



University of Chester

**This work has been submitted to ChesterRep – the University of Chester’s
online research repository**

<http://chesterrep.openrepository.com>

Author(s): Sarah Davies; Miranda Thurston

Title: Sure Start Winsford parent satisfaction survey

Date: January 2005

Originally published in:

Example citation: Davies, S., & Thurston, M. (2005). *Sure Start Winsford parent satisfaction survey*. Chester: University College Chester

Version of item: Published version

Available at: <http://hdl.handle.net/10034/7915>



**Sure Start Winsford
Parent Satisfaction Survey**

**Sarah Davies
Miranda Thurston**

January 2005

**Copyright © Centre for Public Health Research
University College Chester
ISBN: 1-902275-43-8**



Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the following people for their assistance with this survey:

- all the parents and carers who participated in the survey;
- members of the *Community Consultation Group* and the *Service Providers Group* who offered suggestions to help with the design of the questionnaire;
- the *Sure Start Programme Co-ordinator* and members of the *Sure Start Team* for their support with the survey.

Table of Contents

	Page number	
Acknowledgements	i	
Table of contents	ii	
List of figures	iv	
List of tables	v	
Executive Summary	vi	
Chapter 1	Background	
1.1	Introduction and background	1
1.2	Aims and objectives	2
Chapter 2	Study design and methodology	
2.1	Study design	4
2.2	The Sure Start population and how it was sampled	4
2.3	Design of the questionnaire	5
2.4	Survey methods	6
2.5	Survey schedule	8
Chapter 3	Results	
3.1	Introduction	9
3.2	Characteristics of respondents and their families	10
3.3	The number, ages and ethnicity of children living with respondents	11
3.4	Knowledge of Sure Start Winsford services	12
3.5	Overall satisfaction with Sure Start Winsford services	13
3.6	Use of and satisfaction with specific Sure Start services	16
3.6.1	Early Learning Services	17
3.6.2	Childcare and Parenting Services	19
3.6.3	Community Support Services	21
3.6.4	Speech and Language Services	24
3.6.5	Services for Parents	26
3.6.6	Support and Advice Service	27
3.6.7	Further comments from respondents	29
3.6.7.1	Suggestions for improvements to existing Sure Start services	29
3.6.7.2	Other services respondents would like to receive to help care for a child under four years old	30

Chapter 4	Discussion	
	4.1	Introduction 33
	4.2	Awareness of services 33
	4.3	Use of services 35
	4.4	Satisfaction with services 37
	4.5	Comments from respondents 37
	4.6	Conclusion 38
	References	40
	Appendices	
	Appendix A	The questionnaire 41
	Appendix B	Covering letters 42
	Appendix C	Participant information sheet 43
	Appendix D	Comments from respondents 44

List of Figures

		Page number
Figure 1.1.1	Maps showing the two areas covered by Sure Start Winsford	3
Figure 3.5.1	Overall satisfaction with services available to families with young children in Winsford	14
Figure 3.6.1.1	Use of Early Learning Services	18
Figure 3.6.1.2	How helpful were the Early Learning Services?	19
Figure 3.6.2.1	Use of Childcare and Parenting Services	20
Figure 3.6.2.2	How helpful were the Childcare and Parenting Services?	21
Figure 3.6.3.1	Use of Community Support Services	22
Figure 3.6.3.2	How helpful were the Community Support Services?	23
Figure 3.6.3.3	Number of respondents who attended the special events and trips	23
Figure 3.6.4.1	Use of Speech and Language Services	25
Figure 3.6.4.2	How helpful were the Speech and Language Services?	26
Figure 3.6.5.1	Use of Services for Parents	27
Figure 3.6.5.2	How helpful were the Services for Parents?	27
Figure 3.6.6.1	Use of Support and Advice Service from the Sure Start Team	28
Figure 3.6.6.2	How helpful was the Support and Advice Service from the Sure Start Team?	29

List of Tables

		Page number
Table 3.2.1	Age range of respondents	11
Table 3.3.1	Number of children aged under 16 living with respondents	11
Table 3.3.2	Ages of children living with respondents	12
Table 3.4.1	Ways respondents had heard about Sure Start	13
Table 3.5.1	Number of respondents who requested information about particular Sure Start services	15
Table 3.5.2	Types of childcare used in the last year	16

Executive Summary

Introduction

Monitoring and evaluation of Sure Start local programmes is a statutory requirement of the Sure Start Unit. As part of this requirement, local programmes are asked to survey their eligible population, to establish the level of user satisfaction with services for families with young children. The purpose is to ascertain whether programmes are achieving their aims and meeting the needs of local families.

In response to this requirement, Sure Start Winsford commissioned the Centre for Public Health Research (CPHR), University College Chester, to conduct a user satisfaction survey.

Methods

This study used a survey approach to explore users' satisfaction with Sure Start services in Winsford. Postal questionnaires sent to a sample of parents within the Sure Start area were used to collect the data. The target population for this survey was parents or carers of children aged under four who lived within the Sure Start Winsford area. In August 2004, when the planning stage of the survey began, the number of eligible families was 702.

The Child Health Database, maintained by Central Cheshire Primary Care Trust (CCPCT), is the most comprehensive source of information about the local population and was therefore used to access contact details for the eligible population. It was planned to send questionnaires to the whole of the eligible population. However, the list of contact details provided by CCPCT contained just names and addresses of those families who had previously consented to this information being shared. As a result, questionnaires were sent to 252 families, all of the families listed. The sample size was increased during the second phase of

the survey. Reminders were sent to non-respondents and, in addition, a further 142 registered families who were missing from the CCPCT list were sent a questionnaire.

The questionnaire design was based on previous satisfaction questionnaires developed by the CPHR. It was developed following consultation with the Programme Co-ordinator and members of the Sure Start Winsford team, members of the Service Providers Group and members of the Community Consultation Group. A number of steps were taken during the design and administration of the questionnaire in an effort to maximise the response rate for the survey.

A total of 103 questionnaires were included in the analysis. This gave a response rate of 26% for the survey.

Summary of findings

Characteristics of respondents and their families

- 100% of respondents were female.
- 30% were lone parents compared to 67% who were living with a partner.
- 50% reported that someone in their household was in a paid job for more than 16 hours per week.
- 2% stated that they had a disability, and 4% had a child with a disability.
- The age of the respondents ranged from 16 to 51 years old. The age group with the highest proportion of respondents was the 21-25 age group.
- The majority of respondents had either just one child aged 0-16 living with them (46%), or two children (41%).
- 95% of respondents reported their child/children's ethnicity as White (British).

Overall knowledge of and satisfaction with Sure Start Winsford Services

- 96% of respondents said they knew about the Sure Start Programme in Winsford.
- The most common way respondents had heard about Sure Start was through a Health Visitor (61%).
- 91% of respondents reported they were either 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with the available services.
- 71% considered that there were enough services in Winsford to help families with young children.
- When asked whether they thought they receive enough information about services already available in Winsford, 54% said they did receive enough information.
- 76% of respondents indicated they would like information about specific Sure Start services.

Early Learning Services

- The service within this category reported to be used by the largest proportion of respondents was the Ladybird Parent and Toddler Group.
- The service used by the smallest proportion of respondents was Darnhall Little Learners. However, there is just one Little Learners session per week, whereas Ladybird sessions are more frequent and are run in both the Wharton and Greenfields areas of Winsford. Also, Little Learners is a relatively new service.
- The level of satisfaction with these services was high. In particular, 95% of respondents found the Ladybird Parent and Baby Group helpful, with 68% of these reporting that it was 'very helpful'.

Childcare and Parenting Services

- Emergency Childcare and the Midwifery Services were used by just a small number of respondents. This is likely to be a reflection of the nature of the

services, as not all parents would be expected to have accessed these services.

- Levels of satisfaction with these services were high.
- The only service in this category to receive more counts of 'helpful' than 'very helpful' was the Stop Smoking service.

Community Support Services

- The service in this category used by the largest proportion of respondents was the Information and Advice Service.
- The levels of satisfaction with services in this category were high, with every service considered to be 'very helpful' by the majority of respondents.
- The Special Events and Trips proved very popular with respondents.

Speech and Language Services

- The services in this category accessed by the largest number of respondents were the Home Visiting Service and the 2-Year Language Questionnaire.
- The services accessed by the smallest proportion of respondents in this category were drop-in sessions at the Ladybird Groups and at school nursery classes.
- The Home Visiting Service was considered helpful by all respondents.

Services for Parents

- A total of 14% of respondents reported using the Pennies and Pounds Service.
- The majority of respondents reported that the Pennies and Pounds Service was helpful.

Support and Advice Service

- 35% of respondents reported that they had dropped in to a Sure Start office for support or advice.

-
- 22% of respondents reported that they had telephoned the Sure Start Team for support or advice.
 - All respondents found telephoning or dropping in to a Sure Start office to be helpful. A higher proportion of respondents found telephoning the Sure Start Team to be 'very helpful' (65% of respondents), compared with 55% of respondents who found dropping in for advice to be 'very helpful'.

Further comments from respondents

- Respondents were offered the opportunity to give suggestions as to how existing Sure Start services could be improved and what other services they would like to receive to help care for a child under four years old.
- The largest proportion of comments related to a lack of knowledge about existing Sure Start services. Many respondents indicated that they would like to know about the services available.
- A high proportion of comments related to childcare facilities and playgroups. Respondents stated that they would like more access to affordable and convenient childcare, with services that are flexible enough to accommodate their family's patterns.

Discussion and conclusions

The Parent Satisfaction Survey provides an indication of the use of, and satisfaction with, services for families with young children in Winsford. The survey indicates that general awareness of Sure Start was high in Winsford among respondents, although many would like more information about particular services.

There is an ongoing issue of keeping contact details up to date, which is challenging as the eligible population is constantly changing. Therefore it is recommended that the local programme strives to work closely with the PCT in order to keep their information about who the eligible population is up to date. A

drive on promotion of specific Sure Start services in the area, aimed at reaching as many eligible families as possible, is recommended.

Some services were accessed by a number of respondents, however, other services were accessed by few respondents. Most services accessed by respondents had been used more than once by the majority of respondents, and levels of satisfaction were high, indicating that initial engagement with parents/carers is where the difficulty lies. This survey indicates that lack of knowledge about services may be a contributing factor that could be addressed through promotion of the services. Informal services, such as support and advice services and home visiting services, appeared to be popular with respondents. These could prove useful in directing parents/carers to other Sure Start services they may find helpful.

Consulting with parents/carers in more depth on particular issues raised by this survey would be advantageous. More specifically, qualitative work could be used to explore issues regarding levels of service usage and ways to increase it.

Chapter 1

Background

1.1 Introduction and background

Sure Start is a Government initiative focused on reducing child poverty and social exclusion and the resulting effects on families with young children. It was introduced in 1999 with the aim of improving the health and well-being of families with children aged 0-4 years living in areas of high socio-economic deprivation. Nationally, there are currently 524 Sure Start local programmes in operation, serving up to 400,000 children (Sure Start, 2004). Sure Start local programmes aim to work with local agencies in the areas of childcare, education, health, and family support, in innovative ways to offer needs-focused services for young children and their parents.

Monitoring and evaluation of Sure Start local programmes is a statutory requirement of the Sure Start Unit, in order to monitor progress against national objectives, understand how well services are performing and make necessary changes according to the resulting information so that effective services are developed (Sure Start, 2002). As part of this requirement, local programmes are asked to survey their eligible population, to establish the level of user satisfaction with services for families with young children, as a means of checking whether programmes are achieving their aims and meeting local needs (Ball, 2002).

In response to this requirement, Sure Start Winsford commissioned the Centre for Public Health Research (CPHR), University College Chester, to conduct a user satisfaction survey.

Winsford lies in the centre of Cheshire, within the borough of Vale Royal. Winsford is a diverse area as it contains some of the most affluent and the most deprived areas in Cheshire. Winsford Over was ranked 3rd in the Index of Multiple

Deprivation of Cheshire wards in 2004 (Cheshire County Council, 2004). Furthermore, this ward was ranked in the top 5% of most deprived areas in England (Cheshire County Council, 2004).

Sure Start Winsford is a Sixth Round programme, established in 2003. There are two clusters served by Sure Start Winsford, meaning that it is a split site. The two geographical areas are 'Over Two and Grange' and 'Wharton and Gravel', which includes Rilshaw Lane Travellers Caravan Park. Maps showing these areas are presented overleaf, in Figure 1.1.1. Currently there are over 700 eligible families within the areas served by Sure Start Winsford.

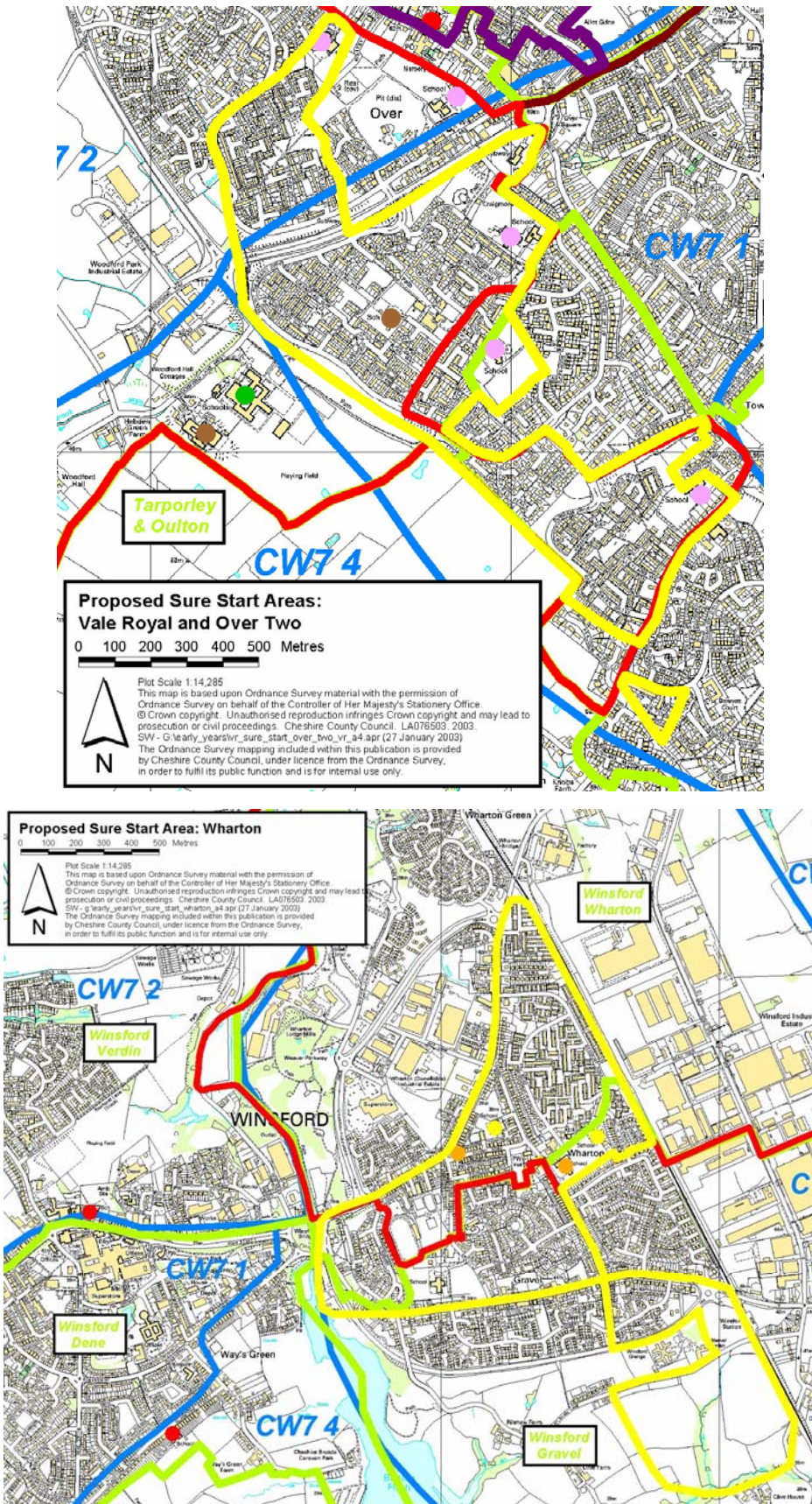
1.2 Aims and objectives

The aim of this survey was to establish levels of satisfaction with services for families with young children, amongst eligible families in the Sure Start Winsford area.

The objectives of the User Satisfaction Survey were to:

- review levels of awareness of local Sure Start services;
- review the use of existing services for families with young children;
- fulfil the Sure Start Unit's requirements for reporting levels of satisfaction with services for families with young children amongst eligible families;
- gather information about the needs of the eligible population and their views on how services are operating and how they could be improved;
- promote the services available through Winsford Sure Start.

Figure 1.1.1 Maps showing the two areas covered by Sure Start Winsford
 Sure Start Winsford areas are marked by yellow lines.



Chapter 2

Study design and methodology

2.1 Study design

This study used a survey approach to explore users' satisfaction with Sure Start services in Winsford. This allowed service users an opportunity to report on their experiences and perceptions of the services they used. Postal questionnaires sent to a sample of parents within the Sure Start area were used to collect the data.

There are advantages and disadvantages in the use of postal questionnaires. Disadvantages include the possibility of a low response rate, which can affect the validity of the survey (Edwards et al., 2002). In addition, the researcher has no influence over who completes the questionnaire and how they go about it (Aldridge and Levine, 2001) and so is unable to ensure they are completed correctly. People with limited literacy skills, visual impairment, or non-English mother tongue, may have difficulty completing questionnaires (Ball, 2002).

However, the advantages that made the postal questionnaire an appropriate method for this survey include that it allows a large number of people to be surveyed, at a relatively low cost (Bowling, 2002). Also, the time span for the distribution and return of questionnaires allows the survey to be conducted relatively quickly (Aldridge and Levine, 2001). Furthermore, the use of postal questionnaires eliminates the risk of interviewer bias (Ball, 2002) and can reduce the social desirability effect of respondents giving socially approved answers to questions, due to the anonymity of this approach (Aldridge and Levine, 2001).

2.2 The Sure Start population and how it was sampled

The target population for this survey was parents or carers of children aged under four who lived within the Sure Start Winsford area. In August 2004, when the planning stage of the survey began, the number of eligible families was 702.

The Child Health Database, maintained by Central Cheshire Primary Care Trust (CCPCT), is the most comprehensive source of information about the local population. In contrast with the Sure Start Database, the Child Health Database contains contact details of families eligible to use Sure Start services but who are not currently registered with Sure Start. For these reasons the sample for the survey was drawn from the Child Health Database. It was planned to send questionnaires to the whole of the eligible population. However, the list of contact details provided by CCPCT only contained names and addresses of those families who had previously consented to this information being shared. As a result, questionnaires were sent to 252 families, all of the families listed. The sample size was increased during the second phase of the survey. Reminders were sent to non-respondents and, in addition, a further 142 registered families who were missing from the CCPCT list were sent a questionnaire. Copies of the questionnaire were also available from the Sure Start Winsford base and one questionnaire was collected from there. This resulted in a final sample size of 395.

2.3 Design of the questionnaire

The questionnaire design was based on previous satisfaction questionnaires developed by the CPHR. It was developed following consultation with the Programme Co-ordinator and members of the Sure Start Winsford team, members of the Service Providers Group and members of the Community Consultation Group. The various Sure Start services were arranged into six categories, for the purpose of the questionnaire. These were Early Learning Services, Childcare and Parenting Services, Community Support Services, Speech and Language Services, Services for Parents, and the Support and Advice Service. The questions included related to the following areas:

- frequency of usage of the different Sure Start services;
- level of satisfaction with services used;
- use of and access to childcare;

-
- socio-demographic data regarding: number and ages of children; whether the parent is a lone parent or is living with a partner; employment status of adults within the household, and the ethnicity of the child.

There were also two open-ended questions offering respondents the opportunity to comment on services they thought could be improved and to give suggestions on additional services they would like for families with a child/children under four years old. A copy of the questionnaire can be found in Appendix A.

Several methods have been found to be effective in increasing response rates to postal questionnaires. These include making the questionnaire look attractive and simple to complete, by using colour and a clear format for questions, with instructions on how to complete them (Ball, 2002). The questionnaire was therefore designed to look visually attractive, using pictures and colour printing. The wording of questions was carefully considered in order to ensure they were clear and easy to understand. Simple instructions for completion were included.

Research findings have shown that response rates to postal questionnaires were more than doubled when a monetary incentive was included (Edwards et al., 2002). Therefore a prize draw was incorporated into the survey as an incentive, with shopping vouchers offered as prizes. The final page of the questionnaire formed the prize draw entry form. Respondents were assured in the questionnaire that the prize draw slip would be separated from the completed questionnaire to ensure anonymity. The prize draw slip also included the opportunity to request information about any of the Sure Start Winsford services, to allow promotion of those services.

2.4 Survey methods

Contacting participants in advance of the survey, then later following up non-respondents, providing a further copy of the questionnaire, and including reply paid envelopes, have all been found to increase the response rate in postal surveys

(Edwards et al., 2002). In consideration of this, registered Sure Start families were informed of the postal survey before it began, through a newsletter from the Programme Co-ordinator, as the contact details of these families were available. A two phase approach to the survey was utilised. Firstly, a questionnaire and covering letter (which included a participant information sheet on the reverse) and a reply paid envelope were sent to eligible families, as identified by CCPCT. Covering letters and the participant information sheet can be found in Appendices B and C respectively. The participant information sheet explained why the survey was being conducted and why the parent/carer had been selected for participation. It also included details on procedures to protect confidentiality and an assurance that declining to take part would not affect the parent/carer's entitlement to use Sure Start or other services. The covering letter asked respondents to return the completed questionnaire and detachable prize draw slip, in the reply-paid envelope.

During the second phase of the survey, non-respondents were sent a reminder letter and another copy of the questionnaire. The covering letter informed participants that the deadline for the prize draw had been extended. At this stage, a further 142 families were also sent questionnaires. These were families registered with Sure Start Winsford, who had not appeared on the list of eligible families received from CCPCT. Unfortunately, due to time required to cross-reference these two lists, the 142 further families were only sent a questionnaire at this second stage. It was not possible to follow up non-respondents in this group, as there was not sufficient time. Questionnaires and reply paid envelopes were also available from the Sure Start office in case parents/carers did not receive one or lost their copy. A database was maintained to ensure that only one questionnaire from each family was included for analysis.

2.5 Survey schedule

The timetable for the administration of the survey was as follows:

Mailing of questionnaires	5 th November 2004
Mailing of reminder letters and questionnaires	6 th December 2004
Closing date for return of questionnaires	11 th January 2005
Prize draw	12 th January 2005

Chapter 3

Results

3.1 Introduction

A total of 395 questionnaires were sent out, and 111 responses were received. Of these, eight were void (one respondent was ineligible for Sure Start services and seven questionnaires were duplicates from families who had already returned a questionnaire). This resulted in a total of 103 questionnaires used for analysis. This gave a response rate of 26% for the survey.

In surveys, a response rate of 75% is considered good (Bowling, 2002), although opinion on this differs, with some authors suggesting a response rate of 60% or over should be aimed for (Punch, 2003). Guidance from the National Evaluation of Sure Start (Ball, 2002) suggests a target response rate of over 70% and states that if the response rate is below 50%, the results of the survey will not be reliable. The response rate for this survey clearly falls short of that target. However, there is no agreed level as to what an acceptable minimum response rate is (Bowling, 2002). Furthermore, survey methods can include postal questionnaires or interviews yet the response rate for postal questionnaires is typically much lower than that for interviews (Robson, 1993).

Another important factor to consider is the sample population. In a recent study, Roberts, Wilson, Roalfe, and Bridge (2004) found that the area in which a person lives is one of the main factors that affects response rate to postal questionnaires. Their results showed that living in an area with a higher Townsend score (a more deprived area) was associated with a lower response rate. As Winsford was selected as a Sure Start area, it is an area of relative deprivation, therefore these findings are relevant. Similarly, a study conducted by Taper and Davis (2003) found that the average response rate for a postal survey conducted by MORI for the Housing Corporation was 45% compared with an average

response rate of 65% for an interview survey conducted on the same topic and broadly comparable in content. Furthermore, when the response rates were analysed by areas of deprivation, based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation, response rates to the postal survey ranged from 54% in the least deprived area to 35% in the most deprived areas. Therefore the response rate to this survey is not so surprising.

However, the fact remains that the views represented in this report constitute just 26% of those people surveyed from a sample of 395 of the 702 eligible families. There is no way of knowing the views of those who did not respond and so the views presented should not be taken to represent the views of all parents/carers within the Sure Start Winsford area. Nevertheless, the views of 103 parents/carers have been elicited which does offer some indication of service user satisfaction and should indicate areas warranting further investigation.

The data were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS). As respondents did not all give answers to every question, the percentages given are based on the total number of responses for each question. The total number of people who responded is also given in each case. For the purpose of analysis, all figures in this report have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

3.2 Characteristics of respondents and their families

Of the 103 questionnaires included in the analysis, 100% (103 people) were completed by females. Of these respondents:

- 30% (31) were lone parents compared to 67% (69) who were living with a partner;
- 50% (52) reported that someone in their household was in a paid job for more than 16 hours per week;
- 2% (2) stated that they had a disability;
- 4% (4) had a child with a disability.

The age of the respondents ranged from 16 to 51 years old. These have been grouped into six age ranges, presented below in Table 3.2.1.

Table 3.2.1 Age range of respondents

Age range (years)	Frequency	Percentage
16-20	20	19
21-25	36	35
26-30	24	23
31-35	12	12
36-40	10	10
41+	1	1
Total responses	103	100

3.3 The number, ages and ethnicity of children living with respondents

Details of the number and ages of the children living with respondents are presented below, in Tables 3.3.1 and 3.3.2. Information about the ethnicity of the children is also presented below.

Table 3.3.1 Number of children aged under 16 living with respondents

Number of children under 16	Number of respondents with this number of children	Percentage
0	1	1
1	45	45
2	41	41
3	11	11
4	2	2
Total responses	100	100

Table 3.3.2 Ages of children living with respondents

Age range of children (years)	Number of children
0-4	126
5-9	26
10-16	8
Total number of children*	160

Respondents were asked the ethnicity of their child/children. 95% of respondents reported their child/children's ethnicity as White (British), (99 families). The remaining respondents reported their child/children's ethnicity as:

- White (Irish) (1 family);
- Mixed (White/Black Carribean) (1 family);
- Mixed (Other) (1 family);
- Pakistani (1 family);
- Chinese (1 family).

3.4 Knowledge of Sure Start Winsford Services

In total, 96% of respondents (96 people) said they knew about the Sure Start Programme in Winsford before they received the questionnaire. The sources that respondents had heard about Sure Start from are summarised overleaf, in Table 3.4.1.

* This data was missing from 8 of the questionnaires.

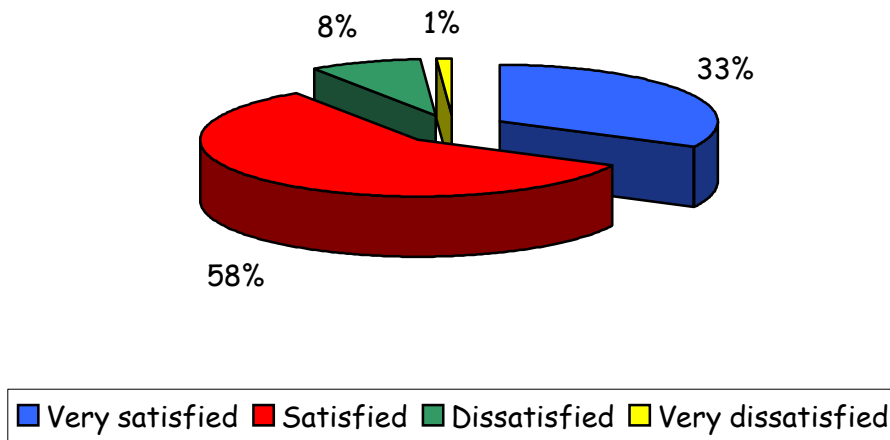
Table 3.4.1 Ways respondents had heard about Sure Start

Heard about Sure Start from:	Number of responses	Percentage
...Health Visitor	63	61
...Information through the post	24	23
...A friend or family member	21	20
...Sure Start Worker	20	19
...Midwife	19	18
...Pre-school or Nursery	15	15
...A leaflet	12	12
...A poster	12	12
...A newspaper	6	6
...Social Services	5	5

3.5 Overall satisfaction with Sure Start Winsford services

Figure 3.5.1 overleaf summarises the levels of satisfaction with services in Winsford for families with young children. 95 respondents answered this question. The overall level of satisfaction was high with 91% (86 people) reporting they were either 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with the available services.

Figure 3.5.1 Overall satisfaction with services available to families with young children in Winsford.



Respondents were asked whether they thought Winsford had enough services to help families with young children. Of the 99 people who responded:

- 71% (70 people) said YES, there were enough services;
- 29% (29 people) said NO, there were not enough services.

When asked whether they thought they receive enough information about services already available in Winsford, 99 people responded. Of these, 54% (53 people) said they did receive enough information, compared with 47% (46 people) who said they did not receive enough information.

Respondents had the opportunity to request information about specific Sure Start services, by ticking a box on their prize draw slip. Seventy-six percent of respondents (78 people) indicated they would like information about particular services. Their responses are summarised below, in Table 3.5.1.

Table 3.5.1 Number of respondents who requested information about particular Sure Start services

Sure Start service	Number of respondents who requested information	Percentage of respondents
Children's behaviour	45	44
Training courses	43	42
Parent and baby/toddler play sessions	39	38
Toy library	31	30
Information on childcare	30	29
Information on childminding	29	28
Pennies and Pounds	28	27
Back to work/changing jobs	25	24
Speech and language	12	12
Health advice	11	11
Giving up smoking	11	11
Community Support Service	11	11
Midwife	4	4

The prize draw slips containing this information were detached from the questionnaires and given to the Programme Co-ordinator at Sure Start Winsford. This allowed the opportunity to respond to these requests for information, thereby promoting Sure Start services.

Respondents were asked whether they ever struggled to get help with childcare when they really needed it. Of those who responded, 36% (36 people) said they did struggle, compared with 64% (63 people) who said they did not struggle. The types of childcare respondents reported using in the past year are summarised below, in Table 3.5.2.

Table 3.5.2 Types of childcare used in the last year

Type of childcare used	Number of respondents	Percentage of respondents
Free babysitting by a family member	73	71
Help from partner/ex-partner	67	65
Free babysitting by a friend	29	28
Fee-charging day nursery	16	16
Paid babysitter	15	15
Creche	11	11
Other	4	4
Childminder	3	3

When respondents were asked where they would prefer any new services to be, the following responses were gained:¹

- within walking distance 55% (57 people);
- in the town centre 19% (20 people);
- on a bus route 14% (14 people).

3.6 Use of and satisfaction with specific Sure Start services

In the following section, the reported use of specific Sure Start services and the levels of satisfaction with those services will be presented. It should be noted that the total number of people using some services, or reporting their satisfaction with those services, is small. Therefore the actual number of people is given, rather than the percentage figures, as basing them on small numbers could be misleading. Where percentages figures are used, the actual number of people is also given.

¹ Percentages given are of the total sample of 103, as some respondents selected 2 or 3 options.

3.6.1 Early Learning Services

There are six services in this category. Figures 3.6.1.1 and 3.6.1.2 show the numbers of respondents who had used each of the Sure Start Winsford Early Learning Services, and how helpful respondents reported them to be.

- The service within this category reported to be used by the largest proportion of respondents was the Ladybird Parent and Toddler Group. Twenty one percent of respondents (22 people) had accessed this service at least once, 77% (17) of these had accessed the service more than once.
- The service with the second highest proportion of respondents having used it was the Ladybird Parent and Baby Group. In total, 20% of respondents (21 people) had used this service at least once, and 90% (19) of these had accessed the service on more than one occasion.
- The service used by the smallest proportion of respondents was Darnhall Little Learners. This service had been accessed by 3% of respondents (3 people) in total. However, it should be noted that there is just one Little Learners session per week, whereas Ladybird sessions are more frequent and are run in both the Wharton and Greenfields areas of Winsford. Furthermore, Little Learners is a relatively new service, having been established in 2004, compared with the Ladybirds service which has been established for a number of years.
- The level of satisfaction with these services was high. In particular, 95% of respondents (19 people) found the Ladybird Parent and Baby Group helpful, with 68% (13) of these reporting that it was 'very helpful'. Ninety one percent of respondents (20 people) reported that the Ladybird Parent and Toddler Group was helpful, and of these, 60% (12) said it was 'very helpful'.
- The only two services to be given responses of 'not helpful' by respondents were also the Ladybird Parent and Baby Group (5%, one respondent) and the Ladybird Parent and Toddler Group (9%, two respondents).

Figure 3.6.1.1 Use of Early Learning Services

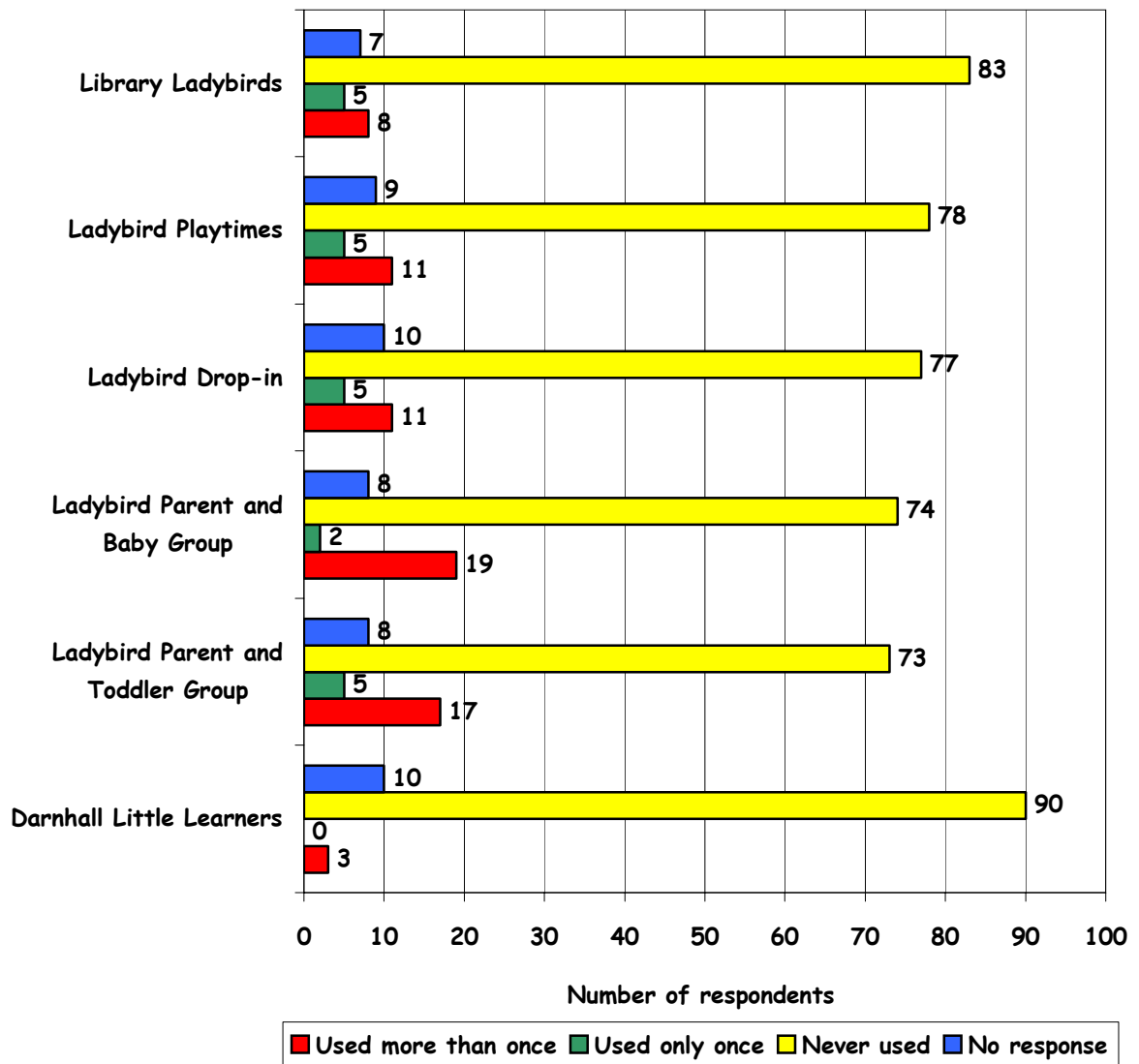
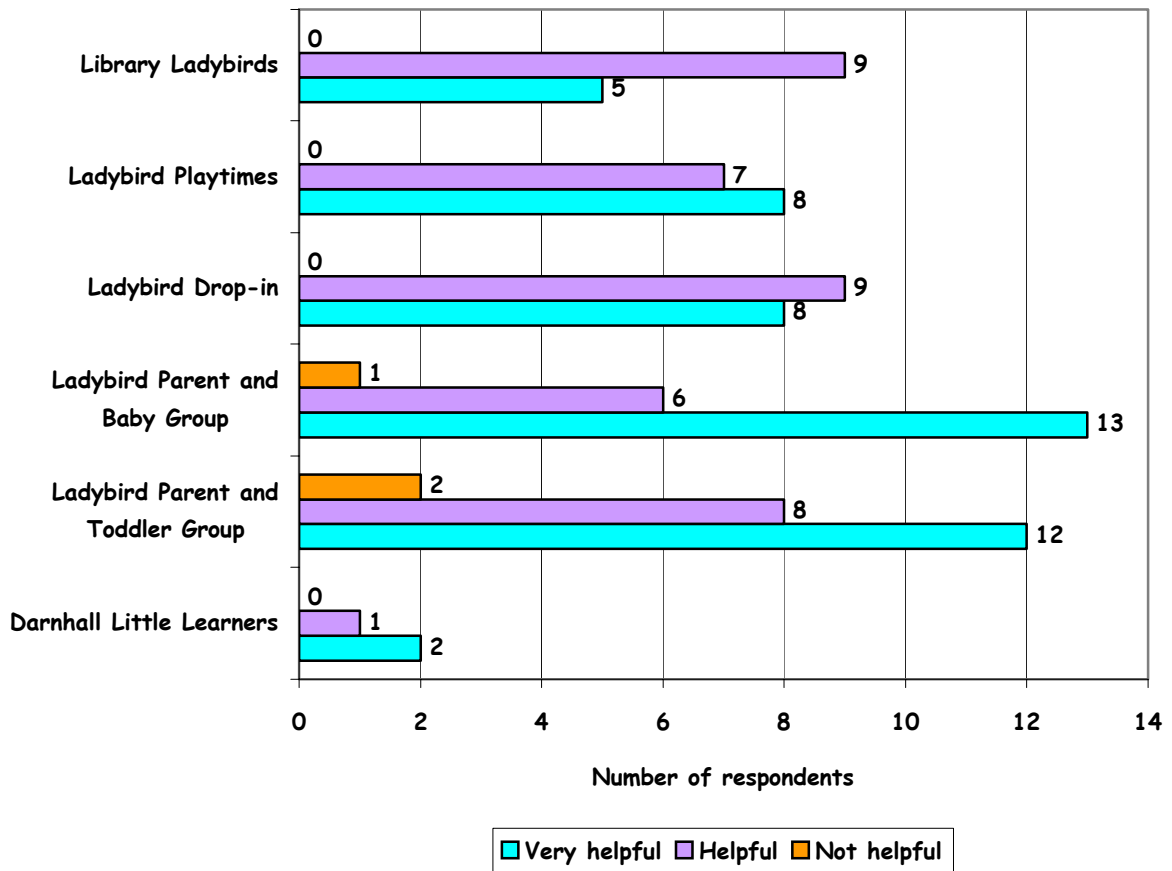


Figure 3.6.1.2 How helpful were the Early Learning Services?



3.6.2 Childcare and Parenting Services

This section explores the use of childcare and parenting services and the satisfaction with these services. There are five services in this category. The results are presented in Figures 3.6.2.1 and 3.6.2.2.

- Emergency Childcare was the least used service in this category, with only 3% (3 respondents) reporting that they had used this service. This is likely to be a reflection of the nature of the service, in that it is only to be used in emergencies.
- Midwifery Services are clearly used only during pregnancy and when babies are young. Therefore not all parents would be expected to have accessed these services. This is reflected in the results, with every Midwifery Service having being used by only 6% of respondents (6 people) each.

- Of the Midwifery services, the Pregnancy to Parenthood Individual Support service was considered to be the most helpful, with 100% of respondents (6 people) stating that it was helpful, and 83% (5) of these reporting that it was 'very helpful'.
- The only service in this category to receive more counts of 'helpful' than 'very helpful' was the Stop Smoking service. Eighty percent of respondents (4 people) considered this service 'helpful' compared with 20% of respondents (1 person) who found it 'very helpful'.

Figure 3.6.2.1 Use of Childcare and Parenting Services

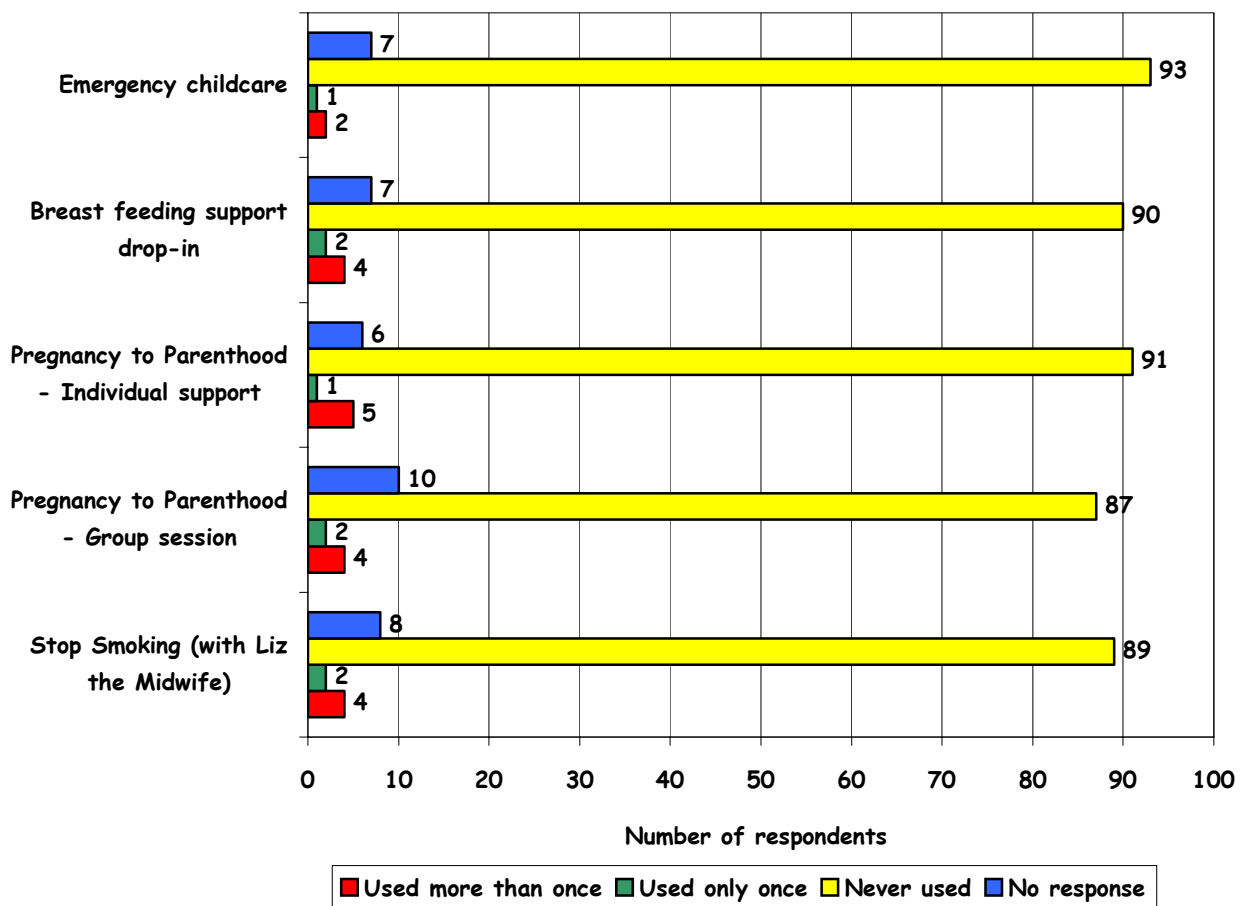
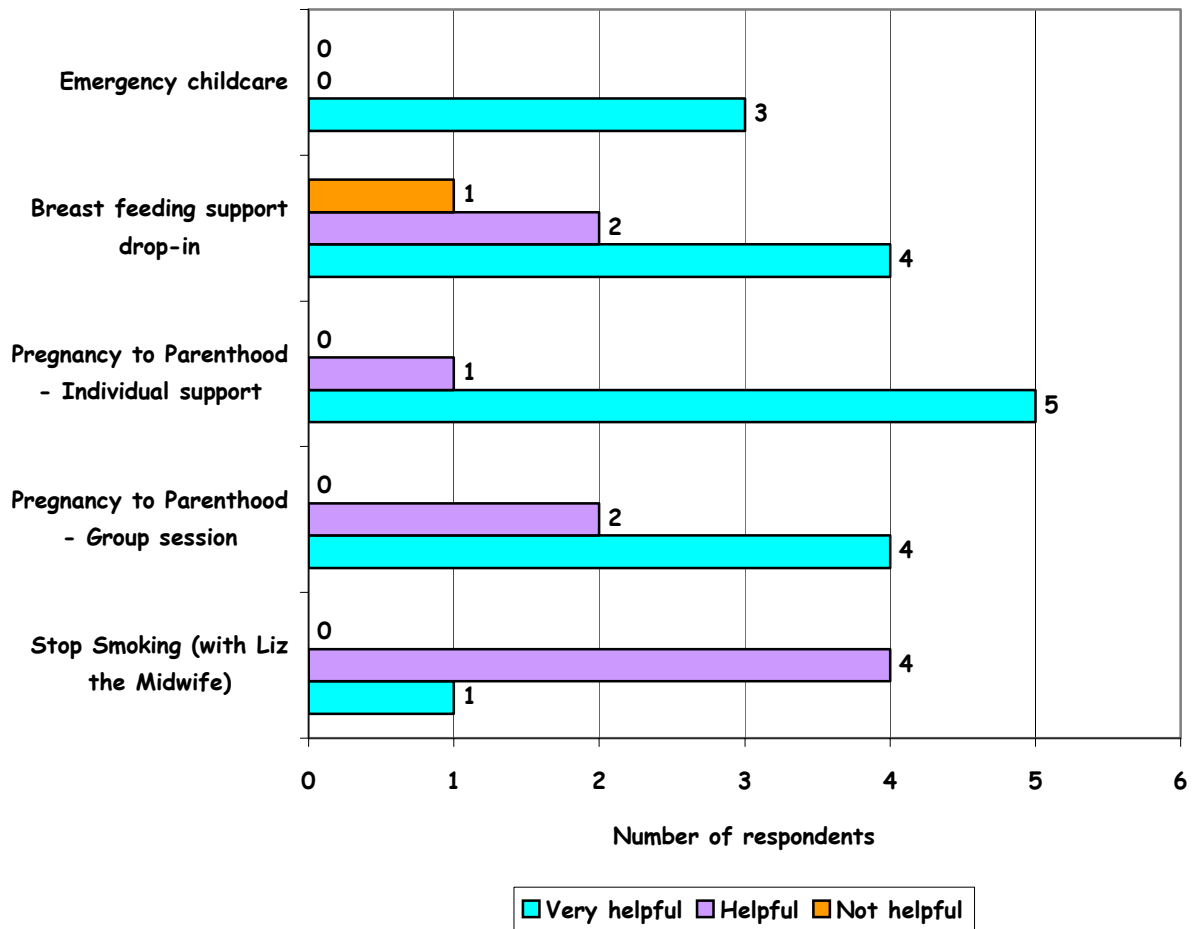


Figure 3.6.2.2 How helpful were the Childcare and Parenting Services?



3.6.3 Community Support Services

There are seven services in this category. Findings related to these services are presented below, in Figures 3.6.3.1 and 3.6.3.2. Results from one of the services, Special Events and Trips, are presented separately in Figure 3.6.3.3, as these relate to one off excursions.

- The service in this category used by the largest proportion of respondents was the Information and Advice Service. In total, 42% of respondents (43 people) had used this service, and 58% of these (25 people) had used it more than once.
- The Home Visiting Service had been accessed by the second largest proportion of respondents in this category. A total of 29% of respondents (30 people) had used this service, with 63% (19) of these having used it on more than one occasion.

- The levels of satisfaction with services in this category were high, as 100% of respondents (10 people) considered the Toy Library 'very helpful'. Similarly, 100% of respondents (36 people) found the Information and Advice Service helpful, with 72% (26) of these describing it as 'very helpful'.
- The Special Events and Trips proved popular with respondents. A hundred percent of those who attended the Teddy Bears picnic (18 people) said they enjoyed it, and 97% of those who attended the trip to Chester Zoo (29 people) said they enjoyed it.

Figure 3.6.3.1 Use of Community Support Services

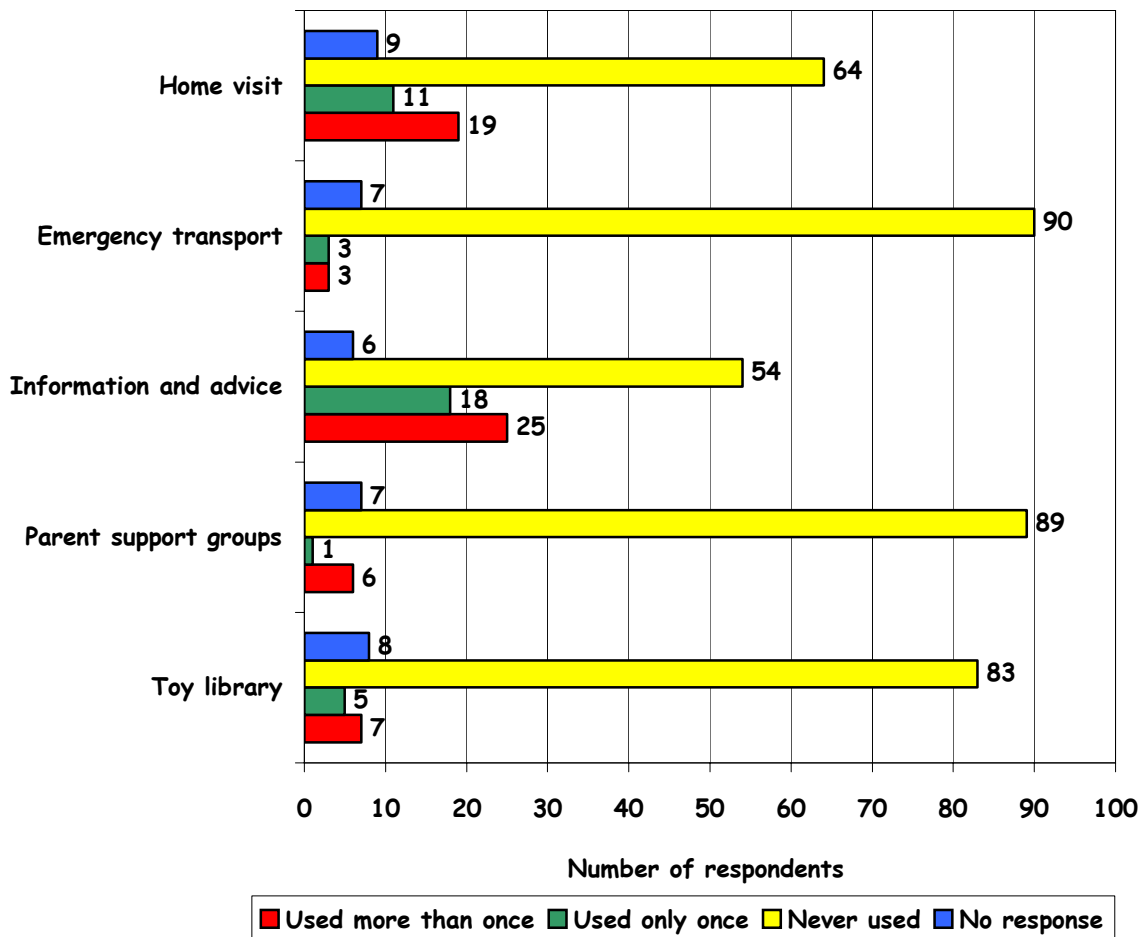


Figure 3.6.3.2 How helpful were the Community Support Services?

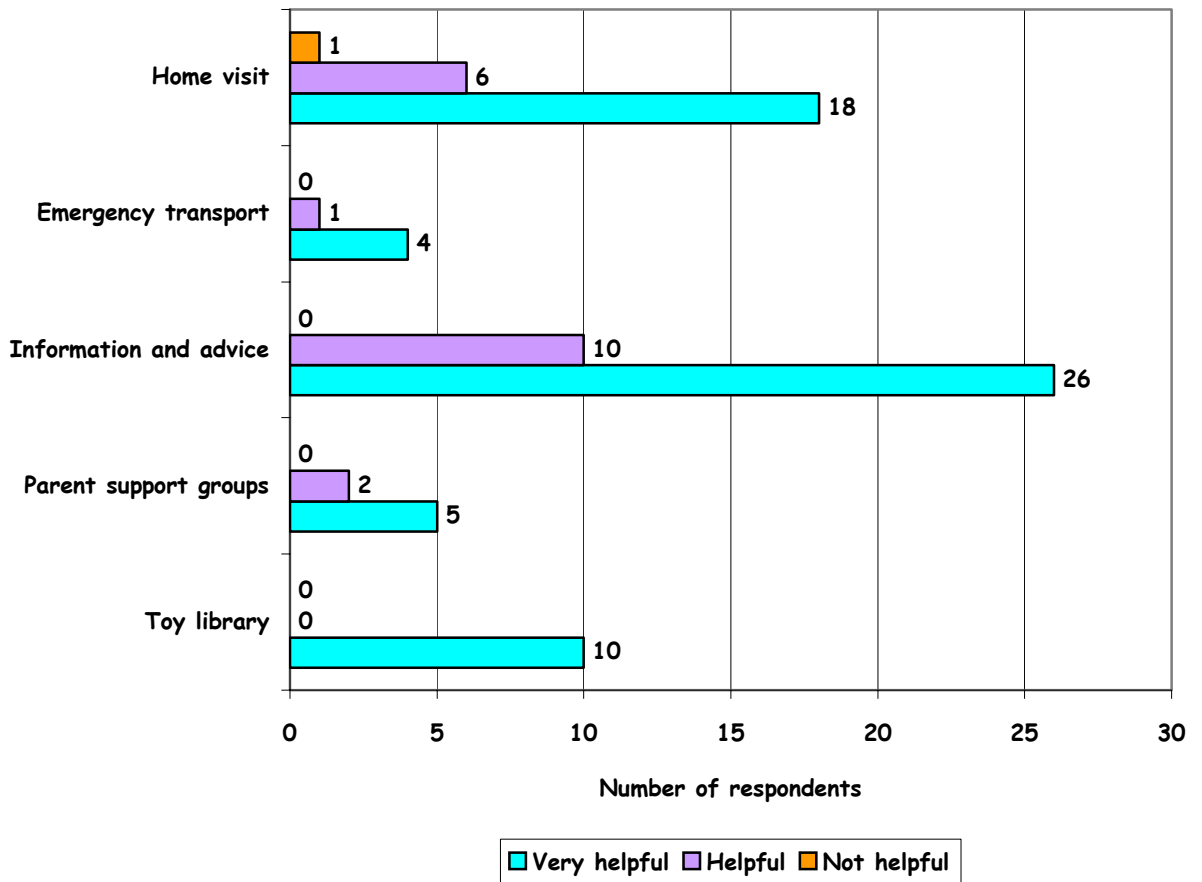
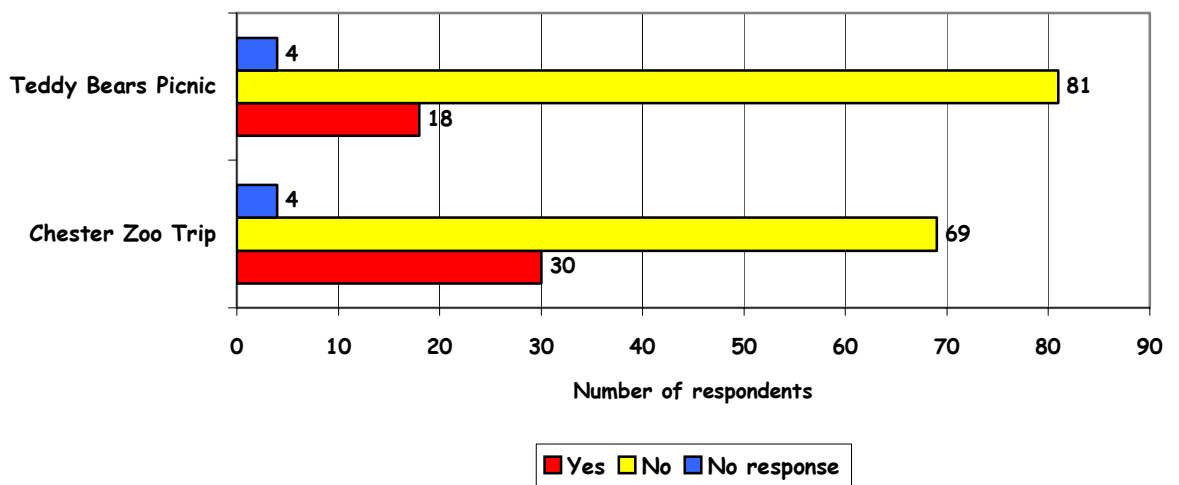


Figure 3.6.3.3 Number of respondents who attended the special events and trips

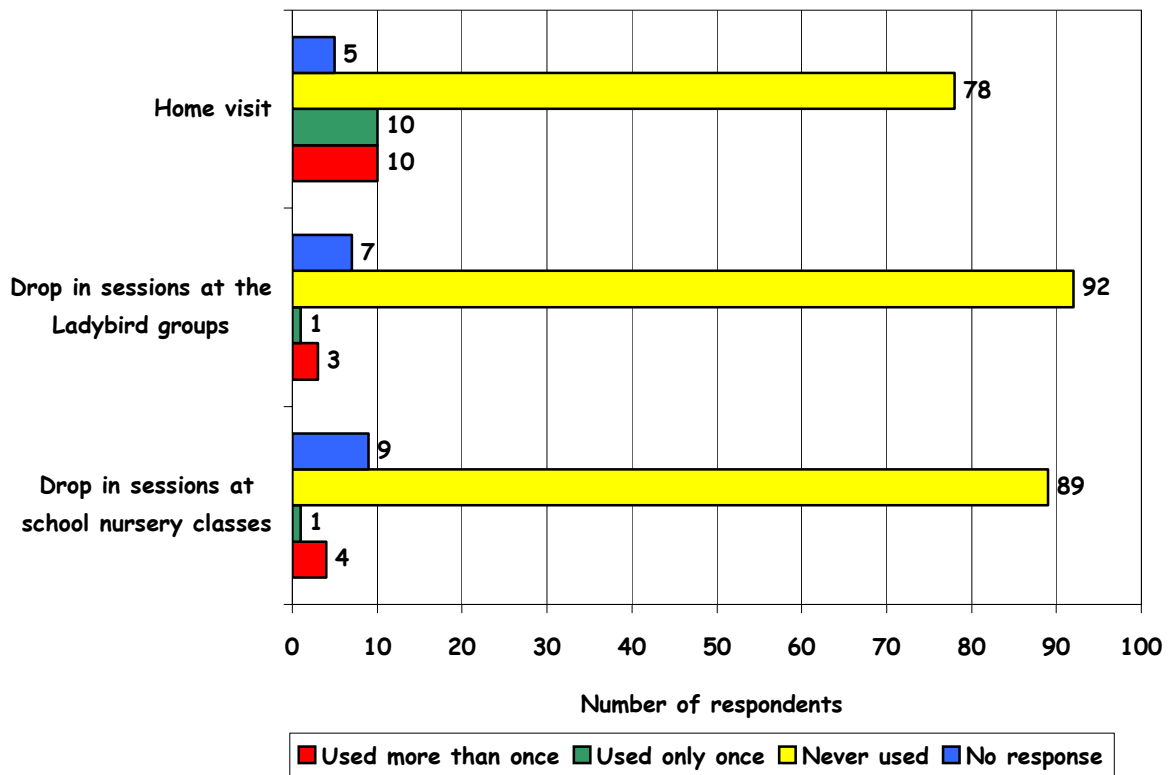


3.6.4 Speech and Language Services

This section focuses on use of and satisfaction with Speech and Language services. There are four services in this category. Findings are presented below, in Figures 3.6.4.1 and 3.6.4.2. The number of respondents who had accessed the 2-Year Language Questionnaire are presented separately, as the nature of this service means it would only be accessed once by each parent/carer.

- The service in this category accessed by the largest number of respondents was the Home Visiting Service, accessed by 19% of respondents (20 people) of whom 50% (10 people) had used the service more than once.
- The service used by the second largest proportion of respondents in this category was the 2-Year Language Questionnaire. This had been used by 17% of respondents (18 people).
- In total, 4% of respondents (4 people) had accessed Speech and Language services through drop-in sessions at the Ladybird Groups, and 5% of respondents (5 people) had accessed this service through drop-in sessions at school nursery classes.
- When asked how helpful the Speech and Language services used were, the Home Visiting service was considered helpful by 100% of respondents (16 people), of which 75% (12 people) found it 'very helpful'.
- One respondent (6%) considered that the 2-Year Language Questionnaire was 'not helpful'. It is not clear why this was. By comparison, 94% (17 people) considered it helpful, with 65% of these (11 people) reporting that it was 'very helpful'.

Figure 3.6.4.1 Use of Speech and Language Services

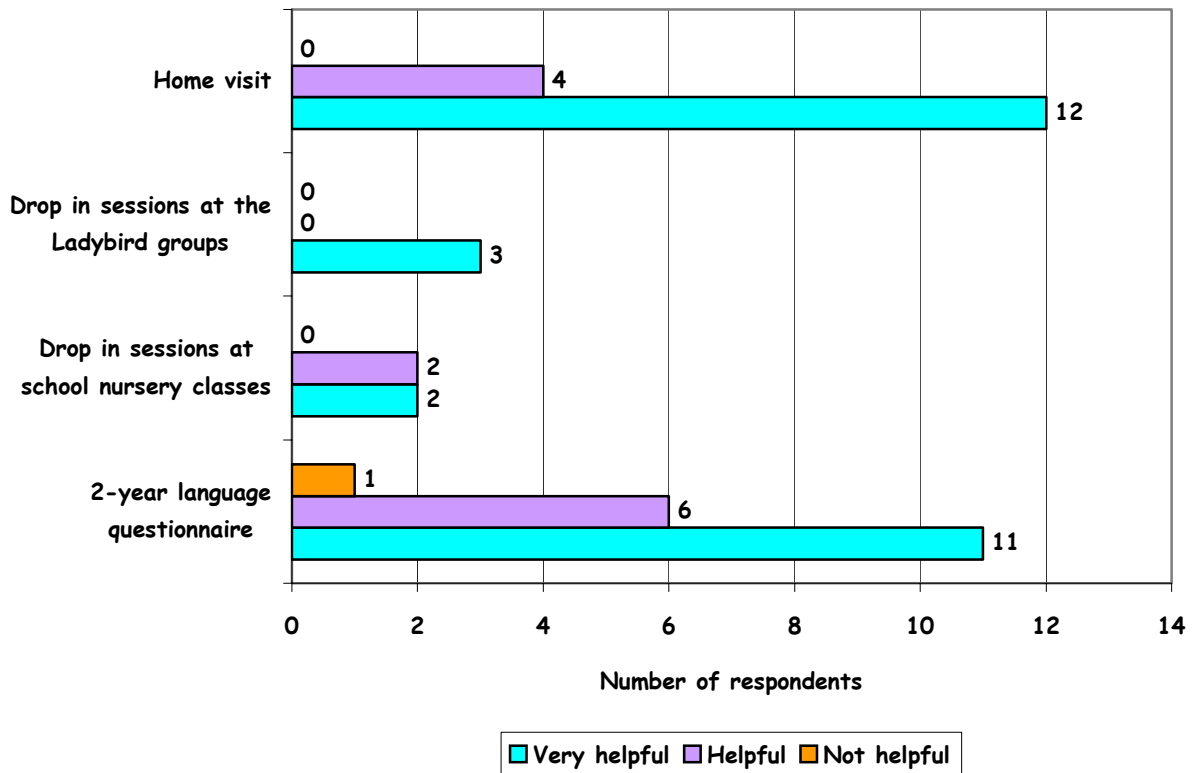


In addition to these Speech and Language Services, parents/carers were asked whether they had completed the 2-Year Language Questionnaire with the Speech and Language Therapist. Responses to this question were as follows:

- Yes - 17% of respondents (18 people);
- No - 73% of respondents (75 people);
- No response - 10% of respondents (10 people).

Levels of satisfaction with this service are shown below, in Figure 3.6.4.2.

Figure 3.6.4.2 How helpful were the Speech and Language Services?



3.6.5 Services for Parents

This category consists of the Pennies and Pounds project, delivered by the Citizens Advice Bureau. Findings regarding use of and satisfaction with this service, as reported by respondents, are presented below, in Figures 3.6.5.1 and 3.6.5.2.

- A total of 14% of respondents (14 people) reported using the Pennies and Pounds Service.
- Of these, 36% (5 people) had accessed the service more than once compared to 64% (9 people) who had used the service on only one occasion.
- In total, 92% of respondents (12 people) reported that the Pennies and Pounds Service was helpful, with 69% of these (9 people) saying that it was 'very helpful'.
- One respondent (8%) reported the service to be 'not helpful'. Reasons for this are not known.

Figure 3.6.5.1 Use of Services for Parents

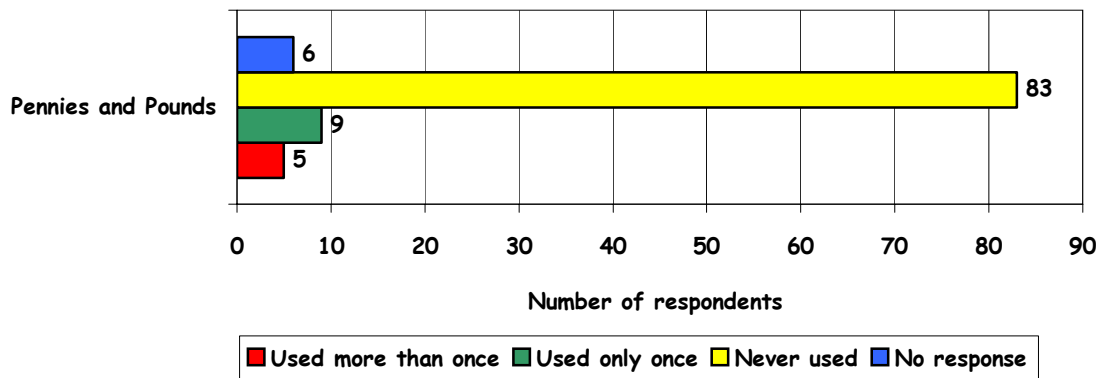
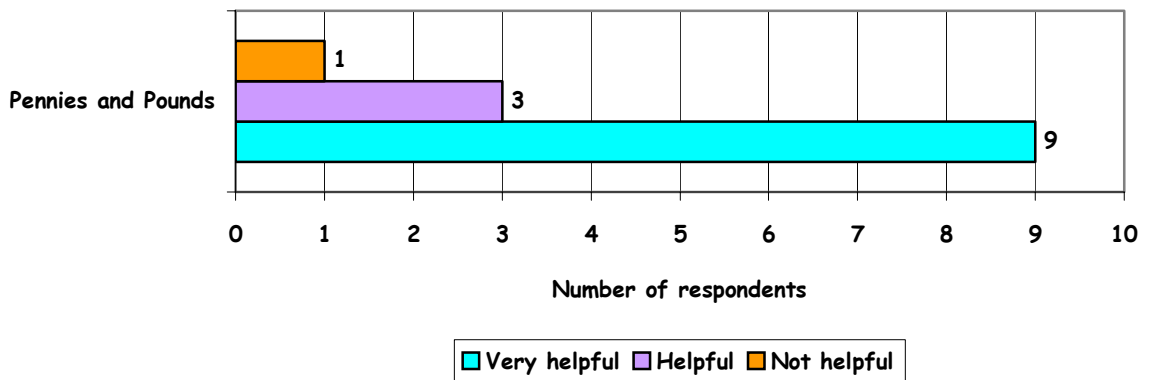


Figure 3.6.5.2 How helpful were the Services for Parents?



3.6.6 Support and Advice Service

Parents/carers were asked whether they had used the informal support and advice service by telephoning the Sure Start Team or dropping in to the Sure Start office, either at Small Oaks or Wharton Clinic. The number of respondents who had accessed this service, and how helpful they considered it to be are presented in Figures 3.6.6.1 and 3.6.6.2.

- When asked whether they ever dropped in to a Sure Start office for support or advice, 35% of respondents (36 people) reported that they had. Of these, 19% (7 people) had used this service 'often', compared with 81% (29 people) who had used it 'sometimes'.

- In total, 22% of respondents (23 people) reported that they had telephoned the Sure Start Team for support or advice. Of these, 9% (2 people) said they phoned 'often' for this, compared with 91% (21 people) who said that they phoned 'sometimes'.
- All respondents found telephoning or dropping in to a Sure Start office to be helpful. A higher proportion of respondents found telephoning the Sure Start Team to be 'very helpful' (65% of respondents; 20 people), compared with 55% of respondents (11 people) who found dropping in for advice to be 'very helpful'.

Figure 3.6.6.1 Use of Support and Advice Service from the Sure Start Team

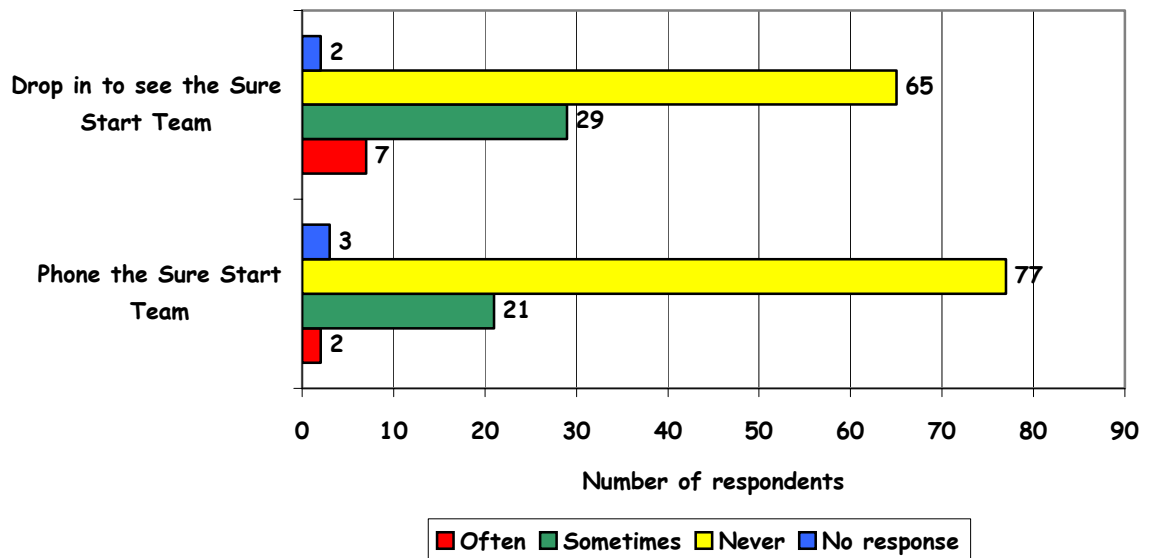
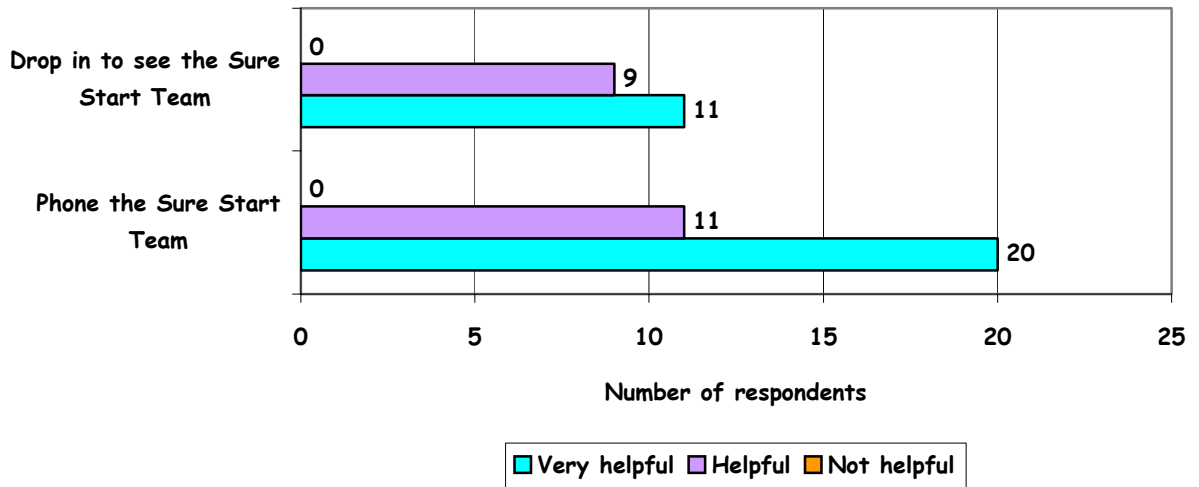


Figure 3.6.6.2 How helpful was the Support and Advice Service from the Sure Start Team?



3.6.7 Further comments from respondents

Respondents were offered the opportunity to give suggestions as to:

- how existing Sure Start services could be improved;
- other services they would like to receive to help care for a child under four years old.

A complete list of all the comments made can be found in Appendix D.

3.6.7.1 Suggestions for improvements to existing Sure Start services

Eleven percent of respondents (11 people) made comments in this section of the questionnaire. Only one respondent suggested an improvement to a particular service, saying it would be better if Darnhall Little Learners could be on for more than one day a week.

The majority (82%, 9 people) of these comments related to a lack of knowledge about the existing services, illustrated by the following comment:

'I did not know about at least half of the services mentioned on the pages before.' (1705).

Respondents indicated that they would like to know about the services available. Suggestions included advertising Sure Start services more, by sending information

in the past, in order to increase awareness of the services available. There were indications that this survey had helped to promote Sure Start services. One respondent commented:

'Most of the services Sure Start has available I didn't even know about but now I do I will be using them.' (1509).

One respondent made the comment that although she has not used many Sure Start services this is because she has returned to full time employment and is not a reflection of her view of services.

3.6.7.2 Other services respondents would like to receive to help care for a child under four years old

Comments in this section were made by 34% of respondents (35 people). In this section, the largest proportion of comments related to childcare facilities and playgroups. In total, 34% of comments made (12 people) related to this. Of these, seven respondents commented that they would like more access to affordable and convenient childcare. The following comments illustrate how people need services that are flexible enough to accommodate their family's patterns:

'More day-care facilities as at the moment I work in the afternoon whilst my husband works permanent nights... solution is day-care but we're on a low income and may find it expensive.' (1307).

'I would like to see more childcare facilities available in colleges which you do not have to be signed up to on a permanent basis and are affordable, as due to myself and my partner not wanting to put our son in a creche/nursery 5 days a week, I currently work evenings and he works days, therefore we have no childcare through the day. It is preventing my return to education.' (1801).

Six respondents commented that they would like more playgroups/parent and toddler groups. Two of these respondents commented that they had attended

parent and toddler groups but that they were dissatisfied with the way they were run, as illustrated by the following quotation²:

'Finding it difficult to find toddler group, all seem clicky and often parents don't watch children, i.e. (name of toddler group). Toddler groups should be run by qualified people, not parents.' (0106).

Two respondents commented that they would like information and support related to children's nutrition:

'I have problems getting my two year old daughter to eat her meals and have tried a lot of different methods to solve this. My doctor referred her to a dietician with no joy. I would like to see some kind of child cookery lesson or recipes I could pick up from Sure Start.' (1103).

As in the previous open comments section, some respondents commented on being un-informed about the different Sure Start services. Eleven percent of respondents (4 people) commented on this and said they would like further information, as in the following example:

'I never knew that there was so much for children to do in Winsford and would like to know more.' (1209).

Other respondents made individual suggestions for services they would like. These included more trips, a mobile library, a credit union, swimming classes, and sports activities for parents.

Two respondents made suggestions for services they thought would be relevant to other parents:

'I personally find meeting with lots of other adults uncomfortable, maybe a scheme where you could meet just one set of parents and their children on a one-on-one basis could be helpful to others as well as myself.' (1102).

² It should be noted that all Sure Start Winsford Parent and Toddler Groups are run by paid staff.

'I think people would benefit from services such as: birthing partners for single mums, or nervous couples, and new mums have a volunteer to visit them to listen and give practical advice if needed. (I would love to do this when my children are a little older!)' (1408).

One respondent took the opportunity to praise the Sure Start Team for their work:

'I must say that I have nothing but praise for the Sure Start Team at Small Oaks. Very helpful and conscientious in their work. The trip to Delamere forest was very enjoyable. Thank you all.' (1005).

Chapter 4

Discussion

4.1 Introduction

The Parent Satisfaction Survey provides an indication of the use of, and satisfaction with, services for families with young children in Winsford. Using names and addresses from the Child Health Database, accessed through Central Cheshire Primary Care Trust (CCPCT), enabled families who are eligible for Sure Start services but may not be currently using them, to be included in the survey. Unfortunately, not all eligible families were included as was originally planned. This was due to the list of eligible families received from CCPCT being incomplete as only details of families who had previously agreed to the sharing of this information were released. This, along with the self-selected nature of respondents, means that the results of the survey should not be taken as representing the views of the whole eligible population, or all users of Sure Start Winsford services. However, the views of the respondents can be used to indicate aspects of service usage that may inform the delivery of services.

4.2 Awareness of services

The survey indicates that general awareness of Sure Start was high in Winsford as 96% of respondents (96 people) had heard of Sure Start. The largest proportion of respondents had heard about Sure Start through their Health Visitor (61%, 63 respondents). Eighteen percent of respondents (19 people) had heard about Sure Start through a Midwife. Given that Sure Start is an early intervention service, there are considerable opportunities for Midwives to raise awareness of Sure Start services. As the Midwife is often the first point of contact with eligible women, this raises the importance of Midwives being informed of the different Sure Start Services and actively promoting them to eligible families they are in contact with. However, it is important to note that Sure Start Winsford was not operational when parents with children over two

years old would have been in contact with Midwifery services. It is also possible that some of the women who have been pregnant within the last two years may have already had an established relationship with a Health Visitor due to having older children. Awareness of Sure Start had also been raised by information received through the post, other Sure Start partners, Sure Start Workers, and promotional materials. Word of mouth was a common way for respondents to have heard about Sure Start, as 20% (21 people) had heard about Sure Start through a friend or family member. This indicates that informal means of communication can also be successful in raising awareness of Sure Start services locally.

However, although respondents were aware of Sure Start services, 47% (46 people) considered that they do not receive enough information about specific services available in Winsford. This was supported by comments from respondents when asked to suggest how services could be improved, and what additional services they would find useful. Furthermore, 76% of respondents (78 people) ticked a box on the prize draw slip to request further information about particular Sure Start services. This provides an opportunity for Sure Start to promote their services by sending out information to those people who requested it. The prize draw slips have been passed to the Programme Co-ordinator for this purpose.

In order to use a particular service, people need specific information about it, such as the day and time, the location, and whether there is a crèche available. There is an ongoing issue of keeping contact details up to date. This is challenging as the eligible population is constantly changing, as people move in and out of the area, and babies are born, and children reach the age of four. Therefore it is recommended that the local programme strives to work closely with the PCT in order to keep their information about who the eligible population is up to date. A drive on promotion of specific Sure Start services in the area, aimed at reaching as many eligible families as possible, is recommended.

4.3 Use of services

Some services, such as services in the Childcare and Parenting category, appear to have fairly low levels of service usage among respondents. However, services in this category are specialised and so clearly would not be accessed by all parents. It may be worth examining the attendance figures for these services, using the MCA database, and comparing them with the number of parents who are eligible for those services.

Services in the Early Learning category also had low levels of usage among respondents. The most used service in this category was the Ladybird Parent and Toddler Group, accessed by 21% of respondents (22 people). This is interesting because 34% of respondents (12 people) who suggested additional services they would find helpful, mentioned childcare facilities and playgroups, with six of these respondents saying they would like more playgroups/parent and toddler groups. It would be useful to investigate this further using qualitative methods to establish whether people are unaware of the services available or whether something about the services, such as times or locations, may be preventing some people from accessing them.

Speech and Language Services also had low levels of usage among respondents. Drop-in sessions at the Ladybird Groups had been used by just 4% of respondents (4 people). Clearly attendance at the specific playgroups and nurseries is an important factor and this would need to be raised in order for more parents/carers to access the drop-in sessions. The Speech and Language service used by the most respondents was the home visiting service, accessed by 19% of respondents (20 people). These home visits could provide an opportunity to increase awareness among parents/carers of other Sure Start services that are available.

In contrast, some services in the Community Support Services category had relatively high levels of usage. The information and advice service, used by 42% of respondents (43 people) was the service used by the highest proportion of respondents out of all Sure Start Winsford services. The home visiting service had been used by 29% of respondents (30 people). It would be useful to examine monitoring data on service usage to see whether this reflects actual service usage. If it does then qualitative work could be carried out to explore why this is the case. Any findings could be shared with other services. Special events and day trips within this category were also relatively well attended. In total, 29% of respondents (30 people) had attended the trip to Chester Zoo and 17% of respondents (18 people) had attended the Teddy Bears picnic. This appears to be an effective way of engaging with the local community and could be used to promote specific Sure Start services.

Indeed, informal services appeared to be popular with respondents. The informal service of support and advice from a member of the Sure Start Team had been accessed by telephone by 35% of respondents (36 people) and by dropping in to a Sure Start base by 22% of respondents (23 people). This service could prove useful in directing parents/carers to those Sure Start services they may find helpful.

Overall, the majority of services accessed by respondents had been used by a greater number of people on more than one occasion, compared with the number of people who had used them only once. This indicates that initial engagement with parents/carers is where the difficulty lies. This survey indicates that lack of knowledge about services may be a contributing factor that could be addressed through promotion of the services. Qualitative work would also be helpful in identifying possible barriers to service usage.

4.4 Satisfaction with services

The reported overall level of satisfaction with services available to families with young children in Winsford was high, 91% of respondents (86 people) reported that they were either 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with local services. In addition, 71% of respondents (70 people) considered that there were enough services available in Winsford. While these figures are positive and encouraging, indicating that the majority of respondents were satisfied with services, it should be remembered that the figures represent the views of 103 people. The eligible population was 702 families at the time of the survey, and it is not possible to speculate on the views of the rest of this population.

Of the specific services that had been accessed by respondents, all were considered to be helpful by the majority of respondents. Many services had a high proportion of counts of 'very helpful'. This suggests that initial engagement with services is the main barrier to service usage, rather than factors related to specific services. Indeed, only six services received any counts of 'not helpful' from respondents. These were the Ladybird Parent and Baby Group (1 person), Ladybird Parent and Toddler Group (2 people), Breast Feeding Support Drop in (1 person), Community Support Service home visit (1 person), Speech and Language 2-year questionnaire (1 person), and Pennies and Pounds (1 person). For each of these services the majority of respondents considered them to be either 'helpful' or 'very helpful'. However, investigating possible reasons for these exceptions may prove useful for service development.

4.5 Comments from respondents

In total, 13% of respondents (13 people) made the comment that they were unaware of existing services mentioned in the survey and several added that they would like to know more. This is supported by the findings that 47% of respondents (46 people) said they did not receive enough information about services in Winsford for families with young children. In addition, 76% of

respondents (78 people) took the opportunity to request information about specific Sure Start services.

Further comments indicated that childcare facilities and a shortage of playgroups are an issue for some respondents. This is consistent with the finding that respondents appeared to be reliant on informal networks of friends and families. The types of childcare used by the most respondents were free babysitting by a family member (71% of respondents, 73 people), and help from a partner/ex-partner (65% of respondents/67 people). Furthermore, 36% of respondents (36 people) reported that they sometimes struggled to get help with childcare when they really needed it. This should be investigated further to assess whether this is due to a lack of knowledge about available services or if it is a gap in provision. This survey indicates that childcare provision needs to be flexible enough to accommodate the variability of family life.

Some respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the parent and toddler groups they had attended. Issues related to the way the groups were run. It was suggested that qualified people should be involved with running the groups, rather than just parents.

Several suggestions were made by respondents regarding future services, thereby providing information that can be used in planning future development. It may be useful to consult with parents/carers on a more focused level regarding this issue, as ensuring services are needs led may help to increase engagement and service usage.

4.6 Conclusion

The findings of the Parent Satisfaction Survey have indicated a high level of satisfaction with services available in Winsford for families with young children. Levels of satisfaction with individual services provided by Sure Start Winsford

were also high. It was evident, however, that there is a need to increase awareness of the different services available. This could be achieved by providing regular information sent as mail-outs. This could be used to provide parents/carers with information about all the different services offered.

Consulting with parents/carers in more depth on particular issues raised by this survey would be advantageous. More specifically, qualitative work could be used to explore issues regarding levels of service usage and ways to increase it.

References

- Aldridge, A. & Levine, K. (2001). *Surveying the Social World*. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Ball, M. (2002). *How was it for you? A brief guide to conducting user satisfaction surveys for local Sure Start programmes*. NESS (National Evaluation of Sure Start).
- Bowling, A. (2002). *Research Methods in Health* (2nd Ed.). Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Cheshire County Council. (2004). *Cheshire Current Facts and Figures*. Retrieved December 7, 2004, from <http://www2.cheshire.gov.uk/R&I/CCFF/PDFfiles/Community/ComD2.pdf>
- Edwards, P., Roberts, I., Clarke, M., DiGiuseppi, C., Pratap, S., Wentz, W., et al. (2002). Increasing response rates to postal questionnaires: systematic review. *British Medical Journal*, 324, 1-9.
- Punch, K. F. (2003). *Survey Research: The Basics*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Roberts, L. M., Wilson, S., Roalfe, A., & Bridge, P. (2004). A randomised controlled trial to determine the effect on response of including a lottery incentive in health surveys [ISRCTN32203485]. *BMC Health Services Research*, 4(1), 30. Retrieved January 13, 2005, from PubMed database.
- Robson, C. (1993). *Real World Research*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Sure Start. (2002). *Annex 6: Information on evaluation*. Retrieved December 3, 2004, from: http://www.surestart.gov.uk/_doc/O-FB11CB.doc
- Sure Start. (2004). *The Sure Start Programme*. Retrieved December 1, 2004, from <http://www.surestart.gov.uk/aboutsurestart/thesurestartprogramme2/>
- Taper, T. & Davis, R. (2003). *HA tenant surveys 1999/2000: comparing methods - key differences*. London: Housing Corporation. Retrieved January 13, 2005, from <http://www.housingcorplibrary.org.uk/housingcorp.nsf/AllDocuments/D6D2DD493ADDBA5880256D170046BACF>

Appendix A
The questionnaire

SureStart

Winsford

User Satisfaction Survey

2004



Winsford

User Satisfaction Survey 2004

Please answer the following questions to help us find out what parents think of services for children under four in the local area.

Q1. Before you got this letter and questionnaire, did you know that there is a Sure Start Programme providing services for families with young children in Winsford?

Yes

No

Q2. If you did know about the Sure Start Programme in Winsford, how did you hear about it?

Please tick all of the ways you heard about Sure Start:

Through a friend or family member

Information through post

Picked up a leaflet

Saw a poster

Saw it in a newspaper

From a Health Visitor

From a Midwife

From Social Services

From a Pre-School or Nursery

From a Sure Start worker

Other (please say how)

.....

Q3. Sure Start Winsford provides many services. Please look through the following list and tick the box to say if you have used them AND IF YOU DID, were they helpful or useful.

Early Learning

Library Ladybirds



Have you used this..... more than once only once never
Was it very helpful helpful not helpful

Ladybird Playtimes



Have you used this..... more than once only once never
Was it very helpful helpful not helpful

Ladybird Drop-in



Have you used this..... more than once only once never
Was it very helpful helpful not helpful

Ladybird Parent and Baby group



Have you used this..... more than once only once never
Was it very helpful helpful not helpful

Ladybird Parent and Toddler group



Have you used this..... more than once only once never
Was it very helpful helpful not helpful

Darnhall Little Learners



Have you used this..... more than once only once never
Was it very helpful helpful not helpful

Childcare and Parenting

Emergency childcare



Have you used this..... more than once only once never

Was it very helpful helpful not helpful

Breast feeding support drop in



Have you used this..... more than once only once never

Was it very helpful helpful not helpful

Pregnancy to Parenthood - Individual support



Have you used this..... more than once only once never

Was it very helpful helpful not helpful

Pregnancy to Parenthood - Group session



Have you used this..... more than once only once never

Was it very helpful helpful not helpful

Stop Smoking (with Liz the Midwife)



Have you used this..... more than once only once never

Was it very helpful helpful not helpful

Community Support



Home visit

Have you used this..... more than once only once never

Was it very helpful helpful not helpful



Emergency transport....

Have you used this..... more than once only once never

Was it very helpful helpful not helpful



Information and advice

Have you used this..... more than once only once never

Was it very helpful helpful not helpful



Parent support groups

Have you used this..... more than once only once never

Was it very helpful helpful not helpful



Toy Library

Have you used this..... more than once only once never

Was it very helpful helpful not helpful



Teddy Bears Picnic

Did you go? Yes No

Did you enjoy it not enjoy it



Chester Zoo trip

Did you go? Yes No

Did you enjoy it not enjoy it

Speech and Language

Home visit from the Speech and Language Therapist



Have you used this..... more than once only once never

Was it very helpful helpful not helpful

Home visit - 2-year language questionnaire



Have you had this visit yet? Yes No

Was it very helpful helpful not helpful

Speech and Language drop in sessions at the Ladybird groups



Have you used this..... more than once only once never

Was it very helpful helpful not helpful

Speech and Language drop in sessions at school nursery classes



Have you used this..... more than once only once never

Was it very helpful helpful not helpful

For Parents

Pennies and Pounds



Have you used this..... more than once only once never

Was it very helpful helpful not helpful

Support and Advice



Do you **phone** the Sure Start Team at Small Oaks or at Wharton Clinic for a chat or advice? often sometimes never

Was it very helpful helpful not helpful



Do you **drop in** to see the Sure Start Team at Small Oaks or at Wharton Clinic for a chat or advice? often sometimes never

Was it very helpful helpful not helpful

Q4. If you think any of the Sure Start services you used could be improved, please name the service(s) and give the reason(s) why:

Service	Reason

We would now like to ask you a little bit about other services in Winsford for families with young children.

Q5. Has your child/children been to a playgroup or nursery *in the last year?*

(Please note that a playgroup or nursery is a group where you can leave your child)

Yes No

Q6. If you answered yes to Q5, how satisfied were you with the playgroup or nursery?

*Please tick **one** box:*

Very satisfied ☺☺
 Satisfied ☺
 Dissatisfied ☹
 Very dissatisfied ☹☹

Q7. Which of the following forms of childcare have you used *in the last year, if any?*

*Please tick **all** those you have used:*

- Help from your partner/ex-partner
- Free babysitting by another family member
- Free babysitting by a friend
- Paid babysitter
- Childminder
- Crèche
- Fee-charging day nursery
- Other (please say what)

.....

Q8. Do you ever struggle to get help with childcare when you really need it?

Yes No

Q9. Overall how satisfied are you with the services available to families with young children in Winsford?

*Please tick **one** box:*

Very satisfied ☺☺
Satisfied ☺
Dissatisfied ☹
Very dissatisfied ☹☹

Q10. Do you think that Winsford has enough services available to help families with young children?

Yes No

Q11. Are there any other services you would like to receive that would help you to care for a child under 4 years old?

Your suggestions:

Q12. Where would you prefer these services to be?

Within walking distance
On a bus route
In the town centre

Q13. Do you get enough information about the services that are already available in Winsford (such as those mentioned in this survey)?

Yes No

Finally, we would like to ask a few questions about *you*. This will help us to understand how different groups of people feel about local services. This is confidential, however, if you prefer not to answer any of the questions then please leave them out.

A. Are you Male Female

B. How old were you on your last birthday? years

C. Do you have a disability? Yes No

D. How many children under 16 live with you?

E. How old are your children?

1st child years

2nd child years

3rd child years

4th child years

F. Do any of your children have a disability? Yes No

G. If you are the child's parent, are you:

A lone parent

Living with a partner

H. Are you - or anybody who lives in your home - in a paid job for more than 16 hours per week at the moment?

Yes

No

I. What is the ethnicity of your child/children?

- | | |
|--|--|
| White (British) <input type="checkbox"/> | Black/Black British (African) <input type="checkbox"/> |
| White (Irish) <input type="checkbox"/> | Black/Black British (other) <input type="checkbox"/> |
| White (other) <input type="checkbox"/> | Indian <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mixed (White/Black Caribbean) <input type="checkbox"/> | Pakistani <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mixed (White/Black African) <input type="checkbox"/> | Bangladeshi <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mixed (White/Asian) <input type="checkbox"/> | Chinese <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Mixed (other) <input type="checkbox"/> | Other Asian <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Black/Black British (Caribbean) <input type="checkbox"/> | Gypsy/Traveller <input type="checkbox"/> |
| | Other ethnic group <input type="checkbox"/> |

Thank you for telling us about being a parent/carer in Winsford.

Do not forget to fill in your entry to the *Prize Draw* over the page. This entry will be separated from your completed questionnaire so no one will know what you have said.

Appendix B
Covering letters

October 2004

Dear Parent or Carer,

User Satisfaction Survey and Prize Draw 2004

Please complete the enclosed questionnaire and return it in the pre-paid addressed envelope by 30th November 2004. You could win one of these prizes:

5 prizes of shopping vouchers worth £20 each
10 prizes of shopping vouchers worth £10 each
30 prizes of shopping vouchers worth £5 each

For help with the questionnaire please contact Marilyn Houston (Tel. 01606 815696) or ask any member of the Sure Start Staff.

As you may know **SureStart** is the Government's programme aimed at making life better for children, parents and communities by bringing together:

- early education
- childcare
- health and family support

Each year **SureStart** programmes have to carry out a survey to find out what parents and carers think about local services and how services could be improved. We are asking for your help with this. We are working on this survey with the Centre for Public Health Research, at University College Chester. They will carry out the analysis of the results.

All you need to do to enter the Prize Draw is fill in the questionnaire and write your name and address on the Prize Draw slip at the end. This will be separated from the questionnaire so no-one will know what you have said about local services. When we receive your completed questionnaire you will be entered in the Prize Draw. The Prize Draw will be made at the Winsford Sure Start Christmas Party (date and venue to be confirmed).

There is some more information about the survey on the back of this letter. Thank you for your help.

Marilyn Houston
Programme Co-ordinator

SureStart
Winsford

November 2004

Dear Parent or Carer,

User Satisfaction Survey and Prize Draw 2004

**It's not too late – you can still be entered into the Prize Draw,
with a chance to win one of these prizes:**

**5 prizes of shopping vouchers worth £20 each
10 prizes of shopping vouchers worth £10 each
30 prizes of shopping vouchers worth £5 each**

A couple of weeks ago we sent you a questionnaire about **SureStart** services. We don't seem to have had a reply from you. Perhaps you haven't had time to fill it in or it's been lost. Whatever the reason, we would still like to hear from you.

For help with the questionnaire please contact Marilyn Houston (Tel. 01606 815696) or ask any member of the Sure Start Staff.

We have extended the closing date until 10th December, so you still have time to fill in the questionnaire and be entered into the prize draw. We have included a questionnaire with the entry form for the prize draw attached and a Freepost envelope, so please do send it in. The Prize Draw will be held at the Winsford Sure Start Management Board meeting, at 9.30am, on the 14th December, at Small Oaks Family Centre. The prize winners will be contacted shortly after.

There is some more information about the survey on the back of this letter. If you have already replied and our letters have crossed in the post, we are sorry to have bothered you.

Thank you again for your help.

Marilyn Houston
Programme Co-ordinator

SureStart
Winsford

Appendix C
Participant information sheet

Winsford Sure Start User Satisfaction Survey Information for Participants

The Sure Start Programme aims to provide support to families with children under 4 years old. It is very important to find out if Sure Start is successful. We are inviting you to take part in this survey so we can find out if local families are getting the support they need. We are also interested in your ideas about how local families could be supported in a better way.

Why do we need to do the research?

We need to do this research to find out if Sure Start is meeting the needs of local families. This will help Sure Start to improve its services and tell us if any new services are needed.

Why are you being asked to take part?

You are being asked to take part because you live in the local area and have a child who is 4 years old or younger.

Who is organising the study?

The study is being organised by the Centre for Public Health Research at University College Chester.

What does it involve?

Taking part in this survey involves filling in a questionnaire, which asks questions about local services and how well they meet the needs of families. This will take about 10 minutes of your time. No one will know what you have said because your name will not be on the completed form used for the analysis. If you want to enter the prize draw you may give your details on the prize draw slip. This slip will be separated from your questionnaire before we read it. We will not use your name in the report.

Your rights

You can choose not to take part in the survey. If you choose not to take part you will still be entitled to use Sure Start or other services and be involved in the operation of Sure Start.

If you would like more information about the research before you decide whether or not you would be willing to take part, please contact:

Sarah Davies at the Centre for Public Health Research, University College
Chester, on 01244 375444 (extension 2023).

Thank you very much for your help with this survey.

Appendix D
Comments from respondents

**Comments from respondents:
Suggestions for improvements to existing Sure Start Services**

It could be on more than one day a week. (0109)

Some of the services offered by Sure Start, I had no idea existed, so I think services should be advertised more. (1102)

Better advertised - still not aware of all activities. (1105)

Whilst I have not utilised many of the Sure Start Services this has been due to my return to full time employment. Therefore this is not a reflection of my opinion of Sure Start. My children both attend the Sure Start sponsored (name of nursery) and I have been very impressed by the nursery, its staff and its facilities. (1203)

I was not informed about trips eg Chester Zoo. I only found out after. (1204)

I didn't know about half of the services. (1402)

More information in the post. I did not know about any of the things going on or the help there is in Sure Start. (1406)

Most of the services Sure Start has available I didn't even know about but now I do I will be using them. (1509)

Many of the services provided overleaf, I didn't know about so there needs to be more awareness of these. (1601)

I did not know about at least half of the services mentioned on the pages before. (1705)

Didn't know Sure Start is based at Wharton Clinic. (1009)

Comments from respondents: Services that respondents would like to receive to help care for a child under four years old.

Going swimming, more trips. (0101)

I would like more information or talk about nutrition for your child. I do not feel there is much support in this area. The toddler groups I go to give healthy snacks. The information I require is for parents at home to improve your child's diet wherever possible. (0104)

Parking areas for parents with children. Finding it difficult to find toddler group, all seem clicky and often parents don't watch children, i.e. (name of toddler group). Toddler groups should be run by qualified people, not parents. (0106)

I was told at Wharton Clinic I would not qualify for Sure Start living at my address. (0108)

Is there a playgroup around for 2 year olds? If not there should be. (0109)

I personally find meeting with lots of other adults uncomfortable, maybe a scheme where you could meet just one set of parents and their children on a one-on-one basis could be helpful to others as well as myself. (1102)

I have problems getting my two year old daughter to eat her meals and have tried a lot of different methods to solve this. My doctor referred her to a dietician with no joy. I would like to see some kind of child cookery lesson or recipes I could pick up from Sure Start. (1103)

Behaviour, sleeping. (1106)

Childcare is still very expensive so cheaper childcare would be great closer to home. (1202)

More activities for two years and over especially while waiting to start nursery. My son starts nursery in January. For the last year he has been very bored as there is not a lot for him to do where we live. A lot depends on the weather for example, the park or walking the dogs. (1204)

I never knew that there was so much for children to do in Winsford and would like to know more. (1209)

More baby only groups and maybe a twins/multiple group. (1304)

No but would like to know about all the services you have. (1305)

I never knew that there was as many activities for children and would like to know more about them. (1306)

More day-care facilities as at the moment I work in the afternoon whilst my husband works permanent nights - it's the way to do this, solution is day-care but we're on a low income and may find it expensive. (1307)

A mobile library that comes to each estate to provide books to loan, rather than you having to go in to the town centre to the main library. (1309)

More local playgroups/nursery. (1406)

I think people would benefit from services such as: birthing partners for single mums, or nervous couples, and new mums have a volunteer to visit them to listen and give practical advice if needed. (I would love to do this when my children are a little older!) (1408)

I think Winsford needs some more parks for the children. (1500)

My child is 4 years old but he has started full-time school, so most of the group sessions in the daytime I no longer attend with him. (1503)

More toddler playgroups for the afternoons. (1507)

If your child has the ability to go to school before the right time and is showing they are ready then they should be allowed into the schools. (1508)

I know you already have parent and toddler groups but I don't think they are any good at all. The one I go to is at (name of place) and it is very poorly run. It is more of a gossip group than for children to learn. I hadn't been for a while, also the room is very small for all the children they have. (1509)

Childcare needs to be more affordable and more widely available. (1601)

Baby sitters so I can go shopping during the week. (1603)

Sure Start nursery could not accommodate my 3 children, so I could return to work. Therefore expansion of nursery. (1606)

Day nurseries - just a couple of hours to get children used to being left alone when they are nearly ready to go to school. (1607)

More information about everything that is available - times etc. (1700)

Dance classes. Swimming classes. (1707)

I would like to see more childcare facilities available in colleges which you do not have to be signed up to on a permanent basis and are affordable, as due to myself and my partner not wanting to put our son in a creche/nursery 5 days a week, I currently work evenings and he works days, therefore we have no childcare through the day. It is preventing my return to education. (1801)

Would it be possible to exchange milk tokens for baby milk at the Sure Start Centres, as it is easier to do this when taking your baby to be weighed. Free phone situated in Sure Start Centres for urgent or emergency use, such as doctors, dentists, hospital. You don't always have enough money for the phone box and you can guarantee they are either vandalised, and it's hard to talk on the phone if you have a small toddler who gets bored easily. (1906)

Days out. (1003)

A Credit Union. (1005)

I must say that I have nothing but praise for the Sure Start Team at Small Oaks. Very helpful and conscientious in their work. The trip to Delamere forest was very enjoyable. Thank you all. (1005)

I think it would be a good idea to set up a sports activity for the parents, as sport helps to combat depression. I find it hard to lose weight, which gets me down. I can't go to the gym as there's no-one to look after my baby. I would love to go to some sort of fitness class and know that my child was been looked after and that I could have fun with other parents feeling the same as me. (1008)