Mandy*, 36, lives in West Berkshire with her sons Nathan* aged 12, Max* 10, and Daniel* six.

After being a victim of domestic abuse Mandy went to a refuge and her three sons were taken into foster care. Three years later, the family have moved to a new area and Mandy is recovering with the support of PACT’s Bounce Back 4 Kids (BB4K) service.

“After we moved I was recovering and I was getting my life back on track. BB4K was suggested for Max and Daniel by their school. They wanted them to have a better understanding about what happened, not to blame themselves, and gain more confidence.”

The BB4K programme consists of a 10 week children’s course and parent’s course which run simultaneously. The aim of the children’s course is to raise children’s self-esteem and to give them ways to express their feelings. The parent’s course aims to empower parents and validate their parental role. Mandy, Max and Daniel completed the course in January 2016.

Mandy said: “The boys liked the social side, meeting other children who had a similar experience. They found out they’re not the only ones. I learnt the effects on the children, how they might have been affected by what happened.”

There have been massive improvements for the family since they attended the course. Mandy said: “I have definitely seen an improvement down to BB4K. I can trust professionals. The boys are trusting of teachers now. Their behaviour has improved, their emotional levels are down. At home the boys have learnt tools for if they feel anxious; they take themselves off and breathe. We have more understanding of each other.”

Mandy said: “If I hadn’t attended the course I’d still be in the same position and the boys would still have outbursts like they did before.”

Nathan, Max and Daniel have been out of foster care and living back with their mum for six months now. Mandy said: “Mother’s Day this year will definitely, absolutely be different to previous years.”

Mandy’s advice to a family offered a BB4K course would be: “It’s nice to have a chance to meet and socialise and see you’re not alone in that situation. It also leads on to other outlets and organisations that can help like Women’s Aid and Legal Aid. BB4K was a good experience, a really good experience for all of us.”

There are plans for Nathan to attend a course later in 2016.

*All names have been changed in line with confidentiality