

# 5,000 reasons to invest



## Southend Partnership Innovation in the Early Years Communication and Language Services

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### Abstract

The communication and language portfolio of science-based innovations was originally based on a pre-existing, science-based model of delivery. We used this to service design speech and language services/activities with a focus on prevention and early intervention in the early years.

As part of this work, we are also evaluating the use of a screening tool at a universal scale, validating (10%) against a standardised and validated measure. In addition, we are testing the robustness of our original Theory of Change and innovating with parental engagement methods (e.g. working with early years' settings, specialist housing Health Visitors and use of digital platforms) that could support the improvement of future access to the curriculum.



### Results

In the last 12 months (academic year 2017/2018) **765** children aged 0-4 years took up the offer of communication and language screening. In Q1 – **475** children accessed communication and language services (including screening, home visits and attendance at the ABSS *Let's Talk* communication and language suite of courses).



### Summary of emerging findings for Formative Evaluation

Early indications from the Formative Evaluation process have shown that the innovations we are undertaking may, at a wider scale, improve the number and appropriateness of referrals to the clinical service. This work adds to the emerging economic case for early identification and intervention.



### Conclusion

Innovation of this type in early years' communication and language has potential for positive impact.



### References

Hart, B and Risley TR (2003), The Early Catastrophe: The 30 Million Word Gap, *American Educator*, vol. 27  
Hurd, A and Macqueen, D (2010), The Wellcomm Toolkit, GL Assessment, London