

National Evaluation of *A Better Start*: Learning from Families

What's happening?

A team of researchers is doing a national evaluation to learn about *A Better Start* (ABS) services.

Researchers from Sussex University want to talk to families to learn what they think about ABS services.

They want to talk to 25 families:

- who have a child aged between 0-12 months or a child aged 24-36 months;
- who live in one of the five ABS areas (Blackpool, Bradford, Lambeth, Nottingham or Southend-on Sea).

The researchers want to make sure that the **whole group of 25 includes a mix of family characteristics and experiences with ABS**. Your local ABS partnership is helping them to do that.

Your local ABS site has agreed to make an **anonymous list of families from the local area** for the researchers.

- The list will only include families who have agreed to be included.
- It will not give names or identifying details for families.
- It will include some anonymous summary information:
 - *For example, 'Mother, Somali speaking, 2 year old boy, uses stay and play services'*
- The researchers will use this information to select 25 families with a mix of experiences to invite to take part in the study.



What are you asking me to do?

Your ABS site would like to include your family in the **anonymous list of families** for the researchers.

If you agree to be included in the list:

- Your ABS site will not give the researchers your name or any other identifying details.
- Your family **might not be picked** for the research – it depends on the mixture of families across all the ABS areas.
- If your family is selected for the research:
 - Your ABS site will ask if they can share your contact details with the researchers
 - You can say no or change your mind at any time – it's up to you.
 - If you say yes, a researcher will get in touch.

If you do not want to be included in the list:

- **That's fine.** Your ABS site will not share that information with anyone, and it will not affect any of the services that you receive.

What if I agree to the research?

A researcher from Sussex University will get in touch to tell you more about the evaluation, and ask if you would be willing to take part.

- You can still **say NO** at any time.
- If you **say YES** the researcher would ask to talk to you twice a year for four years
 - **One visit per year** to your home, or somewhere else if you prefer.
 - **One phone-call** per year - about 6 months after the visit.
 - **You can change your mind** about taking part at any time.

If you take part in the research

- Visits will last about 2 hours, phone calls will take about 30 minutes. Everything will be done at a time that suits you and the family.
- The researchers will talk to you and anyone else in the family who wants to take part.
- They will ask about family life and experiences with ABS.
- They will also bring some activities to do as a family – and a camera you can keep.
- Families will get a thank you gift voucher each time they talk to the researchers:
 - £30 when the researcher visits.
 - £20 for the phone interview.

If you have questions you can contact the researchers directly:

Call Ali Lacey: 07823 515120
Email: A.Lacey@sussex.ac.uk

