



Our volunteering story



We wanted to show how volunteering had been a part of some of the CCVS staff members journeys to where they are now.
This is Mark's story

It is safe to say that volunteering has got me where I am today. Before I started volunteering for a charity called Focus I did not even know charities existed! And to be fair I only fell into volunteering having quit my job and been offered a floor to sleep on if I helped out. The experience of running breaks for adults with disabilities and kids from disadvantaged backgrounds was daunting, amazing, difficult and life-changing. I volunteered regularly for Focus for 10 years and learnt about myself, the way the world treats people who have been labeled, and the amazing difference a group of volunteers can make to people's lives. This experience gave me opportunities to try new things and meet new people. I had my hair cut by a 12 year old as part of her dream day; I met friends whose parents put me up in New Zealand; I danced to the 'Itsy Bitsy Yellow Polka Dot Bikini' in costume; I listened to disclosures; and I saw people grow, shine and do things they thought were impossible.

I still volunteer now, nearly 30 years later. I am a trustee, a school governor and my eldest daughter and I can be found most Sunday mornings volunteering at the local junior Parkrun. I guess it is in my blood, and I very much hope it will become something my kids want to explore. After all, if it weren't for volunteering they would not be here, as my wife and I met whilst both volunteering on a Focus project!