



BigLife Families

impact report
April 2013 - March 2014

introduction

BigLifeFamilies supports parents, children and families from excluded or disadvantaged communities to achieve their full potential by delivering high quality, welcoming and accessible services including children's centres, family support, childcare and volunteering opportunities.

80% of people using Big Life Families said their quality of life had improved after using our services and **99%** said they were satisfied with the quality of these services.

"I have a hearing impairment which means I need a little bit more help at times, but as I have grown up I have realised that shouldn't stop me from doing what I want to do. Before I became a volunteer at The Star Children's Centre in Stockton-on-Tees I felt lonely, and didn't take part in any activities outside my family home, and found it hard to make friends. Since coming to The Star I have never looked back. At first I felt nervous but excited to be learning again, I was very shy to begin with; I did not speak to people unless I needed to. I undertook a number of courses and began volunteering in The Star's crèche in March 2014.

I really enjoy volunteering at The Star and playing with the children in the crèche. I now feel confident and know what I am doing, it has made me happier in myself. I am ready to start my Level 2 Award in Practical Food Safety for Catering. This will qualify me to provide the children with snacks. I am looking forward to being given more responsibility. In the future my goal is to gain paid employment working in a crèche." Hannah



volunteers

More than 63 volunteers were supported by Big Life Families this year, and of those, at least 35 went into further education and employment.

children's centres

This year, Big Life Families ran **3** children's centres – one in Manchester and two in Stockton-on-Tees. Each of the children's centres offer a range of services for local families including parenting classes, outreach, support groups, family services, training and volunteering opportunities.

Over **4,326** families accessed our centres or used our services.



Longsight Children's Centre staff and parents celebrate Refugee Week

Longsight Children's Centre

2,920 families used Longsight Children's Centre this year.

Working alongside both Longsight Community Primary and Aisha Nursery, which is based in the centre, Longsight Children's Centre in Manchester offers a 0 - 11 year package of support for local children and families, meaning that parents can come to register the birth of their child, attend parenting classes, use our nursery and eventually register their child at our primary school.

80 families accessed midwifery services.

170 babies and toddlers had healthy weight checks.

163 children had health and development assessments.

515 children accessed stay and play sessions and when we asked parents at these sessions **89%** said they had learnt new skills needed for when their children start school.

28 people volunteered at the centre with **13** going on to get employment. An average of **10** Roma families a month were helped to access support and make greater use of services.

"I like meeting different people and relating to them no matter what ethnic group they come from. I do arts and crafts with some mums and the expression on their face when they have made something is wonderful. I love volunteering and living in a community that is ethnically diverse. I like getting glimpses of other cultures. I like it that people keep their own culture and also become part of the community."

Tony, Longsight Children's Centre Volunteer



the star & freddy nats children's centres

1,406 families accessed our Stockton children's centres and **192** children accessed stay and play sessions to help prepare them for starting school.

The centres ran a range of services, including stay and play, debt management sessions, young parents group, parenting classes, groups for asylum seekers and refugees, adult learning courses and volunteering opportunities.

173 parents accessed training, **213** accessed employment support, and **27** parents did a volunteering course.

408 families accessed midwifery services and **176** families accessed health visitor support.

We joined with three other voluntary organisations in the Healthways project and helped **60** families to improve their health.

100% of the people we asked said the activities and training provided by The Star and Frederick Nattrass had a positive impact on their family.



Frederick Nattrass Children's Centre started its own daycare nursery this year offering free childcare places to two year olds

"I was pregnant with my eighth child, smoking 40 cigarettes a day, and wanted to improve my parenting skills, literacy and – if it was ever possible - to stop smoking. I've been using The Star for a while now and the Healthways Support Worker there got me on to a nurturing course and a literacy course, they also arranged and went with me to stop smoking sessions. I'm now down to 10 cigarettes a day and I'm also feeling more confident about the future."



/thestarstockton

/FrederickNattrassStockton




family support services

We provided family support services in Manchester, Trafford, Knowsley and Macclesfield, supporting families with children aged 0-19 years who are struggling to cope.

Between April 2013 and March 2014, we worked with **709** families across our services, providing support around domestic abuse, mental well being, debt advice, help to access school and nursery, parenting, confidence, self-esteem, support and friendship networks, and signposting to other services.

100% of the parents we asked said that using our services gave them a better understanding of their children's learning and development and enabled them to make better use of community support and local services.

100% of the parents we asked said they are more aware of services, better able to access services independently and more confident about addressing the issues they face after using our services.



“We were struggling with our daughter who had recently been diagnosed with ADHD, and managing her behaviour at home. School agreed her behaviour was difficult at times. We were distressed because she had recently attempted to harm herself after an incident at school. She was unhappy going into school and felt bullied, and her attendance was low. I was feeling very anxious and on edge with my daughter as she often got angry at home and I found her hard to manage.

The Family First service in Knowsley had one to one sessions with my daughter and did things like self esteem, managing anger, staying safe and respect. I was offered parenting support and the Solihull programme, a course to help me understand my daughter’s condition. I also got referred to a mental health service because I was feeling depressed and anxious.

After the sessions I noticed a change in my daughter. School said they have seen a positive change in her, things are calmer at home and there is more laughter in the house.”





childcare

This year, we took on **6** new nurseries previously managed by Manchester City Council. As well as the Aisha nursery based at Longsight Children's Centre, we opened Slade Lane (Longsight) and Cheetham Park (Cheetham Hill) in September 2013; followed by Alexandra Park (Moss Side), Broad Hill (Burnage), Sunny Brow (Gorton) in January 2014. We expect to open a further nursery at Rusholme Children's Centre in autumn 2014.

263 children used our nurseries.

109 free nursery education funded places were provided for two year olds from the most disadvantaged families.

12 children with special educational needs were supported which included support with speech and language therapy, behaviour and sensory support.

Of the three nurseries inspected by Ofsted, Aisha and Slade Lane were rated good and Cheetham Park outstanding.

Over **1,600** children used our Big Life Crèche which provides services across Manchester, enabling parents to access a range of services.



Childcare Staff and Volunteers

Around **50%** of our childcare staff live within three miles of where they work. **17** staff are multilingual, speaking a range of other languages including Punjabi, French, Somali, Arabic, Bangla and Urdu. **71** of our **75** childcare staff are qualified to Level 2 or more. This includes **2** qualified teachers who play a leading role in setting quality standards, encouraging language development and helping prepare children for school, and **3** staff with Early Years Professional status. **2** members of staff successfully gained qualifications while working for Big Life Nurseries. We supported **10** volunteers and training placements.

“The quality of teaching in the nursery is good and practitioners are very knowledgeable about the Early Years Foundation Stage. They know that children learn best through play and first-hand experiences. They provide a wide range of appropriate, stimulating activities for the children in all the rooms and outdoors. For example, children are supported in using the natural environment and one child’s passion for looking for worms has supported an interest in the bug investigation area ‘Bunningham Palace’. Consequently, children are motivated to learn and make rapid progress across all areas of learning in readiness for school.”

Slade Lane Nursery Ofsted Report April 2014.



BigLife
Families

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BigLife
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business changing lives

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