

The Evaluation Report - Case Study

Aim: To recommend to Dylan's Case Manager relevant community interventions to reduce any future anti-social and offending behaviour.

Dylan is a 14-year old young male. He lives with his mother Mandy (35 years), step-father Tony (42 years) and two younger sisters Chanelle (2 years) and Sienna (12 months). Mandy and Tony began a relationship 4 years ago and Tony moved in to the house 3 years ago. Dylan has sporadic contact with his biological father Jonny. Mandy states that Jonny will come to the house to take Dylan out 'once in a blue moon.' Jonny and Mandy had a short relationship prior to Dylan's birth and separated when Dylan was 4 years old. Mandy outlines that Jonny was occasionally violent to her after misusing alcohol and she recalled that Dylan may have witnessed this on a couple of occasions.

Mandy describes Tony and Dylan often 'clashing' and frequent 'shouting and screaming matches' in the house between them. Sometimes, when Tony has reprimanded him, Dylan has punched walls, kicked doors and smashed things up in the house (even in his own bedroom). Mandy states that Dylan gets angry very quickly and is difficult to calm down. On one occasion, he threw the television set across the living room late at night when Mandy told him to switch his games console off and go to bed. She is now too scared to reprimand his behaviour due to fears of him becoming increasingly angry and violent.

Mandy states she often leaves the discipline in the family to Tony, whilst she cares for the needs of her younger daughters. On one occasion, Dylan grabbed a knife during an altercation in which Tony threatened to have Dylan put in to care if his behaviour continued. Although Dylan quickly put the knife down and exited to his bedroom, Mandy and Tony resorted to phoning the police as Tony convinced Mandy that Dylan needed 'to be taught a lesson' and to be shown clearly 'that his behaviour was out of order.' The police verbally reprimanded Dylan and told him that if they were called to the house again over a disturbance, they would arrest him and charge him.

Mandy and Dylan lived on their own for many years after her separation from his father and they developed a close mother and son relationship. Mandy believes that Dylan saw himself as the 'man of the house' at this time and believes that he now finds it difficult to follow Tony's house rules because of this. Dylan believes that Tony is 'too strict' and 'likes to lay down the law too much' and feels that 'he has no right to, as he's not my real Dad.' Tony states that Dylan 'brings too much trouble to our door' and 'sets a bad example to my girls.' Their relationship is very strained and they spend as little time together as possible.

Police have brought Dylan home on a couple of occasions reporting him as being involved in antisocial behaviour with other peers in the local area, including throwing eggs at windows, drinking cans of beer underage and intimidating locals by harassing them to buy them alcohol, as well as getting involved in fighting with other groups of peers. Police have also questioned Dylan with a group of his peers about a recent fire-setting incident. Rubbish in a skip was set alight on a housing estate near to Dylan's school. Although the police suspected Dylan and his peers of being involved, they had no evidence to charge him with this offence. Dylan has also been banned from a couple of local shops in their home area, after being caught stealing from them (chocolate bars, crisps and drinks).

Dylan has recently been assessed as having average levels of intelligence. Primary school reports indicate that Dylan struggled to sit still and listen in class and that he always appeared to have 'lots of energy.' However, he was academically able and generally made average academic progress with close support. Dylan generally had some positive friendships whilst at this school with some boys whom the teachers described as 'nice boys and a good influence.' Mandy outlines that he would often have these friends over to the house to play at this time and he would also go to their homes regularly, as they lived locally. Mandy came to know their parents well and was happy for Dylan to visit their homes.

After starting secondary school, Dylan's behaviour deteriorated and he began to truant from school regularly and began getting frequently disciplined by teachers and excluded for issues regarding his behaviour. This included showing a disrespectful attitude towards teachers and being aggressive and bullying towards peers. On one occasion, Dylan became verbally abusive to his teacher and threw a chair across the classroom when being sent out of class. On several occasions, Dylan has been reported to have physically hit other peers who had apparently looked at him the wrong way.

Approximately six months ago, Dylan smashed a school window with a rock when angry about an exclusion from school, which he felt to be unjust. Dylan believed that he had been singled out and blamed for some graffiti, which had appeared on a toilet wall in school. He vehemently denied being the perpetrator of the graffiti. Dylan used abusive language towards and threatened the teacher who was accusing him in front of other pupils, stating 'I'll get you for this.' Dylan was sent to the Headmaster who excluded him and he then ran off throughout the school shouting and swearing, closely followed by a group of teachers. Dylan pushed several teachers away as he attempted to run off and he hurled a large rock at a school window, which subsequently shattered. He was permanently excluded from this school.

Dylan was sentenced to a 9 month Referral Order with the local Youth Offending Service (YOS) for this offence of Property Damage. His Case Manager at the YOS is currently conducting an assessment of his needs in order to plan relevant community interventions to reduce any future anti-social and

offending behaviour. This is Dylan's first Order with the Youth Offending Service. Mandy and Dylan have attended all appointments with the YOS so far and the Case Manager describes them as having a 'close bond'. In interview with his Case Manager, Dylan outlined that sometimes he 'just sees red' and finds it hard to stop himself 'lashing out' when angry. He stated that he regretted smashing the window at school, but felt that he should never have been accused of doing the graffiti in front of his classmates, as he was not guilty of this. He believes that his school is 'over the top, too strict and controlling.' He felt that everything had been 'blown out of all proportion', as nobody was harmed as a result of his behaviour and the window would have been insured, so they would have been able to claim the money to get it fixed and 'it was no big deal.'

Dylan currently attends a school for children with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The school is located in quite a deprived area, which is also known to be a high crime area. The new school is a bus ride away and his mother does not drive, so Dylan is required to get the bus to and from school. Since attending this school, Dylan's mother Mandy describes his behaviour as worsening. She outlines that he does not come home straight after school anymore and she is unaware of his whereabouts most evenings. He often comes home at about 11pm or midnight and on occasions has stayed out all night. She assumes that he is staying at friends' houses, but forgets to contact her to let her know. He has mentioned some new friends, but she has not met them or their parents and she does not know where they live. When he comes home in the evening, Mandy suspects that he may have been drinking alcohol or misusing substances such as Cannabis, as his eyes sometimes appear 'blood shot and red'. She has also found cigarette-rolling papers under the bed in his room. Mandy is unsure where or how he would get this, as they do not give him any money. However, she has noticed odd bits of cash going missing from the house, although she hasn't told Tony about this as she is concerned 'he would go mad'.

Dylan was referred to the local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) about a year ago by his GP, following concerns from Mandy about his worsening behaviour at home and at school. Following an assessment at CAMHS, Dylan was diagnosed with ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) and he is currently prescribed medication to take on a daily basis to manage his ADHD symptoms. Mandy states that Dylan will take his medication each morning without issue if she is there to give it to him, but sometimes he leaves the house without taking it or he does not come home after the night before. Dylan attends the regular appointments with his mother to see the CAMHS Psychiatrist, although he complains that he does not like taking medication as it makes him feel 'weird'. Mandy states that Dylan's behaviour is 'out of control' and she is worried that Tony will 'end up throwing him out' if it gets worse, which she does not want to happen. She outlined that she is willing to 'try anything to get him back on track.'