

Chair's Report Phil Harper

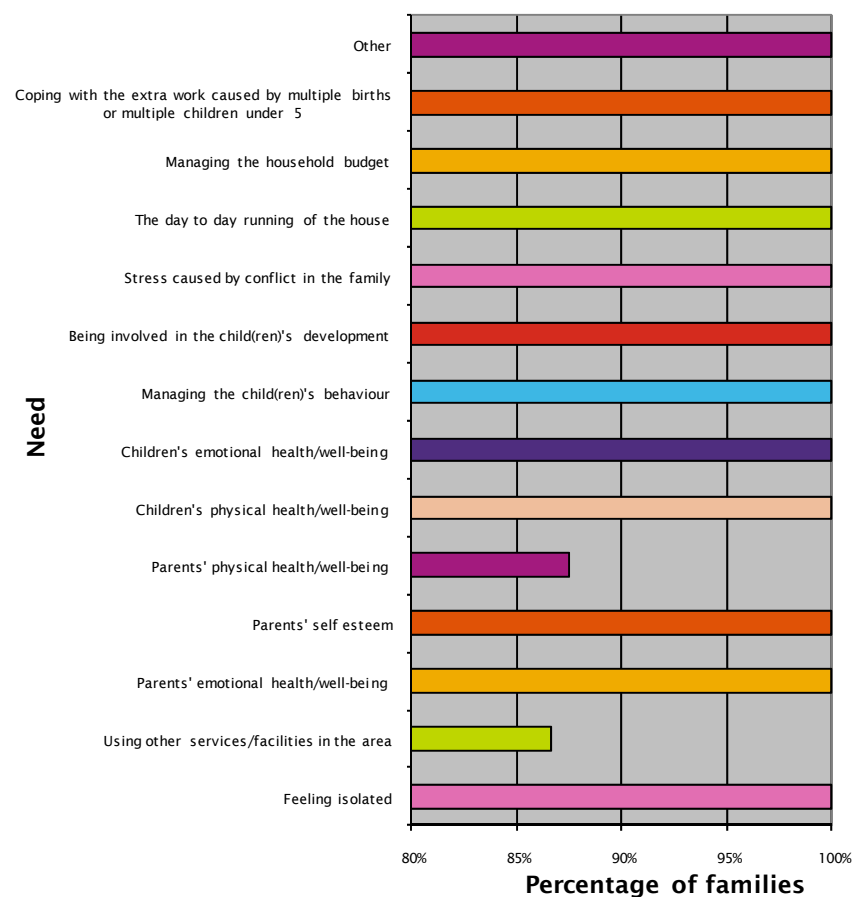
This has been my first year as Chairperson and it has been something of a rollercoaster. It started with uncertainty about funding which forced us to start the formal redundancy process. Money was eventually secured but it was a painful time for all concerned. Throughout this period staff continued to act in their usual committed and professional manner.

On the brighter side, we have enjoyed a number of successes this year. At our last AGM we were the first voluntary organisation in the City to be awarded the local Parents Charter. In June we won the Care and Support award in the West Midlands Parent Support Awards organised by Eduscope. We have recently received an excellent provisional Quality Assurance assessment. An advertisement in the Sentinel has led to responses from 86 potential new volunteers. The newsletter we have started to produce for funders, partners and supporters has been well received. Staff and volunteer morale is high. We have enlisted new trustees and others with invaluable experience and expertise.

The next 12 months will not be easy. Due to the economic situation, there will be more families desperately in need of our support, yet our funding is not currently guaranteed as our core contract with the City Council is likely to be put out for tender. However, we have an excellent track record and reputation and I am confident of success.

I would like to thank all our volunteers, funders, partners and supporters, Chris Pointon and staff and my fellow trustees for all their hard work over the last year. Particular thanks must go to Anne Lakin who has decided to retire as a trustee after being our Treasurer for 9 years. I look forward to another successful 12 months.

Percentage of families for whom Home-Start support has ceased and who feel that their needs have been met either partially or completely.



Saying goodbye

We are losing 3 very important and key members of our team:

Anne Lakin has been Treasurer for the last 9 years. Anne, as well as being an avid Stoke City supporter and partner at Baker Tilly, has provided unstinting and valuable support over the years, being instrumental in our growth and development. Unfortunately for us, work pressures have been building for Anne and she has decided to resign as Treasurer this year.

Karen Davies, Co-ordinator, has worked with us for 12 years. Karen has touched the lives of so many families, parents, children and volunteers during this time, providing a positive role model and proving to be an inspiration to many.

Karen Stevenson, Co-ordinator, has been with us for 5 years and in this relatively short time has proven herself to be a committed and hard working member of our team. Karen has started a degree in Social Work at Staffordshire University and again we wish her every success.

We shall miss Anne, Karen and Karen - but wish them every success and happiness.



Home-Start Stoke-on-Trent Annual Review 2010-2011



This year's review is one of celebration as we have much to be proud of and to celebrate.

Our staff continue to achieve successful outcomes for families and volunteers, and also in their professional development, to ensure that Home-Start Stoke-on-Trent delivers a service that is of the highest standard and professionalism.

I know that inspiration feeds inspiration and that our staff and volunteers have been inspired by the achievements of those they have met and touched in Home-Start, and they in turn are now inspiring others to achieve. That's what happens in Home-Start.

We end the year with feelings of anticipation as we know difficult times are ahead. Every organisation and service is bracing themselves for the cuts in funding that we all know are coming. We feel confident however that our reputation and successes in the City for over 27 years will speak for itself and that funders and stakeholders will continue to support our work to ensure that we all continue to build on the successful partnerships and relationships we have, to ensure Stoke-on-Trent families get the support they need during the difficult times ahead.

Parent Support Award

In June we won the Care and Support Award in the West Midlands Parent Support Awards.

Home-Start Chairman Phil Harper said "We are pleased that our 26 years of experience has been recognised. The engagement of parents, the provision of parenting skills and the empowerment of parents are central to our work. The award is a huge pat on the back for our wonderful volunteers and staff."

Parent Charter

Home-Start was the first voluntary organisation in the City to be awarded the Parent Charter Award.

Parents and volunteers, interviewed by Margaret Elkes from the VAST Children and Families Engagement Team, told how they were completely satisfied with the service they receive and that they truly felt that Home-Start listened to their views and engaged them in the process of support. All in all they confirmed that they felt valued by the service.

Staff

Our staff continue to take advantage of training, learning and development opportunities to ensure their knowledge, skills and practice is up to date and of the highest quality. During the year 2 members of staff have excelled by achieving their relevant degrees



Katie Pointon

Katie, our Lead Childcare Practitioner has achieved her Foundation Degree in Early Childhood Studies through Staffordshire University. Katie has studied for 3 years, whilst managing to continue to work in the crèche at Home-Start. We believe that Katie is the first voluntary sector practitioner to achieve this level of qualification in Stoke-on-Trent.



Karen Davies

Karen Davies, Co-ordinator, has also achieved success in her studies by gaining BSC Sociology and Social Policy. Karen chose to study through a different route, the Open University, whilst again continuing to work full time during her studies.

Congratulations to both and well done on all your hard work and fantastic achievements.



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WHAT VOLUNTEERS & EX EMPLOYEES SAY ABOUT WORKING FOR HOME-START

"I like seeing the families turn their lives around with the knowledge that I played a minor role" - *volunteer*

"I enjoyed everything about volunteering for Home-Start from meeting families to training sessions, but most of all helping families to get back on the right path. Home-Start is a very well run charity." - *volunteer*

"Home-Start provides a valuable service to families in need of support. It also offers excellent preparation for those people suitable to volunteer with families and support/training for volunteers and employees to build on knowledge and skills. Many people do not realise just what Home-Start S-o-T provides for others." - *employee*

WE ASKED FAMILIES IF THEY FEEL THAT HOME-START HAS MADE ANY DIFFERENCE TO THEIR FAMILY

"Home-Start has made a lot of changes in my son's life—now he can go out and mix with other children, and his behaviour has improved a lot. As for me, I see them as the only people I can really confide in. They are my family."

"Home-Start gets me and my children out of the house and interacting with others. It also gives my partner some space from us as he's my full time carer."

"I have gained confidence to go on and do things I thought I would never do. I run my own group for disabled children and children with additional needs. I can't thank the staff enough for their time, effort, love and understanding. A BIG THANKYOU."



REFERRER AND FAMILY COMMENTS

"Home-Start is the most effective service that the health visitors use" - *referrer*

"I have seen parents grow in confidence—Home-Start are a good support system for the Social Work Team" - *referrer*

"Home-Start sets families on the right road they enable families to move on" - *referrer*



"My volunteer has been like 'sunshine after rain' in my family life. She plays beautifully with my child and this gives me some moments of relief when I go to the kitchen to do laundry or cleaning. I do feel great improvement in my moods since she started visiting my family and also because of her I feel more confident as a parent and person." - *family*

FIVE OUTCOMES

1) BE HEALTHY

- ◆ Taking mum and twins to regular health and hospital check ups
- ◆ Registering with and accessing dentists
- ◆ Healthy eating sessions in the home and in Family Groups
- ◆ Opportunities to play in crèche, Pandalas, the park, gardens
- ◆ Meeting other parents whose children are peg fed

2) STAY SAFE

- ◆ Organising fire safety checks and helping to create a safe home environment
- ◆ De-cluttering the home
- ◆ Multi agency working—CAF, core groups etc.
- ◆ Encouraging child safety during trips, days out

3) ENJOY & ACHIEVE

- ◆ Taking families out/day trips
- ◆ Interacting with other children
- ◆ Enabling parents to have a break—to appreciate quality time with the children
- ◆ Crèche activities—time to play
- ◆ Volunteers with children 1—1 in the home
- ◆ Working with Stoke Speaks Out physiotherapists etc.

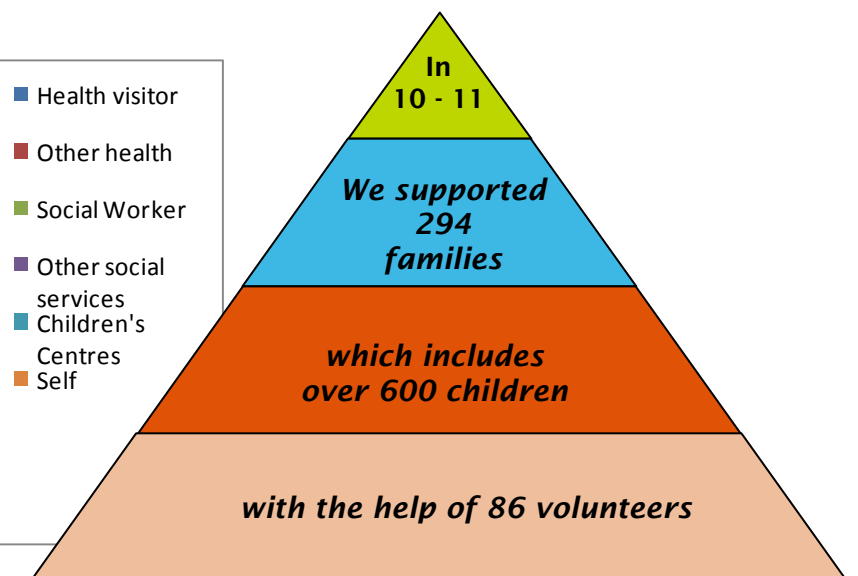
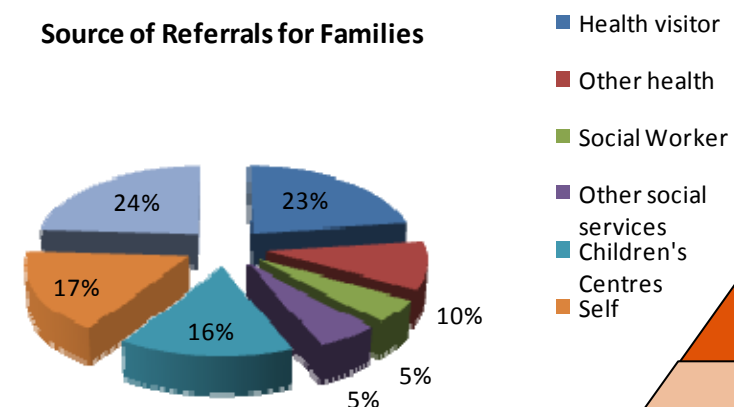
4) ACHIEVE ECONOMIC WELLBEING

- ◆ Offering volunteering opportunities to parents
- ◆ Access to financial help
- ◆ Advise re budgeting

5) MAKE A POSITIVE CONTRIBUTION

- ◆ Consultation with parents and children—choosing activities/venues
- ◆ Encourage family learning / courses and support to access the courses

Source of Referrals for Families



Acknowledgements

Thank you to all the following people and organisations who have helped us this year:- Arc IT, The Rowley Trust, Staffordshire University, Keele University, John Hayden, Amicus, Star Bikers, Home-Start UK, Clayton Methodist Church, BBC Children in Need, Arch, Big Lottery, Local Children's Centres, City of S-o-T, Early Years Inclusion Service, NHS S-o-T, Henry Smith Foundation, When Project, Keele Medical School, Lloyds TSB, Dept. for Children, Schools and Families, Dean Statham, The Frank Buttle Trust, Potteries Centre, Co-op Community Investment & many more. Our own Volunteers who donated a total of £445.24 and donations gratefully received through Missionfish and Charitable payroll giving.