

Families on The Edge

Reflections of families experiences of being supported within Action for Children's residential Family Support Services



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Our family was in a very bad place a year ago... I was drinking heavily and I wasn't caring for my kids. I have now stopped drinking and changed the way I am with the kids... It has been 12 months since we started getting support, but things are turning a corner... ...I don't think we're ready to go it alone yet”

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Parent highlighting the importance
of support workers staying in for
as long as necessary



My baby went to live with my aunt and uncle as soon as he was born, but the plan was always that we would work for him to come home to us...
...it was hard because they were family and obviously they became very attached to him... ...so the workers needed to work with them as well. He is home now.



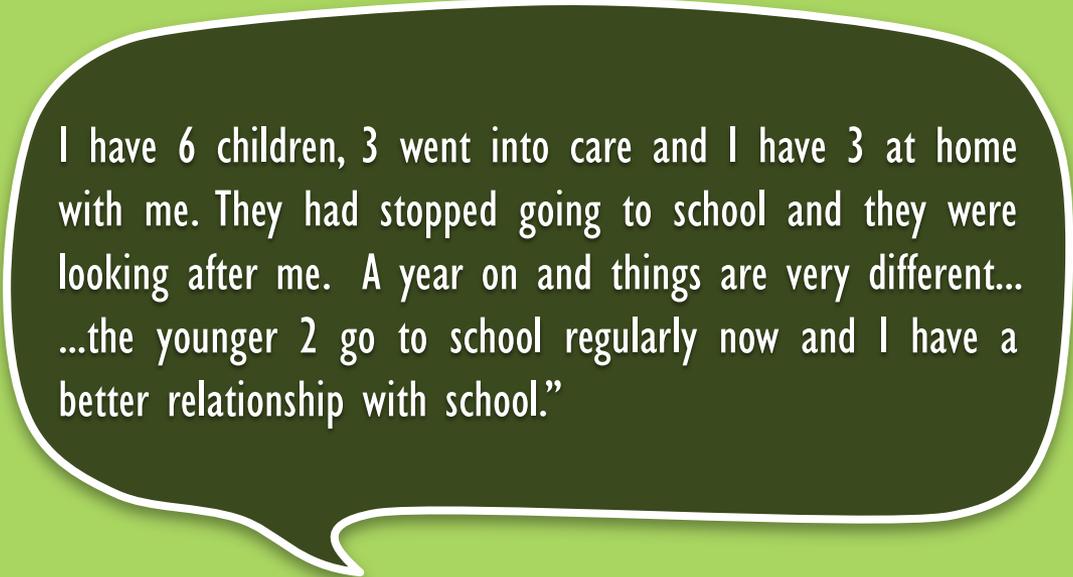
Parent discussing the need for workers to support wider family members as part of whole-family approach.

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It is a difficult thing to say but I was relieved when my son went into care because I couldn't cope any more and I didn't want him to come home... ..he is back home now and things are very different. I just wish this type of support had been there earlier when things started to go wrong. It's a shame that you have to be at breaking point before you can get help.

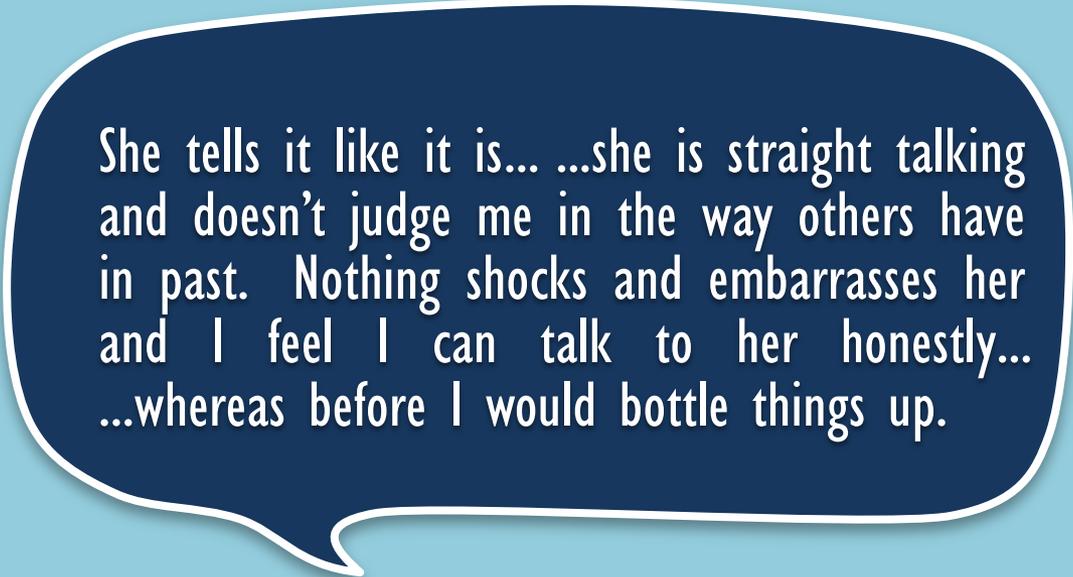
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Parent talking about the importance of building a trusting relationship with a worker to motivate and instigate change. This was particularly important for this parent as she felt that she didn't have the capacity or resources to look after her son again.



I have 6 children, 3 went into care and I have 3 at home with me. They had stopped going to school and they were looking after me. A year on and things are very different... ..the younger 2 go to school regularly now and I have a better relationship with school.”

Parent talking about the need for support to also focus on educational outcomes for children and being included in that support



She tells it like it is... ..she is straight talking and doesn't judge me in the way others have in past. Nothing shocks and embarrasses her and I feel I can talk to her honestly... ..whereas before I would bottle things up.

Parent reflecting on the importance of
a trusting relationship and the skills
and values required by a Family
Support Worker

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I referred myself to the project for support as I was struggling and knew that I needed help to keep my children. I gave up my house to live in the project. I had a mentally abusive partner. I am stronger now with the kids and much more confident. My worker gradually built my confidence through listening and reassuring. She also helped me with budgeting, employment, and social activities for us as a family”

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Parent highlighting the importance of going at her pace in building her confidence and resilience.

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Support to go to the job centre and explain to them that I'm not ready for work was needed. I also didn't understand benefits and how to sort them out so needed support with that... how can you work with people when you've not even got any money or food on the table first?

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Parent explaining the need for support to navigate benefits system to meet basic needs.

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My baby was removed from my care at birth for reasons I still don't fully understand... ..I was young at the time and Social Work didn't think he was safe. It was hard to bond properly during contact but our workers were amazing... ..we covered loads with them: I-I work, cooking lessons, healthy eating, weaning, safety, how to play, and how to interact. We have our son back home and we are so grateful for the support.

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Parents talking about the types of support that were important for them in having their son returned home



With thanks to the families within Action for
Children's residential Family Support services