

# ALL OUR CHILDREN

Home-Start's  
manifesto for families  
2014

We want all our CHILDREN to grow UP with:

- safe places to live and play
- support when their parents suffer from a mental illness
- protection from hunger and poor nutrition

---

This manifesto shows why it is **crucial**.

This manifesto shows how **we can all make it happen**.



---

ALL OUR CHILDREN SHOULD HAVE ACCESS TO THE  
SUPPORT THEY NEED TO DEVELOP AND THRIVE.

THE PRACTICAL SOLUTIONS WE OFFER IN THIS  
MANIFESTO WILL ENABLE LOCAL PEOPLE TO SUPPORT  
VULNERABLE FAMILIES MORE EFFECTIVELY.

---

## priority



all our CHILDREN SHOULD Have safe PLACES to Live AND Play.

Home-Start asks that these steps are taken to make a difference:

- Ensure temporary housing is suitable for children and families.
- Provide key workers/volunteers for all families living in temporary accommodation.
- Prioritise the right to play in policies for housing, education, childcare and health.
- Collect and analyse local and national data on the causes of children's injuries to inform the development of locally targeted community interventions and a national strategy on childhood injury prevention.

## priority



all our CHILDREN With a Parent suffering from a mental illness SHOULD be SUPPORTED.

Home-Start asks that these steps are taken to make a difference:

- Offer every parent who is at risk of, or suffering from, a mental illness a trained befriending volunteer.
- Collect data on children whose parents or carers have mental health difficulties and report on such data nationally.
- Train specialist mental health midwives for every maternity service.

## priority



all our CHILDREN SHOULD be WELL Nourished AND Protected from HUNGER AND POOR nutrition.

Home-Start asks that these steps are taken to make a difference:

- Investigate the specific impact of food poverty on children's physical, mental and social development.
- Weigh children at 12 months to:
- permit earlier intervention by parents, health and social care agencies and provide sensitive support to establish better eating habits.
- allow better analysis of when children are gaining weight.
- Inform the training and engagement of health and social care workers.

# Listen to the voice of families

**Home-Start's 32,000 families, 16,000 volunteers, and staff know what children most need to develop and thrive. It is their voices that have shaped our manifesto. Our call is to all political parties to put children's lives at the heart of policy.**

Every day, Home-Start works with disadvantaged parents and children. Many are socially excluded, living in isolation and facing multiple problems. Changes in circumstances make families even more vulnerable: unreliable employment, gaps in benefit payments, poor physical and mental health and problems with housing can all push families into crisis situations. When this happens, children suffer.

## Not all our children have safe places to live and play.

When children end up in unsafe, unsuitable accommodation they frequently don't eat well, and they struggle even more if their parents are unwell. Families can only be helped with such complex, interlinked problems when local agencies work together in a flexible, responsive and co-operative way and when central government encourages high quality delivery of these services across the country.

"Recently one of our families was moved into a flat. It was rat infested and the mother was only moved out when the ceiling fell in. Luckily nobody was hurt, but she has an eight month-old baby and a three year-old daughter."

(Home-Start Westminster)



## Our families don't all get help with their mental health.

A recent survey of local Home-Starts revealed that more than 70% believed children in the families they work with are not supported by health and social services when their parents suffer from mental illness. 76% said they work with families whose children are not protected from food poverty and 81% support families where the children do not have safe places to live and play.

"We had a mum who was in a mother and baby unit for a month being treated for depression. And when she was released she had no support from mental health services at all. She said her Home-Start volunteer was the only person who offered her support."

(Home-Start Weywater)



These are basic family needs which could be addressed locally. But leadership from central government is needed to assure local services. The language of early intervention is used in national policy and guidance but local practice is often inconsistent. So children, often very vulnerable children, are not getting the support they need. The disconnection between the language of early intervention and the reality for families has to be addressed by central and local government.

**f SHOW YOU CARE:**  
use #allourchildren in your tweets and posts, or email a message or photo showing your support to: [home-start@feeds.storystream.it](mailto:home-start@feeds.storystream.it)

**FOLLOW:**  
what others are saying about All Our Children at: [www.home-start.org.uk](http://www.home-start.org.uk)

**Contact Home-Start:**  
Work with your local Home-Start to make life better for all our children. [www.home-start.org.uk/findsupport/search](http://www.home-start.org.uk/findsupport/search). Or work with us at a national level: email the chief executive of Home-Start UK, Rob Parkinson: [rparkinson@home-start.org.uk](mailto:rparkinson@home-start.org.uk)

We welcome the opportunities to customise and prioritise services to meet local families' needs. But there also has to be a core offer underpinning this so families have access to consistent quality services: they need to know what support they can expect.

**Even if families have food, they are not all well nourished.**

We also welcome the move of public health into local government and the emphasis on working with health visiting and school nursing, family nurse partnerships and the Troubled Families programme to give children the best start in life. We would also like to see recognition of the role of the voluntary sector, and specifically volunteers, in delivering this agenda.

We welcome the government's commitment to increasing the numbers of health visitors and we ask that targets reflect the needs of a rising birth rate. We also ask that there be clear guidance as to the maximum caseload sizes for them. Caseloads should be lower in areas where health visitors are supporting more vulnerable families.



Working locally, we see funding which is often short term, tends to be project-based and is sometimes duplicated or entirely absent across different areas. This is not good for developing local capacity and partnerships. What is needed is sustainable funding for core work which helps agencies provide consistent care and support for families. We urge the next UK government to support this through proportionate and cost efficient procurement processes. Alongside this, local authorities need to be able to provide grants to enable smaller organisations to contribute to the local family support services.

For central government to deliver it needs to act on key data, we need to know how many children are hungry, how many young children are overweight, how many children have parents with mental illnesses and how many children are injured. This information is either outdated, missing or not being used to make a difference.

**The practical solutions we offer in this manifesto will enable local people to support vulnerable families more effectively.**

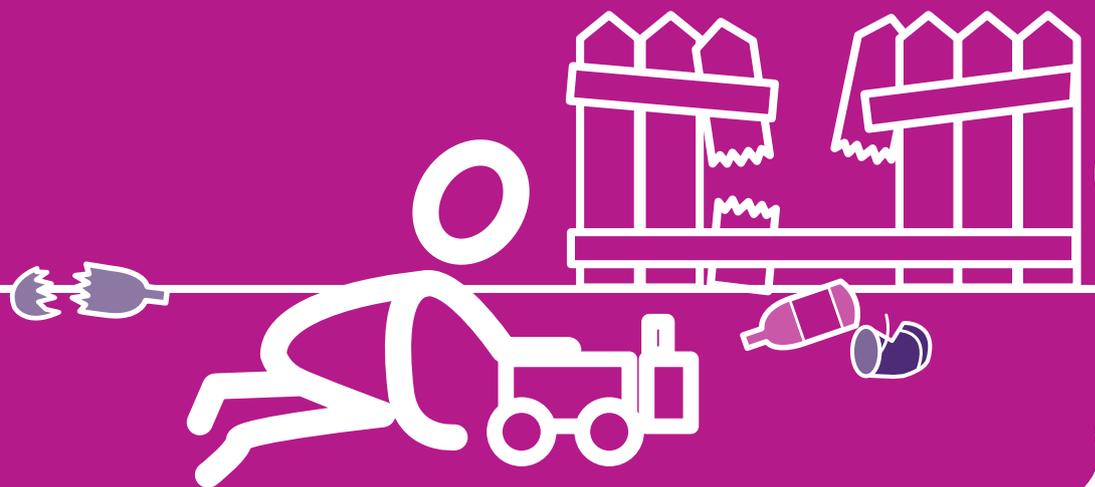
**Show you care:**  
 use #allourchildren in your tweets and posts, or email a message or photo showing your support to: [home-start@feeds.storystream.it](mailto:home-start@feeds.storystream.it)

**Follow:**  
 what others are saying about All Our Children at: [www.home-start.org.uk](http://www.home-start.org.uk)

**Contact Home-Start:**  
 Work with your local Home-Start to make life better for all our children. [www.home-start.org.uk/findsupport/search](http://www.home-start.org.uk/findsupport/search). Or work with us at a national level: email the chief executive of Home-Start UK, Rob Parkinson: [rparkinson@home-start.org.uk](mailto:rparkinson@home-start.org.uk)

# Priority 1

ALL OUR CHILDREN SHOULD HAVE  
SAFE PLACES TO LIVE AND PLAY



Local Home-Starts have consistently identified housing as a chronic problem for families.

A lack of available housing, particularly when vulnerable families are making transitions, often results in families being placed in unsuitable and temporary accommodation. Last summer more than 43,000 families with dependent children were living in temporary accommodation (in England) and more than 10,000 of these families were placed outside their local authority<sup>1</sup>. Although the government has placed a six week cap on how long families should legally be housed in temporary accommodation, last summer more than 760 families were in *bed and breakfasts*<sup>2</sup> beyond the legal limit.

- **GOVERNMENT** should ensure that temporary housing is suitable for children and young people, with particular attention paid to overcrowding and safety, including safe play areas and road access. Families with dependent children should be the priority, so that children can continue attending school and parents can maintain social networks and employment
- **KEY WORKERS/VOLUNTEERS** should be provided for all families living in temporary accommodation.

Living in crowded accommodation and where the surroundings are unsuitable for young children means that there are no opportunities for safe play. Play is fundamental for children's early development. Having fun is a vital element of family life and recent research highlighted that children who have fun are more likely to be ready to start school. But lack of safe play areas or outside space means not all children have the chance to play.

**f SHOW YOU CARE:**  
use #allourchildren in your tweets and posts, or email a message or photo showing your support to: [home-start@feeds.storystream.it](mailto:home-start@feeds.storystream.it)

**FOLLOW:**  
what others are saying about All Our Children at: [www.home-start.org.uk](http://www.home-start.org.uk)

**Contact Home-Start:**  
Work with your local Home-Start to make life better for all our children. [www.home-start.org.uk/findsupport/search](http://www.home-start.org.uk/findsupport/search). Or work with us at a national level: email the chief executive of Home-Start UK, Rob Parkinson: [rparkinson@home-start.org.uk](mailto:rparkinson@home-start.org.uk)

In a recent survey, an astounding 81% of responding local Home-Starts said that not all the children they work with have safe places to live and play. The recent investment in parks and open spaces and initiatives to promote street play are welcomed. To continue this work we call for further community action to enable young children to access safe spaces for play.

- **POLICIES for housing, education, childcare and health – nationally and locally should recognise and respond to the importance of children’s play**



The lack of appropriate play spaces is more associated with deprived families<sup>3</sup>. Unintentional injuries also occur more often for children from the poorest families and they are 13 times more likely to die from an unintentional injury and three times more likely to be admitted to hospital with serious injuries. These figures are startling. Over 300,000 children a year attend accident and emergency centres for head injuries, bath water scalds, burns, hot drink scalds and road accidents<sup>4</sup>. We support the recent Public

Health England report on reducing unintentional injuries in and around the home among children under five years, and its focus on making use of existing services. We are particularly pleased that they have published recent data on local hospital admissions, however we believe there is still more to be done nationally.

- **BEFORE the Healthy Child Programme is moved to local authorities, government should create a working group that examines the social, economic, and health impacts of injuries on children and families at a national level. Evidence from the working group should be used by local authorities to implement injury prevention as part of their public health agenda.**
- **WE ASK government to take responsibility for ensuring that injury prevention is and remains a focus at a national and local level, and we call on the government to ensure this through a national public health campaign on injuries in and around the home.**
- **WE ASK government to develop a training programme that is accessible for anyone working with children and families and that sends a clear and consistent message to communicate the inequality of unintentional injuries.**



**SHOW YOU care:**  
use #allourchildren in your tweets and posts, or email a message or photo showing your support to: [home-start@feeds.storystream.it](mailto:home-start@feeds.storystream.it)

**FOLLOW:**  
what others are saying about All Our Children at: [www.home-start.org.uk](http://www.home-start.org.uk)

**Contact HOME-Start:**  
Work with your local Home-Start to make life better for all our children. [www.home-start.org.uk/findsupport/search](http://www.home-start.org.uk/findsupport/search). Or work with us at a national level: email the chief executive of Home-Start UK, Rob Parkinson: [rparkinson@home-start.org.uk](mailto:rparkinson@home-start.org.uk)

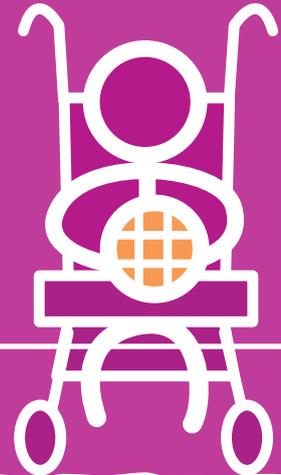
"A large family (five children) was encouraged to move out of social housing as it was deemed overcrowded. As no four bedroomed properties were available they had to move into private rented accommodation which the social worker said would meet the needs of the children better. Recent benefit caps meant the mother's housing benefit no longer covered the rent. They were made homeless and forced to live in temporary accommodation 50 miles away, with the children out of school for months. They have since moved back to the area in a property smaller than their original house."

(Home-Start Gainsborough)



"Babies and children are often confined to pushchairs, cots or car seats because there is nowhere safe to play. The thresholds for social care departments are so high they would not accept referrals for safeguarding issues of this kind, unless a child was seriously hurt or injured."

(Home-Start Erewash)



"Housing stock rarely has safe gardens. Local playgrounds are in disrepair, used by older children and are unsafe."

(Home-Start Stoke-on-Trent)



**f SHOW YOU CARE:**

use #allourchildren in your tweets and posts, or email a message or photo showing your support to: [home-start@feeds.storystream.it](mailto:home-start@feeds.storystream.it)

**FOLLOW:**

what others are saying about All Our Children at: [www.home-start.org.uk](http://www.home-start.org.uk)

**Contact Home-Start:**

Work with your local Home-Start to make life better for all our children. [www.home-start.org.uk/findsupport/search](http://www.home-start.org.uk/findsupport/search). Or work with us at a national level: email the chief executive of Home-Start UK, Rob Parkinson: [rparkinson@home-start.org.uk](mailto:rparkinson@home-start.org.uk)

## Priority 2

ALL OUR CHILDREN WITH PARENT/S  
SUFFERING FROM A MENTAL ILLNESS  
SHOULD BE SUPPORTED



Parents' mental ill health can have a serious impact on children's day-to-day life and on their long-term development. It is vital that we improve our understanding of how mental illness affects all family members and that we find ways to support and help children living with a mentally ill parent. At any one time roughly one in six people are suffering from a mental illness. It is believed that up to 30% of adults with mental ill health have dependent children and 7% live in lone parent households.<sup>5</sup> It is thought that there are 50,000 to 200,000 children and young people in the UK caring for a parent with a severe mental illness.<sup>6</sup> Research estimates that more than 2 million children<sup>7</sup>, including 144,000 babies under one year old<sup>8</sup>, are living with a parent who has a common mental health disorder.

Behind these statistics are families trying to cope with all the added difficulties of mental illness such as taking prescriptions, attending appointments with psychiatrists, psychologists, GPs and support groups, and arranging childcare and travel arrangements; while often lacking the confidence and know how to support and nurture their children. This is a complex cycle of need which requires a co-ordinated approach from professionals together with the voluntary sector if children are to be supported. The cost effective role of volunteers supporting families with mental health issues should be recognised.

- **EVERY PARENT** who is at risk of, or suffering from, a mental illness should be offered the support of a trained befriending volunteer.

Specialist perinatal services do not consistently consider the impact of parents' mental health difficulties on children. Questions about children affected vary and lack clarity and detail.<sup>9</sup> While guidance is available, the reality for families is that the support is

**f** **SHOW YOU care:**  
use #allourchildren in your tweets and posts,  
or email a message or photo showing your  
support to: [home-start@feeds.storystream.it](mailto:home-start@feeds.storystream.it)

**FOLLOW:**  
what others are saying  
about All Our Children at:  
[www.home-start.org.uk](http://www.home-start.org.uk)

**Contact HOME-Start:**  
Work with your local Home-Start to make life better for all our children. [www.home-start.org.uk/findsupport/search](http://www.home-start.org.uk/findsupport/search). Or work with us at a national level: email the chief executive of Home-Start UK, Rob Parkinson: [rparkinson@home-start.org.uk](mailto:rparkinson@home-start.org.uk)

patchy across the country and children remain vulnerable. Adult mental health services and children's services should be required to work together, and with other local organisations, to provide support for children in these circumstances. Providers of care should always consider the needs of children when a parent is identified as having a mental illness and be in a position to provide practical and emotional support.

It is thought that there are  
**50,000 to 200,000**  
 CHILDREN and YOUNG PEOPLE  
 in the UK caring for a parent with a severe mental illness.



- **GOVERNMENT** should require mental health services to collect data on children whose parents or carers have mental health difficulties and should report on this data nationally.

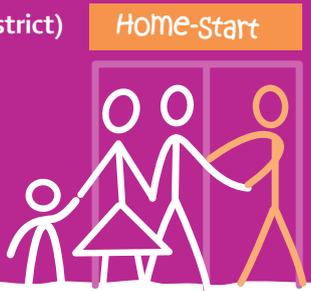
Mental health problems are common during pregnancy and after birth. Both mums and dads can be affected and problems can occur immediately or several years after the baby is born: recent research suggests that mothers are more likely to develop mental health problems when their children are four years old than at any other time.<sup>10</sup> Also, often neglected, is the suffering of fathers with mental health issues themselves, or who are dealing with the practical and emotional consequences of mental illness within the family. Mental health issues, low self esteem and social isolation are the three predominant needs identified by health visitors when they refer families to Home-Start and when families refer themselves.<sup>11</sup> Research has shown the positive role befriending volunteers can have when supporting families with mental health

issues. Volunteers are able to engage these particularly vulnerable families, build their trust and improve their resilience, leading to positive outcomes for the children. The well being of the parents is improved in families with volunteer support. This leads to increased feelings of parental self competence. As a result, parental behaviour becomes more adaptive and child outcomes improve<sup>12</sup> - it's a chain reaction.

- **WE ASK** that government recognises the role volunteers play in helping children whose parents are suffering from mental illness, provides long-term funding and encourage cross team working between local and health authorities and other local organisations.
- **WE JOIN** the Maternal Mental Health Alliance in calling for specialist mental health midwives in every maternity service, promoting parity between physical and mental health in maternity care, improving midwife knowledge and skills, developing support for mothers and their families.

*"Mental Health problems can be long-term and differ in intensity from one week to the next. Health and social services do not have the resources to support families where there are parental mental health issues. It is only independent services like Home-Start that can support families through these stresses."*

(Home-Start Stroud District) **Home-Start**



## Priority 3

ALL OUR CHILDREN SHOULD  
be WELL NOURISHED and  
protected from HUNGER  
and POOR nutrition.



**Local Home-Starts are now routinely linking families to sources of emergency food relief and are reporting that parents are going without in order to feed their children.**

**A recent report found that more than 50% of parents experiencing food poverty have gone without their own meals so they can feed their children.<sup>13</sup> The position is worse for families living in suburban or rural locations who have to travel to pick up emergency food, and this further exacerbates their precarious existence.**

We are encouraged that members of parliament are so concerned about these issues that they have formed the All Party Parliamentary Inquiry into Hunger and Poverty in Britain and we urge government to commit to a thorough review of the inquiry's findings. However, families cannot wait for the conclusion of the inquiry. As a priority, government needs to provide emergency measures so that families struggling to cope with changes in their circumstances are able to get healthy food.

Local authorities also need to have welfare assistance schemes in place to enable families to receive emergency funding to help them bridge gaps and stop them falling into crisis. Funding for these schemes needs to be adequate and ring-fenced. Schemes need to be accessible and eligibility criteria need to be fair so families can get help when they need it.

**f** **SHOW YOU care:**  
use #[allourchildren](#) in your tweets and posts,  
or email a message or photo showing your  
support to: [home-start@feeds.storystream.it](mailto:home-start@feeds.storystream.it)

**FOLLOW:**  
what others are saying  
about All Our Children at:  
[www.home-start.org.uk](http://www.home-start.org.uk)

**Contact HOME-Start:**  
Work with your local Home-Start to make life better for all our children. [www.home-start.org.uk/findsupport/search](http://www.home-start.org.uk/findsupport/search). Or work with us at a national level: email the chief executive of Home-Start UK, Rob Parkinson: [rparkinson@home-start.org.uk](mailto:rparkinson@home-start.org.uk)

*"one mother coming from a domestic violence situation had returned to nursing. she was working five long days each week, relying on her mother to look after her children, and still did not have enough money to feed herself and her two children."*

(Home-Start Surrey)



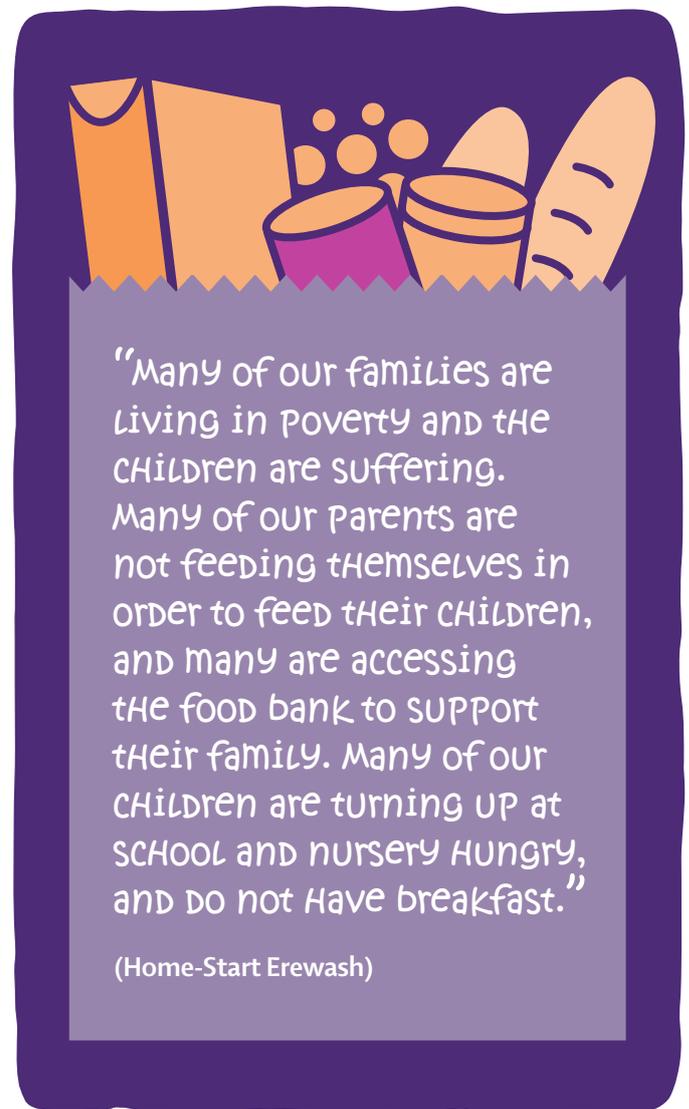
These are vital short term measures – but not the long term solution. None of our children should be persistently hungry.

The long term physical and emotional impact on life chances for children growing up in households who cannot afford adequate food should be mapped and linked with the National Child Measurement Programme. This will build a national picture of how food poverty is affecting communities across the UK, which would then permit us to provide appropriate and targeted interventions.

**Government should gather evidence on food poverty to inform and guide policies on childhood health, nutrition and well-being.**

We request that government also:

- INVESTIGATES the specific impact of food poverty on children's health, social and mental development.
- INVESTIGATES the reasons families use emergency food provisions from places such as food banks, how often they use them, how often families are referred to them, and by whom.



*"Many of our families are living in poverty and the children are suffering. Many of our parents are not feeding themselves in order to feed their children, and many are accessing the food bank to support their family. Many of our children are turning up at school and nursery hungry, and do not have breakfast."*

(Home-Start Erewash)

**f SHOW YOU CARE:**

use #allourchildren in your tweets and posts, or email a message or photo showing your support to: [home-start@feeds.storystream.it](mailto:home-start@feeds.storystream.it)

**FOLLOW:**

what others are saying about All Our Children at: [www.home-start.org.uk](http://www.home-start.org.uk)

**Contact Home-Start:**

Work with your local Home-Start to make life better for all our children. [www.home-start.org.uk/findsupport/search](http://www.home-start.org.uk/findsupport/search). Or work with us at a national level: email the chief executive of Home-Start UK, Rob Parkinson: [rparkinson@home-start.org.uk](mailto:rparkinson@home-start.org.uk)

While children are going hungry there are also children who are growing up in a society which promotes poor eating practices. As a consequence, in 2012, 28% of children between the ages of two and fifteen were overweight or obese. And yet 23% of parents thought their children were a healthy weight when they were not.<sup>14</sup>

We need to be better at identifying when children start to gain weight, what the influences are on their weight gain, and how to ensure all children receive access to affordable healthy foods. There also needs to be training for all organisations supporting families, so they can sensitively help parents. We call for children's weight to be measured from the age of one, to enable parents and health professionals to identify and intervene early when there are significant changes in a child's weight.<sup>15</sup>

The National Child Measurement Programme should be extended to include monitoring at 12 months to:

- PERMIT earlier intervention and provide support to establish better eating practices, by parents, health and social care agencies.
- ENABLE better analysis of when children are gaining weight.
- INFORM training and engagement of health and social care workers.

"Low income, High numbers on benefit, and small estates with ONLY LOCAL SHOPS selling expensive food items."

(Home-Start Mansfield)



"we Have worked with several families where the child and parents are obese due to a low budget and them buying junk food - which is often cheaper than fresh fruit and veg and good quality meat or fish."

(Home-Start Monmouthshire)



# References

- 1 As of end of June 2013, [http://england.shelter.org.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0009/727290/Nowhere\\_to\\_go\\_CHRISTMAS\\_2013.pdf](http://england.shelter.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/727290/Nowhere_to_go_CHRISTMAS_2013.pdf)
- 2 Nowhere to go: the scandal of homeless children in B&Bs. [http://socialwelfare.bl.uk/subject-areas/services-activity/housing-homelessness/shelter/156085Nowhere\\_to\\_go\\_CHRISTMAS\\_2013.pdf](http://socialwelfare.bl.uk/subject-areas/services-activity/housing-homelessness/shelter/156085Nowhere_to_go_CHRISTMAS_2013.pdf)
- 3 NCB [http://www.ncb.org.uk/media/432942/childhood\\_unintentional\\_injuries\\_review.pdf](http://www.ncb.org.uk/media/432942/childhood_unintentional_injuries_review.pdf)
- 4 Making the Link, the Costs of Childhood Accidents, <http://www.makingthelink.net/tools/costs-child-accidents>, accessed on 10/06/2014
- 5 Family Action Group at <http://www.family-action.org.uk/uploads/documents/Mental%20health%20briefing%231%23.pdf>
- 6 Mental Health Foundation (2010) MyCare: The challenges facing young carers of parents with a severe mental illness.
- 7 Manning, V.; Best, D.; Faulkner, N. and Titherington, E. (2009) "New estimates of the number of children living with misusing parents: results from UK national household surveys", BMC Public Health 9: 377
- 8 Manning, V. (2011) Estimates of the numbers of infants (under the age of one year) living with substance misusing parents, London: NSPCC
- 9 A study by the Medical Research Council in 2010 found that one in 28 dads experienced depression in the first year after the birth of their child, although some studies state that as many as ten per cent of new fathers experience PND. Ofsted/Care Quality Commission (2013) What about the children? Manchester: Ofsted
- 10 Woolhouse H, Gartland D, Mensah F, Brown SJ. Maternal depression from early pregnancy to 4 years postpartum in a prospective pregnancy cohort study: implications for primary health care. BJOG 2014. News piece available at [http://www.bjog.org/details/news/6185291/Maternal\\_depression\\_is\\_more\\_common\\_at\\_four\\_years\\_following\\_childbirth.html](http://www.bjog.org/details/news/6185291/Maternal_depression_is_more_common_at_four_years_following_childbirth.html)
- 11 Kenkre, J. and Young, E. (2013) Building resilience: volunteer support for families with complex circumstances and needs. Leicester: Home-Start, page 15. The other two were postnatal depression and teenage pregnancy.
- 12 Sameroff, A. & Fiese, B. (2000) Transactional regulation: The developmental ecology of early. Hermanns et al 2013
- 13 <http://www.trusselltrust.org/resources/documents/Press/1-in-5-parents-struggling-to-feed-children.pdf>
- 14 <http://www.hscic.gov.uk/catalogue/PUB13218>
- 15 <http://www.nationalobesityforum.org.uk/index.php/component/content/article/48-news-x/nof-and-westminster/389-no-fooling.html>
- 16 Kenkre, J. & Young, E (2013)

## SHOW YOU CARE:

 use #allourchildren in your tweets and posts, or email a message or photo showing your support to: [home-start@feeds.storystream.it](mailto:home-start@feeds.storystream.it)

## FOLLOW:

what others are saying about All Our Children at: [www.home-start.org.uk](http://www.home-start.org.uk)

## Contact Home-Start:

Work with your local Home-Start to make life better for all our children. [www.home-start.org.uk/findsupport/search](http://www.home-start.org.uk/findsupport/search). Or work with us at a national level: email the chief executive of Home-Start UK, Rob Parkinson: [rparkinson@home-start.org.uk](mailto:rparkinson@home-start.org.uk)

## THIS manifesto is for

### THE next government

- to take these steps immediately. We want to work on these three public health priorities with the next government. We will be meeting with ministers after the election.

### PROFESSIONAL COLLEAGUES

- to work across disciplines to provide solutions and seamless support for children.

### PARLIAMENTARY CANDIDATES

- to promote the voice of families loudly and clearly during the election campaign, and to commit to supporting these public health initiatives if elected to parliament. We will provide information, evidence and real life stories from constituents.

### FAMILIES, VOLUNTEERS AND LOCAL HOME-STARTS

- to tell it like it is, and raise these issues with local candidates and authorities. Our website provides links and further information: <http://www.home-start.org.uk>

We welcome all your comments and questions in relation to this manifesto.

## WHY HOME-START IS NEEDED

### A nurturing, loving and stable family and home environment strongly determines a child's future life chances.

Children whose parents are struggling to cope with problems such as illness, disability, mental health, poverty, homelessness and domestic violence often miss out on the love, routine and support that are vital for their future.

More than 100 children are referred to our service every day. The need for our work is acute and growing. The families we support often have complex and long term needs which create multiple risk factors for the children's development. Volunteers are a key part of our support; in some instances our volunteers are the first people to reach a family.

Volunteer support for families makes a cost effective difference – invest in local communities to reach public health targets.

#### SHOW YOU CARE:

use #allourchildren in your tweets and posts, or email a message or photo showing your support to: [home-start@feeds.storystream.it](mailto:home-start@feeds.storystream.it)

#### FOLLOW:

what others are saying about All Our Children at: [www.home-start.org.uk](http://www.home-start.org.uk)

#### CONTACT HOME-START:

Work with your local Home-Start to make life better for all our children. [www.home-start.org.uk/findsupport/search](http://www.home-start.org.uk/findsupport/search). Or work with us at a national level: email the chief executive of Home-Start UK, Rob Parkinson: [rparkinson@home-start.org.uk](mailto:rparkinson@home-start.org.uk)

Home-Start was founded in 1973. Today we are one of the leading family support charities in the UK. Our volunteers transform the life chances of some of the most socially excluded children and families in the UK. They support families, build confidence, reduce isolation and improve outcomes for children.<sup>16</sup>

Home-Start has a range of home and community based services for families, tailored to their individual needs and circumstances.

Nearly 16,000 trained family support volunteers deliver our services. The volunteers are supported by more than 1,000 skilled, paid staff who provide the initial training and continue to support volunteers on a regular one to one basis.

Home-Start's approach to working with families is based on in-depth knowledge of local needs and close working relationships with other community agencies.

Over the last 40 years we have helped more than one million of the UK's most vulnerable and disadvantaged children and their families.

We currently reach 32,000 families and 70,000 children the UK every year - that's 1 in every 250 families bringing up children in the UK.

Our services reach into more than 300 communities across the UK and to British Forces bases in Germany and Cyprus.

---

With more than 40 years supporting families, Home-Start knows that small steps are often the most lasting. What we are proposing will make a real, immediate difference to the lives of children.

---

### Home-Start UK

The Home-Start Centre  
8-10 West Walk  
Leicester  
LE1 7NA

t: 0116 258 7900

e: [info@home-start.org.uk](mailto:info@home-start.org.uk)

w: [www.home-start.org.uk](http://www.home-start.org.uk)

Home-Start UK, a company limited by guarantee, company no. 5382181  
Registered charity England and Wales (1108837) and in Scotland (SC039172)

