

SureStart

Annual Report Card 2023/24



Policy Outcomes

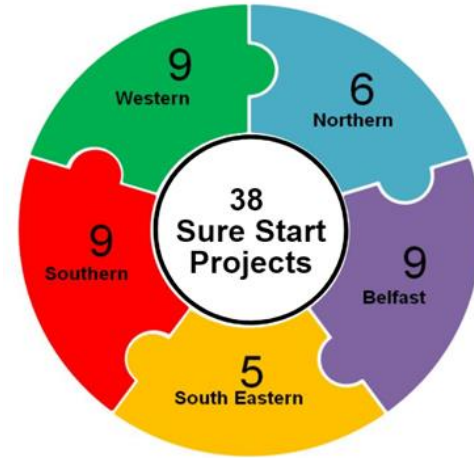
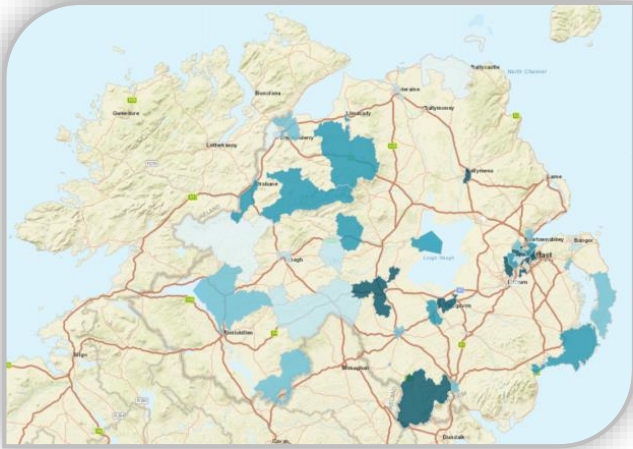
- Improved language skills
- Early identification of developmental delay
- Improved access to services
- Enhanced parenting skills
- Effectively integrated services



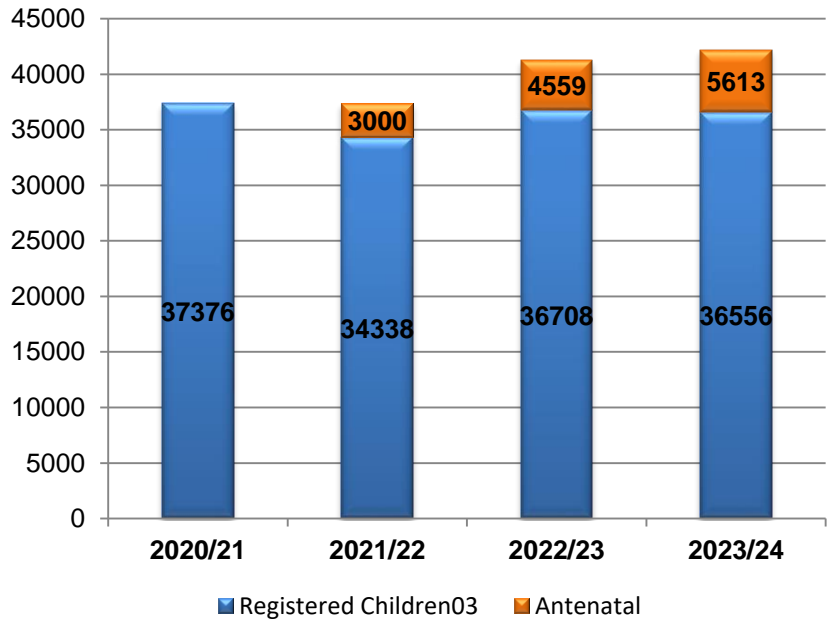
**Partnership working
is at the root of
what makes Sure Start work**

#SureStartWorks

Number of Operational Sure Start Projects across Northern Ireland – 38 *(In at least, the 25% most disadvantaged Areas Across NI as per NIMDM 2017)*

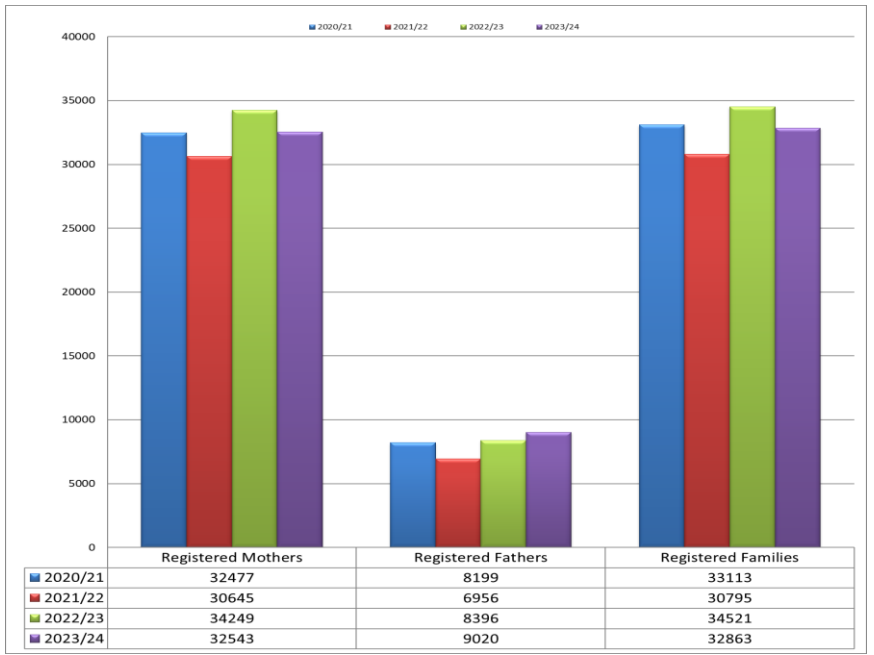


Number of Children 0-3 Years Registered 2023/24



Source: Sure Start Go Database – Score Card Report

Number of Registered Mothers, Fathers, Families 2023/24

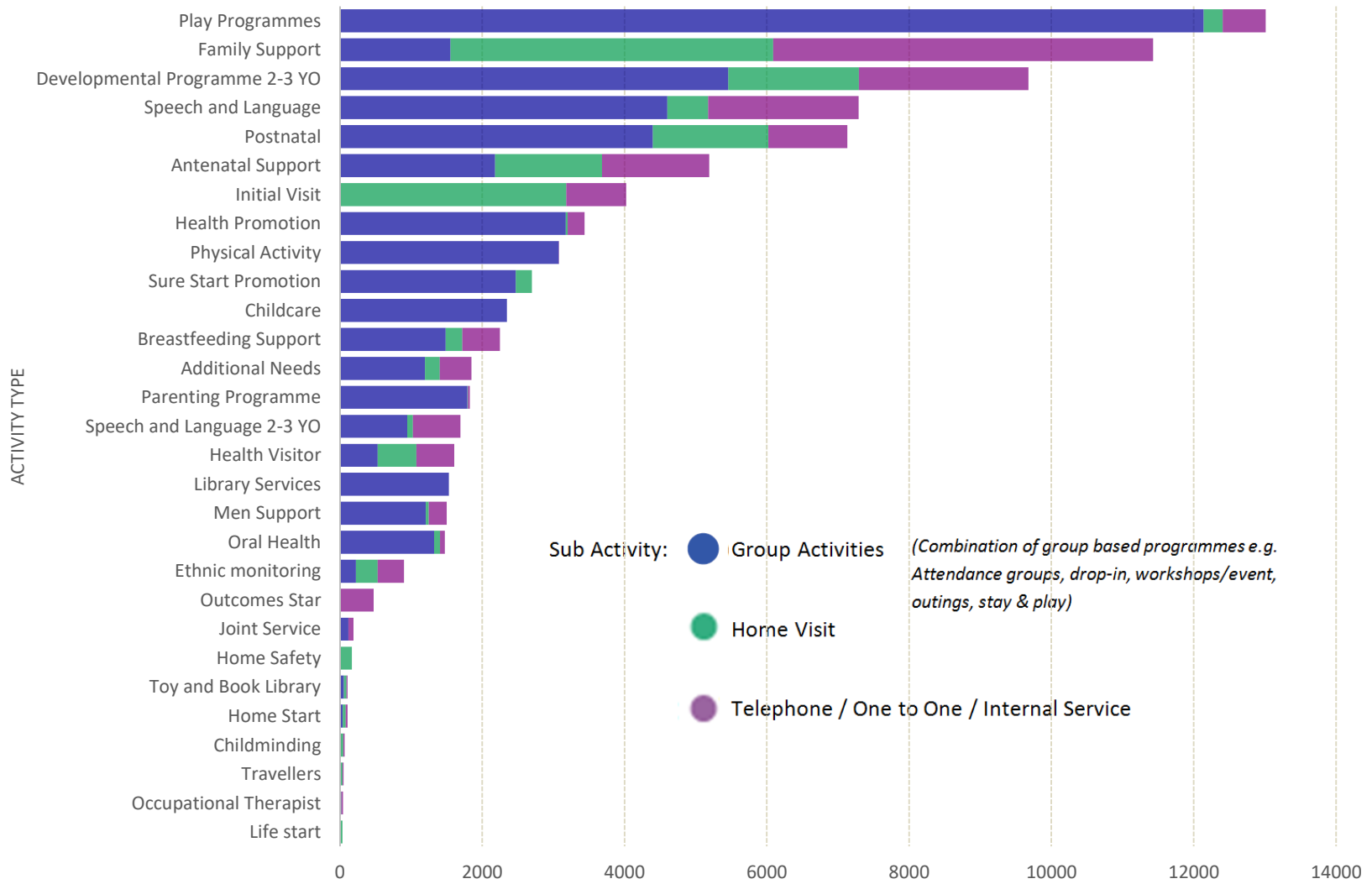


Source: Sure Start Go Database – Score Card Report

Policy Outcome: Improved Access to Services

[Endnote](#)

Number of families availing of each type of support in Sure Start 2023/24 (Note: The same family may have attended more than one activity type)

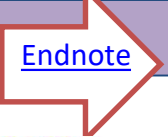


Sub Activity: ● Group Activities (Combination of group based programmes e.g. Attendance groups, drop-in, workshops/event, outings, stay & play)

● Home Visit

● Telephone / One to One / Internal Service

How well did we do?



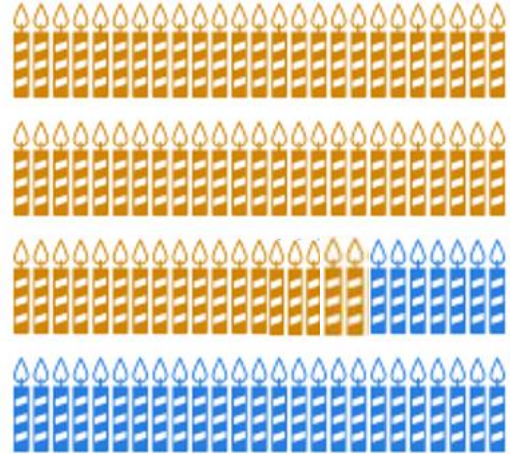
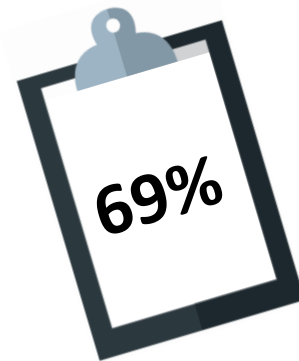
Percentage of eligible children registered (compared to estimated number living in targeted areas, based on 2021 census data)

As at 31 March 2024



Source: Sure Start Go Database – Children Registered by Age

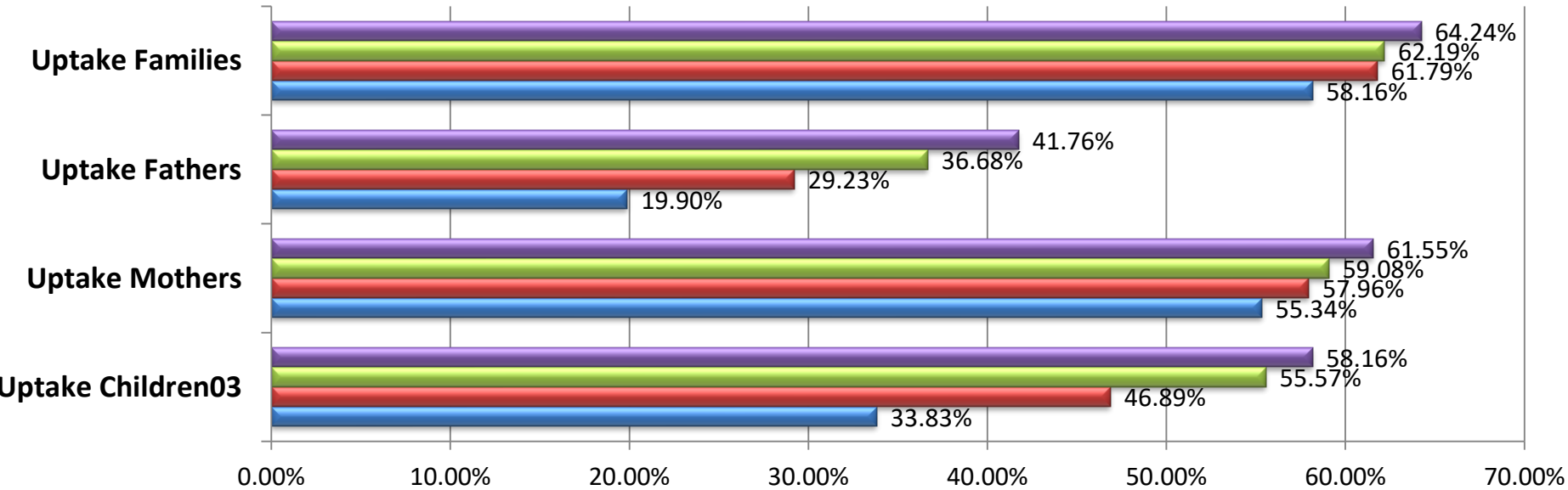
Number of children registered before 1st birthday 2023/24



Source: Sure Start Go Database – Registered Before 1st Birthday Report

Percentage Uptake of Registered Users 2022/23 (Note: Registered users have availed of at least one activity during 2023/24)

2023/24 2022/23 2021/22 2020/21



Source: Sure Start Go Database – Score Card Report

Policy Outcome - Improved Language Skills



Hanen Communication & Language stages model

| Number | Percentage | |
|--------|------------|--|
| 1037 | 83% | Children whose Hanen Communication & Language stage progressed by at least one stage from Autumn 23 to Spring 24 or who remained at the highest stage on this measure. |
| 209 | 17% | Children who stayed at the same Hanen Communication & Language stage from Autumn 23 to Spring 24 |

Due to the success of Hanen* for measuring change during the COVID-19 pandemic it continues to be used in conjunction with Wellcomm. The Hanen approach is now used widely in Sure Start therefore Hanen Communication & Language stages are a complementary indicator of progress. Training in Hanen also provides Sure Start Staff with practical research based strategies to help promote children's language development through attuned adult-child interactions.

* Source: Hanen Learning Language & Loving It . The Hanen Programme for Early Childhood Educators.

***SLC progress of children in the Developmental Programme for 2-3 Year Olds
n= 1246 (excluding Bilingual children)***

Bilingual Language Profile

The Sure Start Bilingual Language Profile (BLP) was introduced as a measure to indicate progress with bilingual children. The BLP is a tool developed by Sure Start SLTs to support SLC monitoring and planning. It enables staff to profile children's development across three areas: development of play, development of attention and number of words used in a sentence. This provides a method of capturing progress and also supports staff to identify areas of strength and challenge to aid practical planning.

| Number | Percentage | |
|--------|------------|---|
| 104 | 89% | Children whose language and communication development progressed by at least one stage from Autumn 23 to Spring 24 or who remained at the highest stage on this measure (as monitored by BLP) |
| 13 | 11% | Children whose language and communication development stayed at the same stage from Autumn 23 to Spring 24 (as monitored by BLP) |

SLC progress of bilingual children in the Developmental Programme for 2-3 Year Olds n= 117



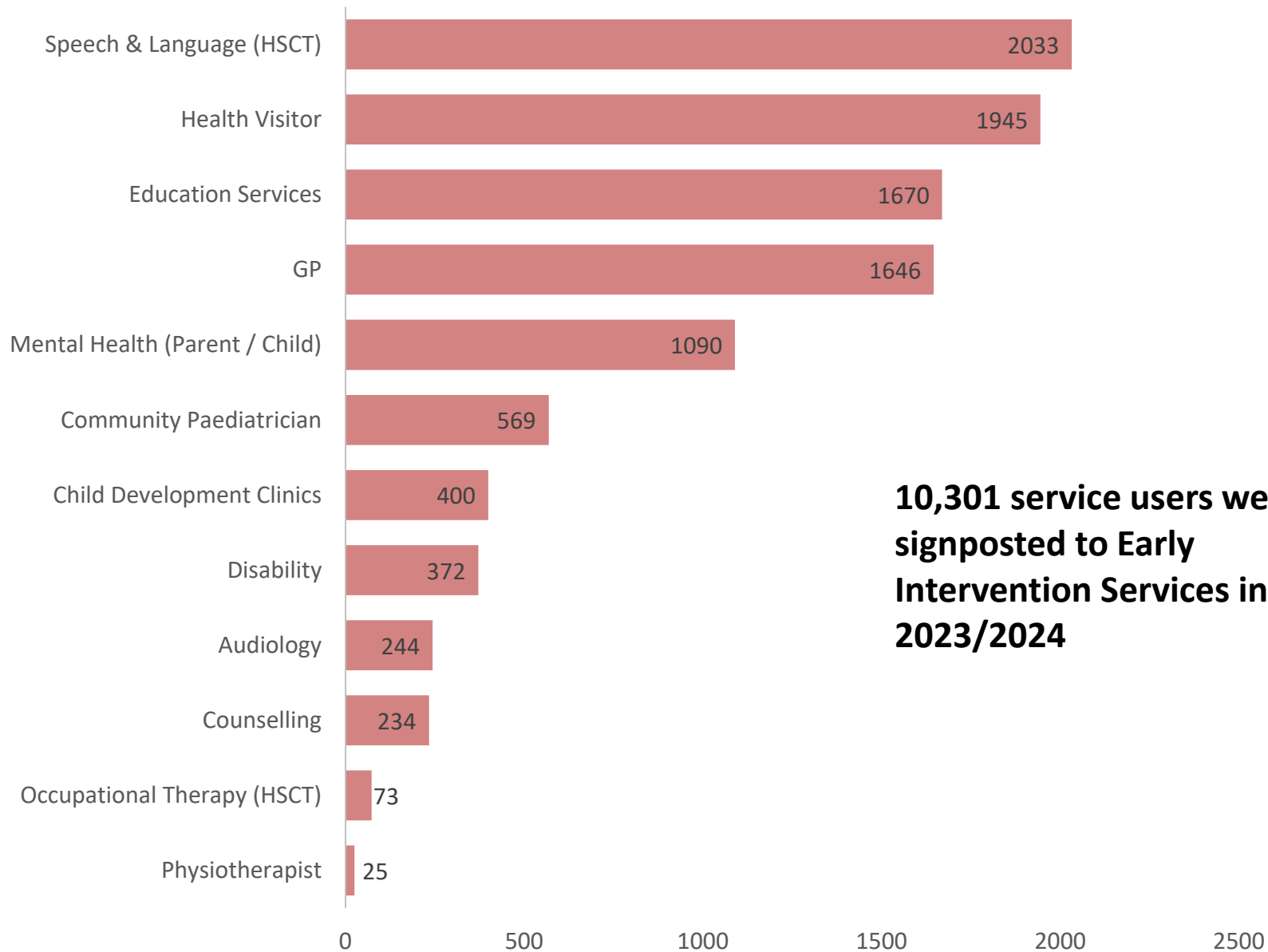
WellComm is a speech and language assessment tool that measures progress in SLC development. It is used on children attending the Developmental Programme for 2-3 Year Olds.

| 2023/2024 (Academic year) | Number | Percentage |
|--|--------|------------|
| Number of Eligible Children | 1532 | |
| Number of Children were screened | 1381 | 90% |
| Number of eligible children who were not screened pre and post as they were absent on one or both of the screening dates | 151 | 10% |
| Number of children screened improved * | 934 | 61% |
| Number of children who did not improve received additional support** | 419 | 94% |

* Defined as progressed towards green or stayed green

** Through collaborative planning between DPf2-3YO staff and Sure Start SLT and /or by signposting to internal Sure Start services and / or by signposting to external clinical services

Policy Outcome – Early Identification of Developmental Delay



Policy Outcomes – Improved Access to Services/Effectively Integrated Services



Signposting

| Signposting | Total Number |
|--------------------------|--------------|
| Charitable Aid | 3,938 |
| Food Banks | 2,038 |
| Benefits Advice | 1,591 |
| Community Services | 1,405 |
| Dentist | 1,224 |
| Breastfeeding Support | 1,075 |
| Early Years | 1,036 |
| Autism Services | 832 |
| Home Safety | 720 |
| Ethnic Minorities | 696 |
| Housing Executive | 554 |
| Financial Advice | 541 |
| Family Support Hubs | 500 |
| Voluntary Organisation | 454 |
| Woman Aid | 403 |
| Citizens Advice Bureau | 400 |
| Midwife/Antenatal (HSCT) | 375 |
| Homestart | 309 |
| Smoking Cessation | 271 |
| Local Housing | 266 |
| Training for Education | 234 |
| Fire Service | 232 |
| Social Services | 213 |
| Legal Advice | 183 |
| NICMA | 46 |
| Ginger Bread | 17 |
| Addiction Services | 3 |



Resources

| Resources | Quantity Issued |
|---|-----------------|
| Information | 33,823 |
| Family Support | 31,586 |
| Play | 27,673 |
| Health Promotion | 14,154 |
| Books | 10,337 |
| Speech and Language | 9,965 |
| Developmental Programme for 2-3 year olds | 9,374 |
| Baby | 8,400 |
| Postnatal | 8,349 |
| Antenatal | 6,791 |
| Breastfeeding | 5,851 |
| Dental | 4,111 |
| New Registration | 3,507 |
| Bookstart | 3,264 |
| Toys | 3,143 |
| Parenting | 3,129 |
| Home Safety | 1,819 |
| Transition | 568 |
| First Aid | 460 |
| Smoking | 10 |

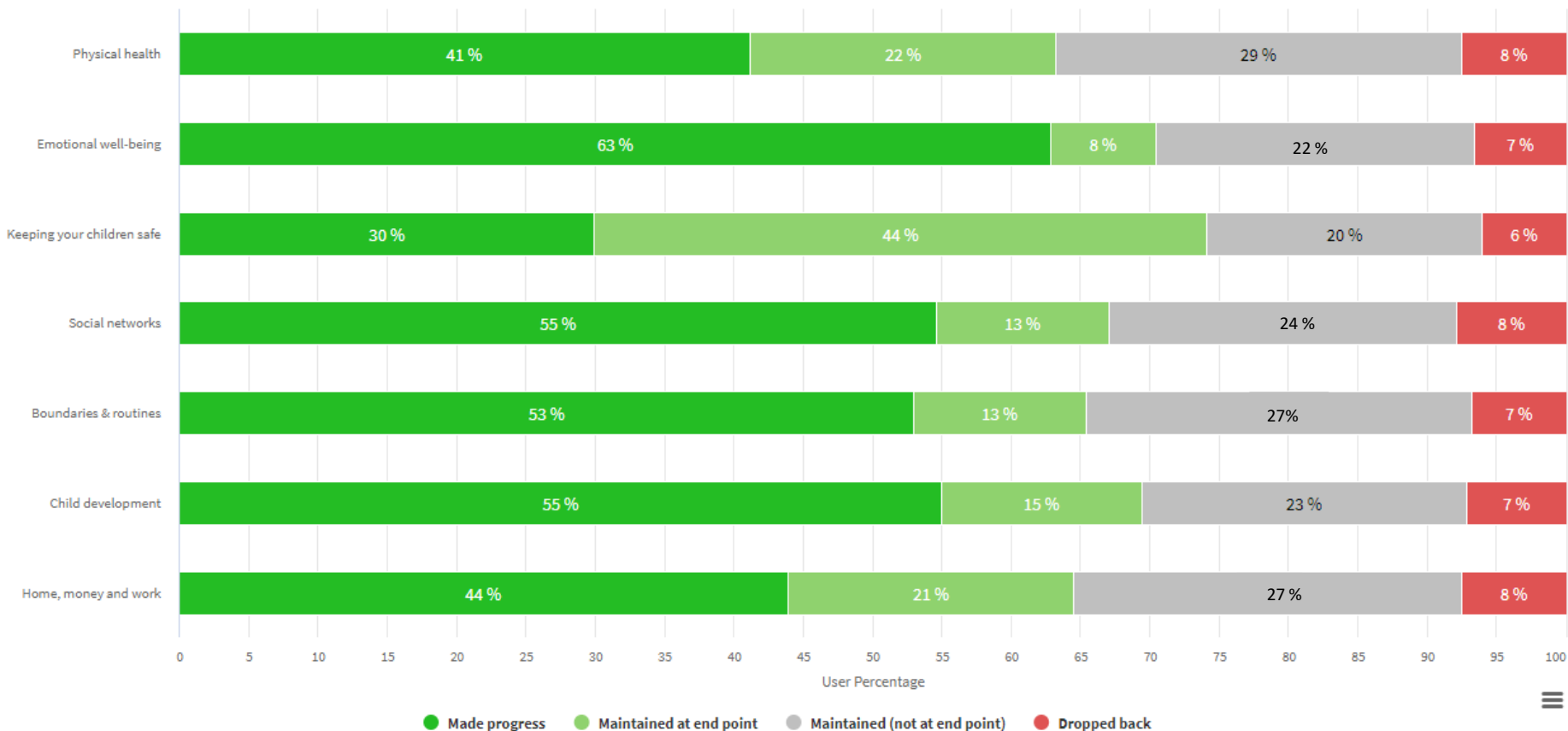
Policy Outcome – Enhanced Parenting Skills



1,473 service users during 2023/24 completed at least 1 Star reading. The figures provided below are based on 540 service users who completed first and second star readings after a Sure Start intervention.

| Are people making progress? | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| In 1+ outcome areas Percentage of people making progress in at least one outcome area | In 2+ outcome areas Percentage of people making progress in at least two outcome areas | In 3+ outcome areas Percentage of people making progress in at least three outcome areas | Outcome areas showing progress Average number of outcome areas in which someone is making progress |
| 93% | 82% | 65% | 3.4 |

How much progress are people making in each outcome area?



Narrative examples

Example 1 – The Child Health Assistant visits the community midwives once a month to share our services. As well as the NIMATS referrals, this has proved to be very effective as the community midwives are aware of what services we offer antenatally, and as a consequence our antenatal registrations are increasing.

Example 2 – Our partners within Health, Education and Social Care maintain close links with the project, this integrated work is effective as it broadens our understanding of the changing needs of families within our community which allows us to offer the most appropriate support in a timely manner. We continue to work with local partners to maximise the resources and facilities that exist within the local community, attendance at sub groups meetings, signposting and sharing resources ensures that the most appropriate support is provided to all families in a timely manner.

Example 3 – The project works in partnership with many organisations to ensure integration of services and thus avoiding duplication and competition. Partnership includes joint delivery of services (Home Start, Family Nurse Partnership, NIFRS, PSNI, Core Health Visiting, District Council, SH&SCT Ethnic Minority Department, Barnardos) and use of community venues (Community houses, Confederation of Community Group premises, libraries, leisure centres and parish centres). Regular referrals are also made to and received from many agencies.

“Our Referral Partners”



NIMATs

6,795 NIMATS referrals to Sure Start (2023/24)

8,499 live births in Sure Start Areas across Northern Ireland 2022/2023

5,613 Registered Antenatal on Sure Start Go

Equated to 83% Registered of these referrals

6,795 NIMATS Referrals to Sure Start
80% of live births in a Sure Start Area referred to Sure Start via NIMATS

UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative

Stage 1
3 Sure Start projects

Stage 3
24 Sure Start Projects

Gold
3 Sure Start Projects

The Unicef UK Baby Friendly Initiative supports breastfeeding and parent infant relationships by working with public services to improve standards of care.



% of Children Overweight or Obese (IOTF)

BMI levels in Primary 1 children across Northern Ireland (IOTF)

| | 2021/22 | 2022/23 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Children living in Sure Start areas | 24.4% | 22.6% |
| Children not living in Sure Start areas | 20.3% | 18.8% |
| All Children | 21.7% | 20.4% |

Source: Children's Health in Northern Ireland



% of Mothers who Smoked During Pregnancy

Percentage of Mothers who smoked (recorded at antenatal booking appointment)

| | 2021/22 | 2022/23 |
|--|---------|---------|
| Mothers living in Sure Start areas | 17.7% | 16.2% |
| Mothers not living in Sure Start areas | 7.6% | 6.6% |
| All Mothers | 11.3% | 10.6% |

Source: NIMATS via Business Objects (PHA Health Intelligence Unit)



% of Children Breastfeeding at Hospital Discharge 2021/22 (during first year of life)

Prevalence of breastfeeding of live infants born to Northern Ireland residents, at various stages during first year of life, by Sure Start area.

| | Discharge | Primary Visit (10-14 days old) | 6 weeks | 3 months | 6 months | 12 months |
|---|-----------|--------------------------------|---------|----------|----------|-----------|
| Children living in Sure Start areas | 42.0% | 36.4% | 28.1% | 23.4% | 18.8% | 12.2% |
| Children not living in Sure Start areas | 57.9% | 50.5% | 41.8% | 36.2% | 30.0% | 20.3% |
| All children | 51.2% | 44.5% | 36.0% | 30.8% | 25.3% | 17.0% |

Source: Children's Health in Northern Ireland



% of Dental Registrations against GP Registrations Children Aged 0-5 years
NI Average 38.8%

| | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 |
|--|---------|---------|---------|
| Children living in Sure Start areas | 50.9% | 40.5% | 35.7% |
| Children Not Living in a Sure Start Area | 57.1% | 46.7% | 42.6% |



% of Dental Registrations against GP Registrations Children Aged 0 -2 years
NI Average 13.2%

| | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 |
|--|---------|---------|---------|
| Children living in Sure Start areas | 28.5% | 14.2% | 11.2% |
| Children Not Living in a Sure Start Area | 32.4% | 17.8% | 15.7% |



% of Dental Registrations against GP Registrations Children Aged 3-5 years
NI Average 60.9%

| | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 |
|--|---------|---------|---------|
| Children living in Sure Start areas | 71.2% | 64.1% | 56.4% |
| Children Not Living in a Sure Start Area | 79.6% | 72.0% | 66.0% |

Is Anyone Better Off? – Educational and Living In Safety Outcomes



% of Year 1-7 primary pupils with a statement of SEN
2020/21 – 2022/23
NI Average 22/23 (5.0%)

2020/21

Children living in Sure Start areas **4.4%**

Children Not Living in a Sure Start Area **3.4%**

2021/22

Children living in Sure Start areas **4.9%**

Children Not Living in a Sure Start Area **3.8%**

2022/23

Children living in Sure Start areas **5.9%**

Children Not Living in a Sure Start Area **4.3%**



% of Year 1-7 primary pupils recorded as Newcomer
2020/21 – 2022/23
NI Average 21/22 (7.8%)

Children living in Sure Start areas **10.3%**

Children Not Living in a Sure Start Area **4.7%**

Children living in Sure Start areas **10.8%**

Children Not Living in a Sure Start Area **4.8%**

Children living in Sure Start areas **11.7%**

Children Not Living in a Sure Start Area **5.1%**



% Percentage of leavers 5 GCSEs A*-C inc English & Maths
2019/20 to 2022/23
NI Average 22/23 (76.1%)

2020/21

Children living in Sure Start areas **70.0%**

Children Not Living in a Sure Start Area **82.5%**

2021/22

Children living in Sure Start areas **70.3%**

Children Not Living in a Sure Start Area **82.8%**

2022/23

Children living in Sure Start areas **68.2%**

Children Not Living in a Sure Start Area **81.2%**



Number of Domestic Abuse Recorded Crimes

2019/20

Children living in Sure Start areas **11,664**

Children Not Living in a Sure Start Area **6,976**

2020/21

Children living in Sure Start areas **13,525**

Children Not Living in a Sure Start Area **8,198**

2021/22

Children living in Sure Start areas **11,754**

Children Not Living in a Sure Start Area **7,282**

How much did we do? 2023/24 bar chart displays the number of 0-3 Year olds registered and Antenatal registrations separately. Prior to 2023 antenatal registrations were previously incorporated as part of 0-3 years registrations.

How well did we do? Percentage figures of eligible children registered and registered children before 1st birthday figures have increased in 2023/24. Further, expansion has been established since 2022/23.

Policy Outcome - Improved Language Skills: Speech Language and Communication (SLC) Language tools used throughout 2023/24 were Wellcomm, the Hanen Communication & Language stages model and Bilingual profile that map progress of all eligible children. These language tools recognise areas of strengths and help identify where additional support is required. For the number children who did not improve received additional support this was not 100% as there was SLT positions vacant at the end of the year, therefore children did not receive additional support.

Policy Outcome – Enhanced Parenting Skills: This year saw an increase of recording of the Outcome Star tool. Projects continue to roll out and train staff in this tool where appropriate

[Is anyone better off \(Health Outcomes\)?](#) Due to Sure Start areas being based on 'legacy' ward boundaries and not the current ward boundaries it has not been possible to get 22/23 figures for dental registrations (all age ranges) and numbers of domestic abuse recorded crimes as this data is collated using the most up to date ward boundaries.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, disruption in schools resulted in some children not being measured during this time. As a result, data coverage was not sufficient enough to provide information for 2020/21 for Primary 1 children, and 2020/21 and 2021/22 for Year 8 children. Although data for 2021/22 is provided for Primary 1 children, the coverage is lower than in previous years and so caution is advised when interpreting data. Data is provided for years 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23. Figures for 2023/24 could not be provided as this data was not available at pupil level therefore unable to distinguish between children within Sure Start areas and non Sure Start Areas.

For the Percentage of Leavers 5 GCSEs A*-C incl English & Maths it is advised caution should be taken when drawing conclusions relating to changes in student performance as alternative methods of awarding grades were given in 2020/21 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and there were various assessment adaptations or other supports in place for 2021/22 and 2022/23.