

# amber

E-bulletin

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Summer's here again and this time there has actually been some sunshine! ...but hot temperatures can mean hot tempers too and that's where **amber** might be able to help cool things down again...

**amber mediation** is open to young people (14-24) and their families where there is conflict and difficulties getting along. Through mediation and support we offer young people and their families an opportunity to think about how and why arguments occur and how to better manage conflict.

## Blowing our own trumpet

We were delighted to be mentioned in the Scottish Government's recent guidance to local authorities on Homeless prevention – click here to read more...

<http://tinyurl.com/mftvk8>

## Having that difficult conversation

Last year we made a short film with some of our service users- you can watch it here

<http://tinyurl.com/lolcjs>

## Facts and Stats

Over the past six months amber has:

- **Taken 32 referrals**
- **Worked with 19 families**
- **15 agreements have been reached**
- **12 young people remain at home**
- **2 young people have returned home**
- **1 young person has moved out**

## FAQs

### *What's the criteria?*

The young person must be aged 14-24 and willing to engage with the process.

Whilst there needn't be an immediate risk of homelessness the level of conflict should be such that homelessness or an unplanned exit from home would be likely in the event of the conflict continuing.

### *How do I make a referral?*

Simply give us a call on 0131 475 2493 and we'll take the details over the phone, download a referral form:

<http://tinyurl.com/lpdu4x>

or email [amber@cyrenians.org.uk](mailto:amber@cyrenians.org.uk)

### *How long is the waiting list?*

We don't operate a waiting list and aim to have our first meeting with the young person and their parent(s) within a week of taking the referral

### *What sort of support do you offer?*

Support is generally around advice and guidance on housing options, confidence building and referring on to other specialists such as counselling and anger management

## Feedback



***"Mediation - it was better than Jeremy Kyle!"***

***"Thank you for your time and advice, amber is a very worthwhile and useful service as it gives all parties an opportunity to explain their side of things and although it cant fix everything it offers different views on how to move forward"***

***"You listened to me and to my dad's side of the story"***

***"I think the service is great. You all made me feel that I wasn't on my own and it was a great help to me"***

## Case Study

### Katie, Tom and Ally's Story

Katie (17) called Amber one Friday morning in a state of panic. Her parents had told her to leave the previous evening and she had stayed at a friend's house overnight and now had no-where to go. We asked for her number and gave her a call back immediately to talk her through what the situation was and to let her know what we could do to help.

We first asked if there was anyway that she could return home and she said this wasn't possible so we had to advise her to go to the Council to make a homeless presentation.

Katie sounded really anxious about this and said she couldn't do this on her own. She said that she could probably stay with other friends over the weekend and we agreed that we would contact her parents and go with her to the Council on Monday to support her.

We then phoned Katie's parents, Tom and Ally. They said that they did want Katie at home but that things were just so bad between them all at the moment that they had all reached breaking point. They agreed that Katie could come home for the weekend and that support would start for them all on Monday.

Although Katie had returned home she was still determined that she couldn't stay there and needed to be away from her parents as they were driving her mad. Katie has a history of adolescent mental health problems and was self-harming. Katie was found a place to stay in temporary accommodation. The Amber team supported Katie to move in and once she had settled a little bit we started the mediation process between her and her parents.

Many of the issues between them were around Katie's illness and her difficulties with communicating with them in any way other than screaming and shouting. Both parents were absolutely exhausted by her and felt that they had been banging their heads against a brick wall with Social Work and other services.

It felt really important for them to know that they weren't being judged and that their love and care for Katie was recognised. For Katie it was important for her to hear that her parents did love her and wanted her home and for her to start taking the support that was on offer.

After three weeks away - a short break in Belfast - Katie returned to her parents. After a couple of months of pre-mediation meetings and support, Katie and her parents were ready for the Face to Face meeting. This was a really emotional meeting and Katie had to leave the room a couple of times for some time out - one of the Amber team was outside waiting for her so that she got a hug and some space before returning to the meeting.

Katie has been back at home for the last six months. She has a voluntary job and is doing ok. Katie still plans to move out and is looking into her options. She and her parents still have ups and downs, but things have improved dramatically. Mediation and support meant that Katie was able to go home and start the move to independence with the support and love of her parents.



## Humour

**Q: "How many mediators does it take to hang a picture?"**

**A: "Mediators don't hang pictures, they reframe them"**

**Q: How many mediators does it take to change a light bulb?**

**A. The darkness seems quite hostile to all the light bulbs and keeps telling them to go and unscrew themselves. The mediator will allow it to vent its anger and express its distress at how it always feels unwanted.**

## Coming Up...

We are working on putting together four sessions on conflict resolution and positive communication hopefully to run throughout October. Further details will be available early September but if you would like some more information just now, please e-mail Lora at [lora@cyrenians.org.uk](mailto:lora@cyrenians.org.uk)

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