

Organisation: Home-Start Richmond, Kingston and Hounslow

Project title: Community Outreach 23-24 HSRKH

Case Study 1 - November 2024

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**Richmond, Kingston
& Hounslow**

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Home-Start Richmond, Kingston and Hounslow supports marginalised mothers through 1-1 bespoke emotional and practical support provided by volunteers and expert Family Support Coordinators. As part of the Skills for Londoner's Project, volunteers and coordinators help the target group identify and access relevant education and skills training, working with them to build their confidence and support them practically to make the first steps on their learning journey.

In the early stages of the project, we've built relationships with key AE providers in the boroughs, to enable Home-Start staff and volunteers to fully understand the offer and accessibility options, and provide feedback to providers about the barriers mothers face to accessing AE. We partnered with Richmond and Hillcroft Adult Community College who attended a Lunch and Learn event at Home-Start offices, attended by staff and volunteers. The objective was to increase awareness and knowledge of RHACC's offer for staff and volunteers to share with the families they support; and share our experience of the barriers mothers face in accessing opportunities, and explore ways to overcome these together.

Lee Barbieri, RHACC's Information, Advice and Guidance Advisor, explained their offer relevant to the target group (eg ESOL courses delivered at Children's Centres; free, personalised IAG sessions; functional skills courses; building skills for life taster sessions), and the process for accessing courses, and support available. The team came away with a clear understanding of where to find information, how to connect mothers to opportunities, eligibility criteria, and who to contact for bespoke support. The RHACC partner gained insight into the challenges marginalised mothers face and discussed ways of overcoming these, for example around navigating the offer online; childcare bursaries; loans of laptops and digital surgeries; physical access to buildings; and the impact of terminology such as "assessments" for mothers with low confidence and self esteem.

In addition, we used the session to do a needs assessment to understand better what their experience of families' learning needs are. As a result, we identified areas for bespoke training and learning which we can deliver in partnership with RHACC as part of the project. We plan to invite

Home-Start supported mothers to attend sessions provided by RHACC trainers at easily accessible venues in the community for taster training and information sessions on childcare qualifications, careers advice, paediatric first aid, nutrition and healthy eating, and teaching as a career.

Staff and volunteers also used the session to connect to learning opportunities for themselves (as local mothers and a secondary target group for the project). This resulted in a staff member signing up for an AI training course delivered by RHACC which she then completed, building her own confidence and skills.