

Cedar Story of Change

“Since Henry was in Cedar he has become a new boy. His confidence grew so much, he feels much more safe when he is at home and when he is out”

Henry's Mum



One four year old boy, Henry, started group in April. At first he was petrified at the thought of leaving the security of his mum's side and clung on to his mum's arm and would not let go of his tiger comfort toy.

Henry met the facilitators in the first week, one of the facilitators was a prison officer called Michael who had volunteered to help Cedar.

Henry's mum said "Before Cedar Henry never had any trust in men. He was very scared of men. He disliked a man who would be near him or talking to me."

Henry was very wary of Michael and this became apparent when the facilitators were helping Henry pack up at the end of the group. When Michael went to help Henry put on his jacket, Henry froze, became wide eyed, started to shake and started to cry.

Michael felt that the Henry's reaction to him trying to help with his jacket made it clear that the presence of a male in his personal space was too much for him. Michael also felt that he had an overwhelming responsibility to try and remedy this and to try and allow Henry to relax in his company.



Over the next few weeks Henry would take part in the group activities that Michael was helping to facilitate however, still did not want to be close to Michael and still hung on to his comfort toy.

Henry did show more of an interest in Michael but still remained guarded.



As the weeks progressed Henry began to communicate with the facilitators and was able to express himself verbally when he was feeling happy, sad, angry or upset. He was beginning to develop emotional maturity and social skills.

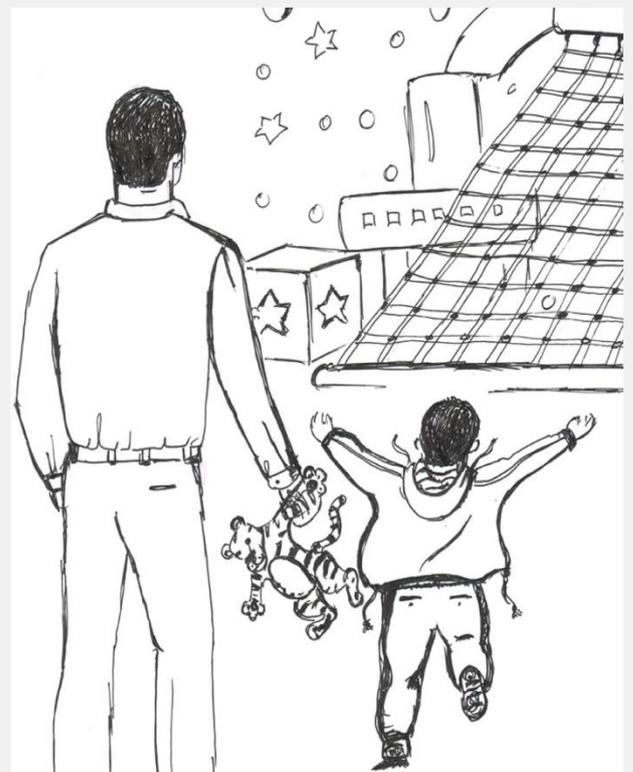
Henry began to spend more time with Michael and allowed Michael in his personal space. This included asking Michael for his help with activities and drawing pictures for him.

Mum said that Henry was feeling more confident and excited at the thought of coming to group each week. He became more self-assured and talkative.

Henry now displayed confidence in himself and his surroundings. Facilitators noticed his progress and growth from being quiet and withdrawn to being outspoken and playful.

By the end of the group programme the dynamics of the relationship between Michael and the little boy had changed dramatically. The boy now sought out Michael for help as well as wanting to spend time specifically with him.

At the end of Cedar activity the little boy constantly called on Michael to play with him. Michael said he enjoyed being a positive role model and hopes to work with Cedar again.



“On Henry’s first day back at nursery after summer his father showed up and started to follow us, he was shouting and swearing at us. Henry was petrified and relapsed after this incident, again he was scared of all men. But what I noticed was that he recovered so well after it and this was down to Cedar. I feel that if Henry hadn’t went to Cedar he wouldn’t have recovered that quickly, he would still be scared.”

Henry’s mum explaining the longer term positive impact of Cedar