



Families' Information Needs

KITES consultation with families - Executive summary

July - September 2008

1. Executive summary

- KITES family information service (FIS) wanted to establish the views of families across the county both who had and who had not used the service and to identify ways of improving the information provided and awareness of the service.
- Two focus groups were run with parents in the east and west of the county to test the relevance of the themes identified by the team and aid the development of a survey to be used countywide. Eleven parents took part. An initial draft of the survey was then tested by two volunteers.
- During the 3 month consultation period the survey was completed by 745 parents of children aged 0-20 who were residents of East Sussex, spread across the five districts. A map showing the location of respondents can be found in Appendix A.
- 31% of forms sent out were returned.

Summary profile of respondents

- The majority of respondents (82.6%) were female.
- The most common age of respondents was 35-44. (45.3% of respondents.)
- 88.5% of respondents defined themselves as White British. See appendix D.
- The most common age of respondents' children was 12+ (27%) and 0-2 years (25%).
- 29.6% of respondents were employed part time, a further 28.6% were full time workers and 21.4% identified themselves as full time stay at home parents.
- 78.3% of respondents came from a two parent family.
- In terms of county districts, 13.15% of respondents were from Eastbourne, 20.4% from Hastings, 22.42% from Lewes, 22.38% from Rother and 17.32% from Wealden. 4.43% of respondents did not give postcode data.

Findings

Objective 1 – the information parents need and when they prefer to receive it

- The survey showed that information about schools is important to parents regardless of the age of their child. 68% of parents rated this as *very important*.
- We learnt that the key times parents want to receive information are in pregnancy (36%), after the baby is born (25%) and when facing parenting challenges (16%). (Choice rated as *most important* by respondents)

Objective 2 - how parents prefer to receive information

- The preferred way to receive information was the internet (31%), printed material (19%) and face to face with an advisor (16%). (Choice rated as *1st priority* by respondents).

Objective 3 – where parents currently go for information

- Preferred information sources were friends and family (40.22%) and the internet (31.84%).

Objective 4 – awareness of KITES Family Information and the services we provide.

- The majority of respondents (60.7% - 452 parents) had not used KITES before. 39% (292) of all respondents had not used KITES because they had not heard of the service or were unaware of what it offered.
- 79% were unaware that KITES provided information on fun things to do and support when things go wrong for 0-20s.

Conclusions and recommendations

- The continued need for information about schools beyond school starting age might suggest the need for continued provision of information about school-related support and school-based services, such as bullying support and after school care.
- The emphasis parents put on receiving information in pregnancy, after the baby is born and when facing parenting challenges suggests an increased need to focus on reaching parents at the antenatal stage.
- The internet featured highly in questions around accessing information. It was the preferred way of accessing and receiving information and the most popular choice for parents who would prefer to access information

and advice from one place. It was also second (to family and friends) as a place parents currently go or would go for advice and family information. This indicates the importance of having a good internet presence.

- One third of respondents were unaware of KITES. 79% of respondents were unaware that KITES holds information about fun things to do and support groups. This highlights the need for more focused marketing and promotion that resonates with the target audience and communicates the full range of services on offer.

Action	Method of delivery
To increase information about the county's developing Extended Schools provision.	Continue the existing drive to develop more information about Extended Schools and through partners working in schools.
To get more information to parents at the ante natal stage.	Delivered through our outreach workers and working with partners in health and Children's Centres.
To make the best use of our internet presence.	Ensure the quality and availability of information on the internet is up to date and accurate and identify where improvements might be made.
To deliver strong messages which create resonance with target audiences.	Review and develop our marketing plan to recognise the multiple markets we serve and raise awareness of the range of services we offer.
To explore and develop the ways in which KITES can capture more information about our service users	Improve client monitoring, via forms and at the point of enquiry etc.
To continue to communicate with service users and enable them to have a say in the provision of our service.	Use appropriate methods, such as feedback forms, informal meetings, focus groups and survey.