

My names Jaiden, I'm 17 and I've grew up in Armadale my whole life, in my spare time I like to play football (when Covid wasn't about) and watched Rangers play every week.

I've always struggled with my mental health from a young age, but things started to become unbearable before the first lockdown, things only got worse from there until I was eventually admitted into the hospital during the second lockdown when things became too much to bear.

Mental health showed up in many different ways, everything became a task, going days without drinking, eating, showering and sleeping. Not talking to anyone for weeks at a time and isolating myself from my friends and family.

During my worst time, it became really unbearable, the only time I'd leave my room was to go to the toilet, and I was slowly giving up and finding no need, at the time it felt like there was nothing to live for anymore that's when I decided I needed help.

When I joined Street League, I was nervous at the start but then I quickly realised everyone was the same as me and I was no different to everyone else. Euan was my main worker, he always understood when I needed a break for my mental health and needed extra support.

I have done both Street League courses now and I would recommend them to everyone who's trying to get extra qualifications (and getting paid for it). Since I started Street League I have been doing better, after getting put on the right medication and being given the right support. Street League gave me some purpose and a reason to get up most mornings and gave me something to work towards.

I definitely think the lockdown made it hard for everyone and their mental health, some harder than others. Spending time with people definitely made it easier to manage my mental health and making sure your surrounded by the right people also does you the world of good.

When I'm feeling down or anxious, I like to listen to music, walk or get out the house, play the Xbox or talk to a friend. They are the things that make it easier to manage my anxiety and help me when I'm feeling down.

Sport and exercise help in many ways, when I'm playing football, you don't have much time to think about anything it takes your mind off things for a period of time, and you get to spend time with your friends. Sport definitely helped my mental health, the first day I came out of hospital I went to training the same night, hesitantly right enough, but I went, and everyone was really supportive.

I think if you're struggling with your mental health, make sure and reach out as soon as possible, it can be hard sometimes but, whether you're a boy or a girl, your mental health matters the same as the person next to you, so make sure and reach out for help.