

Ben, 16



Ben grew up in an abusive family in an environment of parental neglect and emotional manipulation. Beatings were common, there was often no food in the house and Ben was frequently locked in a cupboard under the stairs.

Ben was eleven years old before the abuse came to light and he was placed in foster care.

Despite multiple disadvantages and struggling with severe depression and anxiety, Ben achieved excellent GCSE results and was planning to study at the local college. However, when he was 16 his foster placement broke down due to difficulties within the family and Ben was at risk of becoming homeless.

Ben was referred to YMCA Cornwall as a high priority case and was able to move into a self-contained flat. With the help of our dedicated support officer, he developed the necessary life skills that many people learn from their family, enabling him to live independently and carry on with his studies while starting to make plans for the future.

Despite needing ongoing help from his support officer and referrals to the eating disorder service and the community mental health team, Ben was a valued and popular member of our YMCA community. During his two year stay he volunteered as a Resident Rep and redrafted the Welcome Pack for new tenants while completing his Further Education course at the local college. He also actively volunteered in the community and managed to secure a part time job.

When Ben completed his course and was ready to move out of supported accommodation into his own flat, our resettlement team helped throughout the moving process and continued to provide support for a further six months to ensure he settled in well. He is now at University studying towards a degree and continues to thrive living in a place of his own.