

Supporting vulnerable families in Crawley, Horsham & Mid Sussex



Crawley, Horsham &
Mid-Sussex

Home-Start CHAMS has been supporting local families for 20 years.

At the heart of our organisation is a team of highly trained parent volunteers. They give support and friendship to families with young children, who are facing challenges including disability, mental health issues, bereavement, poverty and isolation. Our aim is to give young children the best possible start in life.

Home Visiting Support

Every week, trained and supervised volunteers visit families with young children, within the family home. They help parents overcome the challenges they face and support young children's early learning.

Twiglets Family Groups

We run weekly, term-time groups for families with multiple birth children, in Crawley and Horsham. Activities include messy play, singing and snack time. Volunteers provide a spare pair of hands for parents.

Volunteer Training

Home-Start volunteers have the opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills through our comprehensive training programme, including first aid, child safeguarding, early attachment and school readiness.

Sara's Story

Sara, aged 2, was living in a small, cluttered, one bedroom flat with her Mum and Dad. There was little space for her to play and a speech delay meant she could only make sounds, rather than clear words. Due to a poor diet and missed meals she was underweight for her age. Sara's Mum, Lydia was struggling with mental health issues, but due to pregnancy was unable to take her medication. The family situation reached crisis point when Lydia left Sara at home on her own. The family were allocated a social worker and Sara was at risk of being taken into care.

Following a referral to Home-Start CHAMS for extra support, parent volunteer Helen began weekly visits to the family. Helen worked with Sara's parents to declutter their living area and make space for Sara to play. She explained how play helps children's early development and introduced games and activities for Sara. Helen particularly focussed on reading and singing to help develop Sara's speech. Helen also encouraged Lydia to begin cooking activities with Sara and explained the benefits of good nutrition for young children. With Helen's support, Sara and Lydia enjoyed baking simple recipes and preparing healthy snacks together.

After 9 months, Helen was able to leave the family knowing their situation had transformed. Lydia's mental health had greatly improved with medication. Sara was enjoying regular story time, games and meals with her Mum. She could now sit and concentrate on play activities, and her speech had greatly improved. Sara was ready to start nursery with confidence, and she has a brighter future ahead.

Our Impact 2017/18

Brighter futures for local children

Last year we gave **313** children in **134** families a brighter future, with our team **59** volunteers, supported by **7** staff members.

Parents told us that after our support:

They felt
less isolated

91%



They were more
involved in their
child's development

95%



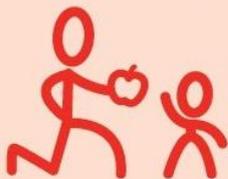
They felt better able to
manage their child's
behaviour

90%



Their children's
emotional health and
wellbeing had
improved

79%



Their own emotional
health and wellbeing
had improved

88%



Their self-esteem had
improved

100%



"Home-Start CHAMS were excellent. I would definitely recommend them. Things are much calmer and more organised now, and the children respond and listen better."

*Quote from a recently supported family.

In 2018 Home-Start CHAMS are celebrating our 20th birthday. Our birthday wish is to be able to support every child and family that comes to us for help.

Please support us by making a donation, volunteering or attending our events.

www.homestartchams.org.uk