

Things are looking up for Jemma

Jemma, aged 20 from Biddulph, is a young mum with a twenty-month old son. She's recently started the V-Talent programme and hopes to find a job as a Youth Worker or Family Support Worker when she finishes next year.

Although Jemma is now much clearer about what she wants to do and is well on her journey to achieving it, it hasn't been easy. She spent many years in care, left school with few qualifications, has dyslexia and felt depressed at times. She had also tried many different courses and jobs, which never lasted and then became pregnant at 18.

Jemma said: "I'm not sure what was up with me, but I'd never been able to settle into any kind of job or training course. I lost interest at school and left with only a couple of GCSEs. Lisa Barlow, my Connexions Personal Adviser, was brilliant; she never gave up on me. Even when I kept dropping out of everything she sorted for me."

Lisa said: "Jemma's had a tough life so far. She's had lots of issues which she has overcome and is now doing very well. I worked with her from leaving school at the age of 16 and I have seen her mature and take control of her life.

"Young people sometimes need to find their own path in life. They may not be ready to take the advice given at 16 but may see the usefulness of this a few years later.



"I believe that Jemma has learned from all her experiences in life and will continue to learn with a positive attitude, feeling that she can achieve in whatever she puts her mind to.

Jemma said: "I'm enjoying the V-Talent programme very much and enjoy being a mum, although it's very hard work. I'm doing work experience at my local Childrens' Centre and Youth Centre and have started my Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award.

"I'm living in my own house now and get help with childcare while I do my course, which is great. I'm very grateful for the help from Connexions and the other organizations who supported me. Hopefully, once I've finished my course, I'll be able to get a job as a Youth Worker or Family Support Worker which is something I would love to do."

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