



Stakeholder Newsletter – April 2021

Our Mission:

To be there for parents when they need us most

Our Vision:

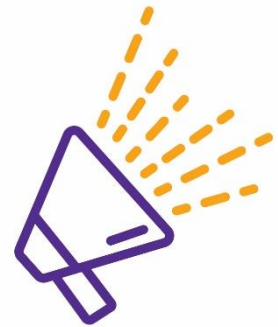
Supporting parents to create stronger families



News

Funding

We started 2021 with the amazing news that we have been awarded five years funding from the National Lottery Community Fund. The funding is, in part, aimed at the continued development of our digital services, but will also enable us to go on offering our traditional support for the next five years.



Partnerships

In December it was revealed that we would be part of the 'Give a little love' partnership with John Lewis and Waitrose. In addition to massively raising our profile, the partnership has generated funding to enable us to run a new programme to support women survivors of domestic abuse.



South West Business and Community Awards

We are excited to have been nominated in four categories.

- COVID Community Champion
- Charity of The Year – Shortlisted!!
- Employer of The Year
- Female Entrepreneur of The Year

The winners will be announced on 29th April.

Our services from April 2021



Reducing Parental Conflict Programmes

These programmes are delivered by trained staff, primarily in groups and via Zoom. These internationally recognised programmes are aimed at supporting parents, both together and separated, to develop positive communication and problem-solving skills, to manage emotions and create more positive environments for their children. These include Triple P – Family Transitions and Within My Reach

Mellow Mums – Digital Coffee Mornings (Talk @ home)

Starting during the Pandemic our Mellow Mums 6-week programme offers mums, with a child under 2, who are feeling low the opportunity to get together. The weekly sessions are facilitated and aim to build a natural network for the mums, empowering them to continue the contact beyond the programme. This is a rolling programme.



New for 2021

Catch-up support text for new parents

New parents will be offered a fortnightly 'catch-up' text for the first 3 months. The aim will be to ensure that parents have an easy, accessible way to ask for help should they need it in the early days. The service will also be extended to parents who are ending support with another specialist service, for example peri-natal mental health support.

Own My Life

This is a nationally recognised 12-week programme to support women who have experienced domestic abuse. The course is based on the principle that women are the experts in their own lives and uses a trauma informed approach. The courses will be delivered digitally.



We will also be continuing to deliver our traditional volunteer peer mentoring support, both face-to-face (post Covid) and digitally to suit the needs of the individual family.

What people say ...

Family Quotes

"Myself and my children, age 3 and 1, all looked forward to our volunteer's video calls each week."

"My volunteer is fab. Don't know how I would have got through lockdown without her. I can't thank her enough."

"My volunteer has been invaluable to me, she never judges me and I can talk to her openly...I have really enjoyed Mellow Mums, it has given me routine, I felt supported and it has been lovely because I have felt really isolated during lockdown"

"The volunteer is really interested in what we talk about, she doesn't forget stuff I tell her. She is really valuable to me at the minute."

"She's been more like a friend rather than a volunteer the last year. Her input into our world has been a massive help."

"My volunteer is amazing, I feel like it's having a really good friend around for me, we talk about everything, she's awesome. My confidence has grown, so I can do the Incredible Years course, which is a big learning curve for me. I now see more good days than bad."

Referrer Quotes

"This has been my first experience of referring a family to Home-Start....It has been brilliant, I will definitely refer more families to you. The Within My Reach Intervention helped this couple, when I see Dad each week, he makes sure he uses the 'Speaker/Listener technique' that he learnt during the course!"

"You are really great and one of the few services that update the referrer."

"I feel the service is highly valuable to our parents."

Volunteer Quotes

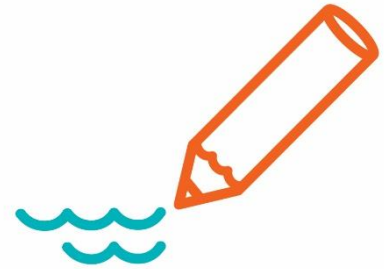
"Digital support has enabled me to support families whom I wouldn't otherwise have helped because they lived either too far away or not in an area in which I wished to work. I think it has also helped Home-Start to better match volunteers with families as they weren't constrained by geography."

"I found it easy to build a relationship with my family over video. She is very chatty and always has a lot to say but also interested in asking about me, so it works well."

Case Studies

A volunteer's reflections on digital support ...

I have to confess, I wasn't initially keen on the idea of remote support and my first two digital support families didn't work out. Maybe because they were young mums and it would have been easier to find common ground if we were walking or having coffee.



However, my most recent one has been great. I really feel as though I am helping whether it's just a friendly ear (mum prefers just audio calls) or offering suggestions to practical issues and providing a confidence boost. My biggest plus so far is proof reading mum's notes for her parental contribution for an application for an EHCP for one of her sons and making suggestions to clarify the case she is making for this.

Another plus to remote support is that it is easy to be flexible around changes to arrangements because no travelling is involved. My current mum is sometimes unable to answer my call for any number of reasons but then we can message to rearrange.

This flexibility is of course also down to the lockdown and home-schooling restrictions but I think it could apply even if the volunteer and family are operating normally.



A mum's reflection on completing the Within My Reach course ...

Initially, my partner and I were due to complete the course together. We both agreed that since the birth of our second child things had been difficult and our communication wasn't good. We didn't feel like a team or that we appreciated each other. I wasn't sure the relationship would continue.

At the last minute, my partner decided he didn't want to attend, so I did it on my own. I found the sessions really useful and even though my partner didn't attend, we went through the workbook and exercises together after each session.

It made such a difference. We have come back together as a team. We were able to decide on house rules so that we don't undermine each other. It made me more aware of my own traits and his and how our backgrounds were impacting on how we responded. I have learned how, if I react differently, I can make a situation end more positively. Our relationship has massively improved, making the home environment much nicer for everyone. I actually share a lot of what I learned with friends and family when they are having relationship troubles. It is one of the best things I've ever done, for me personally and for my family.



National Trust offer for families

For those on a lower income the National Trust can offer membership payment spread over 12 months instead of paying in full for the year.

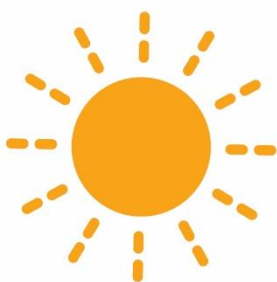
The monthly direct debit is interest free and comes with the full benefits of every membership covering free entry and free parking at most National trust places.

For a family membership which covers 2 adults and up to 10 children between the ages of 5 and 17 it is £126 for the year charged at £10.50 on the 8th of each month.

Contact: Supporter Services Centre 0344 800 1895

Trustee Recruitment

We are currently looking for new Trustees to join our board and are interested to hear from any stakeholder (family, volunteer, referrer, funder) with time, enthusiasm and passion for what we are aiming to achieve. As with our volunteers, we have a three-stage process – application form and references, interview with the CEO and Chair, observing a committee meeting. The board needs a diverse range of skills and people, so if you think you have something to share and can sign up for between a year and three years please contact Andrea Chandler, our CEO for an initial conversation.



Volunteer Recruitment

We are actively recruiting for our next Preparation course for volunteers, which will start this summer.

Volunteers need to be a parent or have parenting experience. Key skills are a non-judgemental approach and good listening skills. Our course runs once a week, for eight weeks (currently via Zoom). If you have a couple of hours a week to spare and

want to make a difference to a local family contact us via email, Facebook, telephone or through the website.

What to expect update –

Families

- You will get an email or text acknowledgement when we receive your referral.
- One of our Coordinators will telephone you within two weeks to set up a Zoom or post-Covid, home visit to discuss what we can offer
- We will keep you updated (every month) until a volunteer match or suitable group is arranged
- If we can't find you a suitable volunteer or programme/group within twelve weeks we will let you know. Unfortunately, we don't hold a waiting list.

Volunteers

- Once you have enquired, we will email you the written information about the role and service
- A Coordinator will contact you within three weeks to arrange a Zoom/Home interview
- The interview is scored and if accepted you will be invited to attend the next Preparation Course. You will be accepted as Home-Start volunteer on successful completion of the course.

Referrers

- Referrals are allocated once a week. We will update you via email as we acknowledge the referral, set the initial visit with the family and arrange the match to a volunteer meeting.
- We do not share information about the ongoing support, unless requested and permission given by the parents, or if the family are part of a multi-agency process (e.g. EHAT)
- When accepting a referral, if the family appear to have more complex needs we will request further information and an EHAT/TAF date.
- We will request an EHAT/TAF meeting date and require a response within 3 days or we will reject the referral
- The EHAT/TAF date must be within six weeks
- We will notify you by email when the support is closed. Again, we will not share progress information unless specifically requested and parental permission is given

Links and contact information

We recently held a Webinar, outlining our services and plans for the next 5 years.

Click [here](#) to view the webinar or [here](#) to view the Powerpoint slides.



[@HomeStartSouthandWestDevon](#)



[@homestartswdevon](#)

Phone – 07307 873163

Email – homestart.shpt@gmail.com

We have new revamped Website due to be launched by the end of April.

You will be able to contact us and securely refer through the site – homestart-southandwestdevon.org.uk