



**NATIONAL
LOTTERY FUNDED**



**Support and friendship
for families**

PRESS RELEASE

ISSUED: 8th January 2019

Urgent call for volunteers as almost £50,000 of Lottery funding is secured by local family support charity to develop a vital service in Wigan and Leigh

For almost 20 years Home-Start Trafford and Salford has been providing frontline support to families who are struggling to cope across the two local authority areas, now thanks to a grant from the Lottery, families living in Wigan and Leigh will soon be able to access help. The remaining £100,000 of Lottery funding will be used to sustain the Home-Start service across Trafford and Salford.

Home-Start works in local communities, recruiting and training volunteers to offer emotional and practical support to local parents and their children who are facing difficult life circumstances. This can be for a range of reasons, including- poverty, poor mental health, illness and disability and isolation.

Locally trained volunteers visit families in their own homes for just a couple of hours each week, providing tailor-made support, and empowering parents to make positive change through a confidential and non- judgemental approach

Home-Start's approach is to support families before they reach crisis point and life events spiral out of control. By working with families in this way, Home-Start helps families to build better futures for their children.

When asked if Home-Start Trafford and Salford has made a difference, one mum said: *"A massive difference, it was a life line given to me, just having a friendly, non-judgmental happy person seeing you on a weekly basis was great. I was so isolated, I had no family or friends in the area."* When asked if she had not received support from Home- Start, where she would be now, she said: *"I think I would have ended up in the mental health unit or hospital."*

There are six Home-Starts working with families across Greater Manchester, and with Home-Start Trafford and Salford soon to be operating in Wigan and Leigh, this means that every local authority area of Greater Manchester will have a much-needed Home-Start service.

Kathryn Eckersley, Manager of Home-Start Trafford and Salford said: “We are delighted with this news, to secure funding from the Lottery is a ringing endorsement of the high- quality support we offer to families. We will be accepting referrals for support from 1st April- families can refer themselves to Home-Start and we also accept referrals from professionals working in health, education and family support services.

Kathryn continued: “Before we can accept referrals we have to have our volunteers in place, so we are going to be recruiting for volunteers immediately as we will be running our first training course in Leigh in February.”

Volunteers need to have parenting experience and be able to offer 2-3 hours of support a week. Full training is provided with ongoing support and supervision. Home-Start volunteers come from all walks of life and all backgrounds. Some volunteers use their Home-Start experience to enhance their career prospects or further education, and other volunteers volunteer for Home-Start after they have retired and want to give something back to the community.

One volunteer who is already volunteering for Home-Start Trafford and Salford said: *“It’s great training which enables you to work with families – feel good factor helping others achieve their next steps, and a real confidence booster.”*

Last year, Home-Start Trafford and Salford’s 150 volunteers supported 219 families and since the service began in 1999, 1,818 families have received help.

The first volunteer training course will start on February 27th and run across to March. It will take place at Higher Folds Community Centre, Stirling Close, Leigh, WN7 2UB

To find out more about becoming a Home-Start volunteer, please email admin@hsts.org.uk or call 0161 8654222. More information about Home-Start can be found by visiting www.hsts.org.uk

-ENDS-

Notes to Editor-

For interviews, case studies and spokespeople please contact:

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Home-Start recruits and trains local volunteers to offer emotional and practical support to families in their own homes. Supporting families with a range of difficulties and issues from poor mental health and post- natal illness to poverty, domestic abuse and illness and disability. There are six Home-Starts working across Greater Manchester. They are: Home-Start Bury, Home-Start Bolton, Home-Start Manchester, Home-Start Oldham, Stockport & Tameside, Home-Start Rochdale, Home-Start Trafford, Salford and Wigan.