



Celebrating 20 Years



2021 – 2022

Annual Report





Chair's ADDRESS

On behalf of the Colin Sure Start Management Committee, I am pleased to present the annual report for 2021-22.

However this is also the project's 20th Anniversary year, so the report will include anecdotes and key milestones or developments across our 20 year history. As someone who was here from the very beginning, I have seen the project grow, change and develop alongside the local Colin community. It has kept at its heart families and children, always putting the needs of children first and this is something I continue to be very proud of.

What is it that makes the Colin area unique? We have a long history of partnership and community work that goes back many years, and in many ways, the setting up of the Colin Sure Start project captures this spirit – it is the product of collaboration, working together and collective contribution. In the early days the project looked different, with many partner community organisations providing services through Service Level Agreements such as creches, young mums groups and DP423YO. This brought many local community groups/organisations, local schools and parishes together in a collective effort to support local families. Over the years the core team has developed and grown and taken on a greater role in the overall work. This has been a welcome development as new services and interventions have emerged. The main thing that has not changed is that the principle of Colin Sure Start belonging to the community here and empowering parents and families has always been and has remained at the centre of what we do.

Over these 20 years I have seen the Colin area itself transform and grow too. Investment in the Colin area has seen the long-awaited redevelopment of Brook Activity Centre to a brand-new leisure centre with a swimming pool and many sports and health facilities for local families that has meant Sure Start are now able to offer a range of health and baby swim programmes right here in the community. The newly built Holy Evangelists Primary School in Twinbrook on the site of St. Lukes has been a big boost for the area, and the development of the Transport Hub on the Stewartstown Road and Glider service with the local Colin Connect busses has added important transport connectivity for local families which is positive for families needing to access services. We have completely redeveloped our site here at Ionad after many years of planning and hard work, and this new building has meant many more opportunities

for partnership work with Sure Start. More recently, a significant rebuild of a Sure Start mobile classroom in Lagmore at Christ the Redeemer has meant not only a facelift and new room for our DP423YO and Play2Learn groups there, but an additional space for parent facilitation programmes, parent support groups and much more in a completely renovated building. This is something that we have been working towards for years and is much needed in the area. A brand new playpark, Páirc Nua Chollan, has opened on the Stewartstown Road after years of planning and looking for the investment required to make this a reality. Again this is another positive development to facilitate outdoor play opportunities and the educational use of the outdoor classroom to promote healthy options for the community.

Families face many challenges ahead - the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on children, the Cost of Living Crisis, increasing heating and electric bills, rents and mortgage increases – we know this will have a negative effect on children and put many families into crisis. However, as you can see the work that Colin Sure Start is doing to support families, parents, carers and children is more important now than ever. Much of the information in this booklet from the year 2021-22 is reflective of constraints of trying to deliver during lockdown and Covid-19 restrictions that were in place during the year. This demonstrates just how responsive and flexible Sure Start can be, and it is in this spirit that we are now finding new ways to support our families in the current challenging times. Finally, as Board Chair I must mention the contributions and commitments of our Board members, staff team and partner organisations. As a company limited by guarantee, the Board of Directors here at Colin Sure Start play a significant role in the leadership and strategic direction of the project. Members give up their time voluntarily, and Colin Sure Start is here today thanks to the commitment of our current Board members, but also many who have served over these 20 years and contributed so much to developing and steering the project. Many of these past Board members will be present at our AGM this year to celebrate this milestone with us. Likewise the partnerships that we have here in the community have been crucial to the project and central to ensuring the work that we are doing with children and families is lasting and continues well beyond their 4th birthday and their time in Sure Start.

Theresa Brady
Chairperson

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Project Coordinator's ADDRESS

I present to you the Colin Sure Start 2021-22 AGM Booklet. This year as we convene for our AGM, we are not just reflecting on the past year of work in 2021-22, but this is Colin Sure Start's 20th Anniversary. This provides an opportunity to reflect over the past 20 years; the beginning, the changes, the growth of the project and new developments that have emerged. All because of a clear vision that we have held on to from the beginning, to give every child in Colin under 4 the best possible start in life.

These past 20 years have seen Colin Sure Start grow, develop and become established within the Colin community here, and it is really no exaggeration to say that the formation of the project would have been impossible without real partnership and the collaboration of many individuals and organisations – many of whom are represented at our AGM. It was this spirit of working together, commitment, with many contributing their experience, time and work, often on top of their own jobs that brought Colin Sure Start into existence. This spirit of commitment, of going above and beyond to try and make things better for the Colin area and its community is still very much alive and well today, and I am pleased to say is still very much a part of the ethos of this organisation. Our Board still consists of members who give up their time, energy, knowledge and experience to further the project completely voluntarily.

There has been much work to do over the years in breaking down barriers and stigma to ensure that all families and children in the Colin area feel involved and welcome at our services and groups. Many families held a view early on that Sure Start was only for those involved with social services or on benefits, and it took a concerted effort by all staff

within the project to build community relations, develop a positive reputation in the community and a real understanding of what Sure Start is and how it is here to support all. We have put on many community events over the years; summer schemes, family events, parents week, Christmas and our visit from the Tooth Fairy which have become part of the community calendar for local families, who now look forward to these. It is a real mark of this work that Sure Start is now viewed very highly within the community here and staff wear the uniform with pride as it represents an organisation that is working for the community.

There have also been significant changes to how we deliver our services over the past 20 years, as the early years saw many individual services, groups and supports delivered through contracts with local partners and organisations, and only a very small 'core' staff team of 5, with 2 additional staff seconded from the SE Trust. Over the years, this changed as more and more services were brought back in to Sure Start to be delivered by our core team, which has grown significantly to what we are now, a staff team of 32 with 3 seconded SE Trust staff. This has been a journey for the organisation, as a company limited by guarantee and registered charity, going from a very small employer to having a considerable workforce and everything from recruitment, training, policies and procedures and organisational structure has had to grow too, along with our Board of Directors. But what we have now is an organisation at the heart of the community that is always seeking to meet the needs of children and families, and this has led to the development of some amazing programmes and services in the last 10 years – the Play2Learn programme, our Little Rainbows and Additional Needs service, development of our Antenatal support and Breastfeeding services, our Fathers support programme, more recently our ESL and Grandparents work and Childminders support just to name a few.

What has also always made Colin Sure Start unique and special, as well as being part of this vibrant and creative community, is our staff team. We now have what is a multi-disciplinary team of early years, family support and health professionals from a wide variety of backgrounds and experience working in a range of roles – from Health Practitioner to Speech and Language Therapist, Family Support Workers to our Early Years staff, a dedicated Fathers Worker and ESL and Grandparents Worker and office staff. This variety is a great strength of Sure Start; in seeing each family as a whole unit and supporting all aspects wherever possible. We have also been blessed over the years with a committed, creative and passionate team of individuals that have contributed so much to the development of new ideas and programmes, finding solutions and treating each child and family as unique, worthwhile and bringing this childlike and positive attitude into the ethos of Colin Sure Start. At this milestone it is also important to reflect on two of our staff team who passed away during these past 20 years who were both great examples of this care and commitment: Carmel O'Hagan, who was our team lead in Family Support for a number of years (2016), and more recently Jennifer McAuley-Bennett (2022), who was a devoted member of our Early Years team.

Our partnerships with other services in the community have always been at the heart of what we do in Sure Start both historically and now, and we continue working together with a range of local partners in the Colin area to provide a joined-up and coordinated service for parents including the Stewartstown Road Health Centre, Speech and Language Therapy services, Barnardos, Save the Children, Colin Neighbourhood Partnership, Ionad na Fuseoige, Footprints Womens Centre, Lagan Valley Education Project, Colin Family Centre, Lagmore Forum, the Mount Eagles Community Association, the South and West Belfast Food Bank, the local Nursery Schools and many, many more.

As Project Coordinator, I would like to acknowledge and thank all the Sure Start staff, the Directors, CCP and DE

representatives, the other agencies and organisations who have worked with Sure Start, and particularly the families who use our services for their engagement and continued support over these past 20 years and especially over these last challenging Covid years.

Roger
Project Coordinator

”

What has also always made Colin Sure Start unique and special, as well as being part of this vibrant and creative community, is our staff team.

VISION

Colin Sure Start aims to reach out to families with children aged 0-4 years..... laying foundations, creating opportunities and working in partnership to give every child the best possible start in life.

MISSION

Our mission is to help each child in the Colin area to reach their full potential by providing support to families and high quality experiences to children during the critical early years from pre-birth up to age 4. We do this by empowering parents and carers with social and educational programmes, home support and opportunities to have positive interactions with their children. We also aim to provide an environment where children are valued and respected, where they can access quality play, and where they develop imagination and skills through interaction with peers.

OUR IMPACT IN THE COLIN COMMUNITY

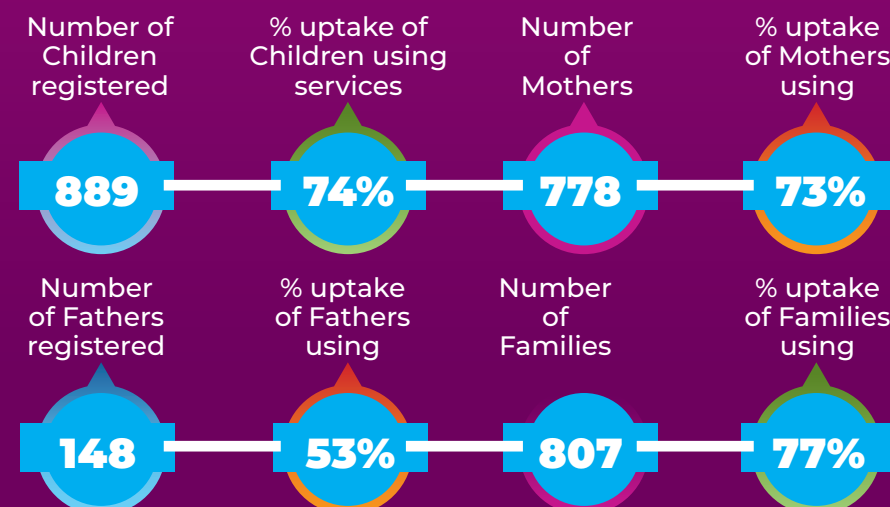
NEW CHILDREN
REGISTERED
21-22 **373**

NEW MOTHERS
REGISTERED
21-22 **293**

NEW FATHERS
REGISTERED
21-22 **76**

ANTENATAL MOTHERS
REGISTERED 21-22
46

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES REGISTERED WITHIN SURE



DELIVERED

2383

Sessions of programmes and activities.

622

Families attended events.

587

Developmental Programme for 2-3 Year olds sessions facilitated.

1509

Home Visits carried out.

55

Attended our popular Rhythm, Rhyme and Storytime.

58

Attended our Aquababes programmes.

40

Attended our Breastfeeding Support Group.

9523

Resources given out to local families in need.

585

Signpostings.

102

Home Safety Checks.

OUR IMPACT IN THE COLIN COMMUNITY

OUTCOMES

ANTENATAL WORKSHOP JUNE 2022

I agree that by attending Colin Sure Start's Antenatal services my physical, mental & social well-being improved.

96%
Agree

I would recommend this programme to other pregnant ladies?

100%
Agree

SUMMER SCHEME SENSORY EVENT AUG 2022

I Would now be confident to carry out these sensory activities at home with my child.

91%
Agree

BABY TIME APRIL 2022

I feel Baby Time provided me and my child with opportunities for social interaction.

100%
Agree

I feel BabyTime provided me with a new opportunity to strengthen my bond with my baby?

100%
Agree

“The girls were lovely, fun and friendly - they talked to us, included everyone, we had your own space lots of different activities, song times and bubbles. My boys just loved it! It was great to get face to face fun - thanks again”

COOK IT APRIL 2022

By participating in the programme, I have become more confident in trying new recipes.

100%
Agree

By participating in this Cook It programme via Zoom I felt more connected with the community and Sure Start during COVID?

100%
Agree

“It was great to just take time with no distractions and spend one on one time with my baby. There's always distractions at home so making the effort to get out and go to the class was important

SPEECH & LANGUAGE SERVICES

2rhymesby2

Speech and Language Therapy support in the Colin Sure Start area has changed significantly from the appointment of our first Speech and Language Therapist to the team in 2002. From originally focusing on the nursery age population with great success it is clear that families need to be hearing about the importance of Speech,

Language and Communication(SLC) development from the antenatal stage all throughout the first 3 years of life. The Speech and Language team work alongside our Sure Start colleagues to ensure that “Communication is everybody's business” and the development of these skills is a key aim in all areas of the Sure Start programme of services.

SURE START SLT INPUT OVER THE YEARS

2002

Nursery Outreach SLT service facilitated by funding from Colin Sure Start

2012

SLT commenced input into Developmental Programme for 2-3year olds

2013

Rhythm, Rhyme and Storytime commenced

2015

SLT no longer involved in Nursery Outreach and embedding Speech, Language and Communication into all aspects of Colin Sure Start Services

SLT promotes speech, language and communication (SLC) in the following ways:

NOW

- Input into DP23YO, Play 2 Learn, Little Rainbows
- Rhythm, Rhyme and Story time sessions
- Antenatal SLC Training
- Parent and Toddler Group Drop in Sessions
- Babytime Group SLC session
- Home visits
- Working with Additional Needs Team
- Onward Referral to specialist service
- Bookstart Group
- Staff Training-Hanen, Elklan
- Joint working with Family Support Team
- Joint working with Early Years Team
- Drop in Visits: Childminder, Grandparents, Parent and Toddlers, Dad's Den

Before meeting Jenny I didn't have much knowledge on speech and language being a first time mum. But after just one meeting with Jenny I felt as if I had been doing this years. She explained everything in great depth and by following the activities I was given, my sons speech improved in just a short amount of time.

RHYTHM, RHYME AND STORY TIME

This Pilot group started in February 2013 and has gone from strength to strength since. This popular group runs twice a week and in the period of 2018-2019 had over 980 adults/children who attended the group. We diversified to online Facebook Live and YouTube sessions over the covid period which allowed our children to still join in with their favourite songs and stories. We are happy to be seeing our children face to face again; watching their joy and fun when they get to read stories and play their instruments. Remember "Good rhymers make good readers!"

PLAY AND GROW

This group developed in conjunction with the Early Years Coordinator and Additional Needs Support Team has provided a much needed intervention for children with additional needs in the community. Parents have enjoyed the opportunity to chat with others who are going through similar issues and gain significant support from each other. One parent said "the staff are outstanding, they provide the most useful advice".

PROGRAMME FOR 2-3 YEAR OLDS

The SLT supports the staff to help target speech, language communication through their daily interactions with children in the programme. Parents are encouraged to learn new strategies in play and stay sessions and the children learn new skills in our LEAP groups. The significant support of our skilled early years staff consistently develop the skills of all the children in the group. "I feel that his speech and language and also his ability to follow instructions has increased greatly through the programme."

BOOKSTART

This fun 4 week group allows parents to learn rhymes, receive new books, play with puppets and learn about early mark making. Since starting in November 2019 we have given out 57 packs to parents to help foster a love of reading at home. We know books are fun for everyone you can turn a page at any age! One parent said "I found the leaflets that were given out very helpful and have got a lot of good advice through the weeks"

HELP KIDS TALK BABY EVENT

The SLT team joined forces with the Baby Time group in Sept 2021 to deliver key messages to parents of babies aged 3-9months. This SLT led session is a fun 1 hour to spend 1:1 time with your baby helping them to learn essential skills to get them ready for talking and listening. We encourage parents to "Play your part right from the start...I need you to talk and play every day" Since Sept 2021 we have been able to give this information to 53 parents!

ANTENATAL SLC SESSION

The SLT facilitates an evening antenatal session quarterly. This informal session allows for expectant parents to learn how important it is to connect with your baby during pregnancy and continue to engage and interact with baby once they are born. We notice that our expectant Dads who have attended really enjoy learning what they can do to connect with baby antenatally and postnatally!

STAFF TRAINING

Our staff are continuously learning and building the skills to help our children become effective communicators. The SLT team completed ELKLAN 0-3s training with 17 sure start staff in 2018/19. 9 staff completed Hanen Teacher Talk Training in Summer 2022. In September 2022 the Family Support Team completed Building Blocks to Communication Training. Also 6 members of staff have completed Intensive Interaction training in 2022 to help support children with social communication difficulties.

”

It was great having a chance to speak to a Speech Therapist and get answers to some questions that I have had. Also it was helpful to see other children with similar problems and realise that he was not so different

DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAMME FOR 2 YEAR OLDS

The Developmental Programme for 2-3 Year Olds has been a core element of Colin Sure Start since it was established. Originally all four Developmental Programme for 2-3 Year Olds were run through service level agreements with other local organisations including Lagmore Parish, Lagan Valley Education Project, St. Therese Nursery School and Ionad Na Fuisseoige.

As time passed and the project became more cemented within the community the programmes transitioned back into Colin Sure Start as a project except for Ionad Na Fuisseoige our Irish Immersion Programme which is still run through the service level agreement with which it originated. Although our other programmes are now directly line managed by the project the strong links with the original service providers remain with two of the other programmes remaining with the same building and the fourth still being delivered on the chapel grounds.

This speaks volumes about what it takes in terms of delivery of a Developmental Programme for 2-3 Year old as partnership with the community and other local organisations is essential.

The Developmental Programme for 2-3 Year Olds caters for 48 children in total over the four programmes. With the ever rising interest, demand and need for places within the Colin area the project responded by developing a new programme that would enable us to provide an additional 30 spaces within a pre-preschool style programme, two afternoons a week in both our Lagan Valley and Lagmore teams. This new Programme, Play2Learn, helped meet a gap in services however interest continued to grow rapidly causing the programme to re-evaluate how this was delivered.

In 2018 Play2Learn was amended to become 6 programmes, over two setting accommodating 10 children in each for a block of 12 weeks increasing the pre-preschool opportunities to 108 in total over the course of an academic year. Up until 2022 this was the standardise format however with the growing demand for additional needs services this programme has been amended with two blocks being amalgamated into one to allow for further pre-preschool additional needs provision to be provided to some of the children within our catchment area who need it the most.

2002

DP23YO established in Colin Sure Start

4
PROGRAMMES
48
PLACES

Lagmore
Lagan Valley
St. Therese
Ionad Na Fuisseoige

FEB 2022

165 Applications
received on time

63%

increase in applications
to the programme from
2016 – 2022

IMPACT OF THE PROGRAMME

”

Hi Kelly,

I am not sure if you remember chatting with me last year before you went off on maternity leave but I am Erin's mum. She attended the 2 year old programme in LVEP and just finished last week. Firstly, I hope you and baby are all well and the return to work wasn't too bad. I dread the thought of it. I return in January. I just wanted to email to firstly echo again my thanks for Erin's place in the playgroup but mainly recognise the excellence of the programme and the amazing work of the girls. When Erin started, she was extremely unsettled to the extent she threw up some days with anxiety and crying. However, Deirdre and the team worked so well with her and by Halloween she was very settled. She made friends and enjoyed attending the programme every day.

I also received feedback that her confidence was an issue but has grown considerably since the beginning to the end of term. I cannot thank your team enough for the work they done with Erin. This was based on their patience, the friendly and approachable environment they created and also working with Erin's style and personality and letting her confidence develop at its own pace and not forcing any situation. The girls were also very very approachable for me a first time parent in answering any questions I ever had or keeping me up to date. I often asked for regular updates of Erin's development and this was never an issue and they were always more than willing to help.

This is particular with Deirdre and then in the second half of the year Danielle. I think the programme is excellent. Its structure and attention to detail and the learnings that it provides to the kids, not to mention the regular trips we attended. I would highly recommend it to all and could never have provided Erin this experience or these learnings myself. I just wanted to email to say a sincere thank you and acknowledge the excellent work of the girls in LVEP. It will remain very positive memories for both myself and Erin and it was an absolute pleasure getting to know them all.

Many thanks and take care. Emma



A clear highlight within the Developmental Programme for 2-3 Year Olds has been the refurbishment of our Lagmore mobile. Pictured below, the space including the extension of the outdoor area has provided a warm welcoming

environment for children and families along with boosting staff moral and reigniting their enthusiasm for highly quality early years provision.



EARLY YEARS SERVICES

The diversity and range of Early Years Services provided by Colin Sure Start has greatly changed since the project was established. As a project it was important that services which not only supported the six key outcomes were developed but also that reflected the need of the children and families within the Colin Area.

BABYTIME

Baby Time was developed by Colin Sure Start staff as a programme which supported parents on their journey to provide age and stage appropriate play with their babies. It also allows for social opportunities for parents to engage with other parents and help eliminate some of the isolation families can feel having a little one at home. The programme began as there was a gap in services for families with babies after completing programmes such as baby massage and yoga who were not quite ready for parent and toddlers. It was also publicised in the beginning as a programme before parents to attend before going back to work which helped to tackle the stigma attached to sure Start of being a service for low income families. The core principles remain the same however a more structure approach has been introduced to help formalise the key messages around speech and language are clear but remain adaptable to meet the interests and developmental milestones for the children attending.



AQUABABES

Being Healthy is at the forefront of a lot of programmes delivered within Sure Start projects. Colin Sure Start acknowledged this along with some of the barriers families face when attempting to access services which promote health such as swimming & leisure centres and brought Aquababes into our list of programmes on offer. This allows families to access the swimming pool, free of charge with a registered STA Baby and Preschool certified instructor. As the 0-1 journey was developed within the project Aquababes is now the final programme on the journey and helps to wrap up the programmes for families and babies before transitioning to our toddler and preschool age-based programmes.



PARENT AND TODDLER GROUPS

A place for children and parents to go where they can just drop in is something that Colin Sure Start has provided from almost the beginning of it's journey. Prior to the Covid 19 Pandemic we delivered five Parent and Toddler Groups throughout the catchment area sometimes catering to over twenty families at a time. The pandemic caused us to look at these services and develop them to still provide the opportunities families were seeking but, in a way, where staff had control over the number of families and who was attending on any given day. We now have an online booking system for three parent and toddlers each week which allow families to dip in and out of Sure start services in a causal way that provides flexibility and still enable their child to engage with other children, avail of high-quality play experiences and for families to make links with each other without fear of stigma. This type of programme is one that families are continuously asking for and something Colin Sure Start places great significance on something that supports the participation of all local families.



Improved language skills forms part of the Sure Start Core outcomes. In partnership with the Colin Sure Start Speech and Language team the Early Years team support the delivery of weekly Rhythm, rhyme & Story time sessions. Prior to Covid 19 this was a drop-in service but like our Parent and Toddler Groups this has adapted to be a programmes families can book onto via our website. This is a great resource for parents to allow them to engage with the speech and language team and also promote their child's speech, language and communication skills trough songs, rhymes and stories. We still run two sessions every week and continue to see the value of this programme for children within our catchment area of all ages from babies right through to preschool. This service is also utilised at many of our larger events such as summer scheme and parents week.

Here at Colin Sure Start we pride ourselves on reflecting on what we are doing, where the gaps in our services are and what our families are telling us they need. From this in September 2022 we introduced our new programme Learn To Explore which aims at bridging the gap for families who have completed the 0-1 journey and where they can go while waiting for their child to be ready for programmes such as Toddler Time.

This programme focuses on the four key areas of development, incorporates learning outcomes, take home resources and activities which parents can recreate at home with their child. So far families have loved the video element and finding new and innovative activities which are appropriate for children between 12-18months which was previously was missing from our available services.



OUR PAST 5 YEARS IN NUMBERS

498 families
have received home
safety equipment such
as cupboard locks and
stair gates

107
parents have
received
weaning
workshop advice
and support

3206
family support
visits supporting
860 parents

843 new
families registered

1547
family support
telephone calls
supporting 562
parents

113 parents
attending physical
activity programmes
like Zumba, Circuits
and Pramastics

212 parents
completed Baby
Massage

179
parents and
babies have
experienced the
benefits of baby
yoga

96
parents have
attended
Grobrain
workshops

TOOTH FAIRIES OVER THE YEARS

We have seen many Tooth Fairies visit Colin Sure Start over the years to teach children about oral hygiene and the importance of getting registered with a dentist. In the past 5 years we have signposted 1018 families to the dentist and family support have given 250 oral hygiene resources to children.



COLIN SURESTART EVENTS

Santa and his elves have made many visits to Sure Start over the years, he loves his trip to meet all the children every year.



Over July and August every year we run many summer scheme events such as Teddy Bears Picnics, Toddler Sports day, trips to the beach, arts and crafts and music and dance days.



GROUPS AND FEEDBACK

BABY MASSAGE

100% of baby massage attendees agreed that baby massage gave them the opportunity to spend time with their baby and promote bonding.



BABY YOGA

100% of baby yoga attendees agreed that they were able to participate in and learn safe postnatal exercises with their baby in a supportive environment.



WEANING WORKSHOP

100% of the weaning workshop attendees would now recognise signs of weaning readiness in their babies.



”

Loved this programme. Massage is now a part of our night time routine.

”

Such a welcoming environment, I was a bit nervous about bringing my baby as he cries a lot but was made feel so at ease.

”

Maire was really friendly and helpful. My baby loved it.

GROUPS AND FEEDBACK

TODDLER TIME

Parents attending toddler time reported increased knowledge or experience in speech and language, oral health, play skills, toddler nutrition and creativity.



”

Really enjoyed toddler time, all the activities were excellent, staff were very good and provided great advice. The activities were well set up and fun for her age group and it really helped my child to interact with other children and try new play activities that we had not done before. I would recommend toddler time to others.

BERNIE ON HOW FAMILY SUPPORT HAS CHANGED OVER THE YEARS

Bernie is the longest serving Family Support Worker at Colin Sure Start. She has seen many changes over the years and was integral in the development of the organisation. This is what she had to say...

There have been many changes throughout my 17 years as a Family Worker within Colin Sure Start. Many of these changes have been extremely positive.

Our Family Team began with just two full time Family Workers who provided family support and delivered three programmes. Our Family Team has now expanded to six family workers, a Fathers Worker, an ESL/Grandparent Worker and a Family Support Co-ordinator due to the demand for support within the Colin area. We now deliver nine programmes within a group setting, which we can adapt and deliver in the home.

Our original premises were in the mobiles at Lagmore which we shared with the Co-ordinator and the administration team. We are now based in a much larger premises in the Dairy Farm with several satellite venues across the Colin Area. We have built up our relationships with other local organisations and health services like the Health Visiting Team.

Originally we provided creche for programmes and facilitated groups such as parent and toddlers. We now have the benefit of our Early years team who do this, which enables us to deliver more family



support and programmes.

In general the nature of Family Support referrals are very similar to previous year; play skills, behaviour and routines, however over the years parental ill health has increased and also speech and language delay is more prevalent within the families who engage with Family Support.

Lastly on a lighter note, we have had many changes in uniform colour over the years from yellow, white, green and purple, but I think we've now settled on our turquoise t-shirts and tunics and navy hoodies.

FAMILY CASE STUDIES

CASE STUDY ONE

Health Visitor referral to Sure Start for behaviour support. Mum reported aggressive behaviours with her three year old; biting, nipping, head banging, undoing herself from a car seat. The family were becoming increasingly isolated due to parents anxiety about behaviours when out. The family worker was able to go into the home observe the behaviours, get additional information and model responses with the parent the child, she then provided the family with invaluable behaviour management resources and advice. Three weeks into support mum reported a decline in aggressive behaviours and a improvement in speech and language. "I cant believe the difference in her, I didn't think these behaviours would ever stop."

CASE STUDY THREE

Health Visitor referral to Sure Start for some speech and language support at home. The little boy was 2 years old but mum had reported very little vocabulary. Upon meeting the family, it was apparent that the little boy had limited language but also some language regression. 6 weeks of speech and language home support was completed and 6 support telephone calls. However, there was very limited progression. A joint visit with our Speech and Language professional was arranged and a different

CASE STUDY TWO

Self-referral family to Colin Sure Start. Mum had recently moved here following the breakdown of a domestic violence relationship and required some practical support and advice to transition into Northern Ireland. We were able to advise mum on how to access the benefits system and the local housing executive. We were able to access some financial support for the family also. The children were booked to attend 6 weeks of parent and toddler and also Rhythm, rhyme and storytime to allow for some much-needed social interaction and integration into the community. "You've helped us so much, thank you!"

approach was suggested. We completed an application for DP23YO and he was offered a place in Play2Learn. Upon further observation in this setting a referral has been made to CDC. This family were very grateful for the support and advice provided by Colin Sure Start. "Thank you for helping with our son and giving us support. Just knowing there was help at the end of the phone was great. The family support service has been very beneficial to us as a family. Again, thank you!"



ANTENATAL SERVICES

In 2015 with the inception of a new Family Support Coordinator in post it was very quickly identified that a key area in Colin Sure Starts work with families was with people in the immediate area that were pregnant. She was very keen to add value to existing services and started out with an antenatal group whereby people could drop in and receive key messages and support. At the beginning there were many mornings in the group when nobody came. In no way did this seem like defeat – it was just a matter of rethinking and providing a programme or service that attracted mums to come along. With some financial support from the then Project Coordinator, Jackie Adair alongside Leanne from AquababesNI we were able to offer a 6 week Aquanatal Swim Programme – a water based exercise programme for pregnant ladies. It was a great success and continues to be one of the programmes offered in Colin Sure Starts Antenatal Journey to date. We have developed a strong working relationship with Better Gym and have used a number of venues over the years – Andersontown, Olympia and now our new home in Brook Activity Centre, Twinbrook at the heart of the Colin Community and its families.

Over the past number of years Colin Sure Start has added Pregnancy Yoga, Pregnancy Massage and Antenatal Workshops to its Antenatal Services. The Health Practitioner has also been trained to deliver The Real Birth Programme offering a 6 week programme for antenatal mums in preparation for birth and those early days afterwards. Many of the referrals for Antenatal Services were self referrals or possibly through the midwife and/or health visitor. Within the past 5-6 years NIMATS has afforded Colin Sure Start with a number of pregnant mums that live within the Colin area who we could contact and offer out the programmes. This contact was historically made via letter – however in line with the development of a number of our Media Platforms, the Health Practitioner alongside the Project Manager recorded a video. The link is sent to mums that are referred to Colin Sure Start which will then take them to our very own YouTube Channel. Its work in progress and we are finding that uptake is getting better and more immediate.

Within the last number of years Colin Sure Start has seen a gradual increase in dads, male carers and partners becoming involved in their child's Sure Start journey. It has been a welcome and heartwarming experience for the staff and even more so within the Antenatal Services here at Colin Sure Start. Partners are now investing more in the early days – in preparation for the birth of their child and are more involved than ever in the decisions that are made for birth and feeding preferences. Their role is VITAL in supporting their partner and Colin Sure Start staff play a key role in providing these opportunities through the Antenatal Workshops facilitated throughout the year linking in with key organisations including Speech & Language, Tara Thompson (The Little Yoga House) and the peer supporters of the South Easter Trust Breastfeeding Peer Supporters Service led by Jacqui Henning.



MOVING FORWARD.....

Colin Sure Start has always had an excellent relationship with the South Eastern Trust with many Health Visitors and Midwives giving their time and expertise to the organisation over the past 20 years. Despite facing their own staffing challenges support was always ongoing and this has been very much appreciated by the

Management Committee, the staff and ultimately the families that have engaged with Colin Sure Start over the past 20 years. As with many services, but especially Health Services, the recent COVID pandemic put tremendous strain on resources including staff. Colin Sure Start worked tirelessly throughout the 2 years of lockdowns, reopening's, lockdowns again, restrictions, risk assessments.....it was relentless! As a result Colin Sure Start had no Health Professional on their team. Despite this, Colin Sure Start innovatively created a new core post for the Health Aspect of its service provision and in April 2021 appointed its first Health Practitioner with key responsibility for Antenatal/Postnatal & Breastfeeding Mums. The Health Practitioner is now 18 months in post and steadily growing the service, welcoming pregnant mums, new mums (& dads) and breastfeeding mums into their Colin Sure Start journey.

One of her key roles within the past 18 months as her role of Breastfeeding Champion also has been the ongoing training and support of the whole of the Colin Sure Start team in the ongoing process of assessment for UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiative.

Stage 3 assessment is imminent and will hopefully result in a positive outcome in an accumulation of at least 5 years work.



BREASTFEEDING SUPPORT

Colin Breastfeeding Group first began in April 2015 when 2 support workers, Julie Anne Murphy and Liz Johnston patiently waited for mums to come along to the first ever session. It was an anxious wait which turned into delight when one mum turned up with her baby daughter! Since that first session the Colin Breastfeeding Group has steadily grown in size throughout the past 7 years with a variety of staff from Colin Sure Start and Colin Early Parenting Programme leading the way.

Over the years the group has moved location as

it has grown and especially after COVID we had to ensure that the venue was an adequate size to ensure social distancing and ventilation and so we relocated to Lagmore Community Forum. On 19th July 2022 Colin Breastfeeding Group made another journey to Colin Family Centre in Poleglass.

At this stage, 7 years later we can say that we have been located now in 3 of our 5 ward areas. Over the years we have welcomed numerous mums – too many now to count – who have come through our doors looking advice, signposting, support and a listening ear. It has been a privilege for Colin Sure Start to have been part of their Breastfeeding Journeys. It has also been lovely seeing these mums return with their second, third and even fourth babies.



NADINE'S STORY

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The support I've received from Colin Sure Start Breastfeeding support group was invaluable to me with my 2nd son 7 years ago. Due to multiple issues including allergies, tongue tie, low weight gain and hospitalisation, I found myself very low at times. Sure Start were at hand when I needed them, loaning me a breast pump and being there for advice or just a listening ear when needed. I've recently returned to the group with my 4th baby and it still has the same friendly atmosphere which I know is down to the group facilitator Julie Anne Murphy, who is a wealth of knowledge and experience. Having this much needed support in the Colin area is such a must for both new and experienced mum's.





BREASTIVAL

Breastival is a unique, award-winning festival which aims to support, normalise and celebrate breastfeeding as part of everyday life.

Since 2017 families, parents to be, friends & supporters have gathered together at the annual event and are encouraged to learn, laugh and maybe even dance to celebrate World Breastfeeding Week.

Since its inception, mums, dads, babies, children, parents to be, grandparents, friends and supporters have gathered together for a day of workshops for both adults and children, talks with local and international experts, meeting new friends and celebrating World Breastfeeding week.

Colin Sure Start has been afforded the opportunity to be involved with Breastival and support it.



GRANDPARENT SERVICE



Our Grandparents group started in April of this year. We recognised Grandparents are increasingly becoming the main childcare providers now for a lot of parents due to the rising cost of childcare provision. The group happens once a month in various locations throughout the Colin area. At

each session the grandparents participate in play, arts and crafts, and rhythm and rhyme sessions along with their grandchildren. They also have the social aspect of meeting other grandparents.

ESL SERVICE



As we now have a number of different nationalities in the Colin area, it was decided that a group for ESL parents and children (English as a second language) was badly needed in the area. This group started in April 2022. The ESL group is on every Friday in Colin Glen Library. We have a number of different nationalities attending the group i.e., Polish, Kurdish, Greek, Indian, Syrian, Romanian and Zimbabwean. Each week they all come together to play with their children and interact with other parents. This group provides a much-needed meeting place for families to find out what is on offer in the local community.

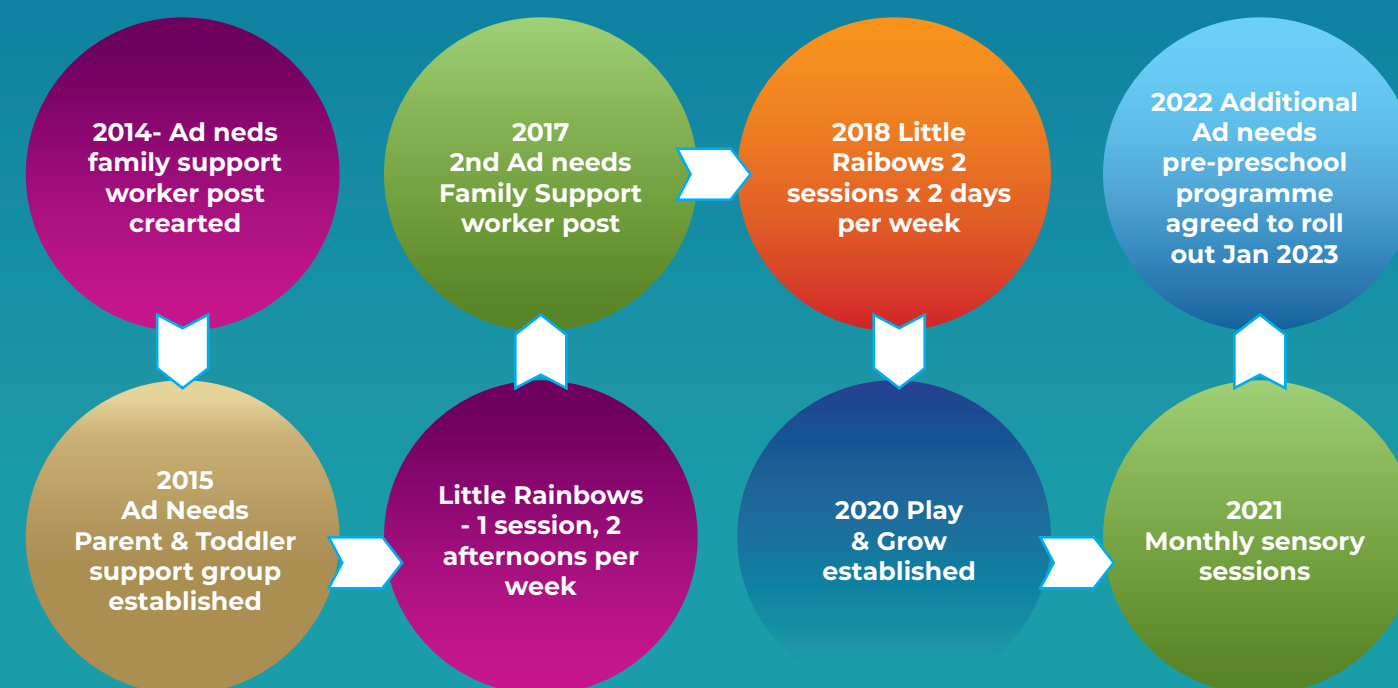
ADDITIONAL NEEDS SERVICE

Our additional needs service was established in 2014. Over this time the service has very much evolved and expanded. The service started out as one additional needs support family worker carrying out home based support for families within the Colin area. The addition of parent & toddler style support group was quickly introduced in 2015 in response to families seeking opportunity for peer support for both themselves and for their children. This group ran weekly for a number of years and was a very successful space for parents to gain advice from staff as well as forming those peer supports and friendships, while the children were able to play in a safe and stimulating environment. In 2015 the Additional Needs provision within Colin Sure Start was then developed further to include a pre preschool programme offered one session, two afternoons a week in Lagan Valley. This was delivered by the Additional Needs Family Support worker and two staff from the Developmental Programme for 2-3 Year Olds.

As the need within the Colin area for support and services for children with additional needs continually grew the organisation responded by

creating an additional post for a second Family Support Worker with an Additional Needs focus in 2017. Also, in 2017 the project established Little Rainbows as a standalone pre preschool programme for children who would benefit from a smaller group running two sessions two days a week from September to June. Continually responding to parent and professional feedback a more formalised parent programme was developed in partnership with the Colin Sure Start Speech & Language Therapist & Early Learning Coordinator in 2020. The programme has continuously evolved as we learnt about what families wanted and needed and now consists of 8 consecutive weeks. Each session focuses on a particular area of development & combines facilitator delivery with in setting practice. This is proving successful for the parents to gain a good level of understanding of their child's needs and knowledge of how to best support their child as an individual.

In 2021 monthly support sensory sessions were introduced to allow parents a less formalised space to continue their journey and further gain support outside of programme delivery. This is a



key sign posting support which allows families to engage in services while waiting for the next Play & Grow programme to begin or as a place for transitioning in and out of one-to-one support. The support within the Developmental Programmes for 2-3 Year Olds has become more necessary in all the venues with numerous children presenting with developmental delays and families requiring support. In 2022 this need was responded to by amalgamating two Play2Learn Blocks in Lagan Valley to become an additional pre-preschool programme for children with additional needs which will run Jan 2023-June 2023. In addition to this the Additional Needs Family Support workers have taken on peer mentoring & support duties themselves within the organisation supporting Early Years staff with strategies and information about referrals and statementing.

Home-based support with families continues and is fundamental to this service as it allows us

to support families wherever they are on their additional needs journey. This service continues to provide the families with the skills they need to engage and support their children with their play and development as well as providing tailored support around Child Development Centre referrals, assessment panels and Nursery applications.

Through this service we have established excellent links with multi-disciplinary teams and a wide range of professionals. This has been based on dedication and commitment of the staff in ensuring other services are aware of what we do and how we fit in within statutory and voluntary organisations. We continue to reflect on the additional needs services we offer and ensure to respond to family need within our catchment area. As the need grows the support services required grows too and Colin Sure Start aims to continue to be part of the ever-changing pathway that is additional needs services.



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As Educational Psychologist responsible for children in the Colin area I was given the opportunity to forge links with Sure Start staff. My role as EP involves observing and assessing preschool children with additional needs in the setting. I have seen first-hand the expertise, professionalism, patience and dedication of the staff. The children and their parents are so well supported at such a challenging time as they move through their educational career. I am delighted to have been invited to write this short contribution in marking the 20 year AGM anniversary and look forward to continuing our collaborative work.

”

During lockdown, Colin Sure Start took a lot of pressure off me. They bent over backwards to help me and my children, between the generous fruit and veg parcels and the activity packs. Me and my children would be lost without them. They always rang to check up on us which was so lovely to make sure we had what we needed or to offer advice. Me and my children would be lost without the help of Sure Start, especially Rebecca who went above and beyond for us and for this I'll be forever grateful! Thank-you Sure Start – your team is amazing!

”

Charlie attended Little Rainbows programme with Rebecca. He suffered with separation anxiety and with the help from Rebecca, we got him to settle into the group. Rebecca really got to know Charlie and was able to meet his needs by providing support for both of us through his whole time at Rainbows, this support helped him to gain better emotional and social skills which then made it easier for him when transitioning into Nursery. Rebecca was still there as support for me when his Nursery journey began. I can't thank her enough for everything she has done for both me and Charlie.

”

Sure Start's been so supportive, they are also very active with mother and babies, toddlers etc. I have enjoyed mixing with others in like minded circumstances, their help and support has been phenomenal over the years, and I know if ever I need to reach out, they are only a phone call away.

FATHERS SERVICES

The Fathers' Services of Colin Sure Start have been a constant feature of our wider team for a decade now, and in that time the project has supported our fathers and their families by providing group programmes and individual supports for all and any who have and are registered with us. These activities range from Father's Day picnics, to swimming and exercising, healthy cooking and eating, to dam and shelter building in the woods, as well as tree planting and growing our own food at the allotment. Throw in arts and crafts, a focus on dads reading, helping to develop the language and literacy skill of the children, and there are not too many areas which we are not covering. So much done, so much still to do!

Allied with these fun and educational activities are

the consistent emotional and practical supports for those who might need advice on employment and/or further education, signposting and referring on to other supports in the community, and just lending an ear when needed. We are always available to help.

Fathers' Services supported many fathers during lockdown, and we were particularly active in providing food parcels, online cooking programmes, arts and crafts materials and reading books. As lockdown measures relaxed slightly, we organized activities in Colin Glen Forest Park, and these overall supports enabled many of our dads to maintain some semblance of normality and gave opportunities to play and bond with their children.



MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

THERESA BRADY CHAIR	DIARMUID MOORE DIRECTOR	LYNDA VLADÉANU ADVISOR	CARLA FRASER SECRETARY
JUDITH SEARLE TREASURER	ISOBEL LOUGHRAN DIRECTOR	FLORENCE DAVIDSON DIRECTOR	DAVID SIMPSON DIRECTOR
SARAH GRANT-JONES TREASURER	GERRY HEERY DIRECTOR		

AUDITOR

LYNN DRAKE & CO.

SENIOR MANAGEMENT TEAM

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MANDI RAFFERTY PROJECT SUPPORT COORDINATOR	MARGARET CLINTON ESL & GRANDPARENTS WORKER	KELLY WATSON EARLY LEARNING COORDINATOR	ANTOINE Ó'FIONNAGÁIN FATHER'S WORKER

FUNDED PARTNERS

In 2021/22 Colin Sure Start funded a number of local partners to help us to deliver core services in the Colin area. We would like to thank these partners for their continued cooperation and dedication in delivering early year's services in the Colin vicinity.

THESE FUNDED PARTNERS ARE:

BARNARDO'S TRAVELLERS EARLY YEAR'S SERVICE

Colin Sure Start provided funding to assist Barnardo's in delivering their Traveller Early Year's Services in the area. This included one to one support and cultural awareness sessions to nursery units.

IONAD NA FUISEOIGE

Colin Sure Start provided funding to assist Ionad Na Fuiséige to deliver a Developmental Programme for 2 to 3 Year Olds and also morning and afternoon crèche services. Ionad also provide short term respite crèche for families who are receiving home-based support from our Family Team.

SOUTH EASTERN HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE TRUST – SPEECH & LANGUAGE THERAPY SERVICE

Colin Sure Start provided funding to assist the SEHSCT in delivering various early year's speech & language services in the Colin area. These services included the early identification, intervention and prevention screening in the Developmental Programme for 2 to 3 Years Olds, Rhythm Rhyme and Storytime and other early years services.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- IONAD NA FUISEOIGE
- ST LUKE'S FAMILY CENTRE
- BARNARDOS TRAVELLERS AND REFUGEE SUPPORT SERVICE
- CHILDCARE PARTNERSHIP
- SOUTH EASTERN HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE TRUST
- DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
- CHRIST THE REDEEMER PARISH
- LAGMORE COMMUNITY FORUM
- COLIN NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERSHIP
- NICVA
- EARLY YEARS THE ORGANISATION
- SOUTH EASTERN EDUCATION & LIBRARY BOARD
- ORTUS
- FAMILY SUPPORT HUB
- CHILDREN IN NORTHERN
- IRELAND
- SOUTH / WEST BELFAST FOOD BANK
- LAGANVALLEY EDUCATION PROJECT
- CASH FOR KIDS
- PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY
- SAVE THE CHILDREN
- MOUNT EAGLES COMMUNITY FORUM
- FOOTPRINTS WOMEN'S CENTRE
- BUSY BEE FRUIT & VEG
- BELFAST CITY COUNCIL
- HOUSING EXECUTIVE
- SUPERVALU
- AMH – NEW COLIN COUNSELLING
- COLIN FAMILY CENTRE
- BROOKE LEISURE CENTRE
- PARENTING NI
- LYNN DRAKE ACCOUNTANTS
- COLIN EARLY PARENTING PROGRAMME
- DEPAUL, IRELAND
- CAMILLA DOUGLAS - GROBRAIN
- NIKKI MCMILLEN - TRIBAL FITNESS
- LEEANNE MARLEY ZUMBA
- LOUISE BERRY - FIRST AID
- LEANNE DALY - AQUABABES
- MARIA MCALEESE INCREDIBLE YEARS
- CLARE DEVLIN
- TANYA CUMMINGS
- BBC EMERGENCY ESSENTIALS
- SAVE THE CHILDREN FUND
- ARTS CARE
- WEST BELFAST WELLBEING
- COLIN MEN'S SHEDS
- COMMUNITY RESTORATIVE JUSTICE – IRELAND
- ASPIRE PROJECT
- BELFAST HILLS PARTNERSHIP



CELEBRATING
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Unit 21, Dairy Farm Centre, Stewartstown Road, Dunmurry, BT17 OAW
t: 02890601417

 @Surestartcolin  @ColinSureStart  colinsurestart  www.colinsurestart.com