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Glasgow North and North Lanarkshire



Welcome to our Newsletter!



Director's Intro



December is always a crazy month in the world of Home-Start GNNL and this year was no different. We are so grateful for the kind donations we received, which come in so many different forms. From beautifully wrapped gifts, to cheques popped through our front door. People's kindness and generosity is always amazing! This year we were delighted to be able to provide every child and parent we work alongside with a carefully selected gift. With the current cost of living crisis impacting so heavily on families, we know how well received these gifts were.



We were also delighted to arrange fantastic Christmas parties for families to attend, which everyone enjoyed. Our staff and volunteers enjoyed some Christmas creating making beautiful wreaths whilst enjoying some festive nibbles.



We have much to look forward to in the coming year and with an ever-expanding staff team we are able to increase our support to families further. Whilst 1:1 support in the home with volunteers remains our priority, we are listening carefully to families about what else would help them and their young families. We know many families lack confidence and even getting over the doorstep can be a challenge. By building up trusting relationships with volunteers and staff, their worlds can be widened in time with friendships being developed in their own communities and accessing local groups and amenities.

We are committed to working collaboratively with all stakeholders, but most importantly are keen to hear the voices of families, their children, and volunteers. Together we can continue to shape and develop our service ensuring it meets the needs of all communities that we work alongside. We are currently working with our staff and Board developing our EEDI action plan and are also working towards the LGBT charter.

We are always eager to hear from others about things that we have done well but also how we can improve. Every day is a school day, so please don't be shy in sharing any feedback, positive or negative!

Wrap up well and roll on the longer days .



Staff News

We welcome Laura, who has joined the Glasgow North team as Group Worker! Laura brings with her a passion for working with children and lots of great ideas, which she has already been bringing to our groups - see photo of Laura (in her pink hoodie) having fun at one of our family groups.



We would also like to say congratulations to Brogan, who has taken on the role of Group and Events Lead. Brogan has already put together great events with our Breakfast with Santa Christmas parties! We also welcome back Emily, our Volunteer Coordinator, from maternity leave. Emily will be working with Anna on volunteer recruitment, training and all other volunteer aspects of Home-Start GNNL.



Volunteer News



Volunteer Training & Assessment Course

We wrapped up our last training block in December. It was fantastic to see volunteers engage with such enthusiasm and passion each week.

Our next volunteer training courses have just begun in both Maryhill and Bellshill. The course runs a half day each week for 7 weeks.

Volunteer News

In December we held a Mince Pie event for volunteers to get together for some festive cheer and chat. A big thank you to the volunteers for helping us with Christmas gift deliveries to our families.

On the lead up to Christmas, staff and volunteers also had the opportunity to socialise and get busy at the wreath-making workshop. There was much banter as everyone got creative decorating their wreaths using orange slices, pine cones, leaves and colourful ribbons!

Volunteer Spotlight

We have interviewed two of our wonderful volunteers - Esraa who volunteers for Glasgow North and Chanelle who volunteers for North Lanarkshire. It is a great way to get an insight into the volunteer role and hear about the difference volunteers can make to families.



Esraa started her volunteering journey at Home-Start in 2021 for Glasgow North. She has kindly given her time to provide support to a local family in the community using her amazing skills, experience and caring nature.

What does volunteering mean to you? / Why is volunteering important to you?

Volunteering holds great significance in both my life and the lives of those I aim to assist. It serves as a source of great personal reward and, at times, becomes a coping strategy for stress. Witnessing smiles and relief in others when they receive my help, support and kindness is deeply fulfilling.

What motivated you to volunteer with Home-Start Glasgow North and North Lanarkshire?

I discovered Home-Start through a friend and was inspired by their impactful work in supporting families. Reflecting on my own experiences as a parent, I recognize the invaluable support I wish I had during my children's early years, particularly as a newcomer to a country navigating feelings of isolation.

Volunteering is my way of providing essential assistance to other families, and it also complements my academic pursuits, offering practical experience in the field of family health and well-being.

Tell us about an achievement or contribution you are most proud of during your time as a Home-Start volunteer.

I take great pride in the support I provided to the family I was matched with through my volunteer work with Home-Start. Witnessing the transformation of the mother, who is now equipped with new-found confidence and resilience, is very rewarding. Knowing that I played a part in empowering her to face the world independently fills me with a sense of accomplishment and reinforces the huge impact you can make by giving a little of your time in volunteering.

I'm equally proud of my contributions to the family group activities during the initial stages of my volunteering. Being part of these activities allowed me to make a meaningful impact on the community and connect families. It's fulfilling to see how collective efforts can create a positive and supportive environment for everyone involved.

Completing numerous training sessions has been a significant accomplishment. These learning experiences have not only expanded my expertise but have also equipped me with valuable insights and tools to enhance the support I provide to families.

Tell us a little bit about your role. Tell us about an aspect of your volunteering that you have really enjoyed.

My role involves offering emotional and practical support to my matched family through weekly home visits. Active listening serves as my primary tool to gather and understand all the issues, allowing me to provide as much support as possible. I offer advice to the mother on stress management and assist in managing children. At times I engage in signposting, directing the family to other organizations for additional support when needed. All with the advice and support of my supervisor.

I really enjoyed witnessing the smiles and giggles on the children's faces, as well as the relief on parents' faces when they felt heard and supported.

What have you taken from your experience of volunteering?

The volunteering experience has greatly contributed to my personal growth, life satisfaction and problem-solving skills. I appreciate that even with minimal effort, I can make a meaningful and positive difference in the life of others.

Why should others choose to volunteer with Home-Start?

Volunteering with Home-Start has been a great pleasure. When you volunteer you receive the support you need and acquire the skills necessary to assist families effectively. Home-Start understands the challenges parents face, and that's why they work alongside families

in a friendly, confidential, and non-judgemental environment.

Chanelle started volunteering with Home-Start in 2021 for the North Lanarkshire team. Chanelle brings a lot of amazing experience and qualities with her. Here she shares more about her volunteer journey and what it means to her to be a Home-Start volunteer.



What does volunteering mean to you? / Why is volunteering important to you?

Volunteering is important to me because it gives me the opportunity to help people. I am able to practice and develop my social and counselling skills that could help overwhelmed parents to build their confidence.

What motivated you to volunteer with Home-Start Glasgow North and North Lanarkshire?

I wanted to make a career change following the birth of my daughter and wanted to gain confidence, learn new skills, and explore ways of helping people. I was happy that Home-Start had opened a North Lanarkshire branch because I had previously volunteered as an English language tutor with Home-Start Glasgow South many moons ago, so I knew how fantastic a charity it was already and was itching to come on board as a peer volunteer.

Tell us about an achievement or contribution you are most proud of during your time as a Home-Start Volunteer.

Helping an anxious single mother's self-esteem improve so that she becomes an active member of her community and look at enrolling into educational opportunities to change careers. To see her growth in the time I had spent with her and her children, I felt immense pride.

Tell us a little bit about your role. Tell us about an aspect of your volunteering that you have really enjoyed.

I primarily provide practical and emotional support for families, especially the parents. I have helped parent(s) budget their income and listen empathically to concerns they have about child-rearing. I also enjoy the excursions that Home-Start take families on because I interact with other families. I am also a Bookbug-at-home practitioner, so I enjoy doing that with the kids, they love the sparkly blanket!

What have you taken from your experience of volunteering?

I have gained a sense of purpose because I am able to help improve the lives of families. Going forward, it has given me the confidence to pursue counselling as a career path and I want to work with single parents.

Why should others choose to volunteer with Home-Start?

Home-Start is a phenomenal organisation that will give you great training, opportunities to develop professionally, and you will be supported by friendly and approachable staff who are always willing to help.

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Our current volunteer training is well on it's way, but if you know anyone who would be interested in our next block of training, please share our information with them or they can get in touch at info@homestartgnnl.org.uk. Click the buttons below for our volunteer leaflet and application form.

[Click here for our Volunteer Leaflet](#)

[Click here for the Volunteer Application Form](#)



Fundraising



Co-op Local Cause

Co-op members raised £2,230.18 for Family Groups over the past year. Our Community Engagement and Fundraising Officer (CEFO) was invited along to a year-end celebration at Cumbernauld and Kilsyth store to meet the staff and other local causes. HSGNNL would like to thank Co-op members, the staff, and member pioneer for supporting us.



Fundraising Events

We would like to give a special mention to The High School of Glasgow who raised £850 for us in December. The S6 Charities Committee organised a Christmas Fayre in aid of HSGNNL and SocialBite. We were present on the day, making home-made Christmas decorations and talking to parents/carers regarding local family support and volunteering opportunities.



Donations

We are thankful for our Community Champions across GN and NL who have supported us in many forms. We have been present in supermarkets across both areas raising awareness of Home-Start and the support that we offer. Our most recent donations have included food packages from Waitrose and food vouchers from Scotmid.

We are also very grateful for the community support received via Glasgow's Spirit of Christmas. Many local businesses got behind Home-Start GNNL and made a huge difference to local families over the festive period.



Did you know you can raise funds for Home-Start GNNL when you do your online shopping!

You can do this by signing up to easyfundraising - it takes just 2 mins to sign up and there are only 4 questions to answer! You can sign up here:

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/>

We would be very grateful if you choose us as your charity as these donations will contribute greatly to the work we do to support local families!





As always, a team of our staff will be walking the Glasgow Kiltwalk on Sunday 28th April 2024. We would like to invite as many of you as possible to join us for a great day out and a blether. There is no pressure on fundraising for this event, it's all about the team spirit! Come along and get to know the staff and volunteers and be a part of the HSGNNL family.

Choose the 3, 14 or 23-mile challenge. The wee wander is great for the kids and your furry four-legged friends!

Get in touch today for your 50% off registration promo code - Rachel@homestartgnnl.org.uk

Training

In September, Kirsteen (Family Support Coordinator for North Lanarkshire) attended a 2-day immersive online Video Interaction Guidance (VIG) training to train as a VIG practitioner. Kirsteen has kindly shared more about VIG.



You may be wondering what VIG is... *"VIG is a strengths-based, brief intervention that promotes attunement, sensitivity and mentalization in relationships. The principles and*

practice can be used to work within any relationship. VIG is effective with parents and carers of children across all ages (including babies and unborn babies)."

VIG requires clients (in our case, caregivers and children) to engage in a number of cycles of natural engagement to be captured in video footage before being micro-analyzed and edited down into small bite-sized moments of attunement and positive engagement. This footage (generally lasting no more than a few minutes) is then shared by the practitioner with the caregivers where they can review the footage and spend some time analysing what they see from their unique perspective; this is repeated a handful of times to help cement the positive realisations and observations noted by the clients at each review meeting. VIG is a client-centered intervention and therefore moves at the client's pace with their goals in mind.



With support from LGBT Youth Scotland, Home-Start Glasgow North and North Lanarkshire are delighted to be working towards becoming an LGBT chartered organisation.

Over the coming months we will critically evaluate the organisation ensuring our policies

and procedures not only meet legislative needs, but are also as inclusive as they can be. The programme of support will provide the necessary training and guidance to the team allowing us to reflect on our practices and ensure our services are welcome to all.

Keep your eyes peeled for up-and-coming events, training and opportunities to be involved in supporting us review and develop our services and become an LGBT Chartered organisation.

Group Support

Our new Café Stork in Glasgow's East End had a lovely start on 25th January - despite the rainy weather!

Parents/carers with babies (0-12 months) are welcome to come to our small, nurturing group to share experiences and make new friends.



We'll be chatting about weaning, oral health, child development/learning and more. Bookbug and Baby Massage will also be visiting and we'll share some well-being tips to help with mental health. Healthy snacks and refreshments will also be available.

Thursdays, 10 – 11:30 am

Barrowfield Community Centre, 67 Yate Street Glasgow G31 4AQ

Family Group Glasgow
Thursday, Maryhill Community Centre
for 0-5 years

Family Group Bellshill
Friday, Bellshill West Church
for 0-5 years

Café Stork Cumbernauld
Thursday, St Mungo's Church,
Cumbernauld
for 0-12 months

Heart of Scotstoun
Tuesday, Heart of Scotstoun
Comm. Centre
for 0-3 years

Springhill Community Centre
Monday, Springhill Community Centre,
Shotts
for 0-5 years

All groups run from 10.00 – 11:30 am and are term-time.

If you would like more information on any of our groups, you can email us at:
info@homestartgnnl.org.uk



Family Group Glasgow

Family Group offers a variety of play activities and experiences for families with children under five.

We have continued working in partnership with Glasgow Sculpture Studio and the Open Museum to deliver the Hands that Hold project – we examine one of the Open Museum handling boxes and then create an artistic response to what we have seen. We looked at the childhood memory box, and families looked at, handled and discussed each piece. There was lots of discussion around our own childhood toys and memories, from ping pong to music boxes, to old toy cars and dolls houses and dolls house furniture. Families then created fabric collages from a huge variety of materials and wool and ribbons, introducing the children to different textures.

We also looked at a handling box about the life of a Chinese artist and their personal journey leaving their own country. Families were able to look at, handle and discuss each piece. Families then created and decorated cardboard memory boxes for their child.

We enjoyed a selection of Christmas crafts for our final session and discussed feedback about the term's activities and planned ahead what we might enjoy in the new term. The new term began with a lovely messy-play session enjoying gloop and water play!

Each week we have a selection of toys and resources for babies and toddlers. We enjoy healthy snacks, there is a wide selection of books, and we sing songs and rhymes each week as a group activity.



Family Group Bellshill

This group welcomes families with children aged 0-5 years. We provide a relaxed, child-led environment and the opportunity to take part in fun, messy-play and stimulating activities which nurture children's development.

We returned to Family Group Bellshill this term with a lovely session thinking and talking about what makes me 'me', prompted by World Religion Day on 21st January. We had fun creating a Home-Start world, surrounded by our unique hands, which we traced around, cut out and painted.

Café Stork Cumbernauld

This group provides a warm and nurturing space for families to make new connections and share perinatal experiences. We provide a safe environment for babies aged 0-12 months to explore their world and take part in lots of stimulating sensory fun whilst strengthening bonds with their parents/caregivers.

We have enjoyed welcoming families back to Café Stork Cumbernauld after the Christmas break and have had the pleasure of new families joining us too! One of the weeks fell on Burns Night, which inspired a Scottish songs and rhymes session where parents and babies enjoyed singing along and doing the actions to the Shooglie Woogie – the Scottish version of the Hokey Cokey! Burns Night also led to funny discussions of our differing dialects and a lovely group chat of what influenced the choosing of our baby's names!

If you would like more information on any of our groups, you can email us on: info@homestartgnnl.org.uk



Isla Fisher visits Bellshill



Over the last few years we have had incredible support from Save The Children enabling us to support many parents and their young families through challenging times.

It was a pleasure for our North Lanarkshire team to recently host a visit by one of Save the Children's Ambassadors, Isla Fisher, who met families and heard of the difference that Home-Start is making to their lives.

In November 2023 it was a cover story for You magazine, but also later appeared in other newspapers. Save the Children shared a video of the visit which you can [watch here](#).



In November we were joined by so many friends and supporters at our AGM in the beautiful Mackintosh Halls in Maryhill. The event celebrated 22 years of Home-Start Glasgow North and North Lanarkshire and 50 amazing years of Home-Start. It is hard to believe that a simple idea that started in Leicester in 1973 in Margaret Harrison's (Founder of HSUK) living room, has now spread to hundreds of communities across the UK.

Following the official AGM business chaired by Susan Walsh, Chair of the Board of Trustees, our Ambassador Kaye Adams spent time listening to brave and honest stories shared by families who have worked alongside HSGNNL over the last year. As always, it is their journeys and courage that inspire us all, staff, volunteers, funders and supporters, to do what we do every day supporting the work of Home-Start Glasgow North and North Lanarkshire. The children were engaged with a face painter, creche and amazing story-telling tales and Tunnock's tea cakes! Our event ended with a fun-filled Ceilidh and fabulous buffet.

Did you know that Home-Start UK have a fabulous magazine - Family Matters! If you would like to keep up to date on all Home-Start UK news, click the button below to subscribe.

Subscribe to our Family Matters magazine here!

We would love to hear your feedback on our newsletter, please get in touch if there's any further information you would like, or if there's anything you'd like to see included, you can email us at info@homestartgnnl.org.uk

We are always grateful for donations to help us continue to support families, you can donate by clicking on the button below.

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Info@homestartgnnl.org.uk

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