

Supporting vulnerable families in Crawley, Horsham & Mid Sussex



Crawley, Horsham
& Mid-Sussex

Home-Start CHAMS has been supporting local families for 22 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 vulnerable 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.

Group Support

91 families accessed our support groups for; parents under 25 facing isolation, families with multiple birth children, a new group on an isolated local estate with no community facilities. Activities include messy play, singing and snack time.

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.

Gillian, who was living in cramped conditions with teenage children and a 4-year-old, was struggling with chronic illness, pain and fatigue, alongside heavy depression.

Largely housebound, with most days spent on the sofa in a darkened flat. She was finding it almost impossible to cope with the behaviour of her active four-year-old who she felt was 'out of control'. She rarely took him out of the home and said she felt like a failure and was unable to cope. Noah entertained himself with no routine in his day and was displaying a number of negative behaviours such as hitting, throwing and jumping on furniture.

The Co-ordinator identified that Mum's mental and physical health had resulted in several gaps in Noah's overall development.

Once placed with the family, the volunteer offered consistent and gentle encouragement, and identified activities for the family to do throughout the week that allowed interaction and a building of a healthy relationship within Gillian's physical capabilities, while encouraging Gillian to participate.

Routines were established around eating, bedtime, storybooks and singing times. Meal plans and recipe cards were provided to encourage the older siblings to complete tasks to free-up Gillian's energy for other activities. Gillian said that she was enjoying playing with her son and was thrilled when nursery reported a marked improvement in his learning and communication and was happy he would now transition to school with confidence.

Noah's challenging behaviours all but vanished with this positive attention from Gillian who had joined the local library and Children's Centre alongside being signposted to Time to Talk counselling service.

'Gillian' said, "I just want to thank you so much for everything you have done for me and my family. I really appreciate it and I will never forget. You have been amazing with Noah and you have helped him grow and learn, you are a part of my family now. I will never forget your support and understanding of everything."

* Written up from a Home-Start CHAMS supported family case. Names have been changed

Our Impact 2019/20

Brighter futures for local children

Last year we gave **328** children in **154** families a brighter future, with our team of **54** volunteers, supported by **8** staff members.

Parents told us that after our support:

They felt
less isolated

93%



They were more
involved in their
child's development

91%



They felt better able to
manage their child's
behaviour

87%



Their children's
emotional health and
wellbeing had
improved

93%



Their own emotional
health and wellbeing
had improved

91%



Their self-esteem had
improved

86%



"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.

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

www.homestartchams.org.uk