



Sharon didn't believe her life was worth living until she found first class support at Stourbridge Children and Families Centre.

Sharon has been a Volunteer at Stourbridge Children and Families Centre for the last three years but as a parent has used the Centre since her children were very young. She is now in the position of both giving and receiving support from an organisation which she believes has almost literally saved her life. "The divorce from my children's father was devastating and left me not only with zero confidence in myself but contributed to a mental breakdown and physical illness. Because I was so desperately unhappy, I could hardly look after the children let alone myself and I succumbed to both depression and viral meningitis."

Family Support Worker?

"Volunteering is the only way I know to thank Stourbridge Children and Families Centre for its constant support and encouragement. It has helped me to turn my life round, and I hope I can play a part in doing the same for someone else."

Sharon has now taken a further step on her personal journey and is working as a Family Support Worker at the Centre.

Sharon Dimmock lives in Stourbridge with her husband, Mark, and has two daughters – Paige is 21 and Emily, 18.



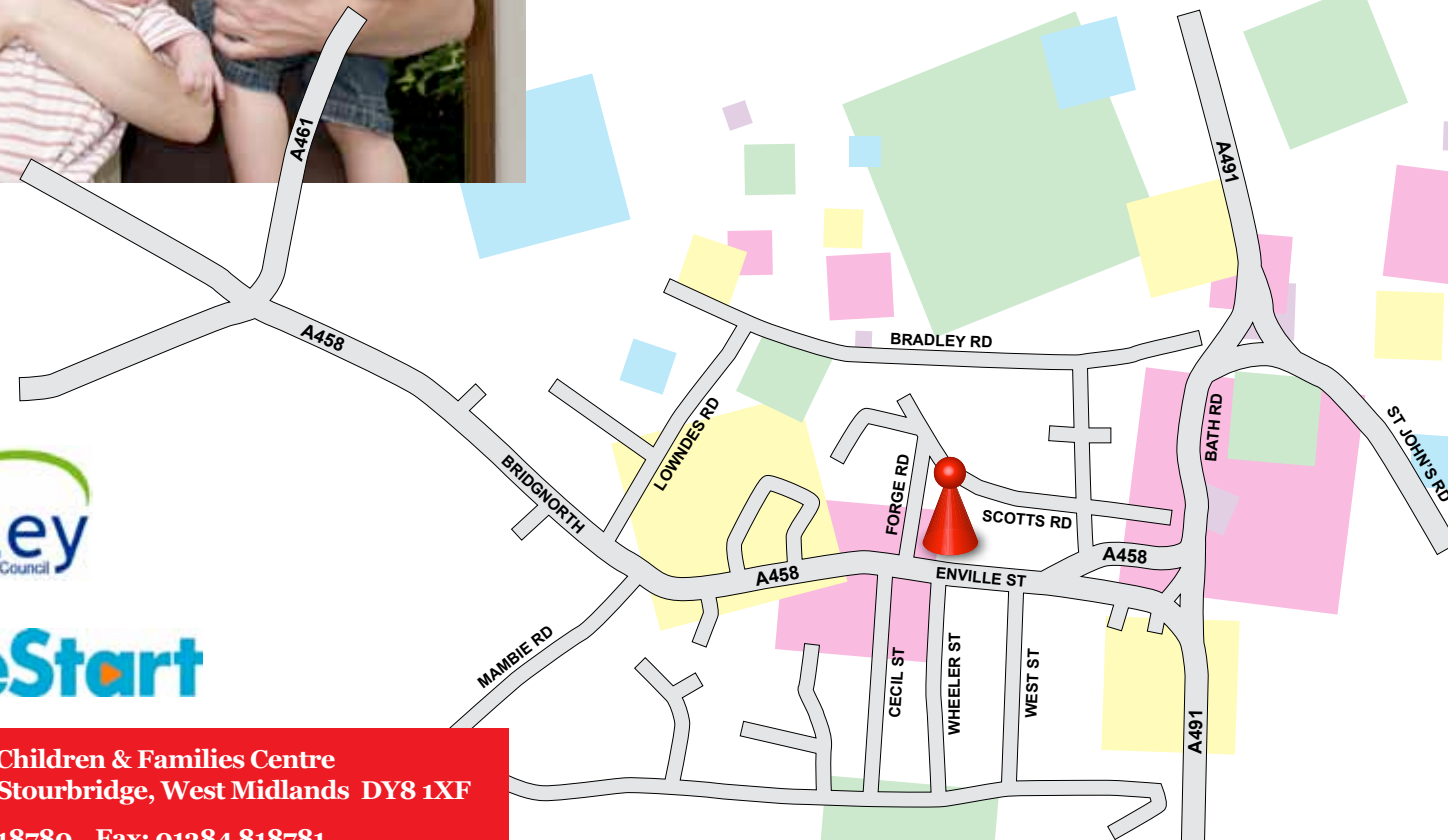
Haydn and Billy have found somewhere to enjoy their Saturdays together even more at the Stourbridge Children and Families Centre Dad's Club.

"I suppose I was strong-armed into it, actually, as it wasn't really something I would have done without considerable encouragement, shall we say! Nevertheless, from the very first I was impressed with the facilities it provided, the entertainment value for Billy and the friendly atmosphere I found there. I love to spend time with Billy and the Dad's Club seemed to have everything I could have wanted, from company and a great range of activities for Billy, to a hot bacon sandwich for me!"

Haydn Ashbrook and his partner, Tamsin, live in Stourbridge with their two children – Billy, who is two years old and their new baby girl.



Stourbridge Children & Families Centre
Forge Road, Stourbridge, West Midlands DY8 1XF
Tel: 01384 818780 Fax: 01384 818781



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Michelle has two sons, Courtney, 18 and Tyrese, who is nearly three

At eighteen months old, Michelle's son was becoming out of control, until they found the help they needed from Stourbridge Children and Families Centre

Having already successfully brought up another child, Michelle was taken completely by surprise by her second son, Tyrese, who turned out to be rather more challenging. "When he was about eighteen months old his behaviour deteriorated hugely, and he began to throw dreadful tantrums. Obviously I got upset and although I now know that that made things worse, in fact Tyrese became more and more out of control."

Children's Centre advice

What Michelle's Family Support Worker from the Children's Centre taught her has made a very great difference, and Michelle credits her with improving Tyrese's behaviour ten-fold.

"Things are so much better now, so much so that Tyrese has been signed off for the time being. He's settled into his pre-school for two mornings each week, and I have the reassurance that if there are any more problems I only have to ask for help for someone to come and see us again. I'm so grateful for the help I've had from Stourbridge Children and Families Centre!"