

Supporting families in North West Kent



Many parents need help, advice, support and friendship during those early years when children are young.

Trained volunteers home visit those feeling isolated and in desperate need of reassurance – without a strong family infrastructure

A team of 70 multicultural volunteers, speaking 20 languages between them, support families in Dartford, Gravesham, Swanley and surrounding villages for 2-3 hours each week, for 6-15 months, having been carefully matched by staff frequently according to shared life experience. Families referred by health and social community workers because they are

- socially isolated with no friends or family
- suffering from post-natal illness
- coping with a disabled or sick child
- overwhelmed by grief after the loss of a loved one and unable to function
- struggling to cope with multiple birth
- suffering with depression / mental health
- from a minority ethnic community and unable to speak to other professionals



A well established charity raising its own funds to support parents in some of the most deprived areas in Kent - many of whom struggle with additional challenges related to low income, debt management and unemployment.

Families in North West Kent are more ethnically diverse than any other Kent district – and recent data from Dartford and Gravesham Community Safety Partnership also shows an increase in domestic violence and teenage pregnancies

Home-Start NWK offers parents of pre-school children

- Weekly 1-1 home visits from a trained volunteer with relevant life experience
- Emotional and / or practical help
- Encouragement regarding positive parenting and community engagement
- Support groups [inc. those for Post Natal Depression, Special Needs & Multiple Birth]
- Outings and parties
- 20 languages spoken by trained volunteers
- Signposting to other agencies for specialist help

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There are many benefits for children as volunteers demonstrate positive play, encourage and enable their parents to access community provision and accompany them on shopping and park trips. Also various appointments including medical ones. Preschool children are isolated by default when their parents are - so Home-Start support helps to improve their lifestyle and emotional wellbeing, enabling them to grow into well adjusted young people.

“I was suffering from domestic abuse and had to leave home quickly with my three kids. I didn’t trust any officials. Home-Start saved me and my volunteer supported us 100% at a time when I was desperate”

“I would be in jail now and my daughter in care if Home-Start had not stepped in to help me”

Home-Start NW Kent needs to generate £100K to provide volunteer training for new recruits and home visiting help for 180 families referred for support each year and are reliant on the goodwill of the public for donations.

Your donation will pay for :

£100	A volunteer supporting a family for 2/3 hours weekly for a month
£250	To complete DBS safety checks on newly recruited volunteers for 2 years
£500	Finance weekly support groups for 10 families for 6 months
£1250	Will sponsor a volunteer for a year = weekly home visiting support for two vulnerable families. Or finance a day trip for 50 families

Dartford MP Gareth Johnson says

“Home-Start North West Kent is an excellent organisation. There is a shortfall in assistance for those suffering from mental illness and this charity catches the families that have been overlooked by social services or are not on the radar. Its key strength is that it is integral to the local community”

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