

Cost-effectiveness Report
April 2003 – March 2004

Introduction

All Sure Start local programmes are required by the Sure Start Unit to conduct an analysis of cost-effectiveness of the programme as part of their evaluation. This cost-effectiveness report is the first of its kind to be produced for Sure Start Paignton and will be used to inform the three-year evaluation report (a further Unit requirement). The analysis of cost and work distribution is based upon a regional workshop and Excel spreadsheet delivered by Patrick Myers from the National Evaluation of Sure Start (NESS) team. In addition the work has drawn on guidance from NESS prepared by Pamela Meadows.

As a further activity to display more meaningful results at the level of service provision the team were asked their opinion of how they feel each service contributes to the programme's work to the four Sure Start objective areas:

- Improving social and emotional development
- Improving health
- Improving learning
- Strengthening families and communities

Apportioning costs

Following a team exercise to distribute the programme's efforts amongst the four target areas (social and emotional development, health, learning and strengthening families and communities) the following figures were agreed upon by the Sure Start Paignton team. See Appendix A for a copy of the spreadsheet indicating the full cost of service in each target area. Please note these figures are based on the activities during the financial year of April 2003 – March 2004.

Table 1: Percentage of team's activities by target area for 2003-2004

Target area	Programme's activities and services/%	Costs/£
Social and emotional development	32.4	222753.19
Improving health	26.4	181052.62
Improving learning	32.0	219506.41
Strengthening families and communities	9.2	63328.78

The costs in Table 1 represent true cost of delivery i.e. administration, maintenance and management costs have been included.

Outputs

During the year in question Sure Start Paignton provided the services found listed in Table 2. This list is taken from the Annual Evaluation (2003) for Sure Start Paignton. For an explanation of these services please see Appendix B. Following a further team exercise the team decided the following percentage of the activity's work towards each of the Sure Start objective areas. The percentages shown are the

average figure taken from each individual team members' report. Again this means the figures are only indicative and not precise financial findings.

Table 2: Each session and their work towards objective areas

Service	Social & emotional development	Improving health	Improving learning	Strengthening families & communities
Active tots	30.833	28.333	31.667	9.1667
Antenatal relaxation	19.167	69.167	3.3333	8.3333
Aquanatal	24	66	6	4
Baby Club	34.167	23.333	30	12.5
Bumps to Babes	38	26	24	12
Heuristic Play	35	4.1667	49.167	11.667
Music and Movement	39.167	5	45	10.833
Playscheme	36.667	10.833	28.333	24.167
Post-natal exercises	27	55	11	7
Saturdads	42.5	9.1667	20.833	27.5
Stay and Play	31.667	13.333	32.5	22.5
Stepping Stones	27.5	5.8333	61.667	5
Treasure Baskets	29.167	8.3333	53.333	9.1667
Home visits	23.333	20.833	24.167	31.667
Speech and Language SLA	32.5	15.833	44.167	7.5
Specialist Health Visitor				
SLA	20	46.667	12.5	20.833
	490.67	407.83	477.67	223.83

What this exercise shows is that the team feels that they are achieving proportional outputs in each of the objective areas for the money invested in them. Referring back to Table 1 it is clear that the most money is being invested in improving social and emotional development and improving learning, which is borne out by the work being done at the sessions provided by the programme. Table 2 shows that the most work at the sessions is in these two areas. So at this stage it is possible to say that the programme's outputs reflect its investment in these objective areas.

Outcomes

Unfortunately during this year the programme was not evaluating its activities at a level that could indicate outcomes being achieved. It is hoped that future cost-effectiveness reports will be able to explore this theme further.

Conclusions

The programme has had a very clear focus in the areas of emotional and social development, health and learning. It was identified in the Annual Evaluation (2003) that the fourth target area (strengthening families and communities) was being neglected. This report has borne out the financial implications of that by showing that the programme is indeed investing less in that area. It is important to note that that should not be read as remiss on the part of the programme's work, but rather indicative of their response to the perceived needs of the area. Future reports may see this picture change.

The programme appears to be getting an accurate return for its investment. The objective areas where the most has been invested, are seeing the most perceived work being completed in them.

As previously mentioned this report is unable to take into account outcomes, due to the lack of evaluation conducted in the period that this report relates to.

Appendix A

	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	PERCENTAGE OF PROG EXP	FULL COST OF SERVICE
EXPENDITURE			
Core activities			
Outreach and home visiting	£0.00	0.00000000%	£0.00000000
Support for parents & families	£242,820.00	40.48734208%	£327,016.26
Play, learning & childcare	£151,143.00	25.20129455%	£203,550.86
Community healthcare	£118,480.00	19.75512845%	£159,562.17
Special Needs support	£61,500.00	10.25439230%	£82,824.73
Total spend on core activities	£573,943.00	95.69815738%	£772,954.02
Additional activities			
Action on teenage pregnancy	£4,000.00	0.66695234%	£5,386.97
Relevant crime prevention & reduction	£0.00	0.00000000%	£0.00
Relevant improvements to parents' employability	£16,500.00	2.75117842%	£22,221.27
Building involvement in community	£5,300.00	0.88371186%	£7,137.74
Total spend on additional activities	£25,800.00	4.30184262%	£34,745.98
Total spend on maintenance activities			
Total programme expenditure	£599,743.00	100.00000000%	
Total management & Admin Expenditure	£139,957.00		
Total development & evaluation expenditure	£35,000.00		
Total other expenditure	£33,000.00		
Total overhead expenditure	£207,957.00		
Total expenditure	£807,700.00		£807,700.00

Appendix B

1) Active Tots

A simple introduction to physical activities for toddlers. The sessions are designed to improve their confidence, co-ordination, balance and gross motor skills.

2) Antenatal Relaxation

These sessions are used to provide expectant mothers with skills and tips that they can use during their pregnancy. The methods they learn here help them to relax and sleep at home and reduce their stress during labour and birth.

3) Aquanatal

These sessions are open to all pregnant mothers in Paignton and are run in conjunction with the Paignton midwives, hence why the session is not limited to the Sure Start area. Aquanatal consists of exercises in the supportive environment of a swimming pool, designed to aid the mothers during labour.

4) Baby Club

A one and a half hour session where parents (almost exclusively mothers) bring their new-borns and babies up to twelve months old. Weighing facilities are available so the babies can be weighed regularly and their weight monitored. The mothers are offered a number of 'treats'. For example they regularly receive sessions of reflexology, manicures and head massages. They are actively encouraged to breast feed and most of these treats are offered as an incentive to do so. The staff running the club try to arrange for a midwife or a health visitor to be at each session but obviously this is subject to staffing restrictions. For the babies there is a baby massage service and members of staff are trained to show parents how to massage their babies at home. An information board is always displayed at the entrance/exit to the venue with information on topics such as weaning, sterilising, 'topping and tailing', safety in the home, breast feeding, baby sleeping patterns and teeth (this is not an inclusive list).

5) Bumps to Babes

An informal 'coffee-morning' for those that are pregnant or have a baby under 12 months. The community nursery nurses alongside Sure Start staff run the sessions. These sessions allow the parents to seek advice and information in a more informal setting.

6) Heuristic Play

This follows on from the treasure basket sessions and gives children further opportunity to develop their senses whilst interacting alongside other children. The sessions are split into two groups, crawlers and toddlers.

7) Music and movement

Does exactly what the name suggests! These are fun, loosely structured sessions for children under three year-olds based around singing, playing instruments and moving to music.

8) Playscheme

This was a successful albeit costly exercise for Sure Start Paignton. The programme ran a six-week summer playscheme, a two-week Easter playscheme and two one-week half-term playschemes. The summer playscheme was of special note because the programme became registered with OFSTED for full day-care, meaning working parents could now access it.

9) *Post-natal and Aerobic Exercises*

This session is run on a weekly basis in St Boniface Church. One of the early years support workers with a bank of casual staff runs a crèche while a qualified aerobics instructor/sports therapist takes an exercise session with activities focused on mothers post-natal needs. Due to its nature this session is attended exclusively by mothers and fathers do not access it. These sessions have been designed to increase mothers' self-esteem after pregnancy and offer them a social setting to reduce their isolation.

10) *Saturdads Club*

This session caters for fathers (and other male carers) who can enjoy time with their children in the company of other males. The club has used the promise of bacon sandwiches to try and attract as many fathers as possible!

The group uses elements of the playscheme for the older children and stay and play sessions for the under fours but offer them in an environment that is male-friendly.

11) *Stay and Play*

A two-hour session run four times a week for parents to bring their children up to four years of age. It is a valuable opportunity for parents (carers and other carers) to socialise as isolation is commonly recognised as an issue for parents, especially first-time ones.

Other services occasionally visit the sessions to provide information and support. Jobcentre, benefits advisors and a counsellor have all been regular attendees. This is in addition to the midwife and health visitor attached to the Sure Start Paignton programme frequently visiting the sessions.

12) *Teaching Sessions for 3 and 4 years olds*

These sessions are run by the early years advisor, a qualified teacher with five years experience, who helps the children to develop their confidence and learning through structured activities.

13) *Treasure Baskets*

At this activity babies watch, socialise, play and explore using everyday materials.

In addition to these sessions the programme also:

14) *Conducted home visits*

The majority of the team conducted home visits so the nursery nurses (who were trained in smoking cessation and breast-feeding advice), health visitor, community development worker (a trained social worker), midwife and play facilitator all had the potential for input to families through home visits.

15) *Speech and language therapists*

Sure Start Paignton has a service level agreement with the Speech and Language service to deliver one-to-one support with families and to train members of the team in early identification of speech and language delay.

16) *Specialist health visitor for substance misuse*

A second service level agreement that the programme holds is with the specialist health visitor who makes support visits and joint planning visits to families where there is an alcohol or drug issue.