

Case study: Chloe

Chloe (aged 11) came into care at the age of 4 and had been with her current carers for seven years.

Previously, Chloe had been living with a maternal aunt she thought to be her mother. Chloe's birth parents have a history of substance abuse and domestic violence and, whilst in their care, Chloe was known to have suffered physical injury on at least one occasion.

Chloe had difficulties attaching to her carers and was showing some sexually uninhibited behaviour.

She had a constant need for attention, low self-esteem and difficulty relating to her peers. Chloe was physically and verbally aggressive to her carers and was resistant to their attempts to nurture her. Chloe's carers were feeling overwhelmed by her needs and de-skilled as parents. They were also highly concerned about how Chloe would manage the transition to secondary school, as she was already struggling academically and behaviourally in her primary school environment.

Chrysalis devised a targeted trauma and attachment therapeutic plan comprising 48 sessions of Theraplay and Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy, along with advice and consultation to Chloe's new school.

On completion the foster carers were both more relaxed and had the confidence to set structures and boundaries for Chloe. Through good use of playfulness and nurture, they were able to help Chloe to regulate her behaviour.

Chloe is now more relaxed and better able to accept structure and guidance from her foster carers.

Her aggressive outbursts at home have greatly reduced in both frequency and severity, and her foster carers are much more confident in their ability to parent her. She has recently received a very good report from school and appears to be engaging increasingly well in the classroom and making lots of effort.

Her academic learning is also improving rapidly.

“ We can see that (the therapy) we have here at Chrysalis has given us so many more strategies to use with Chloe. We feel so much more confident that we can manage the difficulties and that we can help her to learn. I feel much more confident in managing her on my own now when dad is away and Chloe can tell that as well... And Chloe is starting to learn – she is better at accepting consequences and apologising and wanting to make things up with us, when there has been an incident. We feel we are really making progress. ”

Chloe's foster carers