

PARENT ENGAGEMENT & EVENTS

There have been 581 parents/carers and 410 children engaged so far

Social & Emotional

There have been 43 Parent Forums and 66 Relax and Chat sessions so far

Communication & Language



LITTLE STORY EXPLORERS

"Perfect morning for little people - Stories, play, snacks, crafts/sticking & making - Thank you"



BABY SENSORY

"It made me think about how interactive singing can be and that I need to do more at home."



LITTLE WILDLIFE EXPLORERS

"Thank you so much for allowing us to be a part of the Little Wildlife Explorers yesterday, my daughter and I had so much fun."



CHRISTMAS PARTY

"Thank you to everyone involved in today's event. Emma and I had a lovely time. Emma was thrilled with her flap book from Santa."



A GUIDE TO ONLINE SAFETY FOR PARENTS

"I found it to be very useful and it has made me feel very confident in talking to my daughter about internet safety."



A PEELING FRUIT & VEG

"We enjoyed every bit, it was fantastic!"



ROUTINE & SLEEP

"It has made me feel positive that things can get better."

Diet & Nutrition

The journey and why we do it

From the beginning, engaging families in the A Better Start Southend wards who were pregnant or have children under four, took place in all the usual places, like children's centres and school playgrounds. Having conversations with parents about the project, inviting them to attend Parent Forums and suggesting to them to bring a friend. The Parent Forums are a welcoming space run by Engagement Officers supported by trained volunteers to look after your children. A space where you can have a hot drink, meet other parents and then start to learn more about the project. This is where we reach out to parents on neutral ground, to improve their situations of isolation, maybe in time restore some confidence they had lost.

Once parents are relaxed they will talk about what is missing from their families lives, what they would like to see differently, what they would like to learn about. Capturing these parents' thoughts, views, feelings are important and key to everything we do within the project; this is where real co-production starts.

From some amazing conversations with parents, engagement events are born and we have found that they have naturally fallen within one or two of the A Better Start Southend strands. This just shows that we are all working towards the same goals but this journey has only just started.

What does positive Family Engagement look like?

Respectful

Non-judgemental

Inclusive

Diverse

Supportive

Fun

Friendly

Welcoming

There are 37 Parent Champions so far

65 of the parents engaged are dads / male carers

There are 6 Ambassadors so far

16 of the carers engaged are grandparents

The learning and development

We are learning that there are many different ways to meet and engage with families. Some parents need extra support in certain areas, without them realising this extra support could build their confidence.

Dads and male figures have proven harder to engage, so parents rose to the challenge to create family events that focused on Dad, or on activity that Dad will enjoy, staging them at weekends so the family unit have fun together.

Based on conversations with parents we have had a meeting with the Lighthouse Child Development Centre about how we could work with families in developing an event that was inclusive and celebrated all children.

Across all A Better Start Southend wards we are beginning to share our knowledge and though we have only had one joint event it did show a great togetherness, that we are all working towards the same thing. Moving forward we can see the benefits of looking at some of the best engagement events, developing it and staging it in a different area.

"Parent Engagement will always be needed and will be forever changing, but working alongside such enthusiastic parents makes the job a lot easier"
Georgia - Engagement Officer