

**East Midlands Outstanding Learner of the Year  
William Ride**

William: My wife unfortunately passed away in the March of 2005 leaving me with two children. Rhys has got special educational needs.

Pauline Ferguson (Derbyshire County Council Adult Education Service):  
William, I suppose, as a male with young children finds it difficult to find other male support.

William: I went to Barnados and helped to set up a group in May 2005 called Dads Are Us. It was aimed predominately at any male carer of children.

Pauline: He worked very closely with project workers and through doing that identified perhaps gaps in his own skill and experience and knowledge that he needed to fill.

William: It was quite difficult because all the courses that I've been on I'm the only male there.

Pauline: He's now engaged in a course which is dealing with more in depth knowledge about how to work with families and children.

William: To actually get the levels that I need it is going to be difficult, I know. The ideal aim is to have a father's group in every children's centre across the county, which is going to take some doing.