



News Release

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Home-Start calls for children to be prioritised

The seven Home-Starts across Greater Manchester are joining the Home-Start network in calling for all political parties to put children's lives at the heart of policy, through the launch of its *All Our Children* manifesto. Launched at a Westminster reception hosted by the charity's ambassador Alastair Stewart OBE, *All Our Children* has been shaped by the views of Home-Start's supported families, staff and volunteers.

Home-Start across Greater Manchester works with vulnerable parents and children who are socially excluded, living in isolation or facing multiple problems. These can include changes in circumstances, unreliable employment, gaps in benefit payments, poor physical and mental health and housing problems. These can all push families into crisis and when this happens, children suffer.

We want all our children to grow up with:

- **Safe places to live and play**
- **Support when their parents suffer from a mental illness**
- **Protection from hunger and poor nutrition**

A spokesperson on behalf of the seven Greater Manchester Home-Starts explains, "These really are basic needs but many children are not getting the support they deserve. Our manifesto shows why this is crucial and how we can all make it happen. With more than 40 years supporting families, Home-Start knows that small steps are often the most lasting. What we are proposing will make a real, immediate difference to the lives of children."

A recent survey of local Home-Starts revealed that more than 70% believed children in the families they work with are not supported by health and social services when their parents suffer from mental illness. 76% said they work with families whose children are not protected from food poverty and 81% support families where the children do not have safe places to live and play.

The practical solutions offered in this manifesto will enable local people to support vulnerable families more effectively.

-ENDS-

Note to Editors:

- Manifesto available on the Home-Start website at www.home-start.org.uk/HSmanifesto
- Please use #allourchildren in social media mentions and @homestartuk on Facebook/Twitter @GMHomeStarts
- View Storystream of support www.home-start.org.uk/allourchildren
- Interviews are available with spokespeople from one of the seven Greater Manchester Home-Starts.

There are seven Home-Starts supporting families across Greater Manchester. They are-

Home-Start Bury

Home-Start Bolton

Home- Start HOST (Oldham, Tameside & Stockport)

Home-Start Manchester North

Home-Start Manchester South

Home-Start Rochdale

Home-Start Trafford & Salford

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

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