



Ed Balls MP, Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Key note speech at the official Launch of Labour Friends of Sure Start.

12th February 2013.

Labour Friends of Sure Start is a brilliant idea and a great cause.

To go from 0 to 3,500 Children's Centres in one Government is a massive achievement. So far the Government has closed 400 and although we are worried about a narrowing of vision, they cannot destroy Sure Start in one Parliament.

The next election will be about making sure we secure the NHS and Sure Start for future generations.

I'm confident we are going to look back in 30-40 years time and see a national network of Sure Start Centres across Britain. And we will say: that was started by Labour.

The reality is that we know what a massive difference Sure Start makes. It is the ultimate children's policy. It's about bringing together work and education, prevention and support - for every aspect of the Early Years.

Sure Start was not a part of the Beveridge vision in the 1940s, but it is a vital part of the welfare state in the 21st Century. It's part of the reason I, and so many people, are Labour.

Sure Start is ultimate embodiment of the Every Child Matters philosophy. It says that every child has talent and the potential to succeed.

What is particular about Sure Start is that it is the expression of a philosophy that says if the community comes together and uses our collective will, we can do the extra bits for the child with a parent who needs extra help. Or a child with a disability.

If the community can come together and do that extra bit, then every child can have a good start.

It can't be right that the children with the best start get the most help. Sure Start was always in opposition to that. It was a universal service.

We need to see Sure Start as central to our offer to children and parents in the next Parliament.

Labour Friends of Sure Start will help prepare the way. This is a policy issue, it's a moral issue and it's a campaigning issue.

We need to make sure it is a Sure Start election in 2015.



Labour Friends
of **Sure Start**

www.laboursurestart.com