



Newsletter

July 2020 No. 47

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**HOME
START**
Cotswolds

Keeping a safe distance!

When lockdown restrictions started to lift earlier this month, we were able to get some of our volunteers together for two socially distanced coffee meet ups.

It also meant that Coordinator, Janice Gibson, could present one of our long serving volunteers, Fiona Beck, with an engraved candle to thank her for all her hard work (see picture right).

Fiona said: 'I've been a Home-Start volunteer for 13 years now and enjoy it so much. It has been lovely to meet my different families – some of whom I still see – and to work with them. It is such a privilege and a pleasure to see them grow from strength to strength. Thank you Home-Start for 13 happy years of being able to give a little something back...and for my beautiful candle!'



Above and left are some of our volunteers enjoying their new-found freedom. Left: Fiona, Sue, Angharad and Katy. Above: Rhian, Gillian, Janet, Jane and Sally. It was lovely to see you all!



Service update

We are continuing to support families across the Cotswolds by phone, text and in some cases via outdoor, socially distanced visits.

We have also delivered our first ever online safeguarding training for volunteers.

Our staff team are mostly working remotely, with some office hours on a rota basis, so that we can maintain social distancing. It's amazing how quickly you can adapt to new ways of working!

We are pausing our deliveries of 'lockdown packs' for now, but we know these were a real boost for families. We'd like to thank the Cotswold District Council Community Resilience Grant for funding the packs, and Cirencester Foodbank for their contributions. See our website for some of the recipes and activity ideas we included in the packs and if you don't already, please follow us on social media:

Facebook @HomeStartCotswolds

Twitter @HomeStartCots



Our Coordinators (above L to R) Katharine Campbell, Janice Gibson and Lynn Hurley, prepared the lockdown packs every fortnight and delivered them to 28 families across the Cotswolds.

Annual General Meeting

We held our first ever online Annual General Meeting in June via Zoom (pic below). This turned out to be more 'time efficient' shall we say than previous years, but it was still a shame not to be meeting in person. Fingers crossed that next year we can meet under normal circumstances! The 2019/2020 Annual Report and Accounts can be found on our website at www.home-start-cotswolds.org.uk



Activity ideas for the holidays

If it's a rainy day...

- Have a Treasure Hunt and write clues to find objects hidden around the house.
- Turn the radio up and play musical statues. Get everyone dancing, stop the music and whoever can't stand still is out!
- Make a jigsaw puzzle by cutting out pictures from magazines, sticking them onto some card and cutting them up.
- Have a board games afternoon.
- Get out all of your dressing up clothes—mix and match and make up new crazy characters!
- Make a card for a friend or family member.



- Grab any musical instruments you have (you could make a shaker using a lidded pot with dry beans in) and play along with your favourite song.

- Play 'I went shopping and I bought...' going through the alphabet. See how long a list you can remember!
- Create boats out of old margarine tubs—add a lolly stick mast and paper sails and pop them in the bath.
- Play 'Simon Says', including actions like star jumps.
- Build a den and have a sleepover in it.
- Make a pretend shop—you could even make money!

If it's dry outside...

- Have a sports day with some old favourites like the egg and spoon, three-legged race and the sack race.
- Go for a walk in the woods. Look for stones or rocks that you can take home and paint with messages to brighten up someone's day.
- Have a water balloon fight!



- Blow bubbles and see who can blow the biggest one.
- Write a list of things to look for when you are out and about, like a v-shaped stick, something stripy or a yellow car. The kids will love it!
- Try to run away from your shadow—can you do it?
- Hug a tree (nice to do when hugging you can't currently hug all the people you would like to!)
- Pack a picnic and go butterfly spotting.
- Go on a minibeasts safari!
- And don't forget that almost any daily activity is a chance to talk, bond and have fun with little ones!