Case Study - SWITCH PROJECT

K is a young woman of 17 years old, living with her elderly father (mother having died of cancer when K was very young) on a deprived housing estate in the Tees Valley area, where there are a lot of boarded up houses, antisocial behaviour, crime and a high teenage pregnancy rate. K enjoyed school and attained a high level of qualification, registering on a law degree course at the local further education college.

Whilst attending college, she entered into a relationship with a young man and became pregnant. Following the birth of her son, the relationship failed and she found herself isolated, depressed and finding it difficult to cope, with no self worth and no vision for the future.

K’s Connexions adviser informed her of the switch project, at Tees Valley Women’s Centre and K plucked up the courage to ring and ask ‘What went on?’ On her first visit, she was met at the door, shown round the centre and given a cup of tea while her little boy attended the crèche. She returned the next day and started to make friends with the staff and other women.

K has since achieved qualifications in Drugs Awareness, Sage Book Keeping, and is at present completing her Teaching Assistant qualification. Through her voluntary placement at the Unity City Academy Secondary School, she has now gained part time employment and plans to expand her studies by gaining a place at Teesside University.

In K’s own words ‘Had it not been for the support of the Switch project and the Women’s Centre, I would never have had the confidence to achieve what I have and I can now see a better long term future for myself and my son’. Thank you.