

Home-Start – Two Hours Makes A Difference

A Journey to strengthening families &
connecting them to the community



Bringing care to life



Home-Start Program



So..... what is the Home-start model and how does it work?

What is Home-Start?



Home-Start is an international program in which trained volunteers offer regular support, friendship and practical help to families with young children (at least one of pre-school age) primarily in their own homes.

Home-Start works with families who are experiencing a wide range of difficulties and can help prevent family crisis and breakdown.

Home-Start volunteers practice “being with” families and “working alongside” parents to help them provide a safe and nurturing environment for their children.

Home-Start National Inc. April 2001

Reasons for families to be referred...



- Depression and anxiety
- Isolation
- Being a very young parent
- Arrival of a new baby or multiple birth
- Disability issues
- Grief, loss and separation
- New to the area, new to the country
- Mental health issues
- and many, many more!

Volunteers provide...



Weekly 2 hour visit, which includes:

- **Emotional support**, like – listening and sharing; empathising with difficulties; normalising the challenges of life and parenting; focussing on the strengths of the family and helping to build confidence in the parent
- **Practical help**, like – occupying and playing with the children; going to the shops together or to the local park; helping the parent keep appointments (like MCH developmental checks, GP visits); helping the parent to build connections with services locally; encouraging parents to attend playgroups and social events

Quote from the Founder



As Margaret Harrison puts it:

"volunteers would support the parent as the 'sustaining agent' in the child's life and see the home as the 'sustaining background'. Volunteers would offer individual programmes of support and help, to suit the needs of particular families and give children the best possible start in life."

Program Aims



It is.....

- Early intervention/prevention
- Strengths based
- Delivers support where families need it most
- Has goal orientated focus
- Is built on beliefs about what creates a secure childhood
- Has a community perspective
- Is peer to peer support

Families reported they wanted ...



- To be heard
- To learn control
- To know where to get help

Any questions?

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Supported Family quotes:



- *"Thank you very much for all the help you have given me and linked in with other services otherwise I would still be very isolated. I wouldn't have the extra parenting skills or anything else that I have received from the Home-Start Program."*
- *"With Home-Start I know that there are people I can call if I need help. I get out of the house now; I can take my child to the library or the park, do the grocery shopping or even go and sit in a café to have a coffee. This is so much better than what it used to be like, stuck in the house all day; I will never go back to being like that again."*



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Supported Family quotes:

- “To the Coordinator and my volunteer, you are the family in ***my heart and I have to leave because all my kids have grown up and time is up. I know one thing you are always in*** my heart as a family. I can’t thank you enough and I wish I could come back as a volunteer one day. I’m sure you saved one life here.”
- “It reinstated my faith that there are good people in this world willing to help a stranger.”
- “When I had a baby I had someone to tell me ***congratulations, and when I had a problem I can talk to*** someone for advice and help to solve it.”



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Supported Family quotes:

- “If there was no Tuesday to myself then their might not be my kids.”
- “My coordinator helped me access counselling ***and a parenting group. My volunteer encouraged me and gave me the confidence to follow through.***”
- “I question where I would have been at mentally, ***having twin babies would have driven me nuts, I hate to think where I would have been.***”

Volunteers quotes:



"I've found the experience rewarding being able to input into the lives of families with young children."

"I really enjoy my visits with the family and to see the smiles on the children's faces when I arrived is rewarding."

"Home-**Start is a great program that I know makes a** difference."

"I really enjoy being a volunteer the Home-**Start program is** very valuable to our community."

"It's a good feeling knowing that you are making a difference to someone's life"