

Male carer on Family Numeracy course

Key messages:

1. The learner was encouraged to return to learning by his mother's engaging in family learning;
2. The learner went on to take both numeracy and literacy tests;
3. He was able to support both his mother and siblings with their numeracy skills.

This learner is in his early 20s. He has never been employed and, as the oldest of six children supported by a lone parent, he has taken on a lot of the caring responsibilities for his siblings. He attended the course with his youngest brother, aged six. Their mother had attended an earlier numeracy course and had hoped to continue with the Family Numeracy programme. However, she was unable to, as she had successfully moved into employment. The family lives in a ward of Cornwall that is the second most deprived in the county and has multiple deprivation measures.

The learner had left school with a couple of low grade GCSEs. This was due in part to his family circumstances and the support he had to give to his mother and siblings, but also to his low levels of confidence and self-belief. When his mother began attending family learning programmes, this encouraged him to return to learning. He completed a family literacy course in 2007/2008, attending as the carer of his youngest brother. He had hoped to take the national literacy test in 2008/2009, but did not.

His confidence levels were boosted by the progress he made on the FLIF Family Numeracy programme. He was keen to attempt the numeracy test and subsequently took the literacy test too. He even started some part-time work during the course and was very interested in the information, advice and guidance visit that was part of the programme. He is now keen to continue his education and will hopefully progress on to the next level very soon.

He is now helping his mother with her numeracy skills so is reinforcing his learning by supporting her. He also feels that learning alongside his youngest brother has brought them much closer together. Working together on aspects of the programme has helped develop a strong bond between them.

Cornwall Family Learning