



## HELEN'S STORY

Parent Group Leader Helen Gamble has delivered training in Family Links' programmes for 9 years, starting before she became a parent herself. Now with a young family of her own, Helen travels all over the UK and trains about 16 parent group leaders every month. It's clear that she loves her work, and her enthusiasm for the training programmes is infectious.

Before delivering Family Links training, Helen worked for the government's Teenage Pregnancy Unit initiative (now a part of *Every Child Matters*), supporting teenage parents by encouraging them into further education or employment. She undertook the Nurturing Programme Parent Group Leader (PGL) training 'by accident', taking the place of a colleague who was unable to attend the booked course. Helen began to apply what she had learned immediately by running groups with teenage parents, *"I wasn't a parent at the time,"* she says, *"But the Nurturing Programme is not about telling people how to be parents; it's about developing and enhancing life relationships. I find I use the Programme constantly with my husband, the rest of my family, and in my relationships with friends and colleagues."*

Once Helen had children of her own, she took the plunge and became a freelance trainer, travelling around the UK and delivering training to people who work in a wide spectrum of environments, including children's hubs, with parents in crisis, educational psychologists, teachers and other professionals who come into contact with parents. Helen is trained in the delivery of a range of Family Links' programmes, including the Parenting Puzzle workshops and refresher courses, ante-natal training, and Islamic Values classes.

When asked what difference she hopes to make, Helen is characteristically positive,

*"Any small change is good: a feeling that you have helped someone advance. Feeling better about yourself is immeasurable, but it impacts on every part of your life. I trained a woman who said she had borne a grudge against her ex-husband for 16 years and through the Nurturing Programme she was now able to let go of it. That has made a big difference to her life."*

Helen's enthusiasm for Family Links' suite of training programmes is palpable, and her success is evident from the feedback she receives from those she has trained, *"I have a powerful belief in Family Links' training material and its potential to improve people's lives,"* she finishes, *"And I think that's important to share. I am honoured to be a part of it."*