

# 'I just like to help people'

## Modest first-aid volunteer up for award

A YOUNG first-aider who devotes much of his time to helping others has been nominated for an award.

Brett O'Keeffe has been put forward by his classmates at Notley High School, in Notley Road, Braintree, for the Essex Police Young People of the Year competition, which recognises positive, young role models.

The 15-year-old, who lives in Queenborough Grove, Braintree, with his mum, Elizabeth, dad Steven and two brothers, spends hours every week volunteering as a first-aider.

Brett said he was "surprised" his friends George Armstrong and Matthew Davey nominated him, but added: "It was nice of them

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to do it."

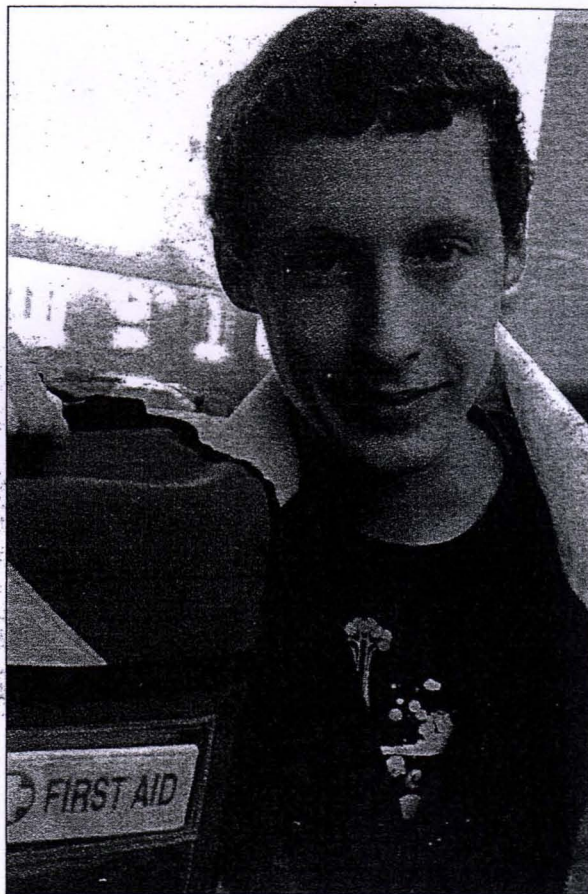
Mrs O'Keeffe said her son, who volunteers with St John Ambulance and Sporting 77 Football Club in Bocking, had always wanted to be a paramedic.

The 41-year-old, who is a teaching assistant at Notley Green Primary School in Braintree, said: "We are very proud of him.

"It's nice to have a teenager focused on something and who also knows what he wants to do in the future."

She said since Brett was about eight years old he wanted to be involved with St John Ambulance, and as a young child he enjoyed playing with toy ambulances.

Brett said he joined St



John Ambulance, which he has volunteered with for five years, to be a "step closer" to his dream of becoming a paramedic.

He said: "I just get a lot out of it. Just the satisfaction of helping somebody who is injured or in need. I just like doing it."

The teenager was surprised he was nominated for the award as volunteering three days a week was "normal" for him, but admitted not many young people did it.

George, 15, of Ludham Hall Lane, Great Notley, said: "No matter whether he is ill, he always goes there

and he is always speaking about it to us."

Inspector Kevin Whipp, head of the children and young people's policing team at Essex Police, said: "Brett is a really positive example to all of us."

■ To nominate a young person aged ten to 25 for the competition, or to enter yourself, visit [yopey.org](http://yopey.org) or write to Essex Police YOPEY, PO Box 103, Har Street, Ware, SG9 0XD, for an entry form.

Entries will close on January 31 and an awards ceremony will be held at the Radisson Hotel at Stansted Airport in March.