



NEWS RELEASE

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Calling all parents across Greater Manchester- could you spare a couple of hours a week to help a local family that will last a lifetime?

“Home-Start helped me turn my life around and gave me my self confidence back. To volunteer for Home-Start and to help get a family back on their feet is a wonderful experience.”

As part of **National Volunteers Week**, (1st-7th June) Home-Starts across Greater Manchester are appealing for new volunteers.

In an ideal world 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 so many reasons for this including; poverty, illness, family breakdowns and parental isolation.

And this is where Home-Start steps in... by recruiting and training local parent volunteers to offer emotional and practical support to families in their own homes. For just a couple of hours a week, your own parenting experience could make all the difference to a family that is struggling to cope.

National Volunteers Week celebrates all that's great about volunteering; the difference that volunteers make to their local communities, and the added social value they offer to society.

Home-Start volunteers provide vital early intervention support, often stopping a family from reaching crisis point. It sounds daunting, but it's not. Parent- to- parent support. A simple idea that really works and has done for the last forty years.

One mum supported by Home-Start said: *“My volunteer was the light at the end of a very dark tunnel. For just a couple of hours a week, I could be*

myself, let my guard down. She didn't judge me, she just listened. She was there for me, like no one else. The end result? A happier mum with happier children. I can't thank Home-Start and my volunteer enough."

In the last year alone, Home-Starts across Greater Manchester have supported nearly 500 families and almost 1,000 children.

But life is getting tougher for many families, and the demand for Home-Start support is at an all-time high. Home-Start needs more volunteers, and across the year, they will be running many training courses, preparing new volunteers before they are matched to their first family.

A spokesperson for Home-Start said: "To be a Home-Start volunteer all you need is parenting experience, empathy and a non-judgmental attitude. Our volunteers come from all walks of life and have many different life experiences. Volunteers are fully trained, receive regular ongoing support and will have the knowledge that they are making a real difference to a local family and that they are part of the biggest network of parent volunteers in the country."

If you are inspired by National Volunteers Week, and want to find out more, please contact your local Home-Start. Or visit the national website, where you can find your local Home-Start in Greater Manchester.

www.home-start.org.uk

-ENDS-

Notes to Editor

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Home-Start is the UK's leading family support charity. We recruit and train volunteers to support families in local communities. Our home visiting work is unique in the UK. The charity was set up in 1973 and now supports over 32,000 families and almost 70,000 children each year. Nearly 16,000 volunteers visit families in their own homes – parents supporting other parents in a variety of situations including isolation, bereavement, multiple births, poverty, illness or disability. www.home-start.org.uk