



# ADHD Foundation

## Services for Youth Justice and HMP

Explanation—not excuses. ADHD is a complex neurobiological disorder. Characteristics include poor concentration leading to learning delay, difficulty in regulating impulsivity, hyperactivity and understanding risk and consequences in decision making, ADHD can impact severely on educational achievement, home and social life.

ADHD also creates vulnerability to mental health problems such as anxiety, depression, bipolar disorder, conduct disorder, addiction and specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia and other communication problems. ADHD affects between 3-5% of young people. It is a chronic lifelong condition, though characteristics are more easily managed in adults

Undiagnosed and untreated, ADHD can result in a lifetime of exclusion in health, education and socio economic life chances, with increased risk of offending. Research suggests that more than 50% of young offenders meet the criteria for ADHD.

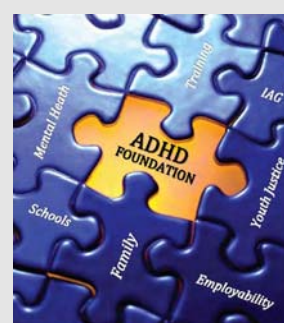
THE ADHD Foundation provides early family intervention, support for schools, clinicians and professionals to identify and manage service users with ADHD.

Early intervention can reduce the impact of ADHD, however, even when ADHD has progressed to the complications of substance misuse and youth justice involvement, it is still treatable. Those working in youth justice need to understand the progression and 'comorbid' mental health concerns associated with ADHD.

### The ADHD Foundation can provide

- ⇒ ADHD Awareness Training for staff
- ⇒ ADHD Awareness sessions for offenders
- ⇒ Strategies for managing ADHD
- ⇒ Understanding medication
- ⇒ ADHD Coaching for young offenders
- ⇒ ADHD 'Brain Friendly' teaching skills for YOI
- ⇒ Pre and post release support

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*The missing piece of the puzzle.*

## John's Story

John – a young man of mixed race from Netherley Liverpool, aged 19, was released from Lancaster Farm YOI in 2010, having served one year imprisonment for burglary of a local shop in Liverpool. John had been charged with several previous minor offences for violent behaviour and possession of cannabis. This was his third custodial sentence.

John was encouraged to engage with our young person's project for 11-19 year olds.

John had been diagnosed with ADD by a Paediatrician at Alder Hey Hospital when he was seven years of age. He had received no support with the exception of psycho stimulant medication. John's mother also discouraged him from taking medication so John was not compliant with his medication regimen. The family history was dysfunctional. John attended six different schools and was eventually excluded permanently at age 14.

The young people's programme primarily funded by Big Lottery and enhanced with funding from the Police Authority Grant enabled John to learn about ADHD and how it affected his ability to learn, achieve and how it predisposed him to impulsivity, challenging behaviour and the increased risk of addiction – evident in his use of cannabis to self medicate the symptoms of his hyperactivity and comorbid anxiety.

John had returned briefly to the family home on his release, however his relationship with his mother broke down and he was evicted from home by his mother – a single parent caring for three younger sisters. John lived rough and stayed with friends for six months. During this period he was considered by us to be at risk.



John learned about healthy lifestyles, achieved an OCN qualification in drug and alcohol awareness – his only academic achievement outside of prison. John achieved Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award and was also offered a work placement at the Foundation for six months. At this point mum allowed him to return home where he has remained since.

John remains a vulnerable young man however he has grown in confidence and the belief that he has the emotional resilience to create a life plan for himself and a determination not to reoffend.

On completion of his work experience, John was successful in gaining employment as a Kitchen Assistant in a restaurant.

John is no longer accessing services but remains in contact with staff from the ADHD Foundation

