



Stroud and  
Gloucester

# ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

For parents  
when they  
need us most



Charity No: 1107019

Company Registration No: 05282509

# GIVING CHILDREN THE BEST START IN LIFE

## About us

Established in 1999, Home-Start Stroud and Gloucester provides vital support to over 600 vulnerable families every year in the Stroud and Gloucester Districts through a range of different services including weekly home visiting by trained volunteers, ante and post-natal groups, a perinatal mental health peer support programme and a Dad Matters project to specifically support dads to have the best relationships possible with their children.

Our mission is to improve the lives of families with children under the age of 5 who are facing multiple challenges, including poverty, social isolation, disabilities, and poor mental health. We believe passionately in early intervention and a strengths-based approach to supporting families to overcome any challenges they face and for parents to be supported to be the best parents they can be. We offer holistic support to families for as long as is necessary, ensuring that we have time to build up trust with them in order to walk alongside them, supporting them to make the positive changes necessary to deal with the challenges that they face and to create the best start in life for their children.

Our work supports parents to grow in confidence and self-esteem, strengthens their relationships with their children, improves their mental health and wellbeing and widens their links with the local community.



## Elizabeth Ewart-James - Chairperson

*"Another wonderful year for Home-Start. New offices, more workers and fantastic fundraising. The early years services are facing enormous challenges due to limited resources, which makes it more difficult for professionals to allocate time for referring to universal services like ours. Our message to our referrers is that we are here to help. As always thank you to our trustees, our staff, and our amazing volunteers."*

**Because  
tomorrow  
starts today**



## Ri Ferrier-Scheme Director

*"As the director of Home Start Stroud and Gloucester, I am continually inspired by the passion, determination, and dedication demonstrated by each and every volunteer, trustee, and staff member within our charity. Throughout the past year, we have supported 683 families, through home visiting, groups, Dad Matters and through additional support for those facing the greatest challenges during the perinatal period. I extend my deepest gratitude to our extraordinary team for their tireless efforts and unwavering commitment. Additionally, I would like to express heartfelt appreciation to our invaluable funders, whose support allows us to offer the children of Stroud and Gloucester the best start in life."*

# REFERRALS AND FAMILIES SUPPORTED

## Referrals 2022/2023

Total no of Referrals to services	847
Total no of families referred to us	524
Families referred to Best-Start	298
Families referred to Bump-Start	169
Families referred to Home-Visiting	164
Families referred to Mothers in Mind	216
Total no of Dads referred to Dad Matters	92

- 25.7% of these were self-referrals
- 15.2% were from families suffering with financial difficulties
- 21.8% were lone parent families
- 28% were young parents
- 71.2% were suffering with mental health issues
- 37.5% had other agencies involved due to the complexity of their needs.



## Families supported 2022/23

Home Visiting	133
Best-Start	175
Bump-Start	81
Mothers in Mind	112
Arkell Family Fun Group	122
Dad Matters	60
<b>Total</b>	<b>683</b>

## Outcomes for home visiting families

	% change 2022-23
How is your physical health?	17.6%
How is your mental health?	28.4%
Do you feel isolated?	35.5%
How is your confidence and self esteem?	47.9%
Do any of your relationships cause you stress?	10.8%
How confident do you feel as a parent?	13.2%
Do you feel you have enough parenting knowledge and skills	5.4%
Are you able to spend quality time with each of your children?	6.0%
How would you score your relationship with each of your children?	6.8%
How would you score your child/children's physical health?	1.8%
How would you score your child/children's emotional wellbeing?	8.0%
Do you have any financial issues?	3.1%
How well do you manage the day to day running of the house	15.7%
How are you managing with several children under 5?	23.7%







### Quotes from Professionals

*"I will be continuing to sing the praises and advocate for Home-Start far and wide. You have been such a course of support, thank you." Social Worker*

*"I cannot thank you enough, the support you give to families is amazing and makes such a difference." Health Visitor*

### Quotes from Parents

*"My volunteer is invaluable, I would not have been able to go out with both boys on my own."*

*"The best thing about Home-Start is it is individualised, focusing on my family's needs and in the home. I got a real sense of warmth from our volunteer. She is caring, brought positivity, was great at listening and just lovely."*

*"Our family would like to thank you for all your kindness and for supporting us through difficult times. I always felt I had someone to talk to during some dark days. And we had the help of the best volunteer ever! People like you make the world a better place. Keep up your awesome work."*

### Quotes from the Children

*"I almost cried when Lucy left, because I didn't want to stop playing. "*

*"I love her too much to say goodbye."*

*"Thank you for the sword fights!"*

*"She is my best friend!"*



# Volunteer Home-Visiting

*We have 79 volunteers.*

*We recruited and trained 16 Home visiting volunteers during this year.*

We provided our volunteers with additional training workshops in:

- Infant Mental Health
- Universal Credit and additional funding available to families
- Allsorts Family Support Service
- Sunflowers Suicide Awareness
- Annual Safeguarding training

Plans for future training workshops include:

- Volunteers Refresher training
- Domestic Abuse Awareness
- Introduction to more eLearning modules such as financial wellbeing & healthy eating
- Home Safety



**For more information about becoming a Home-Start volunteer and to apply please scan the QR code**  
**[www.homestartsd.org](http://www.homestartsd.org)**



We are currently piloting a **new hybrid training** module to introduce e learning modules with face to face training. This will enable us to run more training opportunities for new volunteers every year.

Our School Readiness pilot group was so successful last summer, we are running it again! This will be a drop-in group to support families during the 6 week summer holidays at Nailsworth Primary School. The sessions will be Forest School based with fun learning opportunities and social interactions for children and parents. We are also linking up with Gloucestershire based Forest School this summer to provide families in that area with free access to outdoor fun.

**For parents when they need us most**



# OUR GROUPS

## Number of groups delivered:

16 Best-Start, 11 Bump-Start, 3 ongoing Mothers in Mind groups,  
20 families received 1:1 Support from our Bump-Start co-ordinator  
70 Arkell Family Fun Sessions took place

## Who attended:

Mothers in Mind	120 mums
Best-Start	194 mums, 29 dads, 194 babies
Bump-Start	111 mums, 42 dads, 112 unborn babies
Arkell	122 mums



**Locations of groups** – Cashes Green, Quedgeley, Kingsway, Linden, Stonehouse, Tredworth, Stroud, Gloucester, Nailsworth

**Number of volunteers supporting groups:** 9 Best-Start, 4 Bump-Start, 7 Mothers in Mind, 4 Arkell Family Fun Sessions

## Quotes from parents attending groups

*"I've met up with 2 other mums and it was lovely. We've got a little WhatsApp chat, and its been a godsend in the early hours when we are all awake and just for general support and advice. I definitely think I've made some friends for life and its crazy to think we were all in hospital together and all born 24 hours apart. Will be lovely for our little ones to grow up so close together in age". Bump-Start parent*

*"Stef has been amazing, and this class was much more than I expected, Stef is so knowledgeable and caring which really comes across and she makes you feel so confident in becoming a parent". Bump-Start parent*

*"I have learned from coming to the group to understand things from baby's perspective and think like them. Also, to be kind to yourself and not compare to others as each baby is different. To embrace and enjoy the time!" Best-Start parent*

*"The group helped me bond with baby more and gain confidence and self-esteem around being a mum. I feel better that I'm doing a good job". Best-Start parent*

*"It's the one group I make sure I come to!" Mothers in Mind mum*

*"It's helped me to realise that other mums are in the same situation and made me realise that I'm doing my best". Mothers in Mind mum*



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# Percentage Improvements across groups in 2022

Bump-Start		Best-Start		Mothers in Mind	
Parents Wellbeing	65%	Parenting Wellbeing	55%	Parents Wellbeing	88%
Parenting Skills	68%	Parenting Skills	44%	Parenting Skills	63%
Children's Wellbeing	65%	Children's Wellbeing	37%	Children's Wellbeing	48%
Family Management	59%	Family Management	45%	Family Management	46%
Karitane Parenting Confidence Scale 24%			Warwick Edinburgh WEMWBS 14%		

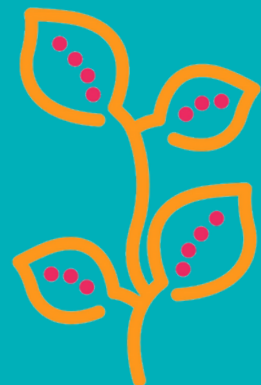
## Arkeff Family Fun Group

90% of parents and caregivers who attend the Arkeff Family Fun Group in Nailsworth report an improvement in stress, self-esteem, feelings of isolation and anxiety.

*"This is truly the best playgroup I have ever been to - the lady running it puts in an exceptional level of effort. She deserves a damehood quite frankly!. Arkeff Family Fun Group mum*

*"I can look around the room and see how much comfort for others this session provides."*  
*Arkeff Family Fun Group mum*

*"I feel the group covers every area of my child's needs at the moment, both educational and social. She is thriving."* Arkeff Family Fun Group mum





# Dad Matters Gloucestershire

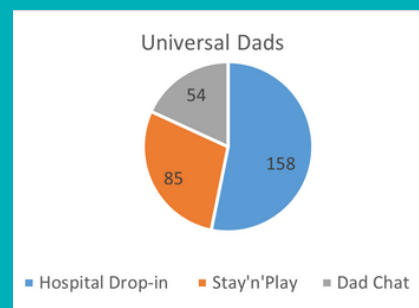
Over the past year, Dad Matters Gloucestershire has continued its commitment to supporting fathers in Gloucestershire, offering valuable resources, programs, and services. The organisation recognises the crucial role that fathers play in their children's lives and aims to provide them with the tools and support they need to thrive as parents.

**In 2022/23 we received 92 referrals to Dad Matters, a 12.2% increase over the previous year.**

- 19.6% were lone parent families.
- 20.4% were young parents (under 25 years of age)
- 86.8% were suffering from mental health issues.

With a focus on reaching out to as many fathers as possible, Dad Matters has successfully supported 287 dads through a variety of initiatives. Our hospital drop-in has been instrumental in providing support to new fathers during a critical and often overwhelming time. By offering guidance, encouragement, and practical assistance, Dad Matters has helped fathers navigate the early stages of parenthood with confidence and reassurance.

The positive results from their universal offerings, such as hospital visits, stay and play groups, and Dad Chat mental health well-being groups, demonstrate the transformative effects on fathers and families. Dad Matters Gloucestershire continues to make a significant difference, ensuring that fathers receive the support they need to thrive in their important roles.



*"I just wanted to say the guys have been great in making me feel welcome and involved in both the Brockworth sessions I have attended. Keep up the good work and a big thank you." Dad, Gloucestershire*

*"Nick was brilliant, he listened to me and was able to help me break down the issues I'm struggling with as a dad. I can't wait to do this again!"*

*Dad, Stroud*

*"Ryan was able to ease my mind about becoming a parent with loads of useful website and apps I could use! Thank you." Dad, Forest of Dean*

## Dad Matters Impact

### Universal Support

Increased confidence in being a parent	100%
Improvement of mental health	77%
Improvement of parental knowledge	56%

### Referred Dads

Increased confidence in being a parent	43%
Improvement of mental health	54%
Improvement of parental knowledge	22%





## Heather Cunild, Treasurer

Our costs increased considerably during this year as we moved offices, recruited more personnel and gave our staff a pay rise after some years without one. This has all been very positive in terms of the operation of the scheme and those who work tirelessly in it but makes our funding requirements more acute at a time when everyone everywhere is feeling the squeeze financially. We have our wonderfully loyal regular supporters and others who have been very generous this year but will need some creative fundraising and bid writing to see us through the years ahead.



Expenditure		Income	
Staff Salary Costs	£278,101	Statutory Grant funding	£107,895
Volunteer Expenses	£7,706	Non-Statutory Grants	£227,136
Rent and Insurance	£17,154	Other Income and donations	£59,477
Professional Fee	£8,408	<b>Total £394,508</b>	
General Costs	£47,942		
<b>Total £359,311</b>			

We would like to give a heartfelt **THANK YOU** to all of our **volunteers**. Without giving the gift of their time to support families, we could not make such a difference to so many families lives who need it the most.

Our volunteers provide support to families in their own homes as well as through peer support groups, and are invaluable in so many ways.

We would also like to say **THANK YOU** to all our **trustees and team of staff** for their hard work and commitment. And we especially THANK all of our funders who continue to believe in us and help us to continue to provide the support we do for families. Their commitment empowers us to make a change for the better, so **THANK YOU**.





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[www.homestartsd.org](http://www.homestartsd.org)



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# THANK YOU!





