

Impact Report

2024-2025



Welcome!

Home-Start HOST helps families with young children thrive and grow together.

We work towards a future where every parent gets the support they need to give their children the best start in life.

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Our Vision

Every parent has the support they need to give their children the best possible start in life.

Our Mission

To empower and uplift families with children from pregnancy to age 5 by providing comprehensive support and resources which increase confidence and reduce isolation.

Our Values

- We are **Aspirational**
- We **Build relationships**
- We are **Creative**
- We are **Empowering**
- We are **Understanding**



Welcome from our Chair of Trustees

It is my privilege, as Chair of Trustees, to introduce our Impact Report for 2024-25. This year has been one of remarkable growth, resilience, and innovation across our services, against the ongoing backdrop of the cost of living crisis and turbulence in the charity sector.

Our dedicated staff, volunteers, and partners have worked tirelessly to support families, nurture early relationships, and champion the wellbeing of children in our communities. We continue to build strong relationships with funders and commissioners, and thank them for their support of our mission and work.

The stories and feedback shared in this report highlight the transformative power of compassionate support—whether through home-visiting, mental health initiatives, early learning programmes, or practical help during times of hardship. We have seen families grow in confidence, children thrive, and volunteers empowered by the difference they make.

As we reflect on the achievements of the past year, we remain committed to adapting, learning, and responding to the evolving needs of those we serve, working in partnership with our Greater Manchester HomeStart partners and beyond.

On behalf of the Board, I extend heartfelt thanks to everyone who has contributed to our mission, especially our staff. Leadership team and volunteers. Together, we continue to build stronger, more connected communities where every child has the opportunity to flourish.

Karen Rose, Chair of Trustees



Welcome from our CEO

It's a privilege to have been able to lead Home-Start HOST for another adventurous year of challenges and successes. The fantastic work that has been achieved, and which is highlighted in this report, is testament to our incredible staff and volunteer team, so I'd like to say a huge 'thank-you' to them all.

There's immense (and growing) pressure on charities like ours, due to increasing costs and increasing need within our communities at a time of decreasing availability of funding. Nevertheless, we have continued to deliver highly effective and high-quality services to families and I'm really pleased that we also recently secured the Investing in Volunteers Award, showing that we also deliver high quality support, supervision and training to our volunteer team.

It's incredibly difficult to capture everything that we do in our short reports, so if you'd like to know more about our work, please get in touch.



Sarah Cook, CEO

Our Reach



In 2024-25, Home-Start HOST supported 5,357 families, across 4 boroughs of Greater Manchester.

Our antenatal offer supported 44 expectant parents pre- and post-birth



Our Infant Feeding service helped 2839 mothers to breastfeed

Our baby bank distributed essential items to 1206 families...



**...including:
278 moses baskets
178 stair-gates
& 703 packs of nappies**

Our Play Learn Grow team delivered 382 early learning sessions



201 families attended parent-and-child peer support groups



Our Diversity team helped 52 families to overcome barriers to accessing support



Our volunteers gifted 4952 hours to visit families, help out at groups, and volunteer in our baby bank and charity shop

Dad Matters supported 325 dads across Greater Manchester with one-to-one support, a further 275 accessed group support, and the team spoke to 3918 dads during outreach work in hospitals and communities



Our Genetics Outreach Worker supported 58 families with ongoing support and information around genetic conditions

Fundraising for special memories

An amazing team of supporters, including several of our staff team, took part in the Great Manchester Run in May to raise funds for our special family events. Creating fun memories as a family is such an important part of childhood, but days out aren't accessible to everyone - whether that's due to affordability, transport, or just needing a little extra support.

At Home-Start, we recognise the joy of parenting as well as the struggles, and our family events are a big part of that. We're incredibly grateful to all our fundraisers and everyone who made a donation - together we raised over £6000 to create joyful experiences for families. Thank you!



Special recognition for Dan, who looks surprisingly chipper after running the half-marathon and 10k in quick succession!



This year we went to Blackpool Zoo - a fun, educational and sunny day out!

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‘I would just like to say a massive thank you for yesterday, it meant so much as we can't afford to go away on holiday or anything, so this gave my girls something special to break up the school holidays! We went to the dinosaur safari first as A is obsessed with dinosaurs and all the girls absolutely loved it.’
- Mum

‘I really enjoyed going, because I had never been before. All the staff were really kind. I explored lots of new animals and I learned a lot. Ellie really helped me and my family today. I really appreciated it, thank you!’

- Muhammad, (11)

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Home-Visiting Support

Home-Start's support for families is built on a foundation of peer support, delivered in the family home. We're passionate about the impact of reaching families where they are comfortable, to support them in their own environment and help them build a network of support reaching out into their community.

This year we have continued to deliver services as part of the Family Hubs network – both in community settings designated as Family Hub sites, and in the home. Our ability to reach families where they are is recognised as one of the key strengths of our delivery model.



This year our home-visiting service supported 394 families and 878 children.

99% of parents surveyed said they would recommend Home-Start support to a friend in a similar situation.



A focus on early relationships:

'Building relationships' is a key value for HOST, and this is never more important than in the earliest days, months and years of life. Our focus on supporting early relationships, in collaboration with families and other services, means those crucial early parent-infant bonds are given space and support to develop.

With a strong focus on keeping the baby/child in mind, our Parent-Infant Mental Health team regularly access training and apply relevant research and best practice throughout our support. We are grateful to our clinical colleagues and partner agencies, who support HOST staff with reflective supervision, and other guidance and support.

'I felt supported and listened to which was the most important part for me – the fact that Home-Start was just a phone call away, and I could get support from my coordinator just by calling if I needed to.'

'You've helped us during a time when I thought no one else cared, not my family, not my friends. The volunteer's weekly visits have given me and the children hope.'



Antenatal Support

We've worked hard this year to extend the reach of our antenatal parent-infant mental health support, and been proud to see this offer grow in success. Currently available in Bolton and Tameside, connecting with expectant parents earlier in pregnancy allows us to offer help with the practical and emotional aspects of preparing to welcome a new baby into the family.

Our coordinators help families access support through our baby bank, and offer support with housing issues and budgeting to alleviate stress from financial pressures and housing insecurity. Parents with limited support networks appreciate support to attend antenatal appointments, and someone to talk to about everything that comes with pregnancy and birth.

We focus on helping parents to build their connection with baby – talking to their bump, thinking about baby in the womb and looking forward to meeting them. We collaborate with midwifery and family nursing teams, and our own Infant Feeding and Dad Matters colleagues.

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‘Being relaxed helped me to concentrate on spending time with the children, talking, being silly with them rather than being caught up within my own anxieties, this enabled me to be present in the moment with them. A friendly face that made me feel not alone. I think this service is essential and everyone should have this available to them, it really helped me through such a difficult time, knowing I had you there for when baby was born helped me to relax more in my pregnancy.’



Growing together - Chloe's story

Chloe's Health Visitor referred her to Home-Start when Chloe was around 20 weeks pregnant with her second child, a little girl. Chloe has learning differences, and physical health issues including scoliosis, which make it difficult to get out and about with her son, and keep on top of things in the flat. Her son Billy was 18 months old at the time of the referral, and showing delays in some areas of development.

Our coordinator Gemma tells about how she approached supporting the family.

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‘I made the decision to match Chloe with Alison, our family support worker, as it allowed us to arrange more flexible support – a volunteer would usually visit at the same time each week, but Chloe had lots of antenatal and other health appointments to manage. Chloe had mentioned that she sometimes struggled to understand information she was given at her appointments, partly due to her learning differences, but also because she had Billy with her and was distracted by looking after him at the same time. Alison was able to help with this by going to appointments with Chloe to allow her to focus on her needs and communication.’

From the very first time I met Chloe, I could see what a loving parent she was to Billy. I can really see what a difference Alison's support has made to Chloe and the children - from helping organise their space at home to make it easier to manage, to helping Chloe to recognise the lovely relationship she has with her children, and feel proud of it, which has had a huge impact on her confidence – it's lovely to see!

Gemma, Family Support Coordinator



Alison, our Family Support Worker, focuses on supporting families with an informed parent-infant focus. Alison worked directly with Chloe, and tells us how that's been going:

Chloe can find information overwhelming, so I took a 'small steps' approach to support, focusing on one thing at once. During her pregnancy, we talked a lot about bonding with her unborn baby, and offered a safe space for Chloe to talk about her worries and how she was feeling.

Another priority was home organisation – due to the small size of Chloe's flat it easily became cluttered, which was affecting Billy's ability to run around and use toys to support his development, like spending more time standing to strengthen his legs. I recommended some practical storage units, which freed up space and made toys and other items easier to access.

Throughout support we worked in partnership with other services, liaising with the health visiting team, and helping Chloe apply to local housing associations to find a more suitable home for the family.

I helped Chloe choose a local nursery, and apply for a place for Billy. When baby Holly arrived, I continued to support Chloe with getting to know her baby, and also with the tricky balance of having two young children to look after, and getting used to balancing their different needs. It was lovely to see Chloe grow in confidence as she recognised her parenting successes!

We asked Chloe about her experience of Home-Start support, and the impact it had had for her family:

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'You've helped me with so much – from helping me sort my bills and finances to helping me plan and get all the things I needed for when Holly arrived. You've helped Billy's development by us getting out to play-centres, and we've been doing more activities at home as well. Giving me so many ideas of things to do has been amazing, and you've just been wonderful helping our whole family, and looking after me as well when I was really poorly.

It's going to upset me when you go, you've been so fantastic with us, and helping me get the slow cooker and recipes to try. I made Billy macaroni cheese in the slow cooker yesterday for his dinner and he absolutely loved it, it's great to have new recipes that are easy for me to do while looking after the little ones, so thank you!

I couldn't have asked for better support, so thank you Alison, and thank you Home-Start!



Volunteering - the Home-Start difference

All our support at Home-Start is based on peer relationships - our volunteers wealth of life experience gives them a unique insight and understanding of parents' needs and hopes.

We spoke to Lea, who volunteers with our home-visiting service and peer support groups, and asked what inspired her to join Home-Start, and how it's going so far.



'I saw an advert on TV for volunteering, and one of the charities was Home-Start. I looked into it, and thought 'I really wish I had had this when my children were small'! My children have additional needs, and I didn't have any family or friends nearby - my husband was working, and it was just us at home. It was a really hard time, and I would have loved someone to talk to back then, but you don't always find out what's available until later.'

'I thought 'I'll give it a shot, maybe my experience can help someone who is in the same position I was years ago', and then when I started the training I became sure I had something I could offer families. Especially parents whose children had a learning need, because things can feel really uncertain when they're young, you can just tell something is different, but you don't know what.'

'I've supported 7 families through home-visits and in a lot of them the children have had additional needs. Parents really relax when they realise you have been through a lot of the same things - it can often feel lonely when you're facing additional parenting challenges, so having someone who really understands is so important. I've also worked in high school supporting SEN children, so I have that professional training and experience as well.'





‘For me as well, it’s nice to have some company – I’ve no siblings and my children are grown up, so it’s just me and my husband at home now, and we don’t have any family nearby. So it’s a nice social thing, and it’s always lovely to spend time with children, isn’t it – mainly it’s good to feel useful, and that I’m making someone’s life a bit easier!’

‘A moment that stood out for me was with one of the first families I was supporting – the little one was non-verbal, which meant he was frustrated because he couldn’t communicate, and mum was stressed because she felt she wasn’t understanding his needs. We worked on learning some Makaton sign language – just the odd things like ‘drink’ or ‘food’, made life so much easier, and mum saw a way forward to help her communicate with her son. It was a relief for her, and I felt a real sense of satisfaction that I’d helped them get somewhere with this thing that was so frustrating.’

‘I’ve been visiting families at home for nearly 3 years, and I’ve supported 7 families in that time. Recently when I was in-between families, my coordinator mentioned the parent-and-baby groups that were running, and said they were looking for help. I started volunteering at the ‘Pitter, Patter, Play & Natter’ group, and it’s completely different from home-visiting! It’s very busy and lively, parents maybe aren’t facing the same level of stress or frustration but you can still tell how valuable it is to be able to get out and talk to other parents.’

‘I’m always telling people how good volunteering is – two of my friends now volunteer with their local Home-Start schemes. I’d encourage anyone to get involved if you have the time – you don’t always realise how valuable your own life experience is, and what a difference you can make just by being there for someone at a difficult time. If you have any time on your hands, it’s a fantastic thing to do.’



Could you help give a child the best start in life?

Join our home-visiting volunteers helping families make the most of their early years - just 2 hours each week makes an impact which lasts a lifetime



Get in touch!

 **0161 344 0669**

 **info@homestarthost.org.uk**

 **<https://home-starthost.org.uk>**



Multi-lingual Parent-Infant Mental Health support

Many of our families are refugees, or seeking asylum in the UK. Often housed in temporary accommodation, sometimes having been re-located far from support networks they have started to build, and with histories of complex trauma, parents often face language barriers and severe financial restrictions.

Our multi-lingual coordinators recruit volunteers with additional language skills and diverse cultural backgrounds to support families in Oldham, Tameside and Bolton who require culturally sensitive support, or support in their home language.

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‘I really like [my volunteer] Asia’s visits, it is really nice to be able to talk about the children development and upbringing - Asia can always link things to an Islamic perspective, which is really important for our family’. - supported mum (translated from Urdu)’



‘Roma and Rochelle have helped me so much with my OCD, and you have not only helped me, but also made my relationship with my daughter so much better. Before, I did not know how powerful a simple hug could be, but now I do. That small hugs in the morning has brought us closer, and I feel like I can understand her better. I feel so thankful to you for giving me this - your kindness and support mean so much to me. ‘

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Peer group support for parents

Our parent-and-baby groups continue to be popular, with a variety of groups in community spaces across, Bolton, Tameside and Oldham. We want our groups to help families make connections in their community, and support them with a space where they can relax with other parents.

We currently offer 'With You in Mind' - small, supportive perinatal groups, a Multiples group for families with twins or triplets, and 'Pitter, Patter, Play & Natter', a universal stay-and-play group for parents with children up to 2.

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'My toddler is able to really enjoy himself in a relaxed safe place whilst I'm able to have a chat with other mums without having to worry too much about him causing chaos. It's a lovely friendly group. My toddler has come on so much since joining the group.'



This year, we delivered 406 group sessions for parents with babies, toddlers, twins & triplets!

Leila, who runs our groups in Tameside, tells us about the moments that have stood out for her at With You in Mind:

'Two of our regular parents have children who have turned 2 years old in the last couple of months, and they have started thinking about different activities to help their development. We talked about this at the group, and encouraged them to join the Play, Learn, Grow course. They were anxious about attending something new, but one of the Play Learn Grow team visited the group, introduced themselves and explained what to expect on the course - this was reassuring, and both families attended and enjoyed Play, Learn, Grow.'

'We recently received a referral for a young mum who wanted to attend one of the groups. One of the regular group members offered to contact her in our group chat to introduce herself and offer some reassurance and encouragement. It was wonderful to see them reach out to each other in this way and to see young parents use their own previous experience to help and support someone else - the true intent behind a peer support group!'

'This is a wonderful group and I would recommend it to all mums. I like that it's not activity-led like other baby groups, meaning there was lots of time to talk, and it felt like such a warm, safe and supportive space.'

Infant Feeding Support

Our Infant Feeding Team is made up of staff and volunteers who combine specialist breastfeeding knowledge, training and information from trusted sources to empower parents, supporting them to initiate and establish breastfeeding successfully. We also use evidence-based information to help expectant parents think in advance about how they would like to feed their baby.

Once baby arrives, we offer parent-centred support to every breastfeeding parent living in Tameside and Oldham. We provide support on postnatal wards immediately following birth, and daily for the duration of their hospital stay. We then offer regular telephone calls, home-visits and support groups. Parents are often referred to us by the hospital, community midwives or health visitors, and we welcome parents contacting us directly for support.

Amy's Story

We supported Amy in late 2023, following the birth of her third child. Amy had lots of experience breastfeeding, and noticed that a procedure to release her son's tongue-tie was affecting his ability to latch successfully. Amy came along to one of our weekly support groups, where our peer supporters gave her information around methods to help improve his latch, and how this might feel different following the release of his tongue-tie.

Amy continued to come to groups throughout the following year, and completed our accredited training, the Breastfeeding Network Helpers Course in January 2025. Amy then supported parents in several of our weekly support groups, before an opportunity to join our Peer Support team as a staff member became available. Amy continues to support parents confidently, effectively and with compassion as a Breastfeeding Peer Supporter!



Amy tells us about her own breastfeeding journey and her pathway into employment with our team:

‘With my first two children I felt confident enough to go it alone as my babies latched and got on with it! I had also spent my entire first pregnancy researching breastfeeding, as it was not something others around me had done. I remember the phone calls from Home-Start though, they always seemed to come just at the time I needed them, a bad night due to cluster feeding or just the number of negative comments I experienced from people that did not understand breastfeeding. Those calls came when that support was needed and helped remind me of how far I had come in such a short space of time and how much we had actually achieved. I feel these calls helped provide the information I needed and empowered me to continue my breastfeeding journey as I knew I had the support and access to help and information.’



‘It was during a group I went to for support with my first child that another mum supported me when I felt overwhelmed. She said, ‘Never give up on a bad day’ and those 6 little words a complete stranger said to me is something that stuck with me over the next 10 years and two more breastfeeding journeys’

‘When I had my first baby it opened my eyes to how much misinformation there is around breastfeeding, and I saw how many people gave up due to not having that support network or access to information and that always made me sad. Breastfeeding should be something everyone has the opportunity to experience if they wish, and lack of support or information should never be the reason they do not. In recent years I have helped support friends and family who’ve had babies alongside me, as I was the only person they had known who had breastfed. I realised that the support and information I was able to provide helped them make informed choices and experience a feeding journey that was exactly what they wanted to experience. Giving them that sense of ownership and empowerment was such a humbling feeling.’

‘Over the years many people have mentioned to me that I should train as an infant feeding supporter as they believed it was role I was made for, but I never believed it would be possible so just dismissed it. It was one week during the group I was still attending weekly that Georgie, the Infant Feeding Peer Supporter, mentioned the upcoming recruitment for the next volunteer training course and she encouraged me to apply. I decided to go for it and loved every second of the training. Once trained I enjoyed being in the groups each week, helping mums and sometimes just being that listening ear for them. When the Peer Supporter role was advertised, I just knew this was the job I wanted to do, a job I could love and enjoy being a part of every single day. I remembered how I’d felt when I spoke to the peer supporters, and I wanted to be part of that.’

‘I genuinely don’t think I could pick just one thing; there is just so much to love about this role. I am so happy to go to work every day and look forward to what is next. No two days are the same, every feeding journey is different and I am also learning so much new information each time I interact with a different family. Whether it is about a parent’s religion and culture or new information around feeding, I love the fact I am continuously learning and there will never be a time where I will know everything as there will always be new information out there.’

‘I also enjoy the fact that I can help each mum I support, sometimes you are faced with a mum feeling completely overwhelmed and by being there to support her and provide a listening ear is so rewarding. I love that feeling that at the end of a phone call or visit you know that your support and interaction has had a positive impact, and you have helped that mum feel in control. Every mum should have the feeding journey they want and being able to be a part of that really is the best feeling.’



‘Play, Learn, Grow’ - discovering learning through play

Play, Learn, Grow is an 8-week programme which helps parents to support their children’s learning and development at home. The Play, Learn, Grow sessions have been designed to complement the goals of the REAL (Raising Early Achievement in Literacy) programme.

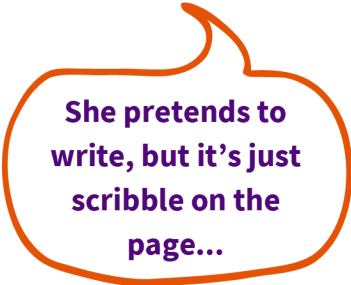
Sessions are structured around aspects of early learning including communication, motor skills, and early literacy and numeracy. We follow Eve, our Play, Learn, Grow manager, as she delivers session 6 - early literacy:

‘We’re delivering a session in a nursery today, so it starts off with just the parents. First of all I’ll ask ‘What is literacy?’ I get lots of answers linked to reading, writing, and knowing your ABC’s. Parents think back to their schooldays and remember things like spelling tests and reading aloud in class. Some parents really enjoyed their early literacy experiences, but not everyone found it easy.’

‘Parents start to think about what literacy looks like for their children -



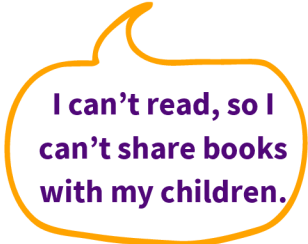
**...he doesn’t
like books...**



**She pretends to
write, but it’s just
scribble on the
page...**



**It’s so hard to get
them to do their
phonics homework
every week!**



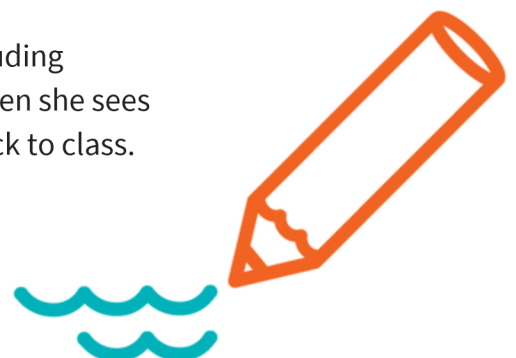
**I can’t read, so I
can’t share books
with my children.**

‘We look at the activities set out in the room and talk about how the playdough is great for building finger strength and control which will help children as they begin to write, and how recognising environmental print like logos or shop names is a valuable early reading skill. A Dad laughs when he sees the YouTube logo – ‘I bet they’ll know that one!’ There’s a tray of flour for children to trace in, and cardboard to paint on with water - a mum comments how her little one loves painting but it’s too messy so this is a great solution. Make sure to take a photo before it dries though!’

‘We have interactive books with flaps and puppets for families to explore – a mum comments how much her son liked the dinosaur book last week! We talk about how you don’t have to stick to the script when you’re reading with your child – it’s ok to make up your own story to go with the pictures, and stop reading if they are losing interest.’

‘The children join the session, run over to their parents and give them a big hug. They explore the activities together, with lots of children heading straight for the playdough – soon the table is full of creations. One child has matched up all the logos and recognised the word ‘Stop’, with mum commenting ‘he read the word!’.

‘As the session ends, we give out the activity packs for this week, including environmental print bingo sheets to take home. One mum laughs when she sees the ‘Start a band’ activity... The parents leave and the children go back to class. It’s time to quickly tidy up and travel to the next session.’



Mum Ayesha* was looking forward to the session, but a bit apprehensive, as her she was unsure about ways she could support her daughter, Sarah, with literacy:

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‘I drop my little one off at nursery and head round to another room where the session is about to start. There are 6 other parents in the group, and one mum asks if I want to go along to the baby weigh clinic with her after the session, it makes me feel welcome as I haven’t really had a mum friend before.’

‘We start talking about literacy, so I explain that I can’t read and don’t really know any nursery rhymes. I didn’t realise you could just talk about the pictures! Eve says she will send me some videos of her singing rhymes and I can learn them that way. We talked about something called ‘environmental print’ – it’s lots of different logos and signs, I hadn’t heard of this before and wondered what logos the children would recognise.’

‘The children come in – my daughter gives me a very quick hug and then heads straight for the playdough. We make lots of things together, I enjoyed making things too. Other children move away from the dough but she wants to stay... Eve says this is fine and points out all of the learning and skills she is practising. Eve asks her lots of questions like ‘which worm is the longest /shortest’, she gets them all right! I find it hard to think of questions like this, but seeing Eve do it makes it seem easier.’

‘The teachers come back for the children - my daughter has had to take some of the playdough with them as she didn’t want to leave the activity! But this is ok, Eve says its fine and not to worry. I get my activity pack for the week and leave with the other parents – it’s been lovely getting to join in with my little one’s learning, and I’ve got more ideas now of things to do with her.’

I didn’t realise we could just talk about the pictures together, it makes us both want to look at books more...

The idea to paint with water is great - they can have fun and it’s easy to clean up

I had no idea my child recognised so many words in logos and signs!

Sarah* loved the playdough so much she had to take a little bit back to class! Manipulating the playdough builds her finger strength and control for when she starts learning to write, as well as letting her create anything she can imagine:

‘Mum said it’s a special day today, she is going to come and play with me in school! We go into another room with lots of toys. I see my mum and give her a hug - then I see the playdough so I run to get a chair. I start squeezing the dough, I like how it feels. Mum sits with me and asks what I am going to make. I say ‘the sun’ and make a ball, with lots of little sticks to make the pointy bits. The teacher says she loves it! I make more things and mum plays with the dough too.’

‘Mum asks me if I want to read a book, but I want to stay and play with the dough... the teacher comes and says that’s fine, I don’t have to move on. The teacher asks me to show her the longest worm I have made... I point to it, mum is proud I got it right! Now my class teacher has come back and it’s time for mum to go, but I really don’t want to leave the playdough... The teacher asks if I want to take some back to class so I can carry on, I say yes and line up. I show all my friends in the line my dough! I’ve had fun making things with my mum today’.

Our Baby Bank - hope & dignity in challenging times

Our baby bank provides essential items and good quality pre-loved clothing for families across Greater Manchester. We take referrals from professional colleagues in health, social care, charity and family support services across the region, supplying donated items including cots, prams and high-chairs. Where items can't be supplied secondhand, these are purchased.

This year we've been particularly grateful for support from local corporate and government partners, who have generously given their time and effort to support what is a vital resource for local families.

Volunteers from BT, Dyno-Rod, SO Energy, Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Telus Energy spent the day working alongside our dedicated volunteers, sorting items and putting together bundles for new arrivals.



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‘Thank you for hosting the volunteering day for the NHS Greater Manchester population health team - we all really enjoyed the day, and appreciated spending time with the baby bank volunteers. It was good to get away from a computer screen and do something hands-on which felt worthwhile, as well as being an eye-opening valuable experience.’

‘The team were impressed with the level of organisation in the warehouse, and how different tasks were assigned to volunteers. It was helpful to have the process explained from referral to a bundle being provided, and it's clear the baby bank team puts a lot of thought and care into making sure families get exactly what they need and improving the lives of so many.’

‘Several colleagues who volunteered expressed interest in being able to volunteer with the baby bank again. All wanted to extend their thanks to you Schadia and your team for organising and making the days possible and for being so warm and welcoming too.’

If your company would like to find out more about supporting our work, or spending a day at with the team our baby bank, please get in touch!





The baby bank relies year-round on our dedicated volunteer team, who give their time in the warehouse and at home cleaning, ironing, sorting and packaging all the items generously donated by our local community. For many, volunteering is not just about helping others, it's also about connection, purpose, and belonging.

Additional thanks to the Hyde Womens' Institute, whose members help us out greatly with ironing - as you can imagine, there's a lot to get through!

Thank you!

Support your community, shop local!

Our charity shop in Hyde continues to thrive, thanks to a dedicated staff and volunteer team, and generous donations from our community. Proceeds from our shop support our baby bank, so not only is your shopping super-sustainable, you are also helping to support local families in need.



If you are in a position to donate to our shop or our baby bank, we'd love to hear from you!

All our contact details, including addresses and telephone numbers for each site, can be found at <https://home-starthost.org.uk/contact-home-start/>

The Dad Matters team offer parent-infant relationship support for dads whose partners are expecting, or have recently welcomed a new baby, helping fathers to feel a vital and valued part of their baby's first days.

Our Dad Matters team have worked hard to build and strengthen relationships and awareness with partner services, and a common thread across our service narratives this year has been increased partnership working, and greater consideration of fathers' support needs. Dads are being identified and referred earlier in their parenting journeys, which is so important to help build a positive, loving relationship with their baby.

Person-centred support is key, with our support offer being tailored to adapt to complex situations, or families where culturally sensitive support can make all the difference.

Fathers report feeling more included in perinatal conversations and families say they are more confident to navigate services. Our Perinatal Mental Health coordinators work closely with maternity and mental health services, resulting in families reporting feeling less stigmatised and more supported in recovery.

“ —

‘I think the best thing about the time I've spent with Dad Matters is having that supportive sounding board, someone to share the highs and lows of parenting with, the joys and the challenges, and explore ways of working things out for the best together as dads. Overall the experience has helped me be a more reflective and resilient father to my two girls, and set me up well to continue on that journey. Thanks very much for all your support!’

— ”

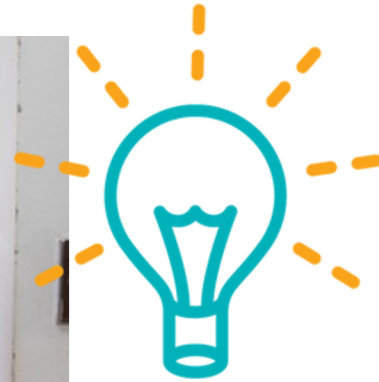




Genetics Outreach Support in Oldham

Our Genetics Outreach Project aims to increase access to services and raise awareness of inherited disorders, through the provision of training and development for health and social care professionals working with affected families and communities.

Arjmund, our Outreach Worker, works to raise awareness in the community, offers training and information sessions and supports a caseload of families experiencing or worried about genetically transmitted illness.



Delivering Christmas Joy

We are touched every Christmas by the care and generosity of local businesses and communities. Many of our families experience financial hardship, which can make Christmas a particularly difficult time of year.



Dunelm Stockport & Bolton's 'Delivering Joy' campaign did just that, bringing the joy of a Christmas gift to hundreds of families. We couldn't be more grateful to the store staff for their tireless organisation, and to Dunelm customers for their thoughtfully chosen gifts.

Collections and donations from BT Openreach, GGR Group, One Soul Café, Northpoint and many generous individuals helped us deliver joy to families across Greater Manchester this Christmas.



Thank You!



Home-Starts in Greater Manchester present: ‘Playful Early Development’ with Dr Dan Wuori

We were thrilled to host Dr. Dan Wuori, Founder and President of Early Childhood Policy Solutions and a global advocate for playful learning, to share his expertise on how everyday play shapes young minds and explore the science behind creating joyful, nurturing environments for children.

Serving concurrently as a Strategic Advisor on Early Childhood to the Saul Zaentz Charitable Foundation, in both roles Dr. Wuori works alongside governors and state legislators to improve early years policy across the United States.

We hosted an exciting one-off event at the Friends Meeting House in Manchester, where Dr Dan and a panel of local early years professionals including our own Kieran, Eve and Rachel discussed the vital importance of play – not just fun, but the foundation for a child’s future – and how we can encourage and make space for play to nurture happy, thriving families.

We were also honoured to welcome Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham to the event, emphasising the region’s commitment to improving experiences and outcomes in early childhood across Greater Manchester.



‘The doors on the bus go open and shut...’ For toddlers, music and movement are more than just entertainment. Beat, rhythm, and tempo all stimulate children’s developing brains - helping body and mind to work together in coordination. Repetitive songs like “The Wheels on the Bus” also help children with important pre-reading skills like pattern recognition and auditory discrimination (the ability to distinguish between separate sounds).’ - Dr Wuori on the learning power of singing your favourite song - something to keep in mind on the 10th repeat!

Mayor Andy Burnham speaks at the event.



Dr Dan Wuori with HOST’s Sarah Cook and Rachel Hover

Thank you to our volunteers



Our volunteers gift their time, skills and experience, whether visiting families, supporting groups or working in our shop & baby bank. Thank you to:

Abeda Khan	Ernestine Simo Simo	Lisa Littlewood	Renata Sikora
Afifa El-Haddad	Ewa Firgurska	Liz Baker	Rochelle Garvey
Alicia Williams	Fae Vincent	Lorri Webb	Roma Tariq
Amanda Crosthwaite	Faustine Onyembo	Louise McKee	Ronald Marrow
Amy Fletcher	Flora Muntu	Lydia Kinsler	Rosie Green
Amy Heyes	Gemma Hotchkiss	Lynn Taylor	Ruth Pickford
Amy Thwaites	Hayley Whitehead	Lynne McMyllor	Saba Jabeen
Amy Turner	Helen Chapman	Lynne Schofield	Safiya Ahmed
Andrea Hunter	Helen Garfield	Maira Khan	Saima Rashid
Andrew Pickles	Hoi Sang Ip	Maisie Wilson	Sandra Noyes
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Anna Davenport	Isatou Joof Samba	Margaret Buckley	Sarah Fitzgerald
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Grateful thanks to all the organisations and businesses who have made our work in 2024-25 possible, through funding, donations, gifts in kind and corporate volunteering:

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CAF Bank	Findell Education	One Soul Café
Cadent Gas	Garfield Weston Foundation	Rotary Club of Denton & Audenshaw
Cash For Kids	GGR Group	SO Energy
Charities Trust	Greggs	Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council
Children In Need	Greater Manchester Combined Authority	Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council
Cracking Good Food	Greater Manchester Mental Health Service	Telus Energy
Dance Like a Mother	Health Education England	The Dane Bank, Denton
Deloitte	Henry Smith Charity	The National Lottery Community Fund
Dunelm Ashton-u-Lyne	John Lewis	Willow Wood Hospice Lottery
Dunelm Bolton	Just Giving Foundation	
Dunelm Stockport	Lidl Bolton	
	Luna's Kitchen	

Individual Donors

A huge 'Thank You' to all the individuals and businesses who have donated to our fundraising appeals or through our website, and to everyone who has supported our families with donations of items. A special thanks to everyone who has fundraised on our behalf - we are incredibly grateful for the support we receive from our fantastic community!



With special thanks to:

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Together, we help families with young children through their most challenging times, because childhood can't wait.



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Registered office: Ryecroft Hall, Manchester Road Audenshaw M34 5ZJ
Registered in England and Wales: no. 7203889,
Registered Charity no. 1135838

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