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**Glasgow North and
North Lanarkshire**



**Welcome to our
Newsletter!**



At last the lighter nights are here and hopefully the slightly warmer weather. I have a pair of trainers sitting behind my office door just waiting to get into some training for the Kiltwalk and I now can't use the cold, dark weather as an excuse! We are absolutely delighted to be joined by more supporters than ever for this year's Kiltwalk, with walkers (and dogs) in all three categories and a great combination of staff, volunteers, families, friends and community connectors! Not forgetting our favourite mascot as well!

Again, some changes to our team. This time we say goodbye to David, our Dad Matters Co-ordinator, and hello to Kirsteen, our new Family Support Co-ordinator in North Lanarkshire. We love when new members join our team bringing new skills, experience and expertise and Kirsteen most definitely ticks this box! We are also delighted to let you know about our new “bolstered” Board. As we continue to grow and develop we need a Board of Trustees that supports this growth and are excited to welcome 5 new members to the team. Welcome Tracy, Marsaili, Sheila, Charles, and Amy.



Like all family support charities, we are noticing an increase in the number of referrals which are often of a fairly complex nature. To support this increase we have been thinking creatively how best to recruit more volunteers. Whilst our current volunteers are our best advocates, we have been excited to see our name in lights on Maryhill Road billboards, and don't be surprised when you see our branding on buses in North Lanarkshire! Please spread the word about our volunteer opportunities as you know how much we love them (and need them!).

We continue to be inspired by families and volunteers every day as they share their life journeys with us. Parents and their young children have embraced the many fun activities and opportunities offered to them at groups, helping them grow and develop in a safe nurturing space. Parents have also attended Trauma Informed Parenting workshops and STEPS to excellence programmes, helping their confidence and skills flourish, and supporting their children to meet their milestones. Our volunteers never cease to amaze us with their endless dedication and commitment to our work.



We were extremely proud to have two volunteers, Linda Mitchell and Victorine Muyu, recognised at the recent HSUK Volunteer Awards, but ALL our volunteers deserve awards!

We have many things to look forward to in the months ahead and once again thank you for being alongside us.



New Chair of the Board



Home-Start Glasgow North and North Lanarkshire is delighted to announce that Susan Walsh, current Trustee on the Board, has taken over as the new Chair. We asked Susan to tell us a wee bit about herself...

I've been a Trustee of Home-Start Glasgow North and North Lanarkshire since 2020. I live in the West End of Glasgow and I'm a mum and a granny (probably the most important jobs I've ever done - and the hardest!). I was originally a nurse and then became a lecturer. I ended up being a college Principal, a fantastic job which I loved doing.



A bit like Home-Start, colleges change people's lives.

What attracted you to Home-Start Glasgow North and North Lanarkshire?

Many of the students I met in college were having a second or third go at education. They'd

had poor experiences as children and had faced some terrible life events. Education wasn't something that felt safe or good for them as children. Surviving was hard enough. So that experience, and my experience working with children and families when I was a nurse, showed me how important supporting families, especially during pregnancy and in the first few years of life really was in setting them up for success.

Someone who inspires you and why?

Oh, now that's a good question! I don't think I have one person who inspires me. I have lots of people who do that but all for different reasons. My granddaughter and grandson inspire me to be curious and not concerned about whether I'll look silly doing something (like dressing up or trying to roller skate!). My daughters inspire me because they're strong, confident, caring and intelligent women and never cease to amaze me at not just what they achieve, but how they do so, with grace and compassion - and I couldn't forget my hubby who's absolutely reliable. I know he'll never let me down no matter what. That takes real strength and commitment 'cos I can be a nightmare sometimes just like everyone else!

Cat or dog?

Both. At one time I had two cats, two dogs, a garter snake, two ducks, a tortoise and two white rats called Sodom and Gomorrah. I think my sister "liberated" them from a university lab!

Favourite hobby?

Reading. If you can read you can go anywhere, be anyone and learn to do just about anything.



Family Outings



Babes in the Wood

Many families had a wonderful evening out to Babes in the Wood at the Theatre Royal. The cast, crew and all the volunteers involved put on a great show!

The PwC Pantomime, brought to life by around 200 staff and alumni, showcased the performance to find Merlin, Robin Hood, Maid Marian and the Merry People in the Medieval Camelot. Many families scooped up the chance to join in the audience and relayed “We LOVED it.... We really enjoyed it and are so grateful for the tickets.”

Thank you to PwC for putting on the West End quality performance in Glasgow.

Irnu Bru Carnival Tickets

In December 2022 we were grateful to be offered a number of Irnu Bru carnival tickets for families to use in their opening, autism friendly session. The children enjoyed the carnival atmosphere, reduced noise and lights during the session even through long lines for rides can be hard to wait in!



Thanks to the kindness of guests at the Barratt Homes West of Scotland Charity Dinner held at the Hilton Hotel in Glasgow, Home-Start Glasgow North and North Lanarkshire were overwhelmed to receive a huge donation of £170,000 from the event. Nikki O'Hara, HSGNNL Director, Susan Walsh, Chair, and other staff and Trustees were delighted to attend the event, which really was amazing. Nikki commented "We are stunned with the generosity of this donation - it's an incredible sum of money to receive and will allow us to continue to support families and their young children at such a crucial time. Along with helping us sustain what we do, it will enable us to recruit and train more volunteers to support families through the difficulties that they face. Volunteers are the heartbeat of our

organisation and families tell us daily of the difference their volunteer makes in their life”.

David Scott, Managing Director, Barratt Homes West Scotland, said: “When we heard about the amazing work Nikki and the team at Home-Start Glasgow North and North Lanarkshire were doing, we felt moved to get involved. We believe that every child deserves the best start in life and Home-Start is there for families when they need it most. I am humbled to think that our Charity Dinner will help support families across Glasgow North and North Lanarkshire during difficult times.”

Nikki reflected that whilst the financial contribution is “a lifesaver”, it is also the other doors that this sort of relationship with Barratt Homes can open too. “With 600 people attending the dinner and hearing about our work, of course there was a perfect platform for profile raising and networking. From the event we have gained two new Board members to support work around HR and health and safety, 12 walkers to join us at the Kiltwalk and a number of staff interested in volunteering with us as part as our community days offer. We are secretly hoping that if we have any small building requirements, they might be just the people to ask!”.



Community Garden Day



We are inviting you and community volunteers to help us spruce up, clear the winter weeds and help make our garden beautiful again for families to enjoy with their young children.

We are on a mission to ensure our garden is a haven for families and nature to thrive. Help us by getting involved, some tasks may include-

- Power washing outside toys
- Painting benches
- General tidying of potted plants

All finished off with a well-deserved cuppa and biscuits!

Our first session will be Wednesday 26th April from 12.30pm-3pm, to book your place, please contact Caitlin@HomeStartGNNL.org.uk

Training



STEPS training

We are delighted to be able to run two STEPS courses for parents this term, one in the North East and one in the North West of the city. In the NE we have partnered with the Winter Gardens Nursery in Tollcross Park who have given us the use of their lovely family rooms to hold the course as we were already providing Home-Start support to some of their families who were interested in attending STEPS. This course helps participants learn about what factors influence their behaviours, learn new skills to tackle the issues that are holding them back in life, and to move towards their hopes and dreams for them and their children's futures. The course in the NE has recently started and the parents are already excited to be learning new things each week and sharing their experiences with each other. The course in the NW is due to start shortly.

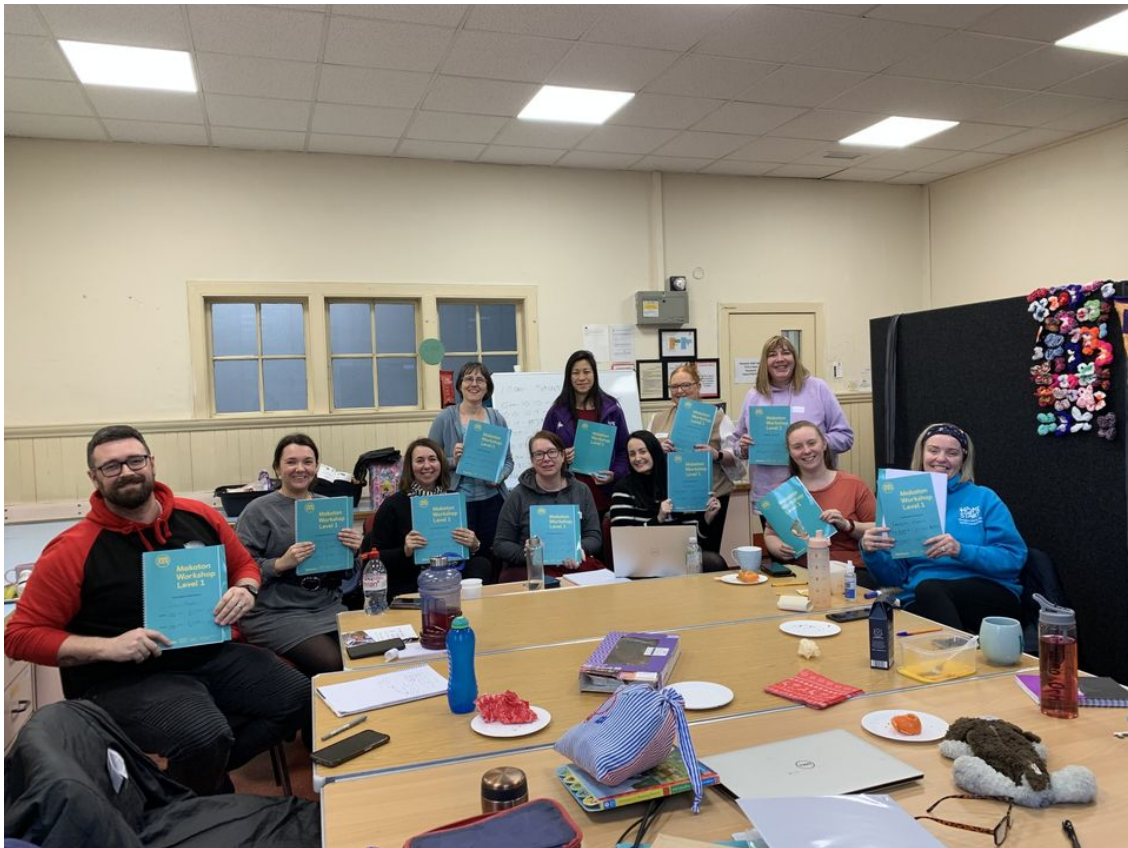
Some Home-Start staff also attended STEPS training, and a few also did further training to become STEPS facilitators.

Here is some feedback from Pamela, our North Lanarkshire Family Support Worker, who has attended both trainings:

"It was an absolutely amazing experience to be trained by Anne in the company of colleagues with like-minded views. It was a team bonding experience and has taught us tools and resources we can use in personal and professional life.

As a facilitator, I really can't wait to deliver this. I look forward to seeing the attendees benefit as much as I did and I am keen to find out how people utilise these tools in every day life".

If you would like to read more on STEPS, which is built on the core concepts of The Pacific Institute's curriculum, please visit [The Pacific Institute's website](#).



Makaton Level 1 Training

Staff loved taking part in Makaton Level 1 training with Katy from Down's Syndrome Scotland. The training provided a practical introduction to the Makaton Language Programme and sessions included discussing commonly asked questions, hints and tips for effective signing and symbol use, and how to start using Makaton in everyday situations at home or work.

During the sessions, we were split into groups to practice the Makaton Core Vocabulary which included the signing of animals, food, places and objects. We found the exercises engaging, fun and practical!

North Lanarkshire Referrals

North Lanarkshire are now open for referrals! If you would like you send a referral in, you can email the referral form to info@homestartgnnl.org.uk, click the button below for the most up to date referral form.

If you would like to self-refer you can send an email with your contact details, and one of the team will get back in touch with you.

[Click for our Referral Form](#)

Perinatal Support



[Perinatal Infant Mental Health Modules](#)

HSGNNL were asked by HSUK to support the development of 4 modules which will be used to support Home-Start volunteers to build their skills, confidence and understanding in supporting parents and children in the first 1001 days of their life.

With this training volunteers will have more of an understanding on how to support Perinatal Mental Health (PMH) and Perinatal Infant Mental Health (PIMH) in their role as Home-Start volunteers.

The modules are available as face-to-face training or as an e-learning option, and they bring together the science of the social and emotional wellbeing and development of children in the earliest years of life and an introduction to perinatal mental health. Each module is packed with videos, information, and interactive exercises to help volunteers consider their role in promoting parenting confidence and helping parents and carers to build responsive relationships with their children.

We will be rolling out this valuable training this year so watch this space!



Infant Mental Health Course by Human Development Scotland

Ainsley, our Family Support Worker in Glasgow, shared her experience having recently attended a 6 week Infant Mental Health course ran by Human Development Scotland. This course ran for 4 hours each week on a Tuesday afternoon. During the 6 weeks she had to present a detailed work discussion piece and also an infant observation.

This helped with her own personal development and also was so valuable to get feedback, advice and encouragement from other third sector organizations and health professionals. Ainsley gained knowledge from listening to others' work practices and also gained peer support. "This training has bettered my working knowledge of infant mental health and how to support parents have better attachment and bonding with their child and how important and beneficial this is for them". Ainsley feels confident in supporting families and has better knowledge and understanding now of infant mental health.



Volunteers' News



Volunteer Training and Assessment Course

Our current Volunteer Training & Assessment course started on 7th March 2023 and will finish near the end of April, with a break in-between for the Easter holidays. We look forward to welcoming our new volunteers to the Home-Start team.



If you are interested in learning more about our training, please get in touch at info@homestartgnnl.org.uk



Volunteer Spotlight



We thought it would be lovely to share an interview with a GN and a NL volunteer on their thoughts on being a Home-Start volunteer, thank you Elaine and Eloise for sharing.

Elaine Bonner - Glasgow North Volunteer

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

Giving up some of your time to try to help, support and make a difference to a family's life through challenging times.



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

Having retired, I wanted to give some of my free time to a charity where I could help in any way. I love meeting people and wanted an active role as a volunteer. Home-Start offers everything I want to do – meeting families in their own homes, getting to know them, listening to their issues and building a trusting relationship.

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

After training as a volunteer, contact with my first family was on zoom. We spoke about the many challenges the family faced and how we would try to improve some of the issues. Myself and my Co-ordinator contacted outside agencies and help was at hand to improve the life of this family.

On zoom, I tried to engage the children by reading books and singing nursery rhymes. When we were finally allowed to visit (in the garden), it was wonderful to meet mum, dad and their four children. Mum always encouraged the children to sing so, after a few months, I took my keyboard and instruments to their house and we had fun singing. We read books together, played in the garden and walked to the local park.

I am now with another family who are seeking asylum. I am totally impressed by mum who has three children of whom two are autistic. Living in a high rise apartment block, she is so resilient, positive and wants the best for her children. She appreciates any help that is given to her.

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

To be perfectly honest, visiting a family in person has to be my favourite role. You get to know the family so well.

At a home visit I arrive and talk with mum and/or dad. Anything that concerns the family is discussed and followed through or resolved.

I play with the children indoors: musical activities, reading, drawing, play with their toys. If the weather is fine, we go outside to the local park. Usually the children bring their bikes and/or scooters. With another baby in the pram, mum says she could not do this on her own.

I also enjoy helping out at the Christmas Party and family day trips during the Easter and Summer holidays.

What have you taken from your experience of volunteering?

For me, it is a joy to volunteer for Home-Start.

You can't change or solve everything, you can only do your best to help, support and

advise the family. With my first family I felt that, at times, I was taking on all the family's problems and would think and worry about them daily. Volunteers must look after their own mental health.

The time that a volunteer spends with a family with young children is precious.

Why should others choose to volunteer with Home-Start?

It is very rewarding. You feel a sense of achievement as you are doing something worthwhile with your time. If you can make any positive change to a family's life - that is amazing.



Eloise Telfer - NL Student Volunteer

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

Having been a recipient of Home-Start's services in the past, and having had such a positive and uplifting experience, I wanted to be able to pass that on to other families.

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

As my youngest had started primary school, I also started a college course, and one of the conditions was a placement with a voluntary organisation, and having thought of Home-Start over the years due to my own experience with them, I knew Home-Start was going to be my first choice.

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

I have only been actively working with my families since January but I hope I can provide them a listening ear, confidence, gain independence and reassurance that they are doing an amazing job!

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

At present the majority of it is really just emotional support and signposting, but I'm hoping with the good weather starting to come through that we can go out and enjoy the weather and fresh air. I have really enjoyed meeting my families and listening to them. I also attended the North Lanarkshire Christmas party for the families back in December where I got to meet other families and talk to them, as well as meet their own volunteers and hear their stories.

What have you taken from your experience of volunteering?

That it is a fulfilling experience, to know that you are developing a friendship with a family, and are able to laugh with them and cheer them on but also there to help them get through the tougher stuff and offer a tissue if necessary.

Why should others choose to volunteer with Home-Start?

To know that you can help provide a positive experience, not only for the parents but also their children, my older children still remember our volunteer and the excitement they had knowing she was coming for a weekly visit. It's an amazing thing to not only watch the families grow and change but also as a volunteer it's helped me to grow as a person too.

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



Group Support



Heart of Scotstoun

Home-Start @ Heart of Scotstoun runs every Tuesday (excluding school holidays) for families with children aged 0-3 years. This group focuses on increasing children's confidence, strengthening relationships and increased wellbeing.

We support this by providing a safe environment where families can engage in a variety of activities, such as messy play, regular Book Bug sessions, sensory play, Oral Health information and much more.



Café Stork @ Parkhead Schoolhouse

Café Stork @ Parkhead Schoolhouse is for families in the Perinatal stage (pregnancy – 1 year). Café Stork runs every Monday between 10am-11.30am (excluding school holidays). Since we moved to our new venue, we have delivered Baby Massage, messy play sessions, regular Book Bug sessions and perinatal fist aid. Our next Baby Massage block will start on the 6th of March.

Café Stork Cumbernauld

Café stork Cumbernauld is for families in the perinatal stage (pregnancy-1 year old), which runs every Thursday (excluding school holidays). Since introducing Baby Massage, our families have benefited from the enhanced parent-child bonding, raised parental confidence, learning of new skills, supporting their child's speech and language development, and opportunity to communicate with their babies in a safe, nurturing environment.

Being a parent can be a wonderful experience, however, it can also be quite isolating, so our families have enjoyed the opportunity to meet other parents, all while supporting their baby's development.



Family Group

We have up to 10 families attending Glasgow North Family Group each week and continue to offer a variety of play activities for families with children under five. Each week we have a selection of toys and resources for babies and toddlers, with a main craft activity available. We enjoy healthy snacks, there is a wide selection of books, and we sing songs

and rhymes each week as a group activity.



Recent sessions have included making playdough and transparent hanging collages, in partnership with Glasgow Sculpture Studio – this partnership will continue after Spring break with regular art and craft sessions. We also painted Valentine cards and discussed Oral health – the children love playing with the snappy crocodile!

Upcoming sessions include a visit to the Children's Wood , and an outing to Hamiltonhill Claypits, also we will be making a rainbow wool collage, and planting cress seeds before Spring Break.

If you are interested in finding out more about any of our groups you can email us at info@homestartgnnl.org.uk





Team HSGNNL are gearing up for our biggest Kiltwalk crew for many years!

Our team of over 50 walkers are setting off on Sunday April 30th.

We have a team in all three categories: the 23 mile Mighty Stride, the 14 mile Big Stroll and the 3 mile Wee Wander.

It promises to be an amazing day!!

There are still places left on the Wee Wander so if you would like to join us please get in touch with caitlin@homestartgnnl.org.uk (registrations for the Mighty Stride and Big Stroll are now closed as it's full).

This year's Kiltwalk is the best and cheapest way to raise funds and awareness of everything we do at Home-Start Glasgow North and North Lanarkshire. One volunteer says "its about giving back in a fun way!".

If you have already signed up don't forget to download the Kiltwalk App where you can gain reward badges, exclusive Kiltwalk filters and an easy video creator to create your story of why you are walking the Kiltwalk 2023.

Donate to our Kiltwalk Fundraising



North Lanarkshire are now supporting 6 families and feedback from cluster lead is that they want this support to continue. They have had some really positive outcomes already, including 2 families securing a housing relocation which they had both noted as their priority of support. The role is evolving and the Family Support Worker's priority is to nurture and support relationships between school and home.

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 on 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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