

Liam & Charlie's Story

By Liam's Mum - 2014



Liam is 15 years old and suffers with PTSD and depression caused by a very traumatic event eight years ago and finds attending school a real challenge due to panic attacks and anxieties. In 2012 Liam took a turn for the worse and his depression became extremely worrying. As a family we were running out of options to keep Liam safe, nothing seemed to be working. It was an extremely difficult time for Liam; he just didn't want to live anymore.

To cut a very long story short, Charlie, our Labrador cross Springer Spaniel, was due to start DHK training; Tracey spoke to me when she heard of Liam's problems and said that Charlie should start his training early and would become Liam's Support School Dog. Since that day, Tracey has seen Liam and Charlie most Thursday afternoons. Not only is she training Charlie as a DHK dog, but she is training Liam in Dog Behaviour and Dog Training, which he adores! Tracey saw Liam come alive when he was working with animals, especially Charlie, and she has nurtured and supported Liam back to a happier place.

Having Charlie in Liam's life has made all the difference. Liam will go into Barnstaple and other places, when a few months ago he wouldn't get out of his bed. He seems to forget his problems when he is with Charlie and concentrates on him. People come over to Liam to find out about his dog in his orange DHK coat and Liam will talk to them about all the wonderful things they do together. His self esteem and confidence is rising daily. Charlie is amazing! He knows when Liam is having a bad day and he will go over and comfort him. Just recently, Charlie and Liam even managed an hour at Liam's school unit, which was incredible, and Liam had no panic attacks and anxiety because his dog was there by his side. Everyone is very impressed with the progress Liam has made, where other therapies couldn't help him, DHK could.



Liam now feels so passionate about the charity he has started to promote and raise money for DHK; he recently had the DHK logo shaved into his hair and raised £335.50. He hopes to be a top dog behaviourist and trainer when he leaves school, but most importantly he wants to work alongside Tracey at DHK to help other children like him. He has attended conferences and workshops with the DHK team to demonstrate the bond he has with Charlie and its then that he talks about his problems freely to others.

One amazing boy, one amazing dog and one amazing charity!



Liam says, "I have been involved in training Charlie, my Trainee Support School Dog, with the help from DHK, for nearly 3 years. Through training Charlie I have found out I am pretty good at dog training, and that I have a real passion for it. I now work for DHK as their Teenage Advisor, and help out at their educational workshops. I started Liam's MOB, a new extension to DHK, at the end of 2014 to inspire more men to be proactive with force free, positive reinforcement dog training, and to educate children about being safe around dogs." www.liams-mob.com & www.facebook.com/liamsmob

