

Dear Sirs,

FOR PUBLICATION

'Stopping families from reaching crisis point across Greater Manchester'.

The current Channel 4 documentary series- '15,000 Kids & Counting' is doing a fantastic job of documenting the impact that poor parenting can have on young children, (many of whom end up in the care of the local authority). Today in the UK there are 15,000 children in care.

But please do not forget that across Greater Manchester there is a vital family support charity called Home-Start, working with almost 500 local families and nearly 1,000 children this year alone.

In an ideal world a charity like Home-Start wouldn't be needed. But for many parents the pressures of family life are simply too much to cope with alone. There are many reasons for this; isolation, poor mental health, no family support network...issues like these can affect a parent's ability to cope.

In some cases this vital charity supports families where serious issues mean that life could spiral out of control; a parent struggling with severe poverty, a drug or alcohol problem, risk of homelessness, domestic violence... the list is endless.

Home-Start volunteers visit families in their own homes, offering non-judgmental practical and emotional support, for any family going through a difficult time.

Our early intervention approach is cost-effective: By helping to prevent family breakdown, Home-Start can work with parents so that their children do not end up in the care of the local authority, meaning less children will end up being a child protection statistic.

We couldn't carry out this vital service without our volunteers. Home-Starts across Greater Manchester are running training for new volunteers this year, if you would like to help us to help more children across Greater Manchester, please visit the national website where you can search for a Home-Start local to you. www.home-start.org.uk

Sarah Petts, manger of Home-Start HOST
On behalf of the Home-Starts across Greater Manchester.