

## CASE STUDY

Every Child Matters — Be Healthy, Enjoy & Achieve and Stay Safe



### Family details:~

Volunteer Andrea supported Mum and 3 children under 2 years old. The family has twin girls aged 22 months and a baby boy aged 11 months. Dad had recently been sent to prison, so the family were left to cope with family life alone.

### Referral and initial assessment of needs:~

Mum was referred by her Health Visitor who thought that she would greatly benefit from a volunteer, who could offer practical and emotional support.

Mum was struggling to cope with 3 young children under 2 years old without the help of a partner. She has difficulty just getting out and about as she needs to use a triple buggy.

Mum was physically and mentally exhausted, the children all compete for attention and are missing their Dad. She found it difficult to give each child individual attention and there was quite a lot of sibling rivalry, especially with the baby.

Mum asked for support to help her access the local Children's Centre and health and social appointments. One of the twins has dietary problems. The family have a low budget and have a reduced income, which meant joining in with activities in the community and family treats were put on hold. Mum was physically unable to get out of the house with the three young children, as a double and single buggy would be needed to keep all of the children safe. Mum no longer had the extra pair of hands and practical support available due to Dad being away.

### Support provided by a Home-Start volunteer:~

Support began when the volunteer visited once a week for 2 hours. Andrea helped Mum attend doctor's appointments and general practical support getting out. Information was provided about POPS (Partners of Prisoner's and family's Support Group) and community transport.

Mum took the opportunity to catch up with her housework whilst her volunteer played with the children. They baked, painted, coloured, lots of reading and played games. The children and Mum looked forward to their visits and felt that they have come on immensely over the last 5 months. Mum managed to get the girls into a nursery for 2 days a week and is able to spend quality time with the baby. Her partner has moved to a local prison within walking distance and Mum and children now visit regularly.

The volunteer has passed on advice and guidance on providing healthy and nutritional food and Mum feels that her daughter's eating habits are getting better. Home-Start has also passed on a free table and chairs which was donated by another volunteer and the family now regularly sit down for meals together.

Emotional support has been a key factor with encouraging and supporting Mum's coping strategies. Free safety equipment was fitted in the families home, which included safety gates, a fire guard, cupboard locks, aiming to prevent accidents.

Support will be continuing until the end of March, when Mum feels that she will be confident to move on without support. She is now accessing her local Children's Centre for sessions with the baby whilst the girls are at nursery. The family have attended group support sessions, delivered by Home-Start and now have the confidence to join other play sessions independently in the future.

### Positive outcomes for this family are:~

- Emotional support and a listening ear, enabled Mum to offload and discuss her difficulties.
- Mum's increasing confidence has a positive impact on the children.
- Quality time can now be spent as a family at meal times and to plan creative activities.
- Mum is able to cope better on a limited budget and access free activities in the community.
- Children have experienced fun, learning activities with the volunteer.

"Thank you for inviting me to group support at Mischief Makers. There's no way I would have been able to go somewhere like this on my own and I wouldn't be able to afford it. We had a really lovely time and we didn't want to come home."

(Telephone feedback from this Mum)