

The PORCH project

Welcome to Nick – PORCH Community Support Worker



My name is Nick Walker and I am 30 (probably 31 now!) years old. Since July this year I have been working with the Prolific and other Priority Offender Unit (PPOU) as the Community Support Worker (CSW).

I see my job role as one which puts me in a position within the unit where I can seek to try to encourage the people I work with to make the steps they need to get closer to and eventually enter lifestyle change. I facilitate this in any way I can (in this respect the role is quite flexible). For example: as part of ENDAS I can get people onto groups to try to promote a pro-social and healthy lifestyle and with PORCH I can take a mentoring approach with people, assisting them with anything which may be proving an obstacle to their progress from housing to employment, among other things.

I have come to this field of work through a background of modern languages (learning and teaching), spending time abroad working (in France and in Thailand) and working for the Probation service...among other things! I feel privileged to be working in a field which reflects a hope that everyone can get something positive out of this life.

A Client's recent experience

In most cases leaving prison we don't have any where to go, so we tend to go back to where we were- before we went to prison (the very places that landed us there in the first place). When I met Sarah and Michelle from Porch I remember thinking "it's another one of those projects set up by the government that don't work",- although with PORCH I found this was not the case.

I have now been out for 4 months without committing any crime, and I can hear you say 4 months is not very long – but anyone who knows me knows 4 months to me is a long time. I am still very much on track and I fully believe this is due to the visit I got whilst in prison from PORCH.

When I got out I was found accommodation in Exeter from a landlord called Dave who works closely with PORCH, so he knew exactly what he was getting himself into! He is a very good landlord.

PORCH and my landlord still work very close with me giving me the support to continue to live a crime free life.

PORCH Latest output figures
September 2006 – November 2007
Total number of Clients supported: 52
Number of Clients who have been found accommodation and/or supported in it: 27
Number of linked PORCH/ CARD service users: 10



November 2007 Issue

CARD AND PORCH NEWSLETTER

We live in changing times for the future of both projects with some exciting possibilities ahead. The closer positioning of CARD and PORCH is continuing. It seems a natural and constructive step to contemplate a formal merger of the two projects. This would also put us in a stronger position to appeal to those who commission services for offenders from the voluntary and community sector, by uniting the best elements from each project. This will be debated in the next combined committee meeting.

Funding is ever present in my mind as all our income is limited and it comes at different lumps of time! The early part of the summer felt like a period of hopeful anticipation as the end of existing funding streams was drawing closer and bids for other money had been made, but as yet unresolved. I am pleased to say that this has now eased somewhat with an award from Devon Supporting People which will maintain both projects until September 2008. This is very welcome to take us through an important transitional period.

The staff team are not staying still either....In CARD- we have been pleased to welcome back Gill Amos from maternity leave but also make a sad farewell to Claire Paine who has made such a full contribution over the past year. In PORCH-

Tanya Hall has the lovely prospect of motherhood up ahead (and we wish her every happiness,) and we are pleased to welcome Nick Walker as the new Community Support Worker. The additional funding has enabled us to take on another project worker and are pledged to welcome back Claire Paine who has taken on this new role

FOR MORE INFORMATION



Website: www.eci.org.uk/card

Telephone: 01392 256246



<http://www.eci.org.uk/porch.htm>

Telephone: 01392 205850

The CARD Project

A piece by a mentee



I started off at Prospects in January. There I met Carol from CARD – she told me what CARD and mentoring was all about. This I was quite interested in and Carol went on the hunt for a suitable mentor for me. Within a couple of weeks I had a mentor called Nuno; this guy is an excellent mentor and also became a close friend. In the time we have had together we have done many activities together.

The good thing is he is not an addict. We learn from each others experiences. After six months of being clean I had a lapse on Heroin. This resulted in me being hospitalised. Once again I turned my life round and got back on board. My life is spot on today.

I am studying adventurous activity leadership Level 2 full time at Bicton College. This will enable me to work towards being an outdoor instructor doing youth work with troubled teenagers. My life has turned 360 degrees – I have a lot in my life today and now have good prospects & a future.

Poem by a CARD mentee

Here's my story let me tell
I've a mentor which is swell
In times of need I call on her
Because I know that she's always
there
To lend an ear to all my woe's
Cos I do go on about my worries and
foes

And after I have said my bit
For a coffee we will sit

She also brightens up my day
With most everything she has to say

Usually it's you've done great mate
Now please keep on going straight

And all Good things will come to you
Just because you deserve them too

And what she says is very true
Cos I know I've got this far by working
very hard
But I know I've been blessed with a
great mentor from CARD

I realise though that should I slip
Or stray she will kick my butt
Because that's what I've asked of her
So with this, what you will
I'll just go on taking pills
(Prescribed that is. Haha)

Latest Output figures

March 2004 – November 2007

Total number of mentors trained: **50**

Total number of mentees assessed: **288**

Total assessed but not suitable: **148**

Number of Mentor / mentee matches: **140**

The CARD Project

Management Committee Meetings

As you may know, we always invite a mentor to attend our quarterly Management Committee Meetings. We do this for the following reasons:

- To ensure Mentors views are represented
- To facilitate transparency and accountability
- So that the Committee can seek clarification if necessary
- To make sure that the mentoring stays at the heart of the meeting.

We are keen to ensure that this is as meaningful an experience for all concerned, and so would ask you to let us know if you have any thoughts, opinions or suggestions?

-If you have been a representative how did you find it?

-Did you feel adequately prepared?

-If you haven't volunteered is there any support that would encourage you to?

-Do you think feedback is adequate?

Some suggestions for making it better include:

- Having the same mentor rep for 6 months or a year so that the person gets a deeper understanding and acts as a point of contact for other mentors.

- To ensure that the rep gets all minutes and notes ahead of time and can ask questions before the meeting happens.

.....**What do you think?**



CARD has now achieved 'Approved Provider Standard' for The Mentoring and Befriending Foundation, and has contributed to an MBF 'Guide to Effective Risk Management for Providers of Mentoring and Befriending Services'.

MBF promotes best practice in mentoring and befriending schemes in the UK



CLOSING A REVOLVING DOOR

CARD Mentor Training Schedule 2007

- February Wed 28th
HIV - Hepatitis Awareness
- March Wed 21st
'Focus' Meeting
- April Wed 18th
Gabriel House (Hostel) Tour and Talk
- May Wed 23rd
'Focus' Meeting
- June Wed 29th
P. O.R.C.H Housing options
- July Wed 18th
BBQ
- August (Holiday)
- September Wed 19th
'Focus' Meeting
- October Wed 24th
EDP/ENDAS Drugs training
- November Wed 21st
'Focus' Meeting
- December Wed 19th
Christmas Do

INTERESTED IN FINDING OUT MORE ABOUT VOLUNTEERING AS A MENTOR?



CONTACT CAROL OR CLAIRE ON 01392 256246 OR INFO@ECI.ORG.UK