

## BREAK REPORT FOR BEER HARRIS MEMORIAL TRUST SEPTEMBER 2023

1. Brief history of the charity
2. Details of project supported by BHMT grant
3. Areas of mental health addressed and profile of the recipients
4. Impact of the project
5. Personal anonymised examples

1. *Break has worked across East Anglia for over 60 years, supporting some of the most vulnerable children and young people in society. Originally founded to give holidays to families whose children have disabilities, Break has grown and evolved. Now our focus is primarily children and young people who have been taken into care. Break provides safe and loving homes for these children as well as activities to support their development towards a brighter future. Break doesn't stop supporting our young people when they reach 18, but continues to offer opportunities and help to stay on a positive life path and fulfil their potential.*
2. *Break's Stepping Forward Project supports mental health of young people who have been taken into care. Through small steps, Stepping Forward offers sessions and activities tackling isolation, increasing self-worth, building skills, and improving confidence.*
3. *Early experiences of neglect, abuse and trauma continue to impact these children after they have been taken into care. Most have fragile mental health, struggle to feel self-worth, or trust adults. Lack of a supportive family and multiple placements result in isolation and feelings of loneliness. Without early intervention, their life outcomes are often poor; resulting in unemployment, homelessness, prison, and even suicide.*
4. *A total of 66 engagements over 19 different activities were achieved by 18 young people. Our young people engaged in activities ranging from speaking at our Christmas Carol concert to an audience of over 200; creating studio podcasts about their experiences; sitting in on recruitment processes for Break and attending our Care Leavers Summit.*

Break's approach is highly effective: 83% of our young people are in education, training or employment compared to only 59% across the country.

By building confidence and self-worth, Stepping Forward helps these young people progress towards education, training and employment. They can form ambitions and are supported to achieve those goals, able to envision a positive future.

5. One of our young care leavers joined the Participation sessions in April. He had formerly not engaged well with Break's services but now expressed an interest in getting involved. He admitted that he had made mistakes that he was not proud of but that he wanted to make better decisions. He also wanted to represent himself well.

He so far has attended several Participation events and activities, already demonstrating that the service is having a positive impact. He has responded to having his opinion valued and shown real commitment to feeding back in agenda discussions and helping to shape Break's services.

His social skills and networking have improved. Although, in the past, he has had difficulties in getting on with other young people he has gotten to know a new group of peers and engages well with them.

This young man has progressed through the stages of building self-esteem and confidence, forging relational networks, engaging with the Opportunities Team and attending sessions and activities. He is now able to look ahead and work on developing independence and considering further external opportunities beyond Break.