

## Ian Vickery – a personal success story

Before joining Next Steps, Ian Vickery 20 and a graduate of Next Steps, found socializing hard “Getting to know people when I joined was difficult. Talking to people and starting conversations – too many people talking at once!”



Since being a part of Next Steps, Ian has won an award for progression with his learning from NIACE. The award is in recognition of Ian’s journey since joining Next Steps - a Speaking Up project that supports people with learning difficulties to build their life skills and confidence and become active citizens within their communities.

Becoming a member of the Next Steps programme was a big turning point for Ian, giving him the opportunity to access different types of courses like Social Skills, Cookery, Communication and Travel. He gained a Millennium Volunteer Award for making an antibullying DVD and organizing an arts festival for people with disabilities. He is now taking an advanced skills course in Independent travel:

“Since I’ve been at Next Steps everything has changed. I am proud of going to Ely by myself – it was my first train journey by myself. I am proud of meeting new friends.”

Learning more about life skills has helped build Ian’s confidence immensely. His past foster carer Dee noticed a big difference in him: “The change in Ian has been amazing - the way he talks, the way he can cope with money, the way he can stand on his own two feet. What I’ve seen in Ian is his own sense of self worth. His self esteem went sky high. It’s now given him the confidence to go into the workplace.”

Go to [www.speakingup.org](http://www.speakingup.org) for more information about our projects and services in Cambridgeshire, or contact [Graham.Fitzgerald@speakingup.org](mailto:Graham.Fitzgerald@speakingup.org)