

Kate was referred to us after experiencing a number of breakdowns in foster placements and through taking several serious overdoses, resulting in hospitalisation. It was suspected that Kate had been a victim of sexual abuse and had made allegations against her stepfather. Her relationship with her mother was strained to say the least and in many ways Kate emulated her mother by dressing in her clothes she would flaunt herself in front of her stepfather and make herself available for further abuse with older men. When Kate was first admitted to our home, as you can imagine her behaviour was difficult to manage. She was a gross attention seeker and on one occasion claimed she had taken an overdose again, and was admitted to hospital. Whilst in hospital she refused to take any fluid resulting in the Doctors needing to keep her in much longer, as a result of her behaviour whilst she was in hospital when the difficulties of her original overdose were well past. However Kate did have two things going for her.

1. She wanted to stand up to her relatives at home, and eventually became estranged from them. Refusing to appease her family in any way.
2. She did appear to respond to the learning opportunities that we were creating for her and began to form sound relationships with a number of primary carers.

Kate stayed with us for a number of years. She passed the usual milestones with pride including nights out for her 16th birthday etc. When Kate was about 17 years of age, it became clear that as a result of attending college and developing social networks outside of Pear Tree that the boundaries and constraints within a residential home were becoming too great for her. Pear Tree used its flexibility and secured the purchase of a property not too far away from the home where she was living. This became Kate's home where she was to live for some time, independent of Pear Tree but being able to utilize the home that she had come from for moral support, practical help and guidance. At the same time benefit from regular structured support from our community support team. In time Kate met the man of her dreams, who was somewhat older than Kate, however, he was able to provide her with a stable loving relationship of the kind that she had longed for. It was not long before Kate moved out and moved in with her boyfriend. A couple of years later we received a postcard from the Bahamas where she had enjoyed a holiday with her new partner. Several years after this Kate visits us on a regular basis and brings her three children who are all beautifully clean and healthy to the farm to see us all, to show her children the animals and to enjoy picnics etc. Kate's success was very much hinged on positive relationships, stability, and consistency and on unshaken resolve and support. This must be considered to be one of the most successful placements to date.