

LOCAL EVALUATION STRATEGY SURE START TILBURY: FEBRUARY 2004 TO JANUARY 2005

BACKGROUND

Having just completed our three-year evaluation we have identified a number of areas we need to develop further.

We have outlined below our evaluation strategy for the forthcoming year looking specifically at:

- Targeting specific evaluation
- Cost Effectiveness
- Health Impact assessment
- Monthly Focus Groups
- Home Visits to families not currently accessing our services
- Evaluating the Sure Start Tilbury Partnership
- Evaluating the needs of parents accessing the Nursery

1. TARGET SPECIFIC EVALUATION

Objective 1: Improving Social and Emotional Development

To improve social and emotional development - an increase in the number of babies/young children with normal levels of personal, social and emotional development.

All families with newborn babies to be visited in the first two months of their babies' life and given information about the services and support available to them.

To increase the involvement of fathers.

To encourage high self esteem in parents and their children.

To raise parental awareness of how to promote personal, social and emotional development in children.

To raise awareness and offer support to the families where the mother is suffering from postnatal depression.

To increase the number of teenage parents who access our services.

FOCUS OF EVALUATION

All projects will continue to evaluate their effectiveness which we will monitor through quarterly reviews.

However, we plan to undertake a specific piece of evaluation in respect of post natal depressed mothers. This will entail tracking Sure Start activities attended and visiting everyone who was identified on the Edinburgh Post Natal Depression scale over the last year. They will be asked to give feedback on the services they received, looking at what was helpful, what was unhelpful and what could have been done differently.

Objective 2: Improving Health:

A 6-percentage point reduction in the proportion of mothers who smoke during pregnancy.

Information and guidance on breastfeeding, nutrition, hygiene and safety.

Reduction in the number of children admitted to hospital as an emergency with gastro enteritis, a lower respiratory tract infection or severe injury.

Antenatal advice and support available for all pregnant women and their families.

Reduction in the number of fathers who smoke during their partner's pregnancy.

Reduction in the number of parents of under 4's who smoke.

FOCUS OF EVALUATION

All projects will continue to evaluate their effectiveness which we will monitor through quarterly reviews.

A specific piece of work will be undertaken identifying parents who have stopped smoking during pregnancy and beyond, to ascertain what services were useful to help people quit and stay quit.

Objective 3: Improving Learning

An increase in the numbers of children having normal levels of communication, language and literacy when they start school.

An increase in the numbers of children with satisfactory speech and language development at 2 years of age.

Encourage people to read to their children and use local libraries
Identify hard to reach families and offer support prior to the child's first birthday.

FOCUS OF EVALUATION

All projects will continue to evaluate their effectiveness which we will monitor through quarterly reviews.

All two-year-old children will still undergo the Sure Start Language measure at their second year birthday visit and the results sent to City University.

Objective 4: Improving the availability, accessibility, affordability and quality of childcare

In operational programmes a 12% reduction in the proportion of young children aged 0 - 4 living in households where no - one is working by March 2006.

To establish Children's Centres in areas of disadvantage, extending core Sure Start services.

To increase the uptake of training opportunities for parents/cares of children under 4.

To have effective links with Jobcentre plus, local training providers and further/higher education centres.

FOCUS OF EVALUATION

All projects will continue to evaluate their effectiveness which we will monitor through quarterly reviews.

We are just in the process of setting up a system for collecting baseline data on parents of under 4's returning to work or starting training.

2. COST EFFECTIVENESS

The Sure Start Finance Manager is working on a detailed cost analysis in respect of each of our projects. This work should be completed by the end of June 2003 and in conjunction with our evaluation work, will inform the Partnership Board 's decisions as to which projects are likely to continue to be viable

3. HEALTH IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The Director of Public Health and the Director of Social Services proposed a Health Impact assessment about two years ago. There have been significant delays in this project due to structural changes in Health and the Sure Start Unit withdrawing their commitment to help fund with the funding. The work will now to be jointly funded by Public Health and Social Services

The main thrust of this Assessment will be a piece of work undertaken by Professor Woody Caan and his team from Anglia Polytechnic University, which is an evaluation fitting the NHS model of a Quality improvement Project. (see attached proposal).

In addition to this, a group of parents, under the supervision of the Assistant Director of Public Health have undergone a three day Participatory Awareness training to enable them to undertake work around collecting the community's views about Sure Start as well as building and strengthening local networks.

4. MONTHLY FOCUS GROUPS (Skippers Speak Easy)

We plan to start inviting a random selection of parents/carers/grandparents who have used Sure Start during the preceding year to these groups.

These sessions will be run informally, marketed as Skippers Speakeasy and the incentive for parents to attend is a free crèche place, refreshments and points.

The purpose of these groups will be to give parents the opportunity to voice their views in a confidential manner to someone who has not been involved in any of the activities and to discover the extent to which our services are meeting the needs of the local community and help to work towards targets.

Therefore parents who attended the 3-day Participatory Awareness training will also be involved in looking at imaginative ways to gather feedback from other parents during these focus group sessions.

5. HOME VISITS TO FAMILIES NOT CURRENTLY USING OUR SERVICES

About a half of the parents in Tilbury with children under 4 do not currently access our services. It is a reasonable supposition that about half of these do not need Sure Start input, however this leaves a significant number of people who we would define as hard to reach who do not attend any Sure Start activities but would probably benefit from doing so. Previous feedback from parents suggests that for many people it is hard to attend activities if people have no one to go with.

The Sure Start Tilbury Monitoring and Evaluation manager is planning to visit a random selection of parents within this category to try to discover why they do not use Sure Start and whether there are things we could do to facilitate this. A £5 WHS voucher will be offered to families who attend a Sure Start activity as a result of this visit.

6. EVALUATING THE SURE START TILBURY PARTNERSHIP

The Sure Start Tilbury Monitoring and Evaluation manager will evaluate the effectiveness of the programmes governance over the course of the coming year. The work will address the following areas:

1. To what extent the terms of reference are being followed and are still relevant to its optional functioning.
2. To what extent the Partnership is a true example of multi agency strategic working.
3. The role of parents on the Board.
4. To what extent the Partnership Board steers the direction of the programme.

7. EVALUATING THE NEEDS OF PARENTS ACCESSING THE NURSERY

As part of the 'Investors in People Award' which our Nursery is hoping to achieve, the Sure Start Tilbury Childcare Manager will be evaluating all parents whose children attend the nursery in order to ascertain whether they feel both their needs and the needs of their children are currently being met.

The questionnaire covers the following subjects:

- a. Work/training status
- b. Ethnicity
- c. The importance of various aspects of the daily running of the nursery
- d. How the different needs of each child are/are not being met