

Case Study 2

Child B was referred to the service by his school after his mother expressed concern about him to the SENCO. Child B had been displaying extreme mood swings at home and they had also been noticed in school. Child B's mother reported that Child B had become very depressed and was displaying very aggressive behaviour toward her and his sister. Child B had threatened both his mother and sister with a bread knife and had actually pinned his sister who is older than him by several years to the couch where she had been unable to move for sometime through fear of being cut. Child B also turns his aggression in on himself and his mother reported that he had threatened on several occasions to injure himself and had drawn knives over his skin, his neck in particular. Child B also had tried to hang himself with a jumper from his home stair banister.

Child B was assigned a 121 Family Link Worker and the work was to be based on self esteem, self control and re establishing family and social links for him as he had by this point disengaged socially and educationally. The link worker supported a referral from the school to get Child B assessed by the Family and Child Mental Health Team, which in time he was. Also the link worker referred the child to the local Authority Child Disability Team because the link worker suspected some academic problems may be contributing toward Child B's intensive frustration and lashing out behaviour. He was assessed by the team and found to have significant problems with special awareness and coordination. He was assigned a worker with them who got Child B a run of hydro therapy to help improve his motor skills and coordination. It was also found during the assessment that Child B had real difficulty getting in and out of the bath to bathe as he was failing to distribute his body weight accordingly; a shower was installed in the family home. Apart from facilitating the action taken with these other agencies the Link Worker also worked 121 with the child to improve self esteem and social skills through a range of cognitive programmes and social skills groups that focused on good role modelling. The Child and Family Mental Health Team also started monitoring Child B's weight and general health as this had previously fluctuated wildly.

Over time Child B began to improve socially and made a small group of peers in school which in turn encouraged him to attend and reduced a lot of stress at home. The arguments decreased and the relationship between the family members improved and they began to leave the house together again socially. Child B continues to improve and last year took part in the school Christmas Nativity.