

One Childhood One Chance

Loredana's Story



Loredana first visited Honey Pot House in 2000 when she was 10 years old and again in 2001 as part of a Young Carers Group. She has stayed in contact with us and regularly speaks at Honey Pot events. Loredana is now a trained Flight Attendant and is currently working in America; proof that early intervention and support massively increases the ability of young carers to achieve their potential.

This is a transcript of an interview with Loredana and is entirely her own words.

How did you feel after your break?

When I returned from Honey Pot, I was overwhelmed with happiness and joy; I was also ready and raring to help Mum out as I'd had a week of fun and knew it was time to start helping again.

It DEFINITELY DOES make a difference to the time my brother and I spent with my Mum. Whilst helping her out we could share with her some of our memories and have a few laughs, we had more stuff to talk about. It drew us all closer, and by the time the next Honey Pot trip came around my Mum was as excited as we were because she knew we loved it.

It was always one of our happiest times. You do wish that the break could last longer but it is amazing being in the countryside surroundings having come from 'Urban living' and when we were there, me and my brother cherished every second of it. I still rant on about it to this day!

Has it made a difference to you as a person?

I LOVED meeting the other children. I used to travel there with my Carers Club so we were already like a little family. We all knew about each others situations so, were able to talk to each other and share our experiences.

To be able to share the Honey Pot experience with some of your best friends is amazing. It gave all of us a lot more confidence and gave us a chance to have some fun and not have to worry about caring. I think for me, I connected with the team leaders a lot. I've always been a child who got on with adults, and the team leaders make the Honey Pot home that extra special. It's like having a big sister or an auntie look after you. We could talk to them about anything including caring as well as watch videos and playing rounders.

It was just a lovely place to be and the workers should really be praised because they do a wonderful job in making us all so at home, and you DO feel like one big family when you step into the Honey Pot Home. You can be yourselves and that is the most important thing.

Are there any other activities that you took part in that you had never experienced before?

Wow. I remember everything! Are you ready (ha-ha)?! I remember driving up to Honey Pot, over the cattle grill and I saw this beautiful house and it was everything I'd ever dreamed of. It looked very cosy and very secure – a lot of us wanted to feel like this.

I remember we went on a bike ride down to the beach. Of course I led the way, and rode next to one of the staff members, we chatted for ages! We rode down to the adventure playground where we used the apparatus, and had a lot of fun falling over all the time! We got to paddle in the sea which was great fun, and lucky for us, I vividly remember a festival going on. I'm sure it was the Cowes Festival or something as there were loads of Yachts.

All of the activities were new to me; I'd only seen the Thames, that brown sludge of a river! So I was astounded at the size and colour of the sea! But also, the activities that were the best were the little things. All the girls sitting down doing each others hair, watching a movie, playing board games, even looking out the window to see trees and birds, was great.

To be able to have time to do all of those little things, the things we would have never had time to do. We even baked a cake! But the activity I most remember was sitting at the table, with the chequered white and red table cloth, and eating with all of my friends, I remember where I sat and everything! That was really nice. So Honeypot enables us to do some activities we have done before, ones that we weren't able to do either because of time or where we lived, but Honeypot also gives us the opportunity to do the smaller things like, being a family, for that week and showing us that we can have a great childhood. As long as Honeypot is there, it will always be there for us.

Why do you think people should support Honeypot?

Support Honeypot because I have never come across a place like this. Never have I seen so many dedicated people work so hard to make young children like me happy. How do you think I still remember every single moment of my time in that house - it's a special place. It gives children who care, like me, who never even have time to think, to find themselves, be a kid and have fun.

I know I'm going to be supporting Honeypot forever, because it's true, you do only have one childhood and there's only one chance to make the memories of that childhood the best. Honeypot gives children the hope and the will to keep on going.

After I came back from Honeypot I cared for my Mum even better than I did before, because I knew my next trip was going to come around again and I wanted to tell the staff all about it, and how great I was at it because of their advice and help. Support Honeypot because if it wasn't for this charity, I wouldn't be the person I am today - happy, confident and proud of who I am and where I've come from. Support the Honeypot family!