

# **Swindon Sure Start Parents' Survey**

## **Report**

**Research Study Conducted for  
Swindon Sure Start**

**September 2002**



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# Contents

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<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Profile of Families</b>	<b>4</b>
Household composition	4
Work Status	6
Level of Income	8
Profile of the Main Carer	9
Child Profile	11
<b>Quality of Life</b>	<b>12</b>
Child's Quality of Life	12
Views of Area for Bringing up Children	13
<b>Overall Satisfaction with Services</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Health Services</b>	<b>15</b>
Use and Demand for Health Services	15
<b>Childcare, Play and Learning Services</b>	<b>17</b>
Use and Demand for Childcare, Play and Learning Services	17
Availability of Childcare	19
Priorities for Childcare Provision	20
<b>Parent Support Services</b>	<b>21</b>
Use and Demand for Parent Support Services	21
<b>Information on Services</b>	<b>23</b>
Informed?	23
Information Sources	24
<b>Awareness and Involvement</b>	<b>25</b>
Awareness	25
Getting Involved	26
Ways of Getting Involved	26
<b>Statistical Reliability</b>	<b>27</b>



# Introduction

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## Background

This document provides a summary of the findings from a quantitative research study among the parents and guardians of children aged 0-3 years, carried out by MORI Social Research Institute on behalf of the Swindon Sure Start Programme.

## Background and Objectives

The research aimed to provide reliable information on the profile, needs and priorities of parents with children aged under 4 in the Swindon Sure Start area. Results will be used to inform the development of services and initiatives for families in the area. The survey also provides a baseline measure against which future progress can be measured.

The survey covered a range of subject areas, in particular:

- demographic profile of parents and children, including age, gender, ethnicity, household income and employment status;
- satisfaction with neighbourhood and priorities for improvements;
- use and demand for local services and facilities for children aged under 4 in the area, including health, parenting, childcare, play and learning services;
- demand for childcare services;
- level of information about local childcare services;
- parental awareness of, and involvement in the Sure Start work programme.

## Methodology

MORI conducted 183 interviews with parents of children aged 0-3 years in the Swindon Sure Start area. Quotas were set on age of child and area (Penhill and Pinehurst) to ensure representativeness. The survey was aimed at the parent or guardian with main responsibility for bringing up the child – most commonly the mother. Fieldwork was carried out by MORI interviewers face-to-face in respondents' homes, during the period 13 July – 3 August 2002. The data are unweighted.

## **Interpretation of data**

Where possible, questions have been benchmarked against nationally representative surveys, to provide context for interpreting the findings. However, it must be noted that some of the comparisons must be treated with caution, given that the audience of the national data is sometimes different – eg based on all households with children, or all residents – rather than parents of children aged 0-3 years. Furthermore, different question wordings and categories have sometimes been used.

It should be noted that a sample, not the entire population of the main carers in the Swindon Sure Start area has been interviewed. This means that all the results are subject to sampling tolerances, and that not all differences are statistically significant. A guide to statistical reliability is provided in the appendices.

It is worth emphasising that the survey deals with parents' perceptions rather than facts; in particular, these perceptions may not accurately reflect the level of services actually being delivered.

## **Publication of the Data**

As with all our studies, these findings are subject to MORI's standard Terms & Conditions of Contract. Any press release or publication of the findings of this Survey requires the advance approval of MORI. Such approval will only be refused on the grounds of inaccuracy or misinterpretation.

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*Carol Gay*

*September 2002*

*Emma Wallace*

*David Peckham*

*Salome Simoes*

# Executive Summary

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- The Swindon Sure Start area has a lower than average proportion of two-parent households and a younger age profile. Most main carers of children under 4 are women and there are fewer working carers than average. Compared with the national average, weekly household incomes in the area are relatively low
- Parents say that improving opportunities to play outside and providing better access to play facilities would most improve their child's quality of life. Less than half (46%) are satisfied with their local area as a place to bring up children, whilst two in five are actively dissatisfied
- Over half of parents are dissatisfied with local facilities and services for children. However, dissatisfied parents tend to be those who do not feel informed about the facilities and services available to them.
- Use of health services is almost universal (98%), with GPs the most frequently accessed service. Services parents would most like to make more use of are doctors, dentists and the community nurse.
- A majority of parents do not feel well-informed about local services and facilities for under fours in their area. Parents would most prefer to receive information about these services via leaflets through the door or from doctors' surgeries.
- A majority of parents (77%) have heard of Swindon Sure Start and half would like to get more involved with the programme. Being consulted on a panel and helping to find out the views and needs of local parents are the most frequently mentioned ways of getting involved.

# Profile of Families

The Swindon Sure Start area has a lower than average proportion of two-parent households and a younger age profile. Most main carers of children under 4 are women and there are fewer working carers than average. Compared with the national average, weekly household incomes in the area are relatively low.

## Household composition

Three in five Swindon Sure Start area households are two-parent households, which represents a lower proportion than is found among households with 0-4 year olds in England as a whole. Correspondingly, more parents in the Sure Start area are single, with the proportion of one-parent households in the area twice that of households with young children in England as a whole.

### QD3 Marital status

	Swindon Sure Start area	England HH with <5s <sup>1</sup>	Great Britain HH with <16s <sup>2</sup>
Base: All respondents (183)	%	%	%
Two parent household	60	82	74
Married and living with a husband/wife	39	62	-
Living with a partner	21	20	-
One parent household	39	19	26
Single	32	13	-
Widowed	-	1	-
Divorced/separated	7	5	-
Refused	-	*	-

Source: MORI

<sup>1</sup> MORI Omnibus Aggregate 2001: Households with children under 5

<sup>2</sup> Living in Britain: Results from the 2000/2001 General Household Survey, Table 3.6

The majority of parents of children under 4 also have older children living in their household; three in five have four to ten year olds and one in five (18%) have 11-15 year olds. Aside from their partners and children, few parents live with other family members.

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**QD    Which of these people do you have living with you?**

**4**

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<i>Base: All respondents (183)</i>	<i>%</i>
My partner/spouse	58
My parents	2
My brother/s and sister/s	2
Other adults	2
Child/ren aged 0-3	100
Child/ren aged 4-10	60
Child/ren aged 11-15	18
Child/ren aged 16+	7

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*Source: MORI*

## **Work Status**

Respondents (the main carer of the child) were asked to give the current economic status for themselves and their partner (where applicable).

Three in ten (29%) main carers are currently working, with the majority of these in part-time employment (22%). This is a far lower proportion than that of women in households with children under five in England as a whole (47%). However, it should be noted that slightly higher levels would be expected for this national comparison group as five year olds may be at school, making it easier for parents to go out to work. The majority of main carers in Swindon Sure Start area (60%) are at home not seeking work. Seven per cent are unemployed, whilst only one per cent are registered as seeking work.

Within the sub-groups, Pinehurst has a significantly higher proportion of working carers than are found in Penhill (37% vs. 21%).

As might be expected, main carers without a partner are far less likely to be working. Around eight in ten (78%) of this group are at home not seeking work whilst only thirteen per cent are working full- or part-time compared with two in five for main carers with a partner (40%).

Among the partners, four in five are working and three quarters are working full-time. Around one in ten (9%) are unemployed and four per cent are at home not seeking work.

In contrast to the employment status of main carers, there are no significant differences in the employment status of partners in Pinehurst and Penhill.

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**Q17 Which statement on this card applies to you (and your partner)?**

	Swindon Sure Start Respondent	Swindon Sure Start Partner	England households with children <5 <sup>3</sup>	
	Base: All (183)	Base: All with a partner (107)	Women	Men
	%	%	%	%
Working	29	79	47	87
Full-time (30+ hours/week)	7	75	22	85
Part-time (29 hours or less/week)	22	5	25	2
Unemployed	7	9	4	7
Registered	1	8	3	6
Not registered, but seeking work	5	1	1	1
At home/not seeking work	60	4	45	1
Long-term sick/disabled	3	5	1	3
Retired	-	-	1	1
Full-time education	1	-	3	3
Other	1	2	N/A	N/A

Source: MORI

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<sup>3</sup> MORI Omnibus Aggregates 2001: Women and men with under 5s in household

## Level of Income

Around one in ten (8%) Swindon Sure Start area parents have a household income of below £100 and a similar proportion have incomes over £400. Over half (55%) earn less than £200 a week compared with a third (34%) in England as a whole.

The mean income for the Sure Start area is £211 per week. There are no significant differences between mean incomes in the Pinehurst and Penhill areas.

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*QD7 Could you please tell me the group in which you would place your total household income from all sources, before tax and other deductions?*

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	Swindon Sure Start	England <sup>4</sup>
Base: All respondents (183)	%	%
£40-£59	1	-
£60-£79	4	-
£80-£99	3	-
Under £100	8	14
£100-£199	47	20
£200-£399	28	26
£400-£499	5	10
£500 or more	3	29
Don't know	6	-
Refused/not stated	4	-

*Source: MORI*

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<sup>4</sup> Survey of English Housing 1998/9

## Profile of the Main Carer

Almost all main carers of under 4s in the Sure Start area are female (95%), although there is a small minority of male carers (5%).

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### QD2 Gender

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<i>Base: All respondents (183)</i>	<i>%</i>
Female	95
Male	5

*Source: MORI*

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Main carers in the area tend to be younger than the national average for women caring for under fives. The Swindon Sure Start area has a far greater proportion of main carers who are 24 or under (38% vs. 3%) and the majority of carers in the area are under 35 years old (86%). There are correspondingly fewer main carers aged over 45 (1% vs. 23%).

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### QD1 Age

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	<b>Swindon Sure Start</b>	<b>England<sup>5</sup></b>
<i>Base: All respondents (183)</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>
16-24	38	3
25-34	48	20
35-44	14	50
45-54	1	23

*Source: MORI*

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<sup>5</sup> MORI Omnibus Aggregates 2001: Women with children under 5 in household

## Ethnicity

The Swindon Sure Start area is ethnically homogenous: almost all parents in the area are white with two per cent describing themselves as from Black and Minority ethnic groups. This represents a slightly higher proportion of white respondents than is found nationally, where seven per cent of parents of 0-4 year olds are from other ethnic groups.

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### *QD6 Which of these best describes you?*

	Swindon Sure Start	England <sup>6</sup>
<i>Base: All respondents (183)</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>
White	97	93
Black Caribbean	1	1
Black African	-	2
Black Other	-	1
Indian	-	1
Pakistani	-	1
Bangladeshi	1	*
Chinese	-	1
Other	-	2
Refused/not stated	2	*

*Source: MORI*

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<sup>6</sup> MORI Omnibus (Parents with children aged 0-4)

## Child Profile

Seven in ten parents have one child under four in their household, with three in ten saying they have either two or three children aged four years or younger.

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**Q2     *And how many children aged under 4 years old are there usually living here?***

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<i>Base: All households (183)</i>	<i>%</i>
One	70
Two	27
Three	3

*Source: MORI*

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There is an even distribution of age among the children who are the focus of the interview (the *selected child*) with a similar picture shown among all children under four in the household.

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**Q3     *Could you tell me the age of each child in the household?***

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	<b>All children under 4 in household</b>	<b>Selected Child</b>
<i>Base: All children under four in household (243); All selected children (183)</i>	(243)	(183)
	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>
Under 1 year	24	25
1 year but less than 2	24	26
2 years but less than 3	24	25
3 years but less than 4	27	25

*Source: MORI*

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# Quality of Life

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*Parents say that improving opportunities to play outside and providing better access to play facilities would most improve their child's quality of life. Less than half (46%) are satisfied with their local area as a place to bring up children, whilst two in five are actively dissatisfied*

## Child's Quality of Life

Improving opportunities to play outside and providing better access to play facilities are parents' top priorities for improving their child's quality of life (43% and 42% respectively). Parents in Pinehurst and those with two to three year olds are particularly likely to identify a need to improve opportunities for playing outside (51% each).

Other key issues for parents are improving crime and safety (36%), more opportunities to play with other children (32%) and a nicer local environment (27%).

Among Penhill parents, better housing rises in importance: around two in five (36%) feel that improving housing would improve their child's quality of life.

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**Q4    Which two or three of these things, if any, most need improving to improve the quality of life for selected child?**

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<i>Base: All respondents (183)</i>	<i>%</i>
More opportunities to play outside	43
Better access play facilities	42
Improved crime/safety	36
More opportunities to play with other children	32
Nicer local environment	27
Better housing	25
More space to play	21
More opportunities for learning	16
Better access to childcare	9
Better health generally	6
More toys to play with	4
Better quality food	3
Other	1

*Source: MORI*

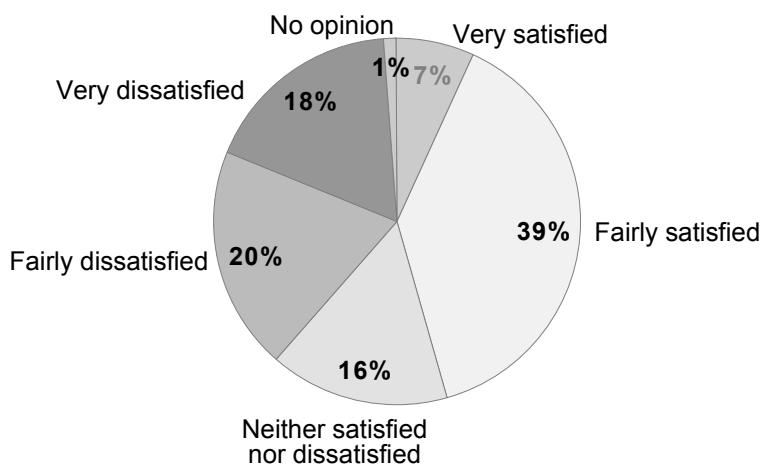
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## Views of Area for Bringing up Children

Around half of parents (46%) are satisfied with their local area as a place to bring up children, including seven per cent who are *very* satisfied. Two in five (38%) are dissatisfied with their neighbourhood while one in five are *very* dissatisfied with their local area as a place to bring up children under four.

### Views of Area for Bringing up Children

Q *In general, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with this neighbourhood as a place to bring up children under 4 years old?*



Base: All respondents, aged 16+, interviewed 13 July-3 August (183)

Source: MORI

# Overall Satisfaction with Services

*Over half of parents are dissatisfied with local facilities and services for children. However, dissatisfied parents tend to be those who do not feel informed about the facilities and services available to them.*

Over half of parents in Pinehurst and Penhill (54%) Sure Start area are dissatisfied overall with the facilities and services for young children and families in their area compared with three in ten (31%) who say they are satisfied.

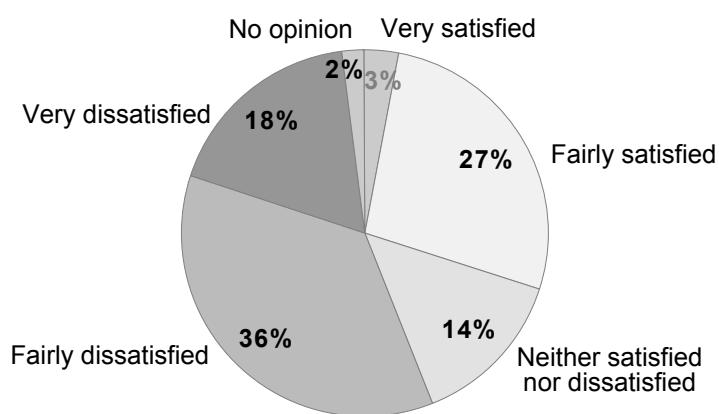
Feelings of dissatisfaction with services may be linked to how well-informed parents feel about them: three in five (62%) of those who say they do not feel informed about services are dissatisfied with them.

In contrast, those who *do* feel informed are more likely to be satisfied: half of 'informed' parents are happy with service provision.

Those on lower incomes (under £180 per week) are also more likely to be dissatisfied with their services (63% dissatisfied).

## Overall Satisfaction with Services

Q *Thinking about all the facilities and services for young children under four and their families in this area, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with them overall?*



Base: All respondents, aged 16+, interviewed 13 July-3 August (183)

Source: MORI

# Health Services

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*Use of health services is almost universal (98%), with GPs the most frequently accessed service. Services parents would most like to make more use of are doctors, dentists and the community nurse.*

## Use and Demand for Health Services

Levels of use of health services in Pinehurst and Penhill Sure Start area are broadly in line with the Sure Start areas surveyed in the 2000 baseline study, although use of the community nurse or health visitor is lower (by 11 percentage points).

Almost all parents (98%) have used at least one healthcare service in their local area in the last twelve months. GPs are the most frequently accessed service, and nine in ten (93%) have visited their doctor within the last year. Over half have seen their community nurse or health visitor (55%), four in ten (44%) have visited a dentist and a third have seen a midwife (35%).

As might be expected, those with children a year old or under are more likely to have seen a midwife or a community nurse (51% and 66% respectively).

Over half of parents (55%) identify a service they would like to use more frequently than they do at the moment. One in five (22%) mention they would like to use their GP more, a proportion rising to two in five (38%) in Pinehurst. Dentists (18%) and community nurses (11%) are other services parents would like to make greater use of.

**Q7 Which health services, if any, have you used in the last twelve months?**

**Q8 And which would you like to use, or use more frequently than you do at the moment?**

	Service Usage		Demand
	Swindon Sure Start	Sure Start Case Study Areas <sup>7</sup>	Swindon Sure Start
<i>Base: All respondents (183)</i>	%	%	%
Doctors/GP	93	87	22
Community nurse/health visitor	55	66	11
Dentist	44	-	18
Midwives	35	34	2
Advice about baby/child health	22	27	8
Ante-natal classes/birth classes	18	15	1
Advice on contraception/unplanned pregnancy	14	12	2
Advice on healthy pregnancy (e.g nutritional advice)	11	13	-
Advice and support on breastfeeding	11	10	1
Counselling/support for mothers with post natal depression	11	5	6
Advice on preventing accidents in the home	9	5	4
Asthma clinic	9		7
Social worker	9		2
Advice/support on giving up smoking	7		2
Advice/support on alcohol/drug addition	3		2
Other health service	1	-	-
None of these	2	6	45

*Source: MORI*

<sup>7</sup> MORI/Sure Start Unit, Parents Baseline Survey, 10 Sure Start Areas, February 2000

# Childcare, Play and Learning Services

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*Around three quarters of parents have used a childcare, play and learning service in the last year. The most popular services are parks and play areas and mother and toddler groups. However, the service parents would like to use more are pre-school playgroups. Parents consider three to four hours to be the optimum period of time needed for childcare on a typical working day. In addition, 9am – 5pm is the most popular time for increasing the availability of childcare.*

## Use and Demand for Childcare, Play and Learning Services

Seven in ten parents (72%) have used a childcare, play and learning service in the last 12 months. Six in ten (61%) have used the help of friends or relatives. The most popular services prove to be parks and play areas (38%), mother and toddler groups (24%), nursery schools (19%) and libraries (19%).

Parents aged 27 or over are more likely to have used a library in the last year (25%). Respondents earning over £180 per week are more likely than average to use mother and toddler groups (33%). Those without a partner in the household are more likely to make use of their relatives for childcare (59%).

### Demand

Nine in ten respondents would like to use a childcare, play or learning service more than they currently do. Pre-school playgroups, parks and play areas, and mother and toddler groups are the services most frequently mentioned (28%, 23% and 21% respectively).

Demand for nursery classes is strongest among those on lower incomes and a quarter of those earning £180 a week or less would like to use nursery classes or schools more often than they do. Parents of children a year old or younger are significantly more likely to want to use mother and toddler groups more frequently (28%).

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**Q9 Which of the following childcare, play and learning services have you used in the last 12 months?**

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**Q10 And which would you like to use, or use more frequently than you do at the moment?**

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	Service Usage		Demand
	Swindon Sure Start	Sure Start Case Study Areas <sup>8</sup>	Swindon Sure Start
<i>Base: All respondents (183)</i>	%	%	%
Relative	50		10
Friend	42		5
Parks and play areas	38	-	23
Mother/toddler groups	24	-	21
Nursery classes/school	19	-	18
Libraries	19	-	5
Sports/leisure centres/facilities	16	-	11
Pre-school playgroups	15		28
Family centres	8	-	10
Toy libraries	7	-	7
Paid baby-sitter/baby sitting scheme	7	1	5
Play-schemes	4		16
Part-time childcare/shoppers creche	3		4
Full day care nursery	2		7
Childminder	2	3	2
After-school club	2		5
Specialist facilities for children with special needs/disabilities	2	2	1
Other	3	6	2
None of these	11	N/A	10

*Source: MORI*

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<sup>8</sup> MORI/Sure Start Unit, Parents Baseline Survey, 10 Sure Start Areas, February 2000

## Availability of Childcare

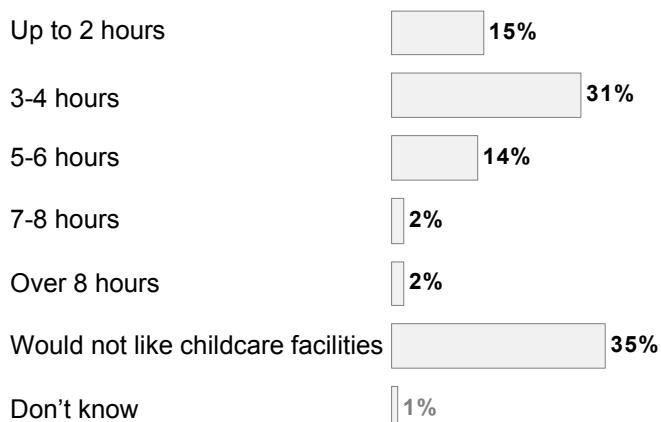
Given the choice, parents are most likely (31%) to consider three to four hours as the optimum period of time for which childcare facilities should be available on a typical working day.

Under two hours of childcare is the next most popular option (15%) followed by five to six hours (14%). Few parents think that childcare is required for over six hours on a working day (4%).

A third would not like childcare facilities to be available at all (35%) and this rises to around a half of parents of children aged one year or younger (45%).

## Availability of Childcare

**Q On a typical working day, how many hours a day, if any, would you ideally like to have childcare facilities available for ....?**



Base: All respondents, aged 16+, interviewed 13 July-3 August (183)

Source: MORI

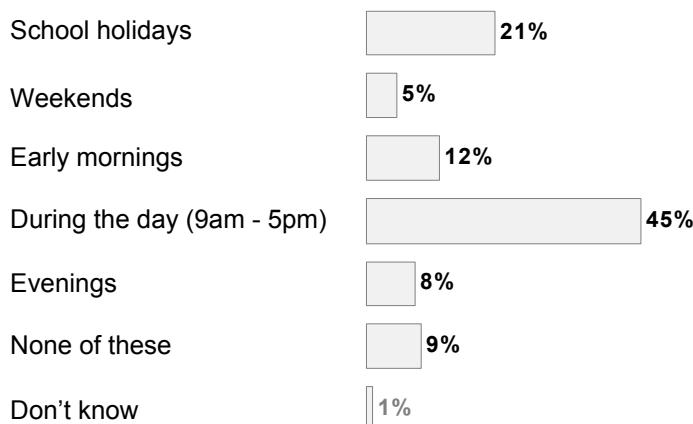
## Priorities for Childcare Provision

The most popular priorities for childcare provision are broadly based around regular work hours. Around half (45%) would prioritise availability of childcare during the day (9am – 5pm) while one in five would highlight the school holiday periods (21%).

Smaller proportions want improvements in the early morning (12%), evenings (8%), or at weekends (5%). However, those without a partner in the household are more likely to see evening provision of childcare as a priority (13%).

## Priorities for Childcare Provision

**Q If it was possible to improve provision of childcare at just one of the following times, which you prioritise?**



Base: All respondents, aged 16+, interviewed 13 July-3 August (183)

Source: MORI

# Parent Support Services

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*Parent support services are more widely used in the Swindon Sure Start area than in other Sure Start areas. Financial advice and drop-ins to meet other parents are the most popular services.*

## Use and Demand for Parent Support Services

Parent support services are more widely used in Pinehurst and Penhill than in other Sure Start areas. Around half of parents (46%) have used at least one of their local parent support services within the last year. This is higher than the 26% found in ten case study Sure Start areas that were surveyed prior to services being rolled out in 2000.<sup>9</sup>

Drop-ins to meet other parents is the most popular parent-oriented service (16%) followed by support for parents of children with behavioural problems (9%).

Financial support, in terms of advice on benefits or money, is the most popular service overall, with two in five saying they use this (18%).

### Demand

Over half of parents would like to use or increase their usage of available parent and financial support services (52%). Parental drop-in services are most in demand and one in seven respondents (15%) would like to make use of these. Advice on benefits (11%) and support for children who have behaviour difficulties (13%) are other services in demand.

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<sup>9</sup> MORI/Sure Start Unit, Parents Baseline Survey, 10 Sure Start Areas, February 2000

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**Q13 Which of the following services that support you as a parent have you used in the last 12 months?**

**Q14 And which would you like to use, or use more frequently than you do at the moment?**

	Service Usage		Demand
	Swindon Sure Start	Sure Start Case Study Areas <sup>10</sup>	Swindon Sure Start
<i>Base: All respondents (183)</i>	%	%	%
Advice on benefits/money advice	18	13	11
Drop in where you can meet other parents	16	5	15
Support/advice for parents with children who have behavioural problems	9	4	13
Any other place or people that can help you or your family	7	-	10
Support from Social Services	6	-	2
Support for parents with special needs	5	3	3
Parenting classes/support	4	3	8
Single parent group	2	2	8
Advice on dealing with family breakdown	2	1	1
Other	1	1	1
None of these	54	74	46

*Source: MORI*

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<sup>10</sup> MORI/Sure Start Unit, Parents Baseline Survey, 10 Sure Start Areas, February 2000

# Information on Services

*A majority of parents do not feel well-informed about local services and facilities for under fours in their area. Parents would prefer to receive information via leaflets through the door or from doctors' surgeries.*

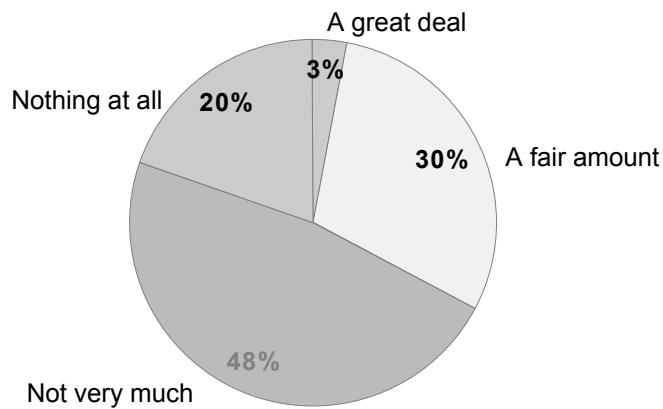
## Informed?

Over two thirds (67%) of parents do not feel well-informed about the local facilities and services for children under four that are available to them. Indeed, one in five say they know 'nothing at all' about these services. In contrast only three per cent say they know 'a great deal' about the services offered in their neighbourhood.

Parents on higher incomes are more likely to feel that they have a good knowledge of what is available to them (42%). Those without a partner in the household are significantly less likely to feel informed, and around four in five (79%) say they know little or nothing about services in their area.

## Information on Services

Q *How much do you feel you know about the facilities and services for young children under four and their families that are available in this area?*



Base: All respondents, aged 16+, interviewed 13 July-3 August (183)

Source: MORI

## Information Sources

Two in three parents would prefer to receive information about local services through leaflets through the door. Doctors' surgeries (43%), health visitors (33%), local stores (31%) and schools (31%) are other popular information sources.

Penhill residents are significantly more likely to want to receive their information from health visitors (43%), while those on lower incomes (under £180 per week) are more in favour of getting information from local stores and post offices (40%).

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**Q16    *Through what sources would you prefer to find out about local services for families with children under four years in the area?***

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*Base: All respondents (183)*

*%*

<b>Adverts in</b>	<b>32</b>
Local newspaper/magazine	30
Yellow Pages/local directory	6
<b>Adverts/posters/leaflets in</b>	<b>62</b>
Doctors' surgeries/clinics	43
Local shops/post offices	31
Community centres	13
Public libraries	13
Churches	3
<b>Other contacts/organisations</b>	<b>92</b>
Leaflets through the door	66
Health visitor	33
School/school teacher	31
Other parents/word of mouth	19
The Internet	9
The Children's Information Service	6
Social services/registration and inspection/under 8's officer	3

*Source: MORI*

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# Awareness and Involvement

*A majority of parents (77%) have at least heard of Sure Start and half would like to get more involved with the programme. Being consulted on a panel and helping to find out the views and needs of local parents are the most popular ways of getting involved.*

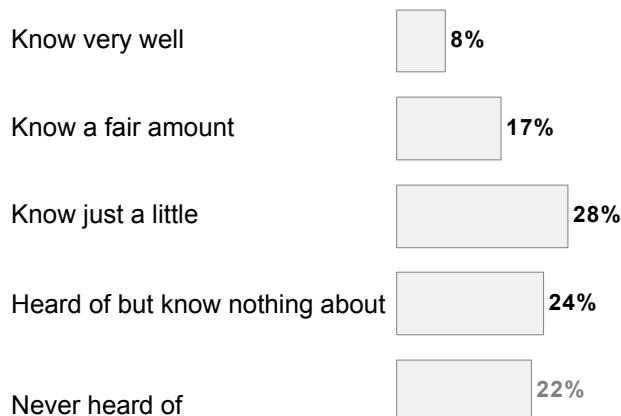
## Awareness

Over half of respondents (55%) know at least a little about the Pinehurst and Penhill Sure Start programme and over three quarters (77%) have at least heard of it. One in five (22%) had never heard of the programme.

As might be expected, respondents who feel informed about services in their area are also more likely to be aware of Sure Start: over half of this group (53%) know at least a fair amount about the Pinehurst and Penhill programme. In contrast, those without a partner in the household are less likely to feel informed and over four in five (83%) know little or nothing about the programme.

### Awareness of Sure Start

Q *How well, if at all, do you know the Pinehurst and Penhill Sure Start programme?*



Base: All respondents, aged 16+, interviewed 13 July-3 August (183)

Source: MORI

## **Getting Involved**

Half of respondents would like to get involved in the Sure Start programme (49%). Younger parents (aged 17-26) are more likely to want to get involved (61%) as are parents who are not working (54%).

There is significant difference in interest in involvement in the programme between Pinehurst and Penhill. Three in five parents in Penhill want to get involved compared with two in five (38%) in Pinehurst. However, this can in part be attributed to the greater proportion of working carers in Pinehurst who are less likely to have time available.

## **Ways of Getting Involved**

A third of those who would like to be involved (36%) would like to be consulted on a panel, one in three (28%) would interview or meet local parents and one in five (21%) would like to be involved in decision making on Sure Start spending.

In terms of helping with local services, around a third would like to work as a volunteer for parent support groups and childcare services for the under fours and their parents (34% and 32% respectively).

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### **Q21    In what ways might you like to be involved?**

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<i>Base: All interested in getting involved</i>	<i>(90)</i>
	<i>%</i>
Being on a panel of parents who are written to ask for their opinions on local issues and developments	36
Being involved in finding out the views and needs of parents in the area – eg interviewing, or meeting with local parents	28
Being involved in making decisions about how the Sure Start money is spent locally	21
Being a member of the Sure Start partnership board	6
Working as a volunteer in local services for the under fours and their parents:	
Parent support groups	34
Childcare	32
Health	14
Education/training	13
Breastfeeding support group	4
Other	1
None of these	2

*Source: MORI*

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# Statistical Reliability

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It should be remembered that a sample, not the entire population of parents in the Penhill and Pinehurst Sure Start area were interviewed for this survey. Therefore the figures obtained may not be exactly those if everybody had been interviewed (the “true” values). However, the variation between the sample results and the “true” values can be predicted from a knowledge of the size of the samples on which the results are based, the size of the true population of interest, and the number of times that a particular answer is given. The confidence with which this prediction can be made is usually chosen to be 95% - that is, the chances are 95 in 100 that the “true” value will fall within a specified range.

The table below illustrates the predicted ranges for different sample sizes and per centage results at the “95% confidence interval”, based on a total population size of around 650 households with children under four in the area.

Sample size	Approximate sampling tolerances applicable to percentages at or near these levels		
	10% or 90%	30% or 70%	50%
50	± 8	± 12	± 14
100	± 6	± 8	± 9
150	± 4	± 7	± 7
183	± 4	± 6	± 6

*Source: MORI*

For example, with a total sample size of 183 completed interviews, where 50% give a particular answer, the chances are 19 in 20 that the “true” value (which would have been obtained if the whole population had been interviewed) will fall within the range of ±6 percentage points from the sample result; in fact the actual result is proportionately more likely to be closer to the centre (50%) than the extremes of the range (44% or 56%).

When the results are compared between separate sub-groups within a sample, different results may be obtained. The difference may be “real,” or it may occur by chance (because not everyone in the population has been interviewed). To test if the difference is a real one - i.e. if it is “statistically significant” - it is again necessary to know the total population, the size of the samples, the percentage giving a certain answer, and the degree of confidence chosen.

The table below shows the minimum difference that must be evident between different sub-groups of the sample for the difference to be ‘significant’ at the “95% confidence interval”.

Sample sizes	Differences required for significance at or near these percentage levels		
	10% or 90%	30% or 70%	50%
50 and 183	± 9	± 14	± 15
100 and 183	7	11	12
150 and 183	6	9	10

*Source: MORI*

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## **Topline Results**

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# **Computer Tables**

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