

A BETTER START SOUTHEND MOBILE VEHICLE

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2019 CONFERENCE



The idea for the Mobile Vehicle originally came from a local parent, who felt it could increase engagement with the community. It would also help to address an element of the original A Better Start Southend bid related to community resilience.



Initial thoughts about the vehicle were about an ice cream style van, but after research we are now looking into the possibility of it being a mini bus or even a double decker bus. A key idea for the vehicle was that it would be used to reach parents and children who may be difficult to engage otherwise.



A group of Parent Champions, supported by ABSS and SAVS, began the process by conducting research. This included looking at other examples of vehicles, finding out about similar experiences and brainstorming what the outcomes should be.



The group have also been on field trips to see how similar functional vehicles operate (one to the SOS Bus and one to the Essex Youth Service Bus) as well as designing a survey for parents and receiving training around Theory of Change and Business Plan writing.



Before the field trips, the group worked on 20 questions they could ask to help to find out more information about the services they visited. They used these as the basis for conversation during the visit. The visits helped to develop the feasibility of the project and there is another visit planned soon. The group will also be visiting different areas in the the A Better Start Southend wards to see where would be suitable for the vehicle to go, for example, based on its size.



The work around the vehicle has so far been a great example of co-production. It is a work in progress and will take at least another nine months to bring a potential vehicle to life. The group are looking forwards to learning new skills along the way and getting to the stage where they can help shape the vehicle itself.