

QAF case study – Lilly’s safe haven



THE YOUNG PERSON

Lilly* is a 12 year old girl who came into care as a newborn baby and was placed with her paternal grandparents and has remained with them over this period.

Lilly has two siblings who were placed in alternative placements. Both siblings are considerably older than Lilly and are determined to be involved in her life regardless of obstacles that are occurring.

CASEWORK AND THE QUALITY ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK

The Strength and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) was undertaken by the carer on four occasions, six months apart. Initial results showed that Lilly had ‘Many Fears, and Easily Scared’ and identified that Lilly was often downhearted and tearful, she complained of headaches, stomachache or sickness and often lied or cheated.

Over the same period Lilly completed four QAF Child and Young Person Questionnaires, where initially Lilly said she felt ‘completely safe’, but then on the third occasion Lilly said that she felt ‘not really safe.’

The results of the QAF Child and Young Person Questionnaire prompted further assessments and investigation to understand the issues that were making Lilly feel unsafe.

THE OUTCOME

Lilly’s response of feeling ‘not completely safe’ alerted the caseworker to have conversations with Lilly and the grandmother. The SDQs undertaken by Lilly’s grandmother also outlined concerning behaviours. It was revealed that neither the grandmother nor Lilly felt safe and that the grandfather was controlling, grumpy and had little input into Lilly’s care.

Lilly and her grandmother identified that they wanted to leave the home as this is what Lilly felt she needed to do to feel safer. This hadn’t been raised before with the caseworker, as they thought this would not be supported by DCJ.

Following this conversation, Lilly and her grandmother were assisted by the caseworker to find alternative accommodation and they were able to apply for the *Start Safely Program*. This program qualified the carer to get additional rent assistance for up to three years.

This was an anxious time for both the grandmother and Lilly, however with the support of women’s services and an alternative housing option, this ensured that Lilly and the grandmother were able to leave the controlling relationship.

Lilly reported in her following QAF Child and Young Person Questionnaire that she felt ‘completely safe’. The results from the last SDQ also show that the difficulties are no longer present. The caseworker has been able to show the positive impact the change has made and that the right decision was made for Lilly and her grandmother.

*Name/s changed to protect the privacy of individuals