

Parenting is tough. As parents we can face all sorts of challenges – the behaviour of our children, the behaviour of our partner, the censorious voice of our own expectations. And for some people, other difficulties come on top of these – loneliness, mental ill-health, and financial difficulties. In all of this, the children are growing up, and the children will not wait for these difficulties to be resolved.

Home-Start supports families with young children during hard times. The support is aimed at helping parents learn to cope, improve their confidence, develop a local community support network and build better lives for their children. It is through trained volunteers, who have experience of parenting themselves, that this support is given. The volunteer visits the family's home for a couple of hours each week and the support which they offer is tailored to each family's needs. Parents and volunteers often develop a profoundly trusting relationship which can lead to significant change within the family; volunteers report that working alongside the family is deeply rewarding, whilst parents often report that the volunteer support made an important difference to them at a difficult time.

The over-arching aim of this voluntary support is to improve the lives of children whose parents are struggling. This improvement is achieved through supporting the parents.

Do you have experience of parenting? Do you have a little time to give back to your local community? And do you think that you might be able to go in to someone's home to offer a listening ear and kindly support?

Home-Start Erewash is currently running a project in South Derbyshire to support local families, and is actively recruiting volunteers. The next training course is due to begin towards the end of September 2019. Training takes place over several weeks and addresses the types of issues likely to be encountered - confidentiality, boundaries and adopting a non-judgmental and supportive approach. Volunteers are asked to commit to 18 months to two years volunteering with Home-Start to reflect the value of the training which is provided.

All volunteers are subject to a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check.

Home-Start Erewash is part of Home-Start UK which was first established in 1973, in Leicester. Now there are Home-Start branches in 71% of local authority areas.

If you would like to volunteer with us, or have a discussion about what is involved, please call our Ilkeston office on 0115 9304640 or Bee Bramhall on 07498 332314

For further information please have a look at our website <https://home-starterewash.co.uk/> or the national website <https://www.home-start.org.uk/about-us>