

# Charity is a lifeline for Manchester families

Home-Start needs more volunteers to help struggling parents

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Home-Start supports more than 500 families across Greater Manchester

A charity that provides a lifeline for families with young children is calling for volunteers to step forward and help struggling parents.

As part of National                      Week, which runs until June 7, Home-Start is urging people - whether parents or grandparents - to put their own experience to good use.

The next course for volunteers to enrol on starts next week and the charity is urgently seeking to fill the places.

One mum who benefited from the charity's help and is now a volunteer herself explained why the role is so important.

The mother, a victim of domestic abuse, said: "I suddenly found myself a single parent with

young children, vulnerable, emotionally low and isolated.

“Home-Start Trafford and Salford turned up at my door and I felt like I’d needed help and support for so long and at last it had come.

“My volunteer was so empathetic and really challenged my thinking and helped me emotionally cope with my current situation. I was lucky to have supportive family, however I found it hard to tell the people so close to me how I was thinking and feeling.

“My volunteer never judged me, and offered a listening ear and an encouraging voice.”

The mum, from Urmston, added: “The support I received from Home-Start allowed me to get my strength back and supported me on my down days and encouraged me on my good.

“I felt like I had a support system there if I needed it and it allowed me to become independent. My children thrived at school and gained in confidence.

“I think without Home-Start my life and my children’s life would have been very different, The six months of support was just what we needed to get us up and running.

“I feel like I have gone full circle from being a family needing help to now I’m that person that can offer that little bit of support to someone in my community.”



Kathryn Eckersley, manager of Home-Start Trafford and Salford

Kathryn Eckersley, manager of Home-Start Trafford and Salford, said the mum was now doing brilliantly in her role as a volunteer.

She said: “The family she is supporting absolutely love her.

“In her role as a Home-Start volunteer she has talked at an Early Help multi-agency conference in Trafford for us and described her own Home-Start support as ‘scaffolding’. She has truly been on a journey with Home-Start.”

More than 500 volunteers support 500 families and 1,700 children with seven Home-Starts across Greater Manchester in situations as diverse as poverty, poor mental health, disability and multiple births.

A Home-Start spokesperson said: “With your support we could reach out to even more local families who need us. We are not looking for people with specific qualifications, just parenting experience.”

Next week’s course will run on June 9, 11, 12, 16, 18 and 19 from 9.30am to 2.45pm at Irlam and Cadishead Leisure Centre, Liverpool Road, Irlam, M44 6BR.

Another course will run in September - on 21-23 and 28-30 - from 09.30am to 2.45pm at St Matthews Church Hall, Chapel Lane, Stretford, M32 9AJ.

To sign up contact Tracey on 0161 865 4222.

To find out more about volunteering for one of the other Home-Starts freephone 0800 068 63 68 or visit [\\_\\_\\_\\_\\_](#).

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