

HOME START

East Sussex

Impact Report
2021-22

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Helping to keep East Sussex families safe and well since 1996

Home-Start East Sussex provides one-to-one support and group work to encourage and develop safety, confidence and independence of local children and adults who have experienced adversity. The charity supports local families and survivors of domestic abuse to build stronger, more resilient relationships, encouraging them to make decisions, act for themselves and take back control of their lives.

Lotus Domestic Abuse Recovery Programme

for females who have been affected by domestic abuse, but who are now away from the relationship and feel safe. The group supports females to process their experience, rebuild confidence and keep themselves and their children safe from abuse in the future.

Who's in Charge? Programme

for parents of children whose behaviour is violent, abusive or seeming beyond control. The group helps parents to reduce and overcome guilt and shame, strengthen positive relationships whilst exploring options of meaningful consequences for children who seem to care about very little.

IDVA support

one-to-one supplementary support for our clients affected by domestic abuse with the additional challenges they may be experiencing. Supporting victim-survivors to access any specialist support services they may need, create effective safety plans and support their children through their anxieties.

Volunteer Family Support Service

aims to increase the safety, wellbeing, confidence and independence of families with at least one pre-school child or who are expecting. For the second year we particularly focussed on minimising the impact of the pandemic on children. A matched parent-volunteer provides a kind listening ear and works with parents on any issues they may be facing.

Being Mum Programme

supports new first-time mothers to improve their confidence in their new role as a parent by providing a space to speak about the changes and challenges that becoming a parent can bring, whilst helping mothers to build friendships with other new mums.

A close-up photograph of a woman with dark hair, smiling warmly as she holds a baby. The baby is laughing joyfully, looking up at the woman. The woman is wearing a grey t-shirt, and the baby is wearing a light-colored, patterned shirt. The background is softly blurred, showing the side of another person's head.

“ Thank you so much for offering this service. It really has been an amazing tool for my parenting skills. You do an awesome job and should be very proud. ”



Our Team



Kate Lawrence
Chief Executive



Alex Salmon
Client Safety and
Quality Assurance Manager



Nyasha Maposa
Client Diversity and
Inclusion Coordinator



Egle Kelpsaite
Volunteer and Families
Coordinator



Rachel Morrison
IDVA and Programmes
Facilitator



Jordan Hollis
IDVA and Programmes
Facilitator



Judith Griffiths
Programmes Assistant



Emily Hall
Services Administrator



Natalie Woods
Whole Family IDVA



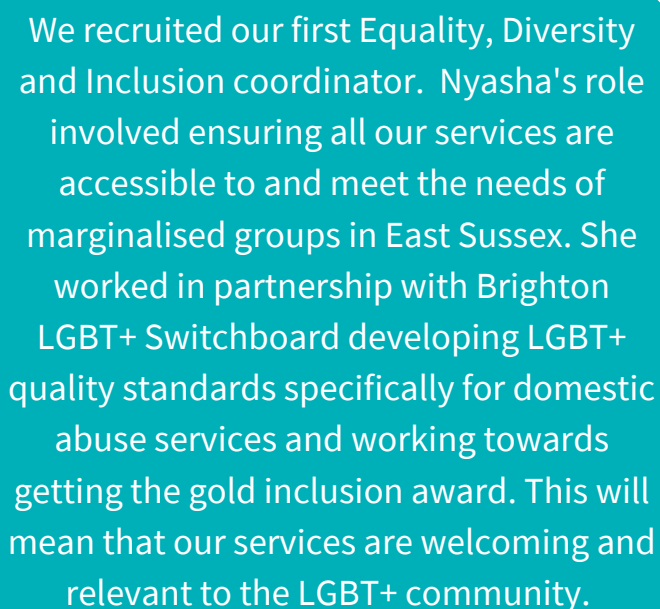
Our People




working towards the increased safety, confidence and independence of disadvantaged families living in the county. This year we supported **172** local families to build stronger, more resilient relationships through targeted services that encourage clients to make decisions, act for themselves and take back control of their lives



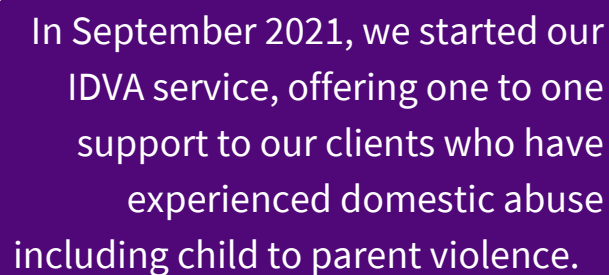
Successes of 2021-22



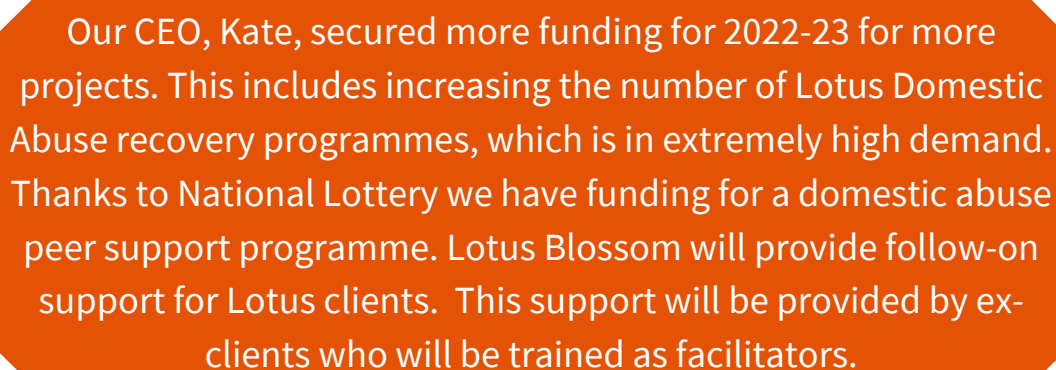
We recruited our first Equality, Diversity and Inclusion coordinator. Nyasha's role involved ensuring all our services are accessible to and meet the needs of marginalised groups in East Sussex. She worked in partnership with Brighton LGBT+ Switchboard developing LGBT+ quality standards specifically for domestic abuse services and working towards getting the gold inclusion award. This will mean that our services are welcoming and relevant to the LGBT+ community.



We developed our Being Mum programme to become more inclusive. The new Being Family service starts in April 2022 and is open to any primary carer of a baby under 12 months old. The programme was previously just for first-time mums.



In September 2021, we started our IDVA service, offering one to one support to our clients who have experienced domestic abuse including child to parent violence.



Our CEO, Kate, secured more funding for 2022-23 for more projects. This includes increasing the number of Lotus Domestic Abuse recovery programmes, which is in extremely high demand. Thanks to National Lottery we have funding for a domestic abuse peer support programme. Lotus Blossom will provide follow-on support for Lotus clients. This support will be provided by ex-clients who will be trained as facilitators.



Challenges of 2021-22



There was ongoing uncertainty of when is the right time to return to face- to face work. Individuals had different feelings about whether they would feel comfortable with face-to-face meetings. Many preferred to continue on Zoom. This meant that our volunteers had to continue offering a hybrid service throughout the year.

We had difficulty securing funding for our Volunteer Family Support Service. This meant that in order to save the service, we have had to merge two services. From April 22, Being Mum and the Volunteer Family Support service will be amalgamated to become Being Family. Despite submitting a number of funding applications, funders were not keen to continue funding this service.

The demand for our Lotus Domestic Abuse Recovery programme exceeded our capacity to deliver the support, resulting in a very long waiting list. We have ensured we signpost clients to other services for more support whilst they wait to be offered a space on the Lotus Programme.

Volunteers were not equipped to deal with the severity and complexity of some families' situations, which meant it was necessary to refer them to our more specialist partners.

The organisation has had to adapt to the rapid growth of the charity. This has led to changes in roles and organisational structure.



“ This group has
changed me and
it’s really changed
our family. ”



Our reach in numbers

172

clients supported in total

167

parents supported

333

children directly supported

187

children indirectly supported

Home-Start East Sussex uses a trauma-informed approach to all service provision. We support clients with a variety of additional needs. Of those supported this year,

62%

reported that they were living with a disability

23%

lived in the lowest 20% deprivation deciles

61%

reported having a mental health problem

11%

were aged 25 or under

7%

were from Black and minoritized communities

7%

disclosed they were from the LGBT+ community

(19% chose not to disclose)



Inclusivity

A commitment to equal opportunities and the fundamental rights of individuals is at the heart of our work. This includes equal treatment and opportunity for people of any race, sexuality, gender, disability, religion or age. Our vision is to be able to offer services for anyone who needs them.

Our priority for 2022-23 is to continue to improve our diversity and inclusion.

We understand that domestic abuse does not discriminate, which is why we worked with Brighton Switchboard to develop an LGBT+ quality standard to ensure our services are welcoming and relevant to the LGBT+ community. As part of this work, Brighton Switchboard reviewed our policies, and gave guidance on how to make them more inclusive to the LGBT+ community.

In 2021-22 we developed an intersectional statement that is read out before every internal staff or trustee meeting.

We also want to promote diversity and inclusion within our board of trustees. Home-Start East Sussex is a member of the Young Trustees Movement which commits to increase the number of under-30s on boards. Whilst this spotlight is on the age factor, the Young Trustees movement is part of a wider call for diversity on boards.



As an ethical employer, Home-Start East Sussex is signed up to local Living Wage Campaigns, committing to account for the cost of living in our staff salaries. Home-Start East Sussex have signed the pledge to always #ShowTheSalary for the roles we advertise. We are displaying the Show The Salary logo to demonstrate our ongoing commitment.

Home-Start East Sussex is a Disability Confident employer because we believe that people with disabilities and long term health conditions should have equal opportunities to fulfil their potential and realise their aspirations.





Feedback from clients

92%

felt their mental health and wellbeing had improved

91%

reported that their social support had improved

94%

felt their risk of harm had reduced

84%

felt that the service had had a positive impact on their children


90%

reported that the service had had a positive impact on their relationship with their partner


90%

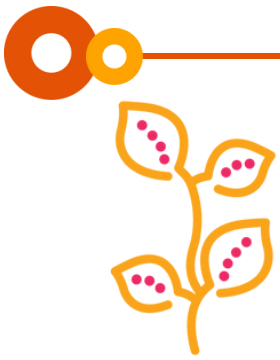
Overall positive outcomes





The lotus group has been totally life changing and has given me the strength to take back so many pieces of myself that I lost to my abusive relationship.





Lotus Domestic Abuse Recovery Programme

The Lotus Domestic Abuse Recovery Programme is a unique group service developed by Home-Start East Sussex to support females who have been through domestic abuse in their recovery and journey forwards. The six-week structured group aims to help them process their experience, and to empower them with the tools and knowledge to keep themselves and any children they may have safe from abuse in the future.



The programme covers:

- Emotional abuse including gaslighting
- Financial abuse and control
- Isolation in abusive relationships
- Early warning signs of an abusive partner
- The cycle of abusive behaviour
- Addressing areas of life still affected by abuse
- Co-parenting with an abusive ex-partner
- Supporting children with their anxieties
- Assertive communication and wellbeing

“The group has helped me to enjoy life and leave what happened in the past, in the past”

This year we supported:



across 5 groups.

Feedback revealed that:

100% felt more **confident to recognise different types of domestic abuse**

100% felt more likely to have a **future free from domestic abuse**

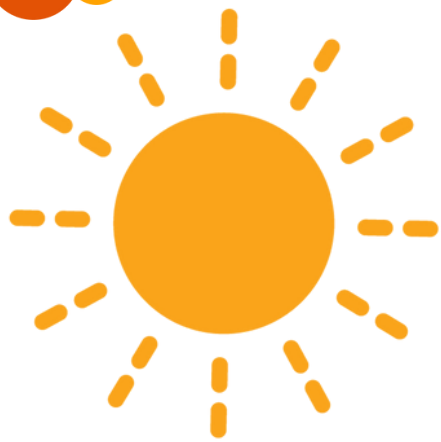
100% felt **their wellbeing had improved.**

98% felt the group had helped them to **plan to make positive changes in their life**

95% felt **less isolated** after meeting the other females in the group



**“ This group has
changed me and it’s
really changed our
family. ”**



Who's in Charge? Programme

The Who's in Charge? Programme is a group for parents and carers of children and adolescents (aged 8-17) whose behaviour is violent, abusive or feeling beyond control.

Home-Start East Sussex ran 3 groups this year following a successful pilot in 2020-21.

The nine-week structured group explores:

- The multicausal nature of abuse
- Entitlement and responsibility
- Meaningful consequences for the child
- Anger and common myths
- Communicating assertively
- Wellbeing, self-care and goal setting

“My mental health is improving with my daughter's behaviour becoming more manageable. Everything is falling into place.”



This year we supported:



30 families
with
77 children

Feedback revealed that:


100% felt more confident about role as a parent

100% felt they were more likely to be able to manage child's behaviour in the future.

92% felt they had a better understanding of the many reasons behind my child's behaviour

81% said their relationship with their challenging child(ren) was better.

100% felt less isolated after meeting parents in a similar situation.



“Just having someone to talk to who does not really know you and is non-judgemental is very helpful.”



Volunteer Family Support Service



Our Volunteer Family Support Service is the longest-running support service at Home-Start East Sussex, with 2021-22 being its 25th year of targeted support to local families. The service supports families with children under school age by matching them with a trained parent volunteer for regular ongoing support, advice and signposting.



The COVID-19 pandemic was still very much a challenge in 2021-22, but our invaluable volunteers continued to support families that needed it. There was some developments in starting to meet face-to-face again. However, understandably everyone's feelings about social interactions varied.

We started offering a blended service from April 2021. This consisted of telephone/Zoom support and meetings in outdoor public places initially. In October 2021 our volunteers started to meet families in indoor public places too.

“ it has really helped me just stop doubting myself as a parent. I am a good mum and I needed to hear that and now I know it. ”

We supported:

40 families

with

81 children


Feedback

revealed that:

of clients reported that the service had **reduced the impact of the pandemic on their child(ren)** in some way.



“ I just wanted to say a huge thank you for the amazing work you do - H has been incredibly supportive and I feel a renewed confidence going into 2022 with the challenges that may lay ahead! Many thanks for supporting me through a difficult few months, onwards and upwards. ”



“The programme has helped me realise that I don’t have to do it all by myself.”



Being Mum Programme

Being Mum is a supportive online group for new first-time mothers. The aim is to improve their confidence in their new role as a parent by providing a space to speak about the changes and challenges that becoming a parent can bring, whilst helping mothers to build friendships with other new mums.

The six-week structured group allows mums to discuss;

- Their story of becoming a mum
- Changes to identity and feelings of isolation
- Mental health and wellbeing
- Bonding with baby and how to improve this
- Maintaining positive relationships with others, including partners
- Learning and development activities

and importantly, to develop friendships with other new first-time mothers across the county.

We supported:

44 mums

with

44 babies

Across 5 groups

“**The changing identities session helped me realise that the focus had been on my baby and that remembering myself is just as important.**”

100% reported feeling **more confident about their role as a mother**

82% felt **less isolated** after meeting other new first-time mothers

93% had **better understanding of development activities** to do with their baby.

100% felt **their wellbeing had improved.**

“**I have gained more confidence in trusting my own judgement. I feel this will naturally inform future parenting decisions.**”



Making life-long friends

When Elly, Carly and Kirsten joined our Being Mum group in January 2021, they didn't expect to leave with life-long friends.



“ It was a life saver to myself when Arlo was a tiny baby and it is great now that the babies are all getting older together and I have support of new wonderful friends. ”



“ It would be great if it could encourage more people to do the course as we are all so grateful for the friendship and support it gave us! ”



“ With IDVA I feel that someone has got my back, I have someone to turn to, and this is really precious, beyond words. The IDVAs sound like they really care and remember what's happened. I am really grateful. ”



One-to-one IDVA support



In addition to our group-based support programmes for victims of domestic abuse, Home-Start East Sussex also delivered tailored one-to-one support to clients that needed it.

We were able to support clients with:

- Safety planning (primarily parents experiencing child-to-parent violence)
- Criminal court cases, civil justice remedies, accessing legal support
- Coordinating child contact, Social Services and children's schools
- Accessing a GP, mental health services, addiction support and counselling
- Parenting children who may have witnessed domestic abuse
- Benefits and immigration issues
- Accessing housing support after leaving an abusive relationship
- Referrals to pattern-changing courses
- Emotional support
- Escalation to higher-risk agencies when needed.



IDVA support helped to

Reduce risk of harm for **100%**

Improve mental health and wellbeing for **98%**

Have a positive impact on children for **88%**

Have a positive impact on partner for **100%**

Improve social support and reduce loneliness for **99%**

of our clients

“I was offered support in areas I didn't even know existed. It's also really reassuring to know that if ever there are any issues, there is someone there who understands and is able to offer support, no matter how long it's been.”



Our Supporters



Wendy and fellow female DJs donated half of the funds raised from an event they ran for International Women's Day.

The Women in Law Society at the University of Sussex ran a Quiz night and Raffle in aid of Home-Start East Sussex on International Women's Day.



And a huge thank you to each of our funders throughout the year. Your generosity has enabled vital services to continue to support vulnerable families and individuals during a year that was difficult for all.



With generous donations from:
ND JT JH HC CR GS PT AR NT RS DO'C KS EP
Volunteer Gift Aided expenses



Dedication



Nikki

We would like to dedicate this year's report to Nikki.

Nikki was one of our Lotus clients who, once she had completed the course became a volunteer for HSES. She was dedicated to supporting other DA victim survivors recover from their experiences. Very sadly, Nikki passed away in December 2020.

Her family confirmed that that she benefited greatly from the work that the HSES team did with her and she really enjoyed her time volunteering with HSES. She was a member of the Lotus steering group and helped to facilitate the programme as well as providing emotional and practical support to the women she attended the group with. Her work has helped to improve the Lotus programme.

She is missed by us all.





Thank you

Debra joined us in January 2021 on a social work placement and continued with us until June 21. We want to thank her for her continued commitment by assisting on our group programmes and becoming a staff member.

Harriet joined us in January 2022 from the University of Sussex on a social work placement. Harriet has been an amazing support to our team and our clients. She has assisted on our online programmes and supported clients one-to-one. Harriet will be leaving us in June, we wish her all the best for her future and thank you for all your hard work.



Volunteers and Trustees



We are lucky to have volunteers and trustees with a wealth of experience who give their time freely.

Thank you for your hard work towards making sure Home-Start East Sussex supports vulnerable families in East Sussex.



Our plans for 2022-23



We are in the process of developing our Lotus Blossom Project. We recognised that there was a need for extra support once the programme has finished. Lotus Blossom will be a peer support group for clients that have attended our Lotus group. This will involve ex clients who have been trained to deliver the optional follow on group.

We recognise the vulnerability of transgender and non-binary domestic abuse victim-survivors and although we have not received specific funding , from April 2022 we will extend our IDVA service so that any transgender or non-binary resident of East Sussex or Brighton & Hove can access it.



We aim to deliver:

10 Lotus Programmes

3 Who's in Charge? groups

4 Being Family groups

Continue to provide one-to-one IDVA support

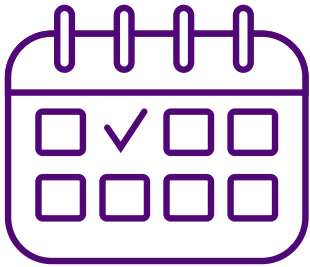




Get Involved



You can support people to live in a safe and nurturing family and to enjoy a positive, fulfilling life in the following ways.



Regular donations

Set up weekly, monthly, quarterly or yearly donations at no extra cost via our TotalGiving page.

Hold a fundraising event

A time-bound challenge, a talent show, a bake-off or a sponsored walk - whatever you love doing, do it for a good cause! Set up a fundraising page via our TotalGiving page to stay on track of donations and share your progress with supporters.



Support while you shop

Sign up to Amazon Smile and Easy Fundraising to donate at no extra cost whilst shopping online.

Leave a gift in your will

Under UK tax law, legacies to charities are exempt from inheritance tax. Supporting Home-Start East Sussex in your will is an amazing way for your generosity to last beyond your own lifetime.



www.totalgiving.co.uk/charity/home-start-east-sussex

