

# **Baseline Satisfaction Survey**

## **1. Methodological Information**

Questionnaires were conducted in 120 households across the catchment area (approx 20% of eligible families) on a variety of aspects of life with a young family, between January and March 2003.

The questionnaire was developed, piloted and refined by a group of parents, with the help of a research consultant and a market research professional, during autumn 2002. The final version was designed to be either filled in by the respondent on their own or by the parent researcher in the form of a question and answer session. Parent researchers were asked to seek out families who were not users of Sure Start services so that

- We could ascertain the views of people prior to the arrival of Sure Start in their lives
- Respondents could also be introduced to Sure Start and encouraged to attend sessions by a near neighbour, rather than by a professional. This is indicative of the approach developed during our consultation phase of encouraging participation at all levels, and wherever possible, “killing two birds with one stone”.

We considered the ethics of having people approach other parents in this way at the nursery gate or baby clinic etc, we also “paired up” parent researchers who were undertaking questionnaires in strangers homes.

Questions were mainly closed, with some open ended and took around 20 minutes to complete. Parent researchers were “paid” with vouchers in recognition of them giving their time. A copy of the questionnaire and the report are attached.

## **Findings and policy recommendations**

The survey findings and recommendations are contained in the body of the report.

Key findings are as follows:

- The data set contains interviews with 122 families with 147 children under 4 interviewed in the area representing 23.5 per cent of all families with children under four living in the area and 17 per cent of all children under 4
- The local parents who conducted the survey were asked to target families who were most likely to be unknown to Sure Start services. There was no checking procedure for this, but it is generally agreed that the majority of respondents were not users of Sure Start services.
- 87.4 per cent of respondents were white or white other

- 63 per cent of respondents have relatives living in the area; 90 per cent have friend living in the area
- 30 respondents were in work of which 20 use relative / partner or friend as child carers
- 9 respondents were pregnant – none under 20 years of age; four smoked; eight already have children; 6 were planning to breast or breast & / bottle feed their babies; 7 were seeing a midwife
- Using milk by using tokens is hampered by the distance needed to travel to the health centre
- The majority of families were one or two children – however 10 per cent had 6 or more children
- Ten respondents had children with special needs or which five were receiving support and a further four would like additional support
- The three most cited important aspects of childcare were safety, children having fun and friendly people
- The overall satisfaction levels of services was high:
  - 60.2% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with services they use
  - Satisfaction levels with bus services are extremely low – an important facility for families living on the outskirts of a city and having to access services and facilities across the City.
- Primary and community health care services – overall there is a high satisfaction level with these services
- Support for families and parents – overall there is a low satisfaction level with these services – with the exception of the local community centres where satisfaction is high but usage relatively low
- Early learning, play and childcare services – overall satisfaction levels are high but some usage levels are low which probably reflect their recent establishment
  - Parks are scored low by 46% of respondents
- Overall there is a sense of community with people being positive about living in the area.
  - However, joy riders, crime and teenagers hanging about are of a concern to many (if not most) of those surveyed. The tackling of criminal activity in the area would result in an improved quality of life for most families and a greater degree of happiness about living in the area.

## **Next Stages**

This was a survey designed to establish a base against which Sure Start activity can be measured.

We have begun work on a follow up survey which will concentrate specifically on health services. This forms part of a broader piece of evaluation of health provision, details of which are attached.

The new survey will be conducted during late spring/summer 2004 and arise to reach 100 households (a one in two sample of families who have received equipment under our child safety scheme).

It will look at:

- Families views of the safety scheme
- Families' wider views of health provisions in the area, which will inform our developing children's health centre services.

It will also provide us with:

- Health data which is still missing or appears unreliable eg. On smoking, breast feeding.
- Information about whether families who have used the child safety scheme know about Sure Start generally, and whether they use other services.

This survey is again being developed, piloted and administered by parents, with the help of a consultant. It will be written up in Autumn 2003.