Supporting families in Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland since 1973.

Our Impact 2025–2026

BECAUSE CHILDHOOD CAN'T WAIT

Support for parents, because childhood can't wait...

Being a parent has never been easy. It can be lonely, frustrating, heart-breaking and overwhelming. All parents struggle at one time or another, and our expert staff and volunteers work alongside families to support parents to regain self-confidence and be the parents they want to be.

This year we made a deliberate shift toward supporting families with more complex needs — particularly through our Mums In Mind (MIMS) programme — providing targeted, high-impact support for families facing post-natal depression and mental health crises.

Over the past 53 years we have worked with families across Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland to reduce social isolation, improve wellbeing, and increase self-esteem for parents and their children. Our positive impact makes a real difference for local families.

In 2025–26...

198 families supported

358 children supported

97 referrals to our Mums In Mind (MIMS) programme

29 referrals to our Dads' Mental Health project

100+ volunteers gave **22,744** hours of their time

33% of referrals involved complex needs



"Home-Start saved our family and my life during the most difficult time. I was struggling so much I wanted to end my life — social services became involved, and the support I received from my volunteer was outstanding. Even though we couldn't physically see each other, having that support over the phone or via text made such a difference."

— A parent supported through Home-Start Horizons



THANKS TO ALL THE VOLUNTEERS

The difference we are making

By focusing on families with complex needs, we achieved transformative outcomes that deliver lasting benefit for both parents and children.

95%
of MIMS mums moved from severe to mild/moderate depression on the Edinburgh Post-Natal Depression Scale

76%
of children in family groups showed positive change in speech, communication & social skills

70%
of families reported increased resilience and reduced isolation

100+
volunteers contributed 22,744 hours of support to local families

Mums In Mind (MIMS)

Our 6-week programme supports mums with a diagnosis of post-natal illness (PNI), or who are experiencing stress, anxiety or depression in the 12 months after birth. We recognise PNI affects the whole family, so we also offer support to partners and dads.

97 referrals this year. We measure impact using the internationally recognised Edinburgh Post-Natal Depression Scale — **95% of mums** showed significant improvement.

Dad's Project

Now in its third year, the Dad's project supported fathers through the Satadads family group at Highfields Children's Centre, online workshops for dads navigating baby's first 12 months, and home-visiting support.

29 referrals to the Dad's Mental Health project this year.



Community involvement

Families and volunteers shaped how we deliver support this year:

- Feedback from families and volunteers guided the expansion of the Dad's project and adaptations to MIMS delivery.
- Regular surveys and feedback sessions led to practical improvements, including sensory toys for children with learning difficulties.
- Former service users became volunteers and trustees, keeping the organisation grounded in lived experience.

Challenges this year

Referrals with complex needs — including domestic violence and disability — rose to **33%** of all referrals, requiring additional resources. The cost-of-living crisis also increased financial stress for families, meaning more signposting to food banks and hardship grants.



THERE FOR PARENTS WHEN THEY NEED US MOST

Volunteers, finances & funding

£328,195

Economic value added by our volunteers this year (22,744hours, value at £14.43/hr— ONS)

33% **of referrals this year involved complex needs, such as domestic violence and disability in the family**

Our volunteers

The work we do would not be possible without the commitment and generious of our volunteers. **100+ volunteers** were involved with supporting families this year, giving **22,744 hours** of home-visiting, group support and telephone contact. Regularly held in both cities and remote areas, volunteer satisfaction and retention, and our teams showed remarkable adaptability in responding to the evolving needs of families.

Funding secured this year

- Further long-term grants secured from Children in Need and Henry Smith.
- A large grant secured from People's Postcode Lottery.
- A continuing pipeline of funding bids.
- Commissioned funding secured/continued via Family Hubs and Getting Help in Neighbourhoods (Health).

Make a donation

To support a family for a year	**£1,809**
To support a child for a year	**£928**
To train a volunteer	**£961**
For a Mum to attend a MIMS course	**£206**
To cover the cost of a home visit	**£32**

Donate via our website or our page on People's Fundraising: www.homestarthorizons.org.uk

WE ARE PROUD TO BE SUPPORTED BY

LOOKING AHEAD

Lessons learned & our plans for 2026–27

What we learned this year

- **Flexibility is critical** — adapting services, such as online workshops for dads, ensured continued support during periods of high demand.
- **Early intervention works** — families engaged early showed faster progress, reinforcing the value of preventative support.
- **Volunteer retention improved** through regular supervision and training.
- Our staff and volunteers have shown remarkable adaptability in responding to families' evolving needs, allowing us to provide intensive support where it is most needed as we work to scale up.

Our plans for 2026–27

- Enhanced Mental Health First Aid training for volunteers supporting families with complex needs.
- Expanded online/virtual workshops for dads and rural families to improve accessibility.
- Strengthening ties with local authorities to secure commissioned funding for specialised programmes.
- Increasing group work sessions and launching targeted peri-natal outreach for dads.
- Working toward our annual target of **400 families** while maintaining our focus on quality and impact.

Conclusion. 2025–26 has been a transformative year for Home-Start Horizons. By focusing on resilience, mental health, and community-led support, we have empowered families to thrive despite adversity. With continued support, we are confident in building a sustainable future for early intervention in Leicestershire.



Every child deserves the best possible start in life.

Find out how to volunteer, refer a family, or make a donation at www.homestarthorizons.org.uk

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