

# Anonymous Service User Case Study: Kooth



## Background

- ‘Nathan’ (pseudonym) is male, 12yrs, who presented to Kooth stating that he was currently living with foster parents, but that he was considering running away.
- Nathan described feeling that nobody cared about him, and that he did not know what to do.
- Nathan also described ongoing thoughts of self-harm.

## Risks & needs assessment

‘Outcome measures indicated that Nathan thought about hurting himself “most of the time.” This was explored further through conversation, and he said that he had no suicidal ideation, but that he would frequently scratch his arms. He also had regular thoughts of running away from his foster home. Nathan said that if he did run away, he would want to return to his biological family, although he was unsure how to get there.

Protective factors were also explored, and Nathan described having a positive support network with his social worker and having support by CAMHS.

Given the level of risk, Nathan was asked to share his personal identifiable information (PII). Nathan said that he wanted services to work together and communicate, so provided this information. Contact was then able to be made with his social worker in the first instance. A collaborative safety plan was developed between Nathan, his social worker, CAMHS, Kooth and his foster family.

## Intervention

Nathan accessed 3 assessment chats initially, then through collaborative discussion with a practitioner, agreed to access structured support with a named Counsellor. Nathan and his named counsellor agreed to utilise a person centred approach, to explore some of his feelings around not being cared for, and to understand his desire to run away.

As well as accessing chats, Nathan was able to use the journal space to record his thoughts and feelings.

This enabled Nathan to communicate these to others, and also to recognise which emotions tended to lead him to consider leaving the foster home.

Risk was regularly reviewed, and Nathan was able to develop other means of managing his feelings, which meant that the frequency of self-harm decreased. Outcome measures indicated a gradual reduction in Nathan's levels of distress.

## Outcomes: Goals and other observed outcomes

Nathan accessed a total of 12 chat sessions with his named Counsellor. Nathan shared how he felt listened to and supported, as any communication with external services was transparent.

Nathan reported that the safety plan helped him to manage his distress differently, and to reduce the thoughts he had of running away. He was also able to begin speaking more openly to his foster family about when those thoughts were triggered.

Nathan set a number of goals during the intervention, such as:

- Utilise the CalmHarm app when thinking about self-harming
- Use the journal to note down thoughts and feelings
- Use 'signal' word to let foster family know if thinking about running away

These goals all began at 'O' and moved toward IO as they were completed, or Nathan felt more confident in them.

Through building a positive relationship with his counsellor, Nathan was able to develop a sense of trust in them, and to believe that people did care about him. He began to speak more about his experiences of being removed from his biological parents and his time in a children's care home, and to build a sense of trust and safety with his foster family.