

**COMMUNITY SATISFACTION
SURVEY 2004**

**RESEARCH REPORT PREPARED FOR
SURE START BOLTON &
GOLDTHORPE**

APRIL 2004

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Appendix One - The Questionnaire

A1 INTRODUCTION

This report details the findings of a community satisfaction survey carried out by McCallum Layton on behalf of the Sure Start programme in Bolton & Goldthorpe, in early 2004.

A1.1 Background And Objectives

An initial baseline measurement of satisfaction with services for young children among local parents is to be collected early on in the operation of each Sure Start programme. A follow-up measurement is then to be collected 3 years later, to track progress. This is a formal local evaluation requirement of the National Sure Start Unit.

The survey objectives are, on the one hand, to collect certain baseline statistics required by the Unit, eg:

- μ Parents' perceptions of the quality of local services for young children
- μ The proportion of parents who report reading to their children regularly

and on the other, to collect information to allow the programme to measure the impact that Sure Start is having in the area.

A1.2 Method And Sample

The survey was carried out by means of face to face interviews with parents of under 4's who live in Bolton and Goldthorpe. Interviews were conducted by members of McCallum Layton's professional market research fieldforce, in March 2004.

The bulk of the interviewing took place out and about in the community - outside nurseries and primary schools, shops, GP surgeries etc, and on the street in between - and therefore gives us a random sample of local parents/carers. We planned to conduct 100 interviews in this way; in the event, 106 were achieved.

In addition to this random sampling, the programme wished specifically to canvas the views of a number of families identified as 'hard to reach'. A list of 56 addresses believed to fall into this category was provided by the programme, and a door-knocking approach was to be used to achieve up to a further 20 interviews with these. In fact, 15 of the respondents interviewed in the random street sample turned out to live at these addresses. A further 16 interviews were carried out door to door among the remaining addresses.

The total number of interviews carried out, then, was 122. This equates to around 20% of the programme's target client group.

The charts and tables in this report are based on the random sample of 106, as these provide representative statistics for the community (and for the sake of comparability in future). A separate analysis has also been done, however, of the total 31 respondents classified as hard to reach – wherever their views and experiences differ from the random sample, this is commented on in the text. Comparisons drawn between other sub-groups in the sample (such as age group, whether or not they are in paid employment etc) are based on the total of 122 interviews.

The research was introduced as being 'a survey being carried out in the area about services for young children' – no mention of Sure Start was made at the outset, in order that awareness of the programme could be measured during the interview itself. A copy of the questionnaire used can be found in the appendix to this report.

A2 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary Of The Key Findings

The main survey sample represents an unbiased cross-section of parents of children aged under 4 in Bolton and Goldthorpe. Respondents are interviewed at random outside schools, shops, and just walking about in the area. The following two key findings will therefore be particularly useful for the programme:

- μ 79% of parents of under 4's were aware of Sure Start
- μ 26% of all parents of under 4's have used or taken part in any Sure Start services/activities

54% of respondents only have children in the age range being targeted by Sure Start. Around half of parents, then, also have older children. 24%, though, are very new parents, having only a child aged one or under.

A fifth of respondents, 20%, have been living in the area for 2 years or less.

According to these results, just under half of children aged under 4 (47%) are living in a household where there is no adult in paid employment, and a third, 35%, are living with a single parent.

46% of parents are making use of nursery/playgroup facilities (most commonly Goldthorpe school and the Salvation Army hall), and 36% attend parent and toddler groups (mostly the Salvation Army hall).

85% said that they read to their under 4's on a regular basis. 29% are making use of book library facilities (Goldthorpe, in most cases).

The main health centres/GP practices being used by this sample are 35 and 96 Barnsley Road in Goldthorpe, Furlong Road in Bolton and Doncaster Road in Rotherham, but there are a great many others also being used by respondents.

36% of respondents have any children at primary school, the main ones among this sample being Goldthorpe, Dearne Highgate and Dearne Carrfield.

Two thirds of respondents, 67%, expressed satisfaction with the area in general as a place to bring up children; 29% were dissatisfied. The reasons given by those expressing dissatisfaction generally related to perceptions of drug use, crime and anti-social behaviour, plus a lack of safe places for children to play and things for them to do.

Concerning local services for young children, 61% expressed satisfaction overall, and 35% were dissatisfied. 9% said that they feel things are better for children in the area now compared to a year ago, but 29% said worse.

Satisfaction levels with specific types of service and facility locally (GP services, nurseries, schools, support services etc) were generally reasonably high. The exception was outdoor play areas - 80% expressed dissatisfaction with local provision. Few respondents indicated satisfaction or dissatisfaction either way with speech and language support.

When asked what they would like to see improved in the area, in the context of services and facilities for young children, by far the most common response focused on outdoor play. Other themes concerned raising the level of safety and cleanliness in the area, together with providing more facilities for older children (to reduce the impact that anti-social behaviour can have on younger ones) and action to tackle crime.

As noted above, the majority of respondents have heard of Sure Start. Moreover, when asked what Sure Start is set up to do, most are able to give answers that reflect the true nature and activities of the initiative.

The most common means by which respondents first came to know of Sure Start is being told about the programme by a health visitor or midwife. Otherwise it has often been via the nurseries/playgroups, or word of mouth from another parent.

26% of all respondents have accessed Sure Start services/activities, and a further 8% have been contacted by the programme. If these are added to the users, then the total proportion of respondents that the programme can be said to be personally in touch with is 34%. A further 12% have at least seen information about the programme.

Of those who know about Sure Start but have not yet used it, 67% said they might do so in future. Reasons given for not having made use of the programme yet were most commonly to do with not knowing enough about it, not having time, or not feeling the need.

53% of all respondents said that they have received a Bookstart bag.

The programme has identified a number of families as 'hard to reach', and hence needing a specific, targeted approach to ensure they know about and are able to access any services required. These look particularly likely to be new parents, and not in paid employment.

This group is less likely than the rest to be making use of nursery/playgroup facilities, and less likely to be reading to their under 4's and using library services. They are also less satisfied with the area as a place to bring up children, and less satisfied overall with services for young children in the area.

The programme's efforts to engage these families appear to have been successful – 87% have heard of Sure Start, and 42% have used services or activities, both of which figures are higher than the equivalent results among the general population.

Conclusions

A relatively high proportion of this community has negative perceptions of the area and of the services and facilities available to them and their young children. There are frequent complaints that there is nowhere clean and safe for children to play out, and 'nothing for them to do'. The Sure Start programme therefore has its work cut out in trying to change this around and provide positive experiences for families in the area.

The early measurements taken in this survey show that the programme has made a good start, with awareness and usage figures developing well. A number of issues are raised by these results, though, that the programme will wish to consider, going forward. Some of the key ones, in our view, are:

- μ Whatever the actual extent of drug misuse, crime and anti-social behaviour is in the area, parents perceive these to be real problems, and in many cases, getting worse. This factor can depress confidence, and create or increase a sense of isolation, which can make it all the harder for services to engage those most in need of them. What can the Sure Start programme do, in partnership with others, to improve this situation?
- μ Half of the young children in the area are living in households where there is no adult in paid employment. Can the programme encourage an improvement in training and work opportunities locally?

- μ Parents making use of nurseries, playgroups and parent and toddler groups think highly of these, but some of those who are not accessing these services feel that provision is poor. Are there sufficient facilities, accessible to the whole community?
- μ Few parents were able to express any opinion on speech and language support. Are services in this field sufficiently accessible?
- μ Perceptions of facilities and opportunities for outdoor play locally are very poor. What can be done to improve provision here?

B1 SAMPLE PROFILE

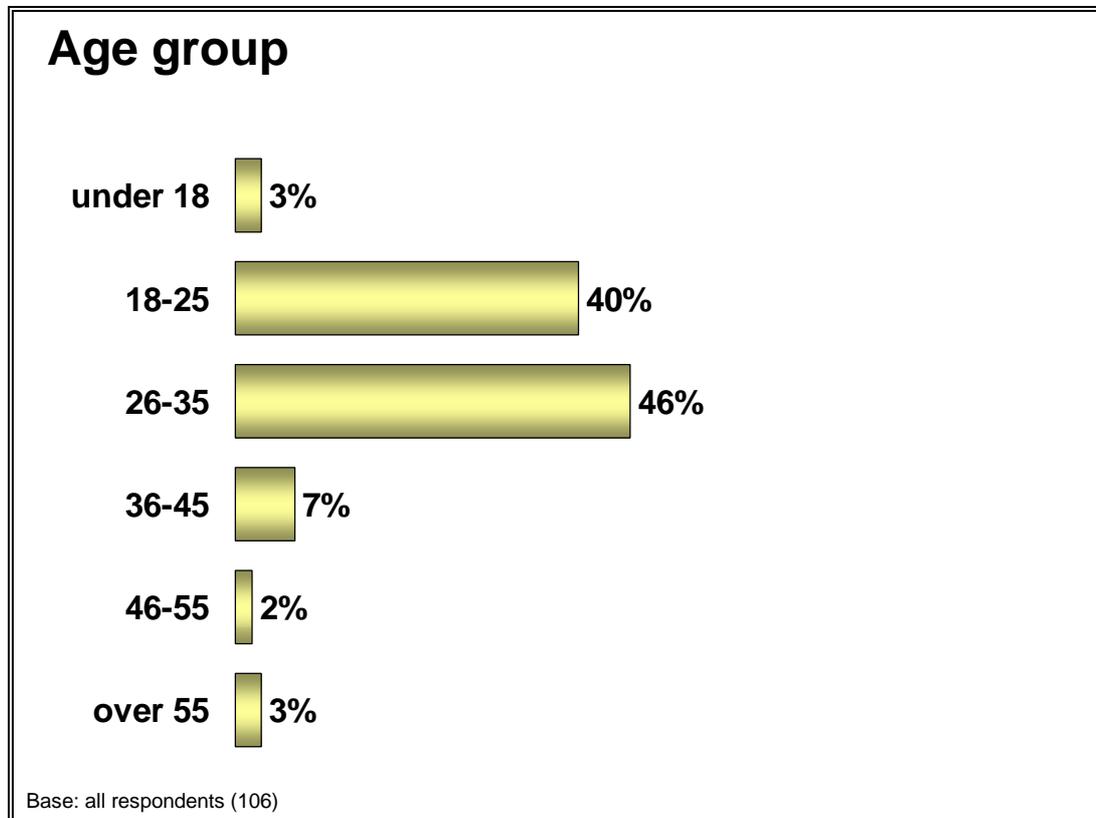
B1.1 Gender

The majority of respondents taking part in this survey (102 out of the representative 106) were female, but 4% were a male parent, guardian or carer.

3% of the 31 'hard to reach' respondents were male.

B1.2 Age

Most respondents (86%) were aged between 18 and 35, although 12% were older than this. Three individuals were aged under 18.



B1.3 Profile Of The Children

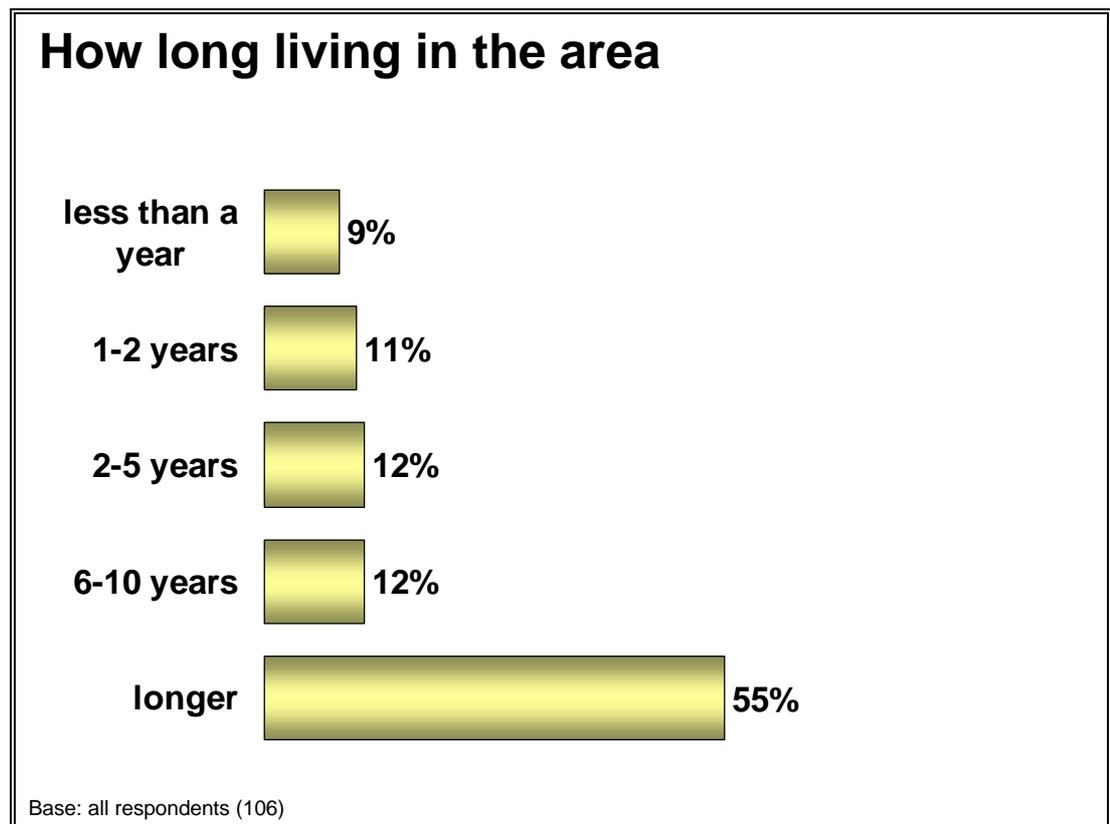
Respondents were asked for the age(s) of all their children. In total, these 106 respondents have 189 children (mean average 1.8 each). They have a total of 107 children aged under 4 (mean average 1.0 each).

54% of the sample only have children in the target age range for Sure Start (under 4). However, 46% also have older children - 33% have any 4-7's, 20% have any 8-11's, and 8% have any secondary school age children. 1% have any children aged over 18.

A quarter, 24%, only have a child aged one or under, and hence are very new parents. Among the 'hard to reach' sample, as many as 39% are new parents, by this definition.

B1.4 Length Of Time Living In The Area

All respondents were asked how long they have been living in Bolton or Goldthorpe:

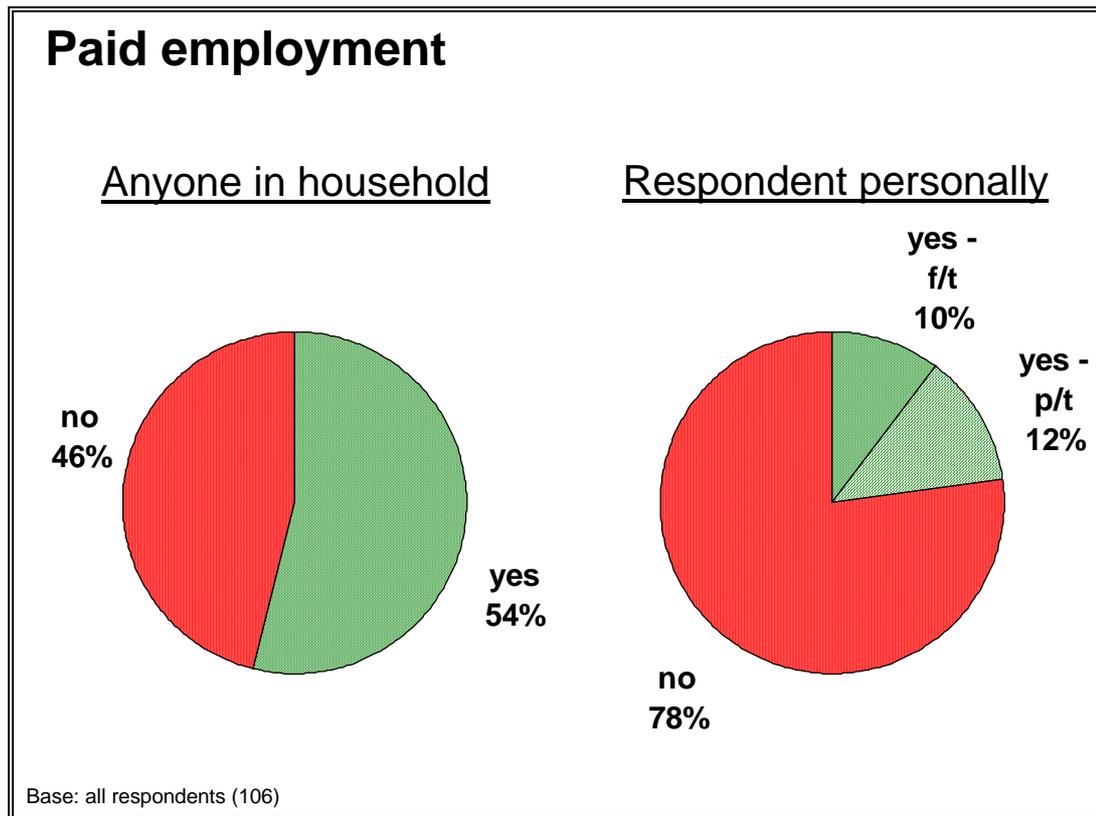


Over half are well established residents, having lived in the area for longer than 10 years. A tenth are very new to the area, having moved in within the last year.

There is no strong correlation between age and how long people have been living in the area, but it may be worth noting that half of those who have moved into the area in the last two years are aged up to 25.

B1.5 Employment

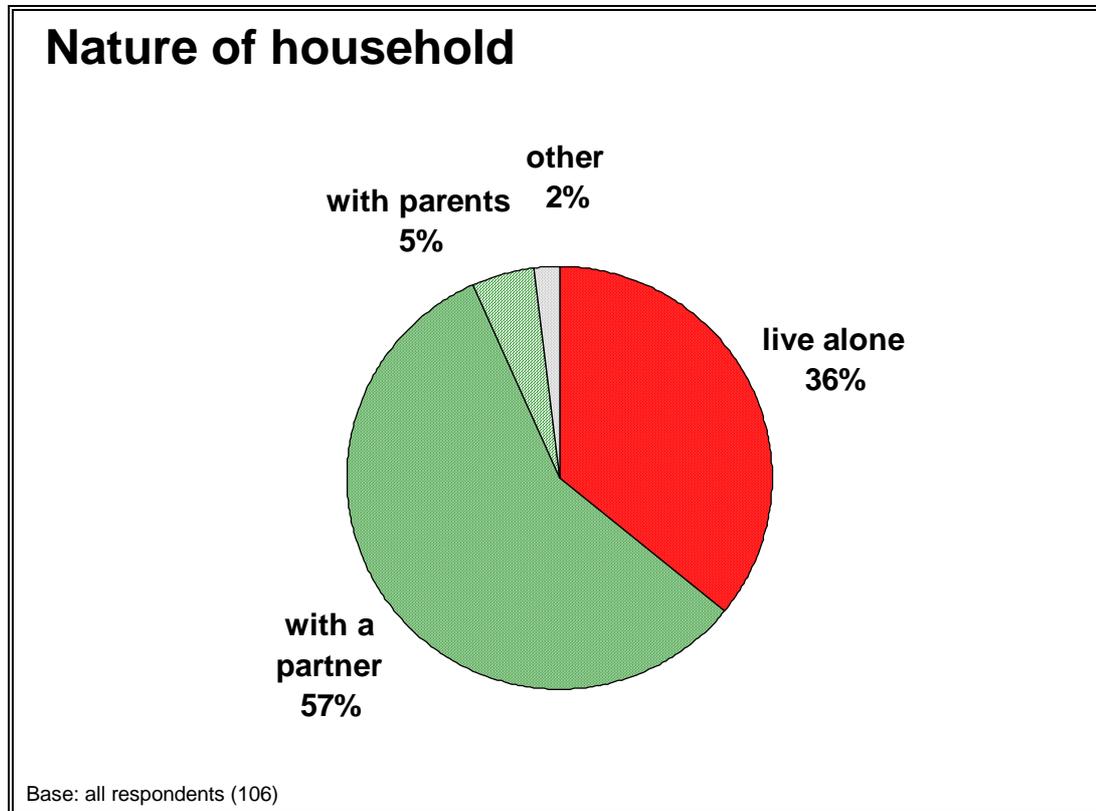
All respondents were asked if there are any adult(s) in their household in paid employment, and if so, whether they personally are in paid employment, either full-time or part-time:



54% of respondents, and 53% of the 107 children under 4 that are looked after by this sample, are in households where there is at least one adult in paid employment. Among the hard to reach sample, however, only 37% of their under 4's are in a household where there is anyone in paid employment.

B1.6 Single Parents

Respondents were asked whether they live on their own, with a partner, with their parents etc:



Just over a third of the representative sample, 36%, said they are living on their own. These households contain 35% of the under 4's. Among the hard to reach sample, these figures were slightly lower, at 29%.

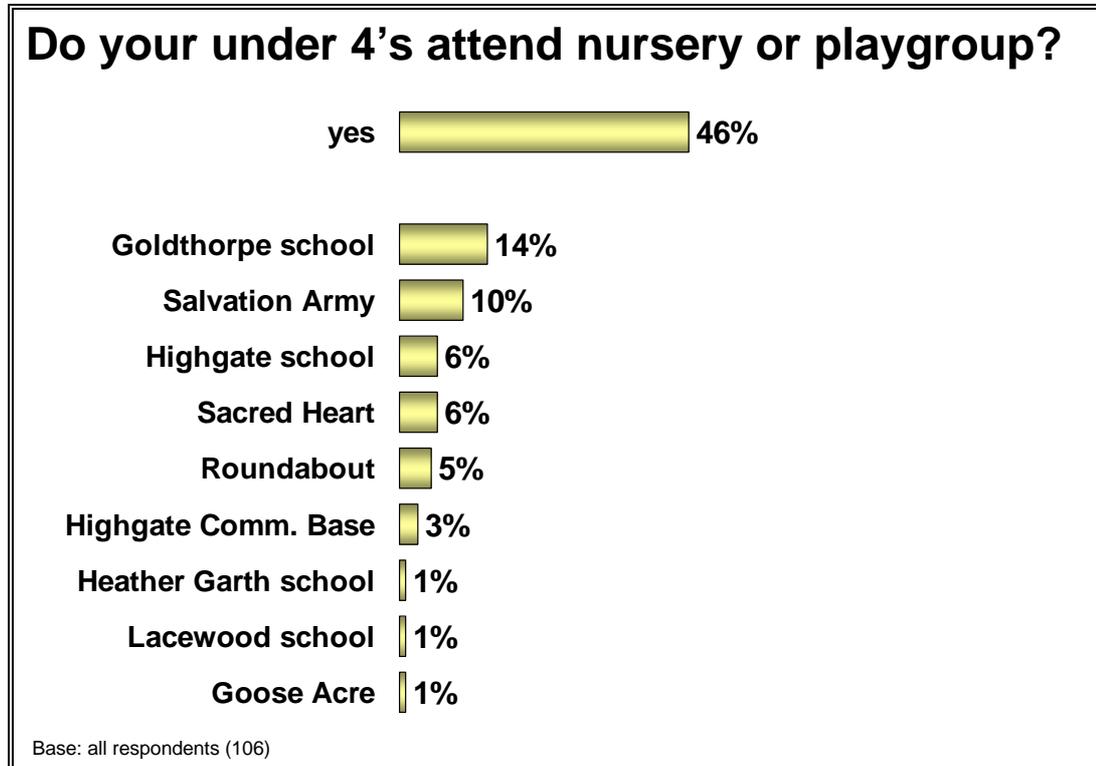
The age group least likely to be living on their own was the 26-35 year olds. Below this, 47% of respondents were lone parents, and 40% above.

Of those living on their own, 12% are in paid employment. 26% of them have moved into the area within the last 2 years.

B2 USAGE OF FACILITIES

B2.1 Nursery/Playgroup Usage

About half of respondents said that their under 4's attend nursery or playgroup.



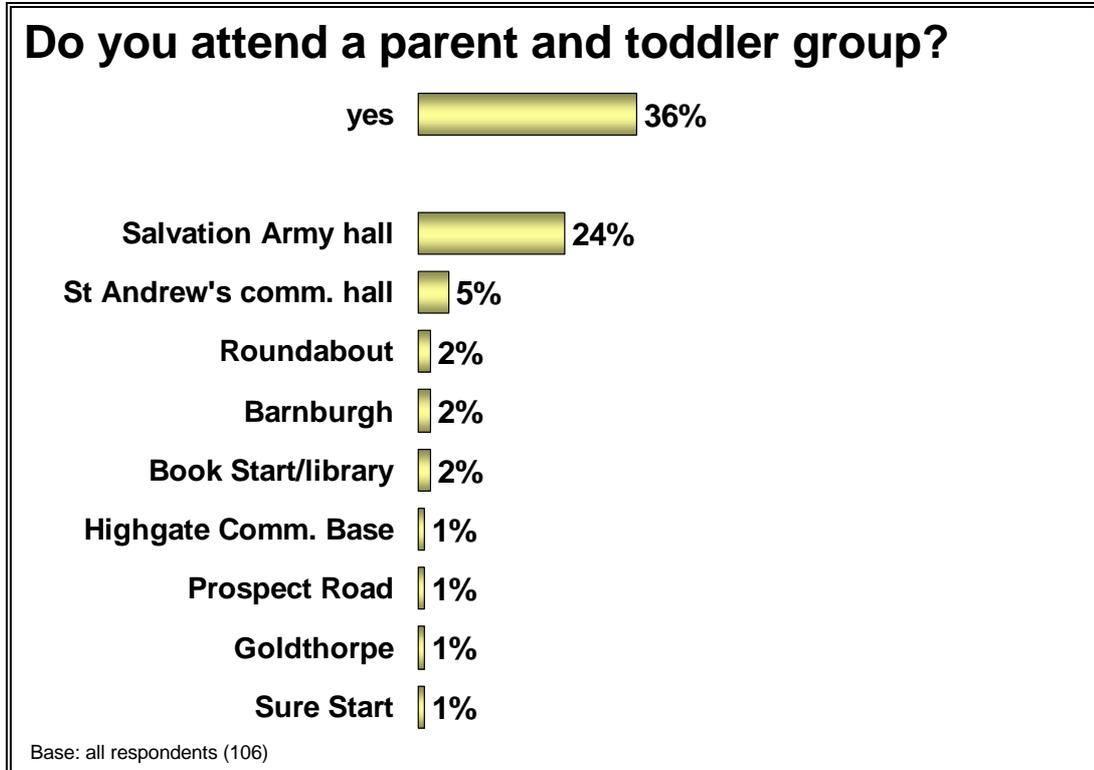
The facilities being used most commonly are Goldthorpe school and the Salvation Army nursery.

Those in paid employment are rather more likely (at 54%) than those who are not (38%) to be using nurseries and playgroups.

Among the 'hard to reach' sample, just 26% are making use of nursery/playgroup facilities.

B2.2 Parent & Toddler Group Usage

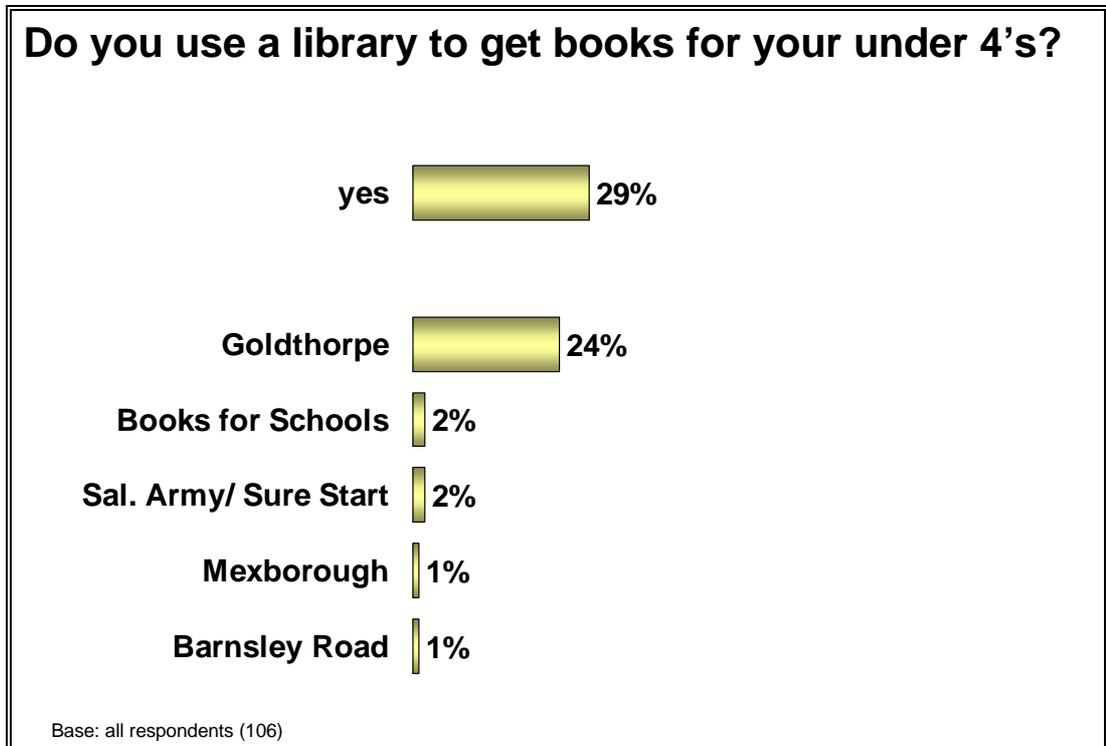
About a third of respondents said that they attend any parent and toddler group:



Likelihood of attending parent and toddler groups increases with the length of time people have been living in the area. 45% of those who have been here longer than 10 years attend, compared to just 20% of those who have moved in within the last 2 years.

B2.3 Library Usage

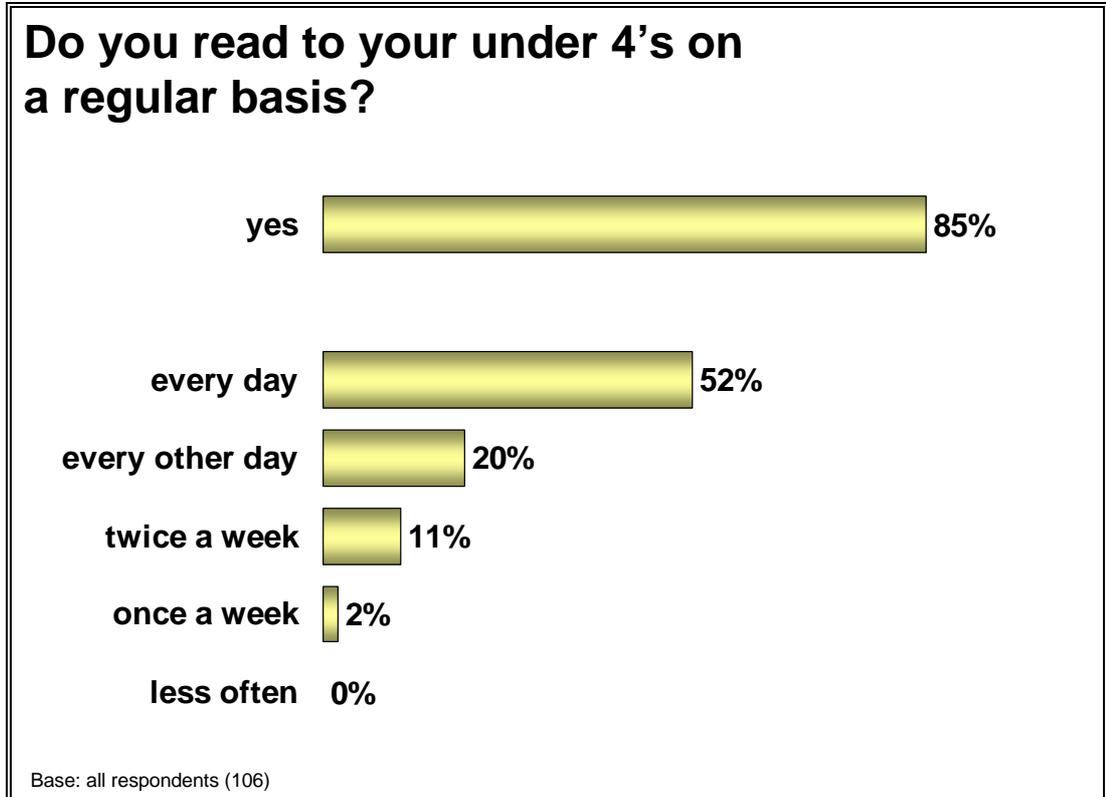
Just over a quarter use any library facilities to get books for their under 4's:



Just 10% of the 'hard to reach' sample said they use a library.

B2.4 Reading Activity

Respondents were asked if they, or their partner if applicable, read to their under 4(s) on a regular basis, and if so, how often:

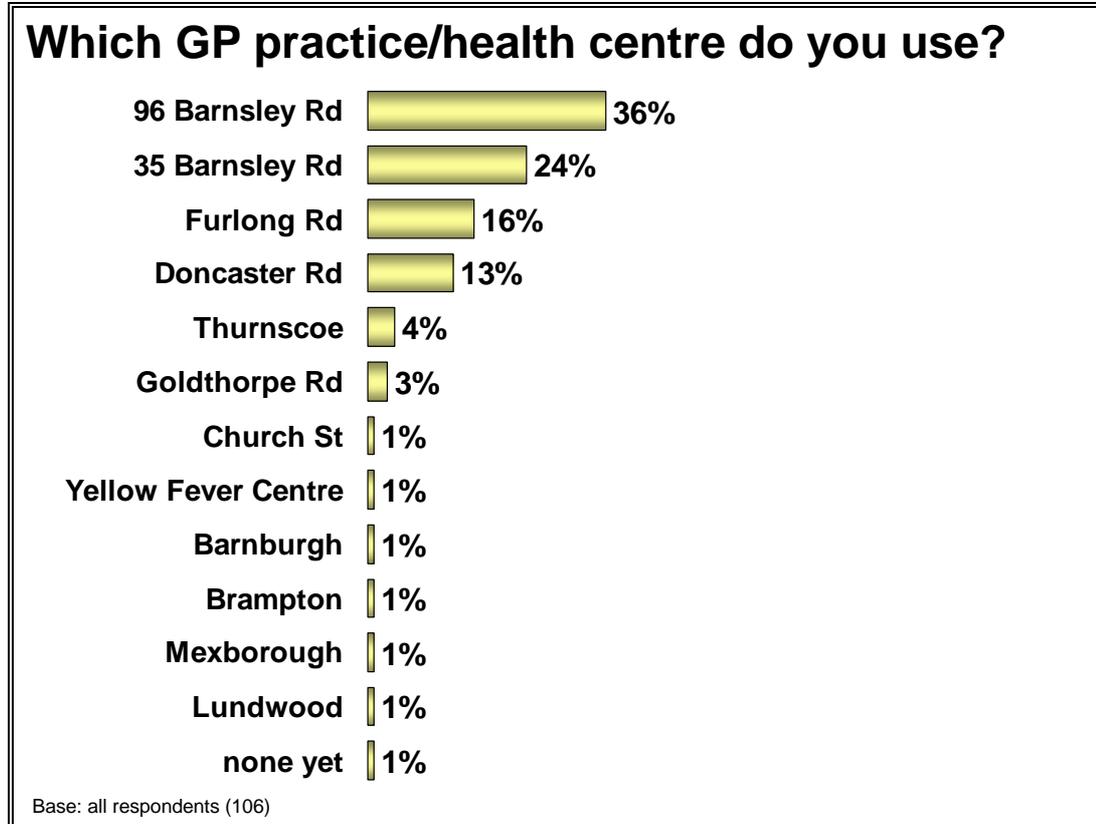


The majority said they do, every day or every other day.

Among the 'hard to reach' respondents, the proportion was rather lower, with 65% saying they read to their child(ren) regularly.

B2.5 Health Centre/Surgery Usage

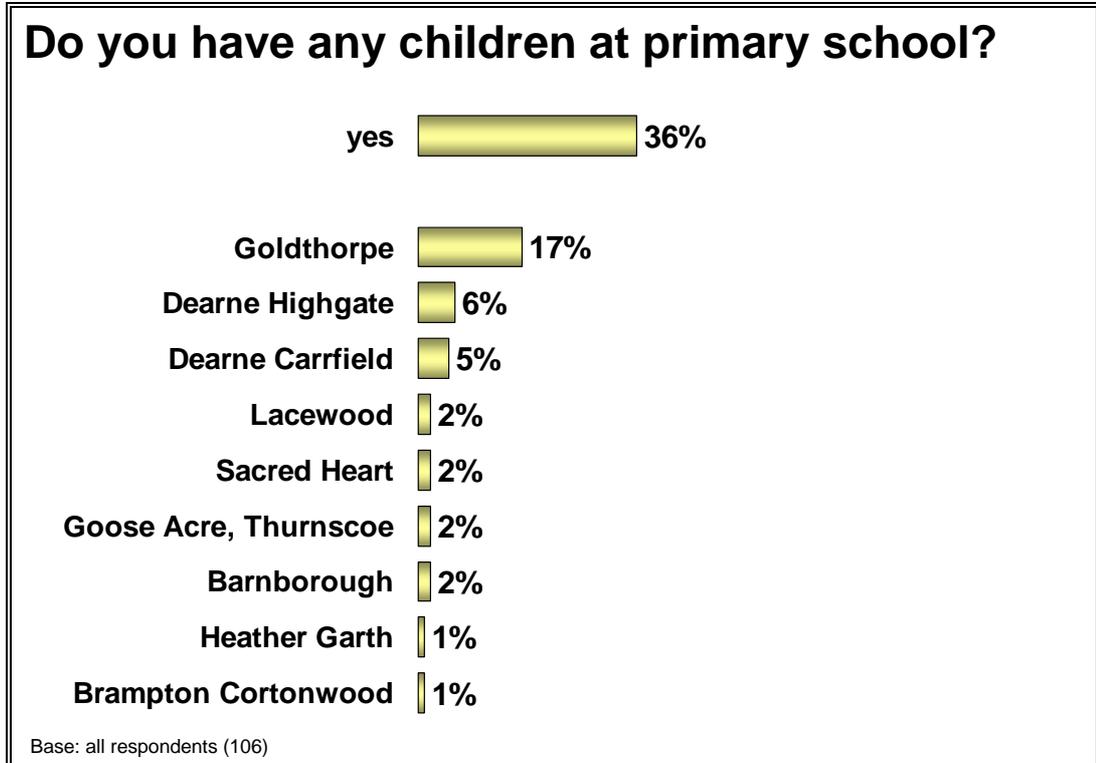
Respondents were asked which GP practice or Health Centre they use:



Four practices emerged as key ones for the community, but some parents are making use of surgeries out of area.

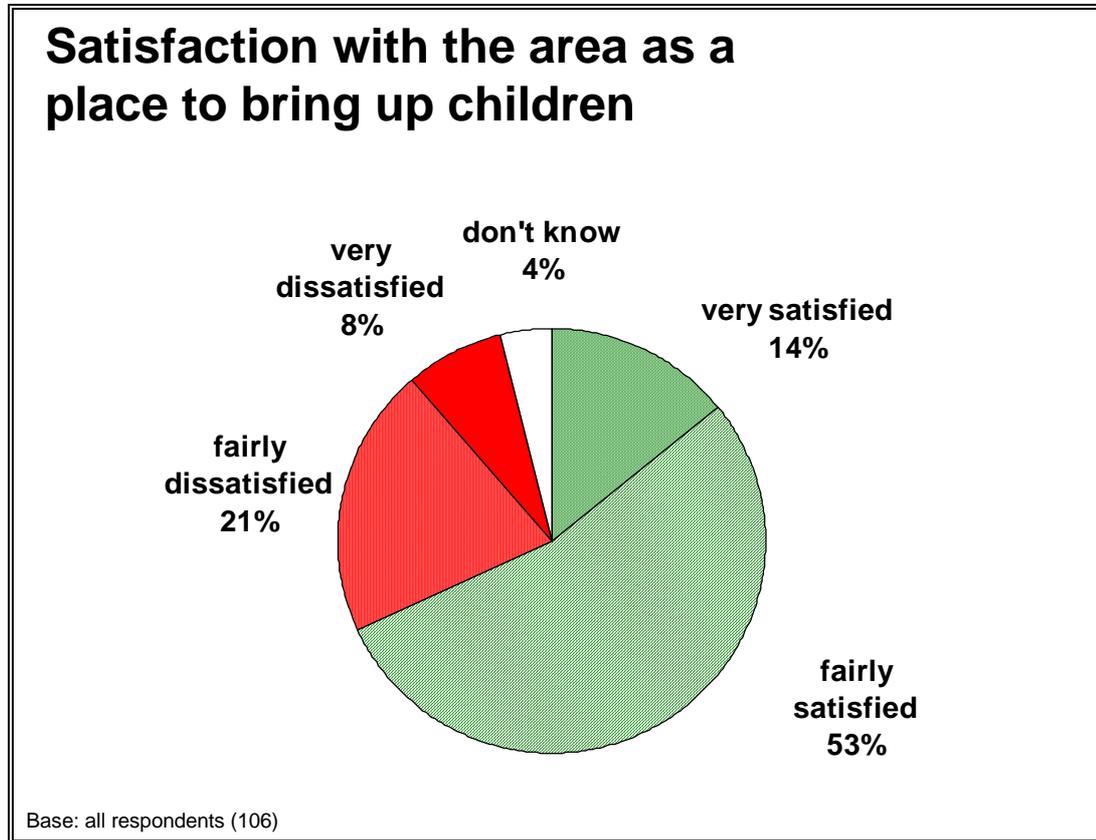
B2.6 Primary School Usage

Respondents were then asked if they have any children at primary school, and if so, which one:



B3 IEWS ON THE AREA**B3.1** Satisfaction With The Area

All respondents were asked how satisfied they are with the area, as a place to bring up their children.



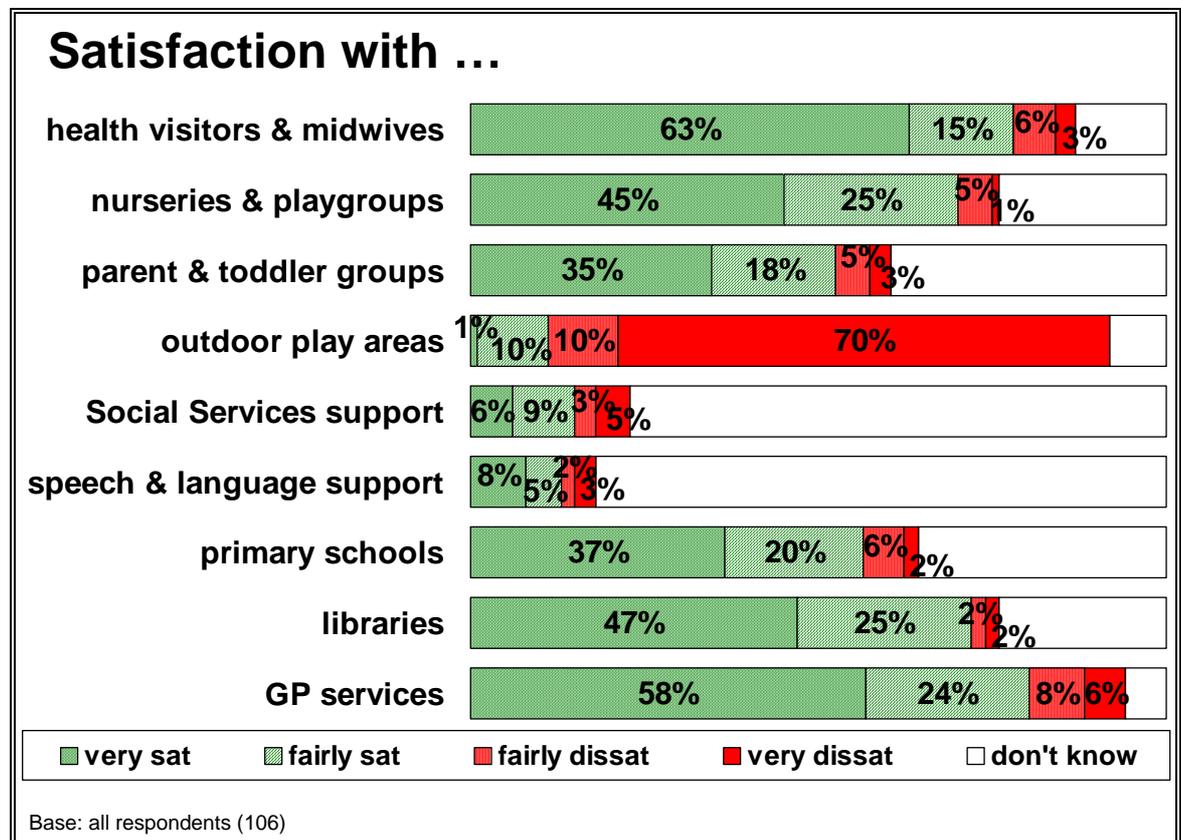
The balance of response to this was positive on the whole. However, 29% indicated they are dissatisfied with the area. The proportion dissatisfied was even higher among the 'hard to reach' sample, at 55%.

These were then asked why they are not satisfied with the area (the figures shown are the number of respondents making each type of comment):

<i>Base: dissatisfied with area</i>	(30)
	No.
Drugs	15
No parks/play areas	9
Nothing for children to do	8
Not a safe area to live	5
Vandalism	5
Streets untidy	4
Gangs hanging around	4
Children misbehaving	2
Parks need improving	2
Schools need improving	2
Nowhere to take toddlers (groups etc)	2
Area is rough	1
Shops need improving	1
Joy riders	1
Robbery/theft	1
Adult behaviour/attitudes	1
Heather Garth trying to ban prams inside	1

B3.2 Satisfaction With Services For Young Children – Specific Services

Respondents were then read a number of types of facility and service, and asked for each one, how satisfied or dissatisfied they are with what is available for young children in this area:



While some respondents could not comment on some of the services, the bulk of the answers given were positive.

The exception to this pattern concerns outdoor play areas, where the great majority said they are dissatisfied.

Of the 8 individuals indicating dissatisfaction with nurseries/playgroups, 5 are not actually using such facilities at the moment. This can either mean that their perceptions of provision are out of date, or that they are not making use of what is available because they are not happy with, or cannot access, provision in the area. Similarly, of the 9 respondents dissatisfied with parent and toddler groups, 7 are not using any such groups currently; and 4 of the 6 dissatisfied with library provision are non-users.

The nurseries/playgroups being used most commonly were Goldthorpe school and the Salvation Army – 88% of the 16 Goldthorpe users said they are satisfied with nursery/playgroup provision in the area, and 100% of the 11 Salvation Army users.

Again 100% of the 29 Salvation Army parent and toddler group users said they are satisfied with parent and toddler provision in the area.

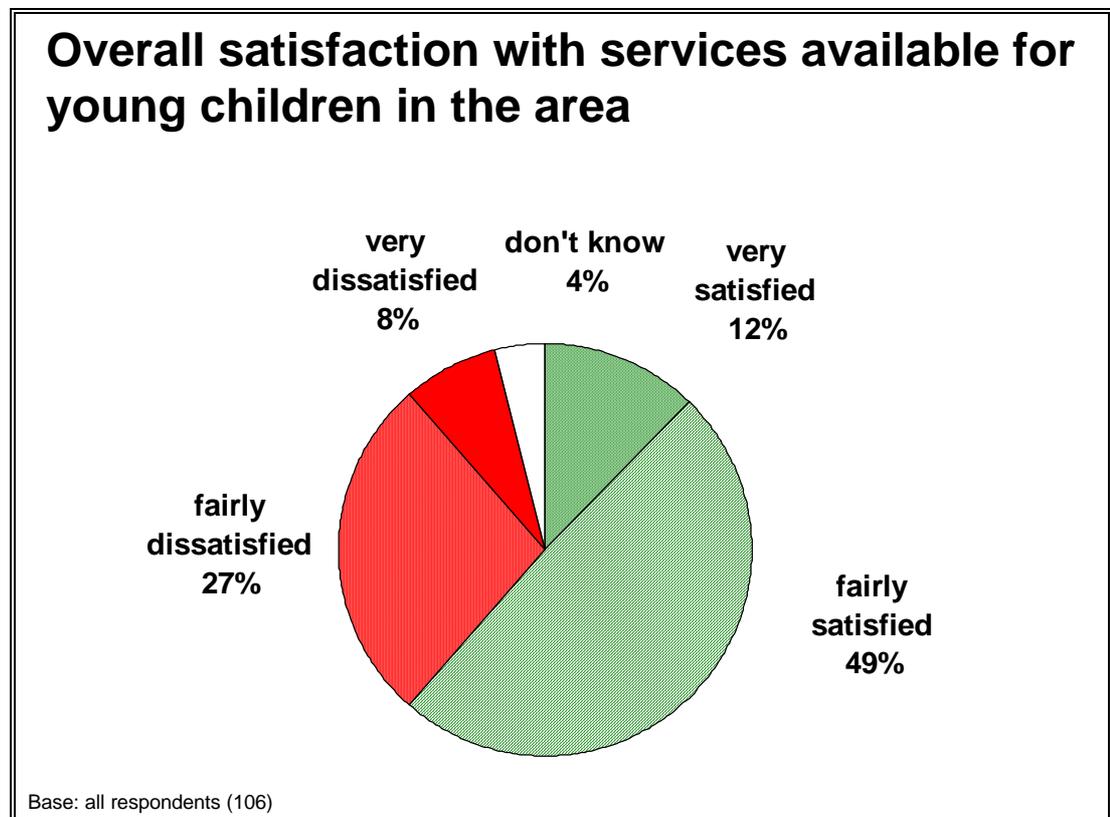
Four parents with any children currently at primary school said they are dissatisfied with the primary schools in the area – these are using 4 different schools, so there is no pattern to disaffection on this score.

96% of the 25 Goldthorpe library users indicated satisfaction with library services locally.

77% of respondents could not answer as far as Social Services support was concerned, and 82% for speech and language support. As far as the latter service goes, this may point to a gap in provision.

B3.3 Satisfaction With Services For Young Children – Overall

When asked how satisfied they are overall with services available for young children in this area, respondents answered as follows:



61% reported satisfaction overall with services for young children locally. 35% were dissatisfied.

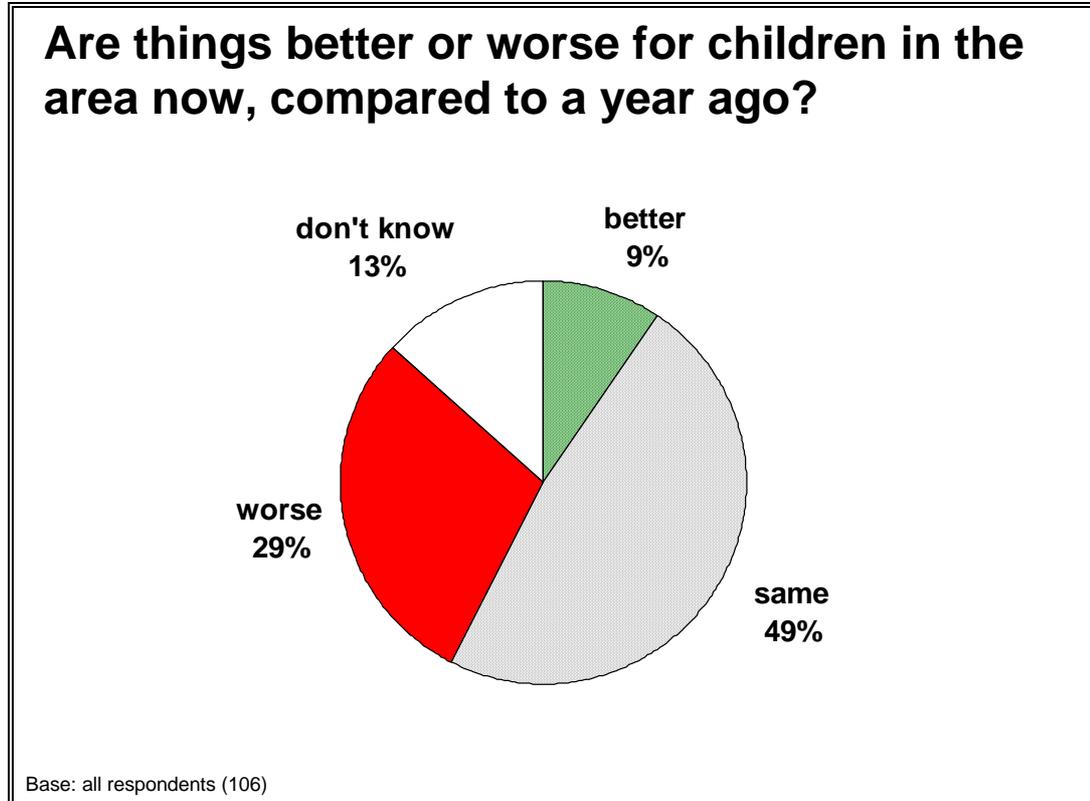
The proportion of 'hard to reach' respondents dissatisfied was 68%.

All respondents were then asked what they would like to see improved, if anything. The full range of answers given is shown in the following table (the figures are percentages):

<i>Base: all respondents</i>	(106)
	%
Any improvements suggested	85
Nothing/don't know	15
<u>Improvements</u>	
More/better outdoor play areas	68
Improve safety in the area (security, cameras etc)	17
Clean up streets/play areas	12
More things to do generally	7
More nurseries/nursery places	6
More activities/trips	6
Youth clubs for older children	6
Get drugs off the streets	5
Tackle vandalism/crime	5
More police on the streets	4
Improve doctors' service/improve appointment system	4
More/better parent and toddler groups	4
More for toddlers to do	3
Wardens to watch parks/schools	2
More advice/support for parents	1
More/better advice from GPs	1
Improve midwife service	1
Library service	1
An indoor play area	1
Improve public toilets	1
Make roads safer/stop the joyriders	1
Help in finding employment	1
Improve safety in schools	1

B3.4 Compared To A Year Ago

All respondents were then asked if they thought things are any better or worse for young children in the area now, compared to a year ago:



Three times as many thought things are getting worse, as better.

Those saying they felt things are either better or worse were asked in what way. Those who thought 'better' made the following comments (figures are the number of respondents making each comment):

<i>Base: things better now</i>	(10) No.
New parks/parks being improved	3
More things to do	2
More/better nurseries/playgroups	2
Sure Start's involvement	1
Street wardens	1
More facilities for younger children	1
Shops have improved	1
Don't know	1

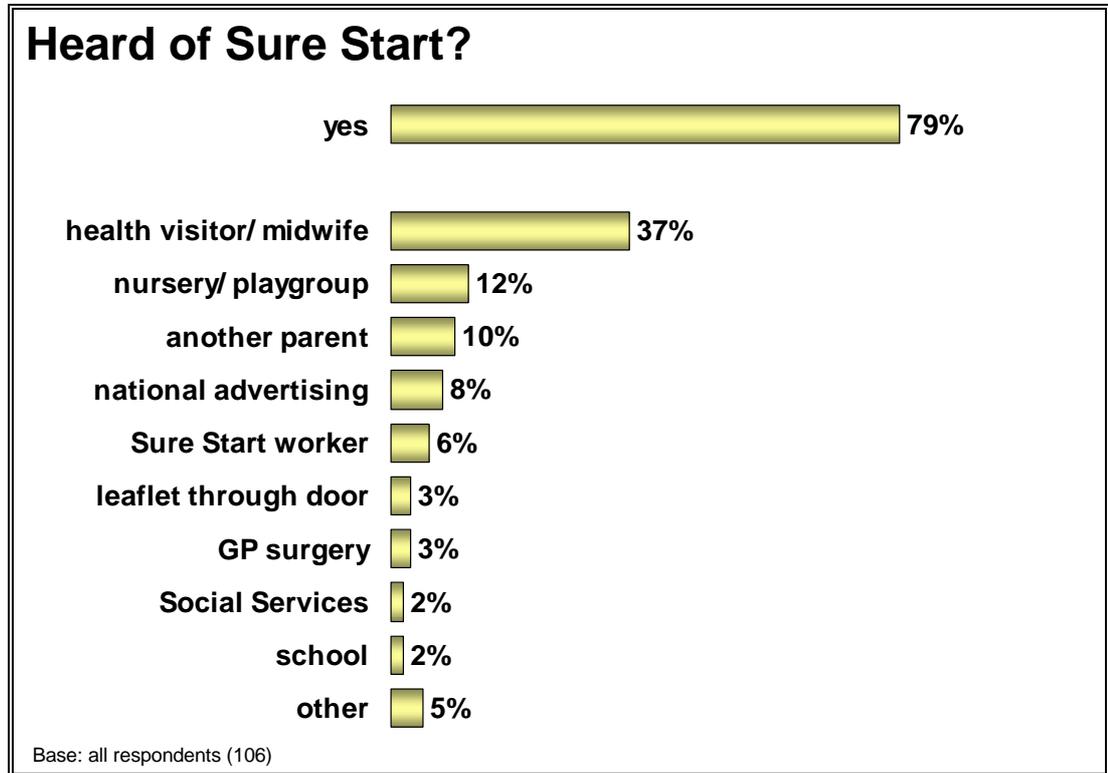
The 31 respondents who said they thought things are worse now gave the following reasons for their view (the figures are again numbers of respondents):

<i>Base: things worse now</i>	(31)
	No.
Vandalism	10
Playgrounds/parks	10
Nothing for children to do	8
Drugs	6
Children's behaviour/attitudes	4
Gangs hanging around	4
Untidiness of the area	2
Adults' behaviour/attitudes	1
The area in general	1
Joyriders	1
Road safety (lights, crossings etc)	1
Don't know	1

B4 AWARENESS AND USAGE OF SURE START

B4.1 Awareness

All respondents were asked if they had heard of Sure Start, and if so, where they had first heard of it from:



Over three quarters have heard of the initiative, and most of this awareness has been generated locally. Those least likely to have heard of it are those in paid employment (31% of them said they had not).

87% of the 'hard to reach' sample have heard of Sure Start.

Those who had heard of the programme were asked what they thought Sure Start is set up to do (the figures are percentages):

<i>Base: heard of Sure Start</i>	(84)
	%
Any answer given	83
Don't know	17
<u>What is Sure Start set up to do ?</u>	
Helping families	37
Providing support/advice	21
Providing opportunities for young children to play/meet	12
Organise activities/trips	10
Providing opportunities to help adults interact	10
Providing courses/classes	8
Running nurseries/playgroups	7
Helping children generally	7
Giving parents a break	6
Providing more facilities	4
Toy libraries	2
Helping people find employment	2
Helping adults learn	1
Educating children	1
Helping children develop	1
Providing safety equipment	1
Encouraging families to do things together	1

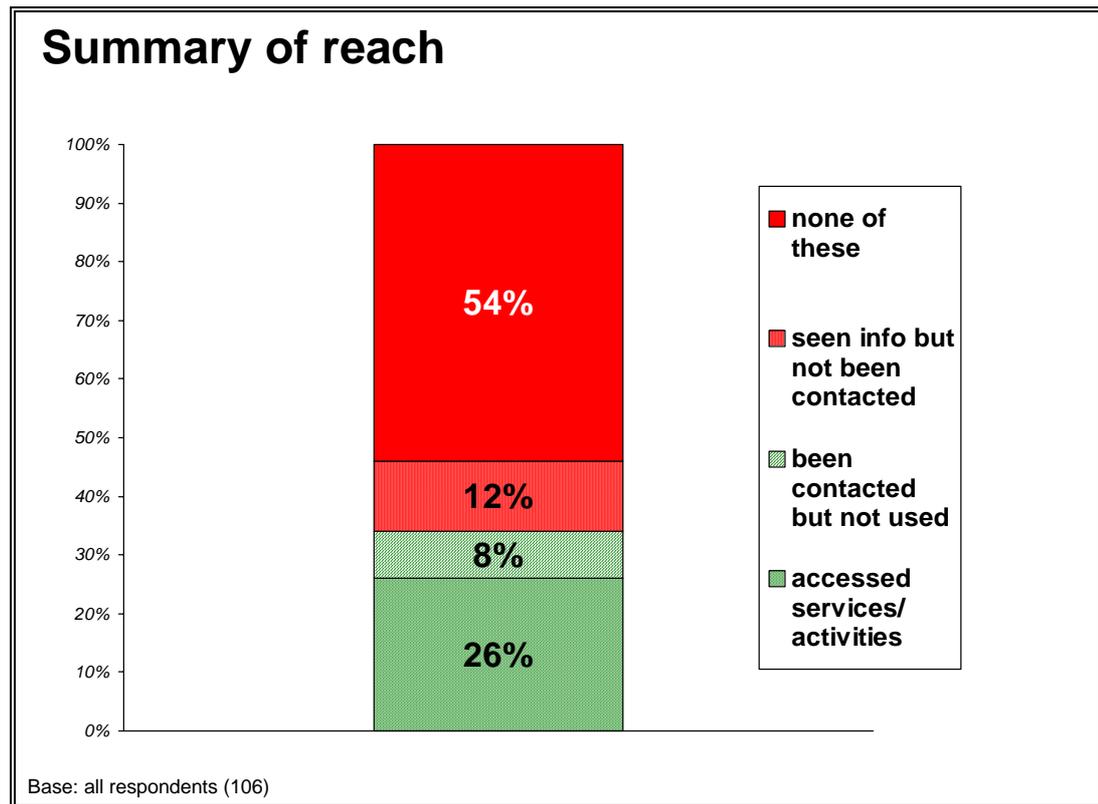
B4.2 Reach

Those who had heard of Sure Start were then asked whether they have used any of the services or taken part in any activities provided by Sure Start in this area. 33% of them said that they have, which equates to 26% of all respondents. 42% of all the 'hard to reach' sample said they have used Sure Start.

Those respondents who had heard of Sure Start but have not used any services/activities, were asked whether anyone has contacted them to tell them about what services and groups are available from Sure Start. 17% of these said they have been contacted.

They were also asked if they have seen any leaflets or other information about what Sure Start does, and 30% of these said that they have.

The chart below, then, summarises the extent of the programme's reach so far, based on all respondents:



Among the 'hard to reach' sample, these summary statistics were as follows:

Base:	(31)
	%
Used	42
Contacted but not used	13
Seen information but not been contacted	3
None of these	42

Respondents who have had any contact or seen any information about Sure Start but not (yet) accessed any service (this equates to 20% of all respondents) were asked why not (the figures are numbers of respondents):

<i>Base: had contact/ information but not used</i>	(21)
	No.
Any reason given	16
No particular reason/don't know	5
<u>Why not accessed Sure Start:</u>	
Don't know much about it	6
Don't need it/not interested	4
Not enough time	3
Children are too young	2
Only just moved here	1

When asked if they might use Sure Start services/activities in future, 67% of these non-users said they might. 10% said not, and 24% could not say.

All respondents were asked whether they have been given a Bookstart bag, and 53% said that they have.