

CASE STUDY



Supporting families through the recession, help to get back into further education and improving the emotional wellbeing of the child.

Family details

This family consists of two parents and one little girl aged 3.

Support needs identified

The family were referred to the project by their Health Visitor. The Health Visitor said the family were new to the area and Mum was suffering from isolation. She was new to the area and friends and family members lived quite a distance away. She felt a Home-Start volunteer, could help improve Mum's emotional wellbeing, due to the little one not sleeping and Mum was exhausted. At this stage, there was no mention of this family being affected by the recession, or struggling financially.

When the Home-Start Coordinator visited the family at home to assess their support needs, she realised that the family were affected by the recession and identified that the following additional support would be beneficial.

- Dad had been forced to reduce his working hours, which reduced the family income.
- Mum was on maternity leave and was trying to manage on reduced finances.
- The family had to move home into a larger property when the baby was born and were struggling to keep up with increased rent payments.
- The little one was unsettled and was very clingy to Mum. This was causing added emotional pressures on the family and causing difficulties to maintain the household chores. The family were struggling to plan for Mum returning to work, due to sleepless nights and the clinginess of the child.
- Mum and Dad didn't know what to do next and their relationship was being put under pressure.

Support provided

- Friendship, emotional support and practical help mainly for Mum, for 2 hours each week. The support continued for two months and our involvement has now ended by mutual agreement.
- Spending quality time playing with the little one, to take the pressure off Mum for a while and enable her to complete household tasks she had fallen behind with. It took time for the volunteer to build a relationship with the child, but this was soon overcome with regular visiting and play activities.
- The Volunteer collected information on local adult Education opportunities and discussed these with Mum, prior to booking an appointment with a careers advisor.
Discussed possible grants and benefits which may be available and where to seek advice.
- Discussions and support around finding a suitable childcare place, once Mum returns back to work.
- The Volunteer helped to look after the child during appointments within the community.
- Supported the family to access free home safety equipment and advice about keeping the home safe, where there are children under the age of five.
Provided the family with a food hamper and telephone top up, during the Christmas period.

Outcomes

- The child is now used to spending time with other adults and is less fretful when Mum isn't around. She will hopefully settle quicker into her new Nursery place.
- Mum is confident to return to work, knowing her daughter will settle quickly into Nursery.
- Mum's isolation will reduce as she returns to work and re-joins her colleagues.
- The finances within the household will begin to settle as, Mum returns to work.
- Mum starts a new course at college soon and she is aiming towards a teaching Degree which will aim to increase the household income and improve career development.
- Mum expressed she was really happy with the service and found her volunteer to be really friendly and helpful.

"I have seen really great changes with this family in such a short space of time. I really enjoyed spending time with the little one and helping Mum find a place at college. I can see that Mum is more confident to return to work now and things will begin to improve. Support has now ended and Mum is confident to go forwards."

(Volunteer Andrea)