



Say 'hello' to ... Robin

A Pastoral Care Case Study

REGISTERED CHARITY 516184

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When Robin first came to our attention he was aggressive towards other children in school and had suicidal thoughts. Robin has now received a letter of achievement from the Head Teacher and the school Governors praising his behaviour and attitude to work. So what made the difference?

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Robin was referred to me at the start of my first term in the Junior School. He was showing strange behaviour in class and was very aggressive during break times. A day would not go by without Robin being in trouble of some sort.

Robin is an intelligent boy but in the class he would be very silly and be flippant about his work. He did not try in his schoolwork and would make an effort to be noticed by his teacher, doing things like shouting out or leaving his chair and sitting under the table. His aggressive behaviour was the main concern resulting in the referral.

Robin's teacher invited his mother to come into school to talk about his work, I was also invited to attend. His mother just said that she didn't know what to do with him – he was being difficult at home.

Robin's father died 2 years previously and the mother now had a new relationship. I checked if it was okay to do some grief counselling with her son to which she agreed. She mentioned that he never talked about his father at home.

At first I started to work through some anger management with Robin showing him how to deal with his pent-up emotions. However, knowing that anger is a secondary emotion, I believed his grief was the main concern.

We started to work on a memory book so that we could talk about his dad in more depth. He found it hard at times but he eventually took to the idea and shared a lot.

At the same time, Robin was telling a few stories that seemed unlikely and when questioned he would continue in the tale until he got stuck. The really sad concern was that he appeared to believe in them.

Also, on a number of occasions I found Robin in hysterical tears. He was beside himself and he couldn't understand why. When asked he would reply that he wanted to kill himself.

I rang his home to arrange an appointment with his mother. She asked why and I had to explain some of Robin's problems of recent times and what he had been saying. She dismissed it as attention seeking but I pursued with my concerns. His mother cancelled my appointments. I expressed my concerns to the Head Teacher and then to the SENCO (Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators). They agreed with me to refer him to CAMHS (Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services). They acted quite swiftly visiting the family and they have now taken them under their wings.

As this was going on, my time with Robin continued. His behaviour improved greatly and he was able to control his emotions much better. I joined Robin with another boy that had lost his father recently which seemed to increase Robin's esteem. You could see a light come on as he realised someone else was in the same circumstances as himself. They freely talked about their loss and worked on their books together. In this term, we will have a day where we will

release balloons as a tribute to their fathers. It is a day that Robin is looking forward to.

At the end of last term Robin received a letter of achievement from the Head and the Governors. They commended him on his behaviour and attitude to work.

Case Study Notes:

Robin's story is true, just his name has been changed in accordance with our confidentiality policy. The case study was written by one of our pastoral care specialists.

The Pastoral Care Specialist:

The Pastoral Care Specialist at Robin's school was based there full-time, offering one-to-one support and peer group sessions to those children who are suffering abuse, neglect, bullying, are bereaved or have low self-esteem.

Schools Outreach:

Schools Outreach provides pastoral care specialists to UK schools as well as short training courses and a consultancy service.

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