

Jessica A family's story

Jessica and her husband moved to Nottingham for career reasons. She had a responsible job and had achieved several promotions.

Jessica had her first baby and then after suffering two miscarriages she had a second baby. Unfortunately, she developed post-natal depression after birth of second child, linked mainly to breast feeding problems. She also developed a back problem when her second child was two. The depression continued as she was feeling isolated because her immediate family were in either Birmingham or Reading and she hadn't made many friends in the Nottingham area. Jessica felt unable to cope domestically, causing friction with her husband. Although she was initially supported by the charity Sure Start for the breast feeding issues, they eventually recommended that she contacted Home-Start for the additional help that she obviously needed.

The Home-Start volunteer helped Jessica in particular with the problems that she was experiencing within the family. Together, they were able to identify what the causes of the friction were and the volunteer was able to help her see the issues from another's perspective. The volunteer was also able to help her think about issues in a different way and to develop coping strategies. She also sought help from her GP for the depression and was treated with medication and cognitive behavioural therapy.

Jessica has now regained her confidence considerably and has worked in a volunteering capacity with the Sure Start scheme as a peer breast feeding supporter. This led to her getting involved in a pilot scheme whereby volunteers provide breast feeding support to new mothers on the maternity wards of local hospitals. She also assists with a local Sure Start swimming scheme. Her ambition is to gain paid employment as a breast feeding counsellor.

Jessica is now really settled in the area, has good neighbours on whom she can rely and has made some friends. She still keeps in touch with her volunteer.