



Home-Start Bristol Easter Newsletter 2011

**Home
Start**
Support and friendship
for families

Welcome to our Easter Newsletter! It is Spring, a time of new beginnings and hopefully some warmer weather!

Here at Home-Start we have started using a new system for gathering information. Families will be more involved in the assessment of their position, scoring themselves at each stage of their support, on how they are coping. This will enable families to see their own 'journey of change' and also improve how we measure the impact of the work we do.

Beverley Symonds (Senior Co-ordinator)

National Family Week 30 May - As the UK's largest family support charity, (there are 340 Home-Starts across the UK, more than 15,000 parent volunteers support nearly 35,000 families and almost 70,000 children)

Home-Start is delighted to offer its backing to National Family Week. 'Parents supporting other parents is the bedrock of our work, this new event will highlight the importance and value of family life.'

Kay Bews, Chief Executive, Home Start UK

Netmums is a website offering information to mothers on everything from where to find play-groups and how to eat healthily to where to meet other mothers. 'Netmums is a wonderful source of information and support'(Fern Britton)

www.netmums.com

Children's Centres have been developed as places where parents and children can go to find out about anything to do with families - different centres have different facilities - many have a pre-school or nursery, some also have toddler groups, classes, and activities that you can get involved in. Some also run support groups, and have special advisors at particular times for you to talk to. Some can be a good source of information on local childcare, as Family Information Services officers will hold outreach sessions at the centre. They are also a great place to meet people and make new friends too!



Louise Allen

Hi! My name is Louise. I have been a volunteer for Home-Start for the last 2 years. I am a mother of 4 children and have recently become a grandmother to a beautiful grand-daughter who is now 8 months old. I have 2 dogs - Fudge and Freddie and I am currently running my own, small business. All of this keeps me busy but I still make time for Home-Start as I enjoy supporting and spending time with children and families. I have recently become a volunteer rep so if you have any problems, ideas or suggestions that you feel that you cannot discuss with your co-ordinator, you can come and talk to me and I will be happy to pass the information on. I will have met a few of you at the last VTE and at the Christmas lunch and will hopefully meet more of you at future events as I come to as many as possible. You can contact me in the office on a Tuesday morning as I volunteer one morning a week helping Alex with administration. I look forward to seeing you all soon.

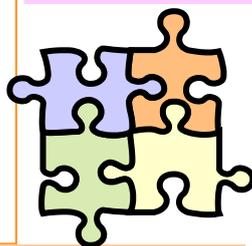
Home-Start Bristol will be having a picnic for families and volunteers during the summer holiday - more information will be available in our summer newsletter and on the website.

Toy Libraries - Buying toys can be expensive so why not save yourself some money by using a toy library! They offer new opportunities for play for all ages and abilities, with many offering specific special needs or multicultural toys, games, DVDs and more. Toys are regularly updated. Contact **020 7428 2288** for more information and to check what is available in your area.

Volunteers - can you help?

WE WOULD LOVE TO HEAR if any volunteers past and present have gone on to do other courses, started work or had a career change? Did your Home-Start volunteering experience and training contribute in any way? Do you speak any other languages? If so would you like to work with families whose first language is not English? **Please e-mail or telephone the office if you are able to help.**

Please try and find the time to check out our newly improved website at www.homestartbristol.org.uk We would love to hear your comments and would welcome any feedback whether positive or negative!



Accreditation:

Congratulations to all of the following who have achieved Level 2 accreditation for the Prep course; Heather, Claire, Marion, Jessie, Fiona, Clare and Alison.

If anyone wishes to work towards accreditation then please contact the office.

NHS DIRECT staffed by people who have the knowledge and experience to give you real help and reassurance whenever you have health worries 0845 4647 24 hours/7 days a week.

What families say about Home-Start:

- 'My treatment for breast cancer has now finished but HS will remain in our thoughts and hearts as the organisation who really did care and took notice of us when all others failed to'
- 'The support helped to increase my self confidence and self esteem when they were at an all time low'
- 'The support of my volunteer has undoubtedly contributed to me not being hospitalised (with post natal depression) again'
- 'A wholly positive experience from the initial visit to the months of support'
- 'The support was vital'
- 'Encouraging and non-judgemental, friendly but not intrusive'

Outdoor fun for families!

Eastville Park is a spacious park, with lake, woodlands and wild flower meadows. There are also tennis courts and football pitches for hire.

Portishead Lake Grounds. Ideal for a picnic and ball games! Also a children's playground (free and enclosed) and rowing boats for hire. There is a cafe with outdoor seating where you can also buy bird food to feed the ducks and swans.

Windmill City Farm - Community farm, with farm animals, gardens, nature reserve, environment trails, adventure playground, rumpus room, cafe and shop. And it's free!



MP Graham Allen calls for early years intervention - his government commissioned report recommends regular assessments of all pre- school children, focussing on their social and emotional development. He says 'All too often society is failing to equip young children with social and emotional skills they need in life. If we can invest a little early in the life cycle to help mums and babies, and young people, then I think you'll find that money is recouped over and over again.'

Home-Start UK took part in the consultation on behalf of all Home-Start schemes. The Chief Executive, Kay Bews OBE stated that while she was encouraged by the government's commitment to early intervention it had not acknowledged the part other approaches and services - especially parent-to-parent support services - can play. 'These services often create the conditions in which such formal programmes can flourish.'

Our March Volunteer Training Event was a hit with volunteers! Our speaker was Hilary Smith (Senior Lecturer Early Years, Education at Bath Spa University) and the subject was '**Managing Challenging Behaviour**'. Feedback from volunteers was very positive and included the following comments;

'**The session exceeded my expectations**' 'The examples were relevant and constructive suggestions were really useful' 'An excellent practical session'

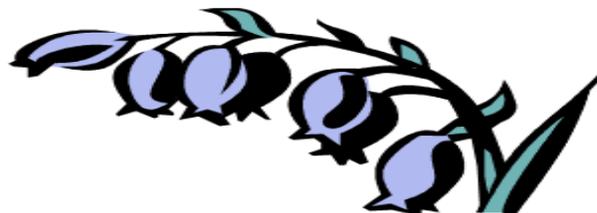
We have 2 more VTEs planned before the summer holiday (see below) **All volunteers most welcome!**



Volunteers at the Christmas lunch Dec 2010

Bluebell Nurses

One of our volunteers, Anna Thompson, has started working with this new charity which is aiming to develop and fund a new community nursing service to support mums and families affected by post natal or ante natal depression. The charity is seeking to consult with anyone who has been directly affected. If you would like to share your views, complete a questionnaire and/or have a couple of hours to spare to come to a focus group (expenses paid and food supplied!) then contact Anna at annathompson@blueyonder.co.uk



Volunteer Training Events Calendar:

Tuesday, 10 May - Conflict Resolution with Nick Thrower (from St Werburgh's Children Centre) 10-12 at St Werburghs Community Centre, Horley Road, Bristol, BS2 9TJ, followed by a ploughman's lunch.

Wednesday, 29 June - Cultural Awareness with SARI (Support Against Racial Incidents), 10-12 venue and lunch to be confirmed.

Wednesday, 13 July - Annual General Meeting, followed by coffee and cake, 10-12 at Redland Green Bowling Club, Redland Green Road, Redland, Bristol BS6 7HE (invite to follow nearer the time)

Parentline Plus has lots of online advice and free resources including leaflets and online learning resources on topics such as bullying, toddler tantrums etc Tel.0808 800 2222 or www.familylives.org.uk



We need you! We really value the views of our families, referrers and volunteers in planning and developing our service. If you would like to be more involved please contact us to let us know and look out for a new questionnaire to be posted on our website in the near future.

Funding News!

Half way through the financial year, we start to look seriously at the funding prospects for the next year. It always feels like looking towards a cliff edge that we **might** walk off! We know that there will be some money in the bank at the beginning of the next April and we know that we can rely on a certain amount coming in but it never looks like enough! With cutbacks in the news everyday, that cliff edge seemed particularly close this time round.

What trustees and Beverley then did was to go into 'funding application overdrive' applying for large and small grants from any trusts and foundations we heard of. With many other organisations competing for funds we have not been surprised that some applications were unsuccessful - **but some succeeded and brought cheques in the post. Then, just in the past few weeks - good news beyond all our hopes! The Local Authority grants we had last year are being continued into the next. We are very grateful indeed!**

So, the cliff edge recedes... But it doesn't mean that we are sitting back and resting on our laurels. The scheme is working very hard at the moment to prepare an application for a Big Lottery grant which would give some funding for 5 years - a nice plump cushion at the bottom of that cliff.

We have wonderful volunteers helping outstandingly brave families - and that, of course, is why all sorts of individuals and organisations are willing to fund us. Thank you!

Jenny Harris (Trustee)



Top Tip from Hilary Smith, Senior Lecturer (Early Years Education, Bath Spa University)

Children like to know what is planned for the day. So prepare them by making a **visual daily plan**. Use pictures, photos or symbols to show what is happening next e.g painting, shopping, a trip to the park.

RECENTLY COMPLETED PREPARATION COURSE

Our latest Prep Course took place at the Barton Hill Settlement where we were made very welcome.

We had fourteen people on the course (one had to leave due to health issues, but hopes to be back) from a range of interesting backgrounds and ages! There were many lively discussions and much knowledge and experience shared.

We look forward to matching these new volunteers during April and May 2011.

NEXT PREP COURSE

Due to successful recruitment of new volunteers we will not be running the next course until September. We are hoping to be able to attract volunteers from a wider range of ethnic groups than we have done in recent times. Advertising and choice of venue (yet to be decided) will reflect this aim. **Any ideas will be very welcome.**

The Editor's Desk, Home-Start Bristol
Unit 11, The Greenway Business Centre,
Doncaster Road, Southmead, Bristol,
BS10 5PY 0117 9501170

bristolhomestart@btconnect.com
www.homestartbristol.org.uk

Activities for the Easter Holiday

Sunday, 10th April:

Eggstravaganza - Bristol City Museum

Spring is in the air! Drop in and discover what's going on in the lives of birds and make some colourful designer nests. Activity times: 10.30-12.30 and 1.30 - 3.30. These FREE drop in sessions can be very popular and so are run on a 'first come, first served' basis. Children under 12 must have adult supervision.

Monday, 11th April:

Easter cards, Kingsdown Sports Centre is hosting a morning of 3D Easter card making. All levels welcome. Please book on 0117 9031633 to avoid disappointment.

Tuesday, 12th April:

Easter eggstravaganza- Bunnies, bonnets and seasonal fun. Staple Hill Library, 10.30-11.30. Phone 01454 865715.

Eggstravaganza Activity Day, Horfield Leisure Centre, a day of mega bouncing for 5-12 year olds. Don't forget to wear socks!

Wednesday, 13th April:

Crafty Bunnies- Easter crafts and stories, Bradley Stoke Library. 2-3pm. Phone 01454 865723.