

Laura, 17

Following troubles with family, I was put into foster care with my ex boyfriend's Nan. I started to have troubles with my ex being violent towards me. Being just 16 at the time I was weak, insecure and suffered low confidence. When I finally found the strength, I sought help from social services so that I could move away from the situation. I was given accommodation in the YMCA and moved in within 3 hours of asking for help. I had a lot of support from the YMCA, especially my key worker. They offered me support, security and protection.

The YMCA staff were supportive when I went through a Police case to do with my ex and they provided me counselling. Although I did not get justice I still gained the better outcome. I had a friendly, supportive group of staff at YMCA that were always there for me when I needed help, I gained independence by living on my own and I've become a good able student at college doing health and social care and getting distinctions in all my I assignments, so that I can go to university within the next few years and achieve my career goal of being a nurse.

When I first moved to the YMCA I suffered with low confidence and didn't like eating in front of people, my key worker made sure I was eating and put me on late meals so I could go to reception and get them when I wanted rather than starve because low confidence to eat in canteen with others. The YMCA staff are so caring, not just because of that but they are there for you when you really need them. I had a member of staff phone the ambulance for me because I was having pain in ribs and struggling to breath. When the ambulance came I got seen to and they asked the staff to keep an eye out on me to make sure I was doing ok, so they kept coming to my room to check up on me that night.

After 4 months of being in the YMCA I was moved to Trafford House where I share a flat with another girl. I start to go up in the world, and just turned 17. Although I have had some troubles with my flat mate, my key worker and warden at Trafford have helped me with this, as they are always there to help. Just 5 months after moving into Trafford, my next step from there is moving into a flat of my own which my key worker helped me with. I moved out of Trafford and into my own studio flat run by BCHA and Spectrum. I couldn't do this without the help of the YMCA staff, there devotion, there security, support and protection they've got me to where I am today and made me the strong, confident person I have become rather than the weak, insecure person I once was.

"I'm beautiful in all ways, God makes no mistakes, I'm on the right track, I was born this way" -, Lady Gaga. This quote helped me realise that God put me here, and he helped me get success in my life and led me to the YMCA to get help. By doing this they helped me and have made my life better and let myself accept me for who I am. Right now, I am on the right track, and that is thanks to the help from the YMCA.