

Young parenthood came hard to Amy, until she found a new enthusiasm for life through the friends and the new job she obtained at Whitley Children's Centre



Amy lives in Whitley with her daughter, three year old Melody. Amy is shortly expecting her second baby.

Stuck in a rut

Amy was just 19 when she had her daughter and admits that she found it hard going at first. Initially living with her mother, she had few friends in the area and was becoming increasingly isolated, with little fun in her life. "I was very introverted, stuck in a rut and with no enthusiasm for anything - quite different from how I used to be," she remembers. "I also had post-natal depression, and everything seemed like too much trouble."



A turn for the better

On the suggestion of her Health Visitor and with a fair bit of persuasion from her mum, Amy eventually took Melody to a Stay and Play session at Whitley Children's Centre, and life began to take a turn for the better. "Melody absolutely loved it, especially things like messy play which I couldn't really do at home with her, and even I started to open up a bit with other people around. Seeing Melody having such a nice time and with people to talk to, I started to actively look forward to going each week."

Fantastic opportunity

It was at one of the Stay and Play sessions when she heard about a vacancy for a Crèche Worker and she decided to apply. "I had always wanted to work with children but had never got around to doing anything about it so when I was offered the job I was thrilled, especially as I've been able to do an NVQ in Childcare whilst I've been there and I'm now going on to Level 3. It's been a fantastic opportunity and it has definitely been the means of getting my life back on course."

Something for everyone

As both a parent and an employee, Amy can see from both sides what the Centre has to offer, and is convinced that it is a very valuable resource to the community. "For the children it is a safe and happy environment where they can explore, learn and socialise in a stimulating atmosphere, and I particularly liked that for Melody as I had no friends of my own with small children for her to play with. For adults, it's somewhere they can go for advice and friendship, and the staff are genuinely caring and always prepared to help. It's something for everyone, and I feel so lucky to work there, doing something I love."

A sense of trust

Because Amy has taken the First Aid course at the Centre, the parents whose children she looks after in the Crèche know that her knowledge and standards of care are high and so they are happy to trust her. "We've all done the same course so they know I know what they know!" she says. "I love being a part of the children's learning process and watching them develop, so I feel I have landed the perfect job in the right place."

An unbelievable difference

Being involved with the Centre in various different ways has, believes Amy, given her her life back, albeit in a new and exciting way. "I used to be quite outgoing and bubbly but the difficult circumstances in which I had been living changed me a lot. Now I have the chance of a new career and new interests in life, and it's made an unbelievable difference to me and in my outlook. Whitley Children's Centre has given me the kick-start I needed and I'll be looking forward to going back after maternity leave."



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