

This story was filmed and recorded during early February 2006 for 'Hear all about it!'

This campaign is a wonderful selection of inspiring adult learning stories told by the learners themselves. The highlights from Phillipa's interview can be watched and read; this is the transcript of the whole interview. The on-line learning champions would be delighted if her stories were used to promote learning in your organisation, college or charity. You can link your webpage to the West Midlands Learning Directory – Hear all about it! page www.wmld.org/pages/hear_all_about_it/.



Phillipa's story -

I'm a supervisor, cleaning at a school. I do Maths and English and Food Hygiene and Safety courses at school. Maths and English is just level 1, beginners, because I never did any at school. I'm re-doing them because I never did any exams or anything.

We moved around a lot, I've got a big family. I was never really at a school long enough. So by the time it came to doing exams and stuff I hadn't really done any revision or stuff to really pass anything. So I never did any. I got a job when I was 16 and I've been working until I had my oldest baby. Then I've been cleaning at a school, but I want to do teaching with children in the end so that's why I'm doing all my courses and stuff now to brush myself up to get better so I can work with children in the end.

I love children. I've always wanted to work with them. I've got such a big family and there are always kids, so I want to work with children. So, if you're teaching you're going to need to do your maths and English, and with the food hygiene and first aid, it's always good to have different things you can go into. I mean, I want to work with children in the end but I did sign language as well. So I did all different things so that I can put it all together to work with children.

I've been working at the school, cleaning, for about 2 years and when I had my youngest, I thought, 'Now I don't want any more kids, I want to get into my training so that I can get to working with kids'. He'll start school in September and I did 2 years of courses already, so I know that in a couple of years I might actually get to work with children and mine will still be young as well.

I passed computers, CLAIT Level 1; I did sign language for beginners and first aid. My Maths and English I've only just started in September, so I haven't actually got any awards for that yet. I'm hoping to get them by March. It's not such a big class, there's more one on ones if you need it. You can make friends. And with the kids as well, I mean they do free crèches and stuff for us, which is good if you've got kids. And there's always help with where we are, if we need to speak to anybody. Or if we miss it, people will pick up your work so you can catch up. It's really good.

I did think at first ‘Oh God, I’m going back’ because I didn’t like school anyway but it’s totally different. I get loads of my friends to try and come to the courses as well so it’s really good. I do enjoy it. I feel really good. I’m doing teachers assistant courses as well so I’m getting to where I want to go. It’s really good. I’m enjoying it.”

This project was managed by jo.knight@niace.org.uk - who can be contacted for more information. She works for NIACE (National Institute of Adult Continuing Education). Birmingham and Solihull Learning and Skills Council funded the project.

