



HOMESTART

Ealing

Autumn 2021 Newsletter

Hello, and welcome to our latest newsletter. Emerging from lockdown, the summer has been super busy. A highlight was our family fun day at Haven Green Baptist Church; it was a great success, and our families are still talking about how much they enjoyed it. We are sure we will be seeing those smiles again at our Christmas party in early December. Another more recent highlight was receiving certificates of recognition from the Mayor of Ealing's office, followed two days later with a fundraising Strawberry & Champagne reception, what an honour!

Homestart Ealing continues to receive plenty of new referrals, and we have trained a new cohort of volunteers. Several families have housing issues and have been moved frequently, causing uncertainty and stress. Support is needed to change nurseries and schools, register for GPs, Dentists and Children's Centres, and often to move possessions. The fear of further relocation is extremely stressful for these families and the uncertainty is a barrier to integration. Homestart Ealing and our brilliant volunteers provide vital support at such a difficult time.

We are very grateful to all our supporters who allow us to work with some of Ealing's most vulnerable families as we endeavour to build resilience, support mental health, and counter loneliness in these challenging times.

Homestart Ealing Manager, Sue Porter and Chair, Sue Butcher

Annual General Meeting

In May we held the AGM for the year April 2019 to March 2020 and reflected on how much had happened, the first week of lockdown was the last week of this accounting period which completely changed the way the scheme operated.

2019-20 was a financially difficult year for Homestart Ealing as, like many local charities, we lost financial support from London Borough of Ealing which had been our biggest funder. We were fortunate to receive a generous three-year commitment from John Lyon, which partially offset the loss of £50k pa from LBE. Going forward we do not anticipate a return to local government funding, and we continue our strenuous efforts to find additional funding from elsewhere. As well as £5000 donation from Viking Community Centre.

Two major fund-raising events this year were a "Flowers for Families" bulb event, raising over £2000 and a Quiz-night at St John's Church which raised over £2500 and two additional donations of £1000. Over the year we continued to work closely with referrers and support over 70 families with home visiting volunteers. We held a weekly family group session at Jubilee Children's Centre and fortnightly singing sessions. We ran a volunteer training session in November and were very pleased to welcome our new volunteers. Our annual Christmas Party for our families was held on a weekend to allow older children and working parents to attend, it was extremely well attended with over 40 children.

Many thanks go to our manager, Sue Porter, and our coordinators, Vicky Carter and Nicky McPherson, for their very valuable work and commitment this year and huge thanks to our wonderful volunteers who give up so much of their time to support families and without whom we could not exist, Families continue to tell us what a major difference it makes to their lives to have Homestart volunteer support at a time of need.



Ealing Mayor's charity

We are honoured to be the new Mayor of Ealing, Councillor Munir Ahmed, chosen Charity for 2021/22. This honour will help to further raise our profile across the Borough and raise much needed funds

81  42

We are currently supporting 81 families with 42 volunteers

For Common Good

We are delighted to partner with For Common Good who have set up a wishlist on our behalf so that people can donate items to us that our families might need most. Please [click here](#) to see our wishlist



Christmas Appeal 8th October - 26th November

This year we will be making up treat bags for our families and have a wish list at Northfields Toy Shop for toy donations so if you would like to support this, please contact them via phone, online or pop in (70 Northfields Avenue, W13 9RR - 07813 85113), mentioning Homestart Ealing. You can check our social media for more details, thank you!

Learning English by Claire Hayes

During Lockdown a group of Homestart mums were very busy practising their English. They were offered a set of 10 lessons and the best part of having to use Zoom is that the mums got to speak to and see each other. It has been a safe way of getting mums together during the Lockdown and they have had a lot of fun sharing their experiences and developing their understanding of the language that they use in everyday situations in the UK.

My role as teacher is to introduce language that is relevant to everyday life (ESOL) and then to facilitate activities for the learners to participate in. This helps to develop confidence and friendships for mums.

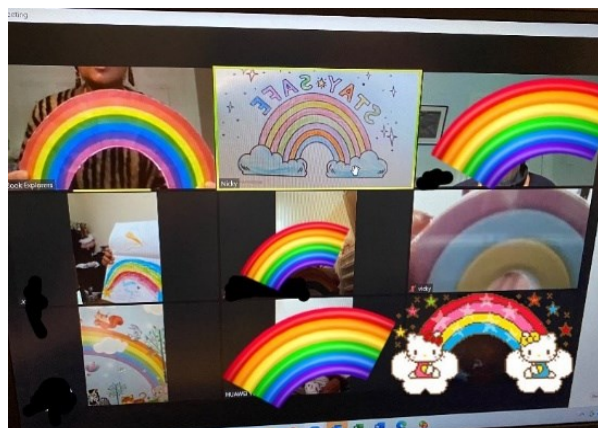
"It is wonderful seeing how much everyone enjoys these classes and amazing to see their confidence and progress grow week by week" says Nicky, Homestart Coordinator and adds that "the attendees particularly enjoyed Claire's tailor-made lesson on supporting their children with schoolwork. Teaching phonics and understanding the language a teacher might use is so much more challenging when English is not your first language"

Singing Group by Ayesha Braganza

Navigating change and jumping the hurdles the pandemic threw at us has been at the core of the past year. Our pre-pandemic singing group had to quickly learn Zoom, figure out how to engage kids online and develop an inclusive, safe format.

Although hard at first, we managed to reach more families through being online. Recently, when singing: 'The Wheels on the Bus', we asked families what they'd like to do on the bus - make the doors open and shut, wipers swish etc. One family gave a surprising answer: she said 'love'. Only slightly wrong-footed, we quickly embraced the moment, singing full blast about the 'love' on the Homestart Bus.

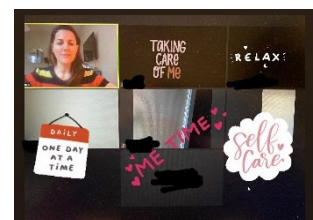
Honest, unexpected human connection is a Homestart gift that helps all of us navigate change. Certainly, for me, as we drove a virtual bus full of Homestart compassion on a wet Monday morning we jumped the hurdles with a bit more of a smile.



Driving the Homestart Bus through the Ups and Downs

Guided relaxation

We have been so grateful to Ruth Timms this past year for her regular online guided relaxation sessions. Open to our families and volunteers, these provided the time needed to be still and to clear our minds whilst being guided through ways to help manage our minds, thoughts and feelings.



Family Fun Day 2021

What a great day out! After the difficult 18 months we have all had, we really wanted to make it a special and memorable day for all our families, and the smiles we saw were priceless.

We have so many people to thank for making it such a fantastic day: **Basil And Crew Mobile Farm** for bringing along the animals, **@greatbritishbounce** for the bouncy castle, **The People's Magician** for the fantastic magic show, **CV Limited** who kindly covered the cost of the magician for us, **Ealing Youth Engagement Programme** for bringing their candy floss machine and teaching the children how to make their own! **ECT - Cllr Anthony Kelly** for helping us get some families from the furthest part of our borough there and back again, **Tesco Perivale** and **Waitrose West Ealing** for donating items for our shared Lunch, **Haven Green Baptist Church** for being the best venue and to our **Mayor Cllr. Munir Ahmed & Steve Pound** for joining us. And finally to all our volunteers who came out to help THANKYOU, without you it's not possible.

