

REPORT TO: EDUCATION COMMITTEE- 15 NOVEMBER 2004

REPORT ON: CELEBRATING SURE START IN DUNDEE

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

REPORT NO: 776-2004

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This Report provides information on the outcomes of a recent independent evaluation of Dundee's Sure Start Strategy and seeks Education Committee approval for taking forward Sure Start Dundee until end of March 2006 to enhance and extend support and provision for children aged 0-3 and their families.

2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The AMA Consultancy have evaluated Sure Start in Dundee and produced a Report, "Celebrating Sure Start in Dundee". It is recommended that the Education Committee notes and approves the contents of the evaluation report and:

2.1 agrees to the publication and wider dissemination of "Celebrating Sure Start in Dundee" (copy attached to this report)

2.2 approves the continuation strategy as outlined in the Report

2.3 approves the proposals for expenditure of Sure Start Funding in the financial years 2004-5 and 2005-6 as outlined in Appendix 1 of this Report

2.4 remits the Director of Education to liaise with the Assistant Chief Executive, (Management) to continue the deployment of staff involved in Sure Start initiatives for the period of these proposals

3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The full cost of these proposals is £1,121,000 in each of the financial years 2004-5 and 2005-6. This will be met by funding provided to the Local Authority by the Scottish Executive. Appendix 1 of this Report provides a detailed financial outline.

4.0 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Delivery of the Sure Start Strategy will support access to the skills, knowledge and information required to enable children and families to play a full part in society

5.0 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Sure Start increases access by a wide range of children and families to services and provision to match local need.

6.0 BACKGROUND

- 6.1 Sure Start was established nationally in 2000 to improve services for children in the first years of life and to strengthen support for parents and families. Reports to the Education Committee describing the delivery of Sure Start in Dundee were approved in 2000 (refer to Report No 645-2000), in 2002 (refer to Report No. 269-2002) and in 2003 (refer to Report No 345-2003).

- 6.2 Funding for the continuation of Sure Start has been confirmed until 2006. This Report provides information on the outcomes of a recent independent evaluation of Sure Start in Dundee and within the context of the outcomes of this evaluation, now seeks approval for the continuation of the strategy as outlined in Appendix 2 of this Report. The continuation strategy has been developed to build on the evaluation and to address gaps in services identified by the Sure Start Strategy Group. This Group has membership from key Council Departments and services, health and the voluntary sector partners.

7.0 CONTINUATION PROPOSALS 2003/4

- 7.1 The key elements of the current Sure Start Strategy can be summarised under the following broad categories:

- Centre based provision which includes childcare and broader family support services
- Parent support groups and programmes
- Home Visiting Programmes
- Family Support Provision and Outreach Service Development
- Early Intervention Programmes for children aged 2-4
- Sports Development Initiative
- Training and staff development
- Partnership and collaboration across agencies and departments including health

- 7.2 The new education and social work co-located service models established at Ardler Primary School, Kirkton Nursery and Charleston Primary School have been key outcomes of Sure Start in Dundee.

- 7.3 The independent evaluation carried out in May 2004, by Ann McGuckin of the AMA Consultancy indicated that some 1091 children and 941 families were supported by Sure Start projects across the City. The Evaluation Report reflected that all of the planned outcomes established for Sure Start in Dundee

had been delivered and that in many cases the work had exceeded initial expectations.

7.4 The Sure Start Strategy and Implementation Group, which has representation from all key stakeholder groups has used the Evaluation Report to plan action around the continuation of Sure Start in Dundee. The strategic priorities which are set out in the Evaluation Report are designed to ensure that :

- the Sure Start projects work more effectively together to deliver better outcomes for children. We know that the projects together will have greater impact than any single project operating in isolation
- gaps in current services are identified and addressed through efficient use of Sure Start resources and strategies and through building the capacity of existing services to meet a wider range of need
- services continue to improve their accessibility and appeal to children and parents. We recognise that there are still significant numbers of children and families in Dundee unable or unwilling to access services which may be of benefit to them and that ensuring that services give parents and children what they want and need is a continuing challenge
- work is ongoing to support staff and policy makers to work together across department and agencies. We are aware of continuing barriers and difficulties associated with inter agency working and we are committed to ensuring that these are identified, better understood and addressed through delivery of effective support and shared professional development opportunities
- the successes of the Sure Start strategy are more effectively publicised and shared as tools for learning and development across the wider early years and childcare context and children's services as a whole

7.5 These proposals seek approval to continue to deliver the key elements of the strategy. In addition approval is sought at this stage to expand provision in 3 key areas:

- the deployment of a speech and language therapist in collaboration with Tayside NHS Trust,
- the deployment of an additional nursery nurse at Frances Wright Pre-School Centre
- the deployment of an additional nursery nurse at Woodlea Children's Centre In addition a new Community Resource is proposed for children aged 0-3 within Woodlea Children's Centre.

7.6 Deployment of a Speech and Language Therapist

7.7 Sure Start has focused primarily on building the capacity of existing early years services to meet a wider range of need. There is a significant number of young children across the City with delayed speech and language development. It is proposed to fund a post of Speech and Language Therapist

within the Health Service to build the capacity of nurseries and services to better address issues related to children's speech and language development. The new post holder will focus on delivering staff training and on working alongside staff to strengthen opportunities for promoting children's speech and language within everyday contexts.

7.8 The deployment of an additional nursery nurse at Frances Wright Pre-School Centre

7.9 Frances Wright Pre-School Centre is a specialist resource for pre-school children with complex additional support needs. The Centre was the first nursery service in Scotland to become accredited by the National Autistic Society. The staff at the Centre have built up a wealth of expertise and experience of supporting children with a diverse range of needs. Over the years staff have attended training and development opportunities to expand their knowledge and skills and the nursery is now recognised as a centre of excellence. However in recent years there has been a focus on trying to place young children including those with additional support needs in neighbourhood nurseries. This has been effectively supported by the establishment of the Sure Start Early Intervention projects and by the Pre-School Home Visiting Service. In addition a recent initiative has been to take the expertise from Frances Wright Centre into mainstream locations across the City to build up the confidence and skills of a larger group of staff and to ensure effective support for children in a range of private and voluntary sector locations in addition to local authority nurseries.

7.10 This initiative has been very successful with feedback from staff receiving the service consistently positive. To date, 5 children have been supported by this initiative and are now well settled into mainstream placements, a further 4 children are currently ongoing and another 2 children are on the waiting list for support. It is anticipated that demand for this service will grow once the service has been fully publicised across the sectors. These proposals therefore seek agreement for the deployment of one additional nursery nurse to Frances Wright to increase the potential of this initiative.

7.11 The deployment of an additional nursery nurse at Woodlea Children's Centre

7.12 Woodlea Children's Centre has established a new project for children aged 0-3. This provides a range of services including, drop in provision, parent groups and workshops, community crèche, health promotion, assessment of additional support needs and access to appropriate services. Currently 30 children aged 2-3 receive a sessional care service. In addition another 28 parents and their children attend weekly groups at the centre.

7.13 This service has been strongly supported by the Sure Start Health Visitor and therefore health promotion, including mental health and well being of some very young mothers, has been a key focus.

7.14 The service is in great demand and already there are clear signs that it is attracting a range of families with a range of need. As part of these continuation proposals it is therefore proposed to deploy an additional nursery nurse to support the continued development of this service

8.0 CONSULTATION

This report has been the subject of consultation with the Chief Executive, Depute Chief Executive (Support Services), Depute Chief Executive (Finance), Director of Social Work and Head of Communities

9.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

ANNE WILSON
Director of Education

Date: 3 November 2004

APPENDIX 1**FINANCIAL OUTLINE OF EXPENDITURE 2004-5 AND 2005-6****Financial Implications****Continuation of Sure start Strategy and Implementation**

<u>Financial Appendix</u>	<u>2004/05</u>	<u>2005/06</u>
Early Intervention Projects		
Woodlea Children's Centre	£60,548.00	£62,318.00
Kirkton Nursery & Child & Family Centre	£58,344.00	£60,047.00
Ardler Primary & Ardler Child & Family Centre	£45,029.00	£56,604.00
Resources to Support Early Intervention	£8,000.00	£8,000.00
Voluntary Sector Projects		
Dundee Sitter Service	£32,000.00	£32,000.00
Home Start Dundee	£35,155.00	£35,155.00
Pre School Home Visiting		
Staff Costs	£74,440.00	£76,600.00
Sports Development Initiative		
(Expand initiative in 2005/06)	£30,000.00	£60,000.00
Health Projects		
Sure Start Health Visitors (2)	£63,300.00	£65,000.00
Speech & Language Therapist (New from Jan 2005)	£9,000.00	£37,818.00
Early Years & Child Care Team	£295,360.00	£165,243.00
Developing Social Work Family Support Service	£332,000.00	£342,000.00
New Community Resources - 0- 3 Woodlea		
Existing Project	£22,826.00	£23,499.00
Expanded Project from Jan 2005	£4,870.00	£20,056.00
Frances Wright Outreach Project		
Existing Project	£45,258.00	£56,604.00
Expanded Project from Jan 2005	£4,870.00	£20,056.00
	£1,121,000.00	£1,121,000.00

APPENDIX 2

Celebrating Sure Start in Dundee

**Ann McGuckin
AMA Consultancy**

18 May 2004

Acknowledgements

Ann McGuckin is an independent researcher and consultant. She evaluated Dundee's Sure Start Strategy over a six week period in the spring of 2004. Ann spent a great deal of time in Dundee talking to everyone involved in delivering Sure Start and also to parents and service users involved in the various Sure Start initiatives. Everyone had a lot to say about this work and Ann generated an enormous amount of material. We would like to thank Ann for her commitment, enthusiasm and ability to listen to and digest so many views, opinions and ideas and to weigh up the key aspects of our Sure Start initiative fairly and comprehensively.

We would also like to thank all the staff in Dundee who gave so generously of their time and expertise. They have helped enormously in this process of evaluating change in a complex policy area. Thanks also to the service users who spoke to us about their experiences, providing a rich and useful perspective to individual projects.

Preface

Dundee has much to celebrate in its Sure Start initiatives. A recent independent evaluation has found that new ways of working with children and parents has brought much added gains for families. This looked inside all of the new Sure Start initiatives. Parents and providers tell their story of the difference Sure Start has made to children's lives.

If you would like to find out more about Sure Start in Dundee, please contact Christine Riach, Manager Early Years and Childcare Services by email christine.riach@dundeecity.gov.uk or by phone on 01382 433950

SECTION ONE

STRATEGY AND POLICY OBJECTIVES: SUMMARY OF PROGRESS

Growing together with some success

Sure Start aimed to bring about a new, more efficient and more focused way of providing services to children and families.

Parents, children and families, have benefited from this approach in a wide variety of ways. Parents have gained in confidence and skill in raising their children. More children have benefited from opportunities provided by professionals from education, health, social work and the voluntary and private sectors. There has been significant progress in bringing these agencies and departments together to deliver a shared agenda. Working together is now a common feature of early years services in the city. Parents have commented on the positive impact of the various initiatives on their children, especially in their children's behaviour. Families have been assisted to move forward towards employment and training. Pathways out of poverty are being navigated slowly..... Sure Start is in the round something positive to build on and grow.

1.1 Dundee Sure Start Strategy

The Dundee Sure Start Strategy Group set out a strategy and targets to show how new service development could be achieved. These have, on the whole, worked effectively. Strategies and targets have been delivered and have in many cases moved well beyond expectations. Strategies have evolved over time to reflect the changing needs of children and families. The growing certainty in the success of Sure Start has given staff confidence in developing and progressing their own services and in looking for ways to work with others.

1.2 Coherence with Other Strategies

All of the initiatives evaluated fit in well with existing anti-poverty and inclusion policies and seemed a logical development of wider agendas. In addition Sure Start has supported delivery of initiatives such as the New Community School, Early Years and Primary Cluster located in nursery and primary school feeders of Braeview Academy. Services have targeted support to areas of greatest need yet have expressed a commitment also to providing opportunities for better outcomes for all children.

1.3 Impact and Added Value of Sure Start

Sure Start has created an impetus for developing new forms of service delivery. It has assisted and encouraged interagency working and collaboration and has allowed access to other groups limited by funding restrictions. General service capacity has been enhanced and there are now more trained staff available and a developing pool of skills and expertise to draw on.

Children's and parent's horizons have been extended and exposure to different experiences has increased as initiatives have drawn in new experts and specialists. A wide range of training and opportunities to learn have opened up for both fathers and mothers.

1.4 Demand and provision of services

As services develop, word has spread and demand has increased: many initiatives have waiting lists. As parents gain in knowledge and confidence there is a desire to move onto training and other activities. This in turn has stimulated service provision: services have extended their hours of opening, and increased out of hours activities for children to support working parents. Outreach initiatives have increased demand in areas where there has traditionally been no history of service provision and have developed a range of new community based services in local areas of Dundee.

1.5 Meeting Sure Start Policy Objectives

There are four broad Sure Start objectives and this evaluation has identified activities and impacts across all of them.

i. To Improve Children's Health

There are many health and community based initiatives with a focus on children's all round health and well being. Sure Start has strengthened the impact of this work by linking it into other aspects of support, by bringing staff together and by adding resources in the way of staff expertise and funding support. The establishment of two Sure Start Health Visitor posts has increased the capacity of early years services to promote and support children's health and to identify problems and work together to find solutions acceptable to families. Health promotion programmes feature strongly in all early years and childcare centres in Dundee. There are healthy eating, oral hygiene and regular physical activity programmes. Smoking cessation, and breastfeeding programmes for parents are well established in centres and community venues across the City. Childcare providers and parents feel these initiatives have had an impact in raising the importance of improving children's health and in the need to ensure that this is a key focus in all services for children and families.

ii. To Improve Children's Social And Emotional Development

Programmes to promote the physical, intellectual and social development of babies and young children are widespread. Early Intervention Teams and Home Visiting Services are key players in developing support programmes for children and families. Staff are seeing more children with language and communication difficulties arriving at nurseries earlier. Children with hearing impairments, emotional and global delay are being identified at an earlier age and have access to relevant services and assessments faster than in the past.

All children have benefited from Early Intervention programmes as nursery teachers, nursery nurses and family support workers tap into a growing pool of expertise. There are more opportunities for parents to assist their child's development and achieve greater satisfaction in their role as parents through playing together and exploring how children develop. Both parents and providers are confident such programmes will have long-term effects on children's social and emotional development.

iii. To Improve Children's Ability To Learn

More children are attending pre-school education than ever before and more have opportunities to develop and learn in integrated environments. Parents are encouraged through a range of programmes to become involved in their children's learning and education. Special play equipment, puzzle and games libraries and play programmes have been developed by specialists to help early learning. These resources can be borrowed by all organisations involved in childcare as well as individual parents. Parents can see changes in their child's behaviour: sharing, communicating with others, playing, concentrating and developing confidence.

iva. To Strengthen Families And Communities

Not all parents have access to childcare services or opportunities to join activities. Outreach work has brought services to parents in their local neighbourhoods, particularly for families who are for a variety of reasons those most "hard to reach" or those living in areas identified as being less well catered for than others. More community activities are available for families and children to join. Regular community-wide activities such as local Festivals, Fun Days and Cluster days are being established. Initiatives have brought greater opportunities for parents - providing support and development programmes and access to training and education. Horizons and experiences are being expanded and a more inclusive atmosphere is emerging. Parents are becoming more confident and taking part in a broader range of community activities.

ivb. To Reduce Barriers To Unemployment

Making childcare more affordable and flexible is a key aim of Sure Start. Many parents are employed in shift working and part-time work and fitting in childcare is a constant worry. Sure Start has helped childcare providers to increase their hours of opening and provide all round childcare, where they can. More out of school clubs for children have been developed also to help working parents. There are more opportunities for parents to train in preparation for work or further education. An extensive range of parenting programmes has been developed across the city where parents can access support with breastfeeding, healthy eating and help to stop smoking. In addition, parents can get advice on managing their children and help with sleeping and feeding routines.

SECTION 3

The Policy Context

The Government is committed to a 'what works' approach to policy implementation. Increasingly children and the family have moved centre-stage in public policy.¹ There is compelling evidence to suggest that patterns throughout life are heavily influenced by experiences in early childhood. A central plank of the Government's social inclusion and social justice agendas has been to ensure that every child has the best possible start in life. One of the routes to achieve this is via Early Intervention and Family Support programmes.² Sure Start is a central part of this broader policy agenda.

Sure Start Scotland was introduced in 1999 to target support at families with very young children (0-3 years), particularly the most vulnerable and deprived. £61 million has so far been distributed to all local authorities to work in partnership with health services, voluntary organisations, the private sector and parents to identify local need and deliver services to meet that need. Starting in 1999 the Sure Start programme had four broad objectives:

- To improve children's social and emotional development
- To improve children's health
- To improve children's ability to learn
- To strengthen families and communities by reducing barriers to employment

Sure Start Scotland has been a major catalyst for change and has led to new and improved services for young children across all local authorities. The Government's target of expanding support for families and very young children through family centres, with mobile and outreach services for at least 5000 additional children by 2002 had been exceeded.³

3.1 The Aims of Sure Start

The overall aim of Sure Start is to increase the availability of childcare for all children, and work with parents – to - be, parents and children to promote physical, intellectual and social development of babies and young children – particularly those who are disadvantaged – so that they flourish at home and when they go to school, enabling their parents to work and contributing to the ending of child poverty.

The Sure Start Principles which inform service delivery are designed to achieve:

- A Sure Start for all children by providing integrated and high quality services, so they can grow up to contribute positively to their communities and society as a whole.

¹ Protecting Children-a Shared Responsibility: Guidance on Inter-Agency Co-operation (1998); For Scotland's Children: Better integrated children's services (2001) ; It's Everyone's job to make sure I'm Alright (2002) and Growing Support: review of services for vulnerable families with children aged 0-3 years (Social Work Services Inspectorate of the Scottish Executive).

² Sure Start Scotland (1998), Childcare Strategy for Scotland (1998)'Pre-school Education Health Improvement Fund (HIF) (2000)The National Health Demonstration Project, Starting Well (1999)

³ Mapping Sure Start Scotland (2002) CRFR; Department of Education, Scottish Executive.

- Better outcomes for all children, and particularly, closing the gap in outcomes between children living in poverty and the wider child population.
- Better outcomes for all parents, increased opportunity to participate in the labour market, ensuring pathways out of poverty and strengthened families and communities.
- Better outcomes for communities, including less crime, higher productivity, a stronger labour market and the building of a civic society

3.2 Socio-Economic Features In Dundee

The focus of Sure Start is on all families and children and particularly those who come from disadvantaged backgrounds and communities. The broader socio-economic picture of Dundee is given below.

The following factors are widely acknowledged to be associated with vulnerability, disadvantage and ill health⁴.

- Dundee has a higher proportion of its population on low income: more unemployed people, more people who are chronically sick, more single parents and more old people than the national average
- Unemployment rates are higher than the national average: 25% of wards have unemployment rates more than twice the national average. Though there are signs of this falling⁵
- Dundee has many deprived areas and according to Scottish Executive calculations, nearly one third of the population live within these areas and over half of all children
- Over half of all children are eligible for School Clothing Grants, rising to 75% in Social Inclusion Partnerships SIPs⁶
- Dundee has a persistent and historically high rate of teenage pregnancy (twice the national average). Abortion rates are among the highest in Scotland
- Nearly one quarter of Dundee children live in one-parent households
- There are high rates of drug usage, high crime figures and high rates of absence from school. Significant numbers of families are affected by HIV/AIDS
- Levels of homelessness contain more children than the national average
- There is a lower percentage of children attaining Standard and Higher Grade passes than the national average.
- The third highest percentage of minority ethnic population lives in Dundee. The percentage of children from minority ethnic communities is higher than the national average

3.3 The Population

The population of the City is 144,180 (mid year GRO estimates 2002). There are currently 27,680 children aged 0-15, of whom 8,145 are aged 0-4.⁷ Out migration is a key issue in Dundee. The total population decreased by 7.6% between 1991-1999.

The 16-24 year old cohort is projected to fall by around 9% from 1998 to 2016 while the 24-49 year old cohort will fall by an anticipated 32%. Simultaneously the 50-65 age group is given a projected 14% increase.⁸

⁴ Information is drawn from Tayside Child Health Strategy and 2001 Tayside Public Health Report.

⁵ Dundee Early Years and Childcare Plan 2001-2004

⁶ Dundee Early Years and Childcare Plan 2001-2004

⁷ Dundee Early Years and Childcare Plan 2001-2004 p.23

The number of children aged 0-15 is projected to fall to 25,577 by 2003 and 23,949 by 2006.⁹ If projections are reasonably accurate then there are implications for the planning of future childcare and family support services.

It is against this background that the assessment of Sure Start will be made.

⁸ Dundee Local Employment Action Plan: Learning, Skills Development and Employment Strategy 2002 – 2004 p.7

⁹ Dundee Early Years and Childcare Plan 2001-2004 p 23

SECTION 4

FEATURES OF THE DUNDEE SURE START STRATEGY

The Sure Start Initiative has been co-ordinated by the Dundee Early Years and Childcare Partnership as an integral aspect of Dundee's early years and childcare strategy. A multi-agency Sure Start Strategy and Implementation Group was established in 2000 with membership from education, social work, health and the voluntary sector. Sure Start targets are outlined in the Dundee Early Years and Childcare Plan 2001- 2004 and initial proposals for delivery are set out in Committee reports.¹⁰

4.1 Key elements of the Sure Start Strategy can be summarised under the following broad categories:

- Centre based provision which includes childcare and broader family support services
- Parent support groups and programmes
- Home Visiting Programmes
- Community Outreach services
- Early Intervention Programmes for children aged 2-4
- Training and staff development
- Partnership and collaboration across agencies and departments including health

4.2 These service categories have been delivered through a series of projects including:

- Sure Start Early Intervention
- Sure Start Health Visiting
- Family Support Provision and Outreach Service Development
- HomeStart
- Dundee Sitter Service
- 0-3 Project at Woodlea Children's Centre
- Expansion of Pre School Home Visiting
- Little Gym Time, A Youth Sports Project

4.3 New co located education and social work service models have been established at:

- Charleston Primary School,
- Kirkton Nursery
- Ardler Primary School

4.4 In addition a new Community Resource for children aged 0-3 has been developed within Woodlea Children's Centre. This provides a range of services including, drop in provision, parent groups and workshops, community crèche, health promotion, assessment of additional support needs and signposting.

¹⁰ A Report to the Education and Social Work Committees - Report No 645-2000

SECTION 5

TARGETS, PROVISION AND NUMBERS ATTENDING INITIATIVES

This section covers Sure Start targets, childcare provision and the numbers attending initiatives.

5.1 Numbers Attending Sure Start Initiatives

Information on numbers of parents and children attending and being supported by programmes is given in Table 1.

A survey of Sure Start projects was conducted in November 2002 and indicated that some 530 children and 273 families were supported by Sure Start projects across the City.¹¹ The same survey found that the new services were highly valued by children, parents and early years staff.

Figures for 2004 show a considerable increase in numbers since 2002. There has been a consistent rise in numbers supported by outreach and other initiatives. Numbers of children supported by Early Intervention Initiatives have remained relatively steady, however. This is not unexpected since Early Intervention figures relate only to children where a need has been identified. Service providers state that there are many children who have low level support needs not recorded in statistics who are now being picked up.

Table 1 Number of Children and Families Attending Sure Start Initiatives 2004

Service	Numbers of Children	Numbers of Families	Numbers of Staff	Waiting List
Sitter Service	67	42	5 contracted 20-25 sessional	7
EIS Kirkton	12	8	2	
EIS Ardler	16	9	2	
EIS Woodlea	15	9	2	
PSHV	120	100	3	14
HomeStart	23	21	3 +26Volunteers	20
Little Gym Time	64	58		
Sure Start Health Visitors	210	185	2	
Charleston Outreach	180	175	1	
Menzieshill Outreach	150	130	1	
Hilltown/Stobswell Outreach	104	83	1	
St Mary's Outreach	130	121	2 half time + 4 CFC staff	
Total	1091	941		

¹¹ A Report to the Education and Social Work Committees - 22nd April 2002

Numbers in the above table were calculated by project managers, outreach workers and Sure Start Health Visitors. These figures relate to children and families receiving a service and/or attending groups.

In some ways the numbers in Table 1 are underestimates. All of the Sure Start projects have created opportunities for direct service delivery to children and families but the projects have not been delivered exclusively. The project staff have interfaced with large numbers of children and families through their links with existing services. This has meant that the projects have had capacity building impact, ensuring that services can reach out to a wider range of families.

The numbers of children attending any service varies throughout the year. The Sitter Service for example calculates its numbers on a different basis from other services. The numbers of families and children using the service varies monthly - since families book on a needs only basis. The number of children noted are the maximum number of different children the service has delivered a service to.

5.2 Targets

Sure Start Targets are set out in The Early Years and Childcare Team Review of Progress, February 2003. All targets have been achieved as Table 2 shows. In some instances developments have moved beyond set targets. There are, for example, more outreach workers. Support for childminders has been strengthened by a city wide Childminders' Network and a Linked Childminding project. In addition a "mentoring scheme" is being developed to provide support to newly registered childminders. A Playgroup Network has also been developed assisted by a Pre-school Playgroups Association fieldworker. In addition, the infrastructure of voluntary organisations has been considerably strengthened by Sure Start funding.

Table 2 Sure Start Targets

Target	Achieved
Appointment of SSHVs	yes
Additional PSHV teacher to develop play	yes
Develop affordable day-care services for parents	yes
Develop Good Practice models	yes
Develop Mechanisms to promote consistent identification of very young children with SEN	yes
Developed and support parents and toddler group network	yes
Subsidise low cost childcare	yes
Review capacity of services	yes
Review provision for SEN	yes
Support voluntary organisations	yes
Develop outreach services in Menzieshill and Charleston	yes
Strengthen support for childminders	yes
Linked Childminding	yes
Support Dundee Sitter Service	yes
Establish Family Learning Networks	yes
Proposals for student parents	yes

5.3 Childcare Provision

There are currently 301 providers of childcare within the city, including Primary Schools. The majority of these are Childminders (44%) followed by Primary Schools (13%) and Local Authority Nursery Schools and Classes (11.6%). There has been a slight drop in the number of childminders in recent years and the majority of growth has been in private sector provision.

More detailed information reveals that the highest amount of provision is in postcode area DD4 with 82 providers followed by DD3 and DD5 with 64 childcare providers. The area with the least provision is DD1.¹²

Table 3 Childcare Provision

Provision	Total Provision	Total Places available	Vacancy Information
Childminders	131	576	69
Out of School Care Clubs	19	602	25
Primary Schools	40	N/A	
LA Nursery Schools and Classes	35	1470	
Child & Family Centres	9	300	
Private Day Nurseries	25	1102	52
Parent and Toddler Groups	26	204	46
Pre School Playgroups	6	138	8
Holiday Play schemes (separate to OOSC)	5	84	
Nursery Centre	1	45	0
Carer's in the Child's Home	1	N/A	
Family Support Centre	2	N/A	
Crèche	1	10	Places always available
Total	301	4531	200

Source: The Childcare Information Service: Audit 2004.

¹² Childcare Information Database

SECTION 6

THE SURE START PROJECTS IN DUNDEE

6.1 Sure Start Early Intervention Projects

Three early intervention teams consisting of two extra staff members (a nursery teacher and a nursery nurse) have been established at Woodlea Children's Centre, Kirkton Nursery and Ardler Primary School Early Years Centre. The nurseries at Kirkton and Ardler are co-located with Child and Family Centres and a new service for children aged 0-3 has been established at Woodlea. The early intervention projects are focused mainly on children aged 2-4 and set out to provide additional support for young children whose development and learning may be compromised by a range of social, emotional and/ or health related problems. To date, more than 150 children have benefited directly from the Sure Start Early Intervention Projects. However this work has had significant implications for a wider population of children as early years professionals have worked together to improve support for children and families and to develop new approaches to tackling common concerns and issues.

The early intervention teams have developed a range of strategies to improve support for all children. However a clear implication of the additional resource has been that in all three nurseries, children with complex additional support needs have been included into mainstream nursery settings.

Sure Start early intervention has focused on the child and his/her parents together. The additional staffing has meant that there is dedicated time for work with parents either individually or in groups. This has meant that parents are involved directly in the day to day experience of their children at nursery and can often pick up ideas to try at home.

"Sure Start has had a very dramatic effect. It has made it possible to have children with additional support needs here for a start and then it has helped us to meet their needs. Early intervention staff have been full of enthusiasm and they have infected mainstream staff. It has made a good bridge between nursery and the child and family centre. They meet weekly with centre workers- so there is good liaison going on over the children"

"They are thoughtful, writing to parents daily, just a few lines and they lift the phone and chat to a parent if they feel the parent doesn't read very well. Keep in frequent contact"

"The Care Commission Inspector was astonished at the caring totally inclusive approach of everybody. "Did you see those children signing over there and helping that little one to do that ?, she asked.

6.2 FAMILY SUPPORT PROVISION

6.2.1 Centre Based

Sure Start funding has been used creatively to strengthen the development of more integrated family support services for children in need aged 0-12 in areas of significant deprivation in Dundee. Funding has been used to support the development of co-located educational and child and family centre provision in Charleston and Ardler Primary Schools, as well as in Kirkton Nursery School.

The working together arrangements between Education and Social Work staff in each facility are still in the process of development. However evaluation of progress to date shows that co-location has significantly improved access, continuity, flexibility and responsiveness of services for the children and families who live in the catchment areas served.

These developments are in line with the Social Work Department's Family Support Strategy, which aims to improve access and the integration of services for children and families in greatest need living in local areas across Dundee.

6.2.2 Outreach Service Development

Sure Start Outreach Projects have been established in local areas of the city where there was a recognised need for additional services for young children and families. The initial areas were Hilltown / Stobswell, St Mary's, and Charleston/ Menzieshill. Four (2 job sharing) outreach worker posts were established and based and managed within nearby Child and Family Centres. The workers already had a good knowledge of the local areas and were able quickly to tap into services and resources that might be of use to local families. In addition a range of new and innovative services are established in partnership with community groups to widen the range of services on offer and to meet identified needs within the areas.

A key success has been in the worker's determination to match services to need and to engage well with parents in order to reflect their ideas and opinions in service plans. An important aspect of this work has been to foster the inclusion and involvement of families who may not already have links into existing services. In particular work to improve support for parents from minority ethnic groups has been very successful.

"We went out speaking to people to find out what gaps there were and what they wanted."

"Its not a one size all approach"

"We started off in the centre and the Employment Action Team came one day a week. People have managed to get part time jobs"

"Staff are much more outward looking- looking beyond the individual- beyond the four walls"

As with the other Sure Start projects staff have recognised the strength of working across professional boundaries, pooling resources such as space, expertise and local knowledge. It has been demonstrated that this community service development approach improves choice and access to family support services. In addition family support staff are able to make contact with more "hard to reach" families. The Outreach model has now been expanded as part of the Social Work Department's commitment to providing community based family support services across a range of services within the city.

6.3 Physical Activity for Young Children and their Parents

Sure Start funding has meant that the successful Little Gym Time Programme, developed by the Leisure and Arts Department Youth Sports Team has been extended across the city. The programme is popular with children and parents alike and provides an opportunity for a fun experience designed to get young children and parents moving. Baby Gym Time is designed for babies aged 10-18 months. Mothers (or fathers) and their babies are involved in playing together in specially designed programmes which aim to stimulate development. Little Gym Time is for children aged 18 months to 3 years. The aim is to develop a wide range of mobility and physical movement. Little Gym Weekenders caters for 2-5 year olds and encourages parents and children to work together using a wide range of small-scale apparatus.

The popularity of the programmes means that they attract a wide range of families who may become involved with a service provider for the first time. This provides an opportunity to sign post other services of interest to the families. The programmes run in a range of venues, including nurseries, community centres and sports facilities. An important aspect of the work is to increase the confidence of early years staff and give them practical strategies to promote the physical activity of young children.

Individualised programmes have been developed for children with a range of additional support needs as a result of collaboration with the Pre-School Home Visiting Service.

“We’ve worked with children on the autistic spectrum, working with the home visiting service. This has been very successful. We’ve just accessed money from Sure Start for equipment for the home visiting service to use. This work is something we’d wish to develop”

“Sure Start has made quite an impact. The resources we have designed are widely used by education, social work and community groups”

“The other thing is that the programme is multi-faceted. It addresses a wide range of skills and provides a mechanism that groups look for to engage the parent both with the group and with their child. That was one of the main aims of the project – to increase parental involvement.”

6.4 The Pre-School Home Visiting Service

Sure Start funding has meant that the Pre-School Home Visiting Service now has an additional 2 home visiting teachers, making up a team of 3.6 teachers. The service operates an open referral system for children aged 0-5 who have additional support needs. Parents who are concerned about any aspect of their child’s development can access support. The service provides mainly home based support and also supports children, their parents and early years staff through transition from home to early years settings. The early contact with the service means that parents are better able to participate as partners in their child’s learning.

“The major difference that Sure Start made was getting more staff, premises and it made us a freestanding service. Now that we are attached to Sure Start we are publicising our services more”

The Pre-School Home Visiting Service have played an important role in supporting children with complex additional support needs to access services in mainstream nurseries.

“We have a lot of children supported in early years centres funded by Sure Start. The majority of children go into mainstream. Fewer children are going into special needs nurseries. Also we are working in private nurseries – visiting children there and in child and family centres”

Collaboration and inter-agency working is a fundamental aspect of the service. These links and networks mean that a more flexible and faster response is available to children.

“It’s taken us into contact with all the agencies- statutory, social work, child and family centres, psychiatric and psychology teams, health visitors dealing with the mental health of parents. All of those concerned with what affects a child adversely. Its beginning to help people understand us”

The service works with early years staff to ensure that a child’s needs are well understood and carefully assessed. The service is able to support parents in speaking on behalf of their child with other professionals. This has raised awareness that children can and do slip through gaps in services,

“Children can very readily slip through screening because of the make up of screening itself. Social communication- children very easily slip through that- those with behavioural difficulties also. The framework of Sure Start has given us confidence that we are on the right track. There is a common Sure Start ideal and we see others working towards these same goals”

6.5 The Sure Start Health Visitors

Sure Start funding has developed an innovative project in Dundee to consider how health visiting can be better integrated into early years' services. Two Health Visitors have been appointed to the project at the east and west of the city and are working alongside early years' staff in a range of educational, social work and community settings. The key aim is to maximise the potential for good health among children aged 0-5 attending early years services.

The Health Visitors have extended the professional base of early years teams and can provide support and guidance to staff to improve their capacity to respond to the needs of children and families. They provide a wide range of resources, additional support and expertise both to early years' staff and to parents. The Sure Start Health Visitors can also help to unravel problems that parents sometimes face in accessing health services for their children. As well as informal visits to early years setting, the health visitors have supported the establishment of groups and events across the city, designed to promote children’s all round health and well being.

“Families are now seeking us out, not because we are providing all the answers, usually we are linking them into mainstream services. These are people who have fallen through the gap. We are identifying families who have problems and trying to strengthen their supports”

“They are working with communities, vulnerable groups, identifying areas within the population where there is deprivation, identifying key health needs that we are looking to promote intervention with. We can do impact assessment from that. These are key to addressing health agendas.”

6.6 Voluntary Sector Partnerships

Sure Start has increased the capacity of voluntary sector providers to support more families. Home Start and the Dundee Sitter Service are key partners in the development and delivery of Sure Start in Dundee. Services like these offer families something quite unique. The services are delivered right to the families own front door, close relationships are formed and services are tailored to the individual needs of families. The informality of the service is highly valued by parents and often parents will access voluntary sector services first. Sure Start funding has meant that both services are now more secure, have stronger infra- structure and are more closely linked into strategic planning of services.

The Dundee Sitter Service provides childcare within the family home and operates from 7am until 10.30pm, 7 days a week. Sitters are paid employees and families pay for the service on a sliding scale related to income. This model of service has been used in other local authority areas seeking a way to provide childcare outwith normal working hours or which is suitable for families with several children with a range of needs and/ or age ranges. Sure Start funding helps to build the infrastructure of the service and to subsidise the cost to low-income families in work and / or education.

Home Start is a national voluntary home visiting organisation working with families who have at least one child under 5 years of age and who are experiencing difficulties. Trained volunteers, usually parents themselves, give practical and emotional support to families, often representing a lifeline for many parents who are finding it hard to cope. The Home Start volunteers are citizens making an important investment in the city's children. Sure Start funding backs up this generosity and commitment and has helped to secure the employment of a part-time co-ordinator. The co-ordinator in turn has supported the recruitment of 18 new volunteers who support 26 families with 43 children under 3 years of age.

"Sure Start has enabled us to get more volunteers. We were able to recruit an outreach worker. We were not very visible before. We don't have to spend so much time worrying about fundraising- we can get on with the job"

"We feel we have a foot in the door now- an opportunity to play a part. We are part of the Early Years and Childcare Partnership now and recognised by other agencies- valued by other agencies"

"We have families from all over Dundee to Invergowrie and Broughty Ferry. They are not all from peripheral estates- stress affects all families, even families who are better off. The concept of vulnerability should be enlarged"

Voluntary Sector services often plug gaps not plugged by other services.

"Places like nurseries are OK but some finish too early- 11.45- when maybe mother finishes at 12. They don't coincide with the hours mothers work. We have lots of domestic and hospital shift workers and they need very early morning starts and late finishes. So the service really benefits shift working mums".

"Students have blocks of education. They need time to study too. They have placements to go to and this can mean extra travel costs, time and extra work when they get home".

"People would not have gone to education or work if it had not been for childcare. We have lots of employers - shops, shift work in the hospitals and 24 hours in ASDA. It is low paid and minimum wage but it still makes a difference".

SECTION 7

The Benefits to Parents, Children and Families

7.1 Overview

In this section, parents tell their story of the difference Sure Start has made to them and their children's lives.

The benefits parents gained from services were wide and varied. Self confidence was increased, skills were developed, knowledge increased and relationships improved with their children and the wider family. But uppermost was a general improvement of the image of themselves as parents and individuals...*"you feel you're doing something."* Positive feelings were experienced when parents were able to keep up with their children on topical issues, able to manage their children better and gain a sense of achievement at learning in later years. Parents saw initiatives more as a stepping stone towards employment - rather than an end in itself.

7.2 Motivation for Taking Part

Groups fulfilled a variety of needs for parents. Motivations for participation were varied - making new friends when moving into the area, trying out new things, wanting to extend knowledge and training in a particular activity.

7.3 Pathways to Involvement

Outreach workers and Sure Start Health Visitors played a key role in informing parents of local activities. Parents found them accessible, easy to talk to and able to respond quickly to their needs.

"I sometimes get a note or phone call from the development worker if there is anything on" (parent)

"If the Sure Start Health Visitor knows about some workshop is coming up, she will give you a phone or write you a letter and let you know what's happening. It's really good". (very young parent)

Parents found they moved on to other things after being involved in one group.

"All these things started from a group I was involved in at nursery that A had help set up with parents". (parent)

"Two or three have gone on to do childminding and gymnastic training and that. A lot of that came from people coming to talk to us in the group about different things. And we thought...oh wait a minute...we could do that" (parent)

Not all young parents are aware of what services there are. Many are lacking in resources and have few information sources and networks. They often did not recognise events targeted at them or that they would like to join.

"I found out through my friend. She went to a group and she asked if I could come". (young parent)

Some very young parents enjoyed fitness, music and dance activities, but they liked to have their children nearby.

"Children are in the room next door to us, which is great because we know they are safe and looked after. We are next door and sit and have a chat and then we go upstairs and have our dancing or keep fit. It keeps us active and gives us time to ourselves".

The difference joining a group made to one young parent involved in a sports activity project but with voluntary input is evident.

"The group is fantastic. You get a break and are able to speak to people about your problems. It is difficult to do this but you can speak at the group. I had a problem with getting a house so my pal asked C if I could come along. I got a lot of help with getting a house and with problem neighbours".

Many young parents were particularly maternal and wanted their babies nearby. Crèche facilities in settings where activities were being held were the most readily identified gap in services and most mentioned by this group. Accessible services, preferably at street level were preferred since lugging buggies upstairs was a deterrent for many.

7.4 Social Inclusion

Project organisers were able to extend the range of interest and expertise available to local groups by bringing in speakers and involving parents in trips to other establishments. One mother relates the story of her children's visits to Dundee Art College. This experience was useful in extending the cultural capital that children had, widening their experiences and raising aspirations.

"We got to do our own family project, like a college, at Dundee Art College. Two young student girls showed you how to do things. They were helping out with the group. That was the first time the kids were there [Dundee College]. They really enjoyed it. More interesting place for them than here. The young one was into art anyway and that just suited him". (parent)

The effect of broadening horizons was more explicit for one parent.

"My daughter had a look around Dundee laboratories. She did a course in the University through the school - a wee science course. They did DNA and things like that. It was a wee science course for kids. She thoroughly enjoyed that and that is what helped her decide on forensic science. I think that's what has made her think of what she wants to be"

One mother attended the launch of the Breast Feeding Initiative in the Centre for Contemporary Arts. She did not come into town very often, had not been in the centre before but had enjoyed the experience.

"I came here because SSHV said I'd like it. I took the bus. I thought you had to pay to com in here but she said you just go in. I don't breastfeed, but I thought I'd just come anyway". (parent)

7.5 Involvement of Fathers

Many initiatives were keen to involve fathers. Several initiative managers mentioned the wish of families to have more involvement from men:

"We have two male sitters, and they're very popular, especially with boys". (Sitter Service manager)

"The new Sure Start officer is a man although most workers are women. He works so well with 0-5 year olds, but he looks a bit like a bouncer". (Little Gym Time manager)

However there are difficulties yet to be overcome

"Sure Start has done some research on this about such things as how can we engage fathers more - there are very few fathers about in some of the areas we work in". (Little Gym Time manager)

7.6 Developing Social Skills

Parents were keen that their children should learn social skills and become independent since these would help when they started school. Early Intervention staff were well aware of the concerns of parents. Seeing their child *"fitting in"* and *"taking turns"* were important for parents.

"More than anything it is just learning to play with other children, getting on in a group. Working out that they have to share things". (parent)

"My youngest one just started primary one and on her first day at school with her, she was absolutely horrified to think I was going to school with her. She kept on saying but I can go myself".

Having an educational input was also welcomed, as were routines.

"They do things like posting letters, I remember that. It is very good that they did little projects on things, maybe on butterflies or things like that".

"The fact that they were at nursery and a wee bell was rung, they knew that they then tidied up, and what they were doing after and everything".

7.7 Parents With Children Who Have Extra Support Needs

Development milestones held a particular resonance for parents whose children had communication or language difficulties. Parents and children benefited greatly from home visiting services.

Some parents struggled before their child was diagnosed. Often seen as overanxious, parents felt anger and some guilt at the time it took to get help for their children.

"I would like to see something for a parent like myself...People like me fall through the net. I am ashamed to say I struggle. We are just beginning to understand what he wants now"

."I was very anxious and worried all the time – because he was premature and because I thought he was not developing quickly enough. He was being monitored closely anyway but I still had to convince the GP that there was a problem"

."It gave me a start [the diagnosis] I tried my best with him but had no experience of autism. He was attending a private nursery and had delayed speech. It was a while before it was

picked up. But I knew it was more than that, I picked up a lot of things and asked question – I feel bad about that now".

However, once support was in place, parents grew in confidence as their skills and knowledge increased.

"Someone always knows someone with a child who has autism. I was on my own with 2 children at home and seeing someone else gave me confidence".

"She [PSHV teacher] came to the home and used K's own toys to play with. So he was very comfortable, because he found it difficult to go out. It was a very relaxed way of helping us".

"Before [PSHV] I was not able to know what he could do. I did not know how to help him. I have a sheet to monitor him now and he is making good progress".

"PSHV has given me more control over L's progress. I wanted to take ownership of this. It is important to me that I should be the one he learns things from".

The use of Video Interactive Guidance (a technique that uses video excerpts of parents and/or staff and children interacting to demonstrate and build on positive approaches)¹³ was praised by parents and confirmed service managers' confidence in the technique.

"VIG has helped enormously. You are able to look back at yourself and see how he responds. When you are playing peek a boo games, you spend so much time hiding that you don't notice his face, but when you see the video it is amazing to see his expressions. You feel you are winning".

7.8 Self Confidence And Self Esteem

Many parents felt able to extend themselves after joining groups and activities. They became more confident and more able to try something new or make changes in their lives. One parent moved to a better job while others were able to train *and feel they were not too old to learn*. Or as one parent said:

"I felt I was a better mother".

Communication with children and families improved and parents felt happier with themselves.

"You could ask the teacher anything, anytime – you could get advice when you needed it. She boosted your confidence. It was very difficult for my son to cope when everyone comes home. She saw this and showed me what to do and I explained to other members of the family. It gave me confidence to cope with him".

"We did something about how to talk to your child about sex. So it would be about what we would do when they are 8 or what kind of things can we say when they are 10 and things like that. Good for making you aware of other things – it made it easier to talk".

¹³ Video Interactive Guidance –interaction between parents and children is videoed to re-enforce positive behaviour

"Once I've got time to recharge my batteries I've got more time to spend on her. More time to play with her and stuff. It is really good...it helps both of us out. She gets time away from me and I get time away from her".

Supporting parents had a wider impact on the family.

"Before, nobody knew what to do or what to say. Now there is acceptance of what is wrong and we know how to communicate with him. It is a lot easier to discuss things. I can share these practices with the extended family, grans and cousins and they are now very supportive".

Siblings benefited too from broad family support.

"I have another child – a daughter – I felt quite sorry for her – she was going to be a single child now since I was spending so much time on K, I felt guilty about it. Now it is different. We feel closer as a family now. I don't feel the family is divided but is pulling together and I don't feel guilty any more".

7.9 Changes in Behaviour

The effect on a child's behaviour was noticeable to many parents and lessened their concern.

"He went from being a wee boy, frightened all the time and now he is more accepting things and easier to handle".

"When he went first he was a bit shy but now he can sing songs and tidies his toys up like at the mother and toddler group. The baby is now eating on her own and I am at college. I am a lot happier now, I can go out every day and see my pals. It's fantastic".

"He became more confident and his speech improved... able to talk and express himself. His confidence grew".

Parents thought that support had made them more positive about the future

"I feel more positive about the future and that Q will have a future and will be able to communicate in his own way. He may not be able to speak but will be able to make himself understood".

Support at critical stages of their children's lives was particularly important for parents. As children joined primary school there was less support for parents.

"E helped with the transition to nursery. She was able to tell the teachers what W liked, what he won't tolerate. She was able to handle the nursery teachers very well. Sometimes you can feel intimidated and would not feel able to tell them what W needed. Every mother I know has said this".

7.10 Keeping Parents Informed Of Issues

Finding out information on a range of issues was important to parents. Some parents were able to speak more knowledgeably and freely to their children after attending groups where specialist speakers were brought in.

"I'm not worried about speaking to the kids about anything now. You are on the same ground as them now. You know how they feel about things".

"Because a lot of people were quite embarrassed about speaking about a lot of things A. brought in somebody from the One Parent Family and they did a discussion on sex. We found it was easier. The ones with younger kids were a bit worried about how to deal with it. It's really better explaining yourself. Really better than picking up rubbish from people in the street and what. We played games to break the tension... break down the barriers. So they split you into groups and you were to pick out different things you thought your kid would ask as they got older, things you would find difficult to talk about".

Finding out about employers responsibilities to breastfeeding mothers was the most important thing that that some mothers mentioned when joining a group.

"I would never have known about what employers responsibilities were had I not joined the group (Breast Feeding Initiative) I had made arrangements about working in the evening after I had my baby, but if I'd know about this, maybe I wouldn't have done that. When I took the leaflet to my boss, I think they were a bit shocked at first at what was required. But they were fine about it. They got everything, a fridge, a room and everything".

Others learned about their housing options - how to gain access to housing and get extra points on housing applications.

"I had a problem with getting a house so my pal asked C if I could come along to the group. I got a lot of help with getting a house and with problem neighbours". (very young parent)

7.11 Skills Development

There were examples of skill development in a wide range of areas. Activities and services extended parent's ability to source training, develop their own initiatives, prepare funding bids, learn financial skills, extend existing skills and learn new skills.

One mother had participated in Little Gym Time training

"Now I am a coach for Little Gym Time. I do a class on a Saturday morning for the Council and I have just qualified as my assistant coach for that and am away to do my club coach. The council funded me for that training through in Edinburgh and we have not long sat our exams. Hopefully, that's both my children at school now so hopefully in another 2 or 3 months I'll get a lot more work in doing Little Gym Time".

Visiting speakers extended interest and opportunities.

"We met every Friday morning and had everything from talks from aroma therapists to people in the community. I mean we made everything from children's puppets, children's fancy dress outfits, aromatherapy, reflexology, and also were doing things like CVs. So there was something for everybody". (parent)

7.12 Quality Childcare

Mothers knew what they wanted for their children - a safe environment with well trained staff. This would allow them to participate in training and work.

"I would like to have somewhere safe to leave my children, so I can go to college, or work. It would be so difficult leaving them with someone I didn't know about or hadn't heard about". (very young parent)

"I would rather go with the council because they are all trained child workers and nursery nurses". (very young parent)

"He goes to crèche at the family learning house. I am doing a computing course when he is in the crèche". (very young parent)

After joining a group young mothers felt less isolated.

"I feel happier and that, meeting people my own age. Happier for my wee boy too because getting time away from me helps him too".

"I am a lot happier now, I can go out every day and see my pals. It's fantastic".

Conclusion

The success of Sure Start is firmly endorsed by parents. A wider range of parents have opportunities to take part in activities than in the past. More are involved in their children's upbringing and have access to expertise and professionals to assist them. Confidence and standing has been increased and this has positive spin-offs for moving towards employment and training. More importantly, there are some early signs that this more inclusive approach is making some families feel a greater sense of belonging and that they have a part to play in their communities.

Section 8

Meeting Policy and Strategy Objectives

This evaluation has found that in almost all of the initiatives developed the Sure Start Strategies have been achieved. Many initiatives have provided services within integrated environments: professionals and expertise have been pulled in when needed to develop individual support programmes for families and children. This approach brought observable and recognisable gains to parents as they have explained. Noticeably, parents do not refer to services as integrated but see them as seamless, able to access the support they need from within any service.

8.1 Examples of Integrated Working

Taking an overview of the strategy some examples of integrated working are illustrated below. These are only a few of a considerable number of initiatives. involving co-operation between services. Health promotion and community programmes feature strongly. Centre-based programmes include healthy eating, oral hygiene, relaxation and regular physical activity. Smoking cessation, adult activity and fitness programmes and breastfeeding programmes are well established in community venues. Examples of how each initiative fulfils the broader policy aims are given. This snapshot gives some indication of the networks and relationships between agencies and professions often enhanced and extended by Sure Start.

8.2 To Improve Children's Health

- Little Gym Time is a physical exercise programme for under 5's. This initiative involves collaboration between Education, and Sports Development and Social Work. The Initiative promotes physical activity in pre-school children and improves their health
- *Is She Getting Enough*, The Breastfeeding Initiative aims to increase and sustain the proportion of mothers breastfeeding by addressing cultural and social factors that inhibit breastfeeding. This collaborative effort involved SSHVs, members of Dundee Repertory Company and mothers from breastfeeding support groups. A video and presentation pack were developed. and disseminated across Tayside. The initiative helps improve children's health.

8.3 To Improve Children's Emotional And Social Development

- HomeStart is a home visiting and family support initiative for families in difficulties where one child is under 5 years of age. The service is in the voluntary sector and pulls in a wide range of expertise including PSHV, Speech and Language Therapists, Aberlour, One Parent Families and Social Work. The Initiative improves children's emotional and social development and supports families

8.4 To Improve Children's Ability To Learn

- Pre-school Home Visiting (PSHV) supports parents and mainstreams children who need extra support. Close links have been made with Speech and Language Therapists, Educational Psychologists, Sports Development, Sure Start Health Visitors, local nurseries and schools. PSHV promotes the involvement of parents in their child's educational development.

8.5 To Strengthen Families And Communities

- Child and Family Centres have been involved in developing flexible approaches to family support using Hanen Training, a multi disciplinary training effort provided by the Speech and Language Therapy Department and partly funded through Health Improvement Fund.
- The Dundee Public Health Nursing Network – a planning mechanism to deliver public health agendas is supported by SSHVs. The Initiative promotes the involvement of the workforce in planning to better target intervention by developing local skill directories of expertise.

SECTION 9

BUILDING ON SURE START FOR FUTURE SUCCESS

Sure Start has brought change and opportunity to many parents and children in Dundee. The promise of delivery of a new form of service provision is much in evidence and would appear to be working well. Coherence in approaches to supporting vulnerable families is being developed and these have brought added gains for all families and children.

All respondents recognise the importance of continuing to develop these approaches and to strengthen further the capacity of Sure Start to deliver improved outcomes for children at the start of life and their families. The existing projects reveal that engaging with parents in meaningful ways is complex and challenging. Dundee has a very strong network of early years services and Sure Start has helped us all to see how these services can be more effectively co-ordinated in developing shared commitment to making a positive difference for children. This is a continuing key challenge for the future development of Sure Start in Dundee. In addition a step change is now required to ensure that the early successes are built on to promote more sustained growth so that greater social change can be achieved.

9.1 A Shared Focus on the Principles underlying the Sure Start Initiatives.

Sure Start Initiatives should encompass some or all of the following elements:

- provide a stimulating environment, in which very young children, through play, have opportunities for physical development, social interaction, personal development and the growth of skills in communication and language
- offer parents opportunities to assist their child's development and achieve greater satisfaction in their role as parents through playing together and exploring how children develop
- provide support to parents which will assist in providing a healthy upbringing for their child
- promote self esteem and personal confidence, as well as communication and decision making skills in both children and parents
- provide opportunities for parents to acquire skills which lay the basis for more extensive training or subsequent employment
- provide inclusive support which is both culturally appropriate and sensitive and takes account of any special needs of children and parents
- provide support targeted to areas of greatest need, including innovative outreach provision to families not otherwise likely or able to seek services¹⁴

The projects delivered in Dundee characterise many of these elements. However none of these projects can stand alone and there is a continuing challenge to ensure that projects are effectively co-ordinated both strategically and at the point of delivery in local communities. Sure Start planning and delivery will therefore strengthen opportunities for inter- disciplinary training and for building effective networks of support within local areas.

This Report provides a sound basis for future development. The findings demonstrate real success and help to shape next steps and direction

The new forms of service development have raised expectations and brought increased demand across all the services examined. Service providers feel there is a need to develop their services further to meet raised expectations and to deliver effective support to meet the increasing demands on services and build on early gains. Families do not use the word

¹⁴ Sure Start Guidelines, Sure Start Unit, Appendix 5

integration when referring to new services suggesting that they see services as a seamless whole, able to be tapped into for the range of support and advice they may need.

As community involvement is stimulated, a growing sense of confidence and pride is emerging. Small inroads are being made into isolated, alienated and vulnerable communities. This can only help close the gap in outcomes between children living in poverty and the wider child population.

9.2 Key areas for future development include the need to ensure that:

- the Sure Start projects work more effectively together to deliver better outcomes for children. We know that the projects together will have greater impact than any single project operating in isolation
- that gaps in current services are identified and addressed through efficient use of Sure Start resources and strategies and through building the capacity of existing services to meet a wider range of need
- services continue to improve their accessibility and appeal to children and parents. We recognise that there are still significant numbers of children and families in Dundee unable or unwilling to access services which may be of benefit to them and that ensuring that services give parents and children what they want and need is a continuing challenge
- work is ongoing to support staff and policy makers to work together across department and agencies. We are aware of continuing barriers and difficulties associated with inter agency working and we are committed to ensuring that these are identified, better understood and addressed through delivery of effective support and shared professional development opportunities
- the successes of the Sure Start strategy are more effectively publicised and shared as tools for learning and development across the wider early years and childcare context and children's services as a whole