

## 7) Case Study: Building trust

This case study illustrates how using person centred tools helps a family who feel they've had to fight for everything, focus on the future instead and see how the present can lead to their son achieving his goals and aspirations.

Angelo is 11 and has a diagnosis of ASD and dyspraxia. He is home schooled due to being bullied in his last placement.

### Angelo's Story

Angelo was keen to return to school but anxious about the environment. His parents had requested an assessment for a statement that was refused by the LA. However, this decision was overruled at tribunal and they progressed to a needs assessment for an EHCP. After having to fight to be heard, the family were feeling defensive and said that it was important to them that any support they receive is independent from the LA.

Angelo's parents were not familiar with the changes to the system, so we discussed the application process, who may be involved, what criteria are assessed and all the possible outcomes of the application. As Angelo is 11 and has a clear idea of aspirations, he didn't want to sit and work with us, he chose to stay in the next room from where he could still hear our discussions instead.

I worked through the tools designed to encourage person centred thinking and planning with Angelo's parents. Angelo did come into the room at this point to add to his One Page Profile. He became animated when talking about his love of computers and his desire to be a games designer when he is older. He stated that at school, they never did anything useful or related to what he was interested in, so we discussed some of the elements involved in designing computer games and how they could be linked to school subjects, eg. code, music, Storyboarding, design, scale and measure etc. Angelo had not considered the connection between what he was learning at school and how it might be useful in real life and thinks that at secondary school, in the right placement, he would be able to learn 'useful stuff to help with designing games'.

The relationship map identified the support the family currently receive and also the gaps. Once this was done, we were able to discuss how these gaps may be filled and by who, which led us to the Local Offer. Angelo's parents were unaware of this resource and subsequently spent time exploring the Local Offer for themselves. Through this and information provided by me at our meetings, they began to access local support for the whole family. Angelo's parents also directed me to Home Education Services and support I had not been aware of, which I could pass on to other families in the future.

With the 'What's working/not working' tool, Angelo's parents referred back to his time at school and the fight they had to get a diagnosis and how he had struggled socially and academically. They considered what worked well at home and Angelo returned at this point to discuss what he enjoys about home education and the activities he does. Angelo was aware of his anxieties and emotions and contributed ideas as to how

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adults around him could help him manage them. He was eager to have his voice heard but being asked his opinions about his needs and how to meet them was a new experience for the whole family and daunting at first.

Angelo's parents were keen for him to attend a specific complex needs school but were aware that this school may be oversubscribed. I was able to give them a list of complex needs schools in the county as well as schools with specially resourced bases and what their specialisms are. This helped the parents realise they had alternative options, whether or not the EHCP was finalised. They spent time after our meeting researching and contacting schools to discuss Angelo and how individual schools would be able to cater for his interests and needs.

I met with Angelo and his parents twice before attending the draft planning meeting with the coordinator and Educational Psychologist. The work we had done together up to this point was clearly reflected in the writing of the plan, and Angelo and his parents were able to be firm and specific about what they wanted considered and included, making the document reflective of Angelo, his views, opinions and aspirations.

Going through the process of applying for an EHCP helped the family think more clearly about what they wanted for Angelo and what Angelo wanted for himself. It gave them the opportunity to reflect on past experiences and create an action plan to move forward. The support of an IS meant they had signposting to services they were previously unaware of, some of which they could access immediately, meaning that they felt like progress was being made and giving them control over the situation. In an email, Angelo's parents told me they felt like a huge weight had been lifted and they could now see a more positive future.

As demonstrated through this case study, the role of an IS is vital in demonstrating the importance of putting the person and their opinions at the centre of all decisions. The IS service provides parents and young people with information about how they can access support and inform themselves, giving them the confidence to make use of local services, enquire about and ask for help and support their children or themselves need long after the process has come to an end. This in turn will lead to a more positive and equal future for children and young people with SEND.