

Parental Satisfaction Survey 2003

Report from research
carried out on behalf of

**KENDRAY AND WORSBROUGH
SURE START**

August 2003

british market research association
bmra
member



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

RBA Research Ltd
Royal House
28 Sovereign Street
LEEDS LS1 4BA

Tel: 0113 285 6300
Fax: 0113 285 6308

2.3 Quantitative Survey with Parents and Carers

2.3.1 Methodology

Between the 19th and 25th of August 2003, face-to-face interviews were carried out with 107 respondents eligible for Sure Start services. The interviews were carried out by experienced interviewers going door-to-door in the localities of Kendray, Bank End and Worsbrough.

The number of interviews achieved produced the following results. Achieving 107 results out of a population of approximately 700, means that the results given are +/-9% at the 95% confidence level. This means that if we had interviewed all possible respondents then we can be 95% confident that the result for the same question would be within 9% of that achieved.

Sub-group analysis is rarely reported due to the sample sizes involved, however significant differences by area (Kendray against Worsbrough) are included.

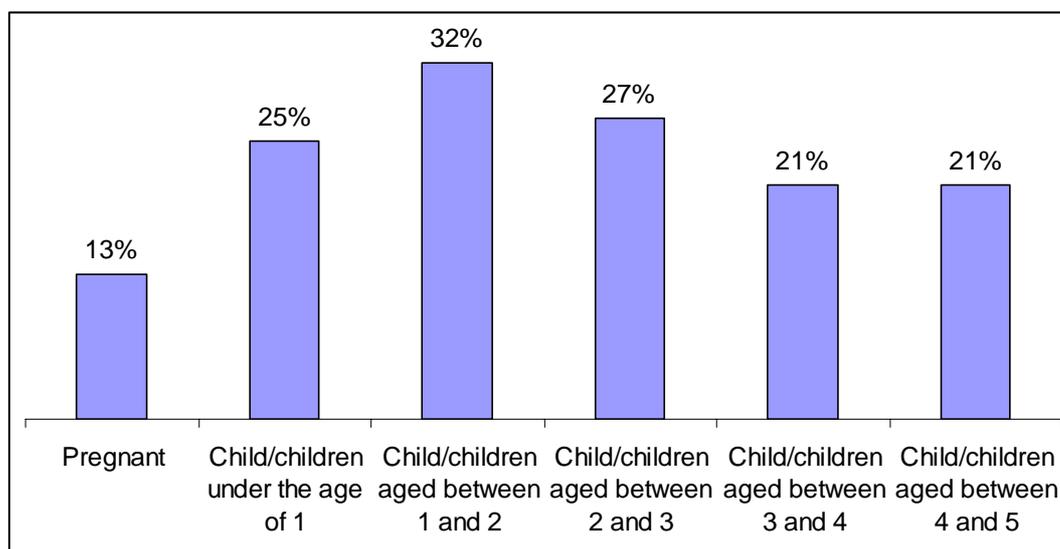
In some cases, responses to individual questions may not total 100%. This could be due to one or more of the following reasons: respondents may have been able to choose more than one category, percentages are given to the nearest whole number the rounding may not result in a total of 100%, respondents may have opted out of a particular question, resulting in some "no replies" (which are not quoted unless significant).

A full set of responses are included as an appendix to this report.

2.3.2 Profile of Respondents

Nine out of ten respondents interviewed (93%) describe themselves as parents/guardians, with a further one in twenty (5%) identifying themselves as grandparents. One in eight (13%) of those interviewed were pregnant at the time of the interview.

**Profile of respondents chart 1:
Which of the categories on this card apply to you?
(Base = all respondents, 107)**



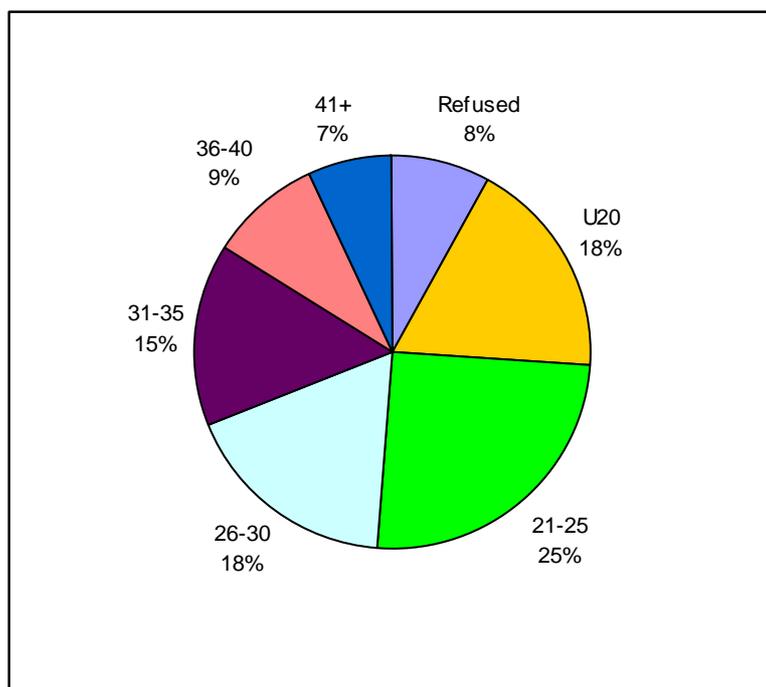
Although children aged over 4 do not currently qualify for Sure Start activities, parents/carers of those aged between 4 and 5 were interviewed as their child would have been eligible for Sure Start services within the last twelve months.

Over one third of the sample (34%) fit more than one of the above categories.

Four out of ten of those interviewed (41%) reside in Kendray, with the remainder (59%) resident in Worsbrough. This approximates to the breakdown of eligible households within the two wards.

The age profile of those interviewed is as shown in the following chart:

**Profile of respondents chart 2:
What was your age on your last birthday?
(Base = all respondents, 107)**



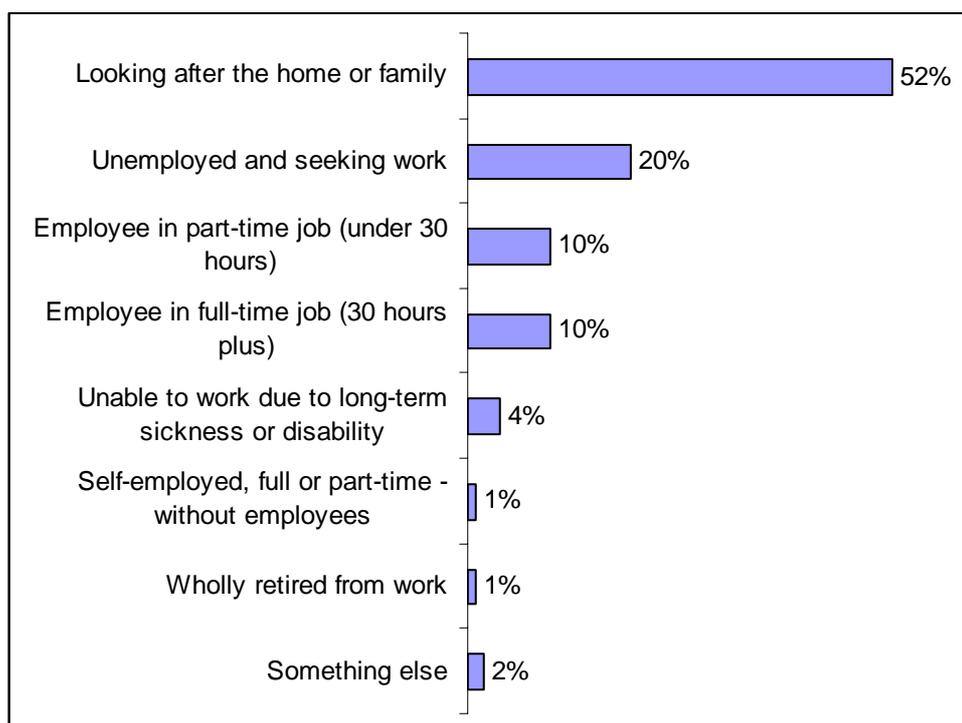
Almost half of those interviewed (48%) say the child/children they are responsible for are being brought up in single-parent households.

Six out of ten of the sample (60%) are responsible for only one child aged under 4 (for half of these people, this is their only child). Half of those interviewed (48%) are also responsible for children above the age of four.

One in five of the parents/carers interviewed (19%) say they have a long-standing illness, disability or infirmity. All bar one of those interviewed class themselves as white British.

Over half of the sample (52%) look after the home or family full-time and one in five (21%) are in employment (full-time, part-time or self-employed). A more detailed breakdown can be seen in the following chart:

**Profile of respondents chart 3:
Which of these activities best describes what you are doing at present?
(Base = all respondents, 107)**



Almost all of those interviewed had heard of Sure Start prior to the interview taking place (97% say they had).

2.3.3 Services

Parents/carers were asked to say how satisfied/dissatisfied they are with various elements of provision for under 4's in the area with the following results:

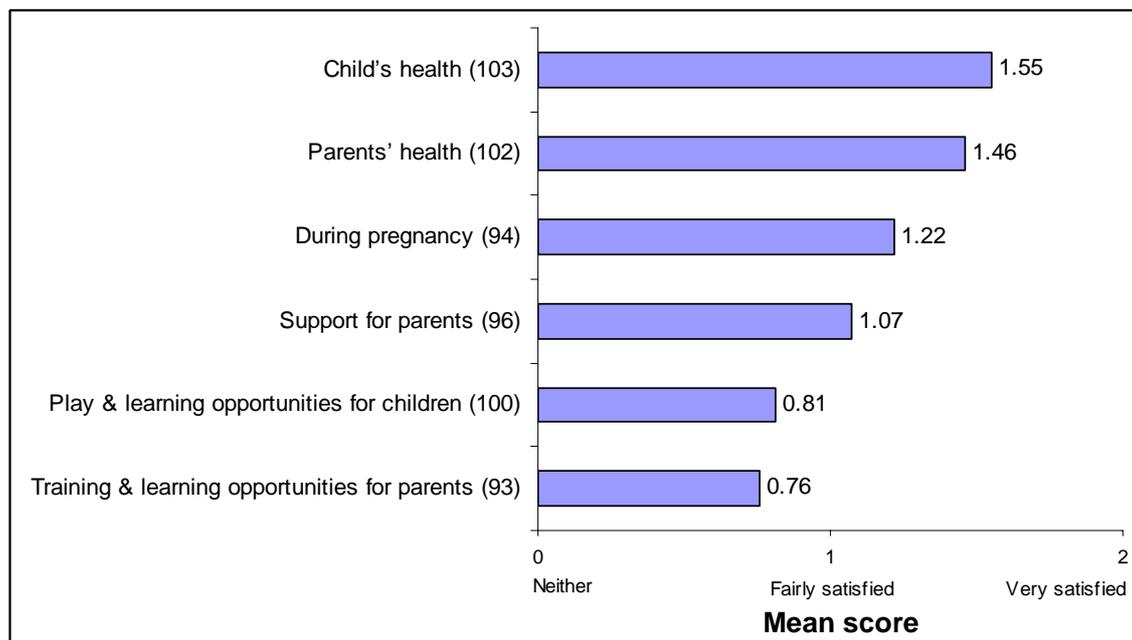
	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	
Child's health	59	32	2	1	1	%
Parents' health	56	30	7	1	1	%
During pregnancy	43	32	7	1	5	%
Support for parents	40	30	11	3	6	%
Play & learning opportunities for children	38	27	8	11	8	%
Training & learning opportunities for parents	27	31	14	11	4	%

By applying a straightforward scoring system¹, we can derive mean scores giving us an indication of the relative strength of each service area:

Services chart 1:

For each of the following areas, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the support available in the Kendray and Worsbrough area?

(Base = all respondents, mean score derived from those expressing an opinion)



It is clear that there are high levels of satisfaction with regards to what is seen as being health provision. Nine out of ten parents/carers (91%) are satisfied with the support available in relation to child health and almost as many (86%) are satisfied with the support for the health of parents.

Three quarters of parents/carers (75%) are satisfied with support available during pregnancy (although one in twenty, 5%, say they are very dissatisfied).

Although none of the service areas merits an overall negative mean score, the areas where there is markedly less satisfaction are “play and learning opportunities for children” and “training and learning opportunities for parents”.

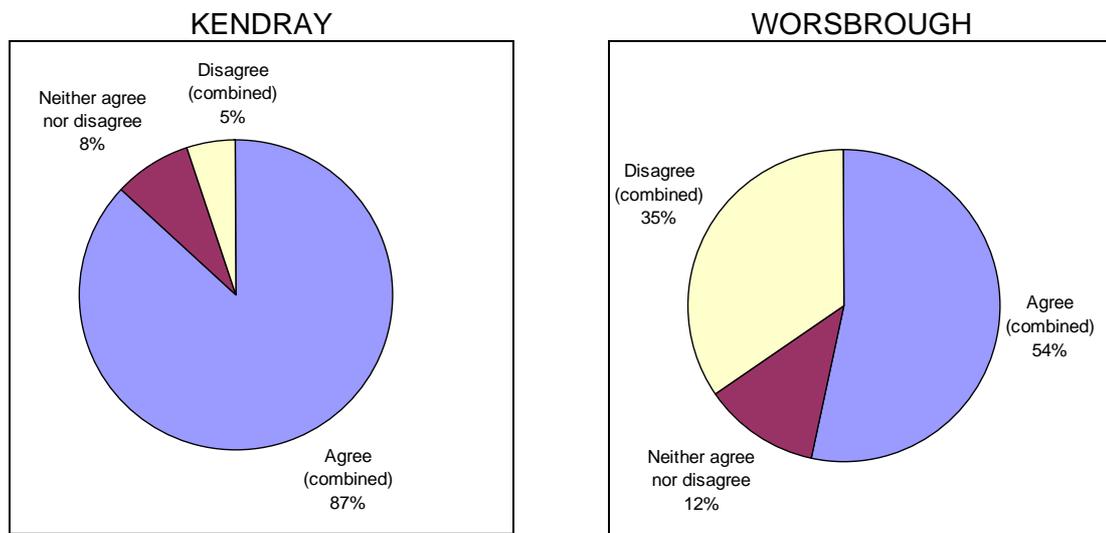
¹ Two points are awarded for “very satisfied”, 1 point for “fairly satisfied”, 0 points for “neither”, -1 points for “fairly dissatisfied” and -2 points for “very dissatisfied”. The total score for each service area is then divided by the number of parents/carers expressing an opinion (figure shown in brackets in the chart).

Two out of three parents/carers (65%) say they are satisfied with play and learning opportunities for children, however one in five (20%) are likely to say they are dissatisfied. Parents/carers in Worsbrough are four times more likely to say they are dissatisfied with this provision, compared with those living in Kendray (29% of parents/carers in Worsbrough say either fairly dissatisfied or very dissatisfied, compared with only 7% of those in Kendray). This finding is echoed by the results from the question asking parents/carers to reflect on how strongly they agree or disagree with the statement "My child/children have had access to good quality play and learning opportunities". Overall seven out of ten parents/carers with children aged from two up to five years old (68%) agree with this statement, but by area there is considerable difference:

Services chart 2:

Thinking about the last 12 months, how much do you agree or disagree with the following statement "My child/children have had access to good quality play and learning opportunities"?

(Base = parents/carers with children aged 2-5 years, Kendray = 39, Worsbrough = 52)



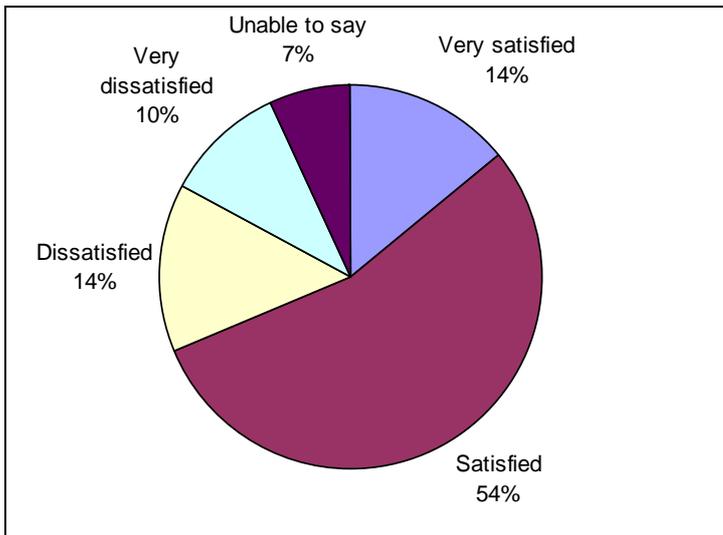
There is a marked difference by area when considering training and learning opportunities for parents. Overall, six out of ten parents/carers say they are satisfied with this provision (and 15% say dissatisfied). In Kendray, three quarters of parents/carers are satisfied, however in Worsbrough it is less than half (46%).

Parents/carers were asked for an overall opinion on local services for young children (under the age of 4). Seven out of ten (68%) say they are either satisfied or very satisfied (three-quarters of those who feel able to express an opinion).

Services chart 3:

Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with local services for young children (under the age of 4)?

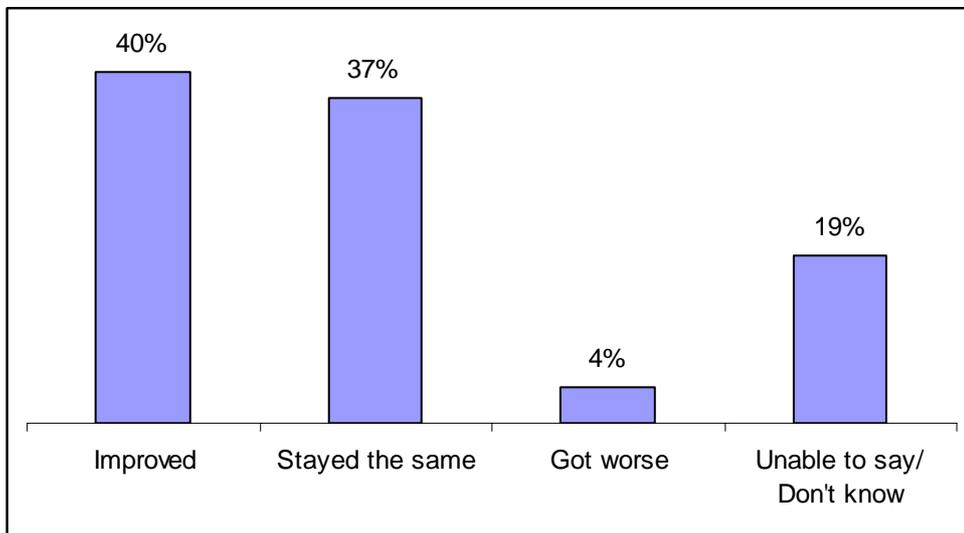
(Base = all respondents, 107)



Asked how services provided locally had changed in the last 12 months, four out of ten parents/carers (40%) report that they have improved. Examples of the improvements include the increase in number of play groups, and the introduction of day trips. Sure Start's contribution is mentioned unprompted by over four out of ten (44%) of those who recognise an improvement.

A similar percentage (37%) say services have stayed the same. Only one in twenty-five (4%) say services have got worse.

Services chart 4:
Over the last 12 months, would you say the services provided locally for children under the age of 4 have improved, got worse or stayed the same?
(Base = all respondents, 107)



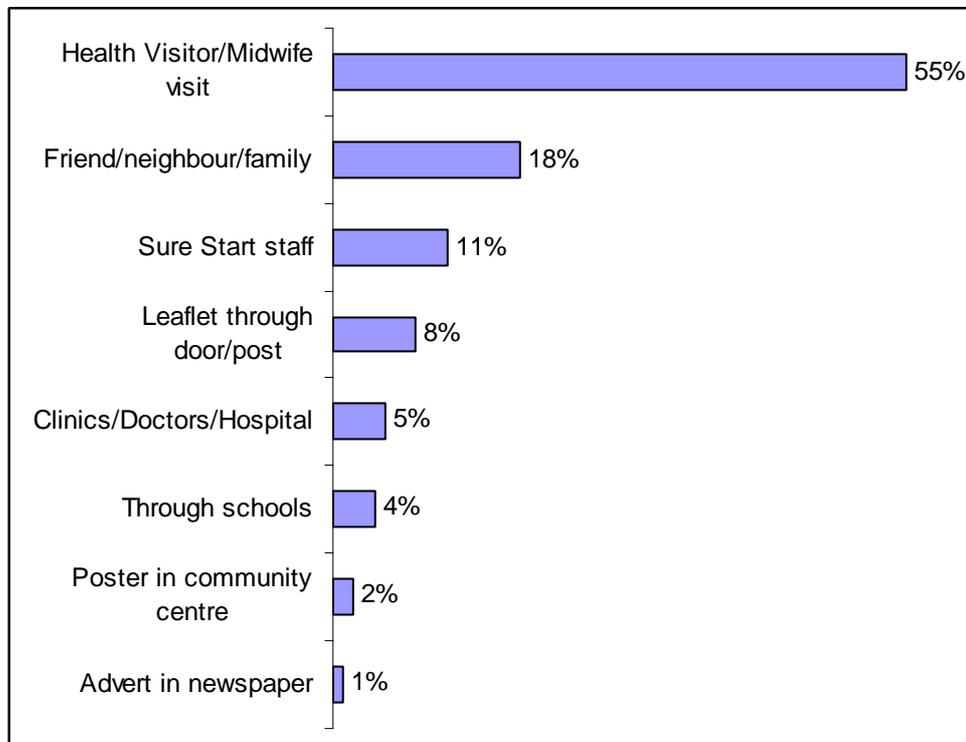
2.3.4 Sure Start

As previously reported, almost all parents/carers are aware of Sure Start. The most popular ways in which they recall first hearing about Sure Start are shown in the following chart:

Sure Start chart 1:

How did you first hear about Sure Start?

(Base = respondents who had heard of Sure Start prior to interview, 104)



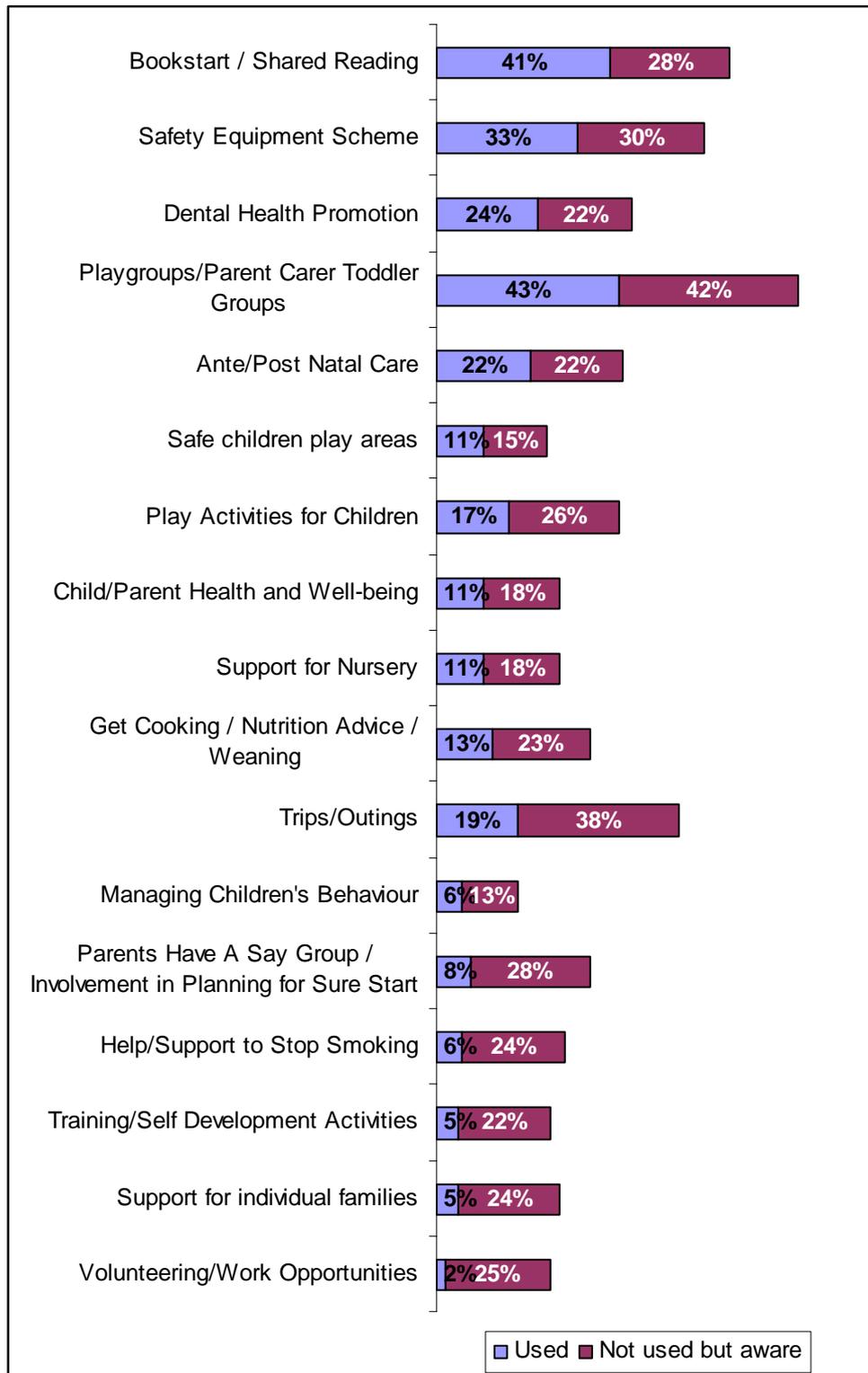
Seven out of ten parents/carers who had heard of Sure Start have registered with the organisation, and over eight out of ten of those (86%) have used at least one of the services offered by Sure Start.

Overall, awareness of, take-up of, and interest in, the range of Sure Start activities or schemes is shown in the following chart:

Sure Start chart 2:

As far as you know, which of the activities or schemes on this list are available in Kendray or Worsbrough? Have you used or been involved in any of these activities or schemes?

(Base = all respondents, 107)



Bookstart and the shared reading programme can be viewed as a success: seven out of ten parents/carers (69%) are aware of the service; six out of ten parents/carers who are aware of the service have made use of it.

The following services have been used by approximately half of those parents/carers aware of the initiative:

- The safety equipment scheme (almost two thirds of all parent/carers have heard of this scheme and 52% have used or been involved with it)
- The dental health promotion programme (less than half of all parents/carers are aware of this, but it is used by 52% of those who are)
- Playgroups and parent/carer toddler groups (this has the highest awareness rating and the highest use rating but is still only 51% of those parents/carers aware of the initiatives)
- Ante/post natal care (less than half of all parents/carers are aware of activities or schemes addressing this, and it is used by 50% of those who are)

At the other end of the scale, only approximately one in five parents/carers who are aware of the following services have made use of them:

- The parents' Have-A-Say group and other opportunities for involvement in the planning for Sure Start (over a third of all parents/carers are aware of the opportunities to get involved, and only 22% of those who are aware have taken up the opportunity)
- Help/support to stop smoking (three out of ten parents/carers are aware of the support available and one in five of those aware have taken up the help)
- Training and self-development activities (just over a quarter of all parents/carers are aware of the opportunities, but only 19% have been involved)
- Support for individual families (three in ten parents/carers are aware of the help on offer with 17% of them having made use of the support)

The service area with one of the lowest awareness ratings (27%) and *the* lowest use ratio is that offering voluntary and work opportunities (only 7% of those aware of the service have used it).

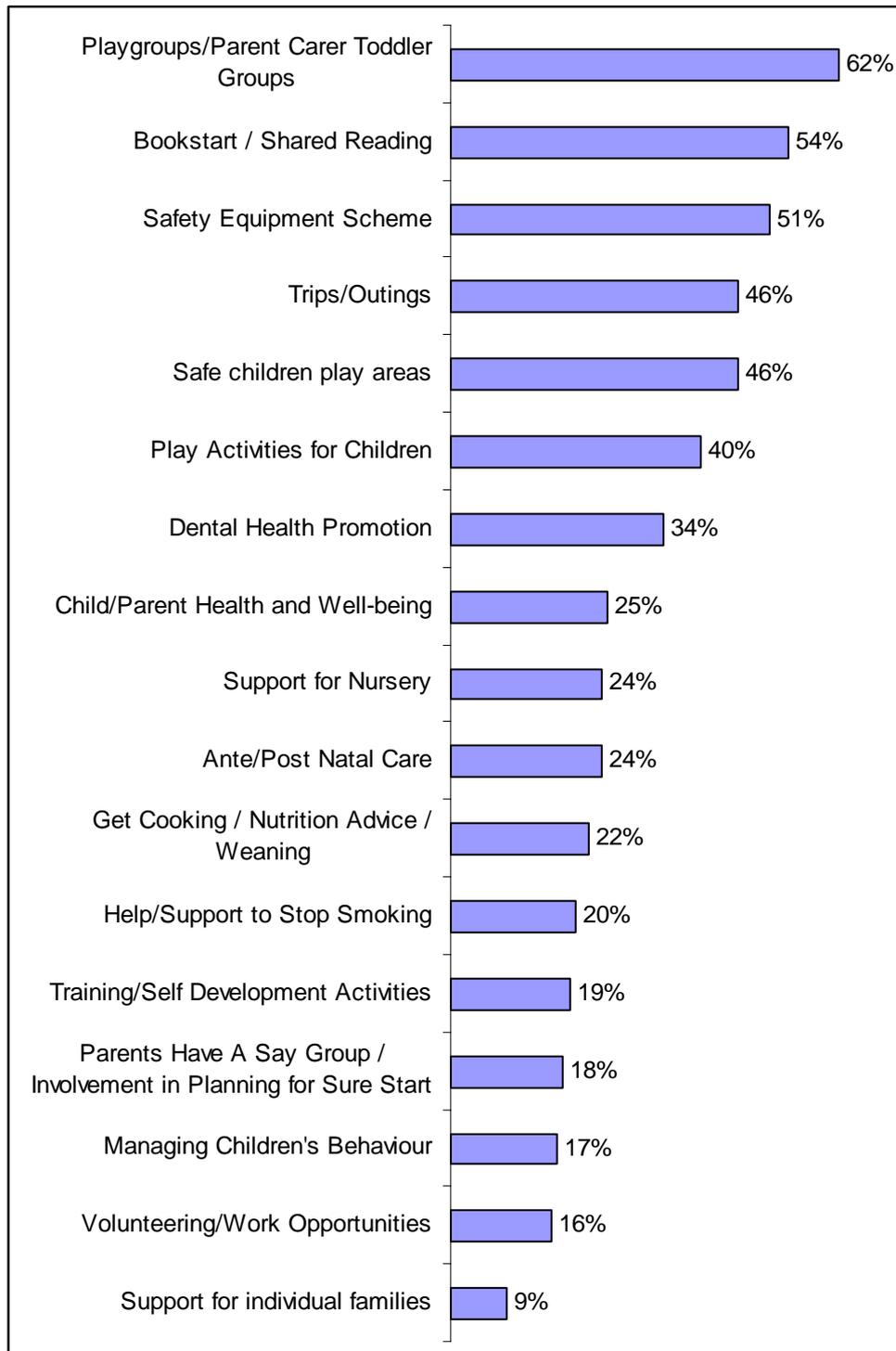
Overall, eight out of ten parents/carers (79%) say they have used at least one service.

Combining the numbers of parents/carers who either currently use or are interested in each service (making the assumption that those currently using would remain interested) produces the results shown in the following chart:

Sure Start chart 3:

Have you used or been involved in any of these activities or schemes? Would you be interested in using any of these activities or schemes?

(Base = all respondents, 107)



The services with the greatest future demand (each aspect being indicated by at least four out of ten parents/carers) are

- Play groups and parent/carer/toddler groups (62%)
- "Bookstart" and shared reading opportunities (54%)
- the safety equipment scheme (51%)
- trips and outings (46%)
- safe play areas for children (46%)
- play activities for children (40%)

The activity where there is the biggest divide between those who have previously made use and those who are interested is the safe children play areas. Nearly half of all parents/carers (46%) say they have used or would be interested in using such areas, but only 11% say they have actually used them in the past. This could be due to the lack of such play areas – later on provision and improvement of these areas is singled out as something else Sure Start should be doing.

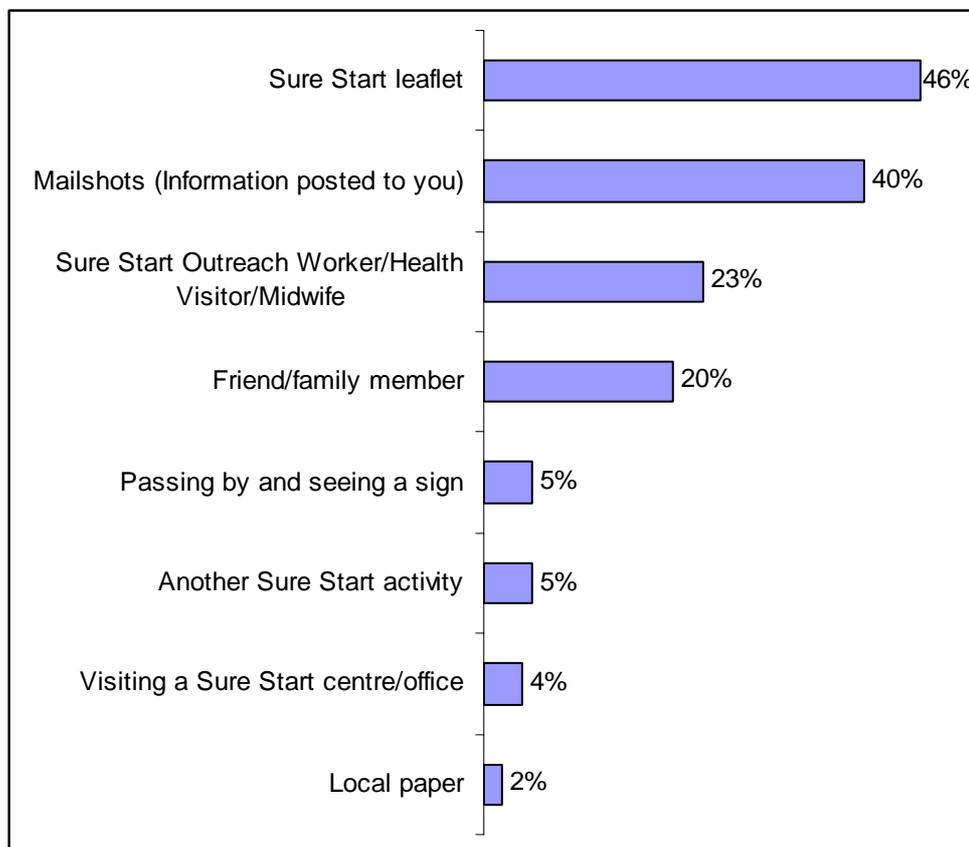
There is another big gap between use/interest and actual use in trips and outings, but this may be down to the fact that opportunities to go on this year's large-scale annual trips had not yet presented themselves.

One in eleven parents/carers (9%) say they have not used nor are they interested in any activities or schemes.

Of those parents/carers who had used a Sure Start activity, more than nine out of ten (96%) say they are satisfied with the provision (63% say very satisfied, 33% say fairly satisfied).

Users of Sure Start services say they usually find out about and get information about the activities and schemes from the sources shown in the following chart:

Sure Start chart 4:
Where do you usually find out about and get information about the activities or schemes provided by Sure Start?
(Base = users of any Sure Start service, 84)

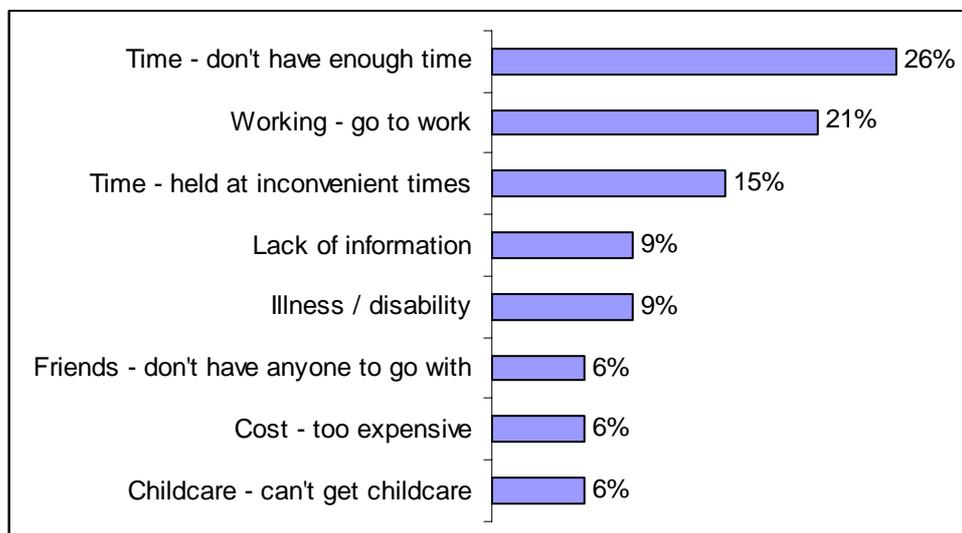


It is clear that the main source of information is material generated directly by Sure Start.

Parents and carers were asked if there is anything else Sure Start should be doing. The majority say that there is nothing else and that they recognise the good work already being done, but amongst the suggestions are providing safe play areas and improving the parks, providing more creche and play groups (both to support working parents but also as an opportunity for networking with other child carers), requests for similar services for the over-5s, and more publicity and information on what is available (including promotion of those services aimed directly at parents).

Finally, parents/carers were asked if there is anything that puts them off or prevents them from using the activities offered by Sure Start. Almost seven out of ten parents/carers (68%) say there are no barriers. For the remainder, the main barriers are shown in the following chart:

Sure Start chart 5:
Is there anything that puts you off or prevents you from using the activities offered by Sure Start?
(Base = those identifying a barrier, 34)



Time is the major barrier to take up of services. Half of those parents/carers who identified a barrier (50%) mention that either the times are inconvenient, they don't have enough time, or they cannot partake because their time is taken up with their work (21% of the parents/carers are in employment and 48% have other children of school age).

Although not statistically significant, it may be worth noting that one of the five men interviewed mentioned that the lack of other men participating put him off attending groups.

As a final reflection on the response to Sure Start (and even allowing for the impact of the incentive offered), it is extremely encouraging that three quarters of all respondents (75%) would be interested in taking part in discussion groups to explore further the current impact of Sure Start and any opportunities for improvements.