

The Samantha Sykes Foundation Trust (SSFT) was formed following the tragic murder of our daughter, Samantha, in 2012, aged 18, as a way of continuing her legacy, which was to help disadvantaged young people and children. The Samantha Sykes Foundation Trust was first registered in 2014.

Although the charity is named after Samantha, its purpose is about the life experiences of some of the people Samantha tried to support. Its two purposes are;

1. To support looked-after children and care leavers to access further and higher education by providing them with items such as laptops, travel passes, books or anything else we believe will help them to fulfil their true potential.
2. To support victims and those at high risk of child sexual exploitation by funding specialist therapeutic interventions to help them re-build their lives.

Please see below some of the examples of how the donations we receive have contributed to making a difference to someone's life. Please note that the content may be upsetting.

Case 1.

Young female who had been trafficked across Europe by her family. Provision of a laptop, so she could access therapy online due to the pandemic. Also, to support academic achievement. £325.00

Case 2.

Young female care leaver who has experienced significant sexual abuse/exploitation during her life. In need of therapy but does not wish to have the traditional type of therapy/counselling. Appropriate therapy identified and sourced. £1,000

Case 3.

This care leaver had just started a degree in Graphic Design at a local university. He has been in the care of his local authority since the age of 14. Due to the nature of his course he requires a much higher spec machine than the one he currently owned. He had no family support, no access to financial resource and unable to afford to fund this from his student loan. A very resourceful and proactive student who had started his own YouTube channel to gain more experience. Consultation with his tutors about what kind of laptop he would ideally need for the course, identified a MacBook Pro. £1275

Case 4.

18-year-old care leaver and father to a one-year old baby. His daughter is currently not in his care. Trying to (in his words) get his life on track. Would like to access and complete basic GCSEs in Math's and English, look at specialist qualifications in the Arts, but also find a part time job. He is currently in temporary accommodation as the Local Authority are trying to find him a permanent home. No access to IT, which keeps him in a cycle of being unable to achieve progress. A Social Enterprise organisation were willing to support him, if he could get access to a laptop. The young person also suffers from anxiety and uses Art as a medium for mental health support. £275

Case 5.

This young person has experienced severe developmental trauma and sexual abuse from her father from the age of 3 to the age of 15 which included sexual exploitation with other males within the community. She fled the family home at 16 and was homeless. The young person is now accessing therapy on a weekly basis since last year. She is only able to access this remotely due to her location and difficulties with travel.

Her previous experience of support was from a therapist provided by her father from their local place of worship who invalidated the abuse that she had suffered. Understandably she does not trust services and is unable to register with a G.P or engage with mental health services. She is frightened to own a mobile phone due to the belief that she will be found and harmed. She suffers with severe anxiety, paranoia, depression, suicidal ideation, and emotional unstable moods because of her experiences.

As a result of sustained abuse, neglect and systemic failures, the young person requires long term therapy to help her to heal from her experiences. After 12 months of consistent therapy sessions, she has just reached the point of being able to touch on the details on her traumatic past and to begin to process these. The young person is a talented artist with a world of potential. At SSFT we believe that this potential should be nurtured, and supported to grow, so that this young person can go on to reach their full potential in life. £1, 820 (to date)

Case 6.

Young female looked-after child, whose foster carer has made a commitment to move her over to the 'staying put' strategy, which will mean she can remain in foster care and have a stable home through their A Levels and University education. The young person wants to apply for a Fine Art degree at the end of her A levels in 2024. Local universities where the young person wants to study use digital technology in the creation of Fine Arts, more and more Fine Arts based outputs are becoming digital and product driven.

This is a specialist field of study, with major needs with regards to equipment. The young person needed to have the same amount of time to enable her to develop to her digital art skills during A levels, to be on par with her peers. Otherwise, she would be significantly behind at the start of university. Following advice from University's, the iPad pro was deemed to be the appropriate equipment and is seen as the new drawing pad for students. The young person is currently excelling in her A levels, and her school are thrilled with her progress. iPad pro purchased. £749

As you can see, we believe that the work we do is incredibly important. There are many more tragic stories where SSFT has made a difference, but it is only with the support from like-minded people who work hard on behalf of these vulnerable groups to raise awareness and funds, that we can continue. Every donation, no matter how small, is valued.

We look forward to working with you to make the lives of our children and young people better.



Julie Warren-Sykes Trustee

Please do check out our website <https://samanthasykesfoundation.com/>