

a parent's story



How it all started... Amy was always a difficult child, but I managed to power on.. It was only when Amy started playgroup just before the age of two, things started to get progressively worse for Amy, as she was in a social environment.. daily I would get calls to go in and sign paperwork, where Amy had bitten another child.

I was powering on, but my coping mechanisms were slipping the more I felt pressure that Amy was a difficult child in the setting.

I reached out several times to the health visitor who had made me aware Amy has flagged up as a child that needs extra support. With this being recognised it was relief, but also a bit of a breaking point for me.. my health visitor reached out to Barnardo's to get me the support I needed for me!! This service wasn't something I knew was available to me.

When receiving the first call from the service, I turned down the support, saying no thanks it's not for me, and the worker said give me a minute to explain what we do, and what we have to offer. I can't tell you how life-changing this support has been for my family and myself. The programme my worker went through with me was the nurture programme which was tailored to my specific needs. I was going through difficulties with family, and my worker helped guide me in the right direction for my child's needs.

Not knowing what exactly was wrong with Amy at the time, just knowing she was difficult, meant I was totally unaware how to keep the meltdowns to a minimum, I didn't even know there was a way to control her behaviour until I completed this programme.

Now meltdowns are contained, I now know what my daughter's triggers are, and I know what the difference is between naughty behaviour and what Amy can't control herself.

I feel eternally grateful to my worker, for being so good with me, she was not only like a councillor for the bad days and the good, she felt like a friend that I could completely be myself with, her advice has moulded our whole future as a family in understanding my daughter's needs that has now minimised her night terrors to a minimum, meltdowns are controlled, and most importantly because of the support from Barnardo's I'm a changed person, I'm a better mum for it. Without this support, as I've told all of Amy's specialists,

I would be in the same boat I was 9 months ago, with a daughter suffering because I couldn't understand her needs.

I believe this support is absolutely vital to all families going through a new journey of a child with additional needs.