

## **Kai case study**

Kai is a 16 year old male, who lives with his family. He has had no previous involvement with services. His parents both work full time and he has two older brothers, also working. Kai is a normal teenager, he likes to go out with his friends. He sometimes pushes boundaries, smokes a bit of cannabis, and hangs around with his friends. Children's Services first became aware of Kai, when his name came up in connection with an offending peer group. Contact was made with his parents, their view was that this is normal teenage behaviour, nothing too serious, and they could deal with it.

Then Kai stabs someone with a knife that he knew his group had stashed somewhere in a bush. The victim is known to him, there has been some history between the victim and Kai's peer group. Kai retrieves the knife, chases the victim, he says he intended to only threaten him, an argument happens, and Kai uses the knife, stabbing the victim a number of times, causing serious injuries.

When Kai went home, he confessed to his parents that he had done something bad, but it was not until the next day, when his mum saw news of the stabbing in the papers, that she realised what had happened and she took Kai to police station.

Kai was bailed to live with other family members in a different area and was not allowed to return to his hometown. At crown court, he entered a guilty plea and was remanded until his sentence, which was to serve his sentence of 2.5 years in a secure children's home (SCH) out of area.

During his sentence, there was close working between Kai, the secure children's home, the youth justice service and his parents, to ensure that Kai got the care and intervention he needed. Kai did specific work on weapons, peer groups and decision making and he engaged well. As his sentence went on, the youth justice service and secure children's home made an application (with parents support) for Kai to start college. The secure children's home enabled him to complete his college interview remotely, which was successful following appropriate disclosure of his conviction. Early release was granted and a robust intense plan to re-integrate Kai to the community and into college started.

Kai was supported by the youth justice service, education, youth worker, a voluntary organisation, MAPPA and his supportive family. The youth justice service recognised the support that Kai would need, and coordinated that, with Kai committing fully to this. It was not without its challenges. After a while, Kai thought he was doing well, he could keep himself away from offending, and he tried to resist the support around him. Transparency was key here, and the youth justice service had many open and honest conversations with his youth justice officer around why he did in fact need close supervision, and why it was important. Building strong relationships with other professionals was also important - Kai was subject to an exclusion zone, which impacted some college trips, and the youth justice service worked closely with college on risk management plans to enable Kai to take full part in his course. These plans included contingency plans, things to look out for, eg if Kai missed college, or turned up smelling of cannabis, any concerns went straight to the youth justice service to be addressed.

In Kai's case the transition from secure to community was also critical. The secure children's home staff visited him three times in the community, and this helped Kai to make sense of his experience in secure accommodation, with someone who had been there with him. Another person who was important to Kai was the Imam in the secure children's home. Kai is a white British male, with a Muslim background. His parents had asked for this while Kai was in the secure children's home, and the Imam there provided a very strong source of support and connection, allowing Kai to revisit his faith. The Imam maintained contact when he was released, again, someone who understood the

experiences he had had in secure children's home. The link from secure to community was important in this case.

There has been a gradual reduction in supervision over time, and this has been in direct proportion to how Kai is doing. Kai has moved over to supervision in probation and continues to make good progress. He is now in his second year at college and is considering an application to university. There is still work to do. He continues to work on his role in peer groups and friends, he has recognised he likes to protect others, and will probably always need to check himself on this response. He has stayed away from his previous offending peer group, having a small amount of contact with some of them.

Consistency across professionals has been a key factor in helping Kai to get the message, with everyone working with Kai saying the same thing. Kai thought at one time that he could remain on the periphery of a group and not get involved. He has learnt that if you are there, there is always the chance you will get involved. So, remove yourself, make good choices, and get away from trouble.

**Questions to consider:**

What would be your role in this case?

How would you work with the family?

How would you work with other agencies to provide support for Kai?