about her concerns for Jack's wellbeing and a physical confrontation between Jack and Lenny. The project worker was trying to arrange a family conference to ensure consistency in parenting in the home.

June

Ellen reported that things had *"been pretty bad."* Lenny had punched a door and injured his hand; he was refusing to go to his tutoring and was now refusing to go out with the project worker. Lenny had swapped one of his animals, against his parents' advice and the new animal had been taken away, which had affected him badly. Ellen felt that *"we are back where we started"* although she valued the project worker's input and believed that this *"keeps the family going."*

Jack was doing better emotionally but Ellen was struggling. Lenny's attendance at home tuition had improved but remained sporadic. The violence towards family members had increased and enquiries were made to see if there were any appropriate domestic violence services in the area. Jack had revealed serious issues from his own childhood and with other extended family members. Lenny was angry, aggressive, depressed, reported being bullied and was talking to himself. He had brought additional animals into the home. The parents were trying to put boundaries in place but this was very difficult with the levels of violence towards them. Karen was reported to be happier and had a new job. The IIP had arranged summer holiday activities for Lenny's sister and her children living next door as a form of respite.

There was a care around the family meeting in the family home involving the IIP and the home tuition service (the two agencies working with Lenny). A re-referral was also made to Child and Family Services, with the parents' agreement (as Learning Services were refusing to accept Lenny had a problem). A family conference was held with other IIP workers to discuss the case. Attempts were made to get activities in place for Lenny, including involvement in animal care groups. He had joined a boys club at the education centres where he attended tuition and he was attending the club, by himself, one evening a week. The project worker had sought to do some conversational consequential thinking work with Lenny about his actions and their impacts on others. The case was viewed as requiring engagement structures with the family that attempt to bring about change indirectly in the absence of much direct engagement from the young person.

July

There was a referral to Children's Services and a review of status with regard to a Statement of Special Educational Needs. This was regarded as progress in an acknowledgment of potential learning difficulties as previously the educational child psychologist had not identified any problems. Lenny had continued to show signs of anger and be abusive and there had been a major deterioration in the parents' relationship and emotional wellbeing. Ellen was also experiencing some physical health issues. The project worker argued that other services only regarded the family as problematic when the behaviour occurred in the neighbourhood, rather than addressing the very difficult domestic environment where issues and events were confined to the home.

September

The Learning Disabilities Team had finally accepted a referral for Lenny after the threat of a formal complaint by the project worker. It was also revealed that initial assessments of Lenny had suggested that he should have a Statement of Special Education Need, related to possible Tourettes syndrome, ADHD and autism and that he should be categorised as high risk. A psychiatrist and psychologist made a home visit, during which they witnessed Lenny's physical aggression towards Karen. The project worker believed that it was a major achievement to arrange these home visits, with significant consequences. Agencies were now showing a supportive and creative attitude. Lenny had been referred to mental health services support team and a psychologist in the Children's Learning Team was putting together a support package, although this was complicated by the lack of intensive support services for children in the area. The package would include behavioural and practical support and a befriending service. Ellen has sought medical advice and support about her health. The parents were anxious that Lenny would be taken into care or sectioned and had threatened to run away with him if this was proposed. Lenny had been in tears discussing his situation, and it was evident he recognised the problems. He had not been engaged in any anti-social behaviour in the neighbourhood and had proactively avoided some potentially risky situations, which the project worker believed he would not previously have done.

The IIP would gradually exit the family, but would continue to make visits and manage the transition to the new support package.

Reflections (as at September 2010)

The involvement of senior mental health officers had provided more power to the project worker to request changes and support from education services and the new Education Welfare Officer was reported to be excellent and supportive of the case. The project worker stated: *"There is now light at the end of the tunnel. The view of these senior medical practitioners is that Lenny's case should never have been left to be managed by a voluntary organisation."* She believed that although social services had acknowledged the vulnerability of Lenny and his family, they had not been certain what to do in this case. The project worker believed that there had been a risk of a serious incident in *"the tinder box"* of the home environment.

According to the project worker, the formal assessment and recognition of Lenny's medical conditions has been the major progress and success of this intervention. It was significant that, due to staff changes, there was now a group of agency workers around the family who share an approach and non-judgemental ethos. The project worker's role had primarily been to keep the family afloat, to avoid major incidents and to keep running to stand still. This assessment validates the longstanding views and concerns of Ellen and Jack and the assessment would not have happened without the involvement of the IIP.

Ellen had really enjoyed working with the project and stated that the project worker had been very helpful: *"We wouldn't have got to this point without [Project Worker] pushing for the assessment and more support. She has also always been there when I've needed someone to talk to"*. The project worker had also shown Ellen and Jack strategies for trying to manage and deal with Lenny's behaviour. The project worker *"couldn't do enough for the family"* and Ellen would recommend the project to other families who should definitely *"give it a try."* Ellen also believed that Jack and she would definitely have separated if it hadn't been for the project worker. Although Ellen was very pleased that Lenny would now be receiving support, she believed that the school should have done more and when it became apparent that the education service could no longer manage Lenny, there was no way that she and Jack could, by themselves, cope with a fifteen-year old boy who has the problems that Lenny faces.

Update: December 2010

The two male workers from the Learning Disabilities Team were reported by the project worker to have been excellent. A psychiatrist made two home visits to assess Lenny but he was not present and no assessment will now be made unless Lenny attends an appointment, which he is refusing to do. Lenny had attacked both his parents in a series of incidents, on some occasions involving a weapon. Jack was still engaging with the IIP, but Ellen was really struggling. Although the psychologist believed that Lenny's diagnosis would include ADHD autism and Tourettes syndrome, as well as communication, memory and language difficulties, social services were still refusing to accept a referral. The project worker described this stand off as one where the project and the family wanted preventative support, but the statutory agencies were only prepared to react if a serious incident occurred. The project worker wanted some form of legal framework within which Lenny could be supported, focusing on his future case needs and considering life-long intervention. The project worker characterised the case as one of neglect, but not by the parents or Lenny himself, who simply cannot cope, but by agencies. However, sectioning a fifteen-year old is very difficult. The project worker was trying to get the parents to engage with potential residential care for Lenny, on the basis that this would maintain some parental control and that a mental health institution would be better than prison (for example if Lenny was to attack someone external to the household). The project worker said that she would resist any attempt to define the parents as negligent. Lenny had not offended outside of the home during this time.

Ricky

Note: Towards the end of the research period Ricky moved out of the family home into a supported foster placement and the researcher was advised by the IIP worker that it would not be advisable to proceed with the final phase of data collection with either Ricky or his mother. The following account is therefore based primarily on the IIP worker's views and perceptions.

Background

Ricky lived with his mother, an older sister aged 17 and a younger brother aged 13. Ricky was no longer in contact with his father who had left the family home six years earlier due to repeated incidences of domestic violence. Ricky was 14 years old when he was initially referred to the Youth Inclusion Support Team in March 2009. As a result of ongoing concerns about his offending behaviour and safeguarding issues arising from his association with a group of older people he was subsequently referred to the IIP in July 2009. Prior to this referral he had spent four months on remand in a Young Person's Secure Unit in relation to a charge of robbery and associated car crime (taking without consent).

Subsequent to his father leaving home Ricky began to get into trouble and by the time he was 12 he had his first conviction for a vehicle theft offence followed a year later by seven further convictions for similar offences. There was evidence that Ricky's educational needs were not being addressed at the point of referral to the IIP. He was reported by his mother to have dyslexia and was the subject of a Special Educational Needs Statement. He had struggled to make progress at a mainstream school - this lack of progress was partially attributed by his mother and his IIP worker to Ricky's heavy cannabis use. At the point of referral to the IIP, Ricky was not attending main stream education. He had previously spent some time at a pupil referral unit but this arrangement had broken down and he was referred for home learning support through an IT-based system of independent learning. Both Ricky's mother and IIP worker expressed serious concerns about the adequacy of this form of education which they thought was completely unsuitable for Ricky who had difficulties with basic literacy skills.

Progress and interventions (from March 2010)

Over the period that Ricky worked with the IIP he maintained close contact with his IIP worker, who saw or made telephone contact with Ricky on average once a week, although the level of contact was reported to vary.

April

Ricky was due to attend court on a new assault charge in which his sister was due to be called as a witness for the prosecution. The case was dismissed as neither Ricky's sister or mother attended the hearing. Ricky and other members of his family were described by the IIP worker as being very vulnerable to neighbourhood conflict and reprisals with Ricky reported as owing around £3,000 in drug-related debts. Ricky and his mother were involved

in a fight as a result of which he was charged with affray. In a further incident Ricky and his younger brother were arrested in connection with an attempted street robbery charge and both were granted bail until May.

Ricky started to attend one to one Cognitive Behaviour Therapy sessions co-run by the IIP worker and a colleague with a focus on improving his risk assessment and problem solving skills. Despite a series of recent incidents resulting in criminal charges being brought against Ricky both the IIP worker and Ricky's mother reported that he was making some progress, as his mother described: *"He's doing really well, not robbing, stopped thieving and stopped the weed mostly and he has more respect for me and has calmed down with his young brother."*

However, according to the IIP worker, Ricky's behaviour remained volatile; exacerbated by continuing cannabis use combined with occasional use of cocaine, valium and 'bubbles' (Methadone). Ricky had been provided with a 360 Drug Project family support worker.

May

In response to serious concerns about Ricky's safekeeping and health due to neighbourhood conflict and threats of reprisals the IIP worker arranged for the family to be transferred to accommodation in a different area of the city. With the help of the IIP worker the family subsequently moved into a new property. The Cognitive Behaviour Therapy sessions were reported by the IIP worker as being successful although Ricky did not attend the final two sessions. The IIP worker explained that part of the problem was the fact that Ricky's world was changing so fast it was very hard for him to maintain any stability. In addition, it was clear that he found undertaking any kind of reflection very difficult. Ricky started a vocational catering course which was jointly funded by Social Services and the IIP. This activity was reported as progressing positively well by both the IIP worker and Ricky's mother. Ricky's most recent drug test had also indicated reduced levels of cannabis use.

June/July

The pending court case for the assault was referred to the Crown Court and Ricky was informed that he would be charged with three inter related charges of wounding with intent (Grievous Bodily Harm), affray and a public order offence. The IIP worker thought it likely that the case would not be heard until October and if Ricky was found guilty he would be likely to receive a custodial sentence of between 18 months to two years. Prior to being given this news, the IIP worker thought that Ricky had made good progress. She described the impact of the forthcoming court case on Ricky and his mother as catastrophic, both in terms of their morale and their relationship. As a result of Ricky's history of offending and in light of his forthcoming appearance at the Crown Court in July, he was issued with an Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme (ISSP) order.

August

Ricky's IIP worker was on sick leave and consequently did not have much contact with him. In the meantime Ricky's home situation continued to deteriorate, resulting in increasing conflict within the family. As a result of ongoing fights and criminal damage to the family home a Child Action meeting was called in which it was decided that Ricky should be

referred to a supported accommodation project for young offenders run by a third sector organisation.

September

Ricky was offered and accepted supported accommodation with the supported accommodation project in early September. As part of the provision of support Ricky was to be provided with a key worker. It was therefore decided that he should be exited from the IIP in order to avoid a duplication of provision.

Reflections (at October 2010)

The IIP believed that Ricky had made intermittent progress during the intervention. He had not re-offended since May and his drug use, in particular his reliance on cannabis, had reduced. Ricky had managed to maintain a strong relationship with his IIP worker, who believed that he had begun to take more responsibility for his actions. Ricky was also reported to be less socially isolated and no longer as vulnerable to becoming a victim of neighbourhood conflict and reprisals. Less progress has been made in relation to family conflict with relationships remaining fraught and volatile.

The IIP worker had attempted to provide a whole family approach to case work with action taken to establish trust with all the family members not just the young person subject of the referral to IIP. This approach was one which was particularly valued by Ricky's mother who described the IIP worker in very positive terms, rating her on a scale of one to ten as being:

"Definitely a ten cos she is good, she is really good, she is the one that is clocking everything around me really, marking it all down in meetings and then she's like going to every single meeting.....she kept her phone on all weekend as well so I could call her, if I needed her."

Ricky also rated his key worker very highly, as eight or nine out of ten, since *"other people wouldn't take you to court and show any interest in stuff."* The IIP worker had concerns about the limited resources available to her to support her case load of 15 young people and consequently the impossibility of providing the intensive form of intervention that young people such as Ricky required. The IIP worker had sought to focus on both dealing with day to day crisis and also taking action to address underlying issues.

Robert

Note: This narrative is based upon telephone contact with Robert's mother (Sarah) during and after the IIP intervention. Contact with the IIP worker was primarily through email. It was not possible to make contact with Robert subsequent to an initial meeting with him.

Background

Robert was thirteen years old when he was referred to the IIP in January 2010 due to his anti-social behaviour and offending. Robert lives with his mother, Sarah, and sister, aged ten. Robert has another sister (aged 15) who lives with her father in a nearby town. There had been a history of domestic violence in the family and Robert's mother used alcohol as a coping mechanism. The family have had contact with Family Support health visitors, Education Welfare Officers and were subject to a social services report in November 2004, which suggested that although Robert's mother wanted support she did not subsequently take up this support when it was offered.

Robert was approaching the end of a six-month referral order following criminal damage within the family home. Robert had been successfully working with Youth Offending Team, had complied with his referral order and had not re-offended. Robert's mother had contact with a Family Intervention Project worker and valued this contact greatly.

There was a history of domestic violence in the family home; from the father towards Robert and his mother. Robert's father was aggressive, verbally and physically, towards him. According to the IIP worker, Robert has been "*mirroring*" his Dad's aggressive behaviour, and Robert has disclosed that he uses language towards his sister that his father used towards him. When Robert's father lived at home Robert used to sleep on the floor next to his father and did this for a number of months. He explained that this was because his father used to threaten to leave. Robert still had limited contact with his father and had disclosed that he could be 'scared' of his father's reactions and behaviour. There had, however, been no reports or evidence of any physical harm to Robert. Since his father left two years previously, Robert had been sleeping on the sofa in the front room. Robert said that he felt more comfortable sleeping there and his own room was not appropriately furnished. The family home was in a state of disrepair and there was no external door on the property.

Robert could become angry in the family home towards his mother and sister but damaged property than rather than physically assaulting them. Robert also wrote on the walls of the house. The family were socially isolated although Robert had one close friend who he associated with after school. Robert's mother found it difficult to make Robert do anything and had problems in the past getting Robert to attend school. She described Robert as "*the man of the house.*"

The Family Intervention Project and the IIP were attempting to access funding to re-decorate the whole house, including Robert's bedroom. Robert had engaged positively with the IIP and was working with an IIP worker to address his anger and behaviour, although he was

reported to still be verbally aggressive in the family home towards mum and sister. Robert had complied with the terms of the IIP contract and had not missed any appointments.

The IIP aimed to encourage Robert to make positive choices and engage in positive activities, to increase his self-esteem and self-worth and to enhance his sense of responsibility for his actions and their impacts on others. The IIP sought to address anger management, Robert's engagement with education and the condition and furnishing of the family home. Robert's identified areas of strength included his willingness to engage with the IIP, his being open about the issues affecting him and his *"knowledge of right and wrong."*

A review of Robert's case in March 2010 indicated that he was now attending school more regularly and the Education Welfare Officer was no longer involved as a result of this progress. Robert was on a part-time timetable and was gradually being integrated into mainstream schooling. However, the IIP worker believed that Robert's behaviour had slightly deteriorated since recently becoming friends with another pupil who was known to get into trouble at school. Robert's teacher had expressed similar concerns and had agreed to update the IIP worker about Robert's behaviour in school. Robert had not attended an IIP review meeting as he was in detention at school.

The IIP worker had undertaken work with Robert about anger management, including triggers, coping, consequences and impacts. Robert indicated that his behaviour at home varied daily but admitted that he was verbally aggressive towards his younger sister. He expressed that he felt he was mirroring his father's behaviour towards himself in the past. Robert had been encouraged to keep a daily diary of his positive and negative feelings and this was reviewed with his IIP worker on a fortnightly basis. The IIP worker had discussed getting Robert a punch bag to vent his anger, but this would only be pursued if Robert's behaviour at school improved. Robert's mother said that she felt his behaviour has improved, but that it needed to improve further. The IIP worker also requested that Robert's mother keep a diary of his behaviour and this will also be reviewed and shared with the IIP worker.

The IIP worker had encouraged more positive outcomes with motivational support and worksheet based work around Robert's self esteem and confidence. Robert had identified his positive points and the points that he needed to work on. Robert had attended a DJ session but didn't go back because of his low confidence and his nerves. The IIP worker had explained to Robert this would be something that would come in time. The key worker also thought that Robert has become more open and honest as the intervention progressed.

Robert had contact with the key worker for at least three one hour sessions each week. Robert had agreed to attend IIP activities and outings during the Easter holidays, including go-karting, paint balling, quad biking and an assault course. Robert had also expressed an interest in basketball which the IIP worker agreed to undertake with him when Robert felt ready to do so. Robert had also agreed to undertake a six-week IIP programme of two -hour sessions which would cover confidence, self-esteem, team building, communication skills, anger management, consequences of behaviour, perception of self and others, emotions and identifying yourself. Robert would receive a certificate and a £10 voucher if he successfully completed the course and he would also be given the opportunity to visit an observatory.

Robert's case was under review and it was anticipated that he would exit the IIP by the end of May 2010. It was thought that there would be ongoing contact with the family through the Family Intervention Project.

Progress and interventions (from April 2010)

April

Robert missed the IIP activities in the Easter holidays due to him sleeping in. Despite this, Robert made good progress and there had been no reports of him being involved in anti-social behaviour or offending. Robert's improved behaviour prompted the decision, agreed by Robert, to reduce the amount of contact time with the IIP worker and to focus the intervention on anger management and Robert's behaviour at school. Sarah, Robert's mother expressed mixed emotions about this decision. She spoke positively about Robert's improved attendance at school but she was concerned that Robert was very insular and attributed this to the large numbers of people involved in Robert's life at the moment. Robert's behaviour continued to be challenging at home. Sarah described him as "*disrespectful*" and wanting to be "*boss of the house*" and "*what he says goes.*" Sarah claimed that she was reluctant to challenge this behaviour as Robert had previously hit her.

At the end of April, one to one anger management sessions were undertaken with Robert by the IIP worker, who stated that Robert had found the sessions useful and they had a positive impact on his behaviour. The IIP work with Robert had also included: perceptions of how he sees himself and how others see him and changing his behaviour at school, including his relationship with teachers. Robert had responded well and was very open and honest about things. All of this work was done on a one to one- basis using work sheets, pictures and words as Robert explained that his preferred learning style was visual. Despite encouragement, Robert attended only one of the six planned IIP programme sessions.

May

Despite initially making good progress at school, Robert's attendance had become sporadic and he had received a number of detentions due to his behaviour. Sarah was worried about this and expressed concern that Robert was "*hanging around with bad boys*" who were perhaps encouraging his behaviour. Sarah felt helpless to do anything about Robert's non-school attendance and said: "*what can I do?*" Sarah did not feel able to push Robert to attend school as it tended to end in arguments.

The IIP worker investigated and discovered that Robert's non-attendance was as a result of bullying. A meeting a school took place to resolve some issues and Robert was allowed to remain in a unit with a small group. The boys who were doing the bullying were spoken to and the situation was closely monitored. Robert agreed to return to school the next day but only attended for half a day. He subsequently refused to attend the next day too. Robert had attended school infrequently throughout his engagement with the IIP and it remained an ongoing issue.

The IIP worker thought that Robert was having some difficulty in dealing with the absence of his father and that this was having a negative impact on him and his school attendance.

Mediation has been arranged between Robert and his father through Time to Talk services. Sarah expressed concerns that Robert was not seeing his father, except for a brief five minutes when his father arrived to collect his sister. On the rare occasions that Robert did spend time with his father, his father's new partner was always present and Sarah felt that Robert should see his father alone. By the end of May, Robert's attendance at school had improved significantly and he had begun contact with his father.

June

In early June, both the IIP and Family Intervention Project workers arranged for a bed to be provided for Robert in his bedroom upstairs. The Family Intervention Project worker would be undertaking a home improvement scheme with the family and funding would be provided for Robert's bedroom to be decorated.

Robert exited the IIP in early June as he had not displayed any anti-social behaviour or offending. He was deemed to have had met most of his targets and the IIP believed that the intervention was now unnecessary, although the Family Intervention Project worker would continue to be involved with the family. Sarah had been advised by the IIP worker to call the school every day if Robert doesn't attend and to keep a diary of this in case the Education Welfare Office became involved again.

However, Sarah argued that there had been no change in Robert's behaviour. He had shown some sign of improvement and had been going to school but had lapsed again. Sarah was reluctant to force the issue for fear of arguments again. Robert appeared happy with his new room and no longer slept downstairs. Sarah was aware that Robert had attended 'Time to Talk' sessions but was not aware that Robert had been seeing his father.

July

Sarah was pleased with Robert's progress. He had been attending school for two full days and three half days each week prior to the holidays. However, she was concerned about his return in September. Sarah was discussing with the school a plan for Robert's return. Sarah stated that Robert still found it difficult to mix and rarely went out with friends. He continued to see his father, but not regularly. There were some plans in negotiation for a more permanent arrangement for Robert to have contact with his father once per week, but at present the meetings between Robert and his father were on an ad hoc basis. Sarah wanted a permanent arrangement to create some stability and continuity for Robert. Robert had turned down an invitation to go to Euro Disney with his father but was reported to be regretting the decision. Robert's sister was going with her father, who agreed to give Robert the equivalent money to spend over the summer. Sarah reported that Robert's behaviour had improved, but that he spent a lot of time in his own bedroom. Sarah was still waiting for help with decorating and furniture. Sarah was being supported by the Family Intervention Project worker, who she described as being "*a 'big help.'*" She had also instigated divorce proceedings. It emerged that debt was another worrying issue for the family and Sarah was now receiving help from the Citizens Advice Bureau and felt that "*the 'pressure's off.'*"

Reflections (at September 2010)

Sarah had welcomed the IIP intervention initially, although she did not have much direct contact with the IIP worker during the intervention. Sarah described Robert as 'having ups and downs'. Sarah thought that the IIP had been particularly helpful in helping Robert to address anger management issues. Sarah had also appreciated the honest approach the IIP worker had taken in encouraging Robert to engage with school and the consequences of non-attendance. Robert's attendance at school (even though it was periodic) had also contributed to diffusing some tensions in the family home during these periods. Although Sarah spoke positively about the IIP she had also stated that the contact that Robert had with the IIP had made very little difference to his behaviour. Sarah suggested that Robert *"did not bond well"* with the IIP worker and *"he couldn't be bothered to see her."* Sarah also thought the key worker was *"judgemental"* when discussing things with Robert. Sarah thought this approach was not particularly effective with Robert who, she said, *"will only do things when he is ready."* On reflection, Sarah thought that Robert had bonded much better with the Family Intervention Project worker than the IIP key worker. Sarah also remarked that there have been *"too many people in Robert's life"* and that he had been overwhelmed by this.

Ronnie

Note: It was not possible to establish direct contact with Ronnie during the study period. This narrative is therefore based on the accounts of his mother and two project workers.

Background

Ronnie was sixteen years old when he was referred to the IIP by the police in June 2009. He lives with his mother, Viv, his adult brother and his younger sister, aged 12, and sees his father infrequently.

Ronnie had a history of offending since 2006 and was known to associate with gang members linked to serious gang and criminal activity. He had been arrested 11 times for incidents including robbery, robbery with violence, robbery with a knife and Aggravated Bodily Harm, although no further action was taken in each case.

Ronnie had been excluded from a mainstream secondary school when he was 14 and attended a local authority education and behaviour support centre. He was subsequently referred to a special needs school. Ronnie's attendance was poor at his school, which required two bus journeys to reach. Ronnie's lack of confidence and his fear of encountering rival gang members meant that he was reluctant to use public transport and he had been seriously assaulted on a bus. He also refused to use the bus service provided by the school as he wished to be seen as "*normal*." Ronnie was in his GCSE year and was unsure what he wanted to do after school. He had enjoyed a plastering course which he completed. Ronnie had been diagnosed with learning difficulties and suffered from a speech impediment, which undermined his self-esteem and made him reluctant to engage in group activities or encounter strangers.

Ronnie used cannabis regularly, often staying up late at night and this was a contributory factor to his non-attendance at, or lateness for, school. Viv believed that Ronnie's use of cannabis began when he was excluded from school and began hanging around on the estate. He had previously been a very good athlete and had attended athletic clubs and competitions, but had ceased to do this.

There was a difficult relationship between Ronnie and his mother, and Ronnie did not respond to his mother's attempts to check his behaviour. Viv believed that Ronnie lacked a mentor figure with his father being absent.

The local neighbourhood social environment was a key influence upon Ronnie. Young people such as Ronnie were under immense peer pressure to join gangs and engage in gang and criminal activity and risked being bullied if they refused. Young people were also at risk of being attacked by gangs from other localities, regardless if they were gang members themselves.

Viv was attending a part-time training course and found it difficult to combine this with providing transport for Ronnie to school, who she believed needed to be able to use transport independently.

The IIP intervention was primarily focused upon diverting him from gang involvement and criminal activity. This included trying to help Ronnie manage and control his speech impediment and to become more confident and assertive as this would enable him to more effectively resist peer group pressure. The IIP intervention was also aimed at guiding Ronnie's transition from school and into college, although Ronnie had expressed an interest in direct employment in a manual occupation. The IIP worker was also acting as a mediator between Ronnie and Viv, helping them to manage conflict, increasing Ronnie's respect towards Viv and Viv's tolerance and patience with Ronnie and in particular regarding his speech impediment. One to one sessions with Ronnie had been delivered as his low self esteem and confidence had prevented him from engaging with group work. The IIP worker was attempting to address this in order that Ronnie could access all of the interventions offered.

Viv had engaged with the IIP and found the intervention; especially being able to talk issues through with the IIP worker, beneficial and would proactively contact the IIP. This positive relationship was enhanced by the IIP worker being a member of the local community and being previously known to Viv. However, although an initial rapport had been established through one to one sessions, Ronnie's contact with the IIP was very limited. He did not engage in group work and had only seen the IIP worker once in a period of months.

Ronnie's school attendance remained erratic, although he was on occasion independently getting to school. He was still smoking cannabis and associating with local gang members, although there had been no recorded involvement in criminal behaviour.

Progress and interventions (from May 2010)

May

Ronnie's attendance at school was still poor and he remained reluctant to use public transport due to fear of rival gangs. There had been no contact between the IIP and Ronnie or Viv, due to the absence of the IIP worker. Ronnie had not engaged with the IIP and this had been reported to the multi-agency project referral panel, which requested that the IIP attempt to persist with attempted engagement.

June

There had been no contact between the IIP and the family. A home visit was attempted but no one was present. There were plans to attempt to contact Ronnie through a visit to his school.

July

Ronnie was not attending school and had not been in contact with the IIP. Viv had received a note from the IIP about an attempted home visit but had not had any direct contact from the IIP and "*didn't know what was going on.*" She stated that "*I need support*" and believed that the project could be more supportive, although she also stated that Ronnie needed to engage and "*was not meeting the project halfway.*"

August

Ronnie had moved to his father's home. This had apparently been suggested by Viv, prompted by arguments between Ronnie and his sister, which on one occasion resulted in the police being called. Viv reported that the situation was calmer. Ronnie continued to visit Viv's house. Viv believed that Ronnie may be more likely to listen to his father, but also claimed that Ronnie's father would not engage with the IIP or Ronnie's school because he refused to admit that Ronnie had any special needs. Ronnie was reported not to like school. Another IIP worker took over the case and was able to visit and speak with Ronnie. It was agreed that Ronnie would work on speech therapy and anger management and the IIP worker would arrange taxis to take Ronnie to these sessions. Ronnie attended the first planned session but was not at home when the taxi arrived to take him to the second session.

September

Ronnie had engaged with the IIP and attended one to one sessions at the IIP offices. A home visit had also been conducted. Viv was clearly anxious about Ronnie's future but there was tension between them and the IIP worker believed that more progress could be made when he worked directly and solely with Ronnie on anger management and speech therapy. The IIP worker had also investigated possible vocational courses for Ronnie, although Viv wanted him to attend a sixth form college.

Reflections (as at September 2010)

Towards the end of the intervention period, it had been possible to establish some interaction with Ronnie and to begin to explore his problems and aspirations. The IIP worker believed that this had been achieved by acknowledging some of Ronnie's challenges, including his relationship with Viv, and making it clear that he wanted to hear what Ronnie had to say and to understand his side of the story. However, the contact had been too irregular to make progress. The IIP used incentives, such as go-karting activities, to engage and motivate young people, but as Ronnie had not completed an initial six-month course with the IIP, he was not eligible for these.

Ronnie continued to be disengaged from the IIP and school and still had problems with anger management and communicating with Viv and his sister. The IIP worker believed that Viv tended to 'overshadow' Ronnie and that his father had been obstructive to Ronnie's engagement with the IIP.

Viv said that she had found some of the initial conversations with the IIP worker helpful. But the IIP had not improved things and Ronnie's behaviour was the same as he had not engaged with the intervention. Viv could not think of anything more the IIP could have done to secure this engagement and that it "*was for Ronnie to get there [the project].*" Viv did state that, if the IIP had been able to convince his father of the necessity and benefits of the IIP, this may have assisted Ronnie's engagement. Viv remained very concerned about Ronnie's education and his future prospects.

Update: December 2010

Although his engagement with the IIP remained sporadic, Ronnie began a construction course at a local college. The IIP believed that although Ronnie's father was still unsupportive of the IIP, he was firmer and that Ronnie was less exposed to the risks of gang activity. Ronnie was attending college regularly, using public transport and had not been involved in any criminal activity.

Steven

Note: This narrative is based on the perspectives of the IIP worker and some communication with Abigail (mother) in the initial stages of the research period.

Background

Steven's family had recently moved to the town from very deprived urban area where gang-related violence was widespread. Steven's father died of a heroin overdose when he was a very young child and his stepfather of 12 years was murdered outside the family home in a gang-related attack. Steven's mother Abigail, who had been in care when she was a child, and had spent time in prison, had relocated to the town to be closer to her mother and to get away from their previous turbulent lifestyle, in particular, the family's involvement with drugs and gangs: *'I got the stage where I just don't want to do it no more. And then as well didn't want that madness for them any more, I wanted things to be a bit calmer for them...on an estate there's madness all around you.'*

However, the IIP worker suspected that Abigail had been dealing drugs and had *"stepped on somebody's toes"* such that the family's safety was at risk. The IIP worker believed that Abigail had become customised to a criminal lifestyle.

Abigail found the transition difficult to adjust to and described it as *"a culture shock."* Abigail's mother became seriously ill and Abigail had not been able to establish a relationship with her and was socially isolated:

"I thought 'oh my god why have we moved here?' I felt like I'd retired...I haven't got anything to bother for, get up, see them off out, sometimes I go back to bed and then that's silly because my depression sets in, there's nothing to do and then at night I can't sleep cos I've slept during the day."

Abigail had serious alcohol misuse problems and was known to have used drugs in the past. She was described by the IIP worker as being *"very unstable"* and was medicated for depression and anxiety, and spent a lot of her day in bed. Her dependence on alcohol and her being pressured to buy cannabis and cigarettes for James, meant that the family failed to pay bills and frequently did not have enough money for day-to-day necessities, including food. The IIP worker believed that Abigail *"wanted to do the right thing"* and tried to be a *"good mum"* but was unable to control her alcohol consumption and her behaviour could get out of control.

The family were initially referred to the IIP because of the behaviour of the eldest son, James, who was involved in serious anti-social and criminal behaviour which resulted in him being given a five month prison sentence for robbery in December 2009, just six weeks after the IIP became involved with the family. James had never engaged well with the IIP and since being released he had statutory Youth Offending Team involvement due to his license agreement and it was felt that James was more likely to work with this enforced measure as opposed to a voluntary intervention.

At the point of the referral, the family were living in a privately rented property. The family had regular parties at the house, James had seriously damaged the property, there were numerous complaints of anti-social behaviour and a very serious dispute with elderly neighbours. Abigail received a suspended sentence for an assault on a neighbour and was on 12 month probation. Abigail had been in prison previously. As a result of receiving a suspended sentence for assault, Abigail had contact with a probation officer who had also arranged for her to see an alcohol worker.

Steven, James's younger brother, was referred to the IIP by the IIP worker who was already involved with the family. It was felt that Steven would benefit from IIP involvement because of family factors that were considered to put him at a high risk of offending, in particular, the influence of his brother as a persistent offender, Steven's poor school attendance, and a lack of stability and routine in the home associated with his Abigail's problems. At the point of referral, Steven had not had any contact with the police and had no offending history. The intervention of the IIP worker was intended to be primarily preventative: *"When you take everything that's going on around him he's so at risk of going down the wrong way that it is purely preventative work with him."*

At the point of referral Steven had a 40 per cent school attendance rate and an Educational Welfare Officer was involved in the case. Abigail was unable to get Steven up for school in the morning and it was difficult for the family to afford the bus fare. However, Steven was reported to enjoy school and to have no behavioural issues and his poor educational attainment was due to non-attendance rather than lack of ability. Steven particularly enjoyed, and was good at, art, and kept a folder of his art work. Steven had few friends in the area and tended to associate with his brother's friends who were deemed to be an inappropriate influence given that most were involved in offending behaviour and were regular cannabis users.

Family violence was a key concern as James had repeatedly been physically abusive to Abigail. Abigail had sought help with this problem in the past but claimed that social services and domestic violence support groups had not offered her any help. She regularly purchased cannabis for James as a means of avoiding conflict with him.

The family were known to social services and a referral was made in October 2009 when James was violent towards Abigail whilst IIP workers and Steven were present. A home visit was carried out but the case was then closed. The police had also been involved as a result of the domestic violence and James was subsequently charged and moved to a hostel. Abigail later dropped the charges against James and no further action was taken.

The intervention of the IIP was focused on reducing the likelihood of the onset of offending behaviour in Steven and its aims included increasing his school attendance. The project was also keen to *"reward"* Steven every so often for his positive behaviour, providing access to additional educational and leisure activities (in a context of a very limited family income), developing coping strategies in times of crisis and providing an adult male role model. It was also felt that Steven needed to address the significant traumatic events that he had experienced as a child. The IIP sought to use the alarm on Steven's phone to wake him without his mother's help and provided the bus fares to travel to school. The IIP worker attempted to get Steven into a football club and provided leisure activities such as cinema and bowling, linked to a process of rewards and treats. The IIP worker sought to build a

relationship with Steven that would enable him to talk about his problems, or to support Steven to find an alternative mentor or school counsellor to talk to.

The IIP was providing a significant amount of practical and emotional support to Abigail, which to an extent had diverted attention away from Steven. Over the first few months of the intervention a great deal of time was spent trying to establish trust with Abigail so that she would share information about herself and her family that would enable the IIP worker to make an informed assessment and put together an intervention plan:

"Mum has been through the system, spat out, chewed up, spun round, come out the other end of it and knows exactly how to play the game, she knows what she'll tell you and what she won't tell you but after a long, long time, it's took me months, eventually her barriers have come down and I actually know real mum now, it takes a long, long time for that to come out but it's there now."

In order to help facilitate the development of an open and trusting relationship with Abigail, the IIP undertook to help her with a variety of practical day-to-day concerns that she was struggling to manage. This included helping the family move house after their tenancy came to an end at a previous property where there had been disputes with the neighbours about anti-social behaviour; and resolving rent arrears and housing benefit claims when there has been a change in circumstances (for instance when James went in to prison). The IIP also assisted in producing household budget plans; helping out financially when it has been deemed necessary and appropriate, for instance, paying for household items to be repaired (e.g. washing machine) and buying the Christmas dinner when there was no food in the house. The IIP sought to ensure that Abigail attended doctor and dentist appointments; accessed mental health support; and the IIP also referred Abigail to a parenting group and coffee mornings to help her build a network of friends. As the key worker explained, the IIP's work with Abigail had been very much "responsive" and concerned with managing day-to-day crises, driven by the needs of Abigail. She explained that this responsive support had been key to securing Abigail's engagement with the IIP and any attempts to address underlying issues:

"There's been millions of people in and out of Abigail's house, workers, the only reason that we've done all right is because we've been honest and consistent and we haven't had such a small remit that it annoyed her 'cause if she said to me '[IIP worker], I don't know how to do this' and I said 'actually that's not, I can't do that, it's not my agency, I'll pass you onto someone else' she would have told me where to stick it but because I think it made us more human that we were able to help with this wide variety of things, there was no need for us to move her house but the reality is it probably saved the young people going into care or something 'cause they had nowhere to live plus it made us human in her eyes and we'd only known her a very short time at that time and it allowed her then to open up the reality to us which she wouldn't do to other people."

Abigail talked about how she appreciated the emotional and non-judgemental support provided by the key worker. She described the project as "absolutely excellent" and said:

"What I like about the IIP worker, she doesn't judge you for anything that's happened in your life or how you've been or how you've dealt with this or that and I think she

knows that I've had quite a mad life I would say, a strange, mad, upsetting, quite traumatic life, she's never undermined what I've got to say about anything or anything like that, sometimes I get really down and think 'what's it all for?' but she always makes me feel better... I've phoned her up sometimes and said 'I'm in bits today I don't know what's the matter with me' blah, blah, blah, and she's sat on the phone for half an hour and chatted to me and I've got off the phone and felt completely different."

However Abigail found it problematic that IIP workers were only generally available during 'office hours.' Following James' release from prison, he had not been violent towards Abigail, but she was fearful that he could become abusive again and having the IIP worker to call for support should this happen provided reassurance to Abigail. Furthermore, Abigail felt that the intervention of the IIP might dissuade James from being abusive as he knew that Abigail would contact the IIP worker, with an increased likelihood that action would be taken:

"I don't know what I'd do without them there, just to know that they're there, if I lost the IIP worker, I don't know what I'd do really, I would really feel completely alone, I know it's still early days with James yet, things are good now at the moment but I know if anything did creep back into the old, when things were a little bit difficult, I know that I could go to them[...]I think that keeps him in a little bit of boundary as well, knowing that they're around, because when it's just mum it's only me he's got to get through but now he knows I have got that little bit of extra support he knows I'll be straight on the phone."

The IIP worker recognised that Abigail's social isolation risked her becoming dependent on the IIP and was trying to help Abigail establish a network of friends in the local area and refocus her efforts, as much as possible, on Steven.

The IIP worker believed that there had been progress with the case and that, for a while, Abigail was "settling down." Steven was attending school, Abigail had received dental treatment that she very much needed; she had started to sort out her finances, was going to the coffee mornings and had started to address her mental health problems. However, in the lead up to and following James' release from prison Abigail had begun drinking heavily again and had been charged with common assault. This had yet to go to trial but because Abigail was already on a suspended sentence, there was a possibility that she would receive a custodial sentence. James was also now subject to a two-year Anti-social Behaviour Order which prohibited him from visiting the neighbourhood where the family had lived previously, drinking in public and causing harassment, alarm and distress.

Progress and interventions (from March 2010)

According to the IIP, little progress had been made with the case. The family's situation worsened due to Abigail's increased alcohol consumption, which was directly related to James being released from prison. Abigail had developed an increasingly aggressive attitude towards the IIP worker.

The IIP worker had been trying to ensure that Steven attended school through providing bus fares, picking him up from school and securing a grant to buy Steven a computer to enable him to complete school work. It has transpired however that Steven has not been attending

school and the IIP worker suspected that Abigail had been using Steven's bus fare money to purchase alcohol. On some occasions, the IIP worker had been unable to deliver the bus fare money for Steven as Abigail would not answer the door.

Abigail's attitude and behaviour towards the IIP worker became increasingly hostile. On a number of occasions, Abigail had rung the IIP worker and had been abusive and offensive and accused the IIP worker of not supporting her adequately. These calls were linked to her consumption of alcohol. Abigail said that she wanted to move back to her previous area of residence and requested money from the IIP to do so. Abigail had also blamed the IIP worker for Steven's non-attendance at school. The IIP worker reiterated to Abigail that Steven's attendance at school was ultimately her responsibility. The IIP had provided money for Steven's bus fares to school on the stipulation that they were provided with receipts. The IIP worker had also picked Steven up from school in an attempt to spend some time with him and to encourage Abigail to ensure that Steven attended school in the morning.

Abigail prevented IIP workers from having contact with Steven during the Easter break and had also prevented Steven from participating in an outing which she perceived to be an insufficient reward for him. There were numerous incidents of alcohol-related anti-social behaviour at the family property and the police were attempting to secure an Anti-social Behaviour Order against Abigail. James had begun being violent towards Abigail again and caused serious damage to the family property, although Abigail refused police involvement. There was a concern that James' behaviour could escalate once his license period ended.

The IIP decided to close the case as Abigail was not engaging sufficiently for the IIP to work effectively with the family and, as such, no progress was being made. Although Abigail's confrontational and abusive behaviour towards the IIP worker continued, the IIP worker was reluctant to withdraw support because of her concerns for Steven who had engaged with the IIP when given the opportunity to do so. A final opportunity to engage fully with the IIP was offered but not taken up and the case was subsequently closed.

Tariq

Background

Tariq was referred when he was fifteen years old. He lived with his mother and father, his older brother and younger sister. Tariq was referred to the IIP in June 2009 by the Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme (ISSP) team. Initially it was a condition of his ISSP that he engaged with and attended the IIP although subsequently he attended of his own free will. Tariq had admitted gang involvement after being seriously assaulted. He had previously been involved in a number of robberies, gang activity and had also been the victim of gang-related threats and violence. He had been subject to a curfew and electronic tagging and had continued to receive support from the Youth Offending Team. He was required to go to an attendance centre once a week as part of his order. Tariq was believed to smoke cannabis, although the extent of this and its effects were not known by the IIP.

Tariq had been subject to temporary exclusions from school. It was reported that it was in the periods when Tariq was not engaged with or attending school that he became associated with negative behaviour. Tariq had also been falling asleep when in school, but despite this, he had been doing well educationally and had applied to go on to college after his GCSEs. He was unsure about whether he wanted to pursue an apprenticeship or get some work experience as a youth worker or mentor. He had also considered taking a year out before college, which the IIP worker believed would present a risk of further involvement in gang-related activity. He was reported to be revising for his examinations.

Tariq was reported to be close to his brother and sister and to have a closer relationship with his father than with his mother, although his communication with both parents was limited. His relationship with his parents had improved since he had been working with the IIP. Both His parents were supportive of the IIP and, although they had initially refused to acknowledge that Tariq was involved with gangs, this had changed after he had been seriously assaulted.

His IIP worker believed that Tariq had become involved in gangs due to his friends, and any change in his behaviour would require either a change in their behaviour or Tariq no longer associating with them, which would be very difficult as long as continued to live in the locality. Because he appeared older than he was, older gang members sought to get him involved in more serious gang activities. The IIP worker believed that Tariq did wish to change his behaviour and was frustrated by the barriers preventing this, for example, the reputation that he had locally and the expectations upon him and how he behaved. There was significant gang-related activity in the neighbourhood where Tariq lived and he received serious threats to his personal safety, which the IIP worker and the school had worked together to manage the risks of, including Tariq starting school later in the day or using taxis or lifts from the IIP worker.

The overall aim of the IIP intervention was to assist Tariq in avoiding gang-related and criminal activity. Tariq had engaged well with the IIP, apart from the immediate period prior to his court case in February 2010. Tariq's IIP worker believed that this was a result of a lack of motivation as Tariq believed that he would receive a custodial sentence. Tariq was not sentenced to custody, which was in part attributed to the positive references provided by

his IIP and Youth Offending Team workers. Tariq met with his IIP worker once a fortnight and they spoke on the phone once or twice a week, including when he *"had a rough day."* Tariq reported valuing this support, especially the IIP worker accompanying him to court appearances. The IIP worker claimed that *"Tariq can just sit down and talk to me and tell me what's going through his head."* The IIP worker and Tariq both identified these one to one forms of support, and Tariq having someone to talk to, as the most beneficial element of the intervention. Tariq was considered willing to *"give anything a go and if he doesn't like it he'll let the project worker know and they will try something different next time."* Tariq had taken part in a decision-making course, bowling and work experience. He also found an anger management course very helpful in seeing the consequences of his behaviour and alternatives methods of resolving problems. Tariq had also attended Youth Offending Team courses on robbery and knife crime. Although Tariq valued the support from the Youth Offending Team, he thought that the informal support provided by the IIP was more effective than the more formal and instructive support, which although it would *"make you get up and do things"*, it did not provide the same opportunities for conversation.

Tariq had developed a set of short and long term goals. He stated that: *"I want to change all my life round, study more, become one of those quieter ones, quiet, mind your own business, do your own thing."* One of this longer term goals was to study at college and work in *"mentoring and public services"* and the IIP worker had assisted him complete college application forms. The IIP had already provided him with the opportunity to gain some work experience as a youth worker which he enjoyed and was motivated by. The IIP worker had also attempted to find a boxing club for Tariq as it was viewed as crucial that he was occupied, particularly during the school holidays. Tariq's mother reported being *"very scared"* during holiday periods without structured activities for him.

Tariq, his mother and his IIP worker all believed that he had benefitted from the IIP intervention, which had encouraged him to be more reflective, to consider the consequences of his actions and to become more independent. He had not been involved in any anti-social behaviour or criminal activity. He was also able to participate in IIP activities and meet his friends at other times, rather than prioritising socialising with his friends over IIP activities, which was previously the case. His friends were also reported to have become more appreciative of the role of the IIP with Tariq. Indeed, Tariq believed that his friends may be influenced by the IIP, as if they saw him (*"one of the worst"* in his own words) making changes and that *"I ain't losing from it"*, then they would be encouraged themselves.

Tariq reported that, previously he would have smoked cannabis and *"just kicked off with people"*, whereas now he was *"staying after school for a bit and catching up."* Tariq believed that he would be in a position to leave the project *"when I am more mature"*, perhaps his final year at college. The IIP worker also believed that Tariq should be supported until he was in college or an apprenticeship and, even then, that communication to check his progress should be maintained. The IIP worker also planned to facilitate Tariq's participation in drama, art and outdoor recreation activities.

Progress and interventions (from May 2010)

May

Tariq had two one to one meetings with his IIP worker. Tariq had been doing well. He had revised for his examinations, both at school and at home and he was predicted to get B, C and D grades. He had been offered a place at college in September to study public services as he now wished to pursue a career in the probation service. Tariq had been involved in a fight at school. The IIP worker believed that Tariq was associating less with peers who were a negative influence. Tariq's relationship with his father was reported to have improved and they were spending time together doing boxing training, football and jogging. Tariq had chosen to attend boxing training with his father rather than a go-karting activity with the IIP. His parents had not been directly involved with the IIP but were supportive of the intervention and were very proud that he had been accepted by the college.

June

There had been little contact between Tariq and the IIP. He was reported to be revising for exams. His mother stated that she was *"happy now that Tariq is no longer in trouble"* and that she had found it *"frightening"* when he was. She also believed that she found it more difficult to keep her children out of trouble as they became older. She also stated that Tariq had witnessed a lot of arguments and fights between his parents and that he struggled to control his anger as *"he couldn't take any of it"* when his parents were in conflict and he perceived that his mother was being hurt.

July

Tariq had remained out of trouble and completed his exams, although he and his mother were worried about what his results would be. Tariq had planned to gain some work experience with the Youth Service over the summer but decided not to when he realised that it was based upon football. Tariq had minimal contact with the IIP and his mother was worried that he was not involved in any structured activities, although he had been seeing his friends, playing computer games and snooker and going to the gym. He had stopped attending boxing training. His mother felt that he needed to keep busy or he would *"mess about"* and get into trouble. She was still positive about the IIP and believed that the IIP worker remaining in touch with Tariq was helpful.

August

Tariq had been in contact with the IIP worker on two occasions, including a face to face meeting *"to catch up."* He received his exam results, which his mother described as *"okay, not high not low"* and he was still expecting to begin college in September. He was reported to be spending a lot of time with his friends and was not involved in any structured activities.

September

The IIP worker had had telephone contact with Tariq on several occasions. He had been very focused on observing Ramadan. He had started college. He got a B, two Cs and some Ds on his exams, but had decided not to pursue a public services course. Instead he was doing a construction course as he now wanted to do *"something with his hands."* The IIP worker was planning to meet with Tariq once a fortnight. Tariq stated that he continued liking

having someone who was not a friend or member of his family to talk to. This was the start of an exit strategy for the IIP, assisting Tariq to feel confident in dealing with college and other issues without the IIP worker's guidance and motivation.

Reflections (at September 2010)

The IIP worker believed that Tariq *"had completely turned around"* since the start of the intervention. For example, he had not been thinking about college but, with the support of the IIP, he had managed to avoid exclusion from school, complete his GCSEs and begin a college course. He had not been in trouble for a long time and was associating with a more positive peer group, including some of his previous friends. He was now more independent and reflective and not so easily led. He had stopped smoking and had joined a gym, which he attended with his father and his relationship with his family had improved. He was reported to be proud of himself and his family to be proud of him. It was intended that Tariq should continue to be able to access one to one support and guidance, through the IIP working with his college. Tariq stated that he continued to *"have chats"* with the IIP worker.

The IIP worker believed that the provision of someone to talk to, motivate him, guide him and believe in him was a key mechanism in achieving this change, as previously he Tariq had only had his family, with whom he had a difficult relationship and his friends, who did not always provide a positive influence. The IIP worker had also sought to change Tariq's negative attitudes towards to the police and other authority figures and the IIP worker believed that being young helped this situation. Building a bond with Tariq had been instrumental to this progress and the one to one sessions and working closely with the Youth Offending Team worker to support Tariq's adherence to his ISSP and accompanying him to court hearing had been very important in establishing this bond. The IIP worker believed that, without the intervention, Tariq *"would have just carried on doing what he was doing"* as he had no alternative influences in his life. Tariq had a pattern of offending behaviour, as the IIP worker reflected upon: *"When I first met him, all he was out to do was get revenge...he started to realise that revenge wouldn't sort out his problems...I had to make him aware that if he carried on with his gang involvement, then his future didn't look bright really."*

The IIP worker believed that this progress was sustainable because Tariq had developed a positive attitude with his mind set on the college and the gym: *"The main thing is that Tariq feels proud of himself...and he's also happy his family are proud of him."* The IIP worker recognised the need to ensure that Tariq remained occupied and did not become distracted into negative or risky behaviour.

Tariq believed that the IIP *"helped a lot"*, through enabling him to meet a lot of other people and to reflect on his life: *"They've helped turn me into an adult."* He was getting on better with his family and was *"less shy"* with them. The IIP had also *"helped me get a place in college...the IIP worker kept coming to me about filling in the application forms for college."* The IIP had *"helped me stay on track...and stay put of trouble."* Tariq had never wanted to disengage from the IIP as he knew *"they were doing things for my good."* He found the one to one sessions the most useful element of support and had continued meeting the IIP worker every fortnight. He also appreciated the IIP worker getting in touch *"just to say how you been, what are you doing?"* He had attended four music-based IIP sessions but had

dropped out as *"music is not my thing."* Tariq stated: *"I've completed all my [IIP] sessions, now I need to make my own way."* Tariq also stated that he knew other young people who had found the IIP to be *"really helpful."* For example, one of Tariq's friends worked with the same IIP worker and Tariq had noticed that his friend had *"started calming down"* and Tariq had noticed *"a change already"* in another young person participating in the IIP.

Tariq's mother had not had any direct contact with the IIP other than to pass on telephone call messages. She was positive about the IIP and believed that *"they support Tariq very well."* She also thought that the one to one sessions and the IIP worker keeping in touch with Tariq were *"very helpful."* She was happy that Tariq was no longer in trouble and very proud that he was now going to college. She believed that helping Tariq to stay out of trouble had been the most important thing that the IIP had achieved. She had been concerned about the lack of structured activities provided for Tariq during the summer holidays, although she acknowledged that Tariq was not always able to participate in all IIP activities, for example, when they clashed with the need for him to attend a centre as part of his court order. She believed that Tariq had *"definitely changed for the better"*, that he was getting on better with his family and was no longer in trouble.

Update: December 2010

Tariq was still doing well. He appeared happier and more confident, was attending college and had not been in any trouble. Based on this progress, the IIP decided to exit Tariq in November. He therefore no longer participated in any of the IIP group activities but he had been reassured that he could contact his IIP worker *"as and when he feels it necessary."*