

EDMONTON 'SURE START' PROJECT
Bilingual Parental Outreach Project

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ETCA 'Sure Start' Project started in August 2000 and is part of a new central government fun project. This project is helping the Turkish Speaking Community in Edmonton. The aim of the project is to help parents with children between the ages of 0 – 4 to cope with physical, mental and social problems and to help the children to get a good start in life.

To date seventeen families have joined the project. Two expectant mothers and nineteen children already benefiting from the scheme. All families have been individually visited and given the required information. At present a further ten families are waiting to be seen.

Studies have been made regarding children's playgroups and meetings organized with 'Green Towers' playgroup at Green Towers Community Center. Arrangements have been made for children of Turkish families to join the scheme three days a week.

In regards to dealing with other groups, arrangements have been made at Edmonton Library for Turkish parents and children to join the 'under 5s' groups on Mondays and Thursdays. The 'borrow a book' scheme is progressing satisfactorily and helping all the family to join the library. Parents have also been informed about 'Parent and Toddler' dance, music and sport activities and encouraged to join these sessions.

At meetings organized by 'Sure Start' new ideas have been collected and meetings held with other 'Sure Start' partner's. With the help of Yvonne Ayo, a mediator worker from Enfield Parents Centre arrangements

have been made for the parents and children of Brettenham Primary School to learn about 'Sure Start'. At the first meeting interested Turkish parents were registered by ETCA's parental outreach officer.

Arrangements have also been made for eight individuals to meet and discuss personal problems with Mr. Tahsin Ibrahim, ETCA's Information and Advice Officer.

An expectant mother, and a child with health problems, have seen ETCA's Health Co-ordinator Dr Mehmet Aba with the aid of 'Sure Start'.

Sometimes the project is asked to help Turkish families outside the Edmonton 'Sure Start' area. In these cases we usually refer them to ETCA's general services.

'Sure Start' also helps its 0-4 age group purchasing and distributing books, pens, pencils and other items. This helps the children with their general education, exercises physical hand movements and helps them develop other day to day activities.

Plans are being made to help parents with regard to Turkish and English reading and writing courses.

Within a period of four months Turkish parents have shown a strong demand for and interest in the 'Sure Start' project. Edmonton ETCA based 'Sure Start' now aims to form more links with other 'partner' agencies involved in the project in order to help expectant mothers, parents and children between the ages of 0 – 4.