

We're really excited to announce that after a year of planning, the seven Greater Manchester Home-Starts have come together to form an official consortium called Home-Start Greater Manchester.

The idea behind the consortium is that going into the future, every family across Greater Manchester, and who is struggling to cope, will have access to Home-Start support.

Called 'Telling Their Stories' we officially launched the new consortium, (funded by the Lottery) at an event held at The Lowry, Salford Quays on 3<sup>rd</sup> September. We had guests from across all sectors and industries, all there to find out more about our work, and how to champion our cause; from the Dept. Lord Lieutenant of Greater Manchester to academics from Manchester Metropolitan University.

Telling Their Stories saw the launch of a series of Home-Start photo essays, (showing the very special relationship between a Home-Start volunteer and their family) a short documentary highlighting the work our volunteers carry out in front line family support, and a new website specifically for Home-Start Greater Manchester.

On the night we also launched our very first fundraising appeal called FIND. (Families in Need Donations). Where people can pledge anywhere from £30 to fund one volunteer's visit to a family, up to £1,500 which will fund a volunteer in visiting a family for a whole year. Those regular readers of our column will know just how vital our volunteers are in offering emotional and practical support to parents who may be struggling from poor mental health, poverty, isolation or illness and disability. And how volunteering can also change the lives of our volunteers too.

We'd love as many people as possible to check out our new website, watch our new film and see whether they may be able to support us with our new FIND appeal.

You can do so by logging on to [www.gmhomestarts.org.uk](http://www.gmhomestarts.org.uk)