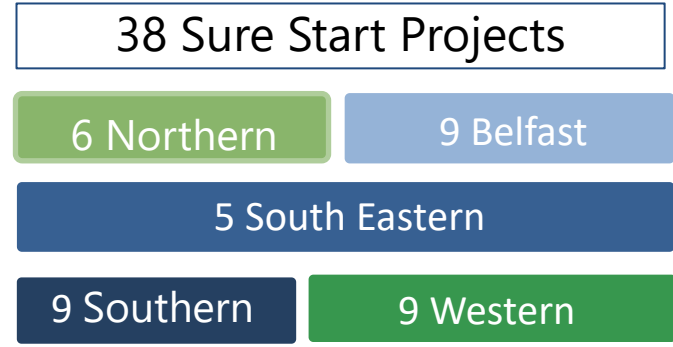
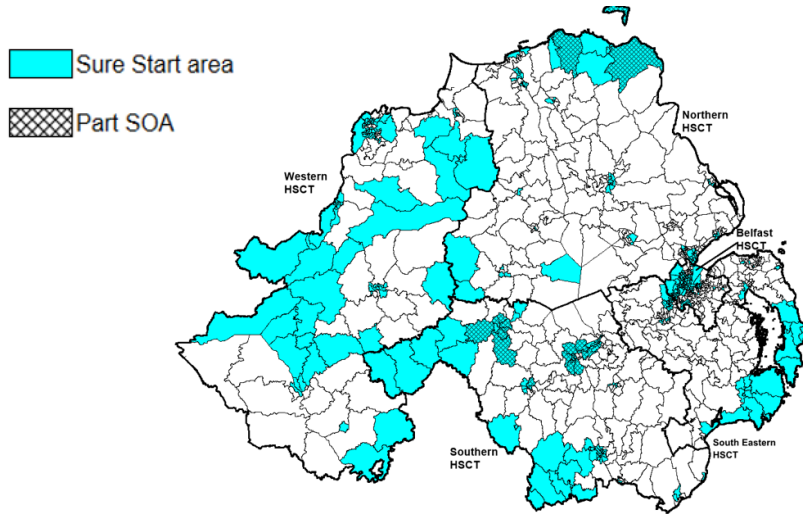
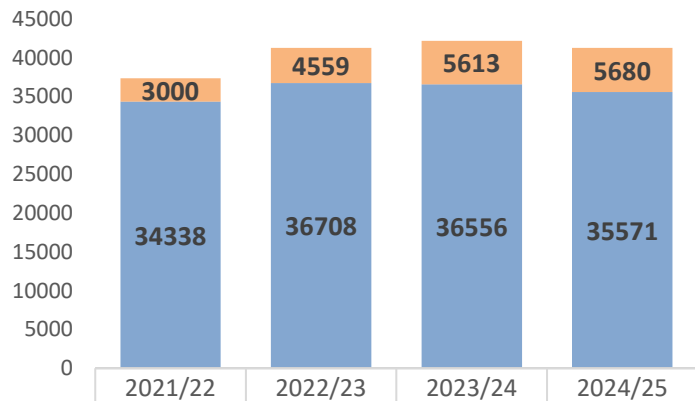


How much did we do?

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



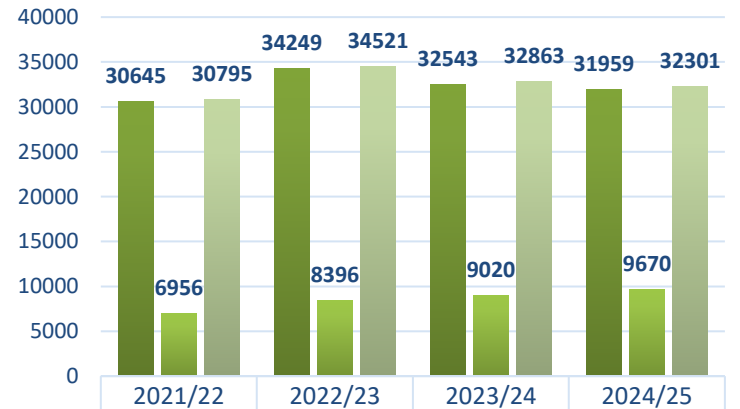
Number of Children 0-3 Years Registered 2024/2025



Antenatal	3000	4559	5613	5680
Registered Children 0-3	34338	36708	36556	35571

Registered Children 0-3 Antenatal

Number of Registered Mothers, Fathers, Families 2024/2025



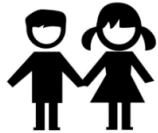
Registered Mothers	30645	34249	32543	31959
Registered Fathers	6956	8396	9020	9670
Registered Families	30795	34521	32863	32301

Registered Mothers Registered Fathers Registered Families

How well did we do?

Percentage of eligible children registered

(compared to estimated number living in targeted areas, based on 2021 census data)



70%

of eligible children 0-3 years registered at 31 March 2025

Percentage of children registered before 1st birthday 2024/25



72%

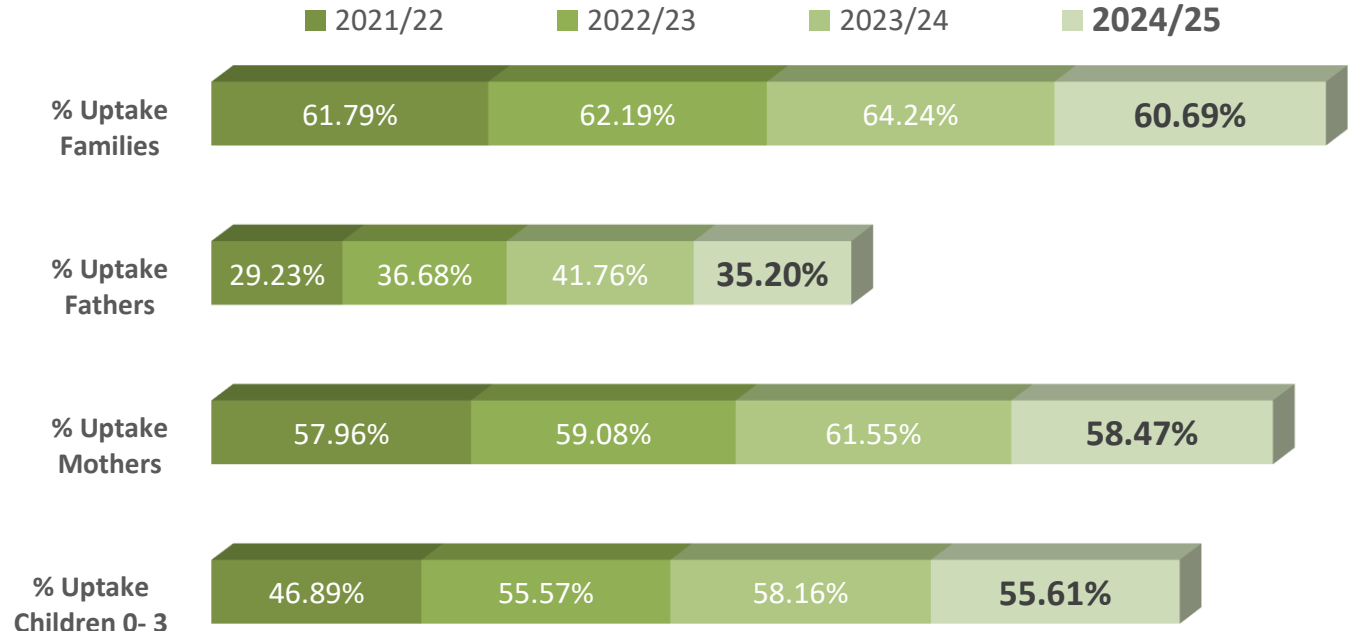
of children registered before their 1st birthday

Source: Sure Start Go Database – Children Registered by Age Report

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

Percentage Uptake of Registered Users 2024/2025

(Note: registered Users have availed of at least one activity during 2024/25)



Policy Outcomes – Improved Language Skills

Hanen Communication & Language Stages Model



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.

Number	Percentage	
1113	85%	Children whose Hanen Communication & Language stage progressed by at least one stage from Autumn 24 to Spring 25 or who remained at the highest stage on this measure.
191	15%	Children who stayed at the same Hanen Communication & Language stage from Autumn 24 to Spring 25

SLC progress of children in the Developmental Programme for 2-3 Year Olds n= 1304 (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	
184	95%	Children whose language and communication development progressed by at least one stage from Autumn 24 to Spring 25 or who remained at the highest stage on this measure (as monitored by BLP)
10	5%	Children whose language and communication development stayed at the same stage from Autumn 24 to Spring 25 (as monitored by BLP)

SLC progress of bilingual children in the Developmental Programme for 2-3 Year Olds n= 194

Policy Outcome – Improved Language Skills



WellComm

WellComm is a speech and language assessment tool that measures progress in SLC development. It is used for children attending the Developmental Programme for 2-3 Year Olds (DP2-3YO).



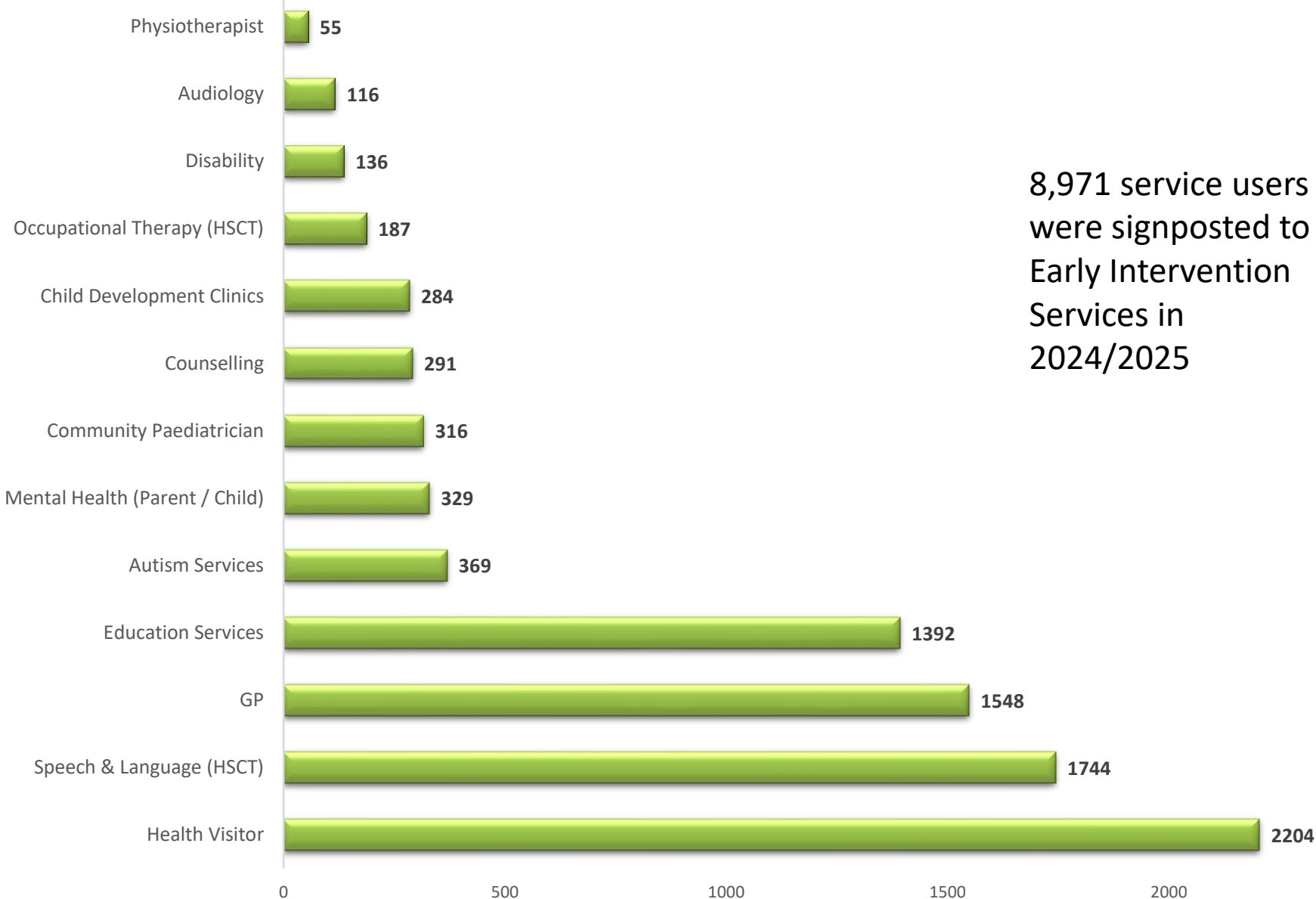
WellComm uses easy-to-understand traffic light reporting to highlight a child's speech and language development. Green indicates an expected level, amber suggests targeted support may be needed and red signals more complex needs that could require referral to a speech and language specialist.

2024/2025(Academic Year)	Number	%
Number of Eligible Children	1491	
Number of Children who were screened	1347	90%
Number of eligible children who were not screened pre and post, as they were absent on one or both of the screening dates	144*	10%
Number of children screened - who showed improvement **	916	68%
Number of children screened - who did not show improvement.	431	32%
<u>Note:</u> All 431 children received additional support ***		

- * All children receive additional SLT support even if only one screen has been administered. All children also receive individual observations from DP2-3YO staff on play, language, motor and social skills.
- ** Improvement defined as progressed towards **Green** or **Stayed Green**, that is, progressed towards expected level for chronological age or stayed at expected level for chronological age.
- *** Through collaborative planning between DP2-3YO 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

Endnote



8,971 service users were signposted to Early Intervention Services in 2024/2025

Policy Outcome – Improved Access to Services / Effectively Integrating Services

Signposting	Total Offered
Charitable Aid	3209
Food Banks	2061
Dentist	1427
Breastfeeding Support	1379
Community Services	1305
Benefits Advice	876
Home Safety	791
Early Years	651
Ethnic Minorities	591
Financial Advice	576
Family Support Hubs	544
Housing Executive	476
Midwife/Antenatal (HSCT)	383
Fire Service	320
Voluntary Organisation	421
Social Services	259
Legal Advice	263
Local Housing	242
Citizens Advice Bureau	257
Homestart	199
Woman Aid	185
Training for Education	136
NICMA	76
Smoking Cessation	71
Addiction Services	39

Source: Sure Start Go Database – Signposting by Plan Report



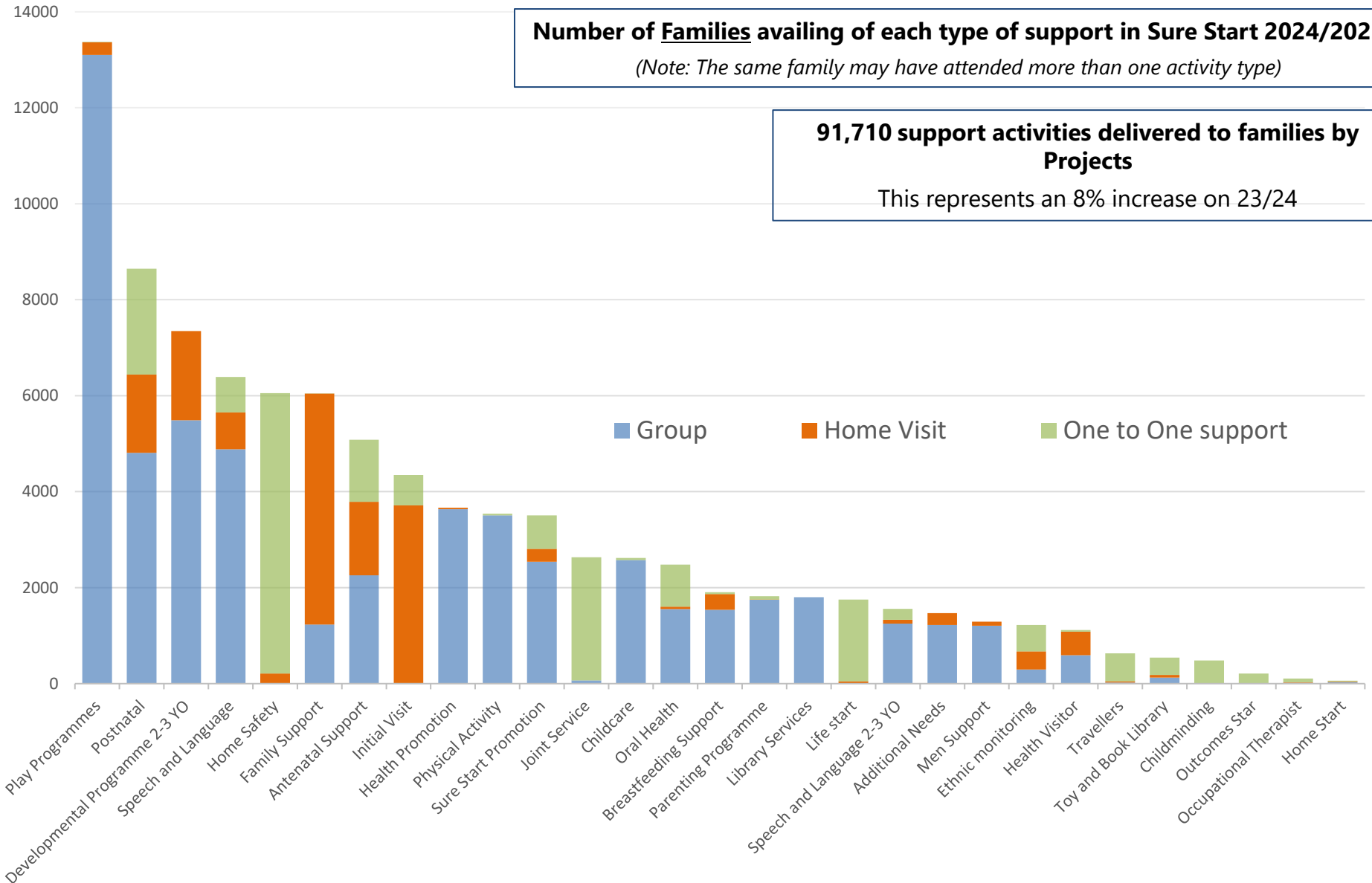
Resources	Quantity Issued
Information	24067
Speech and Language	13344
Play	12717
Family Support	12464
Books	12074
Health Promotion	11261
2 year old programme	7612
Baby	7237
Dental	4690
Bookstart	4652
Toys	4601
New Registration	3676
Parenting	3085
Antenatal	2821
Postnatal	2529
Home Safety	2066
Breastfeeding	1522
Transition	1146
First Aid	594
Smoking	12

Source: Sure Start Go Database – Resources by Plan Report

Projects signposted **16,737** clients to other service providers
and
issued **132,170** resources in 24/25

Policy Outcome - Improved Access to Services

16000



Policy Outcomes – Enhanced Parenting Skills

Endnote

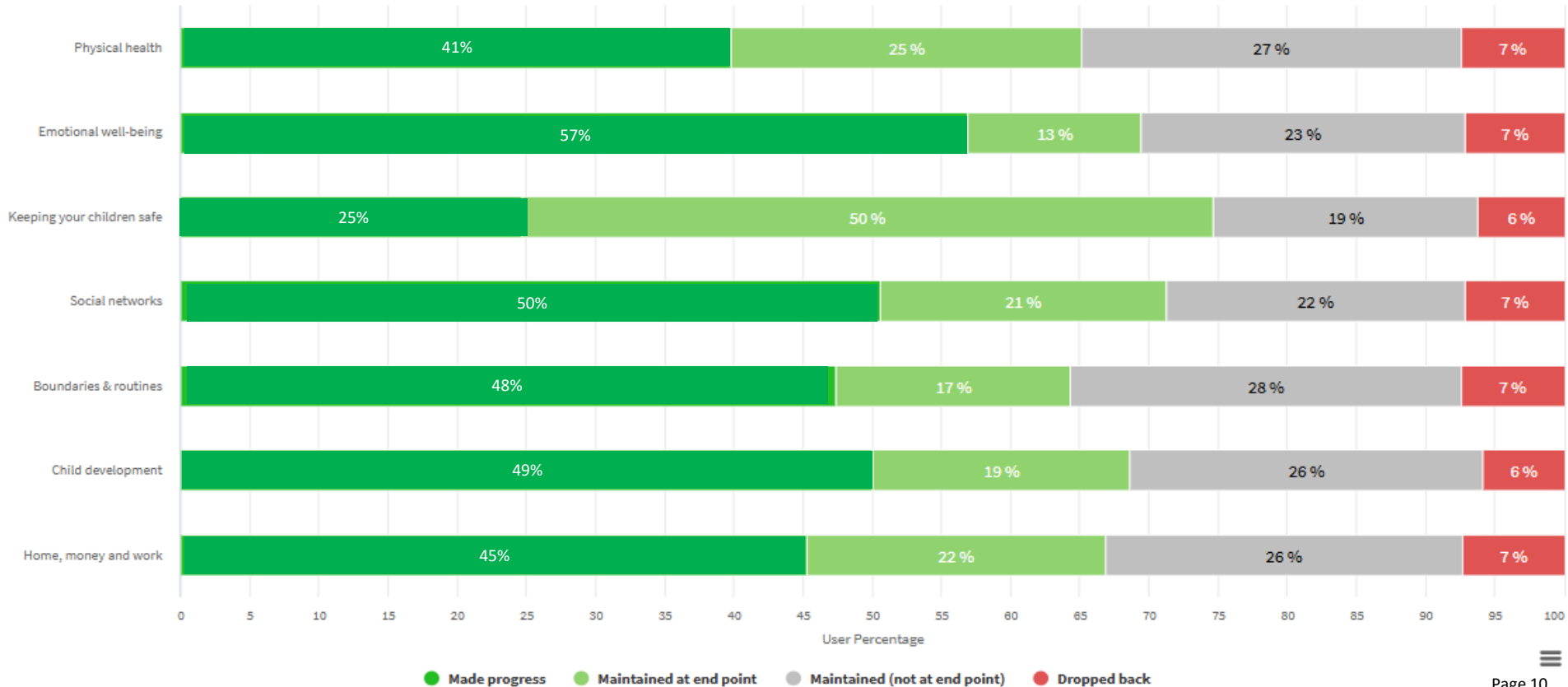


1,675 service users during 2024/25 completed at least 1 Star reading.

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
94%	76%	58%	3.2

The figures provided below are based on **627** service users who **completed** first **and** second star readings after a Sure Start intervention.

How much progress are people making in each outcome area?



Northern Ireland Maternity and Antenatal System (NIMATs)

8285 live births
in Sure Start
Areas across
Northern
Ireland
2023/24
(latest figure available)

82 % of live births
in a Sure Start Area
referred to Sure
Start via NIMATS
In 2023/24



6516
NIMATS
referrals
to Sure Start
2024/25

5680 Registered
Antenatal on
Sure Start Go
2024/25
Equates to 87% of
NIMATS referrals
registered

Source: NIMATS

Source: Sure Start Go Database – Score Card Report

UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative

The UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative enables public services to better support families with feeding and developing close and loving relationships so that all babies get the best possible start in life.

- 6 Sure Start Projects are progressing toward this accreditation
- 3 Sure Start Projects are at stage 1
- 24 Sure Start Projects are at stage 3
- 3 Sure Start Projects have achieved GOLD standard



% of Children Overweight or Obese (IOTF)

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

	2022/23	2023/24
Children living in Sure Start areas	22.6%	23.5%
Children not living in Sure Start areas	18.8%	19.8%
All Children	20.4%	21.3%

Source: Children's Health in NI 23/24



% of Mothers who Smoked During Pregnancy

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

	2022/23	2023/24 <i>partial data see endnote</i>
Mothers living in Sure Start areas	16.2%	14.80%
Mothers not living in Sure Start areas	6.6%	5.70%
All Mothers	10.6%	9.70%

Source: NIMATS via Business Objects (Health Intelligence Unit, PHA), June 2025



% of Children Breastfeeding at Hospital Discharge 2022/23

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	43.6%	38.5%	29.8%	24.4%	19.8%	13.3%
Children not living in Sure Start areas	57.7%	51.0%	41.9%	35.4%	29.7%	20.4%
All children	51.8%	45.8%	36.8%	30.9%	25.6%	17.5%

Source: Children's Health in NI 23/24

Is anyone better off? Health Outcomes



% of Dental Registrations against GP Registrations

Children Aged 0-5 years
NI Average 38.8%

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23; 2023/24
Children living in Sure Start areas	50.9%	40.5%	35.7%	No data available
Children not living in Sure Start areas	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	2022/23; 2023/24
Children living in Sure Start areas	28.5%	14.2%	11.2%	No data available
Children not living in Sure Start areas	32.4%	17.8%	15.7%	



% of Dental Registrations against GP Registrations

Children Aged 3-5years
NI Average 60.9%

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23; 2023/24
Children living in Sure Start areas	71.2%	64.1%	56.4%	No data available
Children not living in Sure Start areas	79.6%	72.0%	66.0%	

Is anyone better off? Education and Living in Safety Outcomes

Endnote



% of Year 1-7 primary pupils with a statement of SEN

NI Average 24/25 -6.6%
Source: DE, Annual School Census

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Children living in Sure Start areas	4.90%	5.90%	Data not available for 2023/24 due to ASOS	7.90%
Children not living in Sure Start areas	3.80%	4.30%		5.70%



% of Year 1-7 primary pupils recorded as Newcomer

NI Average 24/25 -8.7%
Source: DE, Annual School Census

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Children living in Sure Start areas	10.80%	11.70%	Data not available for 2023/24 due to ASOS	13.10%
Children not living in Sure Start areas	4.80%	5.10%		5.70%

GCSEs

% Percentage of leavers 5 GCSEs

A*-C inc English & Maths
NI Average 23/24 - 71.6%

Source: DE, School Leavers Survey

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Children living in Sure Start areas	70.30%	68.20%	63.80%	No data available
Children not living in Sure Start areas	82.80%	81.20%	76.50%	



Number of Domestic Abuse Recorded Crimes

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23; 2023/24
Children living in Sure Start areas	11664	13525	11754	No data available
Children not living in Sure Start areas	6976	8198	7282	

How Much did we do?

Page 3 – 2024/25 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?

Page 4 – Children registered before 1st birthday figures have increased to 72% in 2024/25. Percentage of eligible children registered and percentage uptake figures have decreased in this reporting year. The decline in registrations and usage is attributed to lower birth rates, ongoing staffing and recruitment challenges, a continued focus on expansion areas, and the increasing complexities of children's and families needs which necessitates more targeted and time-intensive support interventions.

Whilst there has been an increase in the number of fathers registered (page 3), there has been a slight decrease in the number of fathers accessing a service. It is important to note that father's work can be specific and specialised, and across Early Years and Education sectors, lower levels of father engagement is common. Other key factors affecting this area of work are -:

- Fathers presenting with increasingly complex needs, resulting in more targeted service delivery, which consequently impacts on Project's scope to work with higher number of families.
- Impact of staffing pressures on ability to meet full service delivery.
- Time of registration – those who register in the latter part of the year, may have not used a service in this reporting year.
- Working patterns of fathers can limit their availability, for example, shift work.

Policy Outcome: Improved Language Skills

Page 5 & 6 - Speech Language and Communication (SLC) Language tools used throughout 2024/25 were WellComm, the Hanen Communication & Language Stages Model and Bilingual Profile to map progress of all eligible children. These language tools recognise areas of strengths and help identify where additional support is required.

Policy Outcome: Early Identification of Development Delay

Page 7 - Signposting families to Early Intervention Services has decreased in this reporting year. Key factors affecting this are -:

- Families presenting with increasingly complex needs, resulting in more targeted service delivery, which consequently impacts on Project's scope to work with higher number of families.
- Impact of staffing pressures can affect all areas of service delivery.
- Recording issues – going forward strategies have been put in place to address this.

Policy Outcome: Enhanced Parenting Skills

Page 10 - Outcomes Star captures 'distance travelled' on the journey towards sustainable changes in people's well-being and circumstances.

This year saw a 13.7% increase in recording of the Outcome Star tool from 1473 to 1675. In addition, the number of families receiving 1st and second star has increased from 540 to 627. Projects continue to roll out and train staff in this tool where appropriate.

Policy Outcome: Effectively Integrated Services

Page 12 - 82% of Live Births referred to Sure Start via NIMATS – Referral to Sure Start via NIMATS requires parental consent. The remaining 18% can register with the Project through a range of other methods, such as self-referral, Health Visiting referral or Family Nurse Partnerships. Antenatal parents can register with the Project at any point during their pregnancy or indeed postnatally.

Page 12 - 87% of NIMATS referrals registered – When Projects contact those referred through NIMATS, the remaining 13% of antenatal parents may choose to defer registration until the postnatal period, or they may no longer require Sure Start services, or they may decide that they do not wish to register and withdraw consent.

Is anyone better off? Health & Living in Safety Outcomes

Page 13 – Percentage of women who smoked – Data excludes women delivering in SEHSCT area between 9/11/23 and 31/3/24. Consistent data for smoking status was not available for these women on EPIC and so these women have been excluded from the data in this table. Data refers to women who were resident in Northern Ireland.

Sure Start area is allocated based on the postcode of the woman at time of birth. Percentage of women who smoked is a valid percentage i.e. number of women who smoked as a % of number of women delivering who had a smoking status recorded.

Is anyone better off? Health & Living in Safety Outcomes

Page 14 and 15 - Sure Start areas are designated by application of the current, official measure of deprivation i.e. the Northern Ireland Multiple Deprivation Measure (NIMDM) 2017. It has not been possible to include 2022/23 and 2023/24 figures for dental registrations and numbers of domestic abuse recorded crimes as the collation of related data does not align with NIMDM 2017.

Page 15 - Figures for 2023/24 could not be provided as this data was not available at pupil level, due to Action Short of Strike (ASOS), therefore unable to distinguish between children within Sure Start areas and non Sure Start Areas.

Is anyone better off? Education Outcomes

Page 15 - Percentage of Leavers 5 GCSEs A*-C including English & Maths 21/22 – 22/23.

Given the various assessment adaptations or other supports in place for 2021/22 and 2022/23, caution should be taken when drawing any conclusions relating to changes in student performance. Year-on-year changes might have been impacted by the different processes for awarding qualifications in these years rather than reflect a change in underlying performance.

Figures for 2024/25 could not be provided as this data was not available at pupil level, due to ASOS, therefore unable to distinguish between children within Sure Start areas and non Sure Start Areas.

Page 15 - A newcomer pupil is one who has enrolled in a school but who does not have the satisfactory language skills to participate fully in the school curriculum, and the wider environment, and does not have a language in common with the teacher, whether that is English or Irish.

This has previously been referred to as English an Additional Language. It does not refer to indigenous pupils who choose to attend an Irish medium school.