



## Meet our new Family Mentor - Steve



Hopeful Families are delighted to welcome a new Family Mentor to our team - Steve! Steve joined us last month and it's clear already how passionate he is about supporting other people and helping them achieve their goals. We had a chat with Steve to get to know him and it was immediately obvious... he has quite a story to tell!

Steve joined us wanting to put the skills he had gained from working in public health on the Doncaster Healthy Schools Programme to use with Hopeful Families.

“What I’m looking to do is help people prove themselves and build up their resilience so that they have a better future and better outcomes, and signpost and support them to be the best that they can be”.

What does Steve plan to do as a Hopeful Families Family Mentor? He’s currently looking at creating some support groups with a sporting background for Hopeful Families participants, encouraging them to come down and watch some games or footage, and talk about their experience within sport. From his experience, Steve has noticed that a lot of people have great memories in sport but nobody to share those memories with.



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With these sessions, Steve aims to help participants' self esteem by providing them with a non judgmental environment to talk to other people, so they can make new friends and reduce the risk of isolation. When we asked Steve where his passion for sports came from, we were blown away by his answer...

Steve used to be a professional rugby league player and referee! His playing career was in Batley before he moved into refereeing, where he became one of the top referees in the country and officiated in Super League and Challenge Cup finals, as well as travelling abroad for World Cups! His favourite memories are walking out onto the pitch at the old Wembley, and the Challenge Cup Final between Leeds Rhinos and Bradford Bulls at Murrayfield in 2000.

After retiring as a referee Steve moved on to video refereeing, and was on the disciplinary panel on the RFL, before coaching elite officials up until last October.

We asked Steve about his career path, from refereeing at the Challenge Cup Final to now helping out families across Yorkshire, and for him it was a natural progression:

“It’s about knowing the rules and adapting them. There are policies and we implement them. Management of players is like talking to families - you get that personal interaction with them, look at their body language, find the signs, use techniques you’ve learned and use the appropriate response. For families we’re supporting, we want them to do certain things to build up their resilience so they can get the best out of themselves.

“It’s all about doing your best, and getting the reward. For me that used to be getting to Wembley, now it’s about getting people to achieve their goals”.



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