
Sure Start South Armagh (2)

1. **Title of event:** Family Fun Day to Celebrate Father's Day
2. **Name of coordinator:** Teresa McGready
3. **Name of organisation putting on the event:** Sure Start South Armagh

4. **Organisation's contact details:**

4c North Street
Crossmaglen
Co. Armagh BT35 9AB
Tel: 02830 860486



5. **Aim of event:**

To acknowledge and celebrate fathers

6. **Date of event:** Saturday 17th June 2006

7. **Time of event:** 11.00am - 1.00pm

8. **Venue for event:** Silverbridge Resource Centre

9. **Describe the event:**

Sure Start South Armagh facilitated two projects in relation to Father's Day. As working with and engaging fathers was a new venture within our initiative, it was necessary to deliver a project that would provide a focal point for the beginning of this work and complement the other project being facilitated. Previous fun days organised by the project had always been well received by families - with a few fathers in attendance. Therefore, it was decided to run a Family Fun Day to celebrate Father's Day.

Carer and Toddler Groups were involved in making Father's Day cards during the two weeks prior to the event. These cards contained an invitation to the Family Fun Day. An invitation was also posted to all registered families, and posters were displayed in community buildings and local premises throughout the area. Local newspapers, and the Sure Start newsletter, ran press releases detailing the event. A staff member availed of the opportunity to be interviewed on Radio Ulster's "Saturday Magazine" programme, where they discussed men's health and the details of our Father's Day event.

On the day, all activities focused on fathers and their children. All 42 fathers who attended received a "goodie bag" and were entered into a free prize draw for male-friendly gifts.

Activities on the day included ...

- **Men's Health Corner** - Information available on physical and emotional health. Project staff available to record blood pressure and carbon monoxide levels.
- **Father and Child Photographs.**
- **Storytelling** - Sessions focused on fathers and their children. All families received a free 'My Dad' story book.
- **Other family activities** - bouncy castles, magician, face painting, DJ, balloon modelling.



The day was brought to a close with a penalty shootout - matching the football skills of the fathers and their children against the talents of the current County Armagh Gaelic Football Team goalkeeper.

Photographs of the day were published in local newspapers. Sure Start also recorded their own video and photographs of the day's events.

10. What was successful about the event?

The positive feedback received on the day and from the returned evaluation forms. When asked what they most enjoyed about this event, the following comments were received on the evaluation forms ...

- ❑ Spending time with the kids, the photo and the penalty shoot.
- ❑ The atmosphere - bouncy castles, penalty shoot.
- ❑ Penalty shoot.
- ❑ I enjoyed everything on the day. I thought it was a great treat for the kids. Well done Sure Start.
- ❑ I enjoyed spending time with the kids and mixing with other dads.
- ❑ Just relaxing and meeting other fathers.
- ❑ Getting to know other fathers and talking about our children.

The fathers appeared relaxed and comfortable, and stayed longer than anticipated. A father reported that, as a result of his health check, he has attended his GP and received potentially life-saving medical treatment.

11. What was most difficult about running this event?

The absence of the goalie at penalty shoot time. Fortunately, a father stepped in to save the day!

12. What did you learn from putting on the event?

- ❑ Fathers will attend an event that is father-friendly and tailored to their interests.
- ❑ That men feel comfortable with other men.
- ❑ Those men who attended were very willing to fully participate.
- ❑ The fathers acknowledged and appreciated the effort involved in organising the event.



13. What has doing this event added to your organisation?

- ❑ Raised the profile of fathers within our organisation.
- ❑ Created a heightened awareness of the value of fathers in their children's lives.
- ❑ Helped achieve Sure Start's overall aim to work with all parents.

14. How will the learning from the event be shared within your organisation?

- ❑ Via Team Meetings and a written report.
- ❑ Pictures and a write-up of the event will be included in the next Sure Start newsletter.

15. What advice would you offer to others thinking about planning such a project?

- ❑ Have as much as possible prepared before the event, for example, setting-up the venue, preparing refreshments and goodie bags etc.
- ❑ Order all resources well in advance, for example, the 'My Dad' books.
- ❑ Utilise all the resources that you have available.
- ❑ If planning outside activities, always have a "Plan B".

