

Anna France-Williams

It Takes a Village: How We Created a Circle of Support around Our Children from Birth

Abstract

My husband and I developed the idea of The Life Village in 2009 when we were expecting our first child, inspired by the many cultures who live the value that it takes a village to raise a child. We wanted to harness the truth within this African proverb and create a circle of support around our new baby, made up of friends and family.

We now have three children and a decade of experience of The Life Village as a network of support. It has formalised our existing connections and given people an opportunity to be part of our family life.

In this talk I will outline how the model works, why we set it up and how it benefits our family. I will share stories of how the Life Villagers have enriched our children's lives and have supported us as parents and discuss what the challenges are of setting up a Life Village for a child and how might this model support different families.