

# Case study: Andrew.

Andrew was aged 14 when he went to his current carers and came into care at the age of 10. He had a history of early neglect and abuse and had suffered two previous adoption breakdowns. He was referred following a sexual assault on a toddler within the extended family which greatly shocked his foster parents and threatened the stability of the placement. Andrew was withdrawn, lacking emotion, lying, stealing and breaking his carers belongings.

Initially, Andrew was very anxious. His carers were highly stressed and very negative and critical about him. Chrysalis worked with Andrew and his carers over 44 two hour sessions. The Theraplay approach taught his carers to focus on pre-emptive positive structure rather than consequences and punishment, to avoid control battles and to bring more engagement and nurture to the relationship in order to build Andrew's trust.

Under the guidance of the clinical team, the foster carers used Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy techniques to help Andrew understand his emotions and recognise how they affected him on a day-to-day basis. Andrew responded well to the therapy and the high level of one-to-one attention provided by his foster carers and started to become more relaxed, open and loving.

Over the course of therapy Andrew disclosed sexual abuse from 2 perpetrators, including during a previous adoptive placement. His carers were able to understand and empathise with him, and to comfort and reassure him during the sessions of Eye Movement and Desensitisation work as he reprocessed and began to come to terms with these traumatic early experiences and how they had influenced his subsequent feelings and behaviour.

By the end of the programme, Andrew was happier, more relaxed, less anxious and less defiant at home.

There was no further sexual touching and his behaviour was vastly improved. Andrew's carers are now optimistic about the future and confident that Andrew will continue to live with them until he goes to university.

“ It has helped us and Andrew enormously and I feel it was exactly the right therapy to help Andrew open up and release the 'demons' within. Without this help we wouldn't be looking after Andrew now. He has responded to the therapy better than we ever could have hoped for. ”

*Andrew's foster carers*