

Caring for my son

I care for my 25 year old son Jamie who has recently been diagnosed with autism and learning difficulties. He was formerly diagnosed with DAMP (deficit attention motor perception).

Life has been difficult for Jamie and this in turn has had an impact on the family. Jamie started climbing 3 years ago and has been with climbing coach Mark McGowan for 2 years now. Through Mark, Jamie had the opportunity to go climbing for a week in the Pyrenees in December last year. But we had no idea how to pay for all the expensive equipment he needed.

We approached Carers Outreach Service for help with this and the results were beyond our wildest hopes. A grant of £250 from the Richard Overall Trust (a Trust to help young disabled people to enjoy and progress in their chosen sport) paid for items including a helmet, bag and quickdraw; V12 provided climbing equipment, including a rope; DMM also provided a box of climbing supplies. (Both based in Llanberis).

Jamie was so excited to be packing and planning for his expedition. He really enjoyed his week of climbing, in fact, it was a brilliant time for the whole family as we were able to relax in the knowledge that Jamie was in good hands and doing something he enjoyed. That week was a piece of gold for us all.

Climbing is an ongoing hobby for Jamie, he calls it his medicine and he is writing a book about overcoming his difficulties with the help of climbing and his climbing friends and coach. He also writes a blog which has quite a few followers.

Through climbing Jamie is growing as a person. He has been invited to compete in a climbing event in February so the equipment will be put to good use again.

I want to thank V12 and DMM for the donations and everyone at Carers Outreach for their help, not just with the climbing equipment, but for being there for us as a family over the years, especially Gwyneth and Helen. Life is still a struggle but climbing has helped us all.

~ Melanie Roberts