

News release

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Families Benefiting from Consultation Event

Over 780 Sunderland parents are helping to shape the city's services for families after giving their views at a major consultation event.

The City Wide Event, which saw 785 residents from across Sunderland complete a survey surrounding family services, collected feedback on existing services and focused on raising the awareness of the level of support that is open to families in Sunderland.

The week-long event also provided families visiting The Bridges Shopping Centre and The Galleries with the chance to find out more about the services offered by Children's Services, including Children's Centres, Extended Services, Families Information Service, the Attendance Team and childcare provisions.

Mum of one, Ashley Carr, whose family won a Nintendo Wii package through a free prize draw during the event, said: "The City Wide Event was an excellent and convenient way to find out more about services for my family. My daughter and I were just passing the stand while shopping and I got some really useful information while Elishia had her face painted, which she loved."

As a result of the event Councillor Pat Smith, Portfolio Holder for Children and Learning City within Sunderland City Council, feels that the Council is now able to focus its provisions to ensure that it is meeting the demands of people living across Sunderland.

She said: "The City Wide Event provided an important insight into how services for families in Sunderland are viewed by the people who are actually using them. As the needs of families are constantly changing, especially during these difficult financial times, it is vital that parents are regularly consulted.

“Thanks to the comments which were collected during the event we will be looking at not only the delivery of the services but how they are publicised to families to ensure that parents are completely aware of what activities and services are offered to them through the City Council,” Cllr Smith added.

Through the event Sunderland City Council aimed to build on the existing take-up of family services across the city to help reach more parents who might be in need of but unaware of the services which are open to them.

Sunderland City Council offers a number of services for families with children aged from birth to 19 years including, early learning and childcare, parenting advice and support, health services, help for parents looking to find work or training and family learning.

Data collected through the event included:

- Over 68 per cent requested additional information on Children’s Services
- 70 per cent had heard of Children’s Centres
- Over 64 per cent were aware of Extended Services (in and around schools)