

# Corrina has discovered a new way to enjoy her children's young lives at an East Reading Children's Centre



Corrina and her partner, Craig, live in Reading with their two sons Derry, two and Kyron, one.

## Getting out of the same old routine

Corrina only discovered Hamilton Road Children's Centre when her second son was about eight months old, and wishes she had known about it earlier. "I was getting a bit depressed at being stuck at home all day with two small children, just following the same old routine day after day, so when I heard about the Centre I thought I'd go and see what it was all about. I'd never heard about it before but it's been great as somewhere to get us out of the house and to have a good time."



**East Reading  
Children's Centres Team**

*A place we play and learn together*





## Never dress your child in his best clothes!

Toys Before Teatime was the first Group Corrina tried. Unsure what to expect, she left Kyron at home with his dad and dressed Derry smartly in new clothes. "I was horrified when he headed towards the craft table and ended up with his clean top covered in paint before we could get an apron on him, but he had such a nice time I couldn't be too upset!" she remembers. "Now I know better and put him in old clothes which don't matter, and it's lovely to let him make a mess and not to have to worry about it."

When Corrina mentioned that she had another baby son at home, the Centre staff encouraged her to bring Kyron along, too, and she was pleased to find that there were a great deal for him as well. "They provided baby toys, books, things for him to look at and play with, and because the staff were on hand to keep an eye on Derry I didn't have to worry about being in two places at once."

## Space to thrive

The Friday Fun sessions are perfect for both the boys, with soft-play equipment including slides, climbing frames, mats and ball pools which allow them to run around in complete safety and wear themselves out. "What I love about the Centre is that they provide things we couldn't possibly have at home and that the boys absolutely adore playing with," Corrina says. "Even if we could afford things like that we haven't got the space at home so this is something really special for them and even though they are so young, as soon as I put them in their double buggy they seem to know where we are going."

## Safe and happy

Corrina often takes Derry and Kyron to the Stay and Play Drop-In where she knows there will be a lot to keep the boys happy, and where she can relax for a while with her friends. "We can have a cup of tea or coffee and a good laugh knowing that the children are safe and happy. The staff are really good with the children and know them well, so the boys feel at home, having a great time."

## Happy bedtimes

Apart from the social aspect of the Centre, Corrina has been offered a lot of general advice on parenting skills such as encouraging good behaviour, suggestions on ways to amuse the boys at home and she has learned new nursery rhymes which both she and Craig enjoy singing to Derry and Kyron at bedtime. "They have also given us books which are part of the bedtime routine and we all enjoy," she says. "Having new ideas on how to interact with the boys has been brilliant."

## A new focus on parenthood

Whilst Corrina has always been happy to be a full-time mum, she acknowledges that the input of the Centre has been invaluable in giving her a new focus on both the boys and herself. "It's given us all another social outlet; the children are making new friends and I have, too. Derry and Kyron feel at home there and if there is ever a time when we have missed a few sessions I notice the difference - they start to get a bit restless because they have missed it. I would miss it if it wasn't there - it's been a real help to me."

### For further information contact your local Children's Centre:

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