

# FINDING YOUR VOICE THROUGH VOLUNTEERING

People with disabilities often face many extra barriers in life than those without, making what, to many people seem like simple and easy tasks, much harder. This is the experience Katrina had growing up, meaning at the age of 25, finding work was proving to be difficult for her.

Following years of negative verbal abuse, Katrina stopped talking to people outside of her family unit as she had lost all trust in others and her confidence was at rock bottom. Breakthrough, an organisation which supports disabled people trying to find work, were helping her, and suggested she should try volunteering to help improve her confidence and give her the opportunity to talk to other people again.

Katrina joined UK Cheerleading Association (UKCA) volunteer programme, and started to volunteer at their events in Manchester. The programme was a perfect fit for her, as they use a buddy system to support all new volunteers. She was also given a role that she felt confident in, at the uniform check station, meaning Katrina was able to develop at her own pace, never being forced to speak to people until she felt confident enough.

Gradually, her confidence started to grow, she started to find happiness and her confidence no longer weighed her down. In fact, not long after starting volunteering, Katrina found a part time job in a local café, becoming an integral part of their team.

Now aged 31, Katrina is a happy and confident young lady, working in a job that she loves, and a large cheer family that she socialises with regularly. Not only that, she still volunteers with UKCA and now has the responsibility of running the uniform check station that she first started her volunteering journey in.

Following years of only speaking to her close family, thanks to volunteering, she now has a new family too, her cheerleading family.

If you've been inspired to start volunteering, or think someone you know could benefit too, [fill in our form here](#) and we'll help you start your volunteering journey.

