



Survey
results

**Time for
families to
have their say!**

Feedback



In December we launched a '**Cumbria Together - time to have your say**' survey.

We heard from over 350 families of young children (aged 0-5 years) from all areas of the County. This is what you told us about your life and experiences in 2020.

- About 50% of you enjoyed spending more time with families and people who are important to you and spending quality time together as a family. Nearly 60% of you said you enjoyed spending more time outside.
- Approximately 90% of you told us you missed seeing people you care about. Over 60% of you were worried about family and friends and felt anxious. You also told us your children missed nursery, seeing their friends, you missed going to toddler groups, baby classes and often felt lonely.



We wanted to know if you had noticed any changes in your child during lockdown. We asked if there was anything you noticed and would like to build on?

- 38% of you told us you would like to help your child become more confident.
- 40% of you would like your child to talk and communicate more with others.
- 43% of you would like to build on your child's independence skills so they can do more for themselves e.g. toileting, dressing.
- 43% of you told us you would like to help your child with their physical skills e.g. walking, climbing, kicking a ball.

We asked what had been difficult?

- Over 50% of you told us your child had become clingier, some of you also told us your child was bored and was sleeping less well. Nearly 25% of you mentioned that your child was also anxious.

We asked you to tell us about things you have been able to do with your child in your local area.

- You have been walking, riding bikes, baking, getting to know your neighbours, enjoying finding new things to do in your local neighbourhood, doing craft activities.

We asked what you have missed doing with your child the most during this time?

- You have missed meeting up with other parents, going to toddler groups, going to new places, nursery, soft play, seeing grandparents and other close family members, meeting friends, swimming, normal activities like eating out and shopping, play dates, baby groups, visiting attractions, going to their classes e.g. gymnastics, swimming, family days out, going on holiday.
- You told us you were worried about your child missing out on social activities and the effect that would have on your child/children. Those of you who have babies have felt isolated, are worried about your babies missing out on important social interactions with others and opportunities to bond with grandparents and other close relatives.

Over 40% of you told us that someone had helped you during this time and you told us about them.

- Things that have helped have been; support from family and friends, being able to see close family and friends “virtually”, support from schools, nurseries and childminders, videos from schools and nurseries, phone calls, people bringing things when needed, financial support, visits from health visitors, neighbours sharing food, someone to talk to, being able to share worries and concerns with someone, food vouchers, food parcels, on line breast feeding support groups, community support, government furlough scheme.

We asked if there was anything positive you experienced in 2020 that you would like to continue?

- The most popular themes were; spending more time together as a family, spending more time outdoors, family walks, appreciating a slower pace of life, flexible working, working from home, spending more time in the local area, being more creative. Here are some examples of things you told us:
 - *"Making time to get out as a family every week, walking and exploring"*
 - *"Through working from home and many after school activities being cancelled we were able to slow down meaning we were all sitting together for meals more regularly".*
 - *"We love spending time together at home and want this to continue. We have found our weekends are much more relaxing and we don't need to be going off for the day when we have so much on our doorstep".*
 - *"Quality but simple family time".*

We then asked if you had any worries about the long term impact of COVID 19 on your child and family and these were the main worries.

- The impact on social and emotional development.
- Lack of social interaction.
- Wary of meeting people.
- Financial worries.
- Worried about family members catching COVID.
- Missing out on time with close family members.
- Worried about attachment issues.
- Mental health and wellbeing worries.
- Worried children and babies have missed vital stages in their development that they can never get back.
- Worried about missing education and if they will catch up.
- Worried about children becoming obsessive about germs, cleaning their hands etc.
- Worried about the future.
 - *"The time lost with family, all the social interaction and experiences and the transition to being with someone other than me and my husband".*
 - *"I worry that my youngest is going to struggle with other people as we haven't really seen anyone during lockdown".*
 - *"I worry my daughter will always be scared of germs. From masks, antibac gel and hand washing that she has had to deal with most days".*
 - *"I worry that my child will have attachment issues when a parent is not near by".*
 - *"Financial as unable to work when my child was not at school so picking the pieces up from lockdown".*





Here is what we plan to do in response to what you have told us:

- Launch a speech, language and communication initiative for families and communities.
- Encourage more early years settings to sign up to the 'Healthy Families Cumbria Pledge' to help families to stay healthy and happy.
- We will support our early years settings by providing training around the issues that you have raised.
- Re-start support groups for families with babies and small children through Children's Centres - as soon as Covid- 19 restrictions allow.
- Promote online and digital support groups for families with young children throughout the pandemic.
- Promote financial support and advice through local Citizen's Advice Bureaus and Focus Family Area Officers -
Focus.Family@cumbria.gov.uk
- Extend the food voucher scheme to February half term.
- Work with Active Cumbria to develop and promote local walking opportunities for families.
- Work with Active Cumbria and Cumbria County Council's Family Learning Team to promote the Active Start programme to support physical development and increase physical activity levels.
- Work with everyone who is in contact with early years children from pregnancy onwards to help your child be ready to learn as part of a 'Cumbria Together' approach; this will include transition to nursery or school.
- Work with communities to develop 'Child and Family' hub centres across the county where families can drop in for advice post-Covid.
- Plan to extend the Solihull online training offer to help you to support your child's emotional development.

