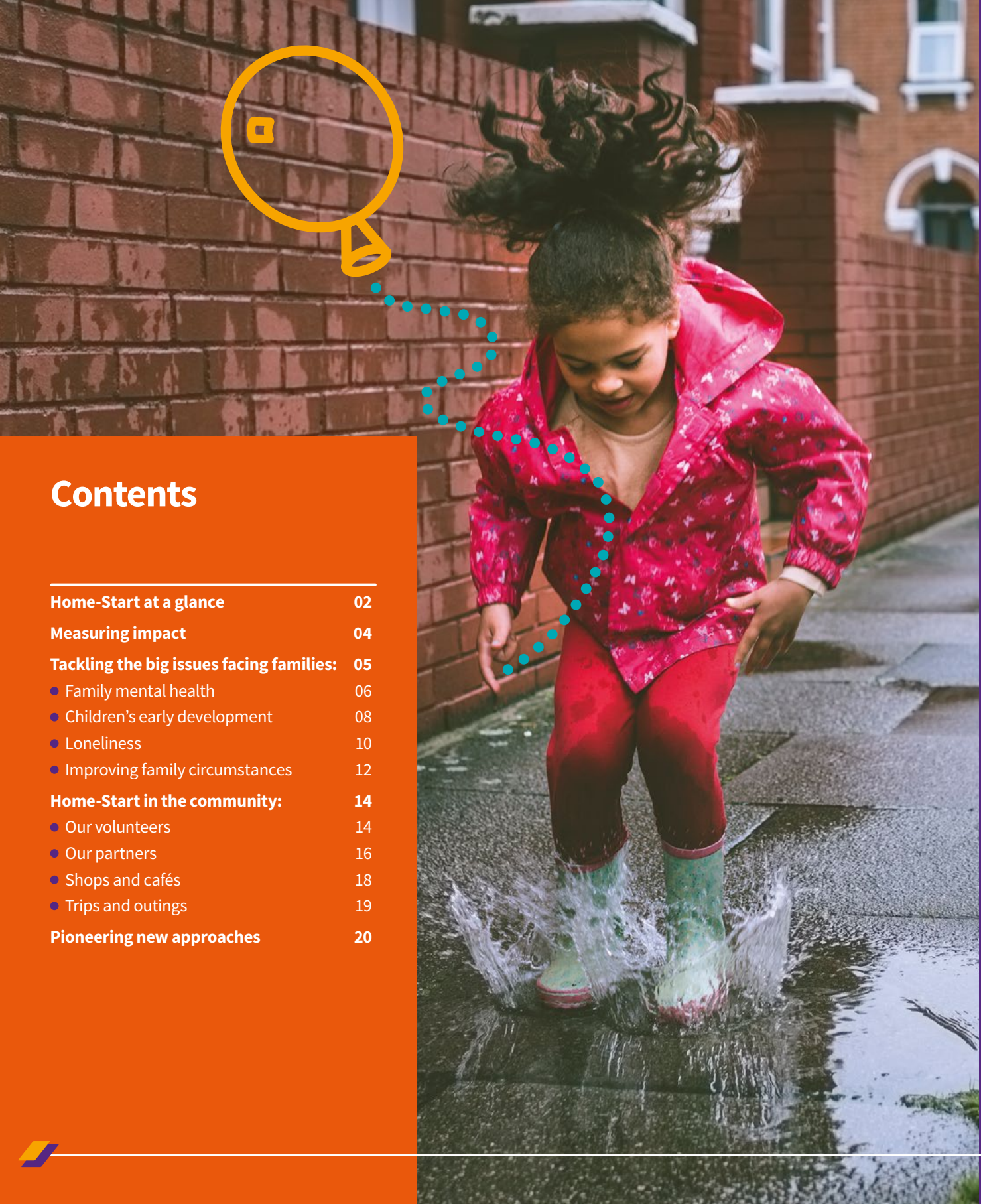




**Because
childhood
can't wait**



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INTRODUCTION

Today and every day, in communities up and down the UK, Home-Start is offering volunteer led parent-parent support working alongside families, helping them to change their lives for the better.

Home-Start measures the impact and effectiveness of our work for every family we see. We use these insights to ensure we're making a lasting difference for all the children and families we support.

This report tells the stories of some of those families and celebrates the impact we have made over the last year¹.

We're proud that we're able to show, using an evidence based approach, the successes we've had and the impact of our work on the lives of families across the UK.

We hope that you enjoy reading our 2019 Impact Report and that you'll continue to support us in the future so that no child's future is limited.

Rob Parkinson

Home-Start UK, Chief Executive

¹All figures based on data collected from the records of 20,000 families in 2017/18

Home-Start at a glance

Income

£30.8m

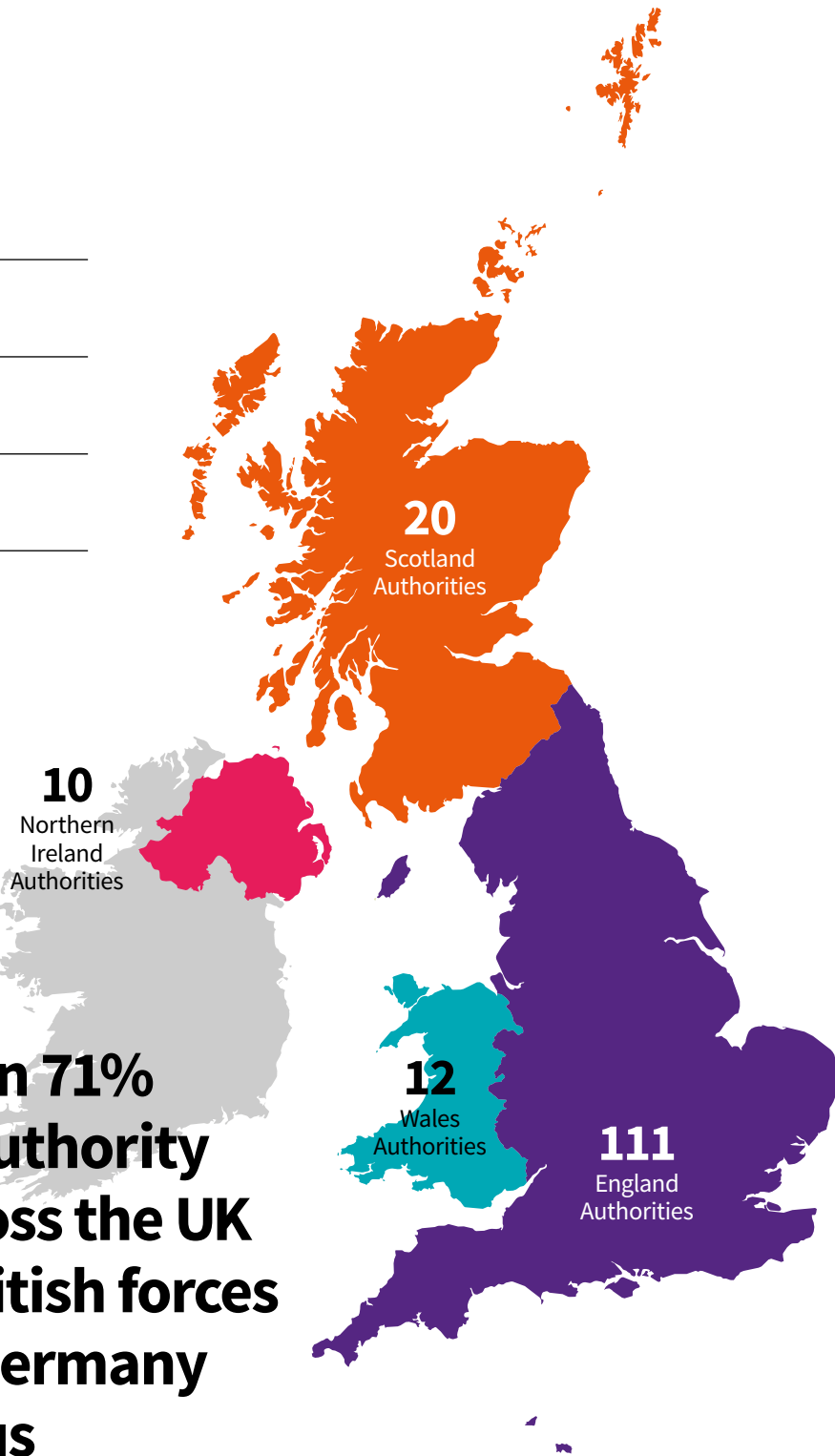
Network income

£2.7m

Home-Start UK income

£33.5m

Total income



We work in 71% of Local Authority areas across the UK and on British forces bases in Germany and Cyprus

HOME-START IN NUMBERS

27,000+

families supported

1,700

trustees

56,000

children supported

233,000

hours of volunteer support

13,500

family support volunteers

£2.1million²

worth of volunteer time



²Real living wage calculation

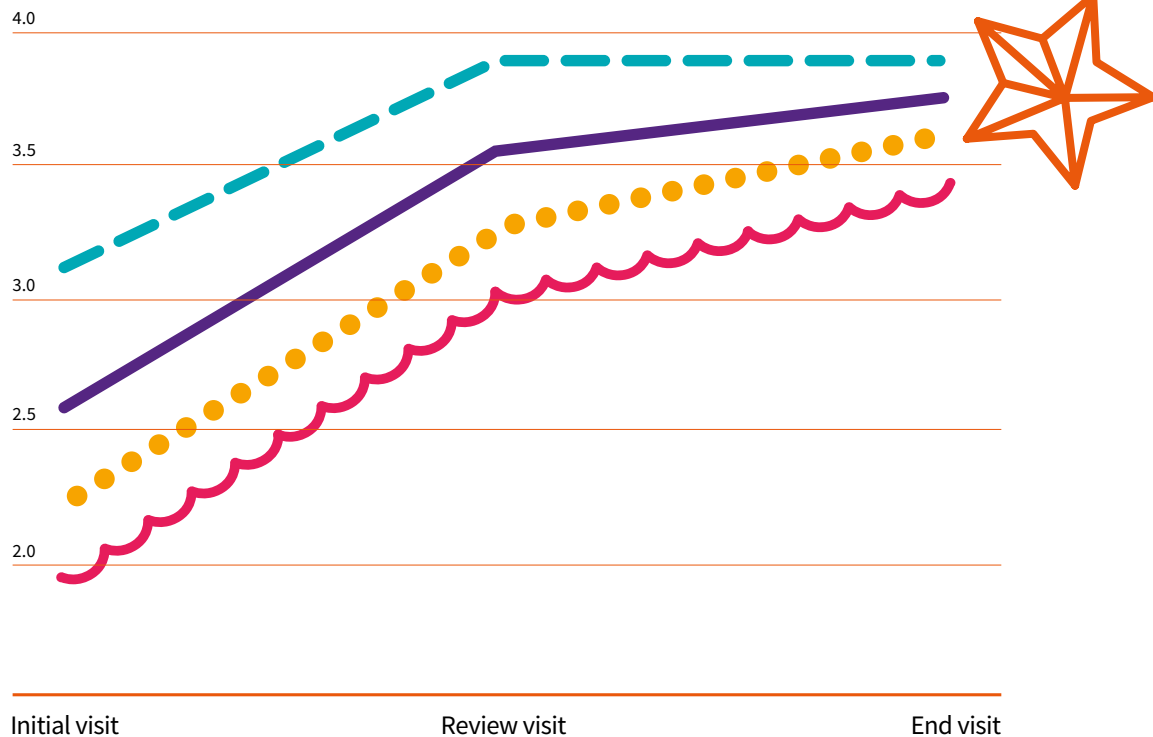
Measuring impact

Home-Start measures each family's progress across four key areas:

We measure where a family is on a coping scale of 0–5 at the start, mid-way through and at the end of their support.

The chart below shows the overall progress for families in 2018.

Coping scores and journey of change



Children's well-being

Family management

Parenting skills

Parenting well-being

Tackling the big issues facing families

Becoming a parent is a joyful but sometimes overwhelming time and it becomes even harder when you are facing additional challenges such as mental health difficulties, financial pressures, loneliness, language and cultural barriers, or a lack of support networks.

We're tackling some of the big issues facing families today. More parents than ever are coming to us because they're struggling with:

Mental health and wellbeing



59% of families helped (up 4% in the last four years)

Loneliness and isolation



59% of families helped (up 3% in the last four years)

Building supportive, nurturing, loving relationships with their children



42% of families helped (up 3% in the last four years)

Facing money worries and financial pressure



26% of families helped (up 3% in the last four years)

An independent study by Cardiff University³ – one of the largest studies of family support of its kind – showed that completing Home-Start support resulted in high rates of improvement among the most stressed families, including:

96% of those facing isolation

94% of those experiencing low self-esteem

95% of those coping with mental health issues

The research also showed that the more frequently visits occurred, the faster families improved.

Children supported by our **Big Hopes Big Future**[®] programme show an improvement of between 25% and 33% in their school readiness across all four developmental areas⁴:

Language skills

e.g. speaking clearly, recognising their name

Daily living skills

e.g. able to use scissors, or toilet training

Cognitive skills

e.g. regular book-sharing at home

Behaviour

e.g. waiting patiently, sharing

The greatest impact is for children in families with the highest needs including those whose parents had mental health problems and are facing complex and multiple disadvantage.

³Dr Nell Warner, Cardiff University, published in 2019: analysis based on data set of 10000 families supported by Home-Start 2013-15

⁴University of Cambridge and using their Brief Early Skills and Support Index (BESSI)

Family mental health



1 in 4
families had concerns about their children's mental health

Mental health problems are common during pregnancy and in the months after the birth. Both mums and dads can be affected. More than 1.6 million children, including 470,000 children under the age of five, are living with a parent who has mental health difficulties.⁵

For many new parents struggling with mental illness it's a frightening and stressful time. Over 93% of the parents we work with are trying to cope with a range of mental health difficulties including post-natal depression, isolation and anxiety

Home-Start is there for these parents when they need us most, providing emotional support and practical help, helping to build their confidence and self-esteem and connecting them with other specialist local services where needed.

93%
of families see improvements in parent's mental health

3 in 5
families see improvements in their self esteem

89%
see improvements in stress caused by family conflict

ANDREA'S STORY

For Andrea and her family living off the army base in Germany, with seven children and no friends or family nearby, felt not just isolating, but overwhelming.

"I'd had a traumatic birth with my daughter Katy, only to find out, three months later, we had another baby on the way. We were already overstretched mentally, physically and emotionally. My husband was off work with stress and mental health issues, and I was finding it hard to manage at home.

The support from Home-Start didn't just help our family situation, it saved my sanity – I don't know what I would have done without them. My husband feels the same. With my physical health deteriorating as the pregnancy progressed, I reached a point where I was not able to look after

the children. Home-Start filled this gap, contacting us every week to see if we needed anything. They'd take us shopping, do the Hoovering, put the washing on and bring us to groups where they would entertain the children, so we could relax and chat to other parents.

Home-Start gave us advice on how we could manage the behaviour of the children. They helped me understand how to listen to them, and be there for them emotionally. If I needed additional help, or my husband was away, they'd always be there. That support kept us going. It became even more vital in the days after Zoe was born, when I was diagnosed with a brain tumour. If it hadn't been for Home-Start, we would have lost all hope.

Life feels much more organised and calmer now. We have a good routine in place. I've finished radiation therapy, and feel so much better. We are looking forward to growing together as a family. I will never forget the compassion Home-Start showed us. Every time I think of them, I smile."

"If it hadn't been for Home-Start, we would have lost all hope... Every time I think of them, I smile."

Andrea, mum of seven



⁵ Children's Commissioner Vulnerability Report 2018

Children's early development



94%
of families are more involved in their children's development

A child's earliest years are irreplaceable. Without a stable, loving and nurturing environment a child will not develop the foundations they need. A positive home-learning environment is key to a child's early development including their ability to learn, their confidence, or even some of the most basic things like being able to go to the toilet by themselves.

Our new **HomeTalk** programme, developed in partnership with the LENA Foundation, is helping parents unlock their children's social, emotional, and cognitive potential by increasing interactive talk – a key factor in early brain development.

A University of Newcastle⁶ evaluation of the HomeTalk pilot, published in 2018, found that;

- the quality and quantity of stimulation and support available to the child increased
- the parents' perception of their child's development improved
- the amount parents spoke to their children increased.

94%
of families see improvements in their children's physical development

25%-33%
improvement in school readiness for children supported by our Big Hopes Big Future[®] programme

AGATHA'S STORY

Agatha Phiri is an asylum seeker from Malawi. Living alone with her baby, Agatha felt isolated, with no family or friends for support.

"My daughter, Elizabeth, was born premature at 23 weeks, weighing just 580g. Just before we were discharged from hospital the Home Office moved me to a new address. Alone, with no family or friends, I felt so lonely. I was a single mum, finally home with my baby, and I didn't know what to do. My midwife suggested Home-Start could help.

I was deeply worried about Elizabeth's development. My Home-Start co-ordinator Laura, explained the importance of talking to Elizabeth and that I should aim to speak around 2,000 words a day to her. Laura suggested we tried Home-Start Oldham, Stockport and Tameside's HomeTalk project.

Elizabeth was given a word pedometer device to wear to count how many words she heard and a Home-Start volunteer would visit us every week. The more I talked to Elizabeth, the more active she got. Before I started the project, I didn't realise how I should be interacting with my child.

Now, when my daughter is around, I hardly touch my phone. Thanks to Home-Start, after a difficult start, we are fully bonded. Elizabeth started school last September and is doing great. I strongly believe this is due to our participation in HomeTalk. With help, I have become the mum she deserves."

Our **Video Interactive Guidance** activity, developed with Home-Start Glasgow North and funded by the Brook Trust, is using coaching and video feedback to help parents build sensitive, nurturing relationships with their children.

DIONNE'S STORY

"After a minute, I forgot Connor and I were being filmed. Watching the film back was the first time I really reflected on myself as a mum. It also made me recognise the positive aspects in our interactions. You could see how much Connor enjoyed my attention. And how much he looked at me for encouragement.

Watching how much Connor enjoyed me playing with him made me realise how important it is to spend quality time together. The video project was really eye-opening. I learned not to doubt myself as a parent, to look at how I react to my child, and how I can make our interactions better.

You don't get your time back with your kids. My ability to give my children what they need is stronger than ever. You don't realise how much support means until you are in a situation that needs it."

⁶Law, Charlton & Rush. (July 2018). Home-Start Early Speech and Language Study. Phase 1 evaluation report. Newcastle University

Loneliness



94% of families feel less isolated

Having a baby changes your life in many ways. For some new parents it can be a really lonely time, especially for younger mums when they don't have networks of support around them.

Four-out-of-five mums under 30 feel lonely some of the time while more than four-in-ten are lonely often or always⁷.

In 2018, we worked with British Red Cross and the Co-op to set up 13 new young mums groups around the country, helping young parents to gather, meet, talk and create their own support networks.

Interim results show that two-in-three of the mums supported have lower loneliness scores than when they joined the groups⁸.

2 in 3

attending young mums groups have lower loneliness scores than when they joined⁸

59%

of all families supported were lonely and isolated

96%

of families facing isolation saw improvements

SHELBY'S STORY

Shelby was 17 when she had her daughter. The only one of her friends with a baby, Shelby felt isolated and alone. Attending Home-Start Croydon's Boost project especially for young mums reduced her feelings of isolation and gave her the confidence to start thinking about her future.

"I was 17 when I found out I was pregnant. It was a total shock. At the time I was at college doing a course in health and social care. I was so scared and just didn't know what would happen to my life.

When Nailah was born I felt quite isolated. Not many people I knew had a baby at 17, and my college friends were going out and spending money on clothes – something I could no longer do. It was hard for my friends to understand what I was going through as they had no knowledge of babies.

My key worker introduced me to Boost, a class run by Home-Start for young mums. I met Katie, who ran the class and was excited to meet the other mums. Having people you can relate to makes such a difference. It really helped to reduce how isolated I had felt.

Katie has helped me find my way as a mum. Initially, I was too scared to breastfeed Nailah in public, so I'd always bring a bottle. Katie showed me how I could feed discreetly and that it was okay to do so. Attending Boost helped me bond with Nailah and, with Katie's support, helped me to be a better mum.

Now that we have a routine and everything is settled, I'm focused on my future. I'm going back to college in September and want to become a midwife. I want to build the best life for Nailah and me."

"Having people you can relate to makes a difference. It really helped reduce how isolated I had felt."

Shelby, mum of Nailah

⁷ Trapped in a Bubble, Co-op/Kantar Public, 2016

⁸ Measured using UCLA Loneliness Scale

Improving family circumstances



93%
of families feel more able to run the family home

Financial hardship in a child's early years has lifelong consequences. Children from the worst-off families are twice as likely to fall behind in their early learning and development and many never catch up.

Poverty is a trap that can feel impossible to escape. Low paid work, a weakening support system and high housing costs mean that over 6 million families across the UK are struggling to make ends meet⁹. More than one-in-three children in families with under-fives are now growing up on the lowest incomes¹⁰.

⁹Resolution Foundation

¹⁰DWP Households below average income: 1994/95 to 2016/17

94%

of families use other local services more

91%

of families feel more able to manage the household budget

ANNE-MARIE'S STORY

Our volunteers encourage families to get out and about and reconnect with their communities and the services available to them.

Here, Anne-Marie describes the impact on her and her family of the support she had from Home-Start West Lothian.

"I was stuck in a two bed house with my partner and four kids. It was putting us under a huge strain, both mentally and physically. We shared a bedroom with our youngest two and no one had any privacy. The kids would fight all the time. We weren't living, we were just existing.

At first I felt nervous. I was embarrassed of the house and how we were living. I hated the thought of someone coming into all the mess and clutter. Soon, I really started to look forward to the weekly visits.

My volunteer would take me out shopping or we'd go for a coffee. To be out of the house and away from the kids helped enormously. Spending this time with the volunteer made me realise I didn't want to just exist anymore, I wanted to start living.

Home-Start has done so much for my family. They helped us with the food bank, attended meetings with the Council to get rehoused and provided us with a school uniform for my daughter.

The kids are so much happier and more relaxed. Home-Start opened doors for me. Finally, after all this time, I think I am just starting to live."

More than two thirds of children living in poverty are in families where at least one parent is working¹¹. Yet working families are often hidden from support services, and deprived of vital support.

Helping Working Families is a Home-Start National Lottery Community Fund programme in Wales, designed to support working families living in poverty.

Home-Starts across Wales are working alongside families to identify the level and type of support needed to help them improve their financial situation. The funding has allowed Home-Start to work closely with families for up to a year, to identify the kind of support they want delivered in future years. This approach ensures that families will be using their own experiences to shape the kind of support they will receive. The project will run until November 2022.



¹¹DWP Households below average income: 1994/95 to 2016/17

Our volunteers

Our local community network of trained volunteers and expert support helps families with young children through their challenging times. Our volunteers offer no judgement, just compassionate, confidential help and support as individual as the people they're helping.



1 in 9

volunteers have previously received Home-Start support themselves¹²



329

volunteers had their volunteer training accredited via CERTA

13,500

family support volunteers

233,000

hours of volunteer support worth £2.1m¹³

1,700

trustees

Volunteering for Home-Start is also good for the people who do it, boosting not only their health and wellbeing, confidence and self-esteem, but building their skills and offering those who want it a route into employment. One-in-every-nine volunteers has received Home-Start support and for them volunteering is a direct and very practical way to give back to the service and community that helped them.

LOUISE'S STORY

Louise, is a volunteer with Home-Start Cardiff and knows what it is like to be on the receiving end of Home-Start support. Following a family crisis, Louise credits Home-Start with helping her to rebuild her life. Now, in a much better place, Louise is focused on giving back, by helping families move on from their own challenges.

"I know what it's like to feel your family is falling apart. To feel overwhelmed, to struggle with mental illness and not see a way out of the fog. Before Home-Start I was in total despair and felt like there was nothing left. Home-Start supported me to get back to the mum I was, before a devastating family breakdown changed everything.

With all I've gone through, I could have put myself into a downwards spiral. I didn't. I've turned it into a way to help others. It has changed my whole life. It has helped me become the person I am now."

Volunteering can be the key to becoming and remaining happy, healthy and confident and for many of our volunteers it opens up new opportunities and sets them on the path to further training and work.

CHRISTINA'S STORY

For Christina, volunteering with Home-Start Craigavon has given her a new focus and opened up new opportunities for the future.

"Before I started volunteering, I went through a very bad time. I was struggling with my mental health and had poor self-esteem. Volunteering made me feel useful and gave me a purpose. Thanks to volunteering at Home-Start, I have progressed from working part-time, to being able to buy a car, to working full-time in an interesting and fulfilling role. For that I am very grateful."

¹²New volunteerism in Scotland with Home-Start: June 2016

¹³Real living wage calculation

Our partners

Home-Start works in partnership with a wide range of local and national partner organisations, to tackle the issues together that are important to families and communities.

We receive referrals from health visitors, GPs, social care and child care practitioners as well as those involved in mental health services, education, early years and probation.

“Many families have complex needs and require one-on-one support to help them work their way out of the difficult circumstances they are in. Having the ability to refer appropriate families to Home-Start enables us to manage the very high number of referrals we receive. We only have six support workers, but have a potential case load of over 2,000 families. We have between 45 minutes to an hour for a home visit. In contrast, Home-Start visits can be very flexible and adapted to the families’ needs.”

Health Visitor

Over 1 in 3
families refer themselves to our service. Other referrals come from community partners:



3,000

families had children in high risk groups

2,888

families affected by domestic violence

In 2018, over 3,000 of the families we supported had children in high risk groups, with severe and well established difficulties and in some cases already in the care of the local authority.

ALEXANDER'S STORY

Alexander (Eck to his friends), is a dad of five. Separated from his partner, Eck received Home-Start support to help him get ready for his three-year-old son William's return from foster care to his new home.

“Due to issues with my ex-partner, my daughter Carly was placed with me. Sadly, my youngest William, three, was placed in foster care, where he spent a year. William has a number of health conditions. He is also a very fussy eater and food can be an issue with him.

Home-Start helped me to get ready for William returning and to focus on being the best dad I can be. Every Monday, I'd get a Home-Start visit. They'd help me to understand letters, or to put things in place for when William moved home. The help from Home-Start has put me in a much better position to give William a solid home life.

Home-Start helped me build a home. William is a keen determined little boy with a cheeky little smile. My family is in a happy place. We are surrounded by horses and I've made a vegetable plot where William will be able pick his own fruit, like I used to do as a child. I feel brilliant right now.”

Lesley Michaelis, chair of Home-Start Slough describes how their early intervention project, developed in partnership with Slough Children's Trust has reduced the number of children being re-referred to Slough Children's Services.

“With funding from The Sylvia Adams Charitable Trust and Slough Children's Trust (social services) we started a pilot project to provide early intervention help to families with children aged 0–3, to prevent statutory intervention further down the line. The Trust was experiencing very high re-referral rates from social services (27%), especially in areas of high deprivation.

Our volunteers spent time with the parents, helping them with parenting skills and supporting them on a wide range of issues. It was done in a very positive, relationship-focused way, rather than ‘telling’ or ‘advising’ parents what they should do.

Families were prevented from reaching crisis situations. Many were stopped from being escalated to child protection status. Two years in, only 7% of the families that Home-Start has supported have been re-referred¹⁴.”

¹⁴ Evaluation of the Home-Start Slough Early Intervention to Prevent Statutory Intervention in 0-3-year-olds project: Bernstock et al, University of London, 2019

Shops and cafés

11

Home-Start shops
around the country



Manager, Louise Wallace at Home-Start North Down has created a welcoming café for families in a new community hub in Bangor.

The new café is open to the public and provides a space for children to play. A small shop sells children's clothes and baby equipment, while the back of the café provides a specially designed private area for family group activities. There is also a food share table, where Home-Start families can help themselves to whatever they need. Upstairs provides space for staff and volunteers, including a dedicated place for volunteer training.



There are now 11 Home-Start shops around the country and a number of new community cafés like this one in Bangor opening up. They not only provide much needed income, but also a welcoming space for local communities to meet, chat and come together.

Trips and outings

Many of the families we work with never get the chance for a break. Time together as a family away from the day-to-day stresses at home can create precious memories, strengthen bonds and help families develop a new sense of optimism.

Pam Hoyle, manager at Home-Start Wrexham shares how a meeting with the National Trust led to a successful collaboration, set to benefit many Home-Start families.

"In July, we took five families camping in the grounds of the National Trust's Chirk Castle. It was a stunning setting. The children were in awe and made memories that will stay with them forever.

Over the course of the three days you could see the huge benefit of parents spending quality time with their children. One mum turned up on the Friday night very stressed with her four energetic boys. During the weekend, watching her relax and actually enjoy spending time with her children was wonderful. Because she wasn't so stressed, she was able to notice when her children were being funny or kind, and was able to praise them.

It might seem like an unusual collaboration, but it's working really well. Importantly it's giving our families quality time together which they wouldn't have without it."

58%
of local Home-Starts
run trips and outings
for families



Pioneering new approaches

Today, over 45 years since Home-Start began, Home-Start UK continues to look to new ideas, new thinking and new technologies to help it respond to the challenges that families and local Home-Starts are facing today.

Thank you to all the funders and supporters including the Scottish and Northern Ireland Governments, NESTA and the National Lottery Community Fund, together with all the trusts and foundations, companies and individuals who have supported our work so generously over the last year.



Home-Starts are developing a range of models to expand their services into new areas including expansion from existing sites such as into Inverclyde (from Home-Start Renfrewshire) and into Islington (from Home-Start Camden)



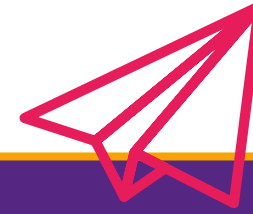
Our **HomeTalk** programme, is now being delivered in five sites across England, with a University of Newcastle led randomised control trial planned for summer 2019.



A **refreshed brand** is reflecting our work today and providing us with a platform on which to grow our influence, and attract more funding and support.



New partnerships with the Royal British Legion and Army Central Fund are providing support to returning army families as they move back to the UK from their current bases in Germany.



A new **intranet**, launched in spring 2019, will build greater communication and collaboration across our network.



A new **'Power Up'** programme, funded by the National Lottery Community Fund is supporting local Home-Starts to become even more sustainable and has allowed us to establish a new leadership programme for our network.



A new **Good Ideas Fund** is providing funding and support for great local ideas to scale across the network.

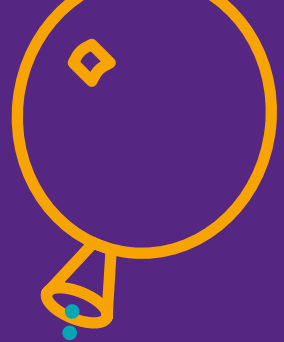


Our **Big Hopes Big Future**® programme is helping parents build supportive home learning environments for their children so they can be ready for their first day at school.

Thank you for taking the time to read our 2019 Impact Report.

We've achieved a lot over the last year, but we won't stop there. Childhood can't wait. Families are facing more pressures than ever before and many of the safety nets they've often relied on are no longer in place. Home-Start needs to ensure we're able to respond not only today but for many years to come.

Families and volunteers have always been the motivation and inspiration for our work and they will continue to shape our work as we work tirelessly to be there for them through their most challenging times.



WHAT WE DO

A child's earliest years are irreplaceable. Without a stable, loving and nurturing environment, a very young child will not develop the vital foundations they need.

Home-Start is there for parents when they need us the most, because childhood can't wait.

Our local community network of trained volunteers and expert support helps families with young children through their challenging times.

GET IN TOUCH

0116 464 5490

info@home-start.org.uk

home-start.org.uk

WHY WE DO IT

The earliest years make the biggest impact. Home-Start makes sure those years count so that no child's future is limited.

HOW WE DO IT

Home-Start offers no judgement, just compassionate, confidential help and support.

Starting in the home, our approach is as individual as the people we're helping.

We share local expertise to help drive national and regional change for families.

