

Case Study - parent carer

Beti, the mother of Rosa, who has autism, contacted Carers Outreach after receiving information about our parents support group through Rosa's school. She would have liked to attend the support group but the distance was too great. Whilst I registered her she mentioned that living in such a rural area of Gwynedd, she has felt very isolated and alone as there were no suitable places to take her autistic daughter and no opportunities to meet other people in similar circumstances.

I mentioned the fun sessions that were being held during the Easter holidays and explained that the whole family could attend. Beti thought this would be ideal. During the fun session the family met several other families. The children played with other children in a safe non judgmental environment.

Whilst Rosa was having a quiet moment on the craft table Beti told me that she was having difficulties with taking Rosa shopping. Her husband worked long hours and none of her family were confident to look after Rosa due to her behaviour. She said that she hadn't been able to talk to anybody before as she didn't want to burden her family and friends with her problems. She also mentioned that her daughter was having difficulties with her balance and couldn't ride a bike. This was frustrating for Rosa as she wanted to be able to ride her bike like her brother could. Both mum and dad are also keen cyclists.

Following the fun session I referred Beti for a Carers Assessment. Two hours a week was awarded during school holidays for Beti to do the shopping. Another 2 hours was awarded for Rosa to have one to one support.

Another referral was made to the Children Today charity and following a grant application, £1,500 was awarded towards an adapted bike for Rosa.

The family's quality of life has improved significantly. Beti doesn't have the stress of having to take Rosa shopping with her, and Rosa is having a fun time with her support worker.

The adapted bike means that the whole family can go on a bike ride together. They live near the Mawddach trail which is a flat safe place to cycle. Beti said that her daughter gets lots of exercise which helps with keeping her fit and healthy, it's an activity that she can enjoy with her brother and parents with the added bonus that she also has a good nights sleep afterwards, which is wonderful!

The family regularly attends the fun sessions and they have made friends with another family who also have an autistic daughter. They have visited each other at their homes and arranged to have chips or ice cream together after the fun sessions.

Beti said that she no longer feels isolated and alone and is grateful to Carers Outreach for arranging the activities to give families opportunities to meet each other and for the whole family to have quality time. She's also grateful knowing that Carers Outreach is there if she needs information or a listening ear.