

## Supported and Supervised Contact

Our team of contact supervisors and support workers are experienced residential care staff. All have worked with children and young people in a variety of settings. Their prime role in contact sessions is to ensure a young person feels comfortable and prepared before any encounter. During these sessions staff may intervene where required to ensure the well-being of those involved. Supervised and supported contact can take place in the family home, a respite home or a neutral environment, locations are always selected well before the visit to ensure all parties consider them appropriate. Supported and supervised contact work can also involve assessments of risk management and relationships. It can also include those involved in private family or childcare legal proceedings.

## Care Leavers and Independence

The main goal of our work to provide a Continuum of Care is demonstrated in our independent living provision for young

people aged sixteen and above. Around the country we have several specialist independence and semi-independence care leavers facilities all of which are supported by a 24/7 on call staff team. The objective is to introduce independence to young people who have been in care for long periods of time. We strongly encourage personal development by helping each young person to become confident in self-care, budgeting and other life skills. Each week young people are provided with a set income and budget and assisted in planning their purchases for the next seven days. This process is used to encourage self-control and establish priorities. In addition to this residents are supported in setting their job aspirations and deciding their career path. Each of our independence homes has strongly established links with nearby colleges and training centres. A focus is also placed on social integration and community involvement through local projects. On completion of their independence 'training' each young person is assisted in finding their own permanent accommodation.

**“Thanks so much for your support, it is clear that you have all worked hard to make Nikki feel safe and it is even more impressive that you are still working with us to ensure her continuing safety”**

Social Worker, November 2007.



## Contact our Family Support Managers

Simon Douglas at  
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**07792 425 364**

John Loaker at  
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**07876 791 942**

Karen Backhouse at  
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**07917 048 858**

**Referrals**  
**0800 731 8401**



# Family Support Services

We believe in new beginnings and happy endings

**Referrals**  
**0800 731 8401**



## Family Support Services

Our staff have unrivalled experience of working with young people at either end of the care spectrum and understand the difficulties often encountered in transition. This may involve a young person's initial entry into residential or foster care or the reintegration of a young person into family and community life. In addition our staff spend a lot of time working with those young people who are at risk of accommodation or those who are experiencing difficulties at home which are affecting their education, progress and behaviour.

The current demand for **Family Support Services** has allowed Continuum to establish a new type of provision which complements all of our longer term work. These services aim to intervene and support young people and their families throughout adolescence. Wherever possible Continuum aims to keep young people out of residential care and to sustain their links with their home and family by targeting each individual's needs in a planned manner.

Our **Family Support Services** are divided into three key areas each of which is subject to unique objective assessments and progress monitoring reviews.

- Early Intervention and Outreach
- Supported and Supervised Contact
- Care Leavers and Independence

Every Child  
and Their  
Family Matters



## Early Intervention and Outreach

These preventative programmes involve a number of approaches, each of which are transferable and used across all of Continuum's work. These include Restorative Conferencing, Parenting Skills Training, Educational Welfare, Care at Home and Respite Care and Adolescent Crisis Intervention. Continuum's Escorted Transportation service is also involved in these programmes to ensure young people get to school, college or other important locations.

## Restorative Conferencing and Family Group Conferencing

Restorative practice seeks to develop communities by managing conflict and tensions by repairing harm and building relationships. One aspect of restorative practice is termed 'restorative justice' and is at the root of Continuum's concept of restorative conferencing. Through a focus on accountability we seek to reduce the number of young people involved in crime and wrong-doing. The roots of restorative work lie with an individual taking responsibility for wrong-doing through participation in the process of 'putting things right'. In addition to this young people gain a new perspective on their behaviours by reflecting on how their actions have affected others.

This work can be used in the family or community environment and extends to work with young offenders. Restorative

practice is quickly becoming a vital tool in our residential work and has helped in developing young people's reasoning through empathy and responsibility. All of our Restorative Conferencing is fully compliant with the National Occupational Standards for Restorative Practice (2006), Best Practice Guidance for Restorative Practitioners (2004) and the Restorative Justice Consortium Principles of Restorative Processes (2004).

## Parenting Skills Training and Mentor Programmes

Our outreach work focuses not only on the young person but on their family and provides guidance for parents, guardians and the extended family. This often includes educating those around the young person to deal with sometimes challenging behaviours and to resolve situations before they escalate. In addition we provide mentors to work with young people at home. This process can involve mediation where family relationships are particularly damaged. The mentor's purpose is to create a bond with the young person and to establish themselves as a trusted confidant and role-model. Our team are guided by the principles of **Webster Stratton** 'the incredible years' techniques. Team leaders are fully trained in these methods to ensure consistency.

## Encouragement and provision of educational welfare

Continuum now has schools in each region of the UK and as a result offers education both in and outside of the home for those who are not suited to mainstream schooling. A place in one of our schools is often a central part of our Family Support Service and allows an individual to re-engage in learning in a more appropriate environment. We also offer home tutoring, provided by qualified teachers for those young people who do not feel ready for the school environment. Wherever possible we encourage young people to re-enter mainstream education.

## Care at Home and Respite Care

We currently offer 'at home' care packages to those families who require support in their everyday environment. This involves trained members of Continuum's staff working within the home developing partnerships with families to create stability. In addition we also offer respite care for young people. This may involve a short stay at one of our respite homes, an environment in which they change their routines and enjoy themselves. The group also has a residential outdoor activity centre in Wales which offers young people new experiences and time to unwind. Our domiciliary care provision is registered with CSCI.

## ACT Team (Adolescent Crisis Team)

Continuum's Adolescent Crisis Team (ACT) includes several of our specialists in Crisis Intervention. Each of these individuals are trained in our unique Continuum Intervention Programme (CIP) and like all our staff are experienced in putting these skills into practice. This team is used when extreme circumstances require professional intervention and each team member plays their part in assessing each individual case and establishing a plan to resolve both behavioural and environmental issues.

We have a number of examples where this specialist input has made a major contribution to preventing family breakdown and has avoided a young person being placed in residential care.

