
Making Safeguarding Personal Toolkit

Case Example 3: Circles of support





Case Example

What about people whose family are not interested?

Carly has just turned 22 years old and has had a life of shared care between the state and her family. Carly has a moderate learning disability and went to a special school, but her support needs were heightened by her chaotic family life. Carly spent much of her childhood between council respite units and living at home. When Carly turned 18 years old her family were persecuted by a firebomb at their home and this separated the family. The only option was for Carly to live in a hostel with 36 other people who all were significantly older than her.

Carly was extremely unhappy, she didn't know many people and her family no longer wanted contact with her. Having known Carly for several years to get her out of the crisis situation, we felt the best thing would be to set up the circle - even though this would be our first it was worth a try. The circle was made up of several people who had known Carly in school and different places she went to. In the first instance the circle managed to secure some direct payments and manage the payments so she could at least have some quality time with personal assistants outside of the hostel.

Eventually the circle managed to support her move into her own home and have been critical in terms of ensuring she can access and contribute to her community. The circle is as strong as ever 4 years down the line and has supported Carly with the struggles of where she lives and who she lives with. The circle are helping Carly look for an alternative place to live in the future, but are supporting her to get it right. They assist her with her making choices on how to spend her money, getting her staff team to understand her and have recently enabled her to meet back up with her Mum again. By no means is Carly's life sorted but the circle has her vision at the heart of everything they do.



Reflective question

What ideas and learning can you take forward from this case example that might help prevent the need for safeguarding in similar situations future?

Source: This case example is from “*Circles in Practice, Caroline Tomlinson on her experience of building a cluster of circles*”.

It is one of several of her case examples included as an appendix in Niall and Helen Sanderson (2012) *Circles of Support and Personalisation*: www.tiny.cc/circles-of-support