




# JOHN AND JANET'S STORY

Seen | Heard | Supported

We knew our son was in trouble whilst he was in the Army, and tried to get Army welfare involved. We were told that they could only help if our son approached them directly, otherwise they weren't able to do anything. The problem with that is that our son would never have reached out for help, because he didn't see that there was anything wrong with him. He's been sectioned several times now and, despite him sometimes saying that he's glad he was sectioned, he still doesn't see that there's anything wrong.

We had to watch him deteriorate, and see his relationship fall apart, and we weren't able to find any information or get any help. We felt completely powerless as parents, and that had a big impact on both of us, both emotionally and on our relationship.

We called RBL to see if they could offer us support, and they signposted us to The Ripple Pond. That initial call with the team was the first time we had felt listened to, and we've felt supported ever since. All of a sudden, we didn't feel like we were the only parents in our situation, it wasn't just us up against the world. Realising that we weren't alone helped to shift the focus with our son too, and everything became different.



It can be hard for other people to understand that the issues can feel so different for parents – even though he isn't living with us day to day, our son will always be our child. Although we have a good relationship with him, and we see him regularly, the worry doesn't ever disappear.

It has been so helpful to see other members' stories, and to be able to take a little bit away from each one. We mainly use the parents' WhatsApp group, because we don't use Facebook, but we don't often tend to get actively involved with the chats. As parents, we feel that our focus is more on sorting out our son and his issues; but we do discuss what we've seen between ourselves, and we'll always reach out and offer support to anyone who is struggling.

Up until joining TRP, we had felt isolated and alone. Finding an outlet where we feel listened to and heard has been a saviour.

## WITH GRATEFUL THANKS

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