

Annual Review
2007 - 2008

Here for families
and children

Charity number 1118249

Home
Start

Support and friendship
for families

Home-Start
Milton Keynes

Vision Statement

***Befriending families in Milton Keynes -
supporting parents to give their children a
safe, healthy and happy start in life***

Home-Start raises self-
confidence, improves social
networks, reduces difficult
behaviour on the part of the
child and improves physical
and mental health

*"Every Child Matters"
Government Green Paper*





We have had a busy year. As well as the numbers of families supported increasing, the nature of many of the issues

families face grow in complexity, providing a considerable challenge to our volunteers and staff.

During the year we welcomed Stephanie Ellis as Senior co-ordinator, Melanie Goddard as Early Intervention Co-ordinator and Elaine Burgess as Family Group Co-ordinator. All our new recruits have made tremendous progress and we are delighted to have them. Trustees Mandy Riddy and Craig Buncher have moved on after many years' service, and our three new trustees have been getting heavily involved, all taking on special responsibilities and roles.

We have set five key priorities as part of a new Business Plan:-

- *Meet demand against a background of growing child population in MK, expected to grow 22.7% by 2016 compared with 2006 against a national average of 15.2%*
- *Build sustainable funding*
- *Promote ourselves more widely*
- *Ensure we have the skills and capabilities to meet standards of service*
- *Maintain excellent quality of service*

We are engaged in seeking a renewal of funding from various organisations and we received a very positive Quality Assurance report from Home-Start UK.

I would like to thank those many supporters who have provided funds allowing us to do our work, and also the rest of the trustees and my biggest thanks have to go to our wonderful volunteers who enabled it all to happen supported by the staff, Steph, Judith, Melanie, Elaine, Sue, Kim, Sarah and Christine.

John Nicolson (Chair) – extracted from Chair's report May 2008

Julie McNeil

Sadly one of our longest serving volunteers - Julie McNeil passed away in August 2008 after a long illness. She was only 48 years old and leaves behind two daughters and a grandson.

Julie had over 10 years experience as a volunteer and was part of the original management team. She had very strong beliefs and was much loved for her strength of character. Our thoughts are with her family at this sad time.

Home-Start has a proven, lasting, positive impact on the development of children and the health and welfare of the family.

Summary of achievements during the year to March 2008

- ✓ We supported **100** families including **42** attending our referral-only family groups supported by **8** volunteers.
- ✓ We employed a Family Group Co-ordinator and started up a third family group during the year.
- ✓ The number of children supported during the year was **200**.
- ✓ **27** volunteers were recruited and trained during the year.
- ✓ **65** volunteers trained to work with families were available to give two to three hours a week of their time to support families in our area.

Generous donations enabled us to have our 2007 summer outing to Activity Land, our annual children's Christmas party and a Valentine's disco at Heron's Lodge.



Home-Start offers a unique service. We recruit and train volunteers who are parents themselves to visit families with at least one child under five, at home, and offer them informal, friendly and confidential support. Alternatively, weekly support is offered via our own family groups.

Our approach

We help to increase the confidence and independence of families by:

- ◆ Visiting families in their own homes to offer support, friendship and practical assistance
- ◆ Reassuring parents that their childcare problems are not unusual or unique
- ◆ Encouraging parents' strengths and emotional well-being for the ultimate benefit of their children
- ◆ Trying to get the fun back into family life

Our volunteers, who have parenting experience themselves, can offer:

- ◆ Precious time for listening and talking

- ◆ Help with the children
- ◆ A break for parents
- ◆ Practical help and reassurance
- ◆ A chance to meet other parents in the same situation
- ◆ Support to use local services and resources

Parents ask for Home-Start's help for all sorts of reasons:

- ◆ They may feel isolated in their community, have no family nearby and be struggling to make friends
- ◆ They may be finding it hard to cope because of their own or a child's physical or mental illness
- ◆ They may have a death in the family
- ◆ They may be really struggling with the emotional and physical demands of having twins or triplets - perhaps born into an already large family

Volunteers

There are many opportunities for volunteering within Home-Start, either working directly with families or in other roles, for example as a Trustee.

Volunteers working with families are all parents themselves who know and understand the stresses of family life, who care about others and are willing to give their time, friendship and skills. They prepare for visiting families by completing a 40 hour preparation course during term-time; this includes a first aid qualification.

On-going training for volunteers includes speakers from local organisations which, during 2007/2008, included the Samaritans, Pregnancy Crisis Centre, Brook, Relate, Turn 2 Us, Mediation training, young people and drugs, Scoop (MK Women & Work) and domestic violence (Lighthouse).

All the families I have referred to Home-Start MK speak warmly of their volunteers and of the groups they attend. With their help the families are able to start to move forward"

Health Visitor 2007/08



Christmas Party December 2007 at Herons Lodge

Recent Events

BBC LIFELINE APPEAL

TV star Debra Stephenson throws Home-Start a lifeline.

Lifeline is the BBC's monthly television charity appeal programme. In July 2008, Ex Coronation Street and Bad girls star, Debra Stephenson, presented a BBC1 Lifeline appeal for Home-Start, the UK's leading family support charity.



Debra spent time talking to some of the families supported by Home-Start; she also went to the home of a father, supported by Home-Start Milton Keynes, who is bringing up his six children on his own after losing his wife last year. If you missed it, view this ten minute programme online at: www.bbc.co.uk/charityappeals/programmes/lifeline/lifeline_archive.shtml.



VOLUNTEER PRESENTATION - 20 May 2008

Staff, volunteers, trustees and regional representatives (about 40 people in total), gathered at Acorn House for a presentation lunch and launch of the new corporate image. Our guest of honour was Margaret Harrison, founder of Home-Start. After time to chat to Margaret and to each other, there was lunch. We then moved to the conference room where John Nicolson, Chair of the Trustees welcomed everyone, and invited Margaret to make some presentations. Each volunteer received a certificate for the number of years they had been volunteering and those who had Home-Start families (some had only just finished their initial training) were also presented with a lovely potted plant and a copy of Margaret's book - "Hurrah for Tuesdays".



Six of the longest serving volunteers were photographed to mark the occasion, the photo appearing in the Milton Keynes Citizen later that week.



There was also a marvellous cake made by a volunteer - Lynda Maddocks.

My volunteer visited for the first time yesterday. I just want to thank you. She is a lovely lady and brilliant with kids. We went to the park and she pushed the pram for me. Simple to some people but a huge huge help for kids and me. Thank you so much. She did not make me feel useless and that meant a great deal. We are so grateful for her help. Thank you for allowing us the gift of assistance.

Left on answerphone by a mum after volunteer's first visit to a new family.



...to all our volunteers, and also to the following organisations who have supported us in a variety of ways....



- ☺ Activity Land
- ☺ The Art Room
- ☺ The Big Lottery
- ☺ Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Town Council
- ☺ The Book People
- ☺ Brook
- ☺ Children Social Care
- ☺ Claire Burgess – for donating sponsorship for running in the April 2008 London Marathon
- ☺ Compass
- ☺ Family Mediation
- ☺ Gulliver's Land
- ☺ Hedgerows
- ☺ Home-Start UK for the design of the new logo and image
- ☺ Lighthouse
- ☺ Lloyds TSB Foundation of England and Wales
- ☺ Midsummer Housing
- ☺ Mike Lozowski
- ☺ Man Investments
- ☺ Milton Keynes College
- ☺ Milton Keynes Community Foundation
- ☺ MK Council (Learning and Development Directorate, Children's Services)
- ☺ MK Council (Early Years and Childcare Directorate)
- ☺ Milton Keynes Taxis
- ☺ Pebbles
- ☺ Pregnancy Crisis Centre
- ☺ Relate
- ☺ The Rotary Club
- ☺ Rowan's Children's Centre
- ☺ The Samaritans
- ☺ Sure Start
- ☺ TG Can Technology
- ☺ Turn 2 Us
- ☺ West Bletchley Town Council
- ☺ Women and Work
- ☺ Woughton Parish Council
- ☺ Yellow Moon
- ☺ Wolverton Tennis Club

Extract from Financial Statements for the year ended 31st March 2008

	£		£
MK Council Grant	65,616	Charitable expenditure	139,894
Project Grants	96,947	Other expenditure	5,614
Donations	1,202		
Bank interest	5,649		
Other	678		
Total Income	170,092	Total Expenditure	145,508

The statement of financial activities for 2007/2008 showed net incoming resources of £24,584. This reflects net incoming resources in unrestricted funds of £24,195 and net incoming resources in restricted funds of £389. At 31 March 2008 total unrestricted funds were £70,197 and total restricted funds were £28,950.

The above information was extracted from the audited Financial Statements of Home-Start Milton Keynes, which are reported on without qualification by Keens Shay Keens MK, Chartered Accountants and Registered Auditors. These summarised accounts may not contain sufficient information to allow for the full understanding of the financial affairs of the charity. For further information, copies of the Annual report and Financial Statements can be obtained from the offices of Home-Start Milton Keynes.

Our Board of Trustees...



John Nicolson (Chair) (pictured left)
Chris Wrage, (Secretary)
Chris Parsons (Vice Chair)
Colin Brookman (Treasurer)
Lesley O'Reilly

...and joined since the year end
John Harris and Simon Chanase

Home Start

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for families

Very positive - it is hard work but rewarding and I get the feeling of adding value"

*Volunteer working with
Home-Start Milton Keynes
2007/08*

"My experience, and that of my clients, is that your volunteers are of the highest calibre, always friendly and willing to 'go the extra mile'. My client families are all vulnerable and going through family crises so the volunteers have needed to be aware, and sensitive, to their very special emotional and practical needs. We have never been disappointed."

Health Visitor 2007/08

Our Staff...

Stephanie Ellis, Senior Co-ordinator
Judith Fearn, Co-ordinator
Melanie Goddard, Early Intervention Co-ordinator
Elaine Burgess, Family Support Group Co-ordinator
Kim, Senior Administrator
Sarah, Administrator
Christine, Administrator
Sue, Finance



**Home-Start Milton Keynes. A charitable company limited by guarantee.
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