



Salford CVS – Family Hub Navigator Support (BDB Case)

**Community Support, Social
Activity, SEND Navigation,
Direct Payment Advocacy**

Date: January – July 2025



Salford CVS support

- Provided space for consistent, safe discussion over 32 sessions to build trust.
- Shared information and signposted to: Salford Parent Carer Forum, Local Offer, SIASS, and Bee Yourself group (though many options were limited due to her son's support needs).
- Referred to Gaddum for carer-specific support – BDB attended an online workshop.
- Referred to Wood Street Mission for clothing and essentials for her children.
- Advocated for a referral to Early Help (via The Bridge) to explore Direct Payments after discussing her friend's experience.
- Presented her case to the MDM team, where the possibility of a Direct Payment solution gained traction.
- Liaised with Salford Council Housing to reactivate her case after her allocated worker was lost to follow-up.

Background

BDB presented to the Family Hub Navigator (FHN) service due to isolation, housing instability, and overwhelming pressures linked to caring for her child with severe autism. She had experienced repeated closure of referrals from services that concluded no support was available. Her request was initially for community support and signposting, but it became evident she needed more intensive, sustained intervention. BDB completed 32 sessions from January to July 2025.

Challenge

- BDB was a full-time carer for her son with high needs and behavioural challenges.
- Isolated, burnt out, and unsupported by formal services.
- Had no active housing caseworker despite living in temporary, unsuitable accommodation.
- Denied access to services based on "thresholds" that did not reflect her lived experience.
- Limited access to carer and SEND groups due to her son's needs.
- Scepticisms and fear around social services involvement due to previous negative experiences.



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Outcomes and impact

- BDB was accepted by Gaddum and Wood Street Mission, receiving practical and emotional support.
- A full Early Help assessment was conducted – a major step forward after years of inaction.
- Direct Payment support was under review at case closure.
- BDB reported feeling optimistic and validated, experiencing a sense of hope and possibility not present at referral.
- She felt heard, respected, and part of decision-making for the first time in years.
- The intervention challenged assumptions around who qualifies for support and demonstrated the power of professional persistence and curiosity.

This case reaffirms the importance of sustained, trust-based engagement and multi-agency collaboration in supporting families who often fall through the cracks. BDB's story illustrates how systems can overlook need when it doesn't fit formal criteria and how tenacity in advocacy can result in re-engagement and hope.

Navigator reflection:

Working with BDB exposed significant gaps in local support for parents of children with complex needs and challenged assumptions about accessibility and inclusion. Despite being told her needs were below threshold, her situation had worsened. The work highlighted the limits of service thresholds and the illusion of choice when options are scarce. Through consistent, empathetic support and collaborative working, BDB regained trust in services and felt hopeful by closure, even as key decisions were still pending. The most meaningful outcome was not the practical resolution, but her restored belief in support systems and her own resilience moving forward.

Quote from BDB:

“Thank you very much Karl, if you did not keep pressing and looking at different ways we can be supported, we would have never applied for Direct Payment. It is very appreciated.”

