

Case study: Highlighting how the IAS Service caseworker engaged with the YP with the assistance of the Council for Disabled Children (CDC) Annual Review animation, thus enabling her to fully understand and participate in the process and ensure her voice was heard.

At the time of referral Juliet was 18 years old and coming towards the end of her first year at college. Juliet has chronic fatigue syndrome, ASD and high levels of anxiety. College was difficult for her and she felt she was not being supported at college and her anxiety levels heightened. This had led to attempts of self-harm and Juliet being moved to the SEN block of her college. Her timetable had been reduced to 3 days, however, she was only managing 2 days.

Juliet 's mum contacted IASS for support at Juliet 's Annual Review meeting. She also asked for a caseworker to visit her and Juliet at home so she could discuss the current issues before the meeting. During the home visit Juliet was feeling anxious as she felt college did not want her there anymore and they were insisting that she had a 1:1 with her at all times. We discussed what support Juliet felt she needed at college and she told me that she needed a quiet place to access easily at times and access to people she trusted. She discussed friends she had made and felt comfortable with. She talked about the EHCP process and how she did not fully understand it so I used the CDC animations to help explain the different aspects of the EHCP to her.

We attended the Annual Review at college and Juliet was happy to attend with the support of me; the IASS caseworker, and her mum. She felt that she had more understanding now she had watched the animations. At the meeting the college wanted to discuss Juliet's inability to access the course she had begun due to it being mainly in the mainstream block. Juliet became upset and college carefully explained they couldn't relocate the course so had instead been exploring alternative solutions. They suggested a vocational course which could be spread over two years and would mean Juliet could access a reduced timetable. Although this was intended to reassure Juliet and seemed like an ideal alternative, Juliet became very upset as it was not the original course; not what she was expecting; and she was unable to truly understand exactly what was being proposed or how it would look in terms of her timetable. I asked the college to provide a visual timetable for Juliet to see, which they were happy to do. Juliet calmed when she saw the timetable and it was explained to her again.

When she was calm I suggested to Juliet that she told college about the support she wanted, as we had discussed with her mum at home. College listened and explained how the support Juliet described could be implemented and she appeared to understand and agreed with this.

The meeting continued with Juliet now feeling calmer and able to contribute to the discussion. I supported her if I felt she did not understand what was happening. The meeting appeared successful and lasted approximately 2 hours.

After the meeting Juliet 's mum called to thank me for my support at the meeting. She felt that although the college had been proactive trying to find a solution, had I not been present Juliet 's voice would not have been effectively heard and her wishes acted upon.