

## **SURE START OSMASTON/ALLENTON EVALUATION Three Year Report**

### **BACKGROUND**

Osmaston/Allenton is one of the most disadvantaged areas in inner City Derby and had very little childcare provision for 800 children less than four years. In November 1999 it was given Government approval as a trailblazer. Sure Start Osmaston/Allenton involves working with seventeen projects from different agencies both voluntary and statutory. A capital build of 1.4 million was completed in April 2003. This provides full day care for 33 children, adult education facilities, crèche area/community room, parents' room, sensory room, community café and offices for the multi-agency team.

The partners involved in Sure Start include, social services, early education, schools, Central Derby PCT, midwives, speech and language therapy, adult literacy, library service (Bookstart) and several voluntary agencies including Osmaston Family Project, Barnardos (Child Development Project), St Bartholomew's Community Initiative and Umbrella (service for special needs children).

During the development of the programme and with multi-agency support, services were and still are delivered from a variety of venues in the community with support of Derby Homes. This has enabled parents to access services locally and has raised the profile of the Sure Start organisation. Sure Start has also managed to secure funding from other sources (SRB5, DAT and Children's Fund). This we believe has complemented the Sure Start service by delivering services to older children and their families and ensured the success of the programme. The evidence of this is shown now in reduced crime figures in the area and a reduction of referrals of children 0-16 years to social services from 500 per year to 300.

The Sure Start bases include:

- First Steps-1.3 million capital build
- Start Sure sub Office - 90-92 Marlborough Road
- The Community House - 16-18 Glossop Street (Barnardos)

- The Place - 38 Mortimer Street (Sure Start/SRB)
- 79 Crewton Way (FCH-Sure Start)
- Osmaston Family Project – 45 Varley Street (nacro)
- Nightingale Infants/Junior School
- Waverley Street Health Clinic (Derby Central PCT)
- Lord Street Nursery (Early Excellence Centre).

Our programme provides a range of services to meet the needs of parents with children less than four years. Some services are universal, available to all who need them; others are targeted at particular groups. Our Sure Start services join up with other services and activities in the area, some of which are funded through other funding streams.

## **SERVICES DEVELOPED AND LINKED TO OBJECTIVES**

### **Objective 1: Improving social and emotional development**

*In particular, by supporting early bonding between parents and their children, helping families to function and by enabling the early identification and support of children with emotional and behavioural difficulties.*

#### **PSA target**

- To reduce the proportion of children aged 0-3 in the Sure Start areas who are re-registered within the space of 12 months on the child protection register by 20 per cent by 2004.

#### **SDA targets**

- All local Sure Start programmes to have agreed and implemented, in a culturally sensitive way, ways of caring for and supporting mothers with post natal depression.
- One hundred per cent of families with young children to have been contacted by local programmes within the first two months of birth.

**To meet these targets we have developed these core services:**

- **Family Visitors** –to ensure all parents received information about Sure Start at 8 weeks and to carry out evaluation
- **Parenting Programme** –to develop multi-agency parenting programme
- **Enhanced Social Services Family support** –to support families in homes to prevent crises and referral to Social services;
- **Health Visiting Team**–to identify and support mothers with post-natal depression.

**Objective 2: Improving health**

**In particular, by supporting parents in caring for their children to promote healthy development before and after birth.**

**PSA target**

- To achieve by 2004 in the 500 Sure Start areas, a 10 per cent reduction in mothers who smoke in pregnancy

**SDA targets**

- Parenting support and information to be available for all parents in Sure Start areas.
- All local programmes to give guidance on breastfeeding, hygiene and safety.
- A 10 per cent reduction in children in the Sure Start area aged 0-3 admitted to hospital as an emergency with gastro-enteritis, a respiratory infection or a severe injury.

**To meet the above targets we have developed and enhanced these services:**

- **Enhanced midwifery service** –to support parents with smoking cessation and ensure 100% pregnant women seen;

- Antenatal family visitor-to assist midwife with smoking cessation target;
- Infant feeding advisor-to promote and support women who breast feed;
- Health visiting Team-including 5 health visitors attached to Sure Start team, community paediatric nurse, health visiting assistant, portage worker-to ensure health advice and support-specifically accident prevention;
- Dental health advisor-to improve dental health of children.

**Objective 3: Improving children's ability to learn**

In particular, by encouraging high quality environments and childcare that promote early learning, provide stimulating and enjoyable play, improve language skills and ensure early identification and support of children with special needs.

**PSA target**

- To achieve by 2004 for children aged 0-3 in the Sure Start areas, a reduction of 5 percentage points in the number of children with speech and language problems requiring specialist intervention by the age of 4.

**SDA targets**

- All children in Sure Start areas to have access to good quality play and learning opportunities, helping progress towards early learning goals when they get to school.
- Increased use of libraries by parents with young children in Sure Start area.

**To meet these targets we have developed and enhanced five primary programmes: -**

- **Bookstart Plus** –to ensure books and reading are promoted and increase library usage;
- **Osmaston Family Project (nacro)** –to deliver childcare provision for 2 and 3 year olds;
- **Speech and Language Therapy**–to ensure training of staff in speech and language and extra support for children with speech problems;
- **Child Care Workers;** -to ensure crèche support for programmes;
- **Parents Plus Parents (Umbrella/Voluntary)**–to develop support for families with children with special needs.

We also have good partnership working with Lord Street Nursery a 65 place maintained Nursery School that recently gained its Early Excellence Award.

#### **Objective 4: strengthening families and communities**

**In particular, by involving families in building the community's to sustain the programme and thereby create pathways out of poverty.**

#### **PSA target**

- To reduce the number of 0-3 year old children in Sure Start areas living in households where no-one is working\*

#### **SDA targets**

- Seventy five per cent of families reporting personal evidence of an improvement in the quality of services providing family support.
- All Sure Start programmes to have parent representation on the local programme board.
- All Sure Start programmes to have developed local targets for ensuring links between the local Sure Start partnership and Employment Service Job centres.
- All Sure Start programmes to work closely with their local Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYCDP) to help close the gap between the availability of accessible childcare for 0-3 year olds in Sure Start areas and other areas.

**To meet the above targets we have developed and enhanced these services:**

- **Participation Co-ordinator** –to ensure parental involvement in the programme;
- **The Community House (Barnardos)**-to ensure sustainability of the programme by developing self help groups and after school clubs and volunteers;
- **Adult Education Outreach**-to ensure basic skills provision to improve literacy levels and therefore enable parents access to further education or work;
- **Careers Service (DIAGP/Connexions)**-to make sure parents have access to expert advice on careers development opportunities.

**We also have good links with the local EYDCP, Learning Skills Council, New Deal for Lone Parents and Job Centre Plus.**

### KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN LAST THREE YEARS

- Development of First Steps 1.3 million capital build April 2003, providing access to child-care, adult education, parenting support, sensory room, crèche facility, careers advice, counselling support and community café.
- Combining services in a multi-agency approach-one main budget, one vision and staff all based in multi-agency teams in different bases
- Governance of programmes-6 parents on management Board-Parent's Forum of up to 20 parents, now have their own constitution
- Parental Involvement/crèche provision-160 new children using crèches in last 6 months
- Use of para-professionals and volunteers to supplement the work of specialised staff, e.g. community befrienders, breast feeding support-20 parents now working as volunteers

- Move from service providers to facilitators-proved by external evaluation
- Achievement of the Unicef Baby Friendly award 2003
- Runners up in Partners in Excellence Award 2003

### **Sustainability of Programme**

Barnardos Community House project provide a team of community development workers who have facilitated and developed after school groups that are now run by local parent volunteers. They are called PATCH and have undergone their own constitution and are now attracting funding into the area.

PATCH –play scheme for after school and holidays employing their own worker.

Toy Library-run by local parents and employing their own play worker.

Parental Involvement is strong within Sure Start and:

Peer mentors have been trained and developed to support local parents in the community.

10 Breast Feeding Support volunteers (BAMBIS) promote and support breast-feeding mothers in the community.

Self-support groups for various groups have been developed and some are forming their own constitution

**Sunrise Group** –for women with post-natal depression

**The Untouchables**-for women suffering from Domestic Violence

**Time out Group**-for parents with special needs children

**Bump Rattle and Roll**-for antenatal and postnatal women who require support

### **Services that have been mainstreamed and no longer funded by Sure Start**

- Adult Education services-literacy and numeracy now integral service within First Steps building
- Health team –skill mix and deliver services differently-Derby Central PCT Health Visitors now geographically based within Sure Start team

- Family Visitor posts ended and work is now carried out by Health Team
- Family support role developed for prevention-working more closely to health visiting team
- Careers workers-IAG now part of team
- Toy Library worker-now funded by parents group

## **EVALUATION IN 2000-2003**

Evaluation has been seen as an integral and essential part of our Sure Start programme over the last four years. It is used to ensure services are developed and changed to suit the needs of the local community and ensure good outcomes for children. Evaluation evidence of the programme is achieved by:

1. Sure Start database (local)/Monthly Monitoring-M3 form
2. Annual statistics-Sure Start Unit
3. Annual parent satisfaction survey
4. Quarterly milestones
5. Evaluation process
6. Comments/Compliments and Complaints policy
7. National Evaluation NESS
8. External evaluation-Leicester Demontfort Social Action research model
9. Media Evidence

The part-time **Evaluation Lead Worker** was recruited in January 2002 Her role is to

- Carry out evaluation of specified Sure Start programmes,
- Ensure all monitoring and annual returns are completed and sent to the Sure Start Unit in a timely manner,
- Provide support to Sure Start staff in the evaluation of their projects,
- Carry out annual surveys of families to elicit their views and satisfaction with the services provided by Sure Start

- Link up with the Social Action Researchers from DeMontfort University, Leicester.

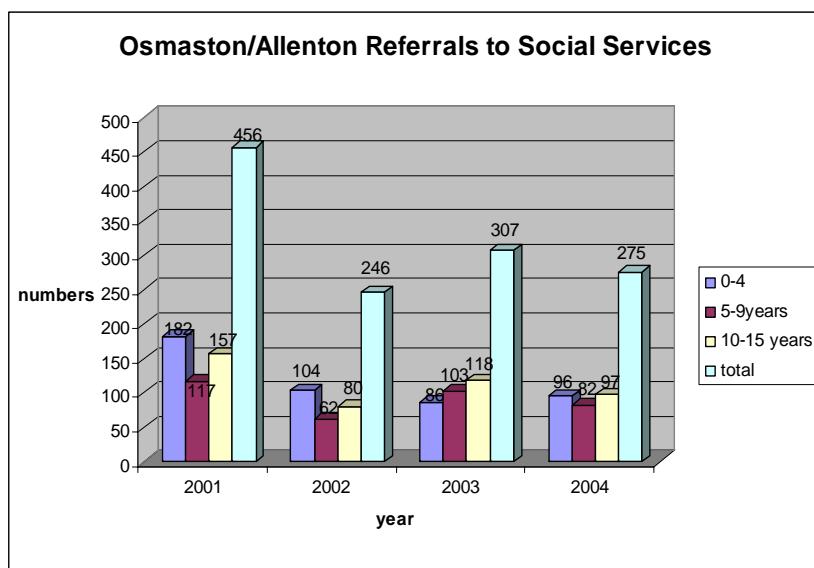
## **1. Sure Start Data base-Reaching Children and Families**

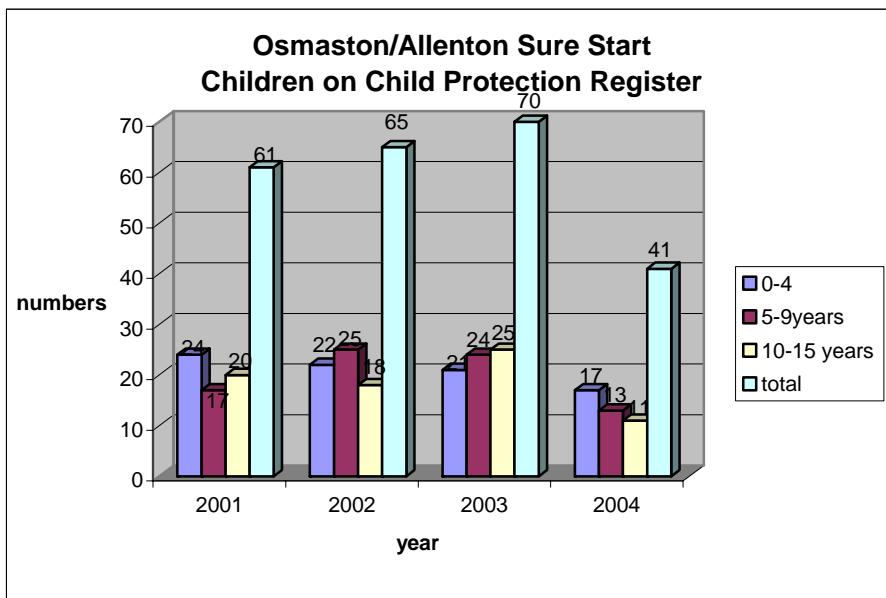
Every month Sure Start staff sends in monthly monitoring forms that capture the number of parents and children they have been in contact with. It also describes what activities parents and children have been involved with. This information is input into the service database in order to generate the monthly monitoring return for the Sure Start Unit. The programme regularly reaches over one third of the children in the area. Feedback is also given to staff on the amount of contacts to clients. Monitoring information has also been used to carry out cost benefit analysis of the programmes.

## **2. Annual Statistics**

**These are collected and sent to Sure Start Unit. Child Protection Referrals and Child Protection rates are one example of data collected.**

**The graphs below are data/information from Social Services over the last four years**





### **3. Parent satisfaction survey**

Parent satisfaction surveys are an annual event. A general questionnaire was sent out in March 2002 to all parents on the database. The purpose is to find out parent's views and satisfaction with the services provided by Sure Start. This questionnaire was repeated in January 2003 by local parents, trained in community research. They carried out face- to- face interviews so ensuring improved compliance.

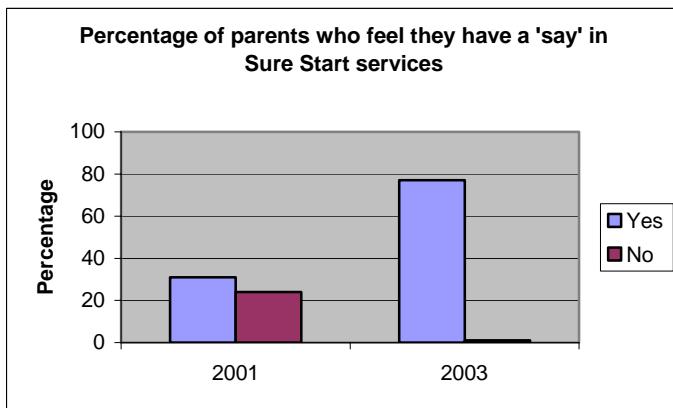
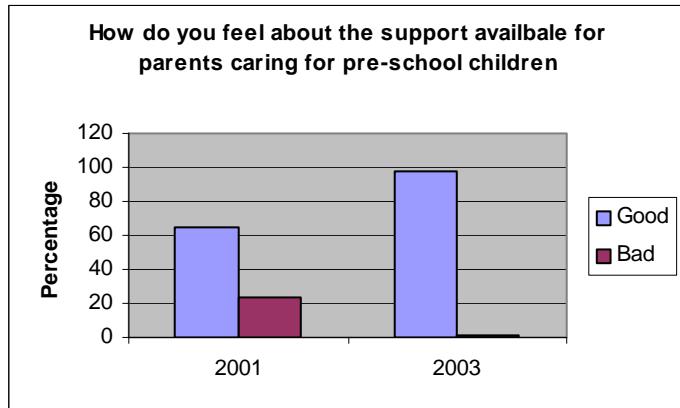
**Satisfaction Survey (2003)** A general questionnaire was given to 100 families to assess their views and satisfaction with the services provided by Sure Start. The results showed that they thought health visitors were the most important service to them in bringing up their children. 91% thought services had improved and 83% felt that their family had benefited from the Sure Start programme. This was a significant improvement from the previous year.

#### **Target**

*75% of families report personal evidence of an improvement in the quality of services providing family support.*

### **Parent satisfaction survey carried out**

- One hundred parents were surveyed
- The most important service in supporting them with bringing up their children were Health Visitors



- 91% of parents thought that services had improved over the last year because of the Sure Start programme.
- 83% of parents interviewed felt that their family had benefited from the Sure Start programme.
- Suggestions for improvements: more activities were held on weekends, improved parks (safety, cleanliness, activities, facilities for younger children), and activities for older children.

#### **4. Milestones**

Each objective working group designs the milestones and these are used to inform the planning process of Sure Start and ensure the programme is working towards achievements of the targets set by Sure Start Unit.

#### **5. Evaluation Process**

One of the major strengths of Sure Start is its multi-professional approach to child development. Traditional roles and organisational boundaries are often blurred in the need to address issues within socially excluded communities

The majority of the team attended training sessions focusing on the mechanics of project evaluation. Many of the team have since looked at introducing evaluation into their work and have become involved in more intense evaluation projects. Further training sessions have also taken place with parents who now form part of our evaluation team. Support from the Evaluation Lead Worker is available to staff on an ad hoc basis.

#### **Project evaluation carried out by Sure Start staff**

Many of the professionals and projects within Sure Start have undertaken evaluation/user satisfaction questionnaires of various designs and methods of delivery, with support from the Evaluation Worker. These have been used to evaluate the effectiveness of various interventions and to plan future courses or services.

- Breastfeeding support questionnaire
- Health Visiting review of services
- Home safety scheme evaluation
- Parenting programme evaluation
- Holiday activities and trips evaluation
- Basic skills course evaluation
- Careers information uptake
- Use of First Steps building
- Family Support Service Outreach case studies

The following lists some of the project evaluation undertaken over the last three years aimed at service users:

- **Family Visitor Evaluation.**

Family visitors were initially employed to raise the profile of Sure Start and ensure parents received information about Sure Start in the first two months. Evaluation was undertaken after two years to find out if there was a continued need for this service. Twenty-five parents were interviewed by telephone. All parents thought this to be a friendly service however reported that they found out most of the initial information from Sure Start from midwives and health visitors. As a result this service has now been reshaped and these visitors are helping other Sure Starts in the initial stages.

- **Base-line evaluation Information/First visit questionnaires**

The Family Visitors completed questionnaires/interviews on their first visit to a new family with 240 families. This information has been analysed to provide some base line data.

Some key points raised by this analysis are:

- Many of the parents had family living close by, but a large percentage requested little support in child rearing.
- Support from boyfriends/husbands was not reported by a large number of parents
- Midwives/Health Visitors were the key professionals in contact with parents.
- There is still a relatively high level of dissatisfaction with Health Care in the area. This usually relates to how much time the Health Care professionals have to listen and talk with their patients.
- Only one third of parents felt they had any voice in the delivery of services.

These interviews were repeated by the Family Visitors 18 months after initial contact to one hundred families to measure any changes in views. The results of this proved the

development of the service and the increase of services to families in the Sure Start area 20% new users were using crèches.

**Partnership Evaluation-The Community House –Barnardos Evaluation**-(partner organisation to Sure Start-receiving 57K of Sure Start funding) who have developed a community development model and empowered the community to develop after-school clubs, volunteering and their own self support groups. Barnardos carried out an in depth evaluation of their service in relation to Sure Start. Local parents were trained to carry out the evaluation and survey local residents' views. Professionals in Sure Start were also asked to complete questionnaires. Outcomes reported that parents, carers and children felt they had benefited from the programme in many ways. As a direct result of this evaluation Barnardos have put in extra funding to the project (report available in annex).

**Health Review.** Several multi-agency focus groups took place to evaluate the health visiting programme and timing of visits to families, as we were not reaching as many 1-2 year olds and 2-3 years as other age groups. As a direct result a new visiting pattern from the multi-agency team was introduced to families to ensure this age group were being reached. The monitoring information has proved that the programme is now reaching more 1-2 year olds.

## **6. Compliments, Comments and Complaints policy**

This policy has been written and a leaflet designed in consultation with the Steering Group and some local parents. It is for the use of all agencies within Sure Start. This policy will allow valuable evaluation of the projects within Sure Start on a comparable basis. How to make a complaint is made clear to service users at each base, fostering a feeling of involvement amongst attendees. This method of feedback is ongoing in the programme and forms are available at each base for use by parents in the area. It has proved a successful method of feedback to the programme.

## **7. National Evaluation**

As a trailblazer Sure Start Osmaston/Allenton has taken part in the National NESS survey.

## **8. External Evaluation/Social Action Research**

The Centre for Social Action, based at DeMontfort University, was contracted for two years to carry out the EXTERNAL evaluation. It is based on a social action model and focused on talking to people in groups about the programme. The groups were: managers group, staff group, parents group and young people's group. They met six times during the evaluation period and their opinions on the effectiveness of the programmes, what works and what needs to change formed the basis of the final report.

The final report demonstrates a positive change over the two years of research. Findings from the focus groups showed that parents are seeing Sure Start as a very valuable service. It is recognised as valuable because the services are seen as support to parents in developing their capacity to care for their children. Sure Start also gives children access to experiences that they enjoy and which increases their resilience. The success of Sure Start is due to:

- The attitude of the staff towards service users
- The fact that relationships between staff and service users are based on partnership
- The programme has created a culture of respect and trust between participants

The feeling was that multi-agency working is creating 'joined-up' services for the under 4's in the area. However there are still some frustrations and sometimes finances are getting in the way of progress now that this Sure Start is in its fifth year of operation. (Report available on request)

## **9. Media Evidence**

Sure Start has developed good links with the local media and has a result has regular articles in the local newspaper about various initiatives. This has helped to raise the profile of our Sure Start programme and the local area. Local residents say they feel more positive about living in the Allenton area (survey results).

## **FUTURE PLANS FOR EVALUATION**

Sure Start Osmaston/Allenton is in its fifth year of delivery and is already seeing some outcomes and impact from the services delivered. Evaluation has formed a valuable part of the programme and has enabled and informed the Management Board to make decisions about the programme. Some programmes have come to a natural end when staff has completed their task. One example is Family Visiting that initially signed up parents to Sure Start and gave them information. This role is now mainstreamed into the Health Visiting Service and the family visitors have been able to support other Sure Start programmes in Derby City.

Evaluation will remain an integral part of the service delivery and parents will continue take an active role in this process. It has enabled us to change services as we can find out what works well for children and their families and what does not work well.

Evaluation will ensure our services are aiming to achieve the defined Sure Start targets and objectives and will enable ongoing feed back into the programme in order to maintain and raise the quality of services delivered in this area.

Evidence of best practice and feedback on the evaluation of Sure Start has also been given to the wider partnership in Derby City and will help inform the establishment of core essential services in Children's Centres.

Chris Tully  
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