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Executive Summary

The Sure Start Bexhill and Sidley is a fifth wave Sure Start programme that aims to address family needs within East Sussex County Council, having received approval for its ten-year programme of making a difference to the cognitive, social and physical development of children and families in 2002/03.

As a result, 2002/03 evaluation report spotlights the lessons learned in establishing the programme, while also detailing baselines of satisfaction with local services amongst local families with very young children that are capable of ongoing measurement. This report also identifies some other needs of local families with very young children.

In understanding the progress of the Sure Start Bexhill and Sidley Partnership in 2002/03 and exploring some of the key reasons for the performance outcomes, in some cases, notably as it relates to:

- The very robust operational and programme management arrangements in place;
- The willingness of the Bexhill and Rother PCT and the Early Years Service to introduce multi-agency, multi-disciplinary models of working;
- The valuable and ongoing contribution of the voluntary sector;
- Ensuring that parents are very well represented on the Board enabling parents to contribute to the wider strategic discussion about the direction of Sure Start Bexhill and Sidley;
- The excellent links between Sure Start Bexhill and Sidley and the East Sussex Children's Fund;

the Partnership should feel very proud of its achievements.

These achievements and key priorities all arise within the context of 2002/03 being primarily a year about establishing the programme and partnership infrastructure, building links with local families and agencies, and taking the first steps in delivery.

There exists, however, substantial scope for Sure Start Bexhill and Sidley, working in partnership with local parents, the local council and others, to address the continuum of needs of parents, parents-to-be and their very young children. The Partnership is well positioned for meeting programme objectives and will certainly improve the life chances of local families.

Introduction

The maxim that *'the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world'* lies at the crux of the Government's belief at how best to address child poverty and address social exclusion.

Sure Start recognises that addressing the needs of, and promoting the social, physical and cognitive development of children demands a focus on family, and addressing the continuum of needs of families with very young children. Sure Start programmes recognise that traditional ways of delivering services that have tended to focus on 'specific issues' or 'concerns', need to be reinvented to respond effectively and meaningfully to the needs of families. This might involve recasting 'clinical' roles within home-based or community-based settings. This might involve offering one-stop shops for information, advice and treatment that cover a broad range of issues from employment and training advice to helping parents with a child that has problems sleeping to giving some parents some respite crèche. This might involve other delivery models that break down professional and/or organisational boundaries.

What Sure Start does is build itself around the needs of local communities, with local parents working in partnership with local statutory and voluntary sector agencies to design and deliver services for families. Not surprisingly, Sure Start programmes have the potential for considerable experimentation and are addressing similar challenges with their own diverse solutions that match their own local circumstances and aspirations.

Consequently, the Government is committed to ensuring that evidence is collected about what solutions work, so that the lessons learned influence even better outcomes and reshape how mainstream services meet needs so that all parents and children are capable of accessing quality services as they need them. To this end, a national evaluation is taking place and all local programmes must undertake annual evaluations.

Cordis Bright have applied an evaluation methodology that emphasises the role of *empowerment* within the evaluation processes. As such, a fundamental tenet of the evaluation methodology has been empowering local people to work with their own communities as part of the evaluation process.

Drawing these elements together, the report is grouped broadly to reflect a client dimension, an operational dimension and a strategic dimension.

The Client Dimension

The extent to which people in receipt of services or in other ways benefit from services believe that their circumstances/ choices have improved. This includes very young children.

The Operational Dimension

The extent to which those that deliver services believe that this new way of working is giving them greater freedom and responsibility for meeting the full continuum of the needs of all families with under fours. The extent to which robust programme management has been established and is a related feature of other outcomes achieved.

The Strategic Dimension

The extent to which the partnership-model enables partners to most effectively apply resources to addressing the full continuum of the needs of a family. This might mean, for example, networking and reconfiguring resources across agencies to provide new joint-approaches to meeting local needs. In the medium-longer term, ensuring success within this strategic dimension will prove necessary to capture the lessons learned from the Sure Start programme and ensure the sustainability of good practice.

Methodology

The evaluation comprised:

- A questionnaire was designed, in conjunction with the local parent surveyors and with programme management, to establish baselines of satisfaction, areas where the programme has started to make a difference and to identify other needs of local parents.

Interviews were then conducted with 210 parents of young children living in the Sure Start catchment area, representing 33% of families with young children known to live in the area. In terms of the extent of coverage the questionnaire the National Evaluation of Sure Start recommends that consultations with the community achieve contact with a minimum of 10% of the relevant population indicating the considerable success of the survey instrument used in this evaluation.

The survey was conducted face-to-face using 8 local parents who live within the Sure Start Bexhill and Sidley area.

- Consideration of the delivery plan and the community consultation report.
- An interview of the Sure Start Bexhill and Sidley programme manager and finance officer.
- A workshop with the Partnership Board.
- 'Spotlighting' two services commissioned by Sure Start Bexhill and Sidley, incorporating value for money assessments, focus groups with staff and survey service users, and review of existing monitoring information. These are covered under separate reports for each of the 'spotlighted' services.

Strategic Dimension

Strategic Dimension- Board working

Sure Start Bexhill and Sidley seeks to understand how the Advisory Board (the Board) initially working with each other are likely to enable Sure Start Bexhill and Sidley to achieve its objectives, and what key priorities exist for the Board.

New ways of working

Sure Start Bexhill and Sidley has ensured that its Board comprises representation from local statutory agencies, the Bexhill Community Partnership (who is also the Chair of the local Children's Fund Partnership), voluntary sector agencies and local parents.

The individuals representing statutory and voluntary organisations tend also to be of significant influence within their own organisations to enable Sure Start Bexhill and Sidley to have a sufficient profile within broader planning frameworks; which is crucial to the mainstreaming of 'success stories' in future years. This is reflected by, for examples, the willingness of the Bexhill and Rother PCT and the Early Years Service to introduce multi-agency, multi-disciplinary models of working as it relates to addressing the needs of very young children with additional needs and the needs of parents that have additional needs. Also, the PCT enabling Richard Watson, the programme manager, to attend PCT manager meetings is highly demonstrative of commitment to ensuring effective joint-working and improved understanding of what Sure Start can offer and what the PCT can offer.

Moreover, there is excellent joint working between Sure Start Bexhill and Sidley and the local Children's Fund enabling a 'better' service delivery that reflects the needs of families with children aged 0-13. This incorporates activities such as:

- Ensuring information sharing between the Boards, with regular updates
- Joint funding outreach workers with families and schools, which has resulted in more parents taking up other activities
- Attending conferences together
- Activities workers collaborating to enable, for example, summer activities

This builds on efforts of collaborative working with other nearby Sure Start programmes, enabling improved efficiencies and opportunities for learning and sharing. This is reflected in the introduction of tri-partite processes concerning integrated working about addressing the needs of very young children with additional needs and the needs of parents that have additional needs and evaluation processes.

Several Board members indicated that seeking to involve some other agencies, particularly transport, would be beneficial to better meeting the needs of local families.

Parental involvement

The extent to which parents are taken seriously as key partners and that the needs of local families or 'service users' are at the centre of programme design and delivery reflects a very different approach to traditional uni-disciplinary provider-driven approaches to delivering public services. However, Sure Start's commitment to such approaches is indicative of a whole government shift towards an increased client-driven approach, within the context of client's wider continuum of needs.

Sure Start Bexhill and Sidley ensures that parents are very well represented on the Board enabling parents, with both fathers and mothers, to contribute to the wider strategic discussion about the direction of Sure Start Bexhill and Sidley. Parent representatives indicated in small group work forming part of the Board discussions about 'how we work' and 'what our key priorities are', that they felt that

- *'services are listening to parents'*
- *'this has given people a voice that is listened to'*
- *'parents are encouraged to air views.'*

Parent Board members also participate in Board sub-groups, including sub-groups and task groups about the risk assessment, the capital programme and programme monitoring and evaluation. Moreover, parents have been involved in training made available to the Board.

Moreover, the regular parents involvement group (the rather unfortunately acronymed PIG) is a sub-group of the Board and meets six weekly, enabling a parent representative to report outcomes at the Board meeting. The PIG provides recommendations to the Board about service delivery (such as having a weekly parent get together and no longer offering funding to the Fun Bus), undertaking activity to bolster community involvement and participation (such as parents wanting to

become involved in fundraising to enable a summer holiday play scheme) and offers advice (such as concerning approvals of the volunteers policy). The PIG has been particularly successful and is leading to a spin-off 'fathers group'.

Parents indicated that some actions that could lead to enhanced parental involvement include:

- Having a local parent as chair of the Board
- Providing a glossary of terms to parents to enable understanding of the jargon, which in a multi-agency partnership context, is even greater; and
- Explaining to members expectations about being involved at the Board

The programme experience

Board members were asked to identify the greatest programme successes and areas for priority into the upcoming period. These are set out at Table One.

Table One: Board's perspectives on the programme experience

Key successes in supporting parents and families to date	Key successes in supporting very young children to date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent get togethers • PIGS • Parentscope • Link workers • That parents can affect delivery of services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making more health services available • Fun Days • Outings • Parent get togethers • Increasing play provision
Key successes in primary healthcare to date	Key successes in community development to date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community midwife • Linked with PCT • Primary care services based in community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent get togethers • PIG meetings • Fun Days • Local services
Other key successes	Areas for more work about parental empowerment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linking of agencies • Capital programmes • <i>Passionate about caring - People care!</i> • Task groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New avenues of spreading the word • Scope for more parents activities, without children
Areas for more work in enhancing community life	Other programme priorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More priorities for young families rather than senior citizens • Transport issues • Disabled facilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved therapy support i.e. PCT waiting lists • Domestic violence • Family support programme

Observations and opportunities

1. The Sure Start Bexhill and Sidley Board has done especially well at bringing together a mix of key statutory and voluntary sector agencies, aligned partnerships, and local parents. It is clearly in a sound position to promote and enable programme management to build further links at a strategic level with other multi agency partnerships (e.g. Children and Young Persons Strategic Partnership, Early Years Development Children's Partnership). There is a key issue for the Board to consider how best it can support programme management to develop these relationships.
2. The Sure Start Bexhill and Sidley Board would appear to comprise an appropriate membership of organisations, with, generally, individuals with sufficient decision making powers within their host organisations to provide profile to the Sure Start Bexhill and Sidley programme within the broader planning frameworks that are crucial to the mainstreaming of 'success stories' in future years.
3. The willingness of the Bexhill and Rother Primary Care Trust particularly to reorganise some health services and to ensure that the programme manager is a regular attendee at managers' meetings within the PCT is highly commendable and augurs well for a future willingness to explore the benefits of mainstreaming successful practice supported by Sure Start Bexhill and Sidley.
4. The excellent links between the Sure Start Bexhill and Sidley and the East Sussex Children's Fund is very good practice, and within the context of Cordis Bright working with 32 Sure Start local partnerships nationally, this is the best level of linkage we have observed to date.
5. The degree to which parents are involved with the programme is highly commendable. Ensuring that parental involvement remains central to the design and the delivery of the programme is likely to involve a multi-layered strategy that incorporates:
 - Seeking to increase the parental role in delivering aspects of the programmes, such as running the playgroups and becoming trainers of courses that they had originally participated in (such as occurred at Sure Start Aylesbury Plus and Sure Start Copenhagen).
 - Developing an induction process for parents that become members of the Board (and indeed Board members generally)

and providing regular processes for the Board to undertake team building activities

- Ongoing consultations with local parents, employing non-traditional methodologies, about their needs
- At least yearly, possibly through the evaluation processes, determining the suitability of the way that the Board itself operates to ensure the centrality of parents' perspectives. This would include the appropriateness of meeting venues
- Identifying a parent that may be willing to become Chair of the Board and offering opportunities such as through training, shadowing or mentoring to enable this to take place

Operational Dimension

Robust Programme Management

The operational dimension of this evaluation considers key issues such as:

- The relationship between programme management and the Partnership Board, the respective agencies which are represented there and the establishment of key roles and responsibilities;
- How parents in particular have been built into the planning framework;
- The extent to which programme management have established systems to anticipate changes in the local Sure Start environment, including political and /or demographic changes,
- The extent to which programme management have established robust systems for the day to day management of the programme, its evaluation and other tools for quality, value for money, and inclusivity.

It should be noted that the focus of the 6-month risk assessment by the South East Regional Sure Start Team also covers a number of key operational areas including:

- Finance
- Personnel management
- Health and Safety

To summarise this additional independent assessment, minor issues were identified around personnel (the need to include supervision, induction, appraisal and development of staff in SLAs), and finance (security of equipment). The overall assessment of the regional 6-month risk assessment was of very good progress having been made (low risk) with most benchmarks having been met. In a more qualitative sense, this Cordis Bright evaluation, on the basis of work with over 30 other Sure Start programmes (nationally and at every 'wave') confirmed the South East Regional Sure Start Team view of a very well run programme with extremely committed programme management, who have established robust systems that are very likely to deliver continued

success. In short, it is one of the best Sure Start programmes we have observed and evaluated in this way.

At the outset, the programme has established good links through the East Sussex Programme Managers Group, which serves as a useful platform for regular joint working and for work with a particular focus (e.g. special needs). In addition, a Finance and Administration Forum exists across the 3 Sure Starts in the sub regional area to spread and share learning, key policies and procedures, and advice.

Essential links have been made with the PCT as the lead organisation, with the programme signposted in key strategic documents like the Health Improvement Plan and 3 yr delivery plan. This is likely to provide a solid base for partners to share information (particularly demographic trends) so that the programme can continue to develop and maintain a capacity for intelligent (joint) commissioning.

The programme has made a good start in terms of parental involvement, successfully negotiating workable solutions to common issues such as:

- building a required trust with parents,
- addressing participation and consultation fatigue,
- facilitating effective involvement (e.g. crèche provision), and
- continuously investing in skills.

The establishment of a community development post to support parental involvement should prove a useful addition to the team to sustain the early capacity building work with parents.

In terms of commissioned service providers, two services were spotlighted as part of this evaluation and these are covered in separate reports. In summary both spotlighted services reported effective, open and supportive relationships with programme management.

For all service providers, a robust system of monitoring service outcomes and outputs has been established. This consists of:

- Service Level Agreements (SLAs),
- Regular monitoring
- Annual returns

There is a need to ensure that national Sure Start (and where appropriate other) national targets are referenced in all SLAs, to ensure that all service providers recognise their part in the greater whole. On balance though, the programme appears to have established a performance management regime appropriate to the resources service providers have

to respond to monitoring, while enabling programme management to make a considered assessment of effective service provision. This 'fit' between information 'demands' and service provider capacity to respond is an extremely difficult balance to achieve and Bexhill and Sidley Sure Start programme management have established the right balance early in the programme.

To support this work, a database of all children in the Sure Start area has been established as a collective resource, an innovative response to a common problem.

One area that will have an increasing importance in the overall assessment of the programme is the value for money assessments for individual services. In order to make these assessments, programme management will need to establish a baseline for future years in order to make what may become more difficult (re) commissioning decisions.

The approach taken to commissioning for the second year is essentially to roll forward the entire commissioning plan, apart from a few poorly performing services. In future years, attention to whether outcomes and outputs are being met will need to be set alongside funding agreed to determine more finely tuned 'value for money' considerations.

Similarly, monitoring inclusivity delivered by commissioned service providers will remain a key issue in light of expected demographic changes (in ethnicity particularly). Raising the profile of the programme amongst harder to reach parts of the community, and requiring of service providers to do the same is an area that programme management acknowledges as an area for further attention.

That programme management have been able to achieve as much as they have within the establishment phase is a credit to all Sure Start Bexhill and Sidley programme management and staff.

Observations and Opportunities

1. One issue arises from the Regional 6 month risk assessment, relating to the need for a longer-term strategy for parental involvement.
2. There is a consideration for programme management to anticipate how mainstream delivery agents may increasingly come to see Sure Start as providing as an essential additionality to their statutory duties and powers, the risks this presents in terms of tensions between local partner priorities and national

Sure Start ones, but also the opportunities this presents for negotiating the sharing of planning information in the shorter term, and for mainstreaming and sustainability in the longer term.

3. In terms of parent representation, the essentially open door policy for parents has served the programme well in its first year. Programme management must ensure that parents who have been involved so far wholly own any revision of the mechanism for parent appointments. The aspiration to have a parent as chair of the Partnership Board is highly commended.
4. The establishment of the right mix of skills on the partnership Board has been a key success of programme management. One area of representation, education (in particular early years) will be essential in the next phase of programme development, in light of national agenda to develop Children's Trust, together with local revisions of Children and Families Preventative Strategies (replacing family Support Strategies).
5. Revisions of SLAs should lead to the inclusion of national Sure Start targets and also those of key partners, so that all Sure Start commissioned service provision has a common strand or 'direction of travel' made explicit in SLAs as the key mechanism for monitoring service delivery.
6. Establishing a more robust basis for ongoing value for money considerations as a key commissioning tool should be prioritised.

Client Dimension – Outcomes for Local Parents and Very Young Children

A. Programme impact

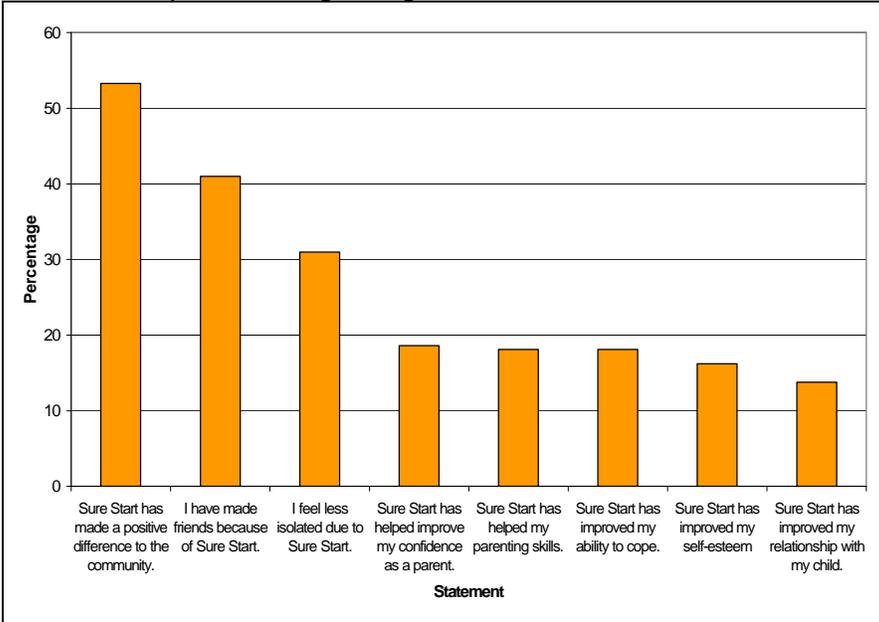
Parents

Integral to the success of Sure Start programmes is making a direct impact in addressing the health, social, economic and other needs of local families.

Parents were asked whether or not they agreed with a series of statements relating to the effect of Sure Start on their lives.

The results are given at Chart 1 below.

Chart 1: Respondents agreeing with statements about their lives



The Chart above indicates a broad range of results from 53% of parents agreeing with the statement “*Sure Start has made a positive difference to the community*”, to 14% agreeing with the statement “*Sure Start has improved my relationship with my child*”.

The results indicate that Sure Start has made inroads in relation to developing links between parents and fostering friendships with 41% of respondents indicating that they have made friends because of Sure Start, whilst a little under a third indicated that they feel less isolated since Sure Start began.

The results, disaggregated by key demographic variables, demonstrated some differences between elements of the community, crucially between lone parents and dual parents:

- As demonstrated at Table 1 below, lone parents were as likely or more likely to agree with each statement regarding parents bar the statement “*Sure Start has improved my relationship with my child*”.

Table 1: Agreement with statement by parenting status

Statement	Evaluation - % agreeing	
	Lone parents	Dual parents
Sure Start has helped improve my confidence as a parent	27.2	15.8
Sure Start has helped my parenting skills	18.1	17.6
I have made friends because of Sure Start	45.4	39.6
I feel less isolated due to Sure Start	38.6	28.0
Sure Start has improved my relationship with my child	11.3	14.0
Sure Start has improved my self-esteem	25.0	14.0
Sure Start has improved my ability to cope	20.4	17.6
Sure Start has made a positive difference to the community	56.8	52.4

- While data was not available for each age cohort, pronounced differences were observed between those in the band 20 to 24 and those in the band 25 to 44, particularly in relation to the statement, “*Sure Start has improved my ability to cope*”. See Table 2 for a full breakdown of results.

Table 2: Agreement with statement by age cohort

Statement	Evaluation - % agreeing	
	20 - 24	25 - 44
Sure Start has helped improve my confidence as a parent	11.1	18.7
Sure Start has helped my parenting skills	11.1	18.1
I have made friends because of Sure Start	38.8	40.0
I feel less isolated due to Sure Start	16.6	33.1
Sure Start has improved my relationship with my child	5.5	15.0
Sure Start has improved my self-esteem	5.5	18.1
Sure Start has improved my ability to cope	5.5	20.20
Sure Start has made a positive difference to the community	52.7	54.3

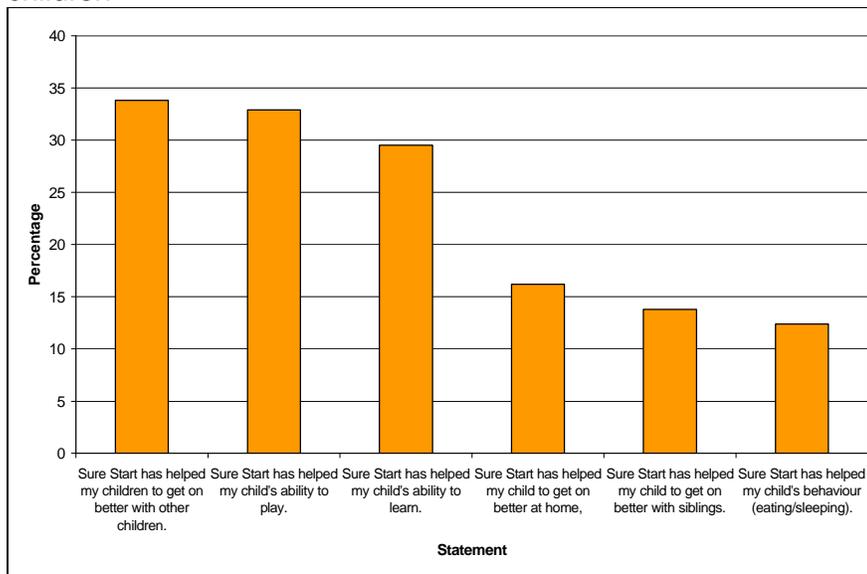
The results are very positive given the life span of the programme to date and indicate that it has managed to achieve positive results in the community already and that it is already impacting upon the lives of parents.

The results also provide a baseline by which to measure the future development of the programme.

Children

To assess the impact of Sure Start on the lives of children of Sure Start age, parents were asked whether or not they agreed with a range of statements relating to their children. See overleaf at Chart 2.

Chart 2: Respondents agreeing with statements about their children



The range of results were not as broad as of those relating to parents, ranging from 34% agreeing with the statement “*Sure Start has helped my children to get on better with other children*”, to 12% agreeing with the statement “*Sure Start has helped my child's behaviour (eating/sleeping)*”.

- Looked at again by demographic factors, differences once again emerged between lone parents and dual parents, but not to the extent observed at Table 1 above.

Table 3: Agreement with child statement by parenting status

Statement	Evaluation - % agreeing	
	Lone parents	Dual parents
Sure Start has helped my child to get on better with other children	36.3	33.5
Sure Start has helped my child to get on better at home	20.4	15.2
Sure Start has helped my child get on better with siblings	15.9	13.4
Sure Start has helped my child's ability to play	36.3	31.7
Sure Start has helped my child's ability to learn	31.8	28.6
Sure Start has helped my child's behaviour (eating/sleeping)	13.6	12.1

- Differences were also apparent again in relation to those in the age cohort 20 to 24 and those in the band 25 to 44, a difference of a factor of 5 in relation to the statement “*Sure Start has helped my child’s behaviour (eating/sleeping).*”

Table 4: Agreement with child statement by age cohort

Statement	Evaluation - % agreeing	
	20 - 24	25 - 44
Sure Start has helped my child to get on better with other children	30.5	32.5
Sure Start has helped my child to get on better at home	8.3	16.2
Sure Start has helped my child get on better with siblings	15.9	13.4
Sure Start has helped my child’s ability to play	22.2	33.1
Sure Start has helped my child’s ability to learn	16.6	30.6
Sure Start has helped my child’s behaviour (eating/sleeping)	2.7	13.1

Observations and opportunities

1. The Sure Start Bexhill and Sidley programme can claim success at the extent to which it has already been able to make a positive impact in the area, despite the short length of time it has been operational with over half of parents feeling that the programme has made a positive difference to the community.
2. In addition to the impact that the programme has observed to have had on the community, parents also felt that there had been some changes with regard to their children’s behaviour with around a third of parents observing that the programme has helped their child’s behaviour, and has helped their child to get on better with other children.
3. The results provide baselines of parental perspectives against which to measure the future development of the programme through subsequent evaluations.

B. Awareness of Sure Start

A core aspect of the success of Sure Start is the level of awareness of the programme in the community, and among its client group. To ascertain levels of awareness, parents were asked whether or not they had heard of Sure Start.

The results are very positive since indicate that 90% of parents had heard of Sure Start.

Results regarding awareness were analysed in relation to key demographic variables.

- Levels of awareness were very similar between lone parents and their dual parenting peers at 93% and 90% respectively.
- While there was insufficient data to compare levels of awareness across all age groups, the data indicated that awareness was higher among those in the age cohort 25 to 44 (93%) than among those in the bracket 20 to 24 (83%).
- As the results in Table 5 indicate, awareness of Sure Start was lowest amongst those who had lived in the area less than a year.

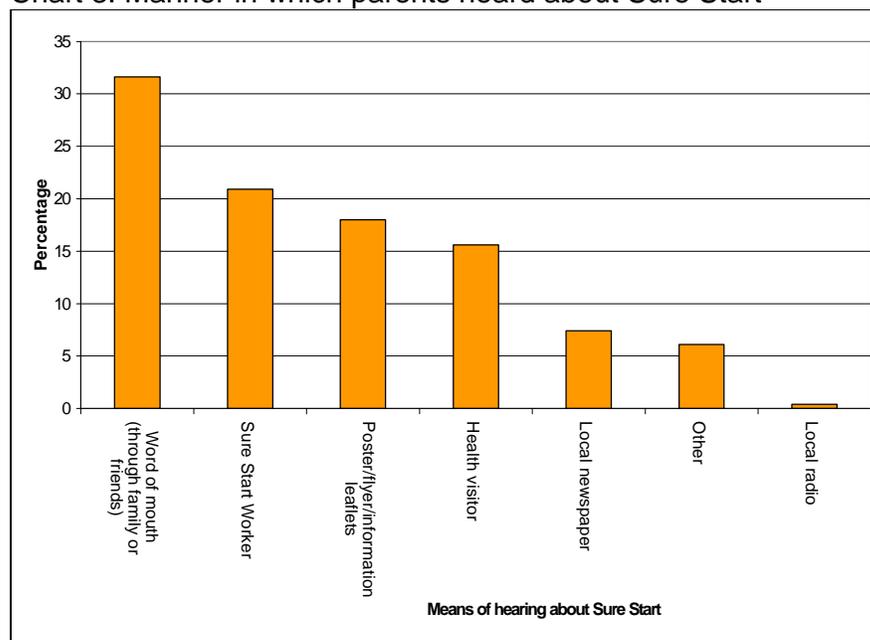
Table 5: Awareness of Sure Start by length of time lived in area

Length of time lived in area	% aware of Sure Start
Less than a year	78.9
1 to 5 years	95.6
6 to 10 years	81.0
More than 10 years	93.9

Those parents who had heard of Sure Start were asked where they had heard of it. The results are given at Chart 3 below.

The single most common means of hearing about Sure Start was via word of mouth, whilst a further fifth had heard about the programme from a Sure Start Worker. Local media outlets (newspapers and radio) proved to have had little impact, collectively accounting for less than 10% of responses.

Chart 3: Manner in which parents heard about Sure Start



The results indicate that, while the local population is spreading information about Sure Start, Sure Start staff are an important means of generating awareness; furthermore the majority of awareness raising is done face to face rather than through publicity (such as leaflets, flyers and newspaper features).

Looked at according to key demographic variables, analysis revealed that:

- dual parents were more likely to hear about Sure Start via word of mouth than their lone parenting peers (34% to 23% respectively). Lone parents were most likely to hear about Sure Start from a Sure Start Worker (27%).
- Respondents not in work were more likely to hear about Sure Start via word of mouth than their working peers (34% of non-working parents against 26% of working parents).
- Those who had lived in the area for between 1 and 5 years were more likely to hear about Sure Start than their peers who had lived in the area for over 5 years (23% of respondents compared to an average of 15% of those who had lived in the area for 5 years or more).

To ascertain whether the spread of information regarding the programme has been accurate, respondents were asked who they

thought Sure Start services were aimed at. The top 5 definitions given are given below at Table 6, while a full list of results can be found at the Appendix.

Table 6: Definition of Sure Start as given by parents

Citation	Percentage of survey population
Pre-school children	8.3
Parents and young children	19.3
Families and children under 5	12.7
Correct definition	9.9
Children	6.1

The results are very positive since demonstrate that the vast majority of parents knew that Sure Start is a service aimed at parents and their young children, whilst 10% were able to give a full and correct definition.

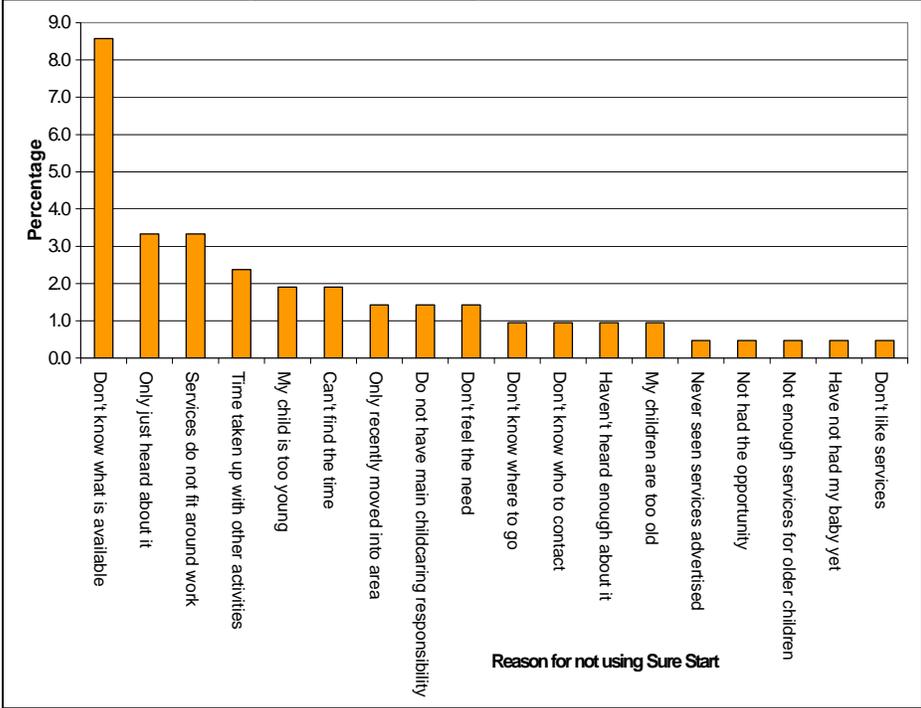
Taking a liberal definition of the programme (references to young children, families and parents) 80% of parents provided a fairly accurate representation of the aims of Sure Start and its intended target group.

Those respondents who had heard of Sure Start but who did not use Sure Start services were asked why they were not using services. The top five reasons cited are given in Table 7 below whilst a full breakdown of results can be found at Chart 4 and the Appendix.

Table 7: Reasons given for not using Sure Start services

Citation	Number of citations	Percentage of survey population
Don't know what is available	18	8.6
Only just heard about it	7	3.3
Services do not fit around work	7	3.3
Time taken up with other activities	5	2.4
Can't find the time	4	1.9
My child is too young	4	1.9

Chart 4: Reasons given for not using Sure Start services



The most common reason cited for not using Sure Start services was lack of awareness about what services were being offered, cited by a little under 10% of the survey population. Expressed in a slightly different fashion, lack of awareness was cited by 27% of those who gave a reason for not using Sure Start services.

A range of quotes is provided below to illustrate this reason given for not utilising Sure Start services.

- Have heard of Sure Start, but unsure what it does.
- Need more information about the services.
- Have heard about Sure Start but have not used any due to lack of knowledge about them.
- Have not had any information – about meetings or events.
- I do not know what is on offer or where it is.

As the quotes demonstrate, parents are willing to use services, but do not feel fully equipped with the information they would like to have before using services. Whilst awareness of the programme is very high, it is necessary to ensure that parents are also aware of the details of the programme: where to go to services, who to approach to find out about what services are on offer, where services are run from.

The results emphasise the need to publicise Sure Start services in order that awareness is translated into actual up-take of services, thereby benefiting as many parents of young children in the area as possible.

Observations and opportunities

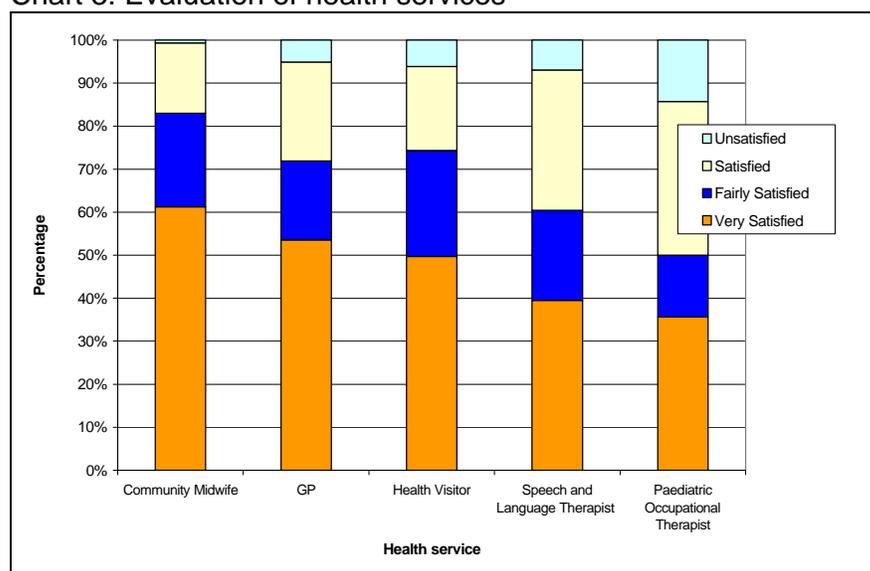
1. The extent of awareness for Sure Start Bexhill and Sidley is very high, at 90% and represents a very good start for the programme. Additionally it provides a baseline from which further progress can be measured.
2. Word of mouth proved to be the predominant means of communicating information about the programme however a fifth of respondents had found out via staff thereby indicating the importance of staff disseminating information regarding the programme.
3. While word of mouth was the most common means of hearing about the programme, there was some discrepancy between dual parents and lone parents who were most likely to hear via Sure Start staff. The results underline the crucial role of staff in accessing what are perceived to be “hard to reach” members of the community, thereby ensuring all parents in the community are accessing Sure Start services.

C. User satisfaction with services

A. Health services

Parents were asked to evaluate health services in the Bexhill and Sidley area using a four point attitudinal scale ranging from Very Satisfied to Unsatisfied. The results are set out below at Chart 5.

Chart 5: Evaluation of health services



The results are very positive with 90% plus of respondents Satisfied to Very Satisfied with each service bar the Paediatric Occupational Therapist (which 86% of respondents were Satisfied to Very Satisfied with). The results are particularly positive for the Community Midwife whom 61% of respondents were Very Satisfied with.

Differences in opinion were minor when looked at by demographic variables, in the region of a few percentile points in each case. One difference was observed between lone and dual parents in relation to their appreciation of GPs:

- 87% of lone parents were Satisfied to Very Satisfied with their GP compared to 97% of their dual parenting peers.

The fact demonstrated above, that a Sure Start service (namely the Community Midwife) is already achieving higher satisfaction ratings than for mainstream services is a very positive sign for the programme

and indicates that it has already been able to impact upon the lives of parents and their children in the area after a relatively short period of time.

Favourite health service

When parents were asked which was their favourite health service, the most commonly cited service was GP (noted by 27% of respondents), followed by Health Visitors (noted by 23% of respondents). The breakdown in full is given below at Table 8.

Table 8: Favourite health service of respondents

Citation	Number of citations	Percentage of survey population
GP	57	27.1
Health Visitor	49	23.3
Community midwife	32	15.2
Speech and language therapist	6	2.9
Hospital	2	1.0
Sea Doc	1	0.5

The quotes provided by respondents give an indication as to why GPs were the most commonly cited favourite service. Quotes are also provided for the Health Visitor and Community Midwife.

- GP – caring attitude, understands my problems and family needs.
- Doctors because they are very accommodating, making appointments for children and are very friendly.
- GP sees us straight away when you have young children.
- GP very approachable and willing to listen and help.
- GP – he makes my children feel comfortable.
- GP – gives fantastic support, very good with my kids.

The quotes indicate that not only do parents appreciate the professional conduct of GPs, but were particularly appreciative of the attitudes of doctors towards their children with parents responding very positively to GPs who were able to make their children comfortable.

- Health Visitor – she spotted my depression when my doctor missed it.
- Health Visitor, I can talk openly and in confidence with her.
- Health Visitor because she is always there when I need her.
- My Health Visitor is the best you'll ever get she is so caring and great with children. She listens to your problems and tries to help, very friendly.
- On hand for lots of support and information.

Parent's comments relating to Health Visitors indicate that they appreciated the support provided by these workers. Quotes emphasise the fact that parents appreciated the caring attitude of Health Visitors, and so were not only looking to them for their professional assistance but for the emotional support they provide.

The quotes for Midwives echo those for Health Visitors, with the caring nature of the staff emphasised by parents.

- I particularly liked the midwives as they were so caring and supportive and you could speak to one at any time of the day or night if you needed to.
- Community Midwife – she was so good when I had my baby.
- Midwife because they are there for your every need.
- Community Midwife – had health problems whilst pregnant and she was brilliant.

Health service needing most improvement

When asked to identify their least favourite health service, GPs once again topped the list, cited by 17% of respondents, followed by Health Visitors at 11%. A full breakdown of the results can be found at the Appendix.

Illustrative quotes have again been provided.

- ❑ GP – can't talk to him.
- ❑ GPs do not seem to have enough time for each patient.
- ❑ GP seems to be very aloof and I'm not always sure that I like his bedside manner.
- ❑ GP – although very friendly, not terribly interested in patients needs.
- ❑ Doctors – impersonal and don't give a lot of reassurance.

The importance of what one respondent calls GP's "bedside manner" is emphasised by the quotes above that indicate that parents think poorly of doctors who are deemed to be uncaring, disinterested or aloof.

- ❑ I am least satisfied with Health Visitors as I find they seem to treat people as "text book" cases rather than as individuals.
- ❑ Health Visitor – seem to disappear once the babies get older.
- ❑ Health Visitor – too inclined to expect children to progress uniformly.
- ❑ Health Visitor – talks a lot of twaddle and she doesn't keep her appointments.

The quotes given with regard to Health Visitors point to a number of areas but do seem to indicate that parents are not as appreciative of Health Visitors who are too formal in their methods.

Key to Sure Start is the fact that the service identified as of most need of improvement is a mainstream health service not provided by Sure Start, indicating that Sure Start services have been well received by parents in the area.

While parents were able to indicate health services that they disliked in the area, it is important to place their responses in the correct context. 79 parents gave details of services they thought could be improved compared to 147 who had a favourite service, a difference of a factor of two.

The fact that GPs were simultaneously the favourite service of parents whilst also being identified as the service in greatest need of improvement underlines the importance of this service in the lives of parents and their young children. The result should not be surprising also given the fact that GPs are the key point of contact for health services and are the gateway by which more specialised services are accessed.

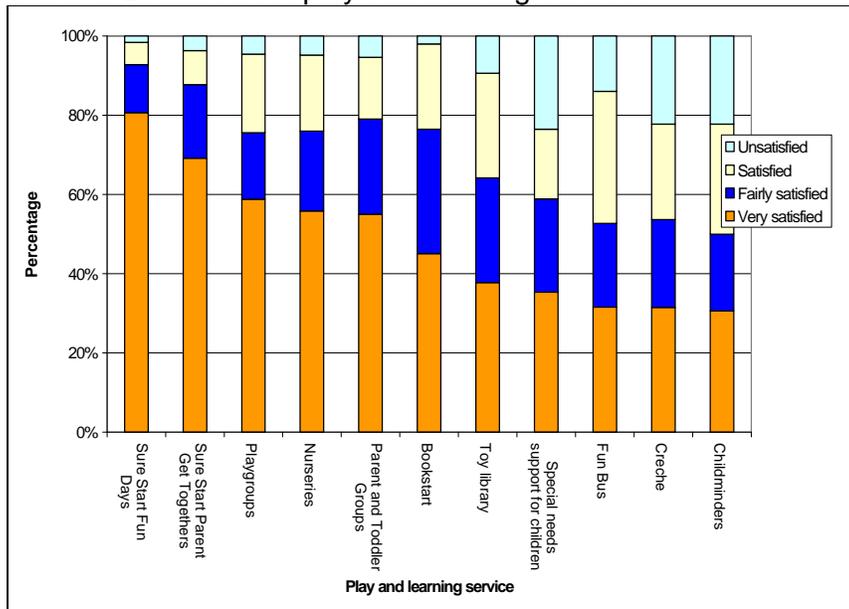
Observations and opportunities

1. In relation to health services, satisfaction levels are high, with 90% plus of respondents Satisfied to Very Satisfied with services (bar Paediatric Occupational Therapist at 86%). Of note are the particularly high satisfaction levels that exist for the Community Midwife.
2. The fact that GPs were respondents' favourite health service whilst also being identified as the service in greatest need of improvement is to be expected given the universal nature of their provision and their function as front-line service.
3. The satisfaction levels gathered represent useful baseline data to enable ongoing evaluation of services. Subsequent evaluation processes could explore updating the baselines, identifying shifts, and examining the extent to which Sure Start Bexhill and Sidley has been responsible for these attitudinal changes.

B. Play and learning services

Parents were asked to evaluate play and learning services using the four point attitudinal scale described above.

Chart 6: Evaluation of play and learning services



The results for play and learning are very positive with 80% plus of respondents indicating that they were Satisfied to Very Satisfied with each service listed bar Special needs support for children, Crèche and Childminders (each at a little under 80%).

Particular successes are the Sure Start Fun Days and Sure Start Parent Get Togethers which 81% and 69% of respondents respectively indicated that they were Very Satisfied with these services.

Insufficient data was available for each play and learning service for full demographic analysis, but the results did indicate that:

- 80% of residents who had lived in the area between 1 and 5 years were Satisfied to Very Satisfied with the Fun Bus, compared to 97% of those who had lived in the area for 10 years or more.

Sure Start should be very satisfied with the results for play and learning services as the Chart makes clear that both Sure Start Fun Days and Sure Start Parent Get Togethers are both extremely popular services among local parents, having the highest proportion of parents who are Very Satisfied. These Sure Start services have evidently tapped into the needs of local parents and as such should both be considered early successes of the programme.

Some attention should be paid to trying to increase levels of satisfaction regarding special needs support for children to levels enjoyed by other

play and learning services in the area, as currently one in five parents indicated being Unsatisfied with this service.

Favourite play and learning service

As with health services, respondents were asked to indicate which their favourite play and learning service and to provide details as to why they had chosen a particular service.

The responses given are detailed at Table 9 below.

Table 9: Favourite play and learning service

Citation	Number of citations	Percentage of survey population
Sure Start Fun Days	45	21.4
Playgroups	36	17.1
Parent and Toddler Group	25	11.9
Sure Start Parent Get Togethers	22	10.5
Nursery	17	8.1
Toy library	6	2.9
Sure Start (General)	3	1.4
Post natal group - Bexhill hospital	3	1.4
Special needs support	2	1.0
Rhyme time	1	0.5
Crèche for parent activities	1	0.5
Childminder	1	0.5
School & family link team & worker	1	0.5

Sure Start Fun Days proved to be the most popular service, cited by a around a fifth of the survey population, followed by Playgroups (cited by 17% of the survey population).

- Fun Days the whole family can join in.
- Sure Start Fun Days are FREE. The children really enjoy it, lots of play. Mum and dad can chat too.
- Sure Start Fun Days – plenty for the kids to do and loads of variety. Also, lots of info for the mums.
- Sure Start Fun Days – a great active day for my child, she enjoyed it.
- The Sure Start Fun Days are great fun and we all love taking part, even us parents.
- Fun Days because they get the children out and they have fun, it's also fun for the parents.

The Fun Days were very highly appreciated by parents who noted that it was not just fun for their children, but for them as well. The range of activities being provided was also highlighted by parents.

- Playgroups – give you time to yourself.
- Playgroup – they love the arts and crafts.
- Playgroups provide a safe, happy and secure environment in which my children are eager to learn. Gives parents a welcome break.
- Playgroup gives my son a chance to interact with his peers.

Playgroups were identified as providing a range of activities for children which they enjoyed, whilst also allowing an opportunity for parents to spend some time away from their children. The sense of the playgroups providing a “safe” and “secure” environment indicates that parents have confidence in this service and are happy to leave their children.

Play and learning service requiring most improvement

56 parents provided details of play and learning services which they felt could be improved. The most commonly cited service was Parent and Toddler Groups, referred to by 17 parents (or 8% of the survey population). The next most commonly cited service was the Fun Bus, noted by 7% of parents. The full breakdown of results are given at the Appendix.

Illustrative quotes have been provided to explore why these services were chosen.

- ❑ Parent groups too “church-ified”. Very religious people tend to run them and expect you to feel the same.
- ❑ The Parent and Toddler group had good facilities but I didn’t find it particularly friendly.
- ❑ Toddler groups always seem to be a “catty-cliquey” atmosphere and have religion forced on you. Toys are always filthy and broken.
- ❑ Parents and Toddlers – toys are not nice. Very religious and parents very cliquey.
- ❑ Parent and Toddler groups – they didn’t make me feel welcome.
- ❑ We moved to Bexhill in May 2002 and although I tried various toddler groups I found them impossible to break into or make friends. I found them unwelcoming and cliquey, so my son and I stopped going.

The quotes are very interesting and highlight a range of issues. Parent and Toddler groups are felt to be unwelcoming by a number of parents who indicated that this has meant that they have stopped attending as a result. Parents also voiced concerns that groups are run by church organisations, and this impinges on the service provided, once again making parents feel uncomfortable.

- ❑ The Fun Bus was unreliable and we didn’t learn anything.
- ❑ Fun bus - unreliable.
- ❑ Fun Bus – never around enough when the time suits me.
- ❑ The Fun Bus was unreliable for quite a while, therefore disappointing for the children.

The key concern with regard to the Fun Bus was simply one of reliability, rather than the quality of the service provided. Were reliability to be improved, it follows that satisfaction with the service would rise accordingly. The comments regarding the Fun Bus should however be read in relation to the fact (given at Chart 6) that 86% of respondents were Satisfied to Very Satisfied with this service.

Once again, it is crucial to contextualise the results. 56 parents provided details of services they felt in need of improvement, against 163 who were able to cite a favourite service, a difference of a factor of three.

Observations and opportunities

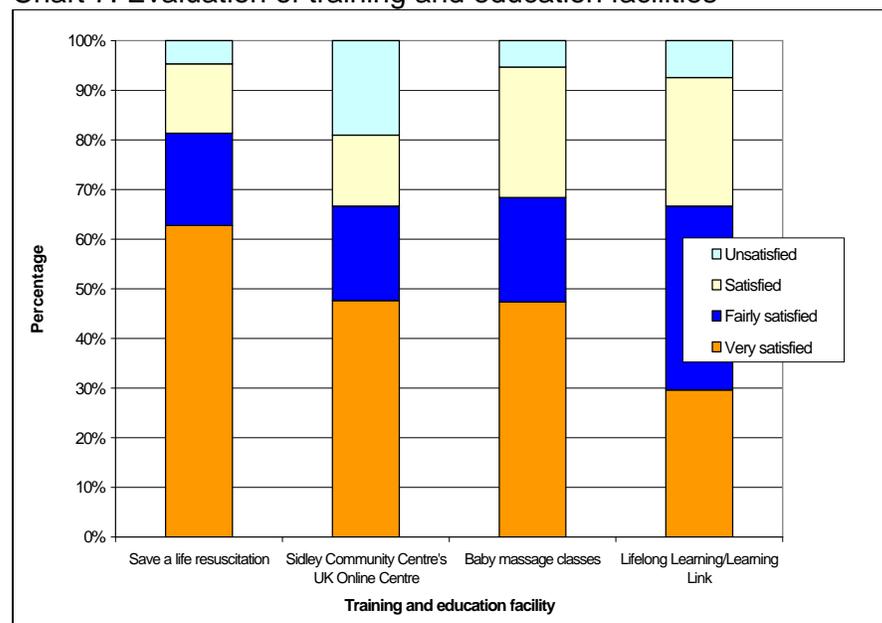
1. In terms of play and learning services, satisfaction levels varied, but were generally high from a little under 80% and up. Satisfaction rates for Sure Start Fun Days and Sure Start Parent Get Togethers are very high and the programme can feel rightfully proud of their successes in these areas.
2. The success of the Fun Days is reinforced by the finding that this is the most popular play and learning service amongst respondents, cited by around a fifth of the survey population. The Fun Days represent a key success of the programme in enabling promotion of Sure Start activities, and acting as a point of contact through which parents can move on to use other Sure Start services.
3. There is scope for Sure Start to address concerns about parents regarding Parent and Toddler groups. Current Parent and Toddler provision was variously identified as being “cliquey” and too explicitly church focused which is preventing parents from accessing such activities.
4. The satisfaction levels gathered represent useful baseline data to enable ongoing evaluation of services. Subsequent evaluation processes could explore updating the baselines, identifying shifts, and examining the extent to which Sure Start Bexhill and Sidley has been responsible for these attitudinal changes.

C. Training and education facilities

Parents were asked to evaluate training and education facilities, using the attitudinal scale adopted for the other thematic areas.

The results are given at Chart 7 overleaf.

Chart 7: Evaluation of training and education facilities



The results from the survey are very positive with 80% plus of parents who had used services indicating that they were Satisfied to Very Satisfied with the service they received. The Save a Life Resuscitation course proved to be very successful with over 60% of respondents indicating that they were Very Satisfied with the service.

There were insufficient numbers of respondents to be able to cross-reference the results in relation to demographic variables.

Favourite training and education facility

35 parents gave details of their favourite training and education facility, of whom 15 cited Save a Life (equivalent to 8% of the survey population). The next most popular service were the Baby Massage classes, cited by 9 respondents (5% of the survey population). Details are given in full in Table 10 overleaf.

Table 10: Favourite training and education facility

Citation	Number of citations	Percentage of survey population
Save a Life	18	8.6
Baby massage	9	4.3
Online Centre	4	1.9
Pottery class	2	1.0
Learning Link (General)	1	0.5
Card making	1	0.5

Illustrative quotes have been provided below for Save a Life and the Baby Massage classes:

- The Save a Life classes are very useful in case of an emergency.
- Save a Life – no fear when looking after children.
- The Save a Life was very informative and made me feel more confident in an emergency.
- I took part in Save a Life as did many others. Who wouldn't when you have children to care for?

- Baby massage – it's fun for mum and baby.
- Attended baby massage classes. Very good technique, baby loved it and I did too, and its FREE.
- Baby massage because it is a nice way to have a bond with the little one.

Training and education facility requiring most improvement

Only 6 parents gave details of a training or education facility they felt to be in need of improvement, 3 of whom cited Save a Life, 2 the Online Centre and 1 Learning Link. Given that 6 responses amounts to 3% of the survey population, the results would tend to indicate that training

and education services are largely meeting the needs of the local population and parents.

Observations and opportunities

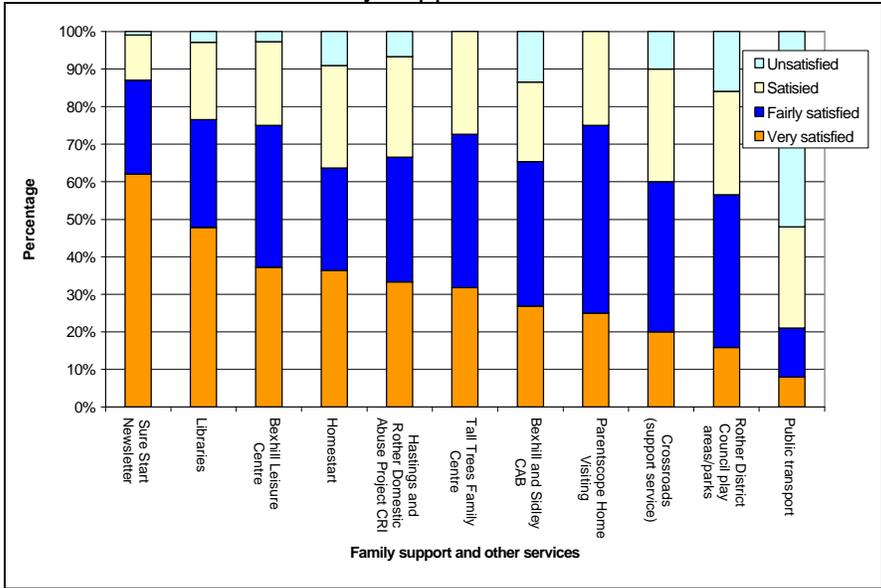
1. Satisfaction levels are high in relation to training and education facilities at 80% plus for each service cited.

D. Family support and other services

Parents were asked to rate a range of family support and other services both Sure Start and mainstream, using the attitudinal scale adopted elsewhere in the survey (see above at Health).

The results are given below at Chart 8.

Chart 8: Evaluation of family support and other services



On the whole, satisfaction ratings for family and support and other community services remain high with over 80% of respondents Satisfied to Very Satisfied with each service bar public transport whom 52% of respondents were Unsatisfied with.

Given the mix of services, the results indicate that attitudes towards mainstream public services and voluntary services are positive as well as for Sure Start services. Thus Tall Trees Family Centre and Parentscope Home Visiting achieved 100% satisfaction rates whilst 97%

of parents were Satisfied to Very Satisfied with both libraries and Bexhill Leisure Centre. The results are all the more encouraging since indicate that those services that Sure Start is closely collaborating with (such as Tall Trees) are providing a calibre of service that complements that provided by Sure Start.

Favourite family support and other service

110 parents gave details of their favourite family support or other service in the area. The two most popular services both proved to be mainstream public services, with libraries cited by 14% of the survey population and Bexhill Leisure Centre cited by 12%. The most popular Sure Start service was the Newsletter, cited by 11% of respondents.

Results in full are given at Table 11 below.

Table 11: Favourite family and other service

Citation	Number of citations	Percentage of survey population
Libraries	29	13.8
Bexhill Leisure Centre	25	11.9
Sure Start Newsletter	24	11.4
Play areas/parks	12	5.7
Citizens Advice Bureau	5	2.4
Tall Trees Family Centre	4	1.9
Homestart	2	1.0
Hastings and Rother domestic abuse project	2	1.0
Crossroads	2	1.0
Parentscope Home Visiting	2	1.0
Parks	2	1.0
Public transport	1	0.5

Illustrative quotes have been provided to indicate why people elected to choose Libraries, the Leisure Centre and Sure Start Newsletter.

- ❑ Libraries – interesting books for babies and parents.
- ❑ Libraries – song and story time.
- ❑ The library and the internet access it provides.
- ❑ I am very impressed with the libraries in the Bexhill area, they have a good range of books, videos, DVDs and the use of computers.
- ❑ Library as it provides extra services such as singing lessons.
- ❑ Library – they offer a wide range of activities for young children.

The range of activities on offer at libraries seems to be crucial in attracting parents. Thus both the needs of their children are catered for (song and story time and books for babies) as well as those of parents (internet access, computer access). Other respondents (not included above) noted that staff at the library are friendly and welcome children, which would be an important incentive in encouraging parents to attend.

- ❑ The Leisure Centre as there are activities for myself, older daughter and a crèche for my youngest.
- ❑ Jumbo's at the Leisure Centre is a life saver when it's wet and you have two warring children. Two hours at Jumbo's and peace is restored.
- ❑ Bexhill Leisure Centre – Jumbo's is brilliant for children – great day out and very reasonable.
- ❑ Bexhill Leisure Centre – lots to do for children and their parents.
- ❑ Bexhill Leisure Centre – I take my daughter to Jumbo's playcentre once a week and the staff are friendly and my daughter loves it.

The quotes indicate that parents appreciated the range of activities offered at the Leisure Centre that cater for both their needs, and those of their children also. In particular, parents noted Jumbo's play-centre as an activity that their children enjoyed.

- The newsletter is always well put together, full of info and things of interest.
- Sure Start newsletter – if you don't attend all groups, you still know what is going on.
- Newsletter is informative and useful. So often newsletters are just done on a whim, this one seems well thought out.
- Newsletter full of information and events, good for new parents starting the circuit.

Sure Start should be very pleased with the response given by parents with regard to its newsletter. In addition to a very high approval rating (see Chart 8 above) parents feel that they the newsletter is valuable in informing them of services available to them and their children and makes them feel involved in Sure Start, regardless of their level of service use.

Family support and other services requiring most improvement

When asked to identify a service to be improved, the results were clear with over a quarter of the survey population citing public transport. The results are given in full at Table 12 below.

Table 12: Family support and other service requiring most improvement

Citation	Number of citations	Percentage of survey population
Public transport	54	25.7
Play areas/parks	33	15.7
Libraries	9	4.3
Bexhill Leisure Centre	7	3.3
Citizens Advice Bureau	3	1.4
Sure Start Newsletter	1	0.5
Hastings and Rother domestic abuse project	1	0.5
Parentscope Home Visiting	1	0.5

The results are very positive for Sure Start in as much as that the key services identified for improvement (public transport, play areas and libraries) are all mainstream services, not provided by Sure Start.

Again, illustrative quotes have been provided overleaf.

- Public transport –drivers don't help with pram then move when you take too long to get prams on.
- Public transport – can't get pushchairs on and never on time.
- Public transport – very dirty, never on time.
- Public transport is awful in this area, they don't have enough pushchair spaces. Also the fares are very expensive and the drivers are rude and don't care about their passengers.
- Public transport - never enough space for buggys and prams.
- Transport is expensive and difficult with young children.

Parents are clearly concerned with physical access issues relating to local buses with respondents noting difficulty with getting prams on to buses, and with space for prams once on buses. The frequency of service also proved to be an issue, as was the general expense of travelling.

- Parks – not enough done for children, they seem to concentrate on older children.
- Parks – facilities are good but dog fouling and broken glass are making the area dangerous.
- Park play areas need updating.
- Play parks – not enough maintenance and too much rubbish being dumped by older adolescents.
- Play parks – the sandpit is still a big issue with germs and hygiene, there is no protective cover.

Parents indicated that parks were not wholly appropriate for young children, with issues of maintenance being cited by a number of respondents.

Observations and opportunities

1. In relation to family support and other services in the area, satisfaction rates varied widely with the highest satisfaction levels

found in relation to the Sure Start Newsletter, and the lowest for public transport.

2. Given the popularity among local parents of libraries, scope exists for Sure Start to work in conjunction with this service in order to both access parents with their very young children, and to provide services from locations that are currently well utilised by parents.
3. Addressing the needs of local families as it concerns parks is an area where there is substantial scope for Sure Start Bexhill and Sidley, working in partnership with parents, the local council and others to make a difference.

E. Further needs identified

Forty Six percent of parents indicated that they would like to see additional services in their area, whilst the remaining 54% felt that current service levels were sufficient.

- ❑ In relation to age, there were some differences in perception of level of service coverage with 28% of those in the age band 20 to 24 stating that they would like to see additional services, compared to 53% of those in the band 25 to 44 years.
- ❑ Over half (54%) of those who had lived in the area between 1 and 5 years wanted to see additional services compared to an average of 40% among those who had lived in the area for 6 years or more.

When asked to elaborate on what services they would like to see, there was very little consensus amongst respondents with no single service suggestions being cited by more than 6% of the survey population. The top few suggestions are given overleaf to give an idea of the range of services requested.

Table 13: Additional services requested by respondents

Service requested	Percentage of services requested	Percentage of survey population
More baby changing facilities	15.0	5.7
More childcare facilities	6.2	2.4
Activities for fathers	6.2	2.4
Baby group/new parents group	5.0	1.9
Toilets in public parks	5.0	1.9
Holiday play-schemes	5.0	1.9
Community café	5.0	1.9
Child friendly play areas	5.0	1.9
Activities for teenagers	5.0	1.9

The fact of there being no consensus would seem to suggest that the programme has met the key needs of families with young children in the Bexhill and Sidley area.

Appendix A

Demographic profile of Bexhill and Sidley survey respondents

Overview

In all 210 people in the Sure Start Bexhill and Sidley area were consulted using a standardised face-to-face questionnaire.

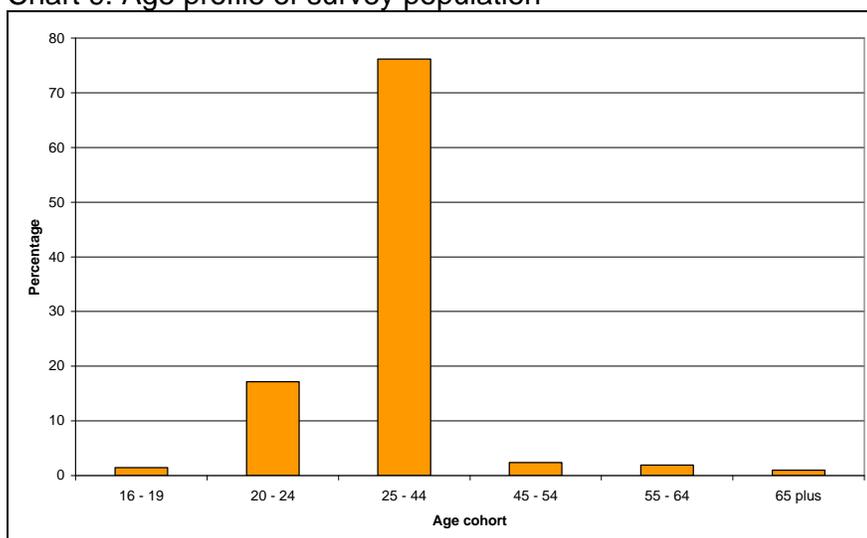
Of the 210 parents interviewed, 18 were male and 192 female giving a percentage split of 9% male to 91% female.

Age

In relation to the age profile of the survey population, the majority of respondents were in the bracket 25 to 44 years of age, constituting 76% of parents. There were more than four times as many respondents in this age cohort than in the next largest bracket 20 to 24 (who constituted 17% of the survey population).

The results are given at Chart 9 below.

Chart 9: Age profile of survey population



The results accord with the predominant ages of parents with very young children. When set in the broader context the 16 to 44 year age

group constitute 38% of the population of the Hastings area as whole (as given in the 2001 Census). The presence of older family members would tend to indicate the wider family taking child-caring responsibility.

Ethnicity

The 2001 Census figures for Hastings indicate that the area as a whole is predominantly of White origin at 97%. Figures in the Sure Start Delivery Plan (May 2002) indicate that in the Bexhill and Sidley area, 99% of residents are of White origin.

The results of the community survey reflected figures for the area with 99% of respondents describing themselves as being of White origin, 0.5% of Black origin and 0.5% as being of *other* origin. There were no Asian respondents to the survey.

Parents

A range of questions were incorporated into the survey to help build a profile of parents living in the Bexhill and Sidley area.

Parenting status

When asked their parenting status, 21% of those interviewed indicated that they are a lone parent, whilst 79% stated that they are in a dual parenting household.

The results regarding parenting status were analysed in relation to a number of key demographic variables.

- Analysis indicated that of 44 lone parents, 42 are female and 2 male.
- The majority of lone parents are in the age band 25 to 44. The age profile of lone parents correlates closely with the profile of the survey population with the next largest band comprising the 20 to 24 year old band at 18%.

Table 14: Age profile of lone parents

Age cohort	% of lone parents
16 - 19	4.5
20 – 24	18.2
25 – 44	72.7
45 – 54	2.3
55 – 64	2.3
65 plus	0.0

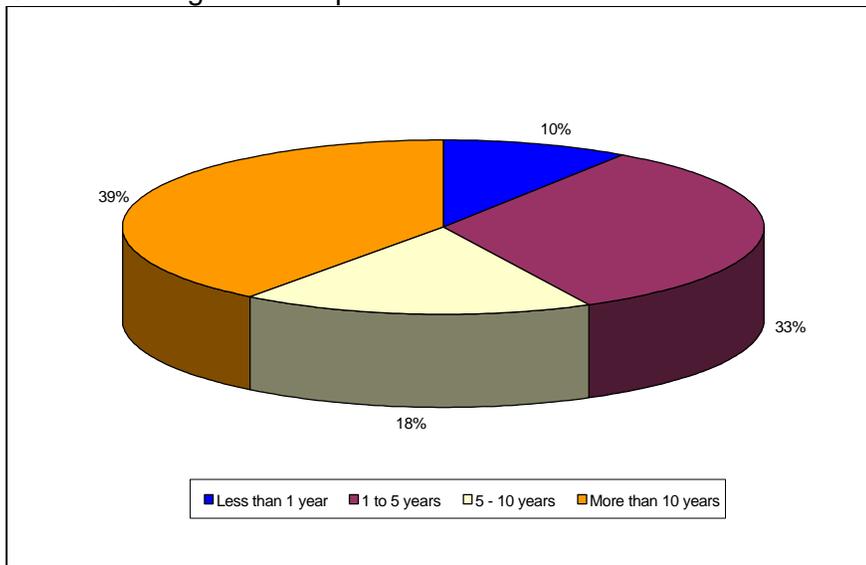
- Slightly more lone parents (13%) have lived in the area for a year or less compared to the survey population (9%).

Length of time in area

Data from the survey demonstrates that 90% of parents have lived in the Bexhill and Sidley area for a year or more indicating a relatively stable population in the Sure Start catchment area.

The results are given at Chart 10 below.

Chart 10: Length of time parents lived in area



Working status

When asked about their working status, one third of the survey population (the single largest group) indicated that they were in part-time work, whilst over a quarter were not in work and not looking.

Taken collectively, those not in work constituted 32% of the survey population (be they not looking for work or looking for work), whilst 45% were in work (be in full or part time). The results are given in full at Table 15.

Table 15: Working status of respondents

Working status	Percentage of respondents
Working part time	33.6
Not looking for work/not looking for work	26.9
Other	17.3
Working full time	11.5
Not looking for work/looking for work	5.2
Student	3.8
Retired	1.4

In total, 36 respondents indicated that they were of Other working status – a little under a fifth of the survey population. The details they provided are given below:

- Full time parent 13 citations
- Housewife 12 citations
- Maternity leave 5 citations
- Casual worker 2 citations
- Voluntary worker 1 citation
- Disabled 1 citation
- Carer 1 citation
- Self-employed 1 citation

Children

In addition to analysing the profile of parents, the profile of children in the Sure Start catchment area was also addressed.

As demonstrated in the table below, 99% of respondents to the survey were parents, indicating the success of the community surveyors in contacting the Sure Start client group.

69% of parents in the survey had either one or two children or were expecting. The results are given at Table 16.

Table 16: Number of children of respondents

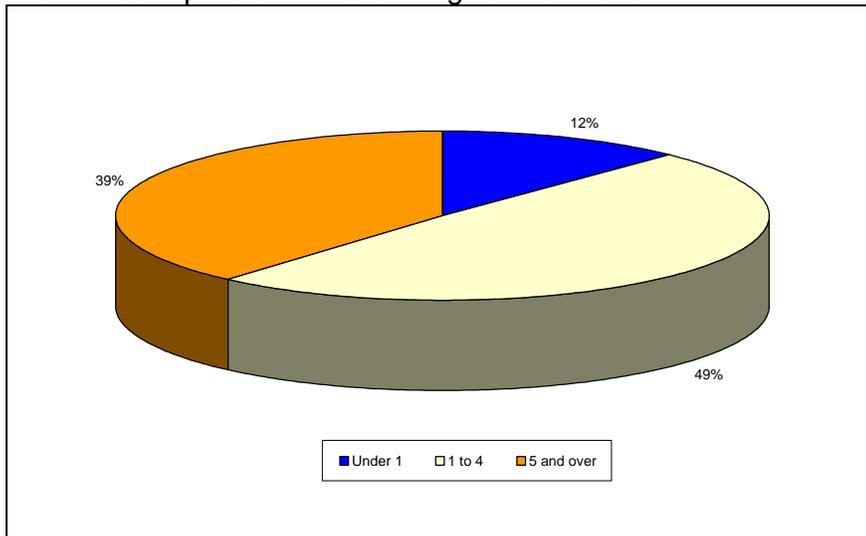
Number of children	Percentage of respondents
None	1.0
1/expectant	32.9
2	36.2
3	19.0
4	9.0
5 plus	1.9

As Chart 11 beneath indicates, almost exactly two thirds (61%) of children of children cared for by respondents fall into the Sure Start age range, while Table 17 gives the numbers of children in each range.

Table 17: Numbers of children aged under 4

Age of children	Number of children
Under 1	12.1
1	8.3
2	16.0
3	15.1
4	9.9
5 and over	38.7

Chart 11: Proportion of children aged 4 and under



Appendix B

Tables of survey results

Table 18: Gender profile of respondents

Gender	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
Male	18	8.5
Female	192	91.4

Table 19: Age profile of respondents

Age	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
Up to 19	3	1.4
20 – 24	36	17.1
25 – 44	160	76.2
45 – 54	5	2.4
55 – 64	4	1.9
65 plus	2	1.0

Table 20: Number of children of respondents

Number of children	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
None	2	1.0
1/expectant	69	32.9
2	76	36.2
3	40	19.0
4	19	9.0
5 plus	4	1.9

Table 21: Age profile of children in Sure Start area

Age of children	Number of respondents	Percentage of children
Under 1	54	12.1
1	37	8.3
2	71	16.0
3	67	15.1
4	44	9.9
5 and over	172	38.7

Table 22: Ethnicity of respondents

Ethnicity	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
White	204	98.6
Black – African, Caribbean	1	0.5
Asian – Pakistani, Indian, Bangladeshi	0	0.0
Other	2	1.0

Table 23: Parenting status of respondents

Parenting status	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
Lone parent	44	21.2
Dual parent	164	78.8

Table 24: Length of time lived in Sure Start area

Length of time lived in area	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
0 – 1 year	20	9.6
2 – 5 years	69	33.0
6 – 10 years	37	17.7
10 years plus	83	39.7

Table 25: Working status of respondents

Working status	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
Working full time	24	11.5
Working part time	70	33.7
Not looking for work – looking for work	11	5.3
Not looking for work – not looking for work	56	26.9
Retired	3	1.4
Student	8	3.8
Other	36	17.3

Table 26: Definitions of Sure Start given

Citation	Number of citations	Percentage of survey population
Parents and young children	35	19.3
Families and children under 5	23	12.7
Correct definition	18	9.9
Pre-school children	15	8.3
Children	11	6.1
Parents	10	5.5
Children 0 - 4	9	5.0
Everyone	7	3.9
Families	7	3.9
Parents who need help	6	3.3
People with children on low incomes	6	3.3
Parents in Bexhill	4	2.2
Young families	4	2.2
Young children	3	1.7
Mothers	3	1.7
The community	2	1.1
Single mothers	2	1.1
Disadvantaged families with young children	2	1.1
Activities for parents and children	2	1.1
Children under 12	2	1.1
Children under 10	2	1.1
People in Sidley/Bexhill	1	0.6
All families in Sure Start area	1	0.6
Unemployed people	1	0.6
Encouraging adults and children to play	1	0.6
Young parents	1	0.6
Families in deprived areas	1	0.6

Table 27: Reasons given for not using Sure Start services

Citation	Number of citations	Percentage of survey population
Don't know what is available	18	8.6
Only just heard about it	7	3.3
Services do not fit around work	7	3.3
Time taken up with other activities	5	2.4
Can't find the time	4	1.9
My child is too young	4	1.9
Only recently moved into area	3	1.4
Do not have main child-caring responsibility	3	1.4
Don't feel the need	3	1.4
Don't know where to go	2	1.0
Don't know who to contact	2	1.0
Haven't heard enough about it	2	1.0
My children are too old	2	1.0
Never seen services advertised	1	0.5
Not had the opportunity	1	0.5
Not enough services for older children	1	0.5
Have not had my baby yet	1	0.5
Don't like services	1	0.5

Health services

Table 28: Favourite health services

Citation	Number of citations	Percentage of survey population
GP	57	27.1
Health Visitor	49	23.3
Community midwife	32	15.2
Speech and language therapist	6	2.9
Hospital	2	1.0
Sea Doc	1	0.5

Table 29: Health service needing most improvement

Citation	Number of citations	Percentage of survey population
GP	35	16.7
Health Visitor	22	10.5
Community midwife	6	2.9
Speech and language therapist	5	2.4
Paediatric occupational therapist	3	1.4
Hospital	3	1.4
Dentist	3	1.4
Occupational therapist	1	0.5
Community psychiatric service	1	0.5

Play and learning services

Table 30: Favourite play and learning services

Citation	Number of citations	Percentage of survey population
Sure Start Fun Days	45	21.4
Playgroups	36	17.1
Parent and toddler groups	25	11.9
Sure Start Parent Get Togethers	22	10.5
Nursery	17	8.1
Toy Library	6	2.9
SS (General)	3	1.4
Post natal group – Bexhill Hospital	3	1.4
Special needs support	2	1.0
Rhyme time	1	0.5
Crèches for parent activities (non-specified)	1	0.5
Childminder	1	0.5
School & family link team & worker	1	0.5

Table 31: Play and learning service needing most improvement

Citation	Number of citations	Percentage of survey population
Parent and Toddler Group	17	8.1
Fun Bus	14	6.7
Nurseries	6	2.9
Special needs support	5	2.4
Childminders	3	1.4
Sure Start Fun Days	3	1.4
Playgroups	4	1.9
Toy library	2	1.0
Sure Start Parent Get Together	1	0.5
Crèche	1	0.5

Training and education facilities

Table 32: Favourite training and education facilities

Citation	Number of citations	Percentage of survey population
Save a Life	18	8.6
Baby massage	9	4.3
UK Online Centre	4	1.9
Pottery Class	2	1.0
Learning Link (general)	1	0.5
Card making	1	0.5

Table 33: Training and education facility needing most improvement

Citation	Number of citations	Percentage of survey population
Save a Life	3	n/a
UK Online Centre	2	n/a
Learning Link	1	n/a

Family Support

Table 34: Favourite family support service

Citation	Number of citations	Percentage of survey population
Libraries	29	13.8
Bexhill Leisure Centre	25	11.9
Sure Start Newsletter	24	11.4
Play areas/parks	12	5.7
Citizens Advice Bureau	5	2.4
Tall Trees Family Centre	4	1.9
Homestart	2	1.0
Hastings and Rother domestic abuse project	2	1.0
Crossroads	2	1.0
Parentscope Home Visiting	2	1.0
Parks	2	1.0
Public transport	1	0.5

Table 35: Family support service needing most improvement

Citation	Number of citations	Percentage of survey population
Public transport	54	25.7
Play areas/parks	33	15.7
Libraries	9	4.3
Bexhill Leisure Centre	7	3.3
Citizens Advice Bureau	3	1.4
Sure Start Newsletter	1	0.5
Hastings and Rother domestic abuse project	1	0.5
Parentscope Home Visiting	1	0.5