

Samantha film transcript

Edel

I'm Edel, Samantha's mum.

Samantha is 21 years old and she lives at home with me and my other three children.

Samantha has been with the charity Sense for the last 19 years.

Josie Sense Support Worker

Samantha is a deafblind adult as a result of Congenital Rubella Syndrome, so therefore has a hearing impairment and a vision impairment, along with lots of additional learning needs.

Edel

She can see about three foot in front of her. Hearing - she can hear, but we're not sure quite how much she can hear.

Josie Sense Support Worker

As a young child she had limited communication options and because of that we saw some quite challenging behaviour at times.

Now as a young person she has developed her communication skills using hand on hand signing so she's able to communicate with us, she understands more about the world she's living in and therefore reduces a lot of her anxieties.

Edel

Sense has made a huge difference in my life.

Samantha comes 6 days a week, which gives me a lot of support and help.

Josie Sense Support Worker

On a typical day, Samantha will come into the Sense day service, where she will be greeted by her Sense support worker.

She'll then attend the Garden Room where she will access an art activity.

Arts and crafts are used to help Sam develop her sense of touch, to have confidence in exploration.

She would then typically move on to receiving a massage with a masseur.

The massage will be used to support Sam to use her sense of touch to explore, to receive touch from another person.

So breaking down those barriers of not wanting to touch what you can't see.

Graham Sense Masseur

Using massage to accept touch tolerance is not just about relaxation, it can take a client down many other avenues like communication.

Josie Sense Support Worker

Because obviously if you want to communicate with somebody using sign language who is deafblind it has to be very much hands on so you have to get round that tactile defensiveness.

Graham Sense Masseur

Also the acceptance of touch for visiting medical practitioners when you may be tactile selective and not want somebody to touch you, it can build up that tolerance.

(Background Talking to Sam A nice gentle hand massage, it's nice orange oil today)

Josie Sense Support Worker

Samantha also enjoys using the sensory room which is a dark room which is full of lights and vibrating equipment so that again, we're encouraging Samantha to use her sight to explore the environment.

We're here to enable her to make choices, to develop her communication so that other people from outside of the organisation can understand that she is able to make choices and has a voice and should be listened to.

Edel

She likes to be loved and hugged and she likes close contact, and when I see her smiling face that makes me happy.

Josie Sense Support Worker

Samantha is a young energetic person who has a real zest actually.

She's a very strong character, she knows what she likes, and she challenges me just as I hopefully challenge her.

But, we have quite good fun you know, I think a lot of people that support Samantha have fun in their day.

You can go home having had a good day at work.

Edel

I hope she continues to come to Sense and if for one reason or another I couldn't look after her I hope she could stay at residential to move onto live with Sense.

Josie Sense Support Worker

We're able to offer her much more options for her life choices, whether that be the clothes that she wears, the food that she eats or in the future maybe the home that she lives in.

That's really where I think Samantha's life will, or we would like it to be going, that she will live a fulfilled adult life.

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