CASE STUDY

Every child Matters — Be Healthy and Achieve Economic well being

Family details:~
Mum is a lone parent with 4 children aged, 2,4,5 and 10. The eldest 3 children have no contact with their fathers. The youngest child visits his father in London when Mum can afford to travel. Mum gave birth to her 5th child in December 2009.

Referral and initial assessment of needs:~
Mum was referred by her Health Visitor. After applying for Asylum in London, she was moved to Rochdale due to NASS (National Asylum Support Service) accommodation ruling. Mum suffered depression and found it hard to manage the children's behaviour. She didn't know anybody in Rochdale and wanted help accessing other services and facilities in this area. Due to travel fare being so expensive, Mum cannot afford to visit her family and is very isolated and lonely.

Support provided by a Home-Start volunteer:~
Home-Start provided support from one hour a week. The volunteer has provided 1-1 emotional and practical support to Mum. Mum was encouraged to use the nearest Children's Centre where Mum can make friends, enrol on courses on how to manage children's behaviour, computers, cooking on a budget and art and crafts.

When Mum's application for Asylum failed. Mum thought it would be best for the children to live with her mother rather than going back to her home country, where she said was not safe due to drugs, knives and guns. This was to begin a long court case. The Grandmother applied for residency of the children but the judge needed to find what status the children had in the country. The volunteer provided emotional support through these difficult times and was a great listener.

The family then moved to a bigger house due to Mum being pregnant. Home-Start raised funds for the washing machine to be delivered to the new address as the removal men said it was too heavy to lift. We provided quilt covers for the children's beds, a food hamper and a phone top-up voucher so Mum could speak to relatives over the Christmas period, helping to reduce Mum's isolation.

In December, one of Mum's children was involved in a traffic accident. Mum was heavily pregnant at the time and this caused her to became very anxious and stressed. Home-Start gave emotional support and Mum was very grateful. The volunteer listened to Mum's anxieties and talked through ways to improve the safety of the children for the future.

When Mum gave birth prematurely, Home-Start provided a steriliser and some baby clothes and helped Mum apply for a maternity grant from the Home-Office. The volunteer supported Mum to make sure everything was ready for the baby.

When the court case was finally over but with bad news to come for Mum. The court ruled the children had no valid leave to remain in the Untied Kingdom, even if the Grandmother was granted residency of the children. Mum was absolutely distraught, the judge said they would all have to be deported back to their home country. Home-Start was there to support Mum and as a last resort, Home-Start made an appointment with the local MP to see if there was any way the family could stay in the UK. Advice was given from a free Immigration Solicitor at the Law Centre. Mum's case was not strong enough to win a failed Asylum appeal. The volunteer continues to keep in regular contact with Mum and the children, to provide ongoing emotional support.

Positive outcomes for this family are:~
• Home-Start supported Mum to ensure the children's basic needs were being met e.g. clothes, washing machine, maternity grant, hampers, steriliser etc.
• Parent and child's emotional well being improved and isolation was reduced.
• Support to access free legal advice within Rochdale.
• Moving house with the help of Home-Start was less stressful and all the emotional support given to Mum over the last year helped.
• Due to effective multi-agency working, the children have attended school, behaviour kept on track and their basic needs have been met whilst in the UK.

"What would I do without Home-Start" was Mum's favourite quote.