**Connell:** I’m Connell Scholar. I am doing a Personal Trainer apprenticeship at Therapy Gyms, helping clients with different conditions and needs.

How I became an apprentice was my job coach, Jonathan Smith, who works at Essex County Council, he sent me a link to the apprenticeship at Therapy Gyms and I thought it looked really interesting.

**Jonathan:** My name’s Jonathan Smith, I work for Essex County Council under the SEND Strategy and Innovation team. Within Essex County Council, we started working around inclusion around apprenticeships. Connell was the first young person that came through this accessible pathway. The journey he’s come on is amazing.

**Connell:** The learning part of the apprenticeship, I have a tutor and he usually comes in once a month just to go over bits and how studying is going and how the learning is going. My colleagues are pretty supportive. It’s a very welcoming, inclusive, friendly environment. It’s those small little changes, those small little adjustments, can make all the difference.

**Matt:** I’m Matt Brinkley and I’m the Director of Therapy Gyms. Connell is our Personal Training apprentice. It’s really nice to see Connell becoming more himself week by week, day by day. You can tell he really enjoys being in the gym and he’s got that passion for it. Adjustments are made to support him the best we can, and as we grow and take on more gym locations, I can just see Connell growing with the business. Inclusive exercise is what we’re all about, so it’s a pleasure to have him here.

**Connell:** One of the highlights for me is being able to be more hands on in my role because I know more. I want to be that personal trainer that can train everyone.

My advice to young people would be do it, go into it, and go into it with an open mind. Not only do you get skills that help you for life, but you also get a qualification out of it. You’re learning and you get to earn as well, that’s one of the best parts about it. What I would say to my younger self is that you’re going to go on to do so many incredible things.