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Simon and Theodore's story*

Find out how Creative Mentoring supported Simon* and Theodore* to explore war, conflict and grief through creativity after they were referred for Creative Mentoring by Derby City Council's Prevent Service.

*Names have been changed to protect the young person's identity.

"It has been rewarding to see his attitude towards the sessions change, from being cynical to being enthusiastic."

Alvin*, Creative Mentor

"Both boys have been keen to share the work with their peers and adults. For Simon, this is especially significant. Both boys will appear in the school newsletter this week showing the artwork. It shows how far Simon has come, because he would never have agreed to his picture being taken."

Teacher

"I'll tell you what... my art skills have been so much better since I started this course!"

Simon*, Mentee

social justice for young people

through arts, culture and creativity

the mighty creatives



who were they matched with?

Simon and Theodore were matched with Alvin. This match was made on the basis that Alvin has experience working with groups of young people and has not been solely focussed on one-to-one work. These skills would prove useful in leading the first few sessions before they split into their one-to-one work.

Alvin has also done some amazing work with other young people who have been referred to us with a need for a positive male role model. Alvin is a versatile mentor which was also a key factor in making this match, as there was not a clear thread between the interests of Simon and Theodore.

what happened next?

The sessions were planned to start as a two-to-one setup before shifting to one-to-one sessions. There was a period of exploration in the beginning between the Creative Mentor and the mentees, with Alvin unsure how things would progress. During the second session, it became evident that one-to-one sessions would not be feasible as Simon only wanted to take part if Theodore did.

This led to all six of the sessions being delivered on a two-to-one basis. Despite this, Simon and Theodore both created their own pieces, with Simon creating a model of a tank and Theodore painting a war piece. Sessions were also much longer than traditionally delivered through Creative Mentoring, with some of these sessions running for as long as four and a half hours.

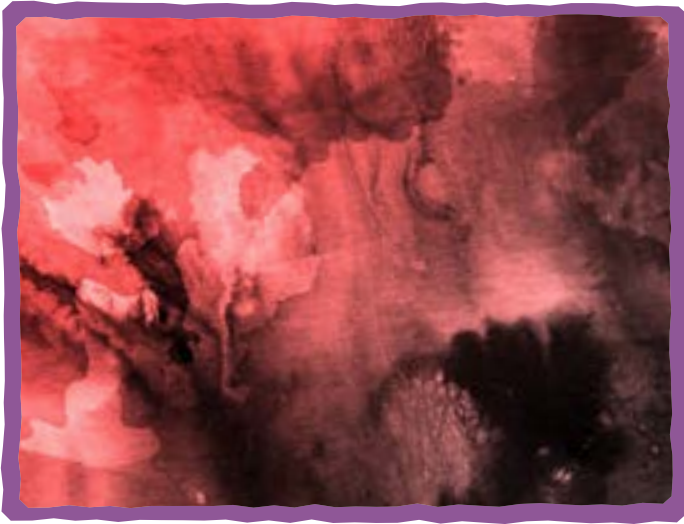


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background

Simon was 10 years old when he was referred for Creative Mentoring by Derby City Council's Prevent Service. At the time of the referral, it was stated that Simon "expressed some extremist views" and "challenging behaviour toward peers and younger children". The referral also mentioned some family challenges, including not seeing his father. As a way to engage Simon, war and conflict were highlighted, with a view to un-glamorise the experience of war. The referrer also informed us that they felt a positive male role model would benefit Simon.

Theodore was 10 years old at the time of his referral to us at The Mighty Creatives through Derby City Council's Prevent Service. It was stated in his referral that, at this time, Theodore had been "alienated from peers", had "made a malicious allegation against a member of staff" and was grieving the loss of his father who passed in 2022. The recommended ways to engage Theodore focused on his enjoyment of drawing cartoon-style people.



what progress has Simon made?

Simon's "Endpoint" scores show **significant progress** in several areas, with Simon scoring himself higher in: **Confidence (1/5 – 4/5)**, **Relationship Building (1/5 – 4/5)**, **Teamwork (1/5 – 4/5)**.

He has shown **moderate progress** in **Participation & Engagement (2/5 – 4/5)**, **Idea Generation (1/5 – 3/5)**, **Problem Solving (1/5 – 3/5)**, **Self-Belief (1/5 – 3/5)**.

Simon has also shown **some progress** in **Motivation (2/5 – 4/5)**, **Communication (1/5 – 3/5)**.

what progress has Theodore made?

Theodore's "Endpoint" scores show **some progress** in: **Confidence (4/5 – 5/5)**, **Self-Belief (4/5 – 5/5)**, **Relationship Building (4/5 – 5/5)**.

Theodore's progress in other areas has been maintained, with his scores reflecting this:

Participation & Engagement (5/5 – 5/5), **Motivation (5/5 – 5/5)**, **Teamwork (5/5 – 5/5)**, **Idea Generation (5/5 – 5/5)**, **Communication (5/5 – 5/5)**, **Problem Solving (5/5 – 5/5)**.



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were there any key moments?

There were many highlights throughout Alvin, Simon and Theodore's time together. One of the standout elements was not a moment but seeing the overall progression that Simon and Theodore made throughout the sessions - both creatively and personally.

"Simon worked on his own project this week, independent of Theodore. I feel this was a positive as, lacking in confidence, he's tended to follow Theodore's lead so far."

"The model was finished by 3pm and Simon was very pleased with it."

"When I asked him (Theodore) if he was happy with his artwork, he said that he was 'really pleased with it.' Which, given how good it was, was actually very modest!"

"Theodore is creative, emotionally intelligent and brings a lot to the sessions. When I asked him what he thought about his work, he said 'I love it!'" **Alvin, Creative Mentor**