

Introduction

Sure Start aims to improve the health and well-being of families and children before and from birth, so children are ready to flourish when they go to school. It does this by:

- setting up local Sure Start programmes to improve services
- spreading good practice learned from local programmes

Sure Start aims to tackle child poverty and social exclusion. By 2004, there will be at least 522 Sure Start local programmes concentrated in neighbourhoods where a high proportion of children are living in poverty.

By 2004, 522 Sure Start programmes will be helping up to 400,000 children living in disadvantaged areas, including a 1/3 of under 4s living in poverty.

Sure Start programmes will work with parents and parents-to-be to improve children's life chances through better access to:

- Family support
- Advice on nurturing
- Health services
- Early learning

The Aim of Sure Start

To work with parents-to-be, parents and children to promote the physical, intellectual and social development of babies and young children - particularly those who are disadvantaged - so that they can flourish at home and when they get to school, and thereby break the cycle of disadvantage for the current generation of young children.

Key Principles

To ensure a consistent approach, Sure Start services must:

- Co-ordinate, streamline and add value to services;
- Involve parents, grandparents and other carers;
- Avoid stigma - all families can use Sure Start;
- Ensure lasting support by linking Sure Start to services for older children;
- Be culturally appropriate and sensitive to needs;
- Promote the participation of all local families;

- Two generations: involve parents and children;
- Non-stigmatizing: avoid labeling “problem families”;
- Multifaceted: target a number of factors not just education or health or “parenting”;
- Persistent: long enough to make a real difference;
- Locally driven: based on consultation and involvement of parents and local communities;
- Culturally appropriate and sensitive to the needs of children and parents.

Objective 1: improving social and emotional development

- Supporting early bonding between parents and their children
- Helping families to function
- Enabling the early identification and support of children with emotional and behavioural difficulties

Target: To reduce the proportion of children aged 0-3 in Sure Start areas who are re-registered within the space of 12 months on the child protection register by 20 % by 2004.

Objective 2: improving health

By supporting parents in caring for their children to promote healthy development before and after birth.

Target : In fully operational Sure Start programmes, achieve by 2006 a 6% point reduction in the proportion of mothers who continue to smoke during pregnancy.

Objective 3: improving children's ability to learn

By encouraging high quality environments and childcare that promote early learning, provide stimulating and enjoyable play, improve language skills and ensure early identification and support of children with special needs.

Target: To achieve by 2004 for children aged 0-3, a reduction of 5% in the number of children with speech and language problems requiring specialist intervention by the age of 4.

Objective 4: strengthening families and communities

By involving families in building the community's capacity to sustain the programme and thereby create pathways out of poverty.

Target: To reduce the number of 0-3 year old children in Sure Start areas living in households where no one is working by at least 12 per cent by 2004.

Core Services and Key Principles

The design and content of local Sure Start programmes will vary according to local needs. But we expect all programmes to include a number of core services:

- outreach and home visiting
- support for families and parents
- support for good quality play, learning and childcare experiences for children
- primary and community health care
- support for children and parents with special needs

AN INTEGRATED DESIGN



NATIONAL EVALUATION OF SURE START

Implementation Study Methodology

IMPLEMENTATION

Aims of the Implementation Study

- The overall aim is to produce a comprehensive picture of the first 260 Sure Start programmes in terms of process and components, which is capable of linking programme activity to outcomes for individual users and communities.

IMPLEMENTATION

Specific objectives include:

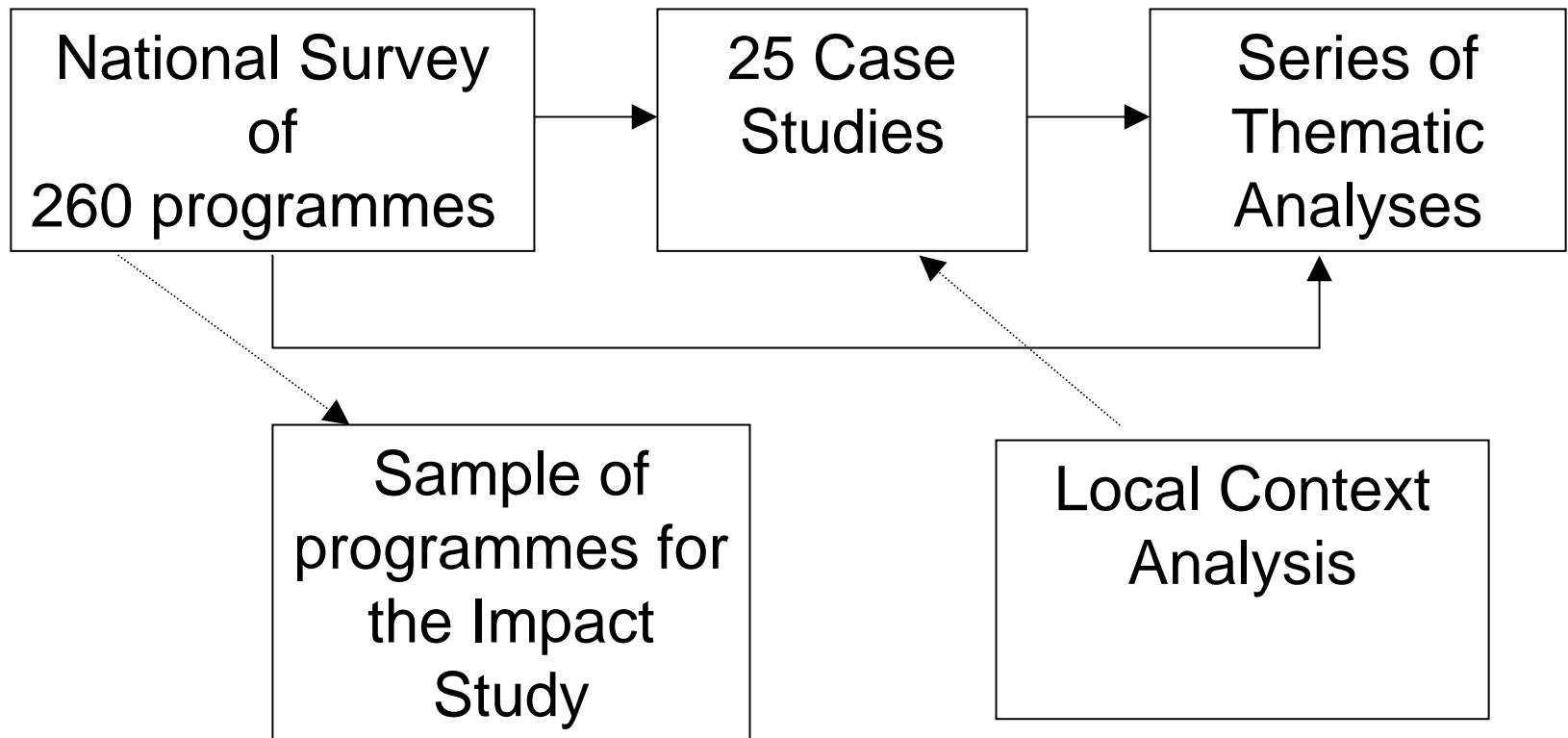
- To describe the full range of approaches to service design and delivery
- To produce a systematic analysis of local programmes
- To produce an assessment of programme quality
- To provide information for sampling programmes for the Impact Evaluation
- To assess the extent to which implementation conforms with programme specifications

IMPLEMENTATION

The study incorporates quantitative and qualitative methods, and has three components:

- A National Survey of 260 Sure Start Programmes
- An In-Depth Study of 26 programmes
- A Series of Themed Evaluations

Relationship Between the Three Implementation Evaluation Components



NATIONAL EVALUATION OF SURE START

Impact Study Methodology

IMPACT

Stage 1: 2001\2002

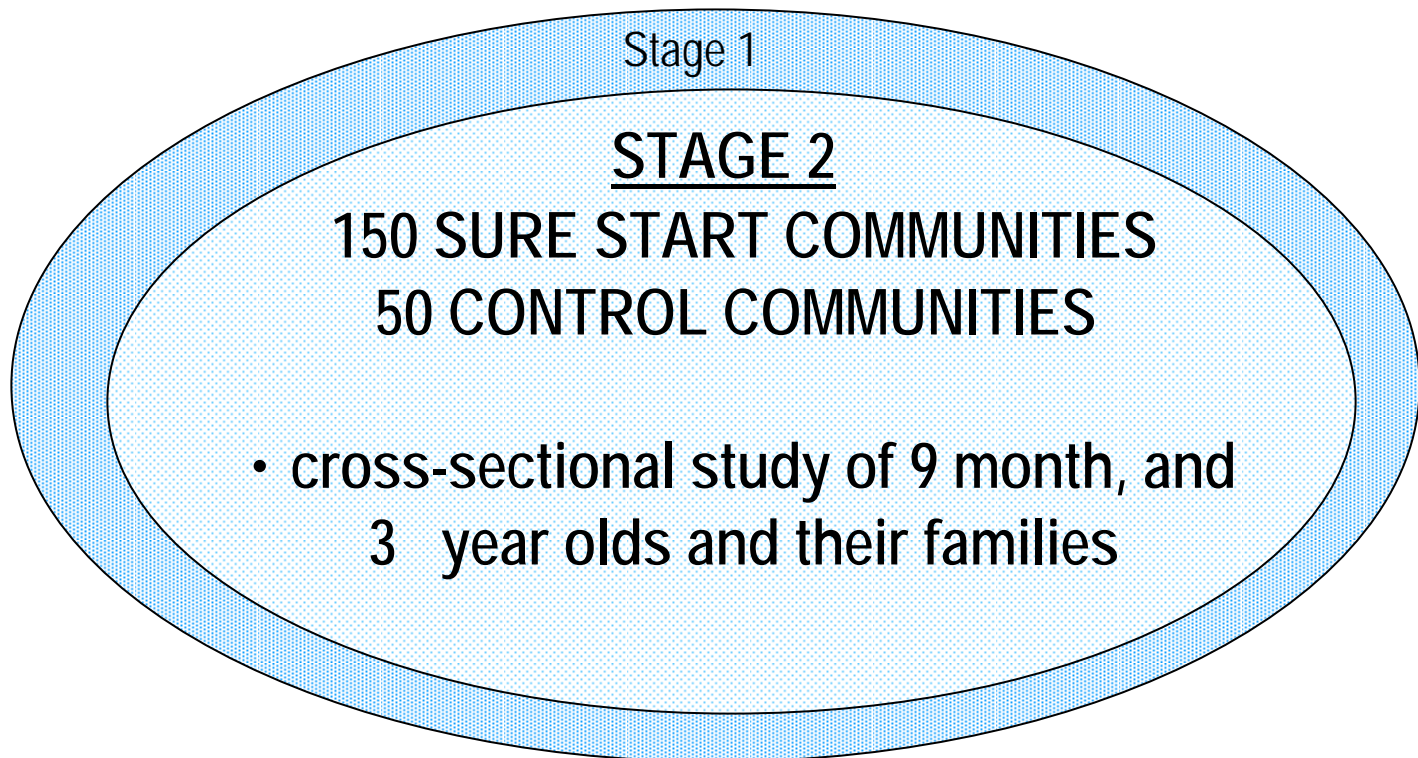
STAGE 1

100% OF SURE START COMMUNITIES

- local context analysis information
- proposed approach to Sure Start
- implementation data

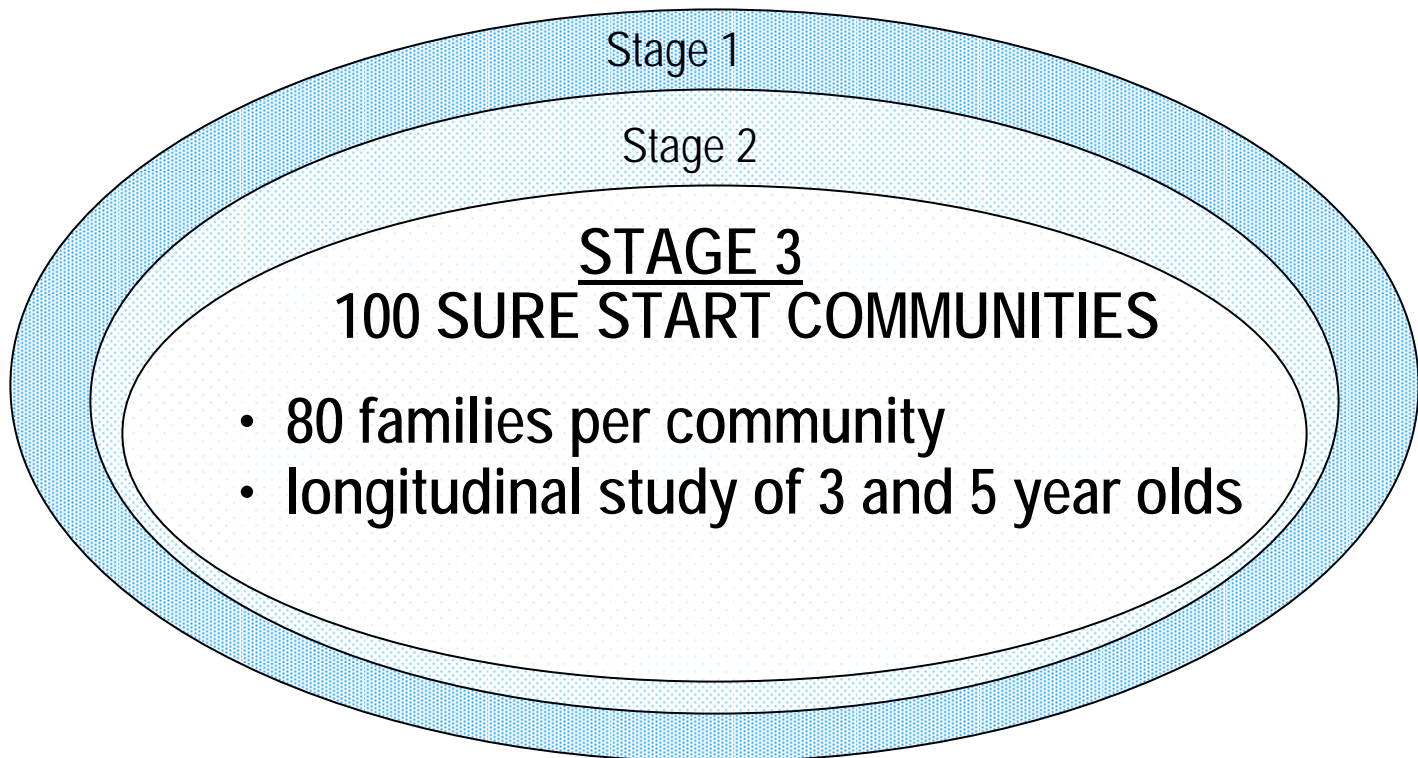
IMPACT

Stage 2: 2003/2004



IMPACT

Stage 3: 2005 and beyond



Research design

<u>Wave 1/Wave 2</u>	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
9 Months	CS/L ₁					
Three Years	CS		L ₁			
Five Years					L ₁	
<u>Wave 3/4</u>						
9 Months		CS/L ₂				
Three Years		CS		L ₂		
Five Years						L ₂
<u>Controls</u>						
9 Months	CS					
Three Years	CS					
Five Years						

IMPACT

Data to be collected

- Family demographics
- Family dynamics (non-parenting)
- Parental health
- Parenting/ home environment
- Child care
- Community
- Child development
- Services utilised by children and parents
- Economic context

NATIONAL EVALUATION OF SURE START

Cost-effectiveness Study Methodology

KEY FEATURES OF THE COST-EFFECTIVENESS EVALUATION

- What are the resource costs of Sure Start?
- How efficiently and effectively are those resources being used?
- What is Sure Start achieving?
- What is the economic value of those achievements?

NATIONAL EVALUATION OF SURE START

Local Context Analysis Methodology

LOCAL CONTEXT ANALYSIS

AIMS

- Describe Sure Start Programme Areas
- Compare Programme Areas - with each other and nationally
- Relate area characteristics to Implementation of Sure Start
- Look at change over time in communities

LOCAL CONTEXT ANALYSIS

What we are studying

- Demographics and Poverty
- Economic Profile and Labour Market
- Crime, Danger and Disorder
- Adult Health and Disability
- Child Health and Development
- School readiness and achievement
- Parenting
- Neighbourhood Networks
- Access to services for 0-3 year olds and their families

NESS Website Address

www.ness.bbk.ac.uk