





# LIZZIE FINDS WORK SHE ENJOYS



## Lizzie moves from vocational training to employment

On this poster we introduce Lizzie: a bubbly 18 year old student who attends courses in Foundation Studies and Vocational Enterprise at the Banbury campus of Activate Learning in England. Lizzie has Turner Syndrome, one effect of this is that she is shorter than average and because of this she experienced bullying at school. She has conductive hearing loss and wears hearing aids to both ears. Despite her SEND, Lizzie's many positive skills and competencies have enabled her to take advantage of the educational and workplace opportunities.

Her college course has enabled Lizzie to build up vital employability skills. At this further education college she has achieved qualifications in English and Maths skills alongside vocational training in practical catering and wood workshop skills. She has also been able to take part in work experience in the college shop which sells cards, stamps, confectionary and items made by students such as bird houses. This has given her genuine experience of dealing with customers and operating the cash till. She has also gained valuable work experience in retail settings: Boots the Chemist and Pets at Home (a large local pet shop). Alongside her college course, enthusiastic Lizzie has also pursued her passion for creativity through ballet and tap dancing.

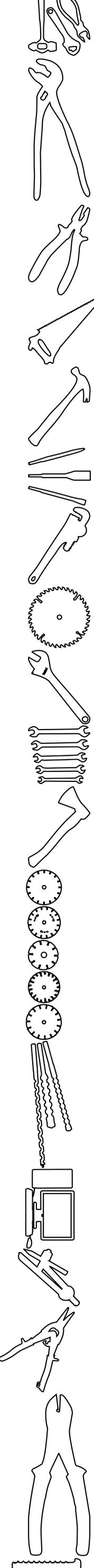
## Getting a job: personal contact through college leads to a real employment opportunity where Lizzie can show her skills and attributes

Lizzie's college runs a job fair, held on the college premises with invited local employers. It was at this fair that Lizzie met representatives of a McDonald's fast food restaurant in person. They were so impressed with Lizzie's sociable, friendly approach that they wanted to offer her a job on the spot. She has now been working at McDonald's for six months, where she has shifts on Saturdays and Sundays from 11 – 4.30pm. Her main duties are keeping the lobby are clean and tidy, cleaning toilets, clearing away trays and restocking condiments on tables. When she started her job she took part in a mentoring scheme designed to teach her how to fulfil her duties as a customer care assistant. Lizzie was able to engage in this supportive training opportunity, helping her learn new skills in her work setting. In addition, she sometimes works on the tills, serving customers where her friendly, approachable nature is a real asset. Feedback from her manager is very positive. *"You make sure that customers have an exceptional experience by putting them first. You always have a smile on your face while working making it easy for customers to approach you."* Her college and her employer working together have ensured that Lizzie's transition into employment has been a positive experience for her, her employer and also her customers.

## Transferable skills learnt in an educational environment can support success in the workplace

Lizzie enjoys her job, meeting new people and learning new skills and feels her experience of working in the college shop has been an invaluable transferable skill. She now has increased confidence when communicating with customers which was demonstrated in her recent Customer Care Assistant Performance Review where her manager reported, *"You always treat staff with the utmost respect and are always happy to help. You always give 100% to your job and also work very well in a team. For customers you are willing to go that extra mile and always make sure that the customers have a memorable visit."*

As her confidence builds, Lizzie is already making plans for her future career. In the future, Lizzie would like to get a job where she could combine her customer service skills with her love of animals and experience of animal care.



# MARTIN WORKS, BUT HAS NOT FOUND HIS DREAM JOB YET

*„I don't like when people are being lazy.“*

# SENE!

SEN Employment Links



An employee of the Archaeological Institute and Martin at the foundations of a Slavonic church in Mikulčice. Following the field work discovery of remains of buildings and signs of ancient life, excavated objects are being prepared for further research. The preparation takes place in the premises of the Archaeological Institute. Martin packs washed and dried items.

Martin is realistic about his abilities and skills which is useful when working with people. He is talkative, patient, empathetic and likes being in contact with people.

If he understands the demands of the work thoroughly, he is able to work independently, and only needs support when looking for a solution to an unexpected problem.

Martin is interested in the world around him. He watches the news, is well behaved and has very good communication skills. He can engage in a simple conversation in three foreign languages.

Martin **knows** how to work, he **can** work and he **wants** to work. He only needs minor adaptations of working conditions and recognition that his needs are taken into account (e.g. by a part-time contract).

Martin likes the region he lives in and its countryside. He knows it well and wishes to stay there.

Martin offers:

- education and skills in the field of caregiving and housework,
- acquired work competences,
- patience and punctuality,
- the desire and will to work,
- knowledge of local habits and traditions.

**Why do you want to work? And why do you work?**

*M: "Because I enjoy it and ... I simply don't like it when people are being lazy and spend days lazing. It doesn't do any good..."*

Martin has Williams syndrome.

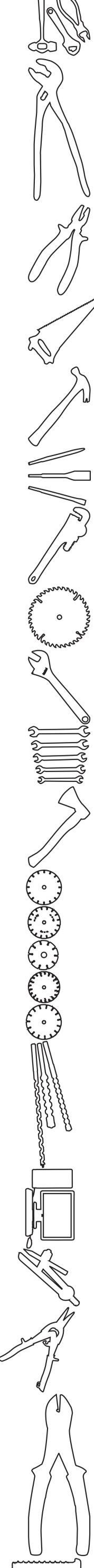
**Martin** (25) comes from the region of Slovácko which is famous for maintaining cultural traditions and has numerous religious and historical sites. He lives there with his parents and brother.

He works for the Archaeological Institute of the Czech Science Academy. His tasks include cleaning and washing of excavated objects (fragments, bones, etc.), and the storage for drying and packing of these items for further research. He has worked there for 5 years. In the beginning, he was working at the excavation sites directly and Martin gradually acquired the skills of choosing items for further research. However, this work was physically demanding. His current work requires patience and time management and takes place in a clean and quiet environment.

It is seasonal work. Martin successfully completed VET education in caregiving and looked for work in this field. He has not succeeded yet though. His VET placement took place in an institution offering social services where he gained experience with people with disabilities and elderly people. Martin had no problems with getting up very early or traveling to the place of work as he was used to both of these from his school years.



Martin is washing excavated objects and storing them for drying.



# PERMANENT EMPLOYMENT IN A STAFF RESTAURANT

## Mika, 31 years



Foto 1 a 2: Mika at work in restaurant

Foto 3: Job coach Satu supporting at workplace

### Likes... (hobby)

Mika is lively, active and talkative about his work and hobbies. He lives independently.

### Education background:

**Basic Education:** In Special School

**Vocational Education:** Initial vocational qualification in catering Kuhankoski Special Vocational Center (Kuhankosken erityisammattikoulu)

**Educational Support:** Special teacher's support, guidance and counseling, Modified teaching & learning materials during study

**Training:** On-the-job-learning in the same place

**Support for employment:** Coaching, practice sessions for work at Amiga Restaurants by SOVATEK Foundation

### Is working...

#### Working background:

Kitchen Assistant from 2009 working at Fazer Amiga restaurants in Jyväskylä

In the beginning 2 months preparation for work  
After this as a regular worker

#### Support at work:

Specific work tasks

#### What helped his employability:

Mika's personality is very positive, he's reliable, hard working and socially interactive.

Positive atmosphere in the working place

Support of the job coach (The SOVATEK Foundation)

Vocational Education

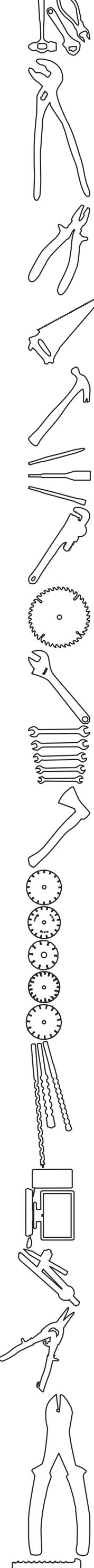
### Is dreaming...

Continuing to work at Fazer Amiga restaurants



Foto 4: Mika at work

Foto 5: Job coach Satu from the SOVAK Foundation



# WORK AS A WAY TO INDEPENDENT LIFE

**Boarding school, care home, sheltered housing and ...**



# SENE!

SEN Employment Links

**Pavel** (24) completed his VET education in the study programme for house decorators. The college was not in the place of his residence, therefore he stayed at the boarding school. He has never had a job as a decorator and has never looked for one. He gradually gained work experience as a plumber and gardener. Currently, Pavel works in a bakery. He carries out the following duties: cleaning of baking plates, boxes and minor plumbing works. He has tried preparation of pastry as well. However, in the future, he would rather work in a baker's shop. He believes that he is capable of coping with a greater work load; he works only part-time at the moment. The bakery is not close to Pavel's home, so he has to go to work by bus.

### Transition from a care home to independent living

Finding work was an important part of Pavel's way to independent living. During his vocational education Pavel lived at a boarding school and in a care home for people with disabilities. He was not very satisfied there, as he did not feel it was appropriate for him due to the higher age average of the clients and their types of disability. He did not have enough freedom and objected to being under control. A few months ago he moved to sheltered living accommodation which was newly built (as part of the undergoing transformation of social services in the Czech Republic). He is very happy there, he enjoys having more freedom and also taking responsibility for his own life. His day no longer consists of activities prepared by someone else. On the contrary, he takes care of himself, his household and independently plans for his current and future life.

### Why do I want to work?

Pavel is glad that he can work and does not spend days lazing around. He enjoys working, both at work and at home: *"Because I like the work. To earn more money and have enough finance for living. I would like to buy a notebook."* Pavel benefits from a small workplace and he likes nice people who do not point out his disability.

### What did I have to learn?

At the start of his job, the owner of the bakery assisted Pavel. *"I had to learn to how to work independently, prepare my work on my own and work in such a way that no supervision is necessary."* Pavel considers it natural to help others when they are busy. Furthermore, Pavel had to learn to get up in the morning and use long distance buses to get to and from work. He knows that he still needs some assistance with money and managing his own finances: *"Planning for budget spending so that I have enough for the whole month."*

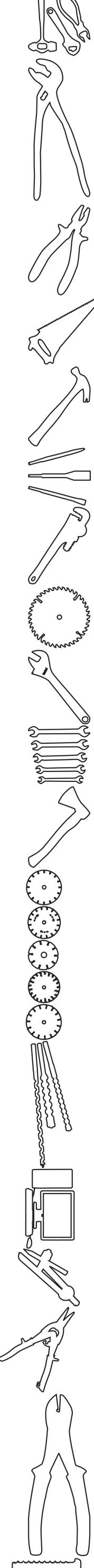
### Why should we support clients to work? (Srdce v domě, p.o., Klentnice)

*"People with SEND wish to be a part of society. One possible way is to integrate them into the job market. Being appreciated and receiving a salary for one's work is very important for self-confidence and personality building."* (Director of the care home Srdce v domě)

The care home for people with disabilities supports its clients on their way to independent life. They build contacts with people and employers in the region. For some of the employers, this is the first contact with people with disabilities.

### Why have we employed a person with SEND? (Bakery MaJa, Dolní Dunajovice)

The owner of the bakery where Pavel works employs three workers with SEND. *"I am satisfied with their performance at work. After initial training and assistance, they are able to work independently. To perform well, they need a fixed schedule which we have put into practice for them."* I am considering an increase in the number of working hours for some of them. The most important is cooperation, but also *"empathy and desire to help those who need it."*



# EQUAL MEMBER IN A WORK TEAM

## Tommi, 24 years



Foto 1 a 3: Tommi at work

Foto 2: Tommi and his job coach Kaisa

## Is working...

as an assistant in Cargo Services in Matkahuolto, Jyväskylä. His job consists of cargo handling in the travel centre and also some customer service.

### Working experience:

Current job: Assistant in Cargo Services in Matkahuolto, Jyväskylä, from 2014  
In the beginning 2 months preparation for work  
Continued 2 months with financial support for employer  
Since this is a permanent worker

### Support at work:

Sign language interpreter (only in meetings)  
Night shifts with colleagues so is not alone  
Previously unemployed altogether for 7 months.

### What helped his employability:

Tommi's activity, cheerfulness and respect for others  
Positive atmosphere in work place  
Support of the job coach (The Service Foundation for the Deaf) – for example CV, forms, applications  
Vocational qualification

## Is dreaming ...

about travelling abroad

## Likes...

hanging out and playing with friends (indoor football, floorball).

Tommi communicates mainly with sign language because of his hearing impairment. He is skillful in using speech communication and lip-reading. Tommi is a young man, who has grown up in family without hearing difficulties. He now lives alone.

## Educational background:

**Basic Education:** In Special School, studied using mainly sign language

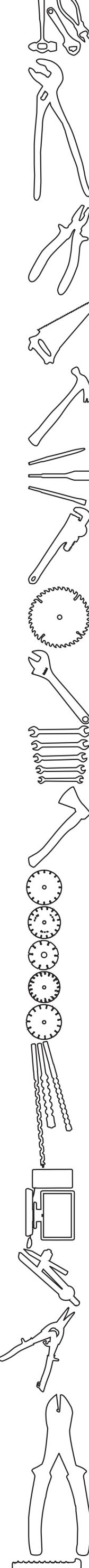
**Vocational Education:** Logistics qualification, Storage services Jyväskylä College (Jyväskylän ammattiopisto)

**Support in College:** Teacher's support, guidance and counseling, interpreter of sign language  
Teaching materials given beforehand to interpreter

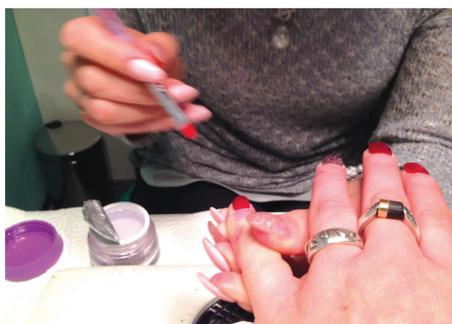
**Practice periods:** On-the-job-learning in five different places and summer job



Foto 4 a 5: Code reading and handling deliveries



# YOU ALWAYS HAVE TO BELIEVE IN YOURSELF



Valentina likes her colleagues and superiors and is happy for their support. She carries out manicure and cosmetic treatment.



**Valentina** (28) lives in Augsburg with her husband and her two children (3 and 5 years old). Ten years ago she was an apprentice hairdresser. After three years she completed her course and was employed at a salon. At the moment she is only working part-time, as she is responsible for the care and upbringing of her children.

Valentina originates from Kazakhstan. With her parents and her brother she moved to Germany at the age of 14. The family was living in Trier for one year, where Valentina went to a mainstream school. After that the family had to move again to Augsburg, Valentina experienced another change of school. As her language competence in German was very low, she had to attend a special class for children with migration background where the focus was learning the German language. After her graduation from school she did vocational training in several places which was accompanied by lessons in German and other subjects in an educational institution.

In this setting it is compulsory to attend classes one day a week. It was difficult for Valentina to meet these requirements, so she was at risk of not succeeding in her apprenticeship. For this reason she moved to the special school of the KJF. *"There the teachers noticed that I have a hard time with learning".*

Valentina received a lot of benefits from the special education at this school for pupils with learning disabilities, where she realized that not only her, but also other adolescents had problems in many different areas. In a regular school, she had understood very little. *"In the new school everything was explained more often and there was the possibility to attend a remedial reading class in small groups in addition to the regular classes in those subjects, where the pupils had their difficulties."*

Her success was supported by the encouragement and positive attitude of the teachers. The beginning of her work at a hairdressers wasn't easy, because of her reluctance to speak German. Due to her uncertainty she rarely succeeded in approaching customers, but with help from her supervisor and colleagues this improved.

*"My boss always told me, that I am good in my work, but I also had to learn to speak to the customers, otherwise I won't be able to work in this job. My colleagues showed me the things I can do better and nobody laughed at me. That helped me a lot",* Valentina points out.

For Valentina's employer it is important to show interest in the apprenticeship: *"When somebody absolutely wants to be a hairdresser and shows this, for me this is more important than good marks in school."* During work experience it can be seen if somebody is suited for the job, shows some effort and is ready to learn. For employers, it is helpful, that outside of the work environment there is somebody, who supports difficulties, offers additional reading classes or is ready to talk. Valentina herself is looking for opportunities to talk when problems appear.

*"Certainly you have to explain a little bit more or even to offer comfort, when something does not come off, but it is like this when working with young people.",* Valentina's employer told us.

After the first successful assessments and especially after becoming employed, Valentina demonstrated her progress. She was asked what characteristics one needs for being successful in a job, even for somebody with learning disabilities. Valentina mentioned several things. First of all, there are qualities like punctuality, reliability and politeness. However, you also have to be able to take criticism and to admit when you have done something wrong but overall you have to have a goal. She describes a big change in herself, as she sees herself as more autonomous and self-confident.

Valentina likes to work in her job and describes a good atmosphere in her team, where everyone supports each other and everybody has a laugh. Valentina did some further training in manicure and cosmetics and wants to work more, when her children are older.

Her advice for other young people is, to pursue their goal and to believe in themselves, even when it is difficult.

Valentina's supervisor (Mrs. L.) says clearly that every person has to be offered a chance including people with learning difficulties or other disadvantages. This should be the responsibility of every employer.



Valentina works in the beauty salon where her apprenticeship took place.

