

Home-Start- why is Early Intervention so crucial

If parents can't cope, children suffer; the impact of which can last a lifetime. When children experience hardship and stress, or their emotional needs are not met in their early years, it can affect them for the rest of their lives. The troubled child of today often becomes the troubled adult of the future.

Home-Start's volunteer-led, Early Intervention approach often stops families reaching crisis point and needing costly statutory intervention.

From conception until the age of two, a child's life-chances are greatly affected by the way he/she has been parented. It's not impossible to improve the outcomes of a child's life (that's been affected by poverty, poor parental mental health, or neglect, for example), but why take the chance? Why risk the happiness and well-being of our future generations? Home-Start's core belief is to support a parent in becoming the best possible parent they can be for their child in the early days of parenting.

In an ideal world, a charity like Home-Start wouldn't be needed. All parents would be able to bring up their children in a happy and safe environment, free from the stresses and strains of family life. But for thousands of families across Greater Manchester, coping with issues such as poverty, poor mental health, isolation and lack of support networks means that these parents are struggling to parent their children.

And this is where Home-Start steps in...

By supporting parents in their own homes, right from the start, with a non-judgmental, needs-met approach, Home-Start and its volunteers are the frontline link to families reaching out and accepting help before their problems spiral out of control.

There is no such thing as a 'typical' Home-Start family. Each family and their needs are as diverse and broad-ranging as the communities in which they live.

We want to see investment in preventative services such as Home-Start. Many problematic situations that families have to deal with can be and should be addressed- long before a problem turns into a crisis.

Providing frontline family support for over 25 years in communities across Greater Manchester, Home-Start sees itself as a leader in Early Intervention. Many children supported by Home-Start have been removed from Child Protection Plans when Home-Start was involved with the family, many parents have improved their parenting skills, breaking that cycle of poor parenting.

Early Intervention is a proven, cost-effective delivery model. It can prevent crisis and family breakdown. It can protect both a vulnerable child and a parent that's suffering in silence. It paves the way for a mum or dad to parent their child in the best way they possibly can.

It's simple, if we don't invest in Early Intervention we are not investing in our children.

To find out more about our work, to support us or volunteer, please visit www.gmhomestarts.org.uk