

## **Are you looking for a New Year resolution that could help change a child's life?**

More than ever before, families across Greater Manchester are turning to Home-Start for support. All seven of our local Home-Starts are seeing an increase in referrals, for a whole range of issues. From dealing with stress inside the home, isolation, poor mental health and financial worry.

Our volunteers, who have parenting experience themselves, provide a crucial support to so many families. For just two hours a week, practical and emotional support is offered to parents inside their own homes, this simple, but effective support can last a lifetime.

Once Christmas is over, and many of us will be looking for a new start in 2016, would you consider becoming a Home-Start volunteer? We offer full training before we match you to a local family, and we offer ongoing training and support and supervision as you go on your journey as a Home-Start volunteer.

*One volunteer who began volunteering for us in January last year, said: "So many of my friends were talking about New Year resolutions- giving up smoking, getting fit.... but I wanted to do something that would make a difference to another person, not just myself. I actually heard about Home-Start through this column, and I thought why not? I liked the fact you didn't need to be a professional, you actually used your own life skills and experiences to help another person. Almost a year on, and I have now supported my first family. It's just been wonderful, I feel so privileged to be on this mum's journey with her, through her ups and downs. The mum I leave now on a Tuesday afternoon, (when I visit her) is a mum who has a smile on her face, this was impossible just a few months back as she was suffering with really bad depression and low self esteem. This is just the most amazing outcome, and I never thought a year ago, I could be a person that would make a difference to someone else's life. I would urge anyone- male/female, young/old to become a volunteer for Home-Start. It doesn't just change another family's life, it changes yours too."*

If you have been inspired by what you have read, and would like to find out more about our training, what being a volunteer for Home-Start involves, and to find the Home-Start near to you, please visit [www.gmhomestarts.org.uk](http://www.gmhomestarts.org.uk)

On behalf of all seven Home-Starts across Greater Manchester, we'd like to wish you all a very Happy Christmas, and hope to hear from you in the New Year.

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