



# ANNUAL EVALUATION REPORT



2004

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EVALUATION OFFICER

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# Introduction

“lucky to  
have  
SureStart  
in the area”  
  
a comment from  
one of our parents

SureStart Rowner was launched in August 2002 and now provides over 20 different services for the parents and young children living in the Rowner area of Gosport. This is the second Annual Evaluation Report, covering the year 2004. The aim of this report is to provide a summary of the evaluation findings for the year, including current and planned evaluation methods, key findings and recommendations for the future.

The report was compiled by the Evaluation Officer, working as part of the core team at SureStart Rowner. After initial appointment in January 2004, one of the first tasks undertaken by the Evaluation Officer was to meet with each service provider to discuss the service they provide and to consider how the evaluation for the service could be moved forward. As a result of these discussions initial evaluation measures were implemented on some services. This first Evaluation Officer left in August 2004 and the post was vacant until the end of September when a new Evaluation Officer was appointed. After a period of induction into the programme, she set about completing 'Initial Evaluation Interviews' for every service, which has now been achieved.

All of the services and activities that are provided by SureStart Rowner are monitored. Data is collected by service providers for the Monitoring Office who is responsible for collating the new registrations and attendance at SureStart Rowner groups and events. This data is submitted every three months to the SureStart unit to show the levels of contacts we are achieving. The Evaluation Officer has worked closely in conjunction with the Monitoring Officer to produce this report.

## Background

SureStart Rowner is a 5<sup>th</sup> wave programme that began with early services in April 2002 before the Delivery Plan was agreed in July 2002. Although this is the third year of our SureStart programme it is our second complete year of operation and our first “fully operational” year. The Sure Start Rowner Management Board (SSRMB) agreed its Evaluation Strategy in September 2003.

Our SureStart operates in the Rowner area of Gosport, near Portsmouth in Hampshire. There are approximately 800 children under the age of four living in this area. The population is described as ‘skewed’ because the proportion of children and young families living here is higher than usual, with children under four years old representing 11.4% of the population.<sup>1</sup> Very few of these families have their extended families in the Sure Start area. The area is overwhelmingly White British, with this ethnic group making up 98% of the total population. The mixture of housing tenures can make an overall sense of community difficult.

SureStart Rowner runs its services from a combination of venues including offices housed in temporary classrooms, a local Community Centre, Church Hall and a room in a nearby school. We also rent a house from Portsmouth Housing Association, our ‘community house’. Work is well underway on a new building that is being purpose built as a Children’s Centre and venue for SureStart Rowner services. The building was originally due to open in the Spring of 2004, but unfortunately it has been delayed and is now likely to be opened officially in May 2005. In the meantime services are running as usual in the above venues.



It is recognised that the delay in the opening of the building has meant that the venues for many of the services are far from ideal. Feedback from service users and providers has highlighted this and the problem that some venues are changing frequently, having an adverse affect on attendance and sometimes space is limited and times are not ideal. It is hoped that the move into the new building will alleviate many of these problems and allow the services to run at an optimum. Therefore, it is envisaged that evaluation of many services can start properly once they have ‘settled down’ into the building later this year.

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<sup>1</sup> Sure Start Gosport Progress Report January 2002

## Evaluation Methods

We use a variety of different methods to evaluate our services. One of these is the '**Service Provider Evaluation Summary**' form (a copy of this can be found in the Appendix). The forms ask a simple set of questions to enable a service provider to provide an update of what they have been doing, any verbal feedback they have received and also to record any issues or concerns that may have arisen. The forms can be completed weekly, fortnightly or monthly - whichever is most appropriate to the service. Currently only some of our service providers are completing these forms, but it is planned to distribute these forms to all SureStart Rowner workers shortly (see evaluation plan). The reports are returned on a regular basis to the Evaluation Officer where they are collated into monthly, bi-monthly and quarterly reports.

These reports allow the people who deliver our services to evaluate their own activities, an important part of evaluation. A number of steps have been taken to gather the opinions of the parents using the services too.

At the moment, this mostly takes the form of questionnaires that are given out during or after meetings and groups. They are mostly 'satisfaction' type questionnaires designed to find out what the parents thought of the service they received, and what they feel they and their children have got out of it. It is strongly hoped that other methods of getting feedback will be explored in the future; such as **face-to-face interviews**, **focus groups** and simple '**games**' that allow parents and children to say, through pictures rather than words, how they feel about SureStart Rowner.



SureStart Rowner has commissioned a local company called '*TWICS*' (*Training for Work in Communities*). The company trains volunteers to become 'community consultants'; for us this means training a group of parents to become evaluators for SureStart Rowner. The course is running at the moment and there are 7 parents attending, as well as myself. The course consists of weekly 3-hour sessions and will run for approximately 10 weeks. Parents will choose a topic that they would like to focus their research on, choose the best method to gather the required information, and then conduct the consultation. It is hoped that the parents will compile their findings into a report to be presented to the SureStart Rowner Management Board

## Summary of SureStart Rowner Services and Evaluation

### Enhanced Midwifery

Our enhanced midwifery service is provided, through the Community Midwifery Team, by a Community Health Care Support Worker (HCSW) who came into post in November 2004. She works 4 days a week for SureStart Rowner and her role is to work alongside the midwives providing care for pregnant women and new parents in the SureStart Rowner area. She meets new parents in their homes where she encourages them to register and gives them information about SureStart Rowner services.

As the service is so new, it is not yet being evaluated. Once the HCSW has settled into her post we will meet to discuss ways to evaluate her service.



### Enhanced Health Visiting

Our enhanced health visiting service is now also provided through a HCSW who joined the local Health Visiting Team at the same time as the enhanced midwifery HCSW joined the Midwifery Team, in November 2004. Originally this service was delivered through the Health Visitors with allocated hours for the SureStart Rowner programme. The role of the Enhanced Health Visiting Service HCSW is to promote SureStart Rowner services, such as the Breastfeeding Group, postnatal groups and Baby Clinic encouraging parents to attend these groups. The Enhanced Health Visiting service also visits families who move into the area. This service, working closely with the midwifery HCSW provides continuity of care within the Surestart Rowner programme.

Again, because this is a new service it is yet to be evaluated.

## PALS (Play and Learn Scheme)

The Play and Learn Scheme (PALS) is a central service within SureStart Rowner- it uses around 20% of our yearly budget. This scheme is designed to deliver on all SureStart Local Programme objectives and is offered as a 'Universal' project to ensure that families who may be described as 'hard-to-reach' do not slip through the net. It is also delivered through an "integrated services" approach with the workers employed through SureStart partner agencies both statutory and voluntary. Because it is such an important part of our programme it is essential that we get it right for the parents and children who use it. The service is extensively evaluated, so that we can see how it is developing and so that we can respond to what parents tell us.

The PALS workers provide one hour of play each week in the homes of children under a year old. The workers take toys and other play activities with them that help to enhance the baby's senses and encourage developmental awareness. There are currently 5 PALS workers, with another due to begin at the end of January. The first visits began in April 2004.

An important part of the PALS team's work is that the workers become 'key' family supporters and encourage families to access other SureStart Rowner services and SureStart Rowner events, such as the Parent and Toddler Groups, the Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) and the Christmas parties.

A number of methods are currently used to evaluate the PALS service...

- Service Provider Evaluation Summary forms (completed fortnightly)
- Monitoring data (including number of visits and activities)
- Background Questionnaires completed with families
- Interim evaluation questionnaires completed with families
- Post-service Satisfaction Questionnaires completed with families

These methods were the result of discussion between the Evaluation Officer and the PALS workers about the best ways to evaluate the new service.

The evaluation methods seem to be working well. However, during the time that the Evaluation Officer post was vacant, some of the evaluation information was not collected. With the new Evaluation Officer in post the collection of

A total of 106 babies were seen by the PALS workers last year

evaluation information will be monitored to ensure its prompt achievement.

'parents  
really look  
forward to  
the visits'

The PALS team requested a meeting with the Evaluation Officer in November 2004, where we discussed how the evaluation was going. As a result of this meeting, the Post Service Satisfaction Questionnaire is to be changed to make it more similar to the Background Questionnaire (thus allowing comparison between 'before' and 'after').

The following are messages collected from the current evaluation of this service and the responses in service delivery as a result of the messages.

### Key Successes

- Popular activities include 'black and white' visual stimulation and baby massage
- Good relationships between PALS workers and parents
- Parents gaining more confidence in playing with their baby
- One mum signed up for 3 training courses to boost her confidence
- **PALS introducing parents to other SureStart Rowner services** (including Breastfeeding Group, Parent and Toddler, Weaning Group, Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB), Play and Talk Group, Take 5 group and the Christmas Parties)
- Fathers getting involved- especially in activities such as baby massage
- The PALS workers feel they are reaching out to more vulnerable families
- Parents buying and making their own equipment to play with and stimulate their babies.
- Reports of babies being more responsive
- Improving relations with Health Visitors gaining confidence in the PALS scheme workers.

'parents  
are  
more  
aware  
of the  
benefits  
of  
playing  
with  
baby'

## Issues or recommendations

- There is concern that parents are not reading the **magazine** as they are not always aware of other SureStart Rowner services
- **Appointment cards** - the need for these is a request from PALS workers as they often find that parents forget appointments and say they would like to have a card given to them with the time/date on it
- Outreach workers and groups to be given **flyers** to hand out telling people about PALS
- Lots of parents have been asking about a **baby group**. Mums have requested a group specifically for babies (not parent and toddler).
- Parents would like the PALS workers to bring toys that older sibling can play with so that they can feel part of the activities
- Some parents are consistently difficult to get hold of on the telephone number they have provided, so **letters** need to be sent to families who are hard to contact by phone

As a result of the review process and feedback from PALS...

## Developments in Service Provision

- A group of parents are receiving training in 'the making of videos' with the aim that the magazine can be delivered in alternative ways to the written word.
- As well as the magazine, the programme uses posters, flyers and word of mouth to pass on information about SureStart Rowner services.
- A website is also planned for the near future.
- The PALS workers are designing appointment cards.
- The PALS workers have produced a 'flyer' for others to hand out.
- The delivery of a new project the 'Parent and Baby group' is due to begin in April with two sessions a week. This group will be delivered by a SureStart partner agency and the PALS workers will ensure the continuity of the programme delivery by a rota of their attendance at this group.
- Toys are now loaned to the older siblings of new babies.
- A letter has been designed by the PALS workers and is used to send to parents who are hard to contact by the telephone.

## Community Parenting

The Community Parenting scheme for SureStart Rowner was delivered by a national organization, 'Home Start'. The scheme involved the recruiting and training of volunteers from the SureStart Rowner area, so that they were in a position to support other local parents. This service was asked for by parents who reported that it was difficult to "go on their own to attend services" and therefore included helping and encouraging families to access SureStart Rowner services, as well as, strengthening family relationships, helping families to improve their social and emotional well-being and providing peer reassurance and guidance to parents experiencing difficulties bringing up children.

The scheme ran for some time, and.....

8 families have been helped by Homestart

but, experienced difficulty in recruiting volunteers.

The lack of Rowner volunteers for the scheme meant that it became increasingly difficult to provide support to those who needed it. Through the programme governance structure and the programme 'review strategy' the Outreach and Home Visiting sub-group looked at the service in great detail including looking at monitoring data and feedback. They recommended to the SureStart Rowner Management Board that the Community Parenting scheme be 'wound down'. The Board agreed the decision in December 2004.

It had become clear that the service that the Community Parenting scheme had developed was not what the parents initially wanted. The decision to wind it down was influenced partly by the fact that a similar sort of service was being developed, by parents, in one the SureStart Rowner Parent and Toddler Groups. Leaders had noticed that some parents were providing a sort of befriending scheme to their peers. With the decision that the Community Parenting Scheme be 'wound down' was also a decision that a scheme that better met the parents needs to be developed. The 'Buddying Scheme', as it is now called, is being coordinated by one of the Parent and Toddler leaders and is so far a big success.

## Learning Opportunities

SureStart Rowner works with parents to ensure that we can offer the sort of learning and volunteering opportunities that parents want and that will contribute to helping them reach their aims: be that to get a job in childcare or to learn how to make greetings cards.

We have forged strong links with our local adult education college, the Essential Skills Support Unit, local community adult education centres, private learning providers, the voluntary sector and statutory bodies.

In the past year we have run courses in First Aid for Childcare, MAKATON, Child Protection Awareness, Introduction to Computing, Introduction to the Internet and Email, Craft Workshops, Brush up your Literacy Skills, Confidence Building, Basic Food Hygiene and Meeting Skills.

The NVQ Level II in Early Years Education and Childcare that began in January 2003 has continued to run and proved extremely popular. When talking to parents it appeared that the thing they most wanted to do, in terms of their future employment, was to work in childcare. Parents had found the cost of childcare courses, the ease and cost of travelling to a college to study and the cost of childcare for their children whilst they studied and during their work-placement, prohibitive. These barriers had prevented parents from pursuing opportunities to gain skills and qualifications in childcare.

Working with a local sixth-form college and near-by pre-schools, SureStart Rowner were able to set up an NVQ II Childcare course locally, consisting of a 6-hour classroom session once a week, and work placements in local pre-schools. We have been able to access funding for parents for childcare through the Learning and Skills Council.

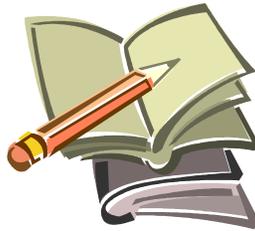
Six parents have already completed this course. As a result, one has set up her own child-minding business, one has been employed by her placement, one has been employed as a classroom assistant and one is pursuing an NVQ III in childcare.

62 parents  
have  
attended  
courses in  
the past  
year.

About three-  
quarters of  
these parents  
have  
attended  
more than  
one course.

The course continues to attract good numbers of learners (currently 10 members) and has a permanent waiting list. We plan to continue to run this course on a rolling programme, our next intake being April 2005.

The Training and Volunteer Coordinator is currently working with the Evaluation Officer to discuss ways in which to evaluate the training courses. Together we have designed a feedback form that can be used for all the courses and will be given to everybody who has taken a course.



## Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB)

Last year 32 people used the CAB.

This is an improvement on the total of 17 people for the previous year.

A Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) advisor runs a drop-in session one morning a week for SureStart Rowner. Parents can also make appointments and she is able to give advice on a wide range of issues including employment law, housing benefit and fathers' rights. The advisor also visits other SureStart Rowner groups such as the Pre-Schools and Parent and Toddler groups.

Evaluation in detail of the CAB was planned for October 2004 as part of the Evaluation Plan 2004-5. It was felt that the reasons for the low attendance last year were linked to the location of the CAB in the main SureStart temporary building, that required users to pass through the general office to seek CAB advice, and that many of these issues would be alleviated following relocation into the new SureStart building. However, as work on the new building was delayed, this in-depth evaluation did not take place. The CAB was one of our services that was relocated to our nearby 'community house' that SureStart rents temporarily from Portsmouth Housing Association. Since this move, which we believe makes the CAB more accessible to parents, there has been an increase in attendance.

A short questionnaire was distributed in Summer 2004 with the aim of finding out peoples' views about accessibility and awareness of the CAB. The results of this investigation were surprising...

80% of respondents found the venue 'very easy' or 'OK' to get to

100% said the advice they received was 'very helpful'

60% said that they favoured a drop-in service (rather than appointments)

In a further study it would be interesting to ask how people found out about the CAB.

### Issues or Recommendations

- There is continued concern over **accessibility** to the CAB - this could be looked at a later date if the problem is not solved by a move into the new building.
- The monthly **magazine** could be used as a way to raise awareness.



## Information for Parents/Parent Forum

### Magazine

Our information for parents involves the publication by parents of a monthly magazine. The parents felt that the information leaflet we first published was not informative enough, not attractive enough and not 'user-friendly'. A working group of parents, led by very dedicated mother (who was subsequently elected as the Editor of the magazine), developed a 'SureStart Rowner Magazine'.

The magazine includes a recipe page to help promote healthy eating, a 'birthdays' page, and expert advice from people such as the Health Visitors, our Oral Health Worker and Midwives etc.

Each month 1,000 copies of the SureStart Rowner magazine, written mainly by parents, are distributed to parents in the SureStart area and our partners in Health, Education, Social Services and the voluntary sector.

The verbal feedback that we get from parents and professionals is very positive and the magazine is considered a good vehicle for communicating with families and other stakeholders in SureStart Rowner.

No *formal* evaluation of the magazine is taking place at present. It would be interesting perhaps to find out how many people are reading the magazine, which pages are most popular etc.



### Parent Forum

The Parent Forum meets regularly each month as part of the Governance Structure of the Programme. The Parents have a decision making process that involves the users of all projects feeding into the Parent Forum, and that in turn feeds directly into the SureStart Rowner Management Board (SSRMB).

## Dinky Ducks Day Care

Our SureStart Rowner Daycare opened in September 2004. It provides full and part-time care within the hours of 8am-6pm Monday to Friday, currently in our temporary building, soon to be in a purpose-built day care unit, for 60 children aged from 3 months to 5 years. (Opening hours are hoped to extend following the move to the new building). The daycare currently has an OFSTED registration for 12 children and run by a team of 5 staff.

Before the nursery was set up, we had 51 families on our waiting list for day care. We asked each of these families to complete a questionnaire to find out what they required from the nursery such as time and days they required care, the age of their child(ren) and the date they would like their child(ren) to start in the nursery. We then analysed this information carefully to make sure that the care we provided would be what the parents wanted. This was to ensure that we could provide the type of care that parents wanted for their children from the day we opened, on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2004.

As part of the future evaluation of this service, we intend to set up evaluation alongside a project that is already operating in our day care unit. This project is called 'Index for Inclusion'. This project aims to ensure that our setting is inclusive to everyone in everything we do.

Formal evaluation of the day care will also be arranged between the Evaluation Officer and Nursery Manager, as part of the Annual Evaluation Plan.

19 children

attend the  
daycare

- some for full day, and
- others for half day sessions-
- we are also providing some wrap-around care

## Parent and Toddler Groups

SureStart Rowner runs 3 Parent and Toddler groups from three local venues (the two main ones are at St. Mary's Church Hall and the Nimrod Community Centre). The Parent and Toddler (P&T) groups were one of three services requested by parents that were set up as 'early services' before the official approval of the programme in July 2002. Our Parent and Toddler groups aim to deliver on all of the SureStart Local Programme objectives.

The Parent and Toddler Groups were visited 4999 times!

The Parent and Toddler leaders see the role of the groups as a dual one. On the one hand, the groups provide a meeting place for parents to enjoy a social gathering and get them out of the house, as well as the children benefiting from interacting with others. Also, the practitioners feel that there are educational and social benefits as the Parent and Toddler groups are geared towards child development. Children are involved in activities which they can learn from, and can use the rules they learn at the group to help them prepare for both pre-school and school. The P&T groups are regularly attended by other SureStart Rowner service providers, including the Oral Health worker, the PMHW, the Library Outreach Worker and the CAB.

An evaluation of the two main Parent and Toddler groups was undertaken in the Spring of 2004. Questionnaires were distributed at the Parent and Toddler groups, with the aim of looking at the differences between the two groups. It was planned to re-conduct the questionnaire 6 months after the original (this could be scheduled into the Annual Evaluation Plan for 2005-2006).

A **summary of the findings** follows;

When asked how they heard about the group, the majority of parents at the Nimrod stated 'friend' (57%) compared with 26% at St Mary's. 33% of people at the Nimrod centre heard about the service from their health visitor or midwife, compared with 60% at St Mary's.

When asked how happy they were with the group, there were **no negative responses**, with 89% of the Nimrod and 100% of St Mary's groups either 'happy' or 'very happy' with the Parent and Toddler groups.

66 different parents visited the Nimrod, 68 visited St Marys and 20 people visited the Crossley Centre

When asked which sessions were their favourite, the varied response indicates that parents like a variety of sessions. When asked which sessions they liked the least, there were quite a few 'no response' answers indicating that most parents didn't feel strongly enough to state their dislikes. Several respondents stated 'other' and specified the 'clever cats' activity, which was then stopped and replaced with another more popular activity.

The most times anyone person came to Parent and Toddler is 109 times!

The questions 'What would you say you got out of the sessions?' and 'What would you say your child got out of the sessions?' had lots of responses which is really good and shows that, as well as enjoying themselves, our parents feel there are benefits to attending the groups too.

The questionnaires also revealed that the groups are not generally used by teenage parents, with the majority of respondents at the Nimrod aged 22-25 and at St Marys aged 26-30.

26 lone parents attended Parent and Toddler

Parent and Toddler leaders have requested a way to record feedback they receive, and have now been provided with Service Provider Evaluation Summaries which they have chosen to complete monthly. The groups hold a 6 weekly review meeting attended by parents where issues are discussed, feedback is given and any changes can be agreed. It is hoped that the Evaluation Officer may attend these meetings, either as an observer or possibly to lead the discussion using a pre-planned set of questions.

146 families used the Parent and Toddler Groups last year.

134 of these families (92%) were White British

12 families (8%) were from minority ethnic groups

The population in the SureStart area is 98% White British, which demonstrates that the use of these groups by ethnic minorities is greater than their proportion in the programme



## Library Outreach Worker

Our Library Outreach Worker works 26 hours a week for SureStart Rowner and her time is made up of a library session and visits to SureStart Rowner groups including Parent and Toddler, the Pre-Schools and the Baby Clinic. She has set up a mini-library in our 'community house' that all of our parents can access, which holds books for children as well as non-fiction books for adults, many of which directly relate to the courses that we run. The library has 2187 books in stock with 353 new books purchased last year. Parents and children are able to register with the library, which registers them with Hampshire County Council libraries too.

There were  
1486  
childrens  
book loans  
and 251  
parent  
book loans  
last year.

The Library Outreach Worker has recently set up a new group, 'Play and Talk' with the Speech and Language Therapist (see below). So far 8 families have been to the Play and Talk Group

An Evaluation Summary Report was compiled for the months May-July 2004, using monitoring data, reports received from the library worker, and feedback forms (given to parents attending the Parent and Toddler groups and the Play Leaders at these groups). The report showed that the number of families using the library fluctuated between 64 in May, 25 in June and 74 in July.

**100% of parents asked in this survey felt that the library sessions were either 'good' or 'excellent'.**

Last year 10 adults and 64 children joined the library. This total of 74 new memberships is a great success and it is hoped that these new members will also use other local libraries

- Our Library Outreach Worker is going to start filling in Service Provider Evaluation Summary forms soon
- She has worked with the Evaluation Officer to design a feedback form that will be given to the leaders of the groups she visits
- We will work together to arrange evaluation of the Play and Talk group

## Free Pre-School

The cost of pre-school was raised as a problem issue by the parents and pre-school workers during the consultation period before SureStart Rowner was set up. SureStart Rowner funds places for children in pre-schools from the age of 2 years 9 months, prior to the availability of the Nursery Education Grant (NEG) paid by Hampshire County Council (HCC), the term following a child's third birthday.

Last year 79 children attending pre-schools from 2 years 9 months had their places funded by SureStart Rowner.

## Antenatal Group

15 people came to the Baby on the Way group last year

Our antenatal group, 'Baby on the Way', is run by a worker from the National Childbirth Trust. It is an informal group for women at any stage of their pregnancy, where they can come to discuss their week, and to give and get support from other mums-to-be. There are some planned topics from time to time, including breastfeeding and birthing positions. Mothers are introduced to post-natal services through this group.

### Issues or recommendations

- The NCT worker would like **visits from other SureStart Rowner workers** at her group, such as the CAB.
- She would like to **raise awareness** of the group with women earlier on in their pregnancy. It is hoped that the new Enhanced Midwifery Service Health Care Support Worker will help to do this.
- The problem has arisen of a number of mothers returning to the group with their babies. It is difficult to balance ante and post-natal needs. This has highlighted the need for support after birth, in particular a **baby group**.

Following a meeting between the NCT worker and the evaluation officer, the weekly feedback form given to women attending the group has been redesigned. The NCT worker also completes Service Provider Evaluation Summary forms on a monthly basis.

## Baby Clinic

186 people  
from 90  
families used  
the Baby  
Clinic last  
year

The SureStart Rowner Baby Clinic is held weekly at the local Community Centre. It is run by a Health Visitor and is an opportunity for parents to sit and chat to other parents, and also to see other professionals such as the Oral Health Advisor and the Primary Mental Health Care Worker.

The Baby Clinic is not being formally evaluated at present. This is something that will be addressed in the Evaluation Plan for the forthcoming year.

## Post-natal Depression Self Help

Each week a small group of parents meet for the 'Take 5' group, to discuss their experiences of the ups and downs of parenthood. The group is for all women in the SureStart area (whether they have post-natal depression or not). A Health Visitor is on hand to provide any support that is needed.

Again, this is a service that is yet to take part in formal evaluation.

This year there  
were 132  
attendances at  
the Take Five  
group,  
from a total of  
43 people.

## Breastfeeding Group

8 families  
came to the  
Breast-  
feeding  
Group last  
year

The Breastfeeding Group meets every Tuesday in our 'community house'. Both mums and mums-to-be come along to meet other parents and share their experiences. Pregnant women can learn more about breastfeeding.

There is no formal evaluation of the Breastfeeding Group at present. This is something that will be planned to happen after the move into the new building.

## Oral Health Worker



An Oral Health Worker is commissioned to work for SureStart Rowner for 2 days a week. She visits groups such as pre-schools, nurseries, the Take 5 and Breastfeeding Groups, and also provides training to other professionals within the SureStart Rowner programme. The worker gives advice on all aspects of oral health including teething, drinks and snacks and helps families to register with the dentist. She gives out toothbrushes and beakers for children aged 4 months upwards. Following a request by parents, the Oral Health Worker researched feeding beakers suitable for the use of children over a year in age that would promote language development skills and feeding skills. The programme has been able to provide these beakers for parents to purchase at a reasonable cost.

The Oral Health Worker has recently set up a Weaning Group, consisting of “one-off” sessions each month. So far the Weaning Group has had 5 attendees, with one mum returning twice. The worker is due to go on maternity leave in a few weeks, and arrangements in her absence to run this group have not been finalized. She hopes that a parent will be able to run the group while she is away. We are working together on the evaluation of the Weaning Group and a questionnaire has been designed that will be piloted at the next group.

48 toothbrush and toothpaste packs were given out along with  
17 beakers for one-year olds purchased.

## Speech and Language Therapist

The Speech and Language Therapist (SLT) works for 15 hours a week for SureStart Rowner (in addition to the statutory Speech and Language Therapy provision of therapists who works in the area on a referral basis). Her role is to work alongside parents and others working with under-fours to promote the speech and language development of children in the area so that they have the language skills they need for starting school. The SLT has been involved in visits and training sessions with many groups including the PALS team, Parent and Toddler groups and Pre-school Leaders. The SLT has recently set up a new group, 'Play and Talk', with the Library Outreach Worker. The group is designed for parents of children aged about 18 months.

- Our monitoring data tells us that the SLT has seen **17 people** from **9 families** in the past year.\*

### Issues or recommendations

- The SLT regularly writes articles that appear in the **monthly magazine**. She would like to make parents more aware of these.
- Create better links with services outside of SureStart Rowner.
- Create an **information file** on all SureStart Rowner services that would include leaflets and updates on the services, which service providers can access when asked about groups etc. This would be in addition to the information leaflets that the SureStart Rowner office already has.
- Create **better links** between herself and other SureStart workers



\*This number does not include the large number of people seen by the SLT at the many groups she attends

- **Homecheck**



The aim of a Homecheck is to improve the quality of life for the children living or who will be living in a home by ensuring that it is safe for them to be there. This service is directly related to the SureStart target to reduce the number of children admitted to hospital as a result of home accidents. As part of a Homecheck the worker offers home safety advice and will do things like check cupboard door catches and ensure smoke detectors are present and working. The basic service is free of charge to the families who use it, although for a small fee, of £5, up to 2 safety gates and a fireguard can be supplied and installed.

The focus in evaluating this service will be on parent feedback. The feedback form that was being used to get parents' views on the service was not as useful as it could be, and so the Homecheck worker and myself worked together to redesign it. There is now more room for parents to comment on the service.

61 SureStart  
Rowner  
families had  
Home checks

#### Issues or recommendations

- The Homecheck worker has expressed concern that questionnaires are often not filled in/returned if left with the family, but also that he feels that negative comments are unlikely to be made if the form is returned to him to read. This issue could be resolved by providing parents with envelopes, either posted-paid or otherwise, in which to return completed questionnaires by using the postal services or handing to the worker in a confidential way.
- It has also been suggested that a good way of getting feedback on the service would be to hold a discussion group. A good vehicle for this could be the Parent Forum or Parent and Toddler 6-weekly meetings. As there are approximately 13 parents regularly attending the Parent Forum who have had Home checks, this would be a viable option. This is something to that will be planned in to the Evaluation Plan for next year.

Existing 'word-of-mouth' evaluation such as this is already taking place on an informal basis and has shown Homecheck to be very popular with the parents.

## Smoking Cessation

The SureStart Rowner Smoking Cessation group is run by parents, for parents. It is a Step-up group linked to the Primary Care Trust (PCT) Smoking Cessation Programme. The group also has an internet support group website called "Fag Ash Lill". The website contains lots of information such as alternative therapies, and a chat-room where parents can get together to communicate. The group runs one morning a week.

This group is very new, so no formal evaluation is taking place yet. This will be addressed as part of the plan to ensure all services are formally evaluated.

7 people have attended the Smoking Cessation Group

## KIDS Inclusion Project and Respite

KIDS works with SureStart Rowner to assist SureStart Rowner families who due to parental or child additional need, disabled children or parents or ill-health, are unable to participate in the services provided for them by SureStart Rowner and its partner agencies.

An Inclusion Worker is commissioned through KIDS to assess families and their needs. She arranges home visits, visits to pre-schools and individual support depending on a family's needs. A respite service, known as the 'Saturday Fun Club', for all SureStart Rowner children, operates for 2 ½ hours each Saturday morning. Parents book 10 week sessions for their child.

34 families have been helped by the Inclusion Project

This year there have been 451 attendances at the Saturday Fun Club, which is 55 people from 24 different families.

Working with a KIDS Manager there are plans to implement 'before' and 'after' measures for the Saturday Fun Club. The 'before' measures will consist of a questionnaire that will ask questions of parents, such as 'what are your main concerns?' and 'What help would you like?', with the aim of finding out where parents feel they and their child 'are' when the service is utilised. An individual action plan will be compiled from the responses- this is something which is happening already but needs to be more formalised. The 'after' questionnaire would be used to see how the parents' hopes and concerns have changed and how they feel about the help they have received. The Inclusion Coordinator and I have had a meeting to discuss further the design of these questionnaires and this is something that will be actioned following completion of this report.

## Conclusion

This Annual Review shows that the services within the SureStart Rowner Programme are continuing to develop in light of parental and service provider feedback and information. The Review Process is operational through the programme Governance Structure, which includes the working Sub-groups and Parent Forum, and the part of the Evaluation Strategy that involves user feedback is also being actioned.

The delay in the opening of the new building has caused frustration for the progression of the programme, but alternative temporary venues have enabled some new services to begin and other services to develop.

The loss of the first appointed Evaluation Officer after six months in post has meant that the scheduled Evaluation Plan for 2004/05 has only partly been achieved.

Several issues have been highlighted during this report and the newly appointed Evaluation Officer, now established in the role, will be able to address these issues and ensure that the programme fully implements its Evaluation Strategy.

Immediate issues to address include:-

- An Evaluation Plan for 2005/2006
- To ensure **that ALL services are being formally evaluated**, in whichever way is best suited to the service. To do this, meetings will need to be arranged between the Evaluation Officer and the service providers.
- We need to make sure ALL service providers are completing and returning the Service Provider Evaluation Summary forms on a regular basis
- **The magazine** – several of our service providers have expressed concern that it appears that parents aren't reading the magazine, as they are not always aware of what is going on in SureStart. Perhaps a survey could be conducted as a way of looking into this further, to find out what parents think about it, are they reading it regularly and is there anything we could do to make it better.

# Appendix

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