



Labour Friends of Sure Start

Maryam's Story

Maryam is a victim of domestic violence. She and her baby daughter fled and hid by sleeping on a friend's couch.

Maryam was terrified of being tracked down by her husband. Her baby began to develop health problems and the local Council refused to help.

With nowhere else to turn, Maryam visited a Sure Start Children's Centre for the first time.

Here she received housing advice, parenting support and was referred to a legal advocacy group. She took her baby to play sessions which helped to support speech and language development.

Equally importantly, Maryam received warmth and encouragement. The Sure Start workers went out of their way to put her at ease. She made friends. Her shattered self-confidence was rebuilt.

The Children's Centre team ensured that Maryam's housing case was prioritised. Thanks to this priceless support, Maryam and her baby are now happily settled in safe accommodation.

After moving in, the very first thing Maryam did was to locate her nearest Sure Start Children's Centre. She is now one of their most regular visitors.

Having received such fantastic support, Maryam was devastated to hear that the Government have closed 401 Sure Start Centres. She said the Centres *"are very important to me and the whole community, closing them would be detrimental to society as a whole."*