

**SEACROFT SURE START
PARENTS SURVEY 2001
REPORT ON THE FINDINGS**

23 April 2002

CONTENTS

| Section | | Page |
|----------------|--|-------------|
| 1 | INTRODUCTION | 2 |
| 2 | SAMPLE PROFILE | 4 |
| 3 | OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH SEACROFT | 8 |
| 4 | COMMUNITY FEELING | 11 |
| 5 | INVOLVEMENT IN SURE START | 17 |
| 6 | NATIONAL TARGETS | 31 |
| 7 | LOCAL EVALUATION | 33 |

Appendix 1 – List of Sure Start activities

Appendix 2 – The questionnaire

1 INTRODUCTION

Background

This research study was carried out by Seacroft Sure Start's local evaluators. It is an initial exploration of the impact of the overall programme on the local families who are participating in it, approximately one year after most aspects of the programme became fully operational. It will of course be very important also to gain the views of families who are not yet participating, and this will be done at a later date.

National guidance states that the aim of Sure Start is 'to work with parents-to-be, parents and children to promote the physical, intellectual and social development of babies and young children - particularly those who are disadvantaged - so that they flourish at home and when they get to school, and thereby break the cycle of disadvantage for the current generation of young children.'

To meet this aim, Seacroft Sure Start comprises a team of Outreach Workers, a Professional Delivery Team and Childcare workers, led by a Programme Co-ordinator and Childcare Co-ordinator, and supported by a small administrative team. The Outreach Workers help to identify and engage the target audience, give out information about Sure Start, and where appropriate provide home visits and one-to-one support. The Delivery team comprises a Health Visitor, Social Worker, Counsellor, Dietician, Educational Psychologist, Speech and Language Therapist and Health and Fitness Specialist. Some Outreach Workers and many of the Childcare Team (who undertake educational and vocational training) have been recruited from the local community. The full team is divided into three mini-teams, each comprising a range of workers, and covering a specific part of Seacroft (i.e. North, Middle and South). The programme offers a wide range of groups, services and support in response to community needs (see appendix 1).

Seacroft Sure Start is committed to serving the needs of local families in a user friendly way. Central to the programme is a desire to empower families; parents are strongly encouraged to get involved in the decision making and running of the programme, and they are currently well represented on the Board as well as on the staff.

Method and sample

The study was carried out by means of depth interviews, conducted with parents who have tapped into the initiative. Participants were recruited from a range of Sure Start activities (see section 5), and interviews took place, by appointment, at a time and place convenient for them - usually in their homes. The evaluator selected the groups to recruit from and the parents/carers to approach, the intention being to recruit from a range of different types of groups/services and to get a sample that represented the whole of Seacroft geographically (as there are marked differences within the broad area in terms of quality of housing, general upkeep, and anti-social behaviour - some parts of South Seacroft being particularly run down and troublesome).

Nearly everyone approached agreed to an interview, and only those who lived outside the boundary were declined because our focus here was on the target audience of Seacroft residents. (The issue of whether or not to allow people outside the boundary to attend groups/receive services has been a difficult one for this programme, along with others; at present a degree of flexibility and discretion is used.)

Fieldwork took place between August and December 2001. About a fifth of the people recruited were not at home when the interviewer called, and about half of these were successfully re-arranged.

A semi-structured interview guide was used (see appendix 2), which collected both quantitative measures and qualitative views and comment. Interviews were taped - with the permission of respondents - and typically lasted around an hour. Respondents were guaranteed anonymity.

In all, 35 interviews were carried out - this equates to around 20% of the families registered as participating in Sure Start activities at the time of the fieldwork. It should be noted, however, that due to the sensitivity needed to engage some 'hard to reach' families, Outreach Workers are known to be in contact with more families than are actually registered with the programme.

2 SAMPLE PROFILE

Of the total 35 interviews, 31 were with a female respondent only (29 mothers and 2 grandmothers who were the primary carers of their grandchildren), one with a father only, two with mother and father together, and one with mother and grandmother together.

The majority of respondents classed themselves as White/British; one was White/Black Caribbean and another White/Irish. (Seacroft has an overwhelmingly white population with just 1.5% ethnic minorities in 2000 - source, CACI Area Data Population Profile.)

The age group breakdown of the sample was as follows:

| | |
|-------|-----|
| 18-25 | 37% |
| 26-35 | 54% |
| 36-45 | 3% |
| 46-55 | 6% |

Respondents were asked how long they had lived in Seacroft:

| | |
|----------------------|-----|
| Up to a year | 14% |
| 1 – 2 years | 20% |
| 3 – 5 years | 17% |
| 6 – 10 years | 14% |
| Longer than 10 years | 34% |

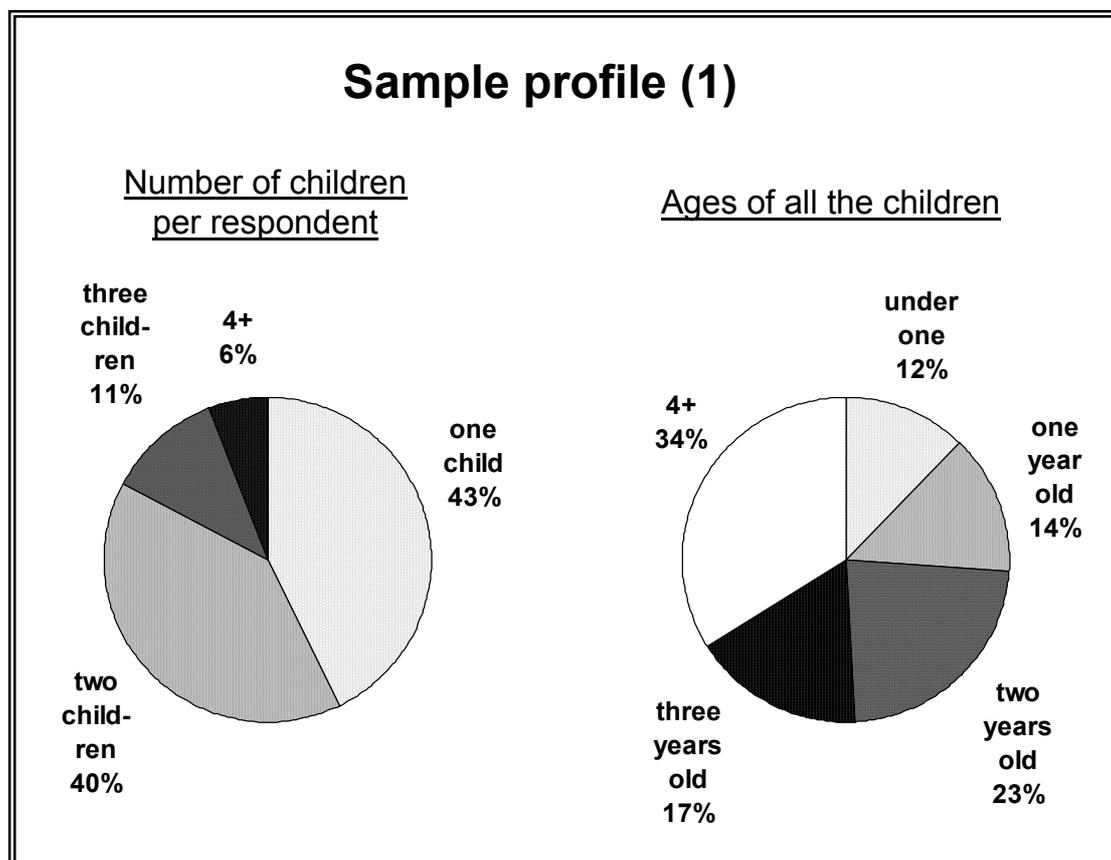
The breakdown of the sample according to the three mini-teams that makes up the Seacroft programme was:

| | |
|--------|-----|
| North | 40% |
| Middle | 23% |
| South | 37% |

Around two in 5 respondents had just the one child, and a similar proportion had two. On average, each respondent had 1.9 dependant children.

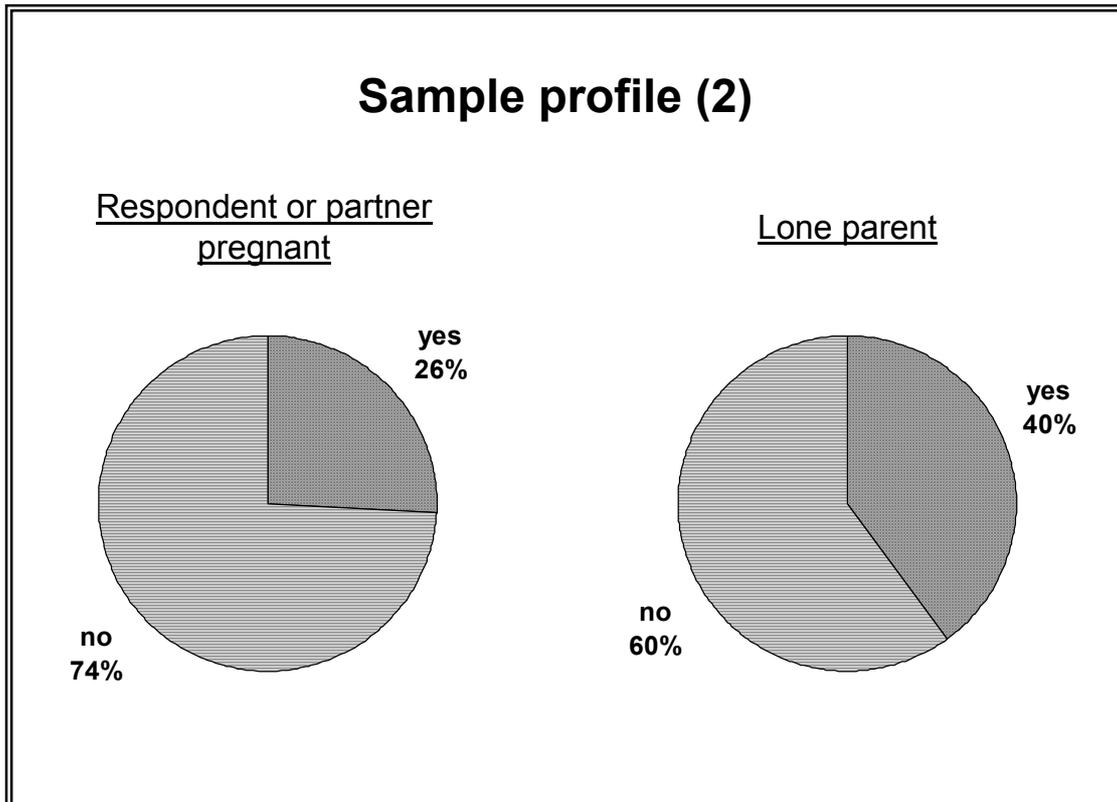
Of the total 35, 30 had at least one child aged under 4 and three had a child who had turned 4 whilst they were attending Sure Start groups. Two others had children of primary school age - one of these was pregnant and the other, a lone parent, was receiving help from Sure Start because of her child's behavioural problems.

Of the total of 66 children in the families of these respondents, around two thirds are under 4.



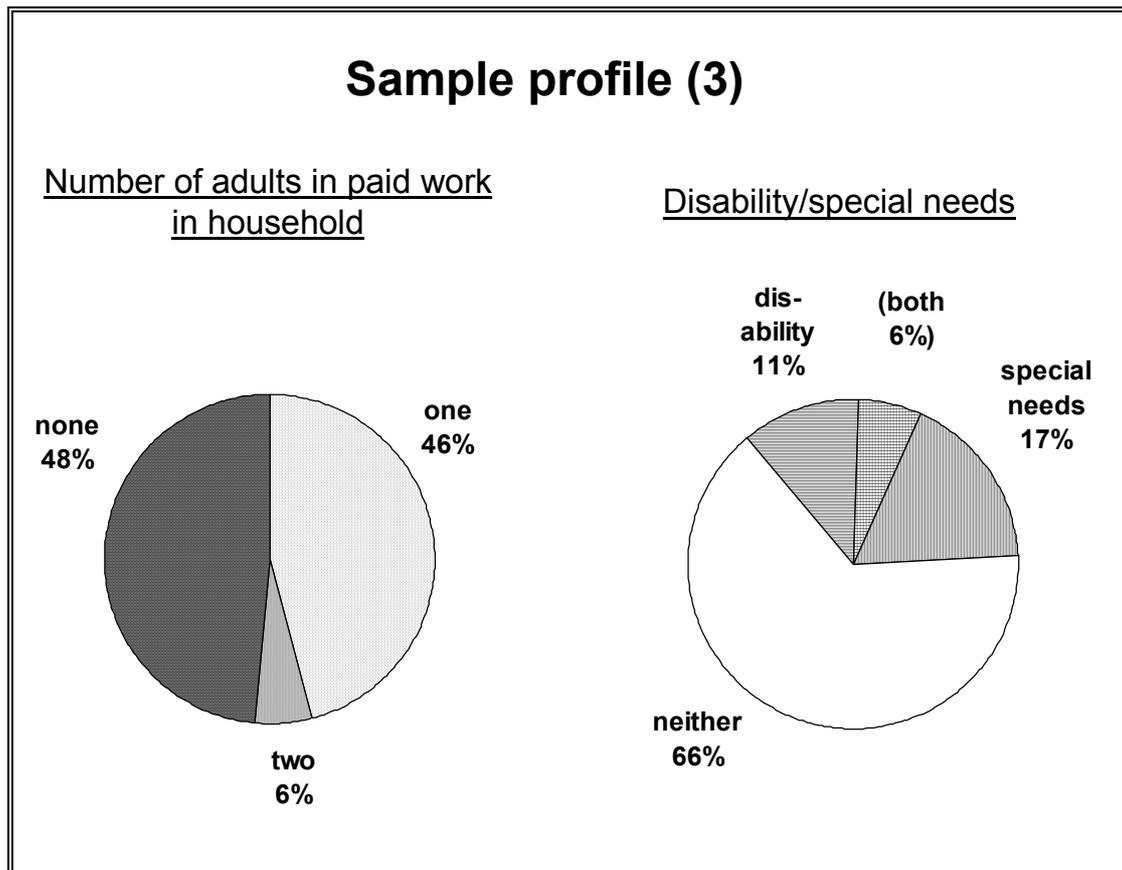
In around a quarter of cases either the respondent or their partner was pregnant at the time of the interview.

Two in five were classed as lone parents in that they did not live with a partner. A few of these, however, did have an ongoing relationship with their child(ren)'s father and two of these were pregnant. Three mothers indicated that they were not living with their partners for financial reasons, suggesting perhaps that some families are still caught in the 'benefit trap', and another said that she preferred to live apart from her partner because it gave her and her children more security.



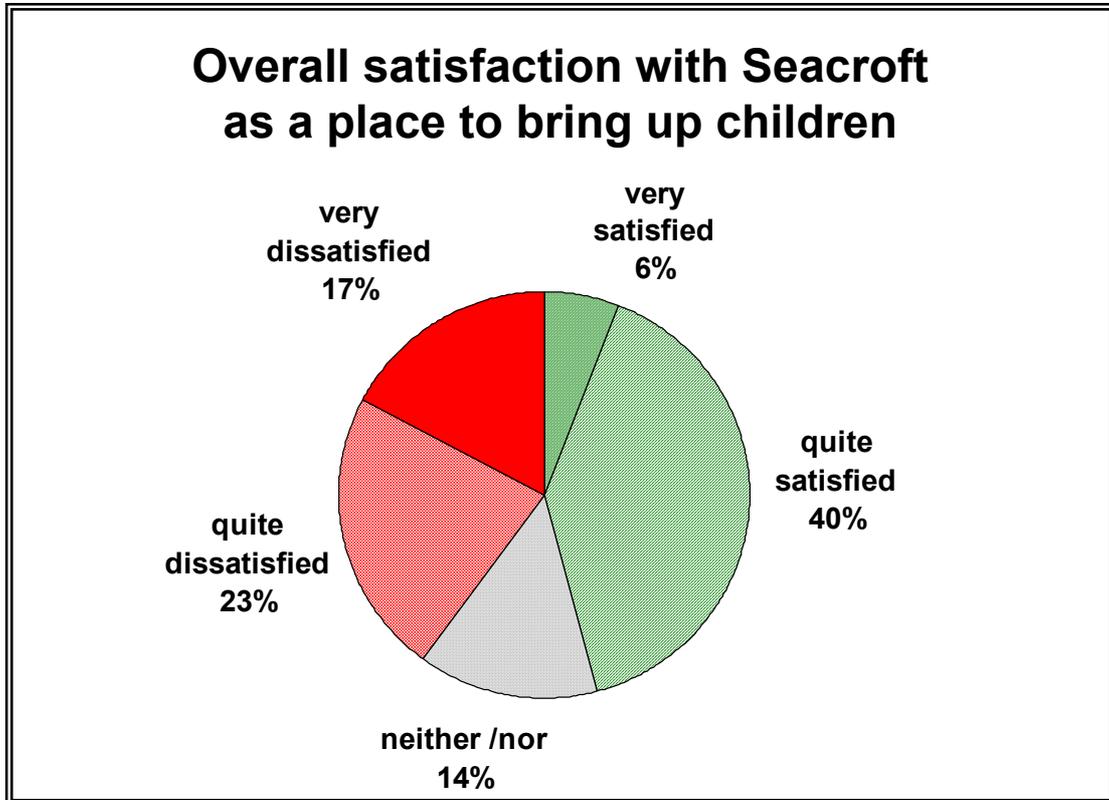
In nearly half of cases, there was no adult in the household in paid work.

In 17% of cases, the mother, father or a child under 4, were classified by the respondent as having a disability (4 parents having mobility problems, one parent having epilepsy, and one mother and child both with asthma) and 23% as having special needs (3 parents with dyslexia, 3 parents with learning difficulties, one child with special dietary needs and one child with speech delay).



3 OVERALL SATISFACTION WITH SEACROFT

Respondents were asked how satisfied they were with Seacroft overall, as a place to bring up children. Two in five expressed dissatisfaction:



Common themes emerged in respondents' complaints about the area - vandalism, crime, a lack of safe play areas and the perception that local schools are poor. For example:

"All the crime in the area. Kids vandalising cars, joyriders, cars burnt out etc. People are afraid to give statements."

"Seacroft has a bad reputation. Lots of the kids are rough, badly behaved."

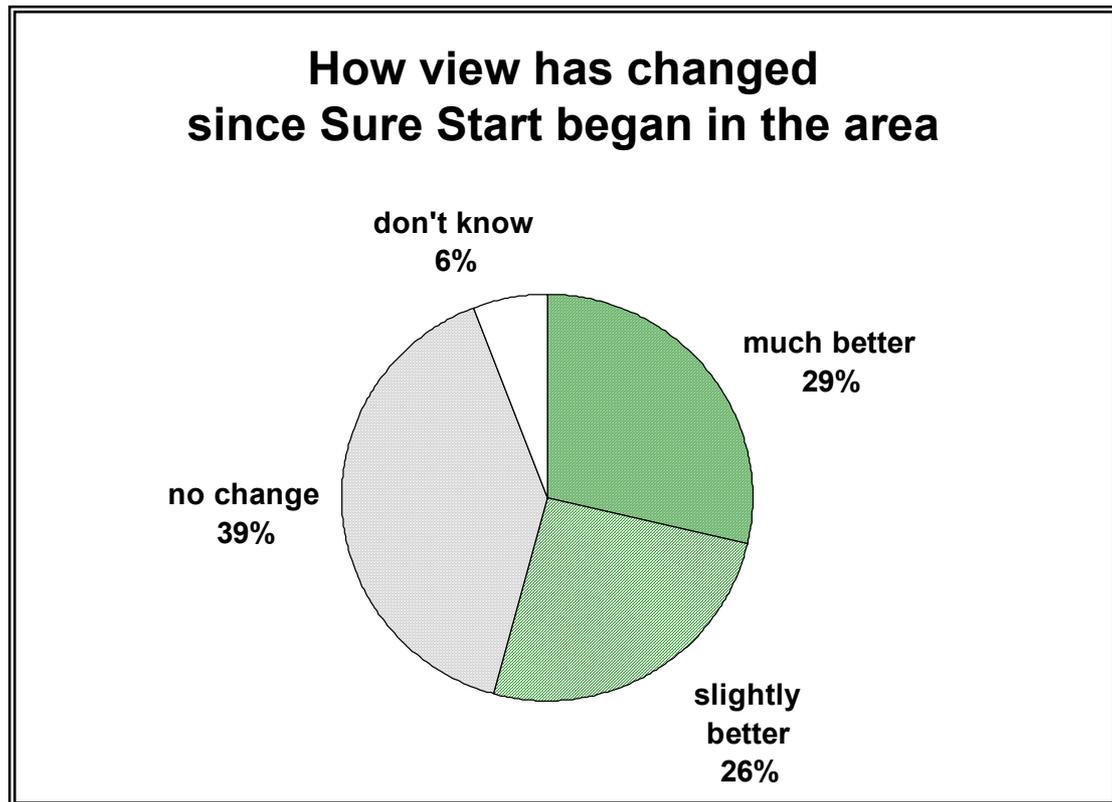
"There's not much for kids to do. The park is covered with glass. Kids get into trouble because they're bored."

"No safe play areas for children, no parks, lots of main roads, poor schools, crime"

"It's a dump. The park is vandalised and the houses need doing up."

In a survey we carried out in Seacroft in July 2001 to establish certain baseline measures for the programme, 101 parents of under 4's were interviewed at random in the street. A similar proportion of them, 37%, expressed dissatisfaction with the services available for young children in the area, and the same concerns were raised.

Respondents were then asked how their view of Seacroft had changed, if at all, since Sure Start began in the area:



Over half thought things were better, and the rest either said 'no change', or 'don't know' (because they had not lived in Seacroft before Sure Start came into the area).

Those who felt things were better now often commented on the fact that there are now things for them and their children to do, for example:

“There’s a lot more for the young kids to do now and there’s the Fun Days in the streets in school holidays.”

“There’s more things for parents to do with their children now”

“A lot more opportunities for parents and young children”

“We’ve got somewhere to go now.”

“We can get help and make friends”

“There’s more activities and support for parents and kids”

In 2001, 30% of the random sample of parents thought things were better for children in Seacroft than they had been a year earlier, while 16% thought worse. Whilst 55% of this sample of Sure Start participants felt the area was now better for children, it seems likely that while the problems stemming from crime and other anti-social behaviour persist, they will hinder to some extent other efforts to make the area a better place to bring up children.

4 COMMUNITY FEELING

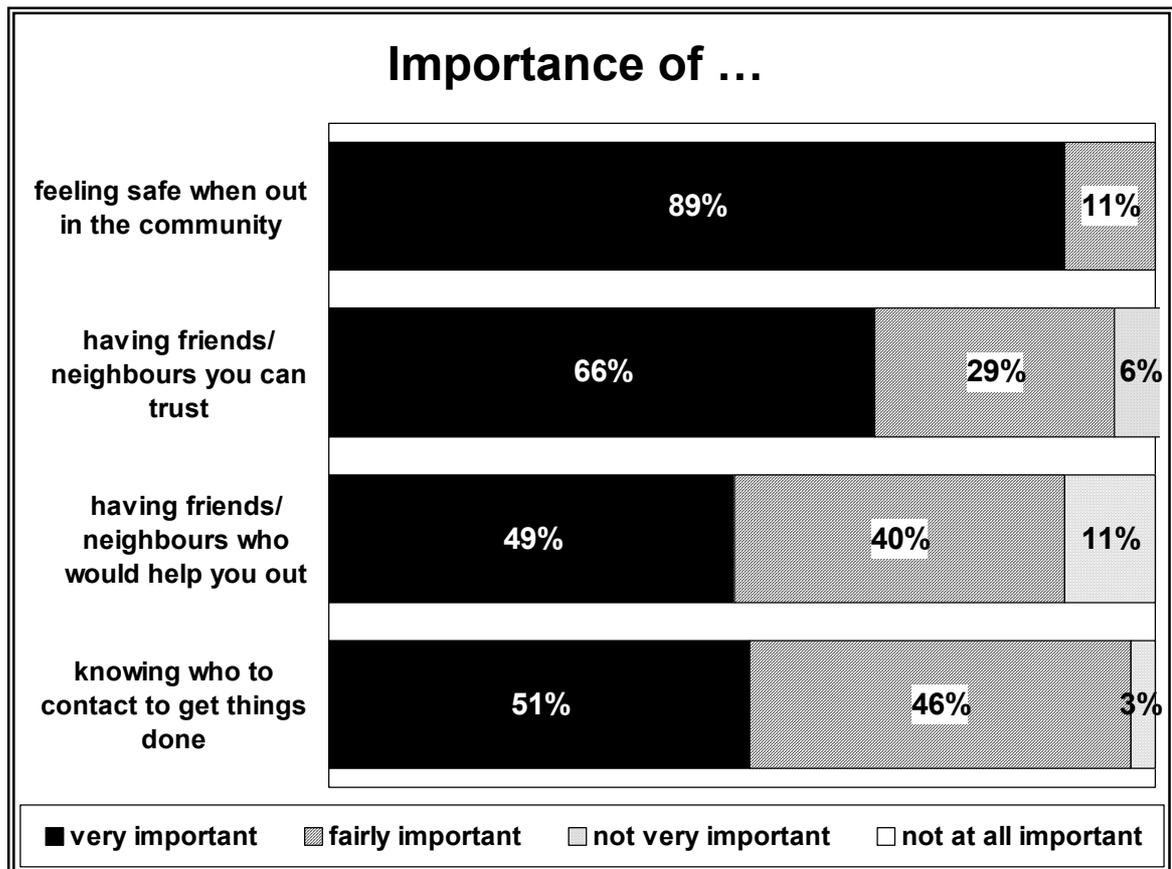
Drawing from recent research called 'Prove It!', conducted for Barclays SiteSavers, and brought to our attention by Sure Start's Regional Office, we decided to investigate what 'Prove It' terms the human concerns (such as trust, confidence and friendship) that, when high in a community, equate to a willingness and ability to work together to achieve common goals. Respondents were, therefore, asked how important they felt certain factors to be, relating to their sense of community. These were:

- Feeling safe when they or their children are out and about in the community
- Having friends and/or neighbours they feel they can trust
- Having friends and/or neighbours who would help them out if they needed it
- Knowing who to contact to get things done in the community

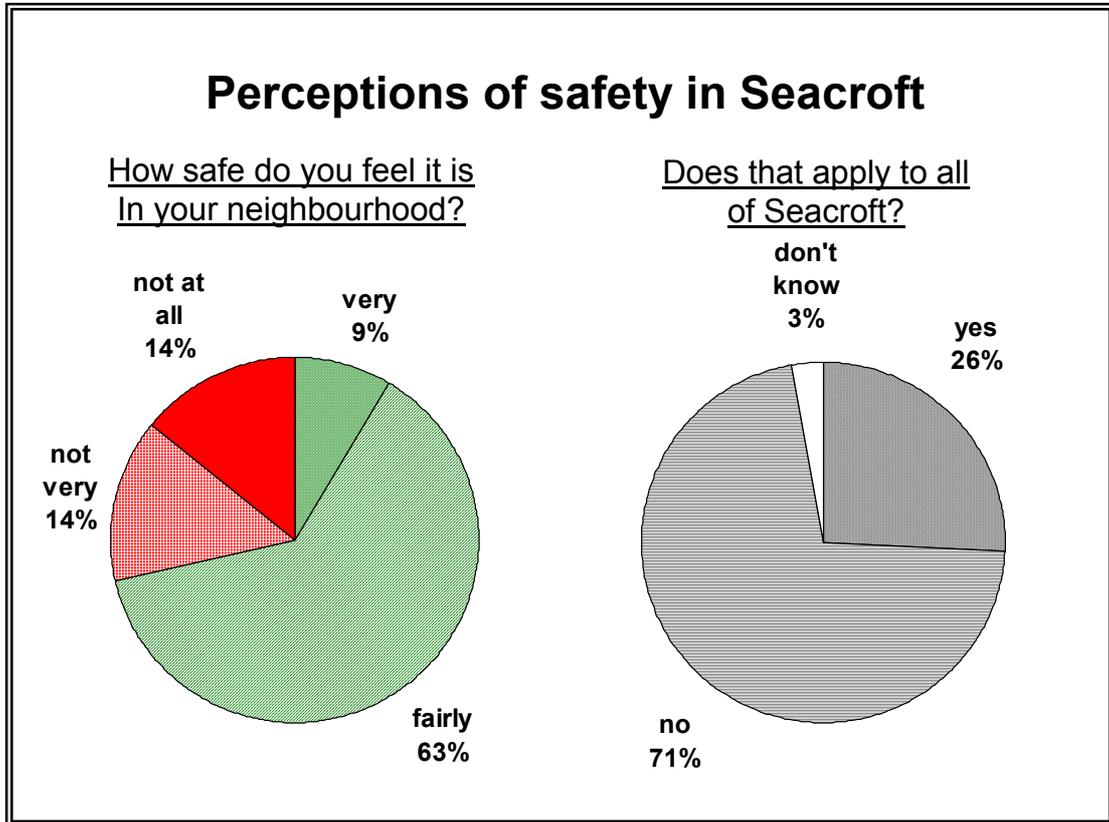
Having established the relative importance of these factors, respondents were then asked about the extent to which these needs are met.

The results will provide a baseline which can be used, in future studies, to indicate whether Sure Start is affecting these 'human concerns' that, if improved, are likely to indicate a strengthened community.

The importance ratings came out as follows:



Over a quarter of respondents do not feel safe out and about in their neighbourhood. Half of these said that they do not feel this way about all of Seacroft; 80% of those who said they generally do feel safe, though, also said they do not feel this way about the whole area. Overall, then, only 11% appear to feel safe anywhere in Seacroft.



There are no real differences in perceptions of safety according to how long the respondent has lived in Seacroft.

Some recent shootings in the area were mentioned by many respondents and have undoubtedly compounded fears about safety.

Where respondents expanded on their answers, it became clear that most of the concern centres around parts of South Seacroft, although a couple also mentioned Kentmere in the North. For example:

"South Seacroft is much worse than the North. I wouldn't feel safe there after dark."

"There are 'no go' areas in Seacroft, mainly in the South."

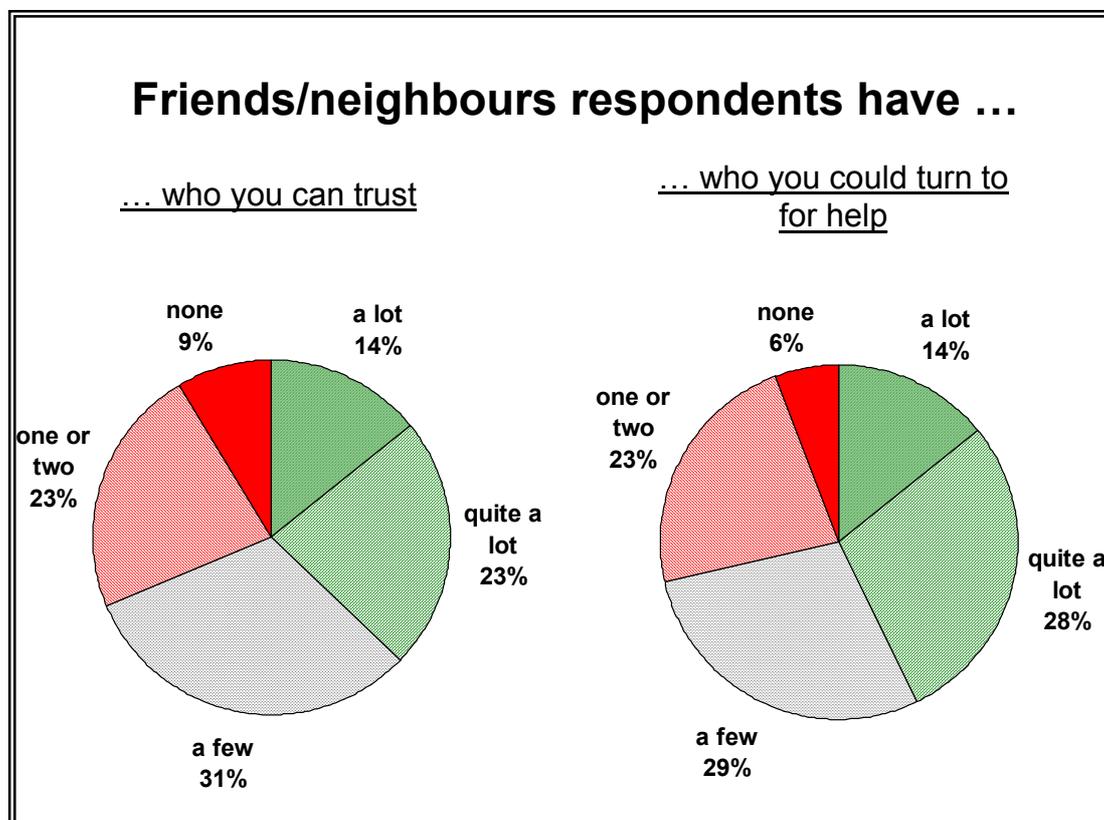
"I would not feel safe in certain parts of South Seacroft, especially since the shootings."

"Kentmere and South Seacroft are much worse than other parts."

"It's very quiet in my area (North) but South Seacroft isn't safe at all"

"I would not go out alone now after dark in any parts of Seacroft"

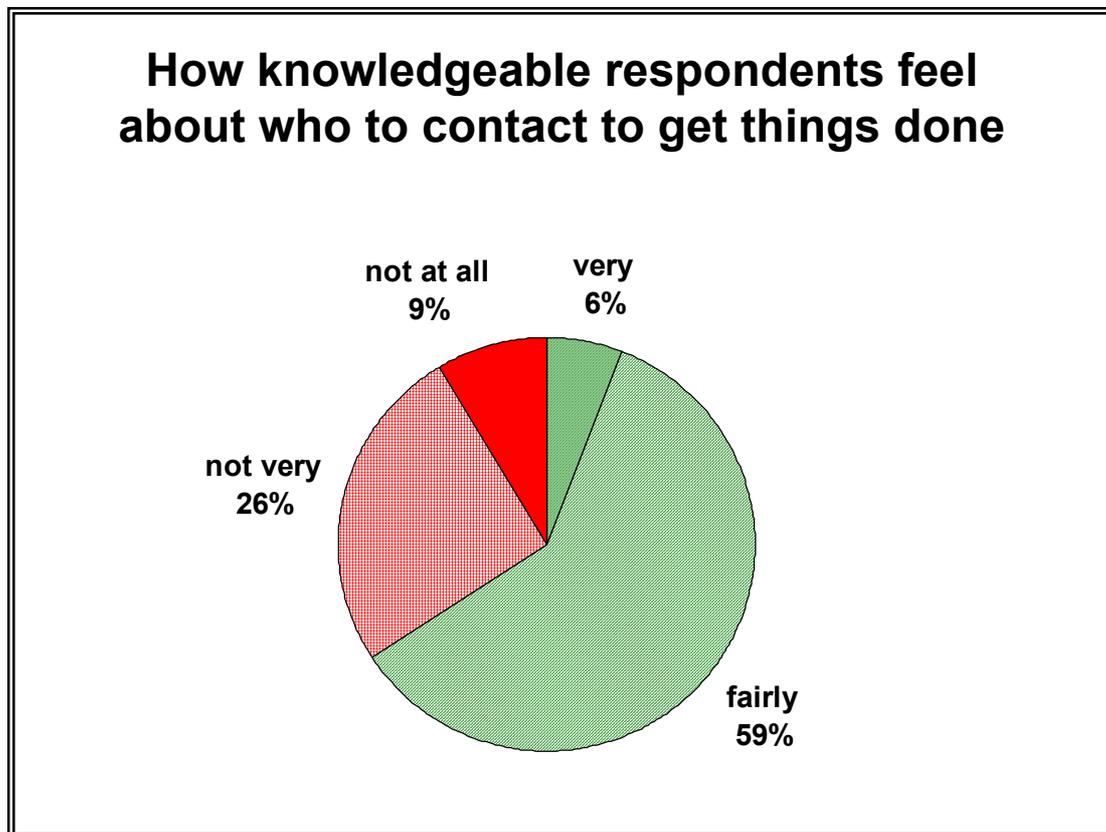
Around a third of respondents feel they have a lot or quite a lot of friends/neighbours in the community they can trust, and two in 5 have a lot or quite a lot of friends/neighbours they feel they could turn to for help if needed:



The number of friends/neighbours that respondents have who they feel would fall into these categories increases with the length of time respondents have lived in Seacroft and whether they have family living nearby. Out of the 16 answering 'a lot' or 'quite a lot' to these questions, 13 had extended family living in the same area, 2 had lived in Seacroft for 10 years or more, and the other had lived in the area as a child.

In other sections of this report many respondents mention that Sure Start has provided them with opportunities to meet more people and make new friends, something particularly valued by those who were fairly new to the area.

Around two thirds feel knowledgeable about who they would need to contact in the community to get things done (but only 6% very much so):



Surprisingly, those who have lived in Seacroft longer are not really any more likely to have this information than newer arrivals.

The 'One Stop Shop' in Seacroft, which has Health, Housing and Social Services sections under one roof, was mentioned by quite a few as having made life easier for them in this respect. Almost everyone, though, said that they would like to be more knowledgeable.

5 INVOLVEMENT IN SURE START

Respondents were asked, unprompted, what they felt Sure Start was set up to do. (Many people said more than one thing, therefore the percentages below add up to more than 100%.)

| | |
|---|-----|
| Helping children/giving children something to do | 29% |
| Giving parents a break/opportunities to socialise | 29% |
| For parents - help/advice | 23% |
| For under 4's - improving life chances | 11% |
| To benefit communities | 9% |
| Education for parents | 9% |
| For families in poor areas | 6% |
| To get parents involved in helping | 6% |
| To let people know what is going on locally | 6% |
| Helping parents back into work | 3% |
| For families with problems | 3% |
| For lone parents | 3% |
| To provide nurseries | 3% |
| Don't know | 11% |

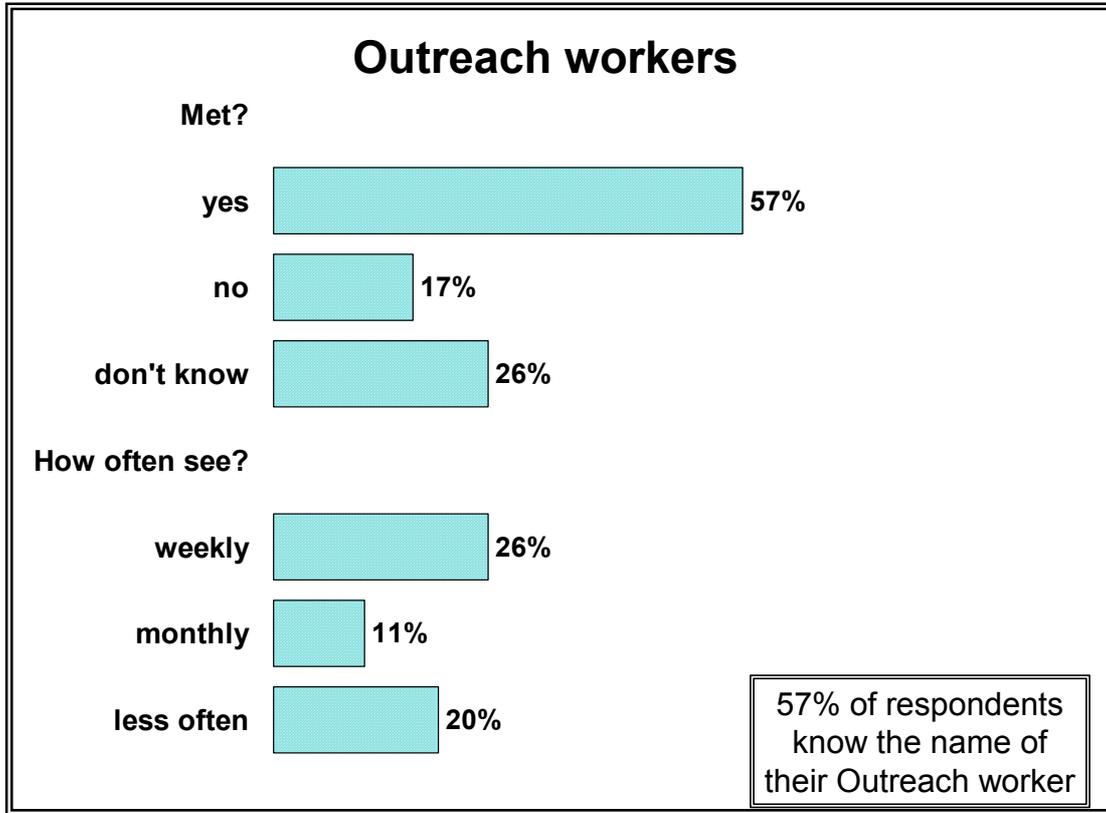
When asked what age group of children they thought Sure Start was targeting, most identified the target as young children, but not all correctly identified the under 4's.

| | |
|---------------|-----|
| Under 4's | 11% |
| One - 3 | 3% |
| Under 5's | 43% |
| 2.5 - 4 | 3% |
| Under 6's | 14% |
| To school age | 11% |
| Toddler - 8 | 3% |
| Don't know | 11% |

Respondents were asked how they had first heard about Sure Start. (A couple named two sources.)

| | |
|---|-----|
| Outreach home visit | 20% |
| Parklands Children's Centre | 17% |
| Other nurseries | 17% |
| Given leaflet outside school | 14% |
| Health Visitor | 14% |
| Given leaflet outside Post Office | 11% |
| Friend/another parent | 6% |
| Midwife | 3% |
| Fun day | 3% |
| Course at East Leeds Family Learning Centre | 3% |

Over half of respondents know the name of their Outreach Worker, and the same proportion, 57%, have met him or her. Around a quarter see their Outreach Worker weekly, usually at home or at a group.



In some cases, though, respondents mentioned their Outreach Worker by name or described them by their physical appearance, but had not realised that they were called Outreach Workers, suggesting that more may know their Worker than these figures indicate.

Respondents had been recruited to take part in this survey at the following Sure Start activities:

| | |
|---|-----|
| Fun Days (various in school holidays) | 20% |
| Parent and child group - Seacroft Grange School | 14% |
| Kids & Co - Parklands Children's Centre | 11% |
| Music & Play - Kentmere Community Centre | 11% |
| Sure Start Pre-school - ELFLC | 11% |
| Busy Bees - Kentmere Nursery | 9% |
| Parent and toddler group - Asket Hill (Weds) | 9% |
| Combo-assertive training - St. Richards | 3% |
| New Lives Together - Kentmere Nursery | 3% |
| Osteopathy | 3% |
| Behaviour Management Group - Asket Hill | 3% |
| Men's cooking group - Parklands | 3% |

Most respondents (86%) had had a child aged under 4 with them on that occasion – 29% more than one. A third, 37%, had had any children with them aged 4+ (nearly everyone at the Fun Days had older children with them), and a few, 17%, had gone with another adult.

80% of respondents have participated in/used other Sure Start activities or services:

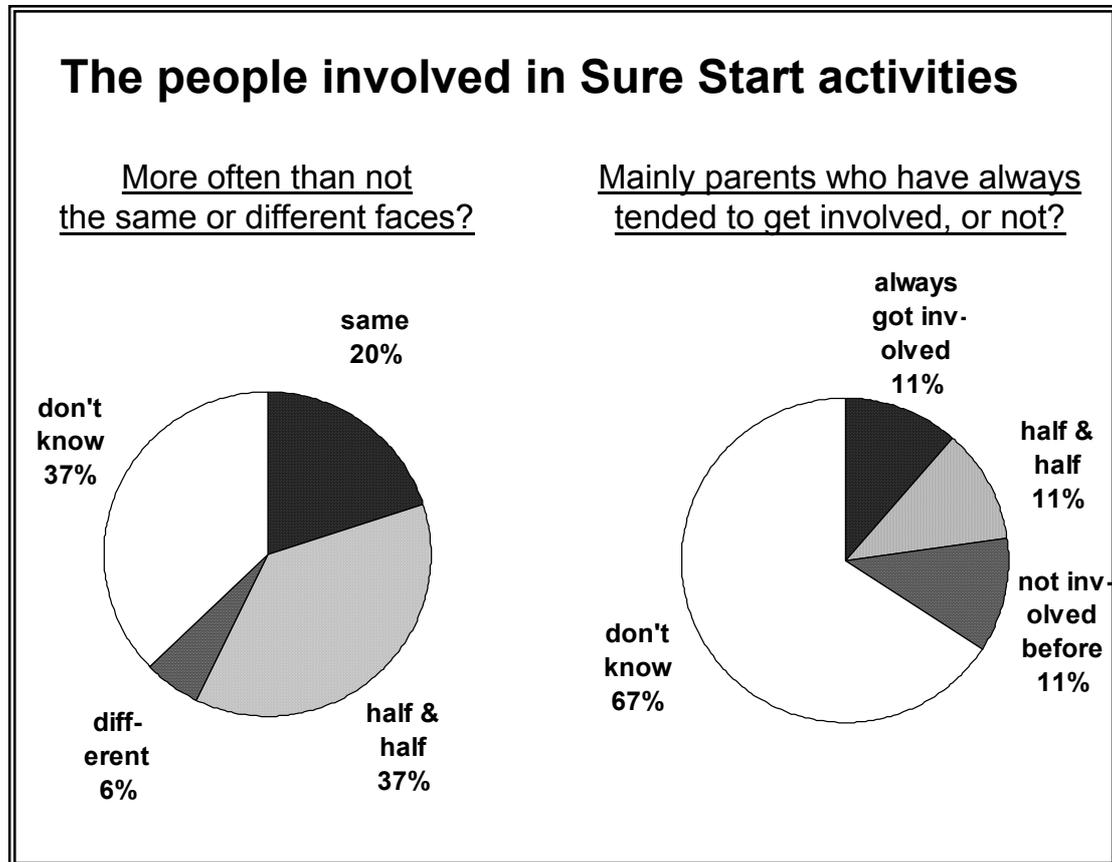
| | |
|---|-----|
| Fun Days | 34% |
| Swimming | 20% |
| Safety equipment | 14% |
| Busy Bees (Kentmere) | 14% |
| Helping to set up/run another activity | 14% |
| Happy Eaters (Parklands) | 9% |
| Kids & Co (Parklands) | 9% |
| Parent and toddler group (Asket Hill) | 9% |
| Feel Good Factor (Asket Hill) | 9% |
| Behaviour Management Group (Asket Hill) | 9% |
| Board member | 9% |
| Support from professional (social worker/dietician) | 9% |
| Dads & Tots | 6% |
| New Lives Together (Kentmere) | 6% |
| New Lives Together (Parklands) | 6% |
| Osteopathy | 6% |
| Hypnosis | 6% |
| Reiki/Reflexology | 6% |
| Pre-school - ELFLC | 6% |
| Craft shop | 3% |
| Combo-assertive training (St. Richards) | 3% |
| Counselling | 3% |
| Trips/outings | 3% |
| Baby massage (Seacroft Clinic) | 3% |
| KidsCope (Parklands) | 3% |
| KidsCope (Asket) | 3% |
| Behaviour group (Parklands) | 3% |
| None | 20% |

32% of the sample are involved in any other community groups or activities:

| | |
|---|-----|
| Attend Parent Partnership groups | 14% |
| Attend non-Sure Start groups at Parklands | 6% |
| Help elderly neighbours | 3% |
| Parent governor at primary school | 3% |
| Help fundraise for sick child | 3% |
| Attend Social Services family centre | 3% |
| None | 68% |

Of the 11 respondents who are involved in other groups/activities, 10 said that this was not linked to their involvement in Sure Start (ie they were already doing the activity before Sure Start came to the area).

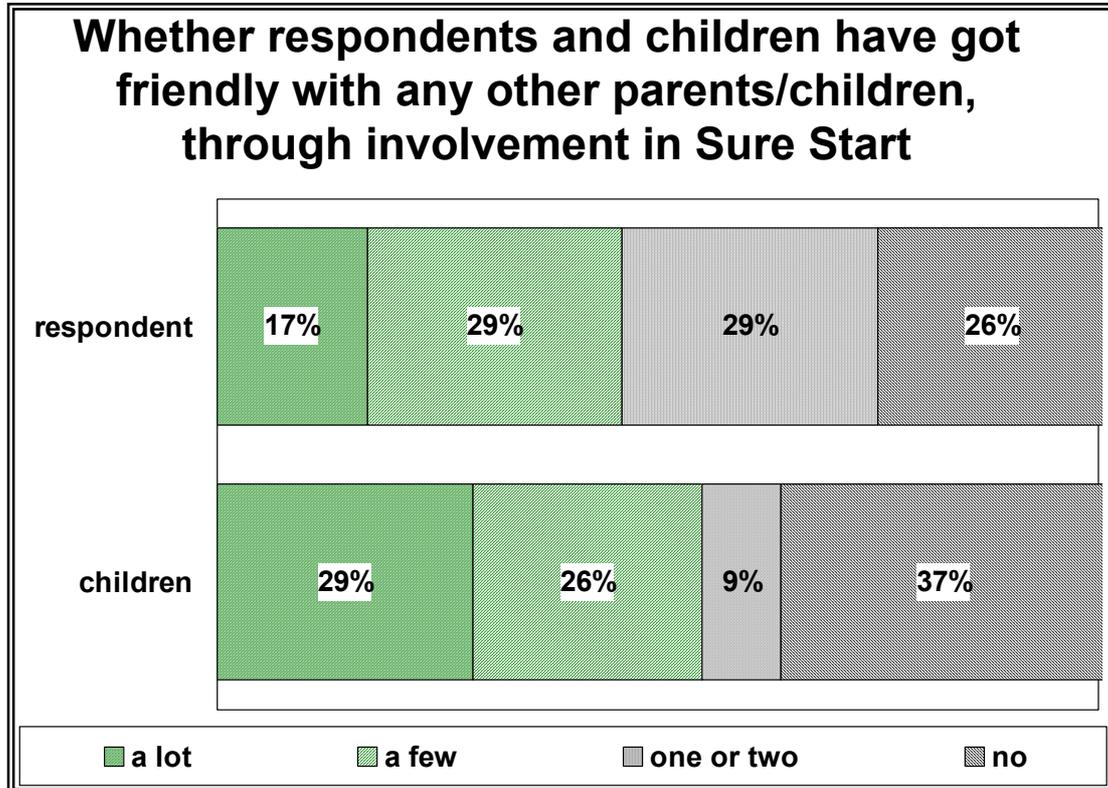
Respondents were asked about the people they see participating in Sure Start – whether or not they tended to see the same faces at different activities, and whether or not they felt they were people who usually got involved in community groups/activities:



The majority of those answering 'don't know' to the first question (left) did so because they were attending just one or two activities. Most of those who did attend enough activities to comment, felt there was about an even mixture of the same and different faces attending different activities.

Obviously only those with some knowledge of community activity were able to express an opinion to the second question (right), and the high level of 'don't knows' - two thirds - indicates that Sure Start is engaging people who have not previously played an active part in community activities. The third that were able to express a view were divided in their opinions, indicating perhaps that it depends on the activities in question.

Three quarters of respondents said they had got friendly with any other parents, through their involvement in Sure Start; 17% said they had made a lot of new contacts. Two thirds said their children had made any friends, with 29% saying 'a lot'. Respondents with the youngest children pointed out that their children were too young to actually make 'friends', but all felt that their children were benefiting from the opportunity to be with children of similar ages.



Respondents were asked to sum up what difference, if any, Sure Start has made to them and their families. These are listed in full below (names have been removed, to protect respondents' anonymity).

Common themes emerging are to do with getting both the child and the parent out of the house, and involved in activities and meeting people. Several parents described ways in which they and their children have developed through the activities and the interaction with other children and adults, and how their relationship with their child has benefited from the support and advice they have had access to, and from being able to have 'a break' doing other things. Respondents who had experienced mental or physical illness, or were incapacitated in some way, or had children with special needs, were highly likely to credit Sure Start with making significant positive differences to their lives. Sure Start workers came across as being very friendly and helpful.

"It's helped with [daughter's] eating. The Pre-school has taught them a lot, it's very good, and she's just started workouts there, she really enjoys them, she's shattered afterwards! For me, well my husband says we're never in now, because I'm always up there doing something."

"It's given us more to do, activities for the kids, and I've got this course through them. I think they've already done a lot for this community. They're very nice people to get on with."

"A lot of difference, we're never in now. I've met a lot of new friends, I could turn to them at any time, they're all very friendly and Sure Start staff are great. If it wasn't for Sure Start setting up these mums and tots groups, what happened to me when I had my first child would happen again - I'd just stay at home, have nobody to talk to - except neighbours - and I would end up being very depressed like before. They keep me on my toes, I'm always baking and doing things, I'm always busy - it's kept me going."

"I suffer from really bad depression and they've helped me a lot with it, me and [child] weren't close at all, but since Sure Start's come we're just starting to get a relationship going, they've helped me to interact with her, so they've actually done a lot for me. I wouldn't have gone out if it wasn't for Sure Start, it's them who actually managed to get me out and they've made it a lot better for me."

"Quite a lot because otherwise we wouldn't get to do half of what we do and I've got someone to talk to now - other parents and the workers, they are really good."

"Gets me out of the house a lot more, and it gives the children socialising skills."

"I've got a bit more of a social life, something to do for me and the children during the day, and [older child] has fitted in, that's been brilliant through the summer holidays with the Fun Days, because at his age [9] he doesn't want to go places with me, he wants to do his own thing, but he's absolutely loved it, he really got involved, and they let him join the cooking group in the holidays - and some wouldn't have done - and he really enjoyed that as well."

"Fun Days were very useful, they kept [child] occupied and it relieved the pressure on me always having to try and keep her amused, it gave me a bit of a break."

"I enjoy doing the cooking group, it's helped me a lot because [child] is a fussy eater."

"It's somewhere to take him to meet other kids, because he's always on his own and he's not been learning as fast because he's got nobody to look at and copy round here."

"It's given me a bit of space because I've got them 24 hours a day and it does get hard, but it's also given them their bit of space as well, with other children, because they've only got each other. When [older child] is at nursery she gets lonely, so odd times I'll come up here to afternoon groups so she's not on her own. It's like given us all more freedom and for them to explore new friends and new things, as well as me being able to sit and do things."

"It's given me an outlet. I find when I've been there and know I'm going, I don't tend to get as wound up with her, or as stressed. Any queries I have I can ask the workers while I'm there. It gives me an opportunity to meet other people, we probably wouldn't have met anyone otherwise, I didn't know anyone where we lived before."

"I like going to groups, it gets me away from the house and into a different environment. She [child] seems more 'chilled out' when she gets home; when she's home all the time she gets 'grouchy' but when she's been playing with other children she seems a lot better in herself. It's nice to take them somewhere where you can relax because you know it's safe for them to play with anything."

"It's got me out of the house and [child] has come on leaps and bounds since she's been going to Pre-school, she's really come out of her shell. It's given me an outlet for talents I didn't know I had, and given my kids the incentive that you don't have to walk out of school with a whole heap of papers, you can actually get on in life and do things after, because I didn't leave school with any qualifications...Sure Start staff don't talk down to you like some professionals do."

"It's made moving into an area I didn't know much easier, and the support network that's around makes living with my disability a damn sight easier, they've offered to help with the housework if I've needed it, the garden; if I need to go anywhere - like to the hospital - they've said just let us know and we'll come with you and watch your kids, because I've two lively toddlers now."

"It's getting me out of the house, rather than me being sat here all the time."

"Mainly it's opportunities for [child] to socialise with other children."

"Getting my daughter to do things, meeting other people and children that are down there."

"Gets us out of the house, helps him to communicate with other kids before he actually starts nursery, helps him to learn to play together, with him being an only child and just having me to communicate with, it gives him more interests and people to talk to."

"He's talking a lot more since he's been round other children and he does painting and stuff and he likes all that, and I'm able to get out of the house now."

"It's made a really big difference, getting out more, making new friends, she's [daughter] making friends, basically yes Sure Start has changed me - for the better I think. Before I used to sit in the house, or just go down to [friend] and that would be it, that would be my day, go to [friend's], come home, go to bed. And it's the same with [neighbour] - I never used to see her out, but I see her on a regular basis now because she goes to Sure Start as well."

"It's brilliant because I needed a lot of help, so my mum had to work part-time to help me out. Whereas now I just have to ring [Outreach Worker], and tell her, for example, when my hospital appointments are and she will come and help out, and if I know I'm going to be in a lot of pain afterwards and my mum is working nights, then if I need them I know they're there. [Outreach Worker] says 'just pick up the phone'. So it's a lot easier and mum's been able to go back to full-time work and I feel as if I'm not a burden on my mum now. If I need to talk, or sort something out, or if I need help, then I just pick up the phone - so yes, it's made a big difference to me."

"It's given me an opportunity to mix with parents of my own age and [daughter] can play with children of her age, [older child] has loads of friends but it was [daughter] who didn't, which is the reason I started going really, she was lost when he started school."

"It gets you out the house, it's something to do, it reduces frustrations."

"[Son] gets out a bit more, it's making him more used to situations where I might have to leave him in a room, preparing him for nursery, because that's what helped [older son] go into nursery, he didn't cry at all."

"It's made me a lot calmer and I feel more confident in myself, there's always somebody there to offer support, advice or practical help."

"It's helped me to understand [son's] behaviour and manage his behaviour better and I've got information on diet and they've loaned me some books on behaviour."

"Mainly getting out of the house, otherwise we'd be stuck in the house, and [youngest child] has become more outgoing."

"It gives me a little break, I have time to do the housework when he's there [at pre-school]. He has more confidence, it's given him an opportunity to mix and brought his speech on."

"It's done quite a lot really, it's brought his speech on and he's making friends. He seemed to be really short-tempered and never could share, now he's learnt to share, co-operate, get involved, because he never used to go out anywhere. It makes me feel better now because I get that extra time for myself. It's like brought us on, I'm just pleased that it came really. I've met up with a lot more people now that I can go round and have a cup of tea with, so yes it's done well for us both. I was a bit nervous at first thinking of getting him in pre-school because I thought he's never left me, it'll never happen, and the first week he was crying and I thought, I can't leave him, because I never have before, but I'm glad I did."

"I know that if I'd still been living in [other area] I would have done nothing at all, it would have been me and him [child] in the house, on our own, all day and I don't think I'd have coped with it very well at all whereas now I get a break from him, I can ask the Sure Start health visitor all kinds of things if I can't see my own health visitor in time. It's some adult conversation as well, that's not just revolving around babies. It's made quite a big difference to me. The practical side's good as well, I mean they provide really reduced rate safety equipment which is quite a help."

"Well I'm not a big user, through choice of my own, but it's made me aware that there are people there if I need them, it's like a security factor with me, that I can go to if I need to and there will be some help available - I'll probably use it more now, with having another one."

"It gives you a little break from your children, with them having childcare there, it's not just you who has to amuse them. And it gives [child] an opportunity to play with other children and play with different toys."

"Well it's the convenience really, it's not every local school that has a playgroup, and people have said they can't believe how much [child] has come on, because he had been slow at talking. We've had a lot of advice, and we could have had a lot more if we'd have wanted it, you know speech therapy and help with sleeping problems, we've had leaflets on everything imaginable."

Respondents were then shown a list of all the activities run by Sure Start at the time of the interview. When asked if this list represented more, less or about as many activities as they thought Sure Start had on offer, three quarters said it was more (54% a lot more) and the rest felt this was about what they had thought. Those respondents who had said earlier that they saw their Outreach Worker weekly or more, were likely to have a better awareness of the range of activities than the rest had.

They were then asked if there were any activities on the list that they had not known about before, but that they or their family might like to participate in. Nearly two thirds picked out one or more of these:

| | |
|--|-----|
| Swimming | 23% |
| Behaviour Management Group (Asket Hill) | 17% |
| Behaviour group (Parklands) | 11% |
| Craft shop | 11% |
| Wild Wild West discount vouchers | 11% |
| Art & Craft | 9% |
| Gardening service | 9% |
| Many Hands Make Light Work | 9% |
| Parent and child group (Seacroft Grange) | 9% |
| Baby massage | 6% |
| Communicate Through Confidence | 6% |
| Cranial osteopathy | 6% |
| KidsCope (Parklands) | 6% |
| KidsCope (Asket) | 6% |
| Music & play | 6% |
| Safety equipment | 6% |
| Busy Bees | 3% |
| Coffee & Chat | 3% |
| Combo-assertive training | 3% |
| Feel Good Factor | 3% |
| Happy Eaters | 3% |
| Hypnosis | 3% |
| Kids & Co | 3% |
| Learn Through Play | 3% |
| New Lives Together - Kentmere | 3% |
| Osteopathy | 3% |
| Post-natal support | 3% |
| Pre-school | 3% |
| Reiki/Reflexology | 3% |
| St James Church Playtime | 3% |
| None | 37% |

When asked if there were any *other* activities or services that Sure Start might be able to provide, to help them improve the life chances of their under 4's, around half had suggestions:

- Transport to get to groups (mentioned by 4 respondents)
- First Aid course focusing on children (mentioned by 2)
- More activities during school holidays (2)
- Safe play areas (2)
- Provide childcare for parents attending GP/dentist appointments
- Basic literacy and numeracy course for young parents
- Reading support group for parents
- Children's gym/exercise club
- Swimming lessons
- Parenting classes
- Information for parents (eg groups to increase awareness of how to get things done in the community)
- More local Fun Days
- Coffee and chat group in South Seacroft
- Learning opportunities for children in South Seacroft
- More in South Seacroft generally
- Happy Eaters group in North Seacroft
- Drop-in at Kentmere

All respondents were asked to indicate the ways they preferred to be kept informed about Sure Start activities. They were shown a list of possible answers and could choose as many as they wished, and also suggest others:

| | |
|--|-----|
| Leaflets through the door | 77% |
| Noticeboards at schools/nurseries/surgeries | 74% |
| Health Visitors | 63% |
| Leaflets given out in the community | 57% |
| Outreach Workers calling at your home | 49% |
| Notices in local shops | 37% |
| Noticeboard at Tesco | 34% |
| Local newspaper | 31% |
| Signs erected in Seacroft specifically to provide information about Sure Start | 23% |
| Local radio | 23% |
| Other professionals | 20% |
| Freephone | 17% |
| <u>Other suggestions:</u> | |
| Maternity ward at St James' hospital | 3% |
| Bus stops | 3% |
| Library | 3% |

If Sure Start only provided activities and services for children aged under 4 and their parents, about half felt this would present any problems to them when it comes to participating in these activities. For most of these, though, it would only be a problem out of school hours (after school and, more especially, in the holidays) when they would be unlikely to be able to attend if they could not take older children along.

We know that the team has had many discussions about whether or not they should provide activities for children aged 4+ and their parents. The results here suggest that it is mainly an issue for school holidays when families are very eager to have activities available for all age groups. Another group for whom it would be a problem are those who start attending when their child is 3 and who then turn 4; in these circumstances it seems highly inappropriate to stop their participation, especially as it is only a relatively short time before they will start school.

54% of respondents said that they or their family was currently getting any support from any other agencies. 43% cited the Health Visiting service and 11% Social Services Social Workers. Other agencies, mentioned by just a few respondents each, were the Speech and Language service (3), an ante-natal clinic (2), and a counsellor and Parklands Nursery staff (one each).

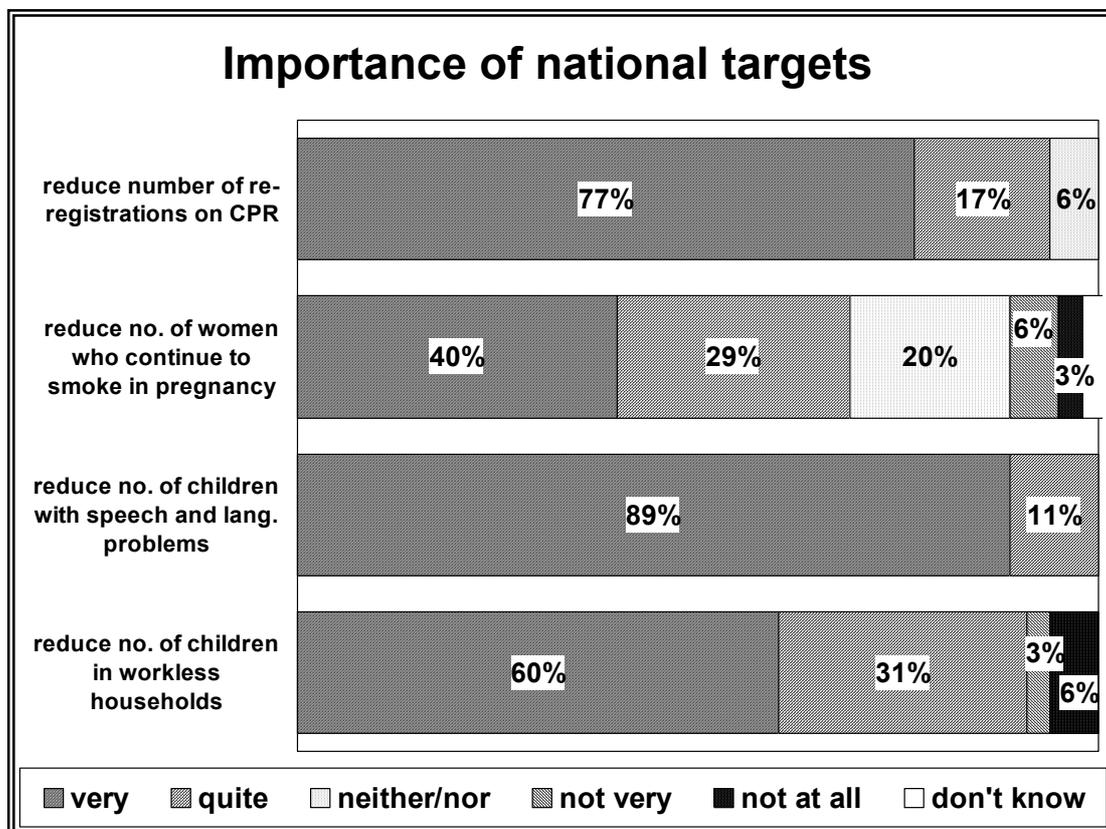
Unsurprisingly, Health Visitors are the professionals most involved with the families who are Sure Start's target audience. Our observations and recommendations for closer collaboration with the Health Visiting Service - not least to maximise the promotion of Sure Start - are covered in our report on the Health Visitors' Survey we conducted recently.

6 NATIONAL TARGETS

Respondents were told about the national Sure Start targets to reduce:

- The number of re-registrations on the Child Protection Register
- The number of women who continue to smoke during pregnancy
- The number of children with speech and language problems, and
- The number of children being brought up in households where no-one is working.

They were asked for their view on how important each of these targets is:

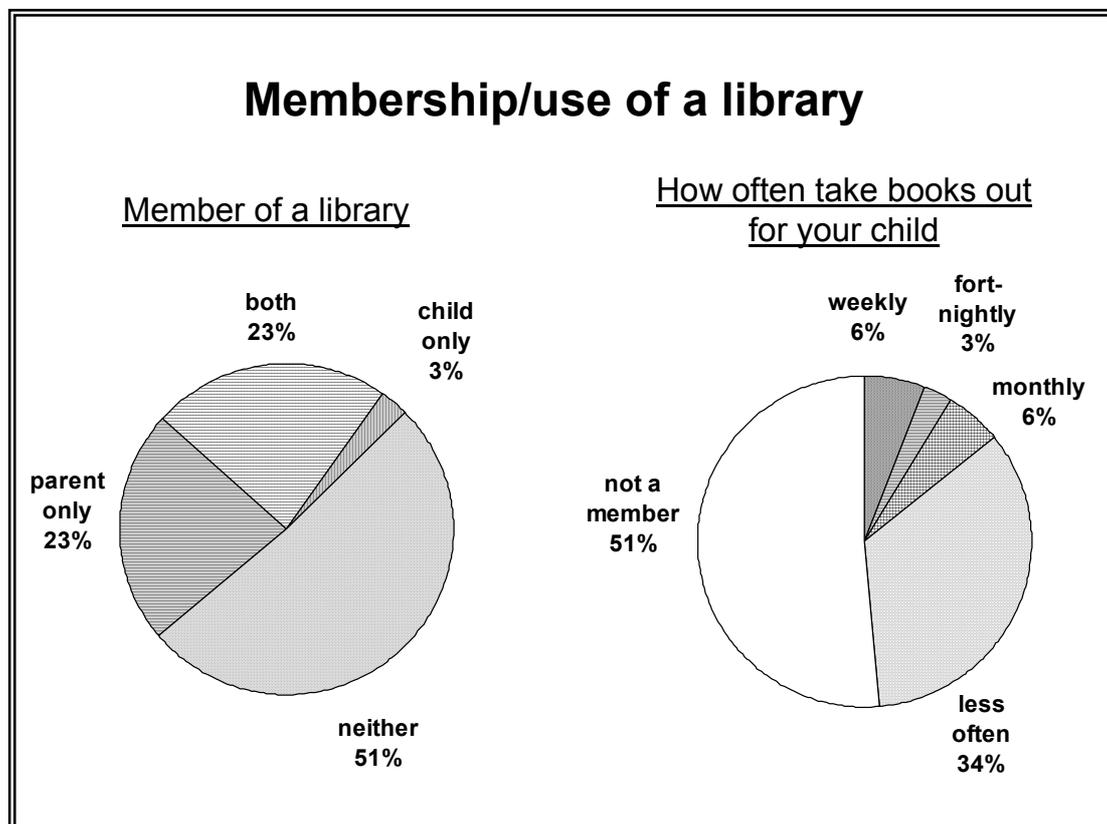


The targets relating to CPR re-registrations and Speech and Language were most likely to strike a chord for respondents, good speech and language being seen as crucial to a child's progress at school.

Reducing the number of women continuing to smoke during pregnancy was the least important of these targets for our respondents, and there was little difference between the views of smokers (51%) and non-smokers, with about the same number feeling it should be a matter of personal choice. 8 mothers had, however, given up smoking as soon as they found out they were pregnant, because of the health risks to the baby, and just one had started again.

On the issue of reducing the number of children in workless households, there was little difference between the views of those who are working themselves (or whose partner is), and those where no-one in the household is in paid employment at present. The vast majority, however, felt very strongly that this is only important where there is more than one adult living in the household; in the case of lone parent families, most respondents felt it to be very important that the parent stays at home with the child, at least until school age, regardless of the quality of childcare available to them.

Another national target relates to library usage, so this topic was also covered in this survey. Half of respondents are a member of a library (mostly Seacroft) themselves, or their child is. In all, 15% of respondents are taking out books for their child(ren) monthly or more often.



Those who were not members of libraries nearly always said that they already had lots of children's books at home and many with children attending school or nurseries said that their children brought plenty of books home from these sources. A few said they would not join a library because of the worry that their children would damage books. A couple were thinking of joining Seacroft Library so that their children could have access to the computer facilities available there.

7 LOCAL EVALUATION

54% of respondents said that they felt it would be a good idea if Seacroft parents did some of the local evaluation for Sure Start themselves. 17% thought not, and 29% did not know - these either thought that parents may not be sufficiently objective, or that this task should not be the parents' responsibility.

When asked if they themselves would be interested in helping to do some evaluation, about half said they would - 14% definitely and 34% possibly.

All 35 respondents said they would be prepared to be interviewed again at a later date.

Appendix 1**List of Sure Start activities (Oct 2001)**

1. Craft Shop
2. Combo Assertive Training - St. Richards, Friday
3. Counselling service
4. WASP (help for women experiencing violence) - Parklands Children Centre, Tuesday
5. Dads & Tots - South Parkway/Fearnville, Friday
6. Happy Eaters - Parklands Children Centre, Tuesday
7. Safety Equipment (minimal cost)
8. Swimming - Fearnville, Wednesday
9. Kids & Co - Parklands Children Centre, Friday
10. Gardening Service
11. Music and Play - Kentmere Community Centre, Friday
12. Wild Wild West (reduced admission token)
13. Busy Bees - Kentmere Early Years Centre, Tuesday
14. Parent & Toddler group - Asket Hill, Thursday
15. Coffee & Chat - Asket Hill Primary School, Tuesday
16. New Lives Together - Parklands Children Centre, Friday
17. New Lives Together - Kentmere Nursery, Monday
18. St. James Church Playtime, Wednesday
19. Post Natal Support - E. Leeds Family Learning Centre, Wednesday
20. Parent & Child Group - Seacroft Grange School, Wednesday
21. Many Hands Make Light Work - ELFLC, Friday
22. Art & Craft - Beechwood Primary School, Monday
23. Feel Good Factor - Asket Hill Primary, Monday
24. Cranial Osteopathy - South Parkway Portakabin, Tuesday
25. Osteopathy - South Parkway, Wednesday
26. Hypnosis - South Parkway, Thursday
27. Reiki/Reflexology - South Parkway, Friday
28. Behaviour Management Group - Asket Hill Primary, Tuesday
29. Baby Massage - Seacroft Clinic, Wednesday
30. Learn Through Play - Parklands Children Centre, Thursday
31. Communicate With Confidence - Parklands, Thursday
32. KidsCope - Parklands, 2nd and 4th Thursday in month
33. KidsCope - Asket Hill Primary, 1st + 3rd Thursday
34. Behaviour Group - Parklands, Thursday
35. Pre-school
36. Fun Days
37. Outings/trips
38. One to one support

Appendix 2

SURE START PARENTS' INTERVIEWS 2001

Name:
Address:

Date: _____

Male ___ Female ___ Ethnic Origin _____

Age range: Under 18 ___ 18-25 ___ 26-35 ___ 36-45 ___ 46-55 ___ 55+ ___

Ages of dependant children _____

You/partner pregnant? Yes ___ No ___ Lone Parent? Yes ___ No ___

Are you in paid work full-time ___ part-time ___ no ___

(If applicable) Is partner in paid work: full-time ___ part-time ___ no ___

Are you, your partner or any dependant children disabled? Yes ___ No ___

Give details:

Do you, your partner or any dependant children under 4 have special needs?

Yes ___ No ___

Give details: _____

How long have you lived in Seacroft? _____

How satisfied are you with Seacroft as a place to bring up children?

Very sat ___ Fairly sat ___ Neither sat/dissat ___ Fairly dissat ___ Very dissat ___

Comments: _____

And has your view changed in any way since Sure Start began in the area?

Much better ___ Bit better ___ No change ___ Bit worse ___ Much worse ___

Comments: _____

Thinking about Seacroft as a place to bring up children, how important are the following to you:

Feeling safe when you and/or your family are out and about in the community?

Very imp ___ Fairly imp ___ Not very imp ___ Not at all imp ___

How safe do you think it is in your neighbourhood at present?

Very safe ___ Fairly safe ___ Not very safe ___ Not at all safe ___

Do you feel the same about all of Seacroft? Yes ___ No ___

Comments: _____

Having friends and /or neighbours in the community that you can trust?

Very imp ___ Fairly imp ___ Not very imp ___ Not at all imp ___

At present, about how many do you have?

A lot ___ Quite a lot ___ A few ___ One or two ___ None ___

Having friends/neighbours in the community that would help you out if needed?

Very imp ___ Fairly imp ___ Not very imp ___ Not at all imp ___

At present, about how many do you have?

A lot ___ Quite a lot ___ A few ___ One or two ___ None ___

Knowing who to contact to get things done in the community?

Very imp ___ Fairly imp ___ Not very imp ___ Not at all imp ___

How knowledgeable about this are you at present?

Very knowledgeable ___ Fairly ___ Not very ___ Not at all ___

Thinking about Sure Start, what do you think it was set up to do?

Do you know the age range of children that Sure Start is targeting?

How did you hear about Sure Start?

Have you met the Outreach Worker who covers your area in Seacroft?

Yes ___ No ___ Not sure ___

Do you know the name of your Outreach Worker? _____

If known, how often do you see your Outreach Worker?

Weekly or more often ___ Fortnightly ___ Monthly ___ Less often ___

You agreed to give this interview while you were at

Were any other members of your family with you then? (take ages of any children) _____

Did you go with anyone else? (take ages of any children)

Have you participated in any other Sure Start activity? Yes ___ No ___

If yes, which one(s) _____

Are you involved in any other community groups or activities? Yes ___ No ___

If yes, give details _____

If yes, is your involvement linked to your participation in Sure Start?

Yes ___ No ___

If yes, comment: _____

Have you got friendly with any other parents through your involvement in Sure Start? A lot ___ A few ___ One or two ___ No ___

Thinking of the parents and children you see at different Sure Start activities, are they:

More often than not the same faces at different activities ___

More often than not different people at different activities ___

About half and half ___

Don't know/Don't participate enough to say ___

Thinking about the parents that regularly participate in Sure Start activities, are they:

Mainly parents who have always tended to get involved in community activities ___

Mainly parents that have not got involved in activities before ___

About half and half ___

Don't know ___

Have your children made any new friends through your/their involvement with Sure Start? A lot ___ A few ___ One or two ___ None ___

Can you sum what, if any, difference Sure Start has made to you and your family? _____

(SHOW LIST OF SURE START ACTIVITIES)

Looking at this list of Sure Start activities, are there ...

A lot more than you would have thought ____

Slightly more ____

About the same ____

Slightly less ____

A lot less ____

Can you see anything on this list that you did not know about before but that you or your family might participate in? (list by number) _____

Can you think of any other activities or services that Sure Start might be able to provide to help you improve the life chances of your under 4's?

Thinking about keeping you informed about Sure Start activities, what ways do you prefer to get this information? (Tick all that apply)

1. Outreach workers calling at your home
2. Leaflets/information given out by workers out and about in the community
3. Leaflets etc. put through your door
4. Signs erected in Seacroft specifically to provide information about Sure Start
5. Notice Boards at schools/nurseries/GP surgeries
6. Notice Board at Tesco
7. Notices in local shops (eg post office)
8. Local radio (if so, which one)
9. Local newspaper (if so, which one)
10. Health Visitors
11. Other professionals (eg social workers)
12. Free Phone
13. Word of mouth (eg other parents)
14. Other means? (SPECIFY) _____

Sure Start hopes to help families give their under 4's a better start in life. What things do you think give children a good start in life? _____

Of these things which do you think is the most important? _____

If Sure Start only provided activities and services for parents and children under 4, does this present any problems for you when it comes to participating in these activities? _____

Sure Start has 4 main national targets to reach, how important do you think these targets are when it comes to improving the life chances for under 4's?

a) reduce the number of children who are re-registered on the child protection register:
Very imp ___ Quite imp ___ Neither/nor ___ Not very imp ___ Not at all ___

b) reduce the number of women who continue to smoke during pregnancy:
Very imp ___ Quite imp ___ Neither/nor ___ Not very imp ___ Not at all ___

c) reduce the number of children aged 4 with speech and language problems:
Very imp ___ Quite imp ___ Neither/nor ___ Not very imp ___ Not at all ___

d) reduce the number of children under 4 living in workless households:
Very imp ___ Quite imp ___ Neither/nor ___ Not very imp ___ Not at all ___

Are you a member of a library: Yes ___ No ___
If yes, which one _____

Is your child under 4 a member of a library: Yes ___ No ___
If yes, which one _____

About how often do you take books out for your child _____

Do you or your family get any support from any other agencies (e.g. health visitors, speech and language therapists, social services etc.)? Yes ___ No ___
Details _____

Finally, thinking about evaluating Seacroft Sure Start, do you think it would be a good idea if Seacroft parents did some of the evaluation themselves?
Yes ___ No ___ Don't know ___

Would you be interested in helping to do some evaluation?
Yes, definitely ___ Yes, possibly ___ No ___
If interested, in what ways: _____

In this case is it OK to contact you in the future? Yes ___ No ___

Would you be prepared to be interviewed again, in a few months' time?
Yes ___ No ___