

Changing Lives: Involved in helping each other

Elle

To start with when we came I was kind of in my head thinking "Oh yeah, I'm here to get help as well and...the support network, whatever." But now I come because I'm more interested in helping the other people that are here. I feel like I can cope with my stuff but I don't know if they can theirs, so I just want to be there for them. That's why I like coming, because I feel like I give something, instead of taking something away.

Vicky

Being involved in volunteering for projects and stuff to help CAMHS. Admission into hospital, and stuff that is bad, stuff that is good and that you can work on.

Sarah: Elle's mum

I think we're very fortunate that we've got Pam on board who has decided to put this group together. I don't think there are many other people who would give their time up freely to help. She does give her time up.

Elle

She's the best counsellor I've had in three years.

Sarah

Yes, definitely. She's made a difference to you hasn't she, because she challenged you.

Eden

It's something to look forward to, if I've had a bad week or something I think "oh, it's Wednesday tonight and I'll see everyone." I've made friends, we're all really close.

Karen: Eden's mum

I think as well, because Eden's not in school at the minute, she's not really got that social aspect. So, I think it's nice for her to get out, and to meet other girls that are in the same situation or going through something similar.

Sarah

I'm sure we will do plenty more things, because we're all of the same mind about...we discussed about bullying in schools and different, better ways of tackling it. I think there will be quite a few issues that we will end up dealing with.

Elle

In a horrible way it's what most kids have got in common, like being bullied at school.

Sarah

Sadly.

Elle

It's horrible, but it's what most people do have in common these days because it happens so much. It's ridiculous, it's horrible.

Vicky

It's relaxing, because you just play games and stuff. It's not stressful and it's not school, so it's good.

Christine: Vicky's mum

You know you're not on your own don't you.

Vicky

Yeah.

Sarah

We play lots of silly games don't we.

Elle

Yeah, like headbands.

Sarah

Yeah, what's that one about?

Elle

That's our favourite one I think.

Sarah

You have to put a card on your head then you have to ask questions about what you are. Whether you're a chicken, or a spoon, or a unicorn, or a tortoise. It's quite entertaining – because of the kind of people that are in the group it's very entertaining. It's a good ice breaker as well isn't it really.

Eden

We just try loads of games out and if we like them we bring them again and try them out.

Karen

I think it's good for us mums as well.

Eden

And dads.

Karen

Yeah, we do have a dad come.

It's something to look forward to. Personally I don't really do a lot with my day, lately it's just been revising which is kind of boring. So, to look forward to coming here on a Wednesday at 6 it's like I get to do something with my evening instead of just sat around watching something on Netflix and pretending to revise.

Karen

Because it's quite a touchy subject, the group, I think it's easier for the mums than it is for the girls. I think that's what Eden was trying to say, she really enjoys coming because it might only be for an hour and a half but we do laugh and joke and I think you can forget everything else that's going off outside and the rest of the days.

Sarah

You can see that the girls start to bond which is really good. I mean you have contact with Eden when we're not here. I think also, for some of the parents we're at varying stages and it's a support network as well. Sometimes someone might get a bit upset when we're talking about some things, but then it turns into a positive because we are there and some of us have been through what they're going through now, so you can share an experience which is always good.