

## **An evaluation of Contact's early years (Brighter Beginnings) workshops – 2017-18**

***"I want to say thanks, it's really helpful –  
it changed my life"***

**- Parent of diagnosed child aged 3**

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# 1. Executive Summary

Between April 2017 and September 2018 Fiveways conducted an independent evaluation of Contact's early years workshops, now known as Brighter Beginnings.

The workshops are aimed at parents of children aged 0-5 diagnosed with a disability or additional need, or whose development is causing concern. They aim to increase families' access to support services, childcare and financial benefits as well as to improve parental wellbeing.

The evaluation methodology involved "before and after" quantitative research amongst workshop participants and a comparison group who had not attended the workshops, as well as some qualitative research amongst participants.

## 1.1. Who is attending the workshops?

- Over three quarters of parents attending the workshops (105)<sup>1</sup> have had a diagnosis for their child.
- Most workshop participants have already had some engagement with support and childcare services and have already claimed some financial benefits.
- Use of services and childcare, and the number of financial benefits received increases with the age of the child and when a child has had a diagnosis.
- Roughly half of the workshop participants feel that they do not know what to do when their child starts behaving badly and a similar proportion feel alone. A quarter do not feel confident dealing with professionals. These feelings are more likely to occur amongst parents without a diagnosis and parents of children aged 4 and over.

## 1.2. How do participants rate the workshops?

- Participant satisfaction with the workshops is extremely high. Of those who completed a follow up survey eight weeks after the sessions (32), 94% agreed that the workshops had made a positive difference to them and their family (no-one disagreed).

*"If it wasn't for the workshops, I would be anxious and down in myself. They have changed my and my son's life – they have made things better, they really have. I would advise anybody who has a child with additional needs to go."* – Parent of diagnosed child aged 3

## 1.3. What short-term changes occur after the workshops?

- The workshops clearly make a positive short-term impression on those that attend them. Feedback from participants gathered immediately after workshop sessions indicates that most of them feel better informed, more confident, less isolated and better able to deal with stress.

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<sup>1</sup> Numbers in round brackets are the number of respondents to a survey or question.

- This is supported by insight from the evaluation – amongst those who were surveyed both before the first workshop session and after the last workshop session (47) the proportion of those feeling alone reduces by over a half, as does the proportion of those not knowing what to do when their child demonstrates behaviour that challenges.

*“Last year I felt I was on my own - I avoided playgroups and I didn’t speak to anyone. Now I have friends who I can talk to who don’t judge.”* - Parent of diagnosed child aged 3

#### **1.4. What medium-term changes occur after the workshops?**

- For those participants who completed both the baseline survey and the follow-up survey eight weeks later (21) the average number of benefits they had received increased by 22% and the average number of services used increased by 21%.
- In total, 52% of participants increased the number of different services they used and 38% increased the number of different benefits they received.
- There was little change in the average number of childcare options being used, however the average number of hours of childcare used increased by 15%.
- There has been little change in how these participants rate their happiness and anxiety between the baseline and follow-up (improvements of 4% and 7% respectively).
- Nonetheless, qualitative feedback indicates that the positive changes in dealing with behaviour that challenges, isolation and confidence dealing with professionals noted in the short-term feedback (above) continue into the medium-term.

*“I feel so much better about myself and more positive about how to look after my child and knowing what’s available to make my life easier.”* – Parent of diagnosed child aged 3

#### **1.5. Would this change have happened anyway?**

- Attending the workshops is associated with greater increases in subsequent service use, childcare use and benefits received compared with not attending.
- Parents in the participant group (21) on average increased their use of services by 21% compared with 12% for the comparison group (29)
- Parents in the participant group (15) on average increased their childcare hours by 16%. The comparison group saw a slight (5%) decline in hours used (12)
- Parents in the participant group (21) increased the average number of benefits received by 22%, the comparison group increased by 7% (29)
- However, the comparison group saw a larger increase in happiness and a larger decrease in levels of anxiety compared with those who did attend the workshops.

#### **1.6. Key learning for the workshops**

- The agreed evaluation method was not designed to generate insight on how Contact’s delivery might be improved. However the findings indicate that, although there is evidence

that the workshops have a positive influence over practical outcomes, there is less quantitative evidence of an improvement in emotional outcomes such as an increase in happiness or a reduction in anxiety levels.

- To address this issue, Contact are already considering steps to increase the emotional impact of the service through increasing attendance at the “Support for you” session, using positive parent testimonials to boost morale, and ensuring the charity keeps in touch with participants through their regular newsletter (if attendees opt in to receive this).

### 1.7. Key learning for the evaluation

- In general, the evaluation methodology was effective and has enabled us to measure the desired outcomes.
- Measuring changes in childcare use was challenging as requirements and options change depending on the age of the child. Future research might resolve some of these issues by clarifying that nursery attendance was to be counted as “childcare”, collecting years and months for children’s age, asking specifically about the 30 hours childcare entitlement, and by using online surveys (rather than paper) to “route” parents through relevant questions.
- Changes to participants’ ability to deal with behaviour that challenges, their levels of isolation, and their confidence with health professionals should also be measured in the follow-up survey.
- Further clarification is needed to ensure participants understand whether they are being asked about *current* service use or benefits received, or whether they had *ever* used those services or received benefits.
- If Contact wish to gather insight to improve the delivery of the workshops, or better understand the issues faced by the audience, then the evaluation method would need to include more qualitative research.

### 1.8. Conclusion

This evaluation reveals that Contact’s early years workshops have a positive *practical* influence on parents. On average, those who attend the workshops go on to access more support services, use more childcare provision, and receive more financial benefits than those who do not. There is less quantitative evidence of a positive *emotional* impact on workshop participants in the medium term (although in the short term the proportion of respondents feeling less alone reduces by a half). However, it is clear from qualitative feedback that many parents attribute attending the workshops with feeling more supported, confident and more “in control”. In addition, 94% agree that the workshops have made a positive difference to them and their family.

*“Beforehand I was a bit lost but now I know that, if I need help, there is help there. I feel like I’m in charge - I’m the Mum.”* – Parent of diagnosed child aged 2

## 2. Introduction

### 2.1. Contact

Contact is the charity for families with disabled children. Contact understands that life with a disabled child brings unique challenges and Contact exists to help families feel valued, supported, confident and informed. Contact provides trusted support and information in lots of ways – through its dedicated free helpline; website; parent guides; fact sheets; workshops and other resources.

Contact also bring families together in local groups and online, to support each other by sharing experiences and advice.

Contact helps families to campaign, volunteer and shape local services to improve life for themselves and others.

Contact supports all families with disabled children, whoever they are and whatever their child's condition.

For more information about Contact, please go to <https://contact.org.uk/>

### 2.2. Contact's early years workshops

Contact runs early years workshops across England and Wales primarily aimed at parents of children aged 0-5<sup>2</sup> with a diagnosed disability or additional need and parents who are concerned about their child's development. The workshops aim to increase:

- Families' use of support services
- Families' access to formal childcare
- Families' access to financial benefits
- Parental well-being

In the main these workshops involved four sessions covering:

- Information about local support services
- Communication skills to help parents get what they need for their child
- Information on how to encourage positive behaviour
- Information on financial benefits and support

In Wales and some other locations, two additional sessions were run covering:

- Understanding sleep
- Support for parental wellbeing

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<sup>2</sup> In some areas, to aid recruitment, this was extended to 0-9.

## **2.3. Evaluation requirements**

Fiveways ([www.fivewaysnp.com](http://www.fivewaysnp.com)) specialise in strengthening charity governance, assessing and managing risk, and evaluating services to drive future improvement.

In April 2017, following a competitive tender process, Fiveways were commissioned to undertake an evaluation of the forthcoming workshops. Fiveways were required to:

- Develop an evaluation methodology, identifying measurable outcomes
- Identify information that could be captured via existing session evaluation forms
- Develop additional monitoring and evaluation tools
- Develop a proportionate methodology for comparing outcomes in the participant group with a comparison group
- Conduct quantitative and qualitative research and data analysis
- Write an impact evaluation report.

## **2.4. How this report is structured**

This report starts by outlining the research methodology and activities used in the evaluation (section 3), it then analyses the profile of those parents who attended the workshops (section 4), and their overall satisfaction with the service (section 5).

It then looks at the outcomes parents have experienced in the short term (i.e. directly after the workshops – section 6) and in the medium term (eight weeks after the workshops – section 7) before comparing those outcomes with a comparison group of parents who did not attend the workshops (section 8).

Although the scope of the evaluation was primarily to measure and compare outcomes, some thoughts are given to how the workshops themselves might be developed in light of the findings of the evaluation (section 9) and the process learning gleaned about how to conduct a similar evaluation in the future (section 10).



### 3. Evaluation methodology

#### 3.1. Measurable outcomes framework

At an early stage of the project an outcomes framework was agreed using Fiveways' "Value Creation" approach (see Appendix 12.7). This confirmed the changes the evaluation would measure and at what point. This framework is captured in the table below.

Value created	Participant outcomes to measure (changes we would expect to see)	Baseline	End of programme	Follow-up
<b>Realised</b> - What difference has the project made to the desired objectives?	<b>Have the desired changes been achieved?</b>			
	<b>Use of support services</b> • Number of new support services accessed	X		X
	<b>Use of childcare</b> • Families access more formal childcare	X		X
	<b>Take up of benefits</b> • Number of new benefits accessed	X		X
	<b>Improved parental well-being</b> • Increased happiness • Less anxiety • Feeling better able to handle difficult behavioural situations • Feeling less alone	X X X X	  X X	  X X
<b>Applied</b> - What difference has the project made to what attendees do?	<b>Changes in what people do</b>			
	<b>Use of support services</b> • Attempts to access local support services	X		X
	<b>Use of childcare</b> • Approaches to childcare providers	X		X
	<b>Take up of benefits</b> • Attempts to claim benefits they are entitled to	X		X
	<b>Parental wellbeing</b> • Use of new approaches to handle difficult behavioural situations			X
<b>Potential</b> - How has the activity affected attendees?	<b>Changes in attitudes/opinions/intention</b>			
	<b>Use of support services</b> • Feeling more confident in dealing with professionals	X	X	
	<b>Use of childcare</b> • Increased likelihood to use formal childcare	X	X	

## 3.2. Research activities

The following research activities were undertaken to measure the outcomes above.

### 3.2.1. Participant group

#### Baseline survey

- A paper-based baseline survey was completed by workshop participants before the first workshop in the series<sup>3</sup>. Data entry was completed by Contact.
- In total we received 105 responses to the baseline survey – across 22 locations.
- Matching the baseline survey to the end of programme and follow-up surveys was done by asking participants to provide the first letter of their first name and the day of the month of their birthday, as well as the location of the workshops they attended.

#### End of programme survey

- To measure short-term changes, a paper-based end of programme survey was completed by participants at the final workshop in the series. This was also data captured by Contact.
- We received 79 responses to the survey from 17 locations (47 of which were matched to the baseline).

#### Follow-up survey

- Both the baseline and end of programme surveys sought permission from participants to send them an online follow-up survey by email eight weeks after the final workshop. Eight weeks was considered enough time for change to have happened, but not too long for the influence of the workshops to fade.
- To minimise “loss to follow-up” the following steps were taken:
  - Participants were emailed four weeks after the final session with a reminder to download their Contact “Helpful Guide<sup>4</sup>” and were reminded the follow-up survey would be sent in the next few weeks.
  - A clear deadline was given by which to complete the follow-up survey (two weeks after the email containing the link was sent)
  - A reminder email was sent a week after the email containing the link.
  - Taking part in the survey was incentivised by entry into a prize draw to win one of two prizes of £30 Love to Shop vouchers.
- 33 people responded to the follow-up survey from 15 locations, between November 2017 and September 2018. This represents a 26.4% response rate<sup>5</sup>. We were able to match 21 of these responses with people who also completed the baseline survey.

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<sup>3</sup> The Contact adviser running the sessions oversaw the completion of the survey.

<sup>4</sup> Contact’s “Helpful Guide” helps parent carers navigate their way through the support system and points them to more in-depth help and advice on Contact’s website.

- Participants were also asked whether they would like to take part in a telephone interview. Four interviews (the target set by the project) were completed and written up as case studies (see 8.6 below).

### 3.2.2. Comparison group

#### Baseline survey

- An online baseline survey (distributed by email) was conducted in mid-November 2017 amongst a group of parents of children aged 0-5 who had a disability or additional need, or whose development was a concern.
- These parents were known to Contact<sup>6</sup> but when asked, they answered “no” to the question “*Have you ever been in touch with the charity Contact (previously called Contact a Family)?*”
- Taking part in the survey was incentivised by entry into a prize draw to win one of two prizes of £50 Love to Shop vouchers and 93 eligible responses were received.

#### Follow-up survey

- Respondents to the baseline survey were asked if they would participate in a second survey ten weeks after the baseline to mirror the time between the participant group baseline (first workshop session) and follow-up (eight weeks after the last workshop session).
- The comparison follow-up survey was incentivised by a £10 Love to Shop voucher for all those who completed it.
- This survey was sent in mid-January 2018. 30 responses were received within a few days, so the survey was closed to avoid overspending on the incentive. 29 of these responses could be matched<sup>7</sup> with the comparison baseline survey.

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<sup>5</sup> The email with the link to the follow-up survey was received by 125 people. The response rate compares well with rates usually achieved by Contact when sending a one-off survey (typically around 10% or less).

<sup>6</sup> These parents were on a list of people Contact communicated with about campaigning issues. Other options were considered for recruiting a comparison group such as using a recruitment service or promoting the survey on online fora – but pressure on resources (time, money and personal contacts) meant these options could not be implemented.

<sup>7</sup> For the comparison group, matching was done by asking participants to provide the first letter of their first name and the day of the month of their birthday.

### 3.2.3. Summary description of groups analysed in this report

Group/sample	Description
“Participant baseline”	Those attending the workshops who completed the baseline paper survey before the first session (total response = 105).
“Participant end of programme”	Those attending the workshops who completed the end of programme survey after the final (usually fourth) workshop (79).
“Participant follow up”	Those attending the workshops who completed the follow up survey approximately eight weeks after the workshops ended. (33).
“Matched” participant groups	<p>These are individuals whose responses to the end of programme survey or the follow up survey can be compared with their responses to the baseline survey.</p> <p>47 people completed both the baseline survey and the end of programme survey</p> <p>21 people completed both the baseline survey and the follow-up survey.</p>
“Comparison baseline”	Parents of children aged 0-5 who had a disability or additional need, or whose development was a concern, but who had not been in touch with Contact by phone or in person. These people completed an online survey (93)
“Comparison follow up”	People who responded to the comparison baseline survey who also completed a follow up survey eight weeks later (30)
“Matched” comparison group	These are individuals whose responses to the comparison follow up survey can be compared with their responses to the comparison baseline survey. (29)

## 4. Who is attending the workshops?

### Summary

This section considers all the responses to the participant baseline survey (105).

- Over three quarters of parents attending the workshops have had a diagnosis for their child.
- Most workshop participants have already had some engagement with support and childcare services, and have already claimed some financial benefits
  - In terms of services used, nearly all parents had accessed Speech and Language Therapy services and seen a paediatrician. Use of services is higher amongst parents of those children with a diagnosis compared with those without, and parents with older children (aged 4 and over) compared with those with younger children (aged 0-3).
  - 7 out of 10 parents (of children of all ages) are currently using some formal childcare, at an average of around 15 hours a week.
  - 88% of parents have received at least one financial benefit, with DLA and Child tax credit the most commonly received.
- Roughly half of participants feel that they do not know what to do when their child starts behaving badly and a similar proportion feel alone. A quarter do not feel confident dealing with professionals. These feelings are more likely to occur amongst parents without a diagnosis and parents of children aged 4 and over.

### 4.1. Profile of respondents

Of the 81 respondents who answered the question<sup>8</sup>, 78% had a child aged 0-9 who had been diagnosed with a disability or additional need and 22% had a child aged 0-9 and were concerned about their development (but they did not have a diagnosis).

Most sessions were aimed at parents of children aged 0-5. However, to boost recruitment, some sessions expanded their audience to include parents of children up to 9.

The average age of children in sessions attended by parents of children aged 0-5 (85) was 2.8; the average age of children in sessions attended by parents of children aged 0-9 (18) was 5.6<sup>9</sup>.

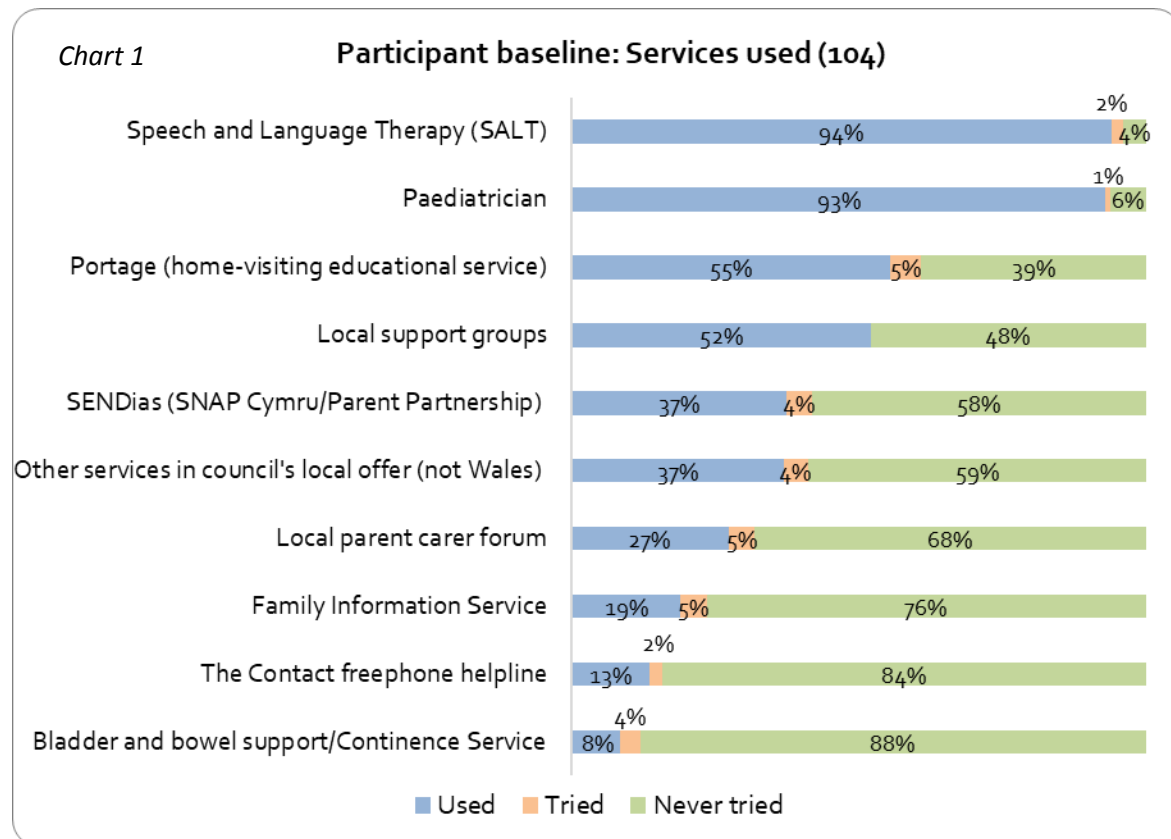
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<sup>8</sup> This question was not included in the first version of the baseline survey (it was added after the comparison group baseline survey was decided). Prior to the evaluation there was some anecdotal feedback that some parents may have been reluctant to say that their child did not have a diagnosis. However, as the surveys were completed individually it is not anticipated that this affected response.

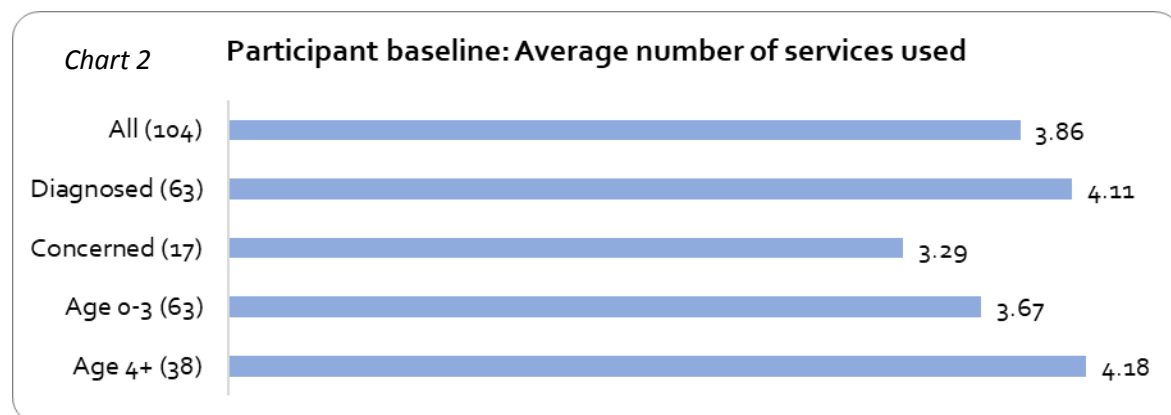
<sup>9</sup> If parents had more than one child aged 0-5 that had a diagnosis or that they were concerned about they were asked to answer the surveys thinking about the older child.

## 4.2. Services used

All respondents had used<sup>10</sup> at least one of the 10 services listed. Nearly all (94%) had used Speech and Language Therapy services and had seen a paediatrician (93%). Only 1 in 8 had used the Contact freephone helpline.



On average workshop attendees had used 3.86 of the services listed. Those with a child with a diagnosis and those with children aged 4 and over used more services on average.



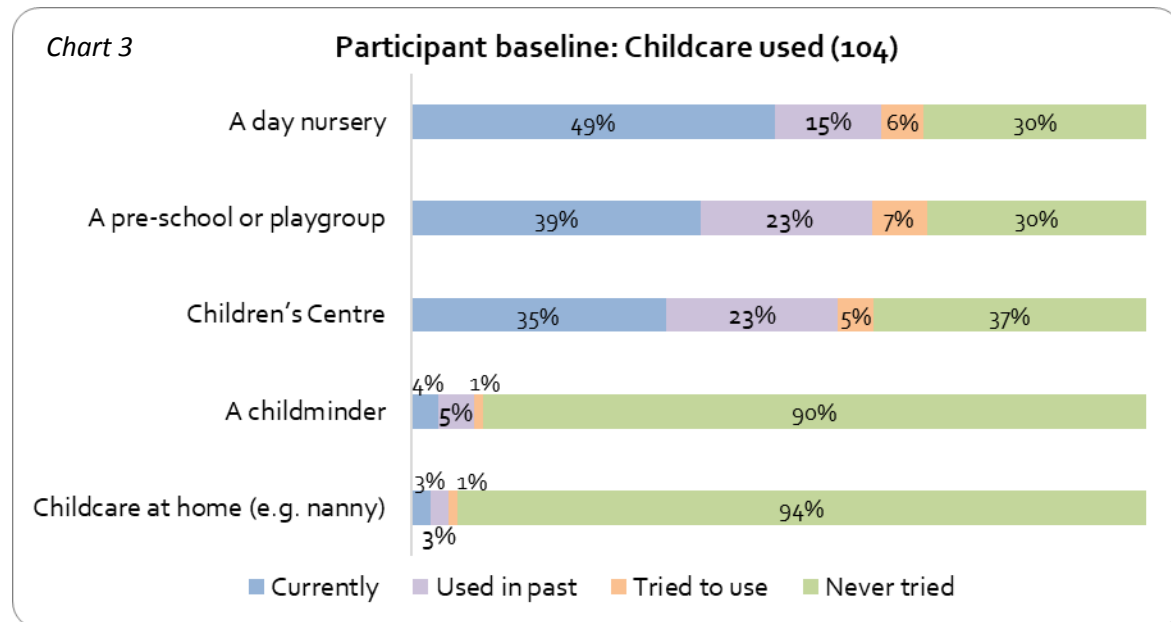
18% of respondents had tried to use, but hadn't yet used, one or more of these services.

<sup>10</sup> This question did not ask about whether the service was *currently* used. Some services listed do not have continuous use, so if parents had used them in the past it was interpreted as they were able to access them.

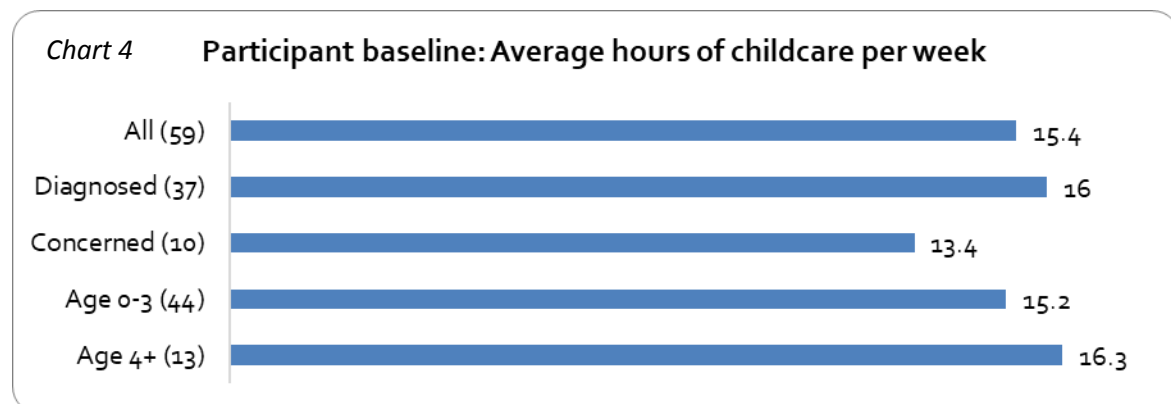
### 4.3. Childcare used

72% of respondents currently use one of the 5 formal childcare options listed.

On average workshop attendees were currently using 1.1 of the childcare options listed, with around a half using a day nursery.



Those who indicated the hours of childcare they were currently using (59) used an average of 15.4 hours a week. Use is slightly higher amongst those with a diagnosis (compared with those without) and amongst those with older children (compared with younger).

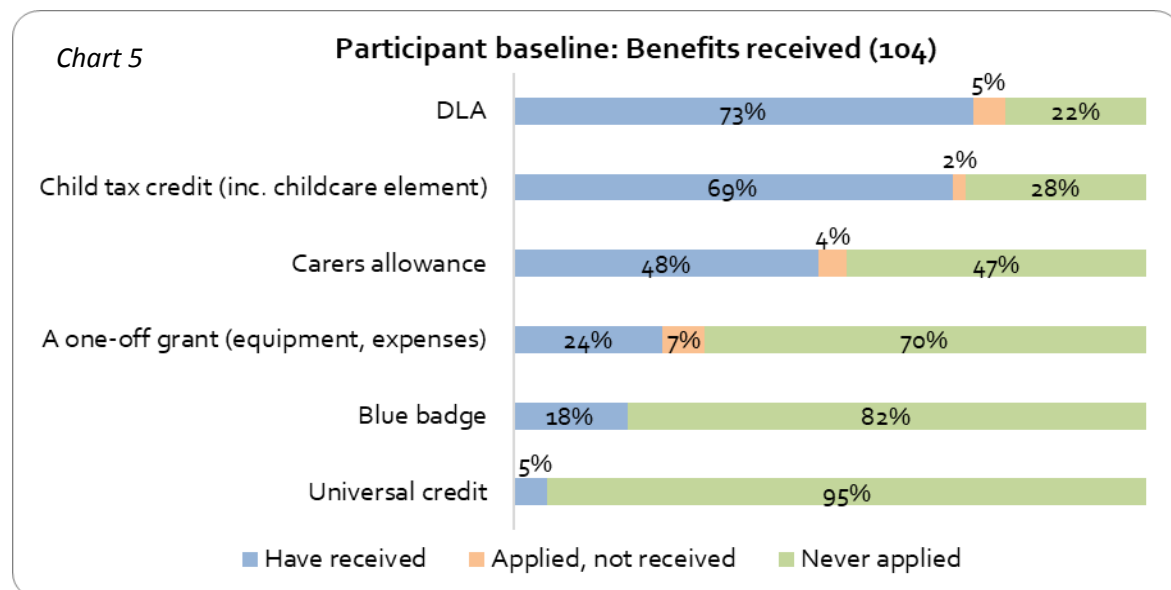


29% of respondents (104) were not currently using one of the 5 childcare options listed. 11% had not used, or tried to use, any of these options in the past.

14 indicated how likely they would be to use childcare in the future. 4 (29%) indicated that they would be very unlikely and 5 (36%) indicated they would be very likely to use childcare.

#### 4.4. Benefits received

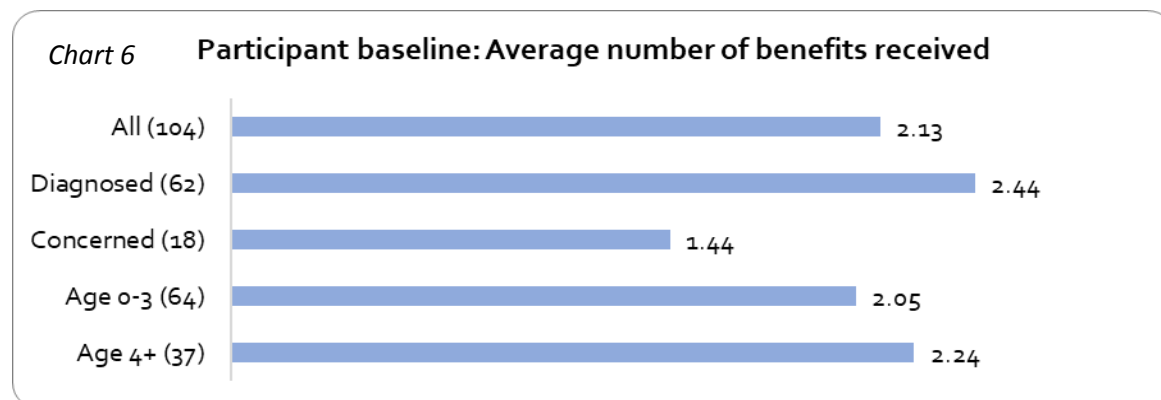
88% of participants have received one or more of the 6 financial benefits listed in the survey, with DLA and Child tax credit being the benefits most participants had received. Only 18% have received a blue badge – that may have been because parents may not have been able to apply for one due to age of their children.<sup>11</sup>



16% of participants had applied for one of these benefits but not received it.

Of the 12 participants who had not received any of these benefits, 5 had applied but not received one of them and 7 had not applied for any of them.

Those parents whose child had a diagnosis and those of children aged 4 and over on average received more of the benefits listed.



<sup>11</sup> Automatic eligibility for a blue badge comes with the higher rate of the Mobility Component of the DLA. It is possible to receive the higher rate for a child from the age of 3 (and the lower rate from the age of 5). A parent of a child younger than 3 may apply for a badge if the child has a specific medical condition which means that they always need to be accompanied by bulky medical equipment and/or need to be kept near a vehicle.

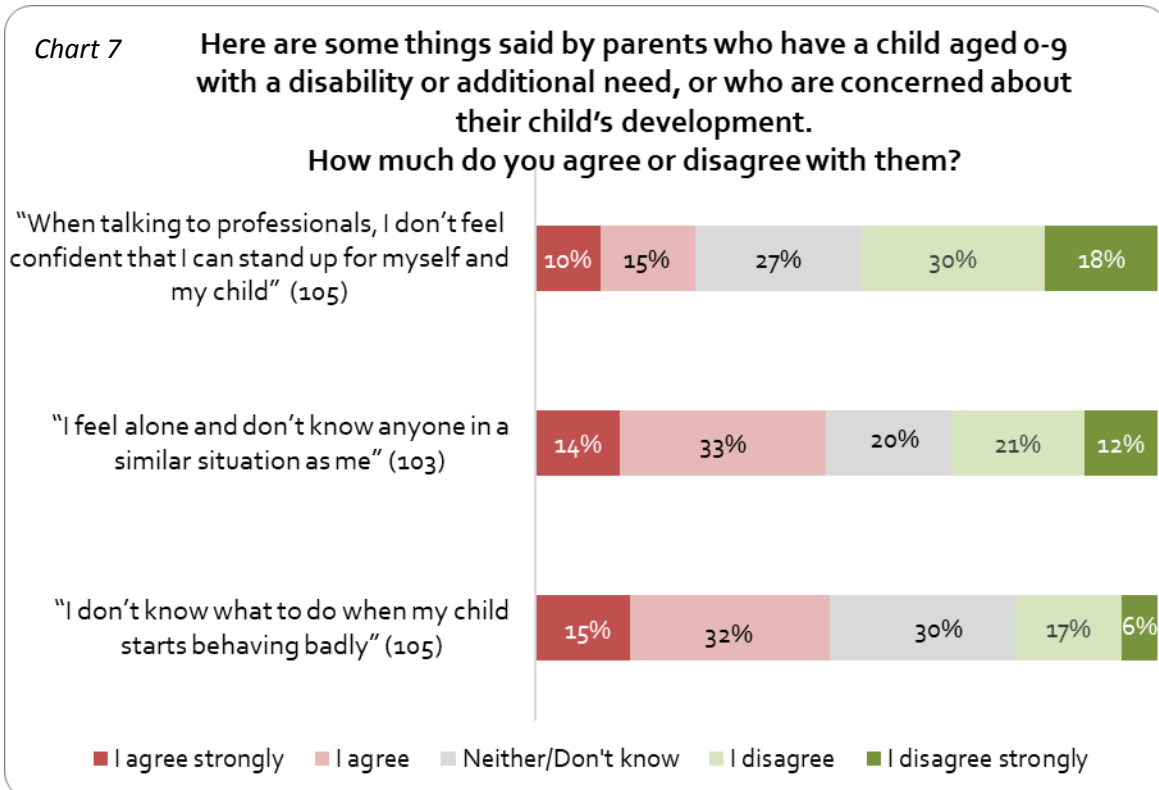


#### 4.5. Dealing with behaviour that challenges, isolation and confidence

47% of participants feel that they don't know what to do when their child starts behaving badly – twice as many that feel they do know (23%)<sup>12</sup>.

47% also feel alone (33% disagreed that they felt alone).

A larger proportion of parents felt confident dealing with professionals (48%) than those who didn't (25%).



<sup>12</sup> For questions measuring agreement with statements people can also answer "I neither agree nor disagree" or "I don't know" so agreement and disagreement do not add up to 100%.

Those parents of children over 4 are more likely to agree and less likely to disagree with each statement than parents of younger children (see numbers in red) – indicating that needs in these areas may increase as children get older. In the case of behaviour that challenges, this may become more noticeable in public when the child is older, making it more likely that parents feel less able to deal with it.

<b>Table 1</b>	<b>0-3 (63)</b>		<b>4+ (39)</b>	
	<b>Agree☹</b>	<b>Disagree☺</b>	<b>Agree☹</b>	<b>Disagree☺</b>
“I don’t know what to do when my child starts behaving badly”	46%	27%	51%	15%
“I feel alone and don’t know anyone in a similar situation as me”	41%	38%	57%	24%
“When talking to professionals, I don’t feel confident that I can stand up for myself and my child”	21%	59%	34%	32%

Those who are concerned about their child’s development but do not have a diagnosis are more likely to agree (or less likely to disagree) with these statements than parents with a diagnosis – indicating a higher level of need for those parents in these areas.

<b>Table 2</b>	<b>Diagnosed (63)</b>		<b>Concerned (18)</b>	
	<b>Agree☹</b>	<b>Disagree☺</b>	<b>Agree☹</b>	<b>Disagree☺</b>
“I don’t know what to do when my child starts behaving badly”	44%	25%	44%	11%
“I feel alone and don’t know anyone in a similar situation as me”	40%	33%	67%	33%
“When talking to professionals, I don’t feel confident that I can stand up for myself and my child”	18%	53%	33%	50%

## 4.6. Happiness and anxiety

Participants were asked to rate on a scale of 1 (low) to 10 (high) how happy and anxious they felt yesterday<sup>13</sup>.

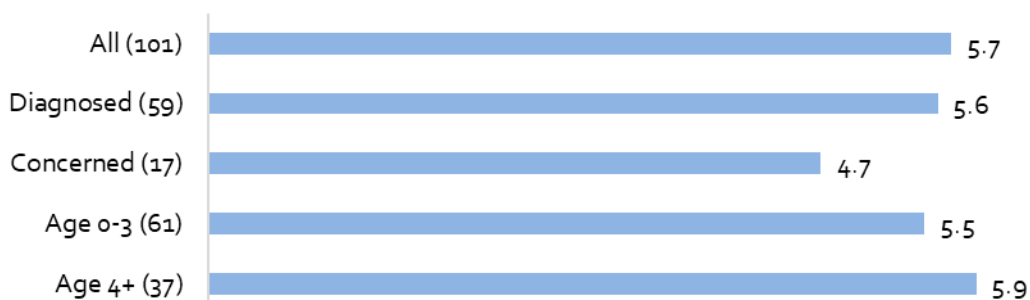
On average, all respondents rated themselves as 6.4, so more happy than not (the UK average April 2017-March 2018 was 7.52, so this group is less happy than the UK population as a whole). Ratings between the groups were consistent except for concerned parents without a diagnosis who rated themselves less happy on average.

**Chart 8 Participant baseline: Average rating of happiness yesterday (1 "not at all", 10 "completely")**



On average, all participants rated themselves at 5.7 for anxiety – so slightly more anxious than not (the UK average April 2017-March 2018 was 2.89, so this group is considerably more anxious than the UK population as a whole). Concerned parents without a diagnosis rated themselves lower (in this case less anxious) than other groups.

**Chart 9 Participant baseline: Average rating of anxiety yesterday (1 "not at all", 10 "completely")**



<sup>13</sup> These are two of the four questions used by the ONS as measures of personal well-being. The original intention was also to ask the other two (life satisfaction and feeling that the things done in life are worthwhile) however these were removed following feedback from Contact's parent advisors.

## 5. How do participants rate the workshops?

### Summary

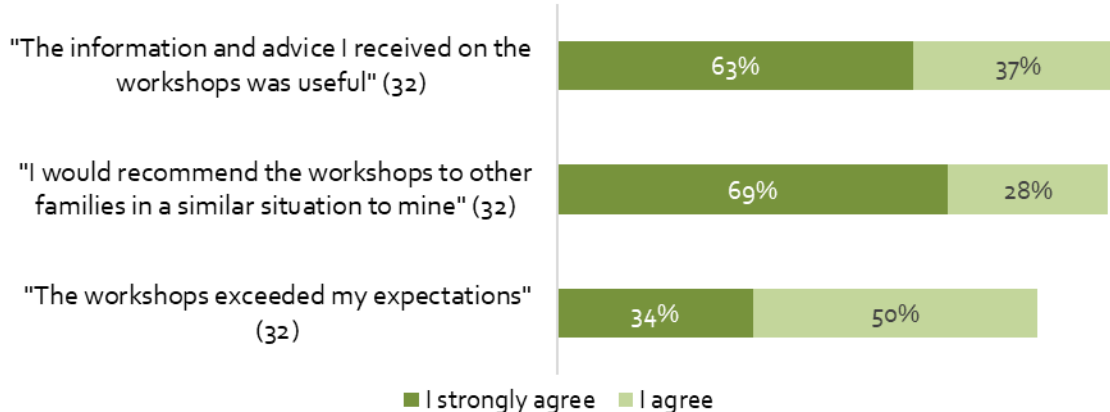
This section considers all the responses to the participant follow-up survey (33) completed eight weeks after the final workshop session.

- Participants are very positive about the workshops, 100% of those surveyed found them useful.
- 74% of parents say they have used approaches to handle challenging behaviour covered in the workshops.
- 94% agreed that the workshops made a positive difference to them and their family – no one disagreed.

### 5.1. Overall satisfaction

Feedback on the workshops is very positive. 100% of respondents to the follow-up survey felt the information and advice given was useful, 97% would recommend the workshops to others, and 84% agree that the workshops exceeded their expectations. Only 2 parents disagreed with any of these statements.

**Chart 10** Here are some statements made by parents about Contact's Early Years workshops – how much do you agree or disagree with them?



This positive feedback was also reflected in the qualitative survey responses.

Of the 14 people who answered the question on what could be improved about the workshops, 4 answered nothing could be improved and 7 said Contact should continue with, or do more of, the workshops.

*"I just want to say a big thank you again for inviting me on to the course as it was extremely helpful, and I wish I had done the course years ago. I think you need to do these courses again as I can think of three parents that would really benefit from coming on a course like the one I did."* – Parent of diagnosed child aged 3

*"I can't think of anything [to improve] as I found them perfect."* – Parent of diagnosed child aged 3

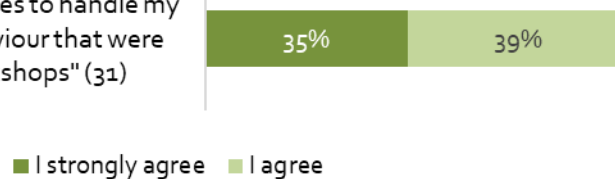
*"[It would] be great to have them every six months or annually because the government change things all the time - it's nice to keep up to date. Even to meet new moms and be able to openly talk about our issues and resolve them together."* – Parent of diagnosed child aged 3

## 5.2. Action taken

74% of parents agree they have used approaches to handle behaviour that challenges covered in the workshops.

**Chart 11** Here are some statements made by parents about Contact's Early Years workshops – how much do you agree or disagree with them?

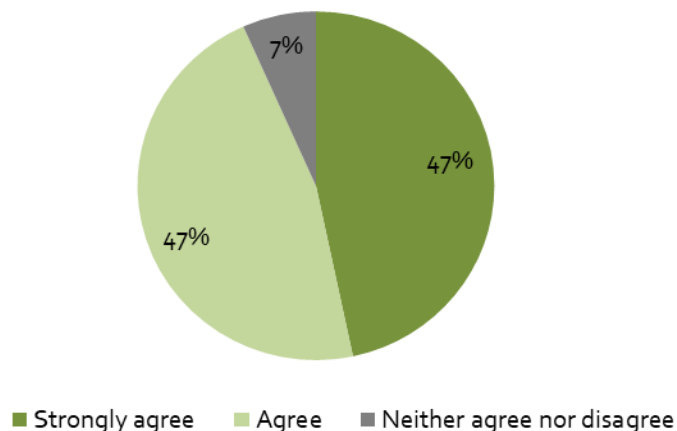
"I have used the approaches to handle my child's challenging behaviour that were discussed at the workshops" (31)



## 5.3. Perception of difference made

94% of participants agree the workshops made a positive difference to them and their family – no one disagreed.

**Chart 12** How much would you agree with the statement "The workshops made a positive difference to me and my family" (32)



## 6. What short-term changes occur after the workshops?

### Summary

This section considers the responses of 47 workshop participants who completed both the baseline survey (before the first session) and the end of programme survey (at the end of the last session). It also includes feedback from the “point of service” questionnaires conducted by Contact after each session.

- Feedback from participants gathered immediately after workshop sessions indicates that most of them feel better informed, more confident, less isolated and better able to deal with stress.
- This feedback is supported by insight from the evaluation – for those who were surveyed before the first session and after the last session (47) the proportion of those feeling alone reduces by over a half, as does the proportion of those not knowing what to do when their child demonstrates behaviour that challenges.

### 6.1. Immediate feedback from point of service questionnaires

Contact collects feedback at the end of every workshop, using a series of standardised statements, against which participants rate themselves<sup>14</sup>. The immediate feedback from participants is very positive.

<b>Table 3</b> <b>Statement</b>	<b>% Strongly Agree/ Agree</b>
I feel better informed about how to get the support I need (359)	97%
I feel more confident (360)	91%
I feel better able to deal with stress (357)	77% <sup>15</sup>
I feel less isolated (359)	81%
I feel better informed about my rights to benefits and grants (98)	96%
I have a better understanding of the ideas and resources that can help support me and my family (274)	93%
I would recommend Contact’s services to others (359)	98%

<sup>14</sup> This feedback is collected after every session; therefore, each participant could provide feedback more than once, namely at every session attended. The exception is feedback on “feeling better informed about benefits” which is only collected after the “Money matters” session.

<sup>15</sup> This figure is 10% higher than the feedback Contact receives for its stand-alone workshops. This may suggest that a series of workshops is more effective at addressing parents’ feelings of being overwhelmed by the amount of information received and provides the time and space for parents to feel supported, rather than just to absorb information.

## 6.2. Dealing with behaviour that challenges, isolation and confidence

This immediate feedback is corroborated by this evaluation. The workshop participants who were surveyed before the first session and after the last session (47) report feeling more knowledgeable about what to do when their child demonstrates behaviour that challenges, more confident dealing with professionals, and less isolated at the end of the workshop programme than they did at baseline (the start of the workshop programme).

Table 4	Baseline		End of programme		Agreement falls by	Disagreement rises by
	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree		
	☹	☺	☹	☺		
"I don't know what to do when my child starts behaving badly" (47)	43%	23%	15%	55%	65%	136%
"I feel alone and don't know anyone in a similar situation as me" (47)	41%	35%	17%	66%	59%	90%
"When talking to professionals I don't feel confident that I can stand up for myself and my child" (47)	21%	45%	15%	64%	30%	43%

## 6.3. Intention to use childcare

8 workshop participants who were not using childcare rated their intention to use childcare (on a scale of 1-9 with 1 representing not at all likely) in both the baseline and end of programme survey.

The average score for these participants increased from 4.9 to 5.9 indicating that, as a group, they are slightly more likely to use childcare after the workshops than before. Of the 8, 4 were more likely, 3 less likely and 1 stayed the same.

## 7. What medium-term changes occur after the workshops?

### Summary

This section considers the responses of participants who completed both the participant baseline and the participant follow-up survey (21). This is referred to as the “matched sample”<sup>16</sup>.

- For the matched sample, the number of benefits received increased by 22% and the use of services increased by 21% between the baseline and follow-up.
- Although there has been little change in the number of childcare options being used, the average number of hours of childcare used has increased by 15%.
- There has been little change in how the matched group rate their happiness and anxiety between the baseline and follow-up (improvements of 4% and 7% respectively). However qualitative feedback indicates participants have experienced improvements in their confidence, reduced feelings of isolation, and increased their ability to cope with challenging behaviour.

### 7.1. Services used

There has been a 21% increase in the average number of different services used by the matched group. At baseline it was 4.4 of the 10 options given<sup>17</sup>, at follow-up it was 5.3.

The use of most services has increased. The biggest increases have been in the use of the Contact helpline, the Family Information Service, local parent carer forums, and local support groups.

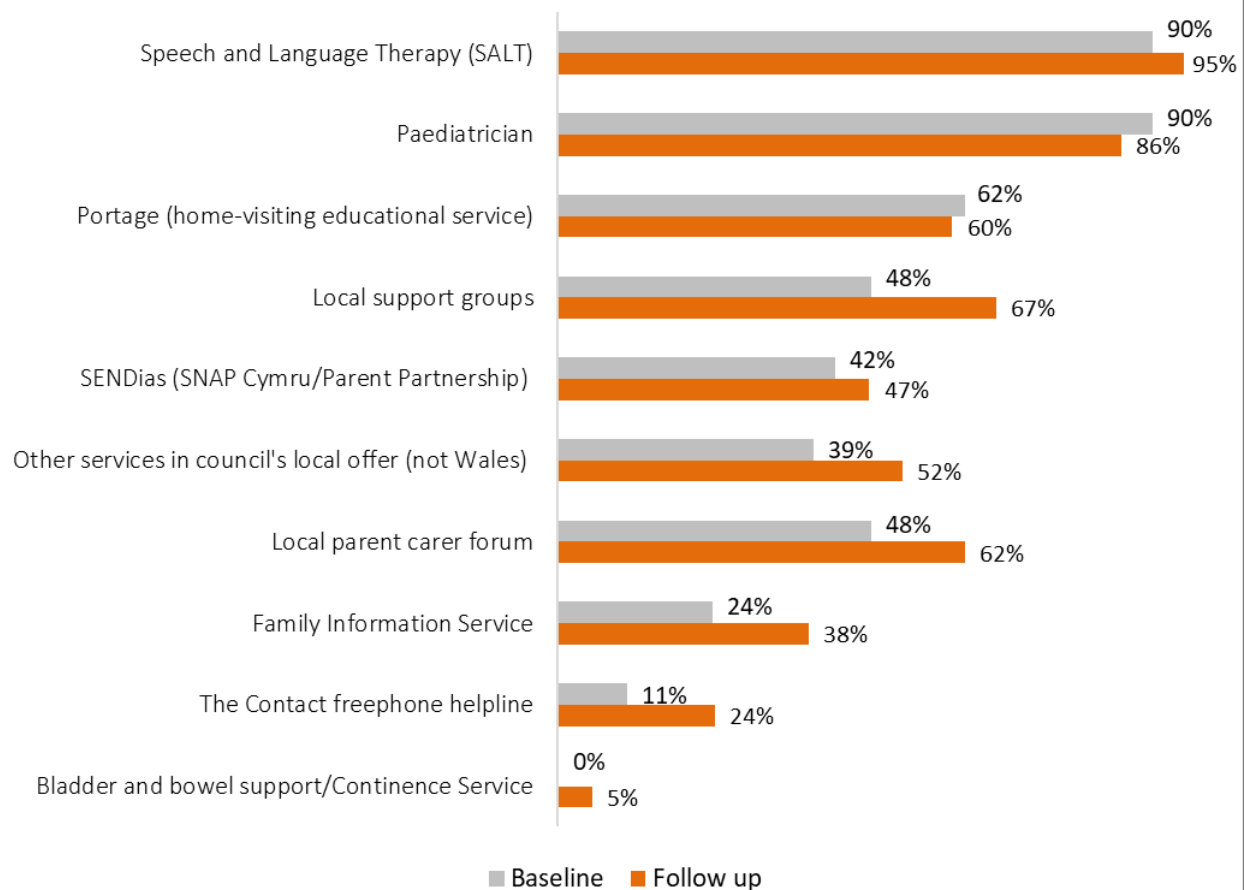
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<sup>16</sup> A comparison of the matched sample with the non-matched sample is in the appendix (12.2)

<sup>17</sup> 9 in Wales



**Chart 13 Difference in services used - matched participant baseline and follow up (21)**  
(percentage who have used the service)



### Changes by respondent

As noted above (footnote 10), the questions relating to service use did not ask about whether the service was being currently used, just whether it had ever been used. Some of the services listed in the survey do not have continuous use, so if parents had used them in the past it was interpreted that they were able to access them. Therefore, as the answer options only included whether the service had been used or not, it should not have been possible for service use to decline. Just over half the matched respondents (52%) increased their service use - however, as shown in the table below, 24% decreased their use – indicating that some respondents may have interpreted the question as asking about current use.

Services used - 21 respondents

Baseline - average	4.4	
Follow up - average	5.3	
No. increasing services	11	52%
No. staying the same	5	24%
No. decreasing services	5	24%
<i>Down by 3</i>	2	
<i>Down by 1</i>	3	
<i>Same</i>	5	
<i>Up by 1</i>	3	
<i>Up by 2</i>	2	
<i>Up by 3</i>	3	
<i>Up by 4</i>	3	

Table 5

There were also changes in attempts to use services. At baseline 4 parents had tried to use at least one of these services, this increased to 9 at follow-up.

Qualitative feedback<sup>18</sup> indicates that participants discover support options they may not have been aware of beforehand.

*"I learnt so much and found about so many resources and places to get support I had never even heard of; the ladies were so knowledgeable and made the workshops so interesting."* – Parent of diagnosed child aged 3

*"It made me realise that I am not alone, there is lots of support available that I didn't know about so am extremely grateful."* – Parent of diagnosed child aged 1

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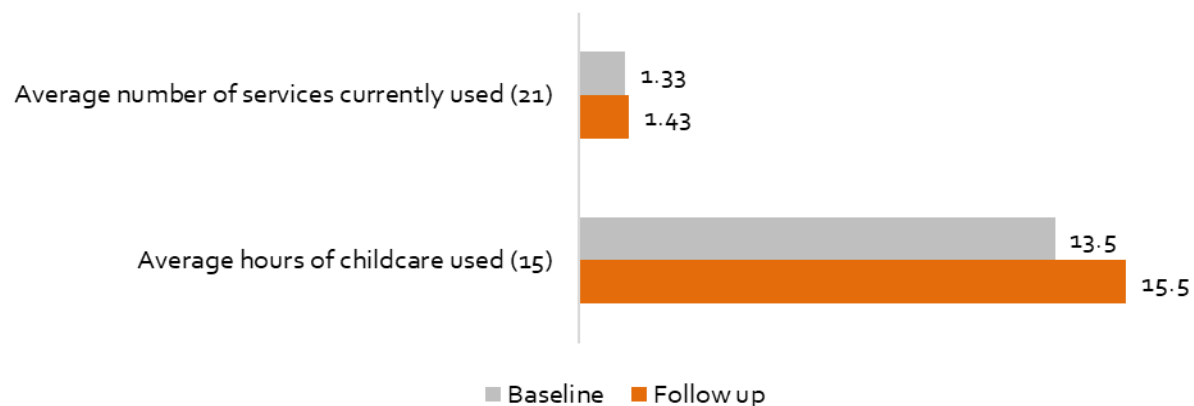
<sup>18</sup> All the quotes in this section are from matched participants

## 7.2. Childcare used

Overall, on average, there has been a slight increase in the average number of childcare options used by the matched group between baseline (1.3) and follow-up (1.4).

For the 15 parents who indicated the number of hours of childcare used in the baseline and follow-up survey, the average hours used has increased from 13.5 to 15.5 a week (a 15% increase).<sup>19</sup>

**Chart 14 Difference in childcare used - matched participant baseline and follow up**



### Changes by respondent

27% of matched respondents increased their childcare hours.

#### Hours of childcare - 15 respondents

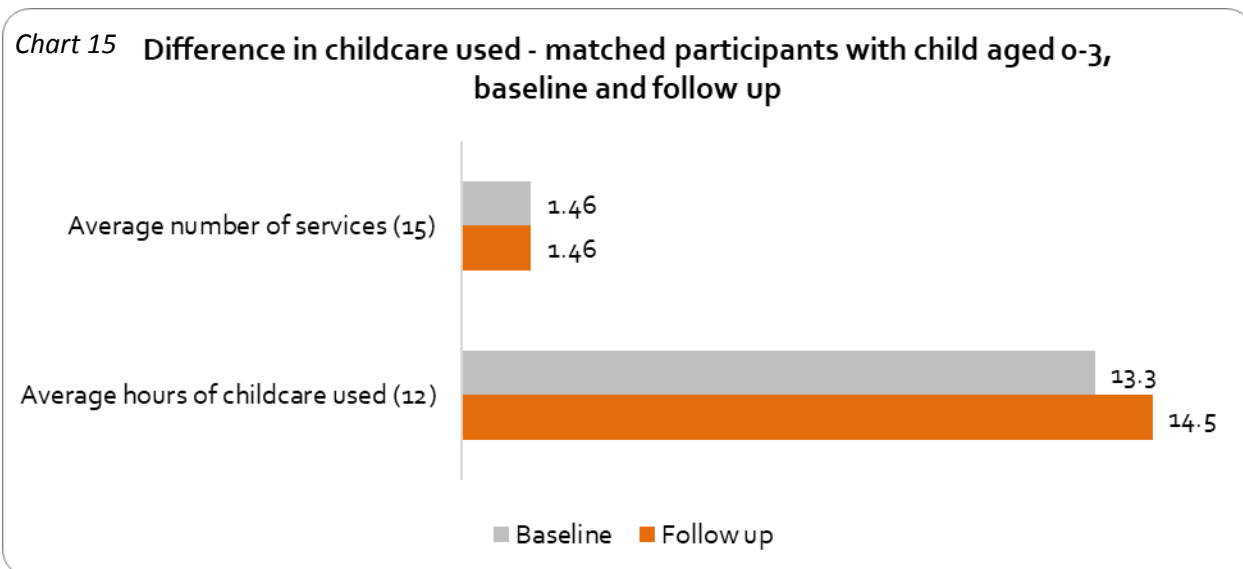
Baseline - average	13.5	
Follow up - average	15.5	
No. increasing hours	4	27%
No. staying the same	9	60%
No. decreasing hours	2	13%
Down by 3	1	
Down by 1	1	
Same	9	
Up by 3	1	
Up by 5	2	
Up by 9	1	
Up by 17	1	

*Table 6*

<sup>19</sup> In the online follow-up survey, parents of children over age 5 were routed through the survey so they did not need to answer childcare questions which were less likely to be relevant to them. Therefore the matched participant group responses analysed here are for parents of children aged 0-5 only.

It is likely that children reaching school age would have influenced the childcare figures. 4 (of the 7) matched parents who gave reasons for not using childcare in the follow-up survey mentioned their child starting school.

For the 15 parents of younger children (aged 0-3, who could not have started school in between surveys) at baseline the average number of childcare options used remained the same (with average hours increasing by 9% for the 12 parents who indicated the hours in both surveys).



Two other parents who gave reasons for not using childcare in the follow-up survey mentioned the complexity of the child's needs.

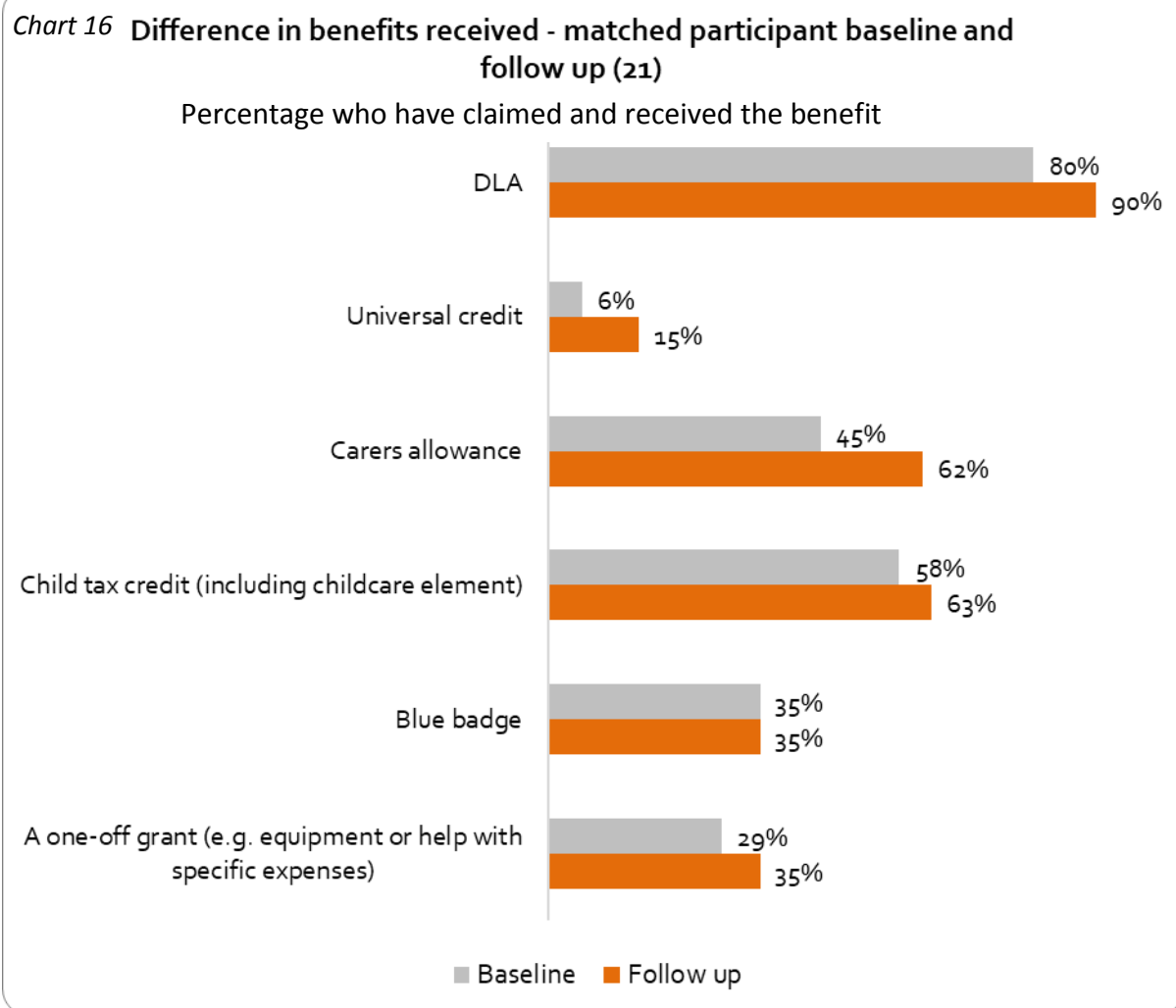
*"We struggle to find someone qualified to help with our daughter's care."* – Parent of diagnosed child aged 3

*"My child has complex medical and physical needs and I feel that she is not ready yet to be left in the care of others as she is very complicated and is hospitalised regularly."* – Parent of diagnosed child aged 2

### 7.3. Benefits received

There has been a 22% increase in the average number of benefits received by participants who completed both the baseline and the follow-up surveys (the matched group). At baseline it was 2.4 of the 6 options given, at follow-up it was 2.9.

The proportion of the matched group receiving each benefit has increased or stayed the same. The biggest increases have been in the receipt of Universal Credit and Carers Allowance.



At baseline 3 (14%) of the matched group were not receiving any of these benefits, this reduced to 1 (5%) at follow-up.

#### Changes by respondent

As with the question on service use above, this question asked if respondents had received any of these benefits – not whether they were currently receiving them. Therefore, the number of benefits received per person should not have decreased. 38% increased their benefits, however 14% reduced their benefits (and may have interpreted the question as asking about benefits being currently received).

Benefits received - 21 respondents

Baseline - average	2.4	
Follow up - average	2.9	
No. increasing benefits	8	38%
No. staying the same	10	48%
No. decreasing benefits	3	14%
Down by 1	3	
Same	10	
Up by 1	4	
Up by 2	2	
Up by 3	2	

Table 7

Whether someone increased the number of benefits they received seems to be associated with whether they attended the workshop session that covered financial support available to parents (“Money matters”)

- Of those that attended the session (16) – 8 increased their benefits (50%), 6 stayed the same (38%) and 2 (12%) went down
- Of those that didn’t (5) – none increased their benefits, 4 stayed the same (80%) and 1 went down (20%).

Therefore, all those who increased their benefits attended the “Money matters” session and none of those who did not attend the session increased their benefits.

Qualitative responses reflect the positive impact the workshops made to family finances:

*“I’d also like to mention we never knew about the benefits we could claim to help with our son. We currently spend an arm and a leg each month...It’s nice that we now claim that extra. This means we can now afford to accommodate his needs and we have a little spare to do other activities with our son and daughter. We also initially felt bad for trying to claim these. After the final session, we felt confident in claiming the extras. That’s thanks to you guys. It’s made life much easier and we are again forever grateful for that.”* – Parent of diagnosed child aged 3

*“[Contact adviser] was lovely, very positive. Makes you believe in yourself. [She] encouraged me to apply for DLA and it has since been awarded.”* – Parent of diagnosed child aged 4

*“[Contact adviser] was great and explained everything really well, a lot of help I hadn’t even realised is available, she helped me with questions I had on the DLA form and gave advice [on] other benefits we may be entitled too.”* – Parent of diagnosed child aged 2

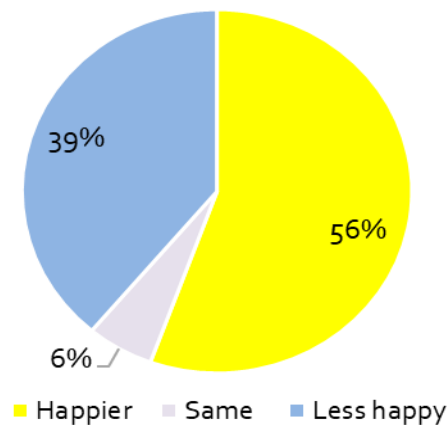
## 7.4. Happiness and anxiety

There was little change in the levels of happiness and anxiety within the matched group between the baseline and follow-up surveys.

The average rating of happiness increased slightly from 5.7 to 5.9 (4%) and the levels of anxiety fell slightly (7%) from 5.6 to 5.2.

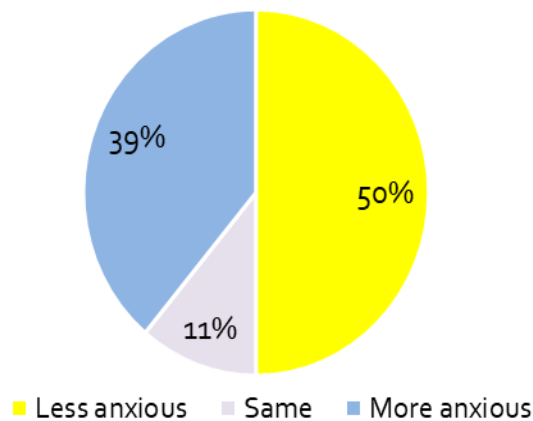
56% of participants felt happier at follow-up compared with 39% feeling less happy.

*Chart 17*      **Matched participants - changes in happiness assessment (18)**



50% of participants felt less anxious at follow-up, compared with 39% feeling more anxious.

*Chart 18*      **Matched participants - changes in anxiety assessment (18)**



As they ask for how people feel at a specific, narrow point of time (“yesterday”) these questions are perhaps not the most effective at measuring slower, less linear improvements in people’s happiness and levels of anxiety. The case studies below (8.6) and the satisfaction responses above (5.1 and 5.3) clearly indicate that the workshops make a positive emotional impact on many participants. Qualitative feedback also indicates that the positive changes in dealing with

behaviour that challenges, isolation and confidence dealing with professionals noted in the short-term feedback (see section 6 above) continue into the medium-term.

*“I’m now confident and organised while attending appointments thanks to tips and advice from Contact.” – Parent of diagnosed child aged 2*

*“I found all the workshops very useful, they gave me more insight into what my entitlements are and how to deal with my child’s behaviour. Knowing I’m not alone and getting to know other moms helps because I always felt like no one understood how I felt.” – Parent of diagnosed child aged 3*

*“The workshop helped me to understand that there is help and support out there for my family and that I am not on my own when it comes to caring for my daughter. I also made friends with some really lovely mothers and found out a lot about help with doing fun things with my family that are possible.” – Parent of diagnosed child aged 3*

*“The workshop made a big difference in my family because if my son has a meltdown I can sometimes stop him having a bad one.” – Concerned parent of child aged 3*

## 8. Would this change have happened anyway?

### Summary

This section considers the changes experienced by matched workshop participants (21)<sup>20</sup> with the changes experienced by the comparison group (29).

- The evidence suggests that attending the workshops is associated with greater increases in subsequent service use, childcare use and benefits received compared with what would have happened naturally over time without attending the workshops (as in the comparison group).
  - Parents in the participant group (21) increased their use of services by 21% compared with 12% for the comparison group.
  - Parents in the participant group (15) increased their childcare hours by 16%. The comparison group saw a slight (5%) decline in hours used.
  - Parents in the participant group (21) increased the average number of benefits received by 22%, the comparison group increased by 7%.
- However, the comparison group that did not attend the workshops saw a larger increase in happiness and a larger decrease in levels of anxiety compared with those who did attend the workshops.

<sup>20</sup> All the matched participant group had children aged 0-5 so are comparable with the comparison group.



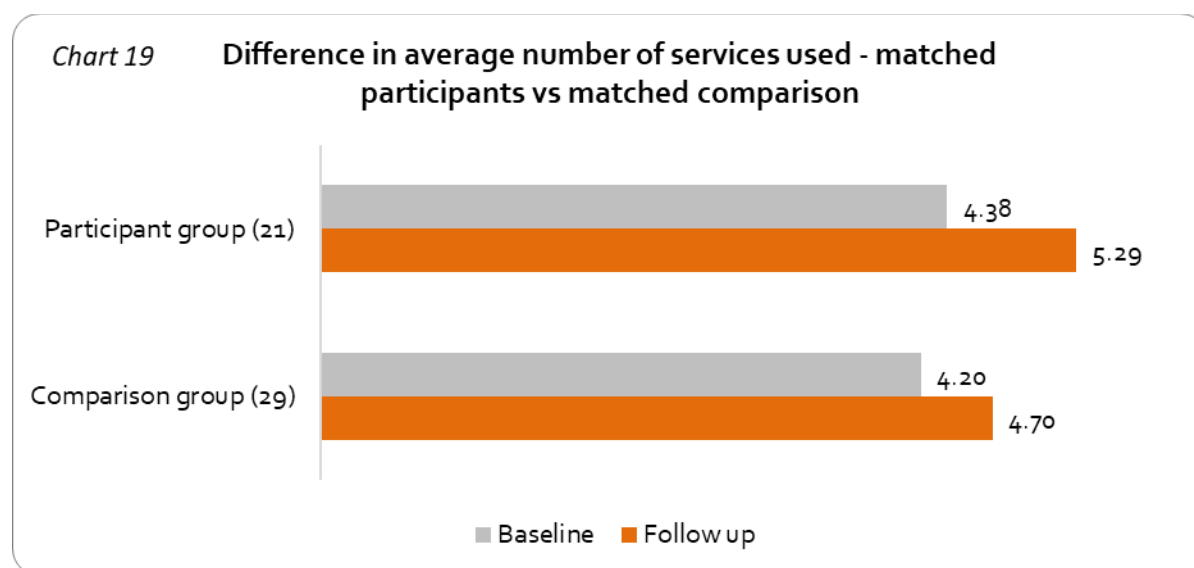
## 8.1. Comparison of groups at baseline<sup>21</sup>

The comparison matched group were more likely to have a diagnosis for their child. The number of different services used was similar between the groups, although the comparison matched group started from a higher level than the participant group in terms of average number of hours of childcare used and number of different benefits received.

<b>Table 8</b>	<b>Matched participants (21)</b>	<b>Matched comparison (29)</b>
% With diagnosis	78% (18)	93%
Average age of child	3.1	3.0
Average services used (baseline)	4.4	4.2
Average childcare options currently used (baseline)	1.3	0.7
Average weekly hours of childcare – if used and answered in both surveys (baseline)	13.5 (15)	22.1 (12)
Number of benefits received (baseline)	2.4	3.0

## 8.2. Changes in services used

As described above (7.1) the participant group increased the average number of services used by 21% - the comparison group also increased but by 12%.

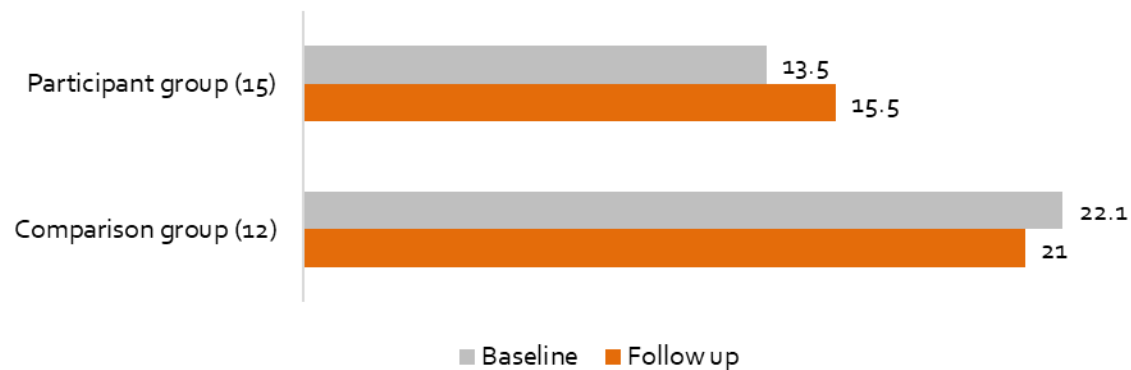


<sup>21</sup> The surveys did not include demographic/socioeconomic profiling questions as it was not clear to what extent these indicators would determine how similar the groups were. Instead the groups are compared by factors directly related to the family's situation.

### 8.3. Changes in childcare used

We saw above (7.2) that the participant group increased their childcare hours by 15%. The comparison group saw a slight (5%) decline in hours used (from a higher base).

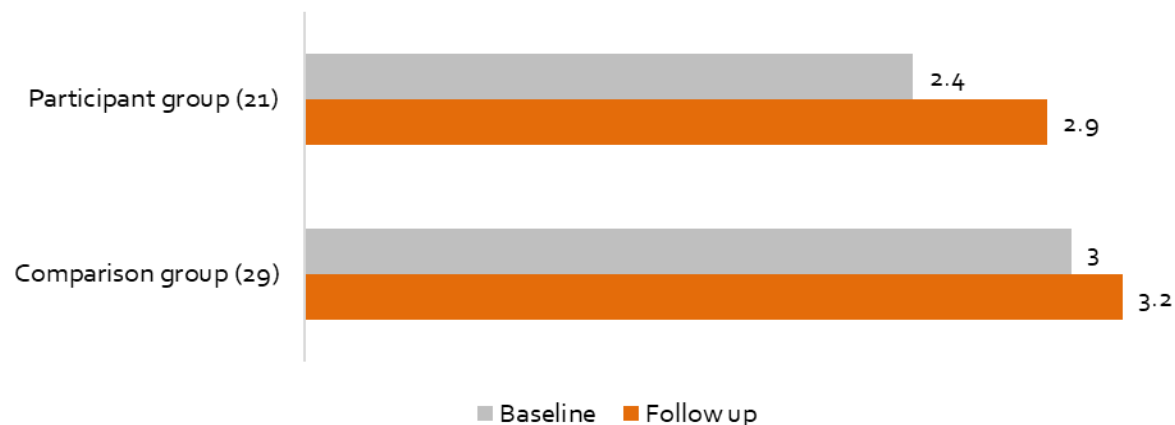
*Chart 20*    **Difference in average hours of childcare used - matched participants vs matched comparison**



### 8.4. Changes in benefits received

The participant group increased the average number of benefits received by 22%, the comparison group had a more modest increase of 7% (again from a higher base).

*Chart 21*    **Difference in average number of benefits received - matched participants vs matched comparison**



### 8.5. Happiness and anxiety

We saw above (7.4) that, for the participant group, the average self-assessment of happiness remained broadly similar between baseline and follow-up. The comparison group rated themselves slightly happier at follow-up compared with baseline (up 14% from 5.1 to 5.8). The participant group did show a small decline in anxiety (4%), however the comparison group had a slightly larger decline in anxiety (9%).

Greater proportions of the comparison group felt happier and less anxious at follow-up, compared with the participant group, though the comparison group started from a lower baseline (less happy and more anxious on average). Occasionally, exposure to the negative experiences of others and awareness of the challenges ahead can also have a negative impact on anxiety. This may have affected the achievement of these outcomes by the participant group. The content of the workshop programme consisting of four sessions did not include a specific session on wellbeing and resilience. This was later added to the series of six workshops as the “Support for you” session.

<i>Table 9</i>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Follow-up</b>	<b>Diff</b>
<b>Assessment of happiness</b>			
Participant group (18) – average (higher = happier)	5.7	5.9	4%
Comparison group (28) – average	5.1	5.8	14%
Participant group (18) - % happier		56%	
Comparison group (28) - % happier		57%	

<i>Table 10</i>	<b>Baseline</b>	<b>Follow-up</b>	<b>Diff</b>
<b>Assessment of anxiety</b>			
Participant group (18) – average (lower = less anxious)	5.6	5.2	(7%)
Comparison group (28) – average	5.9	5.3	(9%)
Participant group (18) - % less anxious		50%	
Comparison group (28) - % less anxious		61%	

## 8.6. Case studies

The case studies developed following telephone interviews with those who completed the follow-up survey, reveal both the changes made by the workshops and what might have happened if these parents had not attended the workshops. The names and ages of the people mentioned have been changed to preserve the participants' anonymity.

### Case study 1

Debbie's three-year-old son Adam has a rare genetic disorder which means he can't sit up, walk or feed himself. Debbie is *"his arms and legs"*. At times, Adam also displays challenging behaviour.

Before going to Contact's Early Years Workshops, Debbie was unsure what to do for the best. Adam was the first child in her family's recent history to have a disability and it had been a big shock for everyone. She *"felt like a failure"* and was suffering from depression and anxiety. *"People don't understand how hard it is at times – when you just want to sit in a room and scream. If you are smiling on the outside they think you are okay – they don't see the struggling person inside."*

Debbie had previously been given information by her health visitor and SISS (Specialist Inclusion Support Service) worker. However, she felt at the time that it was too much information to take in. When she found out about the workshops (through Adam's playgroup) she thought *"all these sessions apply to me!"*

Debbie found the sessions welcoming and felt that the information provided was clear. *"The women doing the workshops were brilliant. You could ask them anything and they either knew the answers or had the information. That's great as you can't rely on Dr Google."*

One immediate positive impact of the workshops for Debbie was hearing about the experiences of other parents. *"I didn't feel alone anymore – it's quite comforting. It's hard finding somebody who understands, and I've made a couple of friends through the workshops and we still contact each other if one of us is having a low day. Even if our children have different disabilities, we can still help each other."*

Support to respond to challenging behaviour was also something covered by the workshops that really helped Debbie. *"This was something I needed to tackle. Before, if Adam was kicking up a fuss in a shop and people were giving me dirty looks, I would worry about what others thought and back down. Thanks to that workshop I gave myself a kick up the backside. It was really empowering. It made me overcome my anxiety and personal issues and realise that I don't know these people and I need to focus on my child, that's all that matters. I thought 'Why am I worrying so much? I'm only going to make myself ill and that's no good for anyone especially my son'. So now I comfort him, get down to eye level and try to calm him down. I feel so much better doing that. Now other people come up to me and ask if I need a hand! Hearing from other parents helped – I thought 'if they can do it so can I'."*

### Case study 1 (continued)

The money matters workshop was very useful for Debbie, she was previously unaware of Carer's Allowance and knowing about this has opened the possibility of stopping work to be able to look after Adam full time. Debbie would welcome a recap session on financial issues as circumstances can change and issues not relevant at the time of the workshop can become relevant later.

Debbie also found the workshops' support to work with health professionals very useful. Previously Debbie hadn't planned for meetings with Adam's care team, but the workshop made her realise that she knew her child best and needed to be clear with professionals about what he needed. *"I used to dread these meetings, but I prepared questions in advance. Because of the workshop, I was more in charge of holding the meeting and I asked for things Adam needed. The meetings have gone much better. Adam was having difficulty with acid reflux. I had been told over the phone that someone would get back to me, but they hadn't. I had written down the names and dates, so in the meeting I said, 'I'm still waiting for that help – is there anything we can do now to resolve the situation?' and there and then the paediatrician sorted out a prescription. I even asked the paediatrician for his mobile number for emergencies and I got it!"*

When reflecting on the overall impact of the workshops, Debbie said, *"I feel so much better about myself and more positive about how to look after my child and knowing what's available to make my life easier."*

### Case study 2

Lauren's three-year-old daughter Ava has global developmental delay and hypermobility syndrome. Attending the Contact workshop has been a *"game changer"* for Lauren and Ava in several different ways.

Firstly, Lauren feels better prepared to speak with health professionals. *"Everything has changed from that session. I would freeze up at appointments and not ask the questions I needed. Now I know how to prepare and how to be open with my body language. Now I go in, I'm to the point, I tick things off my list – I feel relieved that finally I'm getting the best for Ava."*

Secondly, Lauren discovered she was eligible for Carers Allowance. *"Beforehand we were struggling to make ends meet. We were offered food stamp vouchers. Carers Allowance has helped us manage and now we're getting through. We can even buy something for Ava's development each month."*

Finally, attending the session has helped Lauren feel better by connecting her with parents who can relate to her situation. *"Last year I felt I was on my own - I avoided playgroups and I didn't speak to anyone. Now I have friends who I can talk to who don't judge."*

Lauren has already told other friends to get in touch with Contact and about the workshops – *"I tell them that is a really warm, welcoming atmosphere – and that they will have a bit of a giggle!"*

### Case study 3

Emma's two-year-old son, Riley has sensory loss and some developmental delay.

Emma, naturally, was keen to find out as much as possible about how she could support him both now and as he gets older. Having not found Google searching very useful, she attended one of Contact's Early Years Workshops.

The information provided at the workshop, both by Contact and the other parents there, was a revelation for Emma. *"It was brilliant, I had no idea there was so much support out there"*. Since the workshop Emma has been exploring how to access Portage (home visiting pre-school education) and she has joined a WhatsApp group with other parents who went. *"We're on it every day – people post information and events they have found. We also meet up with the kids"*. Meeting other parents was a big plus for Emma: *"It made me realise that I am not alone."*

Emma feels that, following the workshop, she is less worried and more confident. *"Beforehand I was a bit lost but now I know that, if I need help, there is help there. I feel like I'm in charge - I'm the Mum."*

Emma would recommend other parents in similar situations to go to the workshops – *"they were lovely, I really enjoyed them and I'm extremely grateful for how they have helped my family."*

### Case study 4

Sally's three-year-old son Mason has been diagnosed with autism (he is non-verbal) and hypermobility syndrome.

The special needs nurse at Mason's nursery let Sally know about Contact's Early Years workshops and Sally, who was struggling to understand Mason's behaviours and how best to handle them, felt they would be useful for her.

Sally found the workshops welcoming, friendly and professional. *"It was really, really good to meet other mums – it made me realise I was not alone."*

Thanks to the workshop Sally found there was more support available to her and her son than she was previously aware of. The family had not been awarded the mobility component of Disability Living Allowance as Mason was thought not to have a physical disability.

The Contact workshop signposted Sally to the Cerebra website where she found out that Mason could be eligible, and she is now appealing the original decision *"only because the workshop told me which road to go down."* In addition, Sally's family has had to leave their home as their landlord is selling their house – Sally was made aware of a charity who could provide support with their move into an unfurnished council property.

#### **Case study 4 (continued)**

Sally's confidence has increased significantly since the workshops. Previously she used to feel "like an idiot" when meeting professionals - but the workshop "taught me that I'm the expert on my child. It doesn't matter how many degrees you've got, I know more than you because I live it every day."

This increased confidence has also helped Sally with difficult situations in public. "I understand more about my son's needs and how to deal with them. When Mason had a breakdown in public I used to run away and try and remove him, but now I try and deal with whatever is bothering him at the time. I used to be worried and anxious taking him out. Now I'm not, he needs to be a little boy – if others don't like it, then they don't like it."

In conclusion Sally said "If it wasn't for the workshops I would be anxious and down in myself. They have changed my and my son's life – they have made things better, they really have. I would advise anybody who has a child with additional needs to go."

## **9. Learning relating to the workshops**

As noted above, there is evidence that the workshops have a positive influence over practical outcomes such as service use, use of childcare and benefits received. There is less quantitative evidence of an improvement in emotional outcomes such as an increase in happiness or a reduction in anxiety levels – however qualitative feedback from the survey and case study interviews, and the fact that 94% of participants agree the workshops made a positive difference to themselves and their family (with no disagreement) indicates that attendance does have a positive emotional impact for participants.

When the workshop programme was a series of six sessions, it was reported that several parents did not attend the last session - "Support for you" - which puts parents in touch with local support groups. So, some participants may not have benefited from this important signposting to more sustained support.

Furthermore, the content of the workshop programme consisting of four sessions did not include a specific session on wellbeing and resilience, so this may also have affected the achievement of these outcomes.

To address this issue, Contact are considering encouraging attendance at all the sessions by putting (the popular) "Money matters" session last. It also may be effective to weave information about the available emotional support throughout all the sessions, rather than covering it all in one session.

Another suggestion - for both recruiting parents to the workshops and retaining their presence at all the sessions - would be to produce video case studies of parents who have clearly benefited from the programme. Occasionally, exposure to the experiences of others can have a negative impact on parents and having some positive counter balance some parents' "horror stories" would be useful to keep up the morale of others.

Finally, as parents' situations can change over time, one survey respondent requested a "refresher" session at a later date. Two ways of meeting this need would be to sign parents up to Contact's regular newsletter, and to encourage parents to attend local support groups through which they could access other workshops run by Contact or other organisations.

## 10. Learning relating to the evaluation

In general, the evaluation methodology was effective and has enabled us to measure the desired outcomes. The challenges inherent with tracking a cohort of service beneficiaries over time were considered in advance and the steps taken to match respondents (using tracking codes) and minimise loss to follow up (reminders, incentives) have been effective.

Of course, it would have been better to have heard from a larger number of people, but this was limited by the initial size of the programme, and by the fact that parents of disabled children have limited time to respond to follow-up surveys (nonetheless, the response rate to the follow-up survey was higher than that normally observed by Contact). Also, the fact that not everybody attends every workshop (see table below 12.3) meant that some attendees would not have had the opportunity to do the participant baseline (if they did not attend the first session) or the end of programme survey (if they did not attend the final session). There was consideration of asking parents to enrol in the workshops online (e.g. through Eventbrite) - this would potentially make completing the baseline survey easier as it could be done online in advance of the workshop.

### Issues relating to childcare

Measuring changes in childcare use was challenging. Firstly, the data received was not always consistent. Some respondents who were using childcare options did not enter the hours they used, and some included hours even when they didn't indicate they were using any of the options provided.

Secondly, requirements and options change depending on the age of the child. Several respondents indicated that their childcare hours had reduced because their child had started school or nursery. For some parents, "nursery" was not thought of as "childcare" (even though it was listed as one of the childcare options in the survey, several people who indicated that they used a nursery did not enter the number of nursery hours in the question *"If you do currently use any of those childcare options, roughly how many hours a week is your child in childcare?"*). For some, nursery may be more associated with education than childcare.

Being clearer about the above point (e.g. asking *"how many hours childcare including nursery..."*), collecting years and months for children's age, and asking specifically about the 30 hours childcare entitlement would be considerations for future development of the surveys. It would also be advantageous to ask these questions online so as to "route" parents appropriately through questions relevant to them – the paper survey format for the participant baseline and end of programme survey meant we were limited in how much we could route respondents dependent on their responses.



## Other suggestions

It would also have been interesting to measure the changes amongst participants in dealing with behaviour that challenges, isolation and confidence with health professionals in the medium-term as well as in the short-term and to include those questions in the follow-up survey. This would also have allowed for a comparison with the comparison group.

The use of the ONS personal wellbeing questions could be reviewed as they are perhaps better suited to larger studies. Bespoke questions to measure emotional change could be developed as alternatives.

As noted above, there may have been some confusion amongst respondents as to whether the survey was asking about *current* service use or benefits received, or whether it was asking whether respondents had *ever* used those services or received benefits. Further clarification of the wording of these questions is recommended.

Finally, the agreed evaluation method did not include much qualitative research (only free text boxes in the online surveys and four in-depth interviews for the case studies). This was appropriate as the main aim of this evaluation was to demonstrate the value of the workshops. If there was a requirement to gather insight to improve the delivery of the workshops, or better understand the issues faced by the audience, the evaluation design would need to include more qualitative research amongst participants, non-participants and those delivering the sessions.

## 11. Conclusion

This evaluation has found that, on average, participants that attend the Contact workshops increase their use of support services (by 21%), the number of hours of childcare they use (by 15%) and the number of benefits they receive (by 22%) in the eight weeks following the workshops. These increases are greater than those experienced by a comparable comparison group who had not attended the workshops.

Participant satisfaction with the workshops is extremely high. 100% of participants at follow up felt the information and advice given was useful, 97% would recommend the workshops to others, and 84% agree that the workshops exceeded their expectations.

There has been less change in the levels of happiness and anxiety amongst participants (improvements of 4% and 7% respectively in the eight weeks following the workshops), and the comparison group saw a larger increase in these outcomes.

However, the qualitative feedback from parents given in the online surveys and in-depth interviews indicates that the workshops do have a positive emotional impact for most participants. In particular, the proportion of parents feeling alone reduces by over a half from the start to the end of the workshop programme, and 94% agree that the workshops have made a positive difference to them and their family (no-one disagrees).

## 12. Appendices

### 12.1. Survey responses and matched samples by location

<i>Table 11</i> Location	Baseline	Final session	Follow up	Matched final session	Matched follow up
Billingham	2	3	1	2	1
Blaina	3	2	2	1	1
Blyth	3		2		1
Bristol	6	5	2	5	1
Coventry	5	6	2	1	
Gateshead	5	3	2	2	2
Grimsby	2				
Lambeth Jessop's Children's Centre	1	2		1	
Lewisham Kaleidoscope	8	7	2	5	2
Manchester	11	10	2	5	
North Tyneside	1	2	1	1	
Norwich, Hamlet Centre	6	2		2	
Papworth	3	1	1	1	1
Pegswood, Northumberland	1	2	1	1	
Rainbow House, Ormskirk	11	7	7	7	6
Redcar	2				
Rhondda Cynnon Taf	7	6		5	
Solihull	11	6	3	4	3
South Acton (Children's Centre)	3				
Southall (London all)	8	7	2	1	2
Southwark (1st Place Children's Centre)	1	2		1	
Southwark (Cambridge House)	5	6	3	2	1
	<b>105</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>21</b>

## 12.2. Comparison of follow up matched and non-matched workshop participant groups (at baseline)

The workshop participants for whom we were able to match their follow-up answers with their baseline answers were, at baseline, using a wider range of support and childcare services, and receiving a wider range of benefits, than those who either didn't do the follow-up or who we were not able to match. However, the non-matched group were, on average using more hours of childcare – possibly due to the fact their children are slightly older. Therefore, the participant follow-up group, was starting at a slightly higher level of support than the workshop participant group as whole.

<b>Table 12</b>	<b>Matched participants (21)</b>	<b>Non-matched participants</b>
% With diagnosis	78%	78% (63)
Average age of child	3.1	3.4 (82)
Average services used	4.4	3.7 (84)
Average childcare options currently used	1.3	1.03 (83)
Average weekly hours of childcare	13.5 (15)	16.1 (43)
Number of benefits received	2.4	2 (69)

## 12.3. Matched participant group (21) by subject covered<sup>22</sup>

<b>Table 13</b>	<b>Number</b>
<b>Subject covered</b>	
Information about local support services	19
Communication skills to get what you need for your child	16
Information on how to encourage positive behaviour	19
Information on financial benefits and support (i.e. money matters)	16
Understanding sleep	3
Finding support for yourself	3

<sup>22</sup> This question, asked at follow-up, aimed to get information on whether the respondents had attended all or just some of the (4 or 6) workshop sessions. Dedicated sessions on “Understanding sleep” and “Finding support for yourself” were introduced later, and hence were only delivered in 4 out of the 22 workshop locations.

#### 12.4. Matched participant group (20) by number of subjects covered

<i>Table 14</i>	
Subjects covered	Number
1	2
2	0
3	4
4	11
5	0
6	3

## 12.5. Participant group surveys

### 12.5.1. Baseline survey (0-5 version)

Thank you very much for coming to our “Birth to Five” workshops.

**contact** *For families with disabled children*

We ask all the parents who come to the workshops some questions before the sessions start and when they are finished.

Your answers will help Contact make sure the workshops are as useful as possible for the parents that come to them.

Your answers will be treated as **confidential and anonymous**.



Katie Barron, Contact

1. To help us compare answers before and after the workshops, please provide the following information

What is the first letter of your first name? (e.g. if your name is Jane you would answer J)

What day of the month is your birthday (e.g. if your birthday was on the 18th November, you would answer 18)

Answer here

2. Which of the following statements best describes your situation?

I have a child aged 0-5 who has been diagnosed with a disability or additional need

I have a child aged 0-5, they have not had a diagnosis but I am concerned about their development

Please tick one box

- 3.

How old is your child with a diagnosis or that you are concerned about?

(if you have more than one child aged 0-5 that you are concerned about, or who has a disability or additional need, please answer these questions thinking about the older child)

4. Below is a list of support services available to parents of children aged 0-5 who are concerned about their child's development, or whose child has a disability or additional need.

Please tell us if you and your child have used them, have tried to use them (but haven't), or have never tried to use them.

<i>Support services</i>	<i>Please tick one of these three boxes for each service</i>		
	<u>We have used</u> this service	<u>We have tried</u> to use this service (but haven't)	<u>We have never tried</u> to use this service
Speech and Language Therapy (SALT)			
Bladder and bowel support/Continence Service			
Paediatrician			
Portage (home-visiting educational service)			
The Contact freephone helpline			
Family Information Service			
Special Educational Needs Information Advice Service (SENDias)			
Local support groups			
Local parent carer forum			
Other services in your local authority's "local offer"			

5. Here is a list of childcare options. **Thinking about your child with a disability or additional need, or who you are concerned about,** please tell us if you and your child currently uses them, have used them in the past (but not now), have tried to use them (but haven't), or have never tried to use them.

<i>Childcare options</i>	<i>Please tick one of these four boxes for each option</i>			
	<u>We currently use</u> this	<u>We have used</u> this in the past but not now	<u>We have tried</u> to use this	<u>We have never tried</u> to use this
A childminder				
A day nursery				
A pre-school or playgroup				
Childcare in your own home (e.g. a nanny or home childcarer)				
Children's Centre				

6. If you **do** currently use any of the above options, roughly how many hours a week is your child in childcare? *(then go to question 8)*

*(If you don't currently use childcare, skip to question 7)*

7. If you **don't** currently use childcare, **how likely** are you to use formal childcare in the future (such as a childminder, nursery or pre-school)? (where 1 is very unlikely, and 9 is very likely). *Please tick one box*

Very unlikely		Unlikely		Not sure		Likely		Very likely
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

8. Below is a list of financial benefits. Please tell us if, **since the birth of your child aged 0-5 who has a disability or additional need, or who you are concerned about**, you have received this benefit, have applied for it (but not received it), or have never applied for it.

Type of benefit	Please tick one of these three boxes for each benefit <b>Since the birth of my child aged 0-5 with a disability or additional need, or who I am concerned about:</b>		
	We <u>have</u> <u>received</u> this	We <u>have</u> <u>applied for it</u> <u>but not</u> <u>received it</u>	We <u>have</u> <u>never applied</u> <u>for it</u>
DLA			
Universal credit			
Carers allowance			
Child tax credit (including childcare element)			
Blue badge			
A one-off grant (e.g. equipment or help with specific expenses)			

9. Here are some things said by parents who have a child aged 0-5 with a disability or additional need, or who are concerned about their child's development. How much do you agree or disagree with them?

	<i>Please tick one box per statement</i>					
	I agree strongly	I agree	I neither agree nor disagree	I disagree	I disagree strongly	I don't know / Not applicable
"I don't know what to do when my child starts behaving badly"						
"I feel alone and don't know anyone in a similar situation as me"						
"When talking to professionals, I don't feel confident that I can stand up for myself and my child"						

Next, we would like to ask you a couple of questions about your feelings on aspects of your life. There are no right or wrong answers. For each of these questions you can answer on a scale of nought (0) to 10, where nought is 'not at all' and 10 is 'completely'.

10. Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday? Where nought is 'not at all happy' and 10 is 'completely happy'

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

11. On a scale where nought is 'not at all anxious' and 10 is 'completely anxious', overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

That's it! Many thanks for your time. Please hand this survey back to the person running the session.

I hope you enjoy the workshops.



### 12.5.2. Questions asked in the end of programme survey (0-5 version)

Thinking about all the “Birth to Five” workshops you have been to (not just the one today) please answer the following questions.

All your answers will be treated as confidential and anonymous.

- Here are some things said by parents who have a child aged 0-5 with a disability or additional need, or who are concerned about their child’s development. How much do you agree or disagree with them?

	<i>Please tick one box per statement</i>					
	I agree strongly	I agree	I neither agree nor disagree	I disagree	I disagree strongly	I don't know
“I don’t know what to do when my child starts behaving badly”						
“I feel alone and don’t know anyone in a similar situation as me”						
“When talking to professionals, I don’t feel confident that I can stand up for myself and my child”						

- Please only answer this question **if you did not** use childcare for your child aged 0-5 prior to attending the workshops. **How likely** are you to use formal childcare in the future (such as a childminder, nursery or pre-school)? (where 1 is very unlikely, and 9 is very likely).

*Please tick one box*

<i>Very unlikely</i>		<i>Unlikely</i>		<i>Not sure</i>		<i>Likely</i>		<i>Very likely</i>
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

3. To help us compare answers before and after the workshops, please provide the following information

What is the first letter of your first name? (e.g. if your name is Jane you would answer J)

What day of the month is your birthday (e.g. if your birthday was on the 18th November, you would answer 18)

Answer here

That's it! Many thanks for your time. Please hand this survey back to the person running the session.

I hope you enjoyed the workshops.

### 12.5.3. Follow up survey (English version)

Thank you for opening this survey for parents who have attended Contact's Early Years Workshops. Your answers will help Contact understand how best it can continue to support parents of young children who are disabled or who have additional needs.

The survey only takes a few minutes to complete. To say thank you, once you have completed the survey you will be invited to enter a prize draw to win one of two £30 Love2Shop vouchers.

Your answers will be treated as confidential and anonymous. The survey does not ask for your name (although we will ask for contact number or email if you would like to be entered into the prize draw).

Thanks again

Richard Donaldson

Fiveways NP – an independent research company appointed by Contact to conduct this research.

1. Where did you attend the Contact workshops?

2. To help us compare answers before and after the workshops, please provide the following information.

- What is the first letter of your first name? (e.g. if your name is Jane you would answer J)
- What day of the month is your birthday? (e.g. if your birthday was on the 18th November, you would answer 18)

4. Which of the following subjects did you cover on the workshops? Please tick all that apply and, if you attended every workshop, please tick all options.

- Information about local support services
- Communication skills to get what you need for your child
- Information on how to encourage positive behaviour
- Information on financial benefits and support (i.e. money matters)
- Understanding sleep
- Finding support for yourself

5. Which of the following statements best describes your situation?

- I have a child aged 0-5<sup>23</sup> who has been diagnosed with a disability or additional need
- I have a child aged 0-5, they have not had a diagnosis but I am concerned about their development

*If you have more than one child aged 0-5 that you are concerned about, or who has a disability or additional need, please answer these questions thinking about the older child*

6. How old is your child with a diagnosis or that you are concerned about? (in whole years)

7. Below is a list of support services available to parents of children aged 0-5 who are concerned about their child's development, or whose child has a disability or additional need.

Please tell us if you and your child have used them, have tried to use them (but haven't), or have never tried to use them. [options = We have used this service, we have tried to use this service, (but haven't), We have never tried to use this service]

- Speech and Language Therapy (SALT)
- Bladder and bowel support/Continence Service
- Paediatrician
- Portage (home-visiting educational service)
- The Contact freephone helpline
- Family Information Service
- Special Educational Needs Information Advice Service (SENDias)
- Local support groups
- Local parent carer forum
- Other services in your local authority's "local offer"

8. Here is a list of childcare options. Thinking about your child with a disability or additional need, or who you are concerned about, please tell us if you and your child currently uses them, have used them in the past (but not now), have tried to use them (but haven't), or have never tried to use them. [Options = We currently use this, we have used this in the past but not now, we have tried to use this, we have never tried to use this]

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<sup>23</sup> The age ranges were amended for those workshops attended by parents of a wider age group

- A childminder
- A day nursery
- A pre-school or playgroup
- Childcare in your own home (e.g. a nanny or home childcarer)
- Children's Centre

9. If you do currently use any of those childcare options, roughly how many hours a week is your child in childcare? (Please leave blank if you do not use childcare)

10. If you don't currently use childcare, please let us know the reasons why not?

11. Below is a list of financial benefits. Please tell us if, since the birth of your child aged 0-5 who has a disability or additional need, or who you are concerned about, you have received this benefit, have applied for it (but not received it), or have never applied for it. [Options =We have received this, we have applied for it but not received it, we have never applied for it]

- DLA
- Universal credit
- Carers allowance
- Child tax credit (including childcare element)
- Blue badge
- A one-off grant (e.g. equipment or help with specific expenses)

Thank you for your answers so far. You are already about half way through the survey and there are just a few more questions to go.

Remember at the end of the survey you will be invited to take part in a prize draw to win one of two prizes of £30 Love2Shop vouchers.

Next, we would like to ask you two questions about your feelings on aspects of your life. There are no right or wrong answers. For each of these questions you can answer on a scale of nought (0) to 10, where nought is 'not at all' and 10 is 'completely'.

12. Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday? Where nought is 'not at all happy' and 10 is 'completely happy'

13. On a scale where nought is 'not at all anxious' and 10 is 'completely anxious', overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?

14. How much would you agree with the statement "The workshops made a positive difference to me and my family" [Options - Strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, strongly disagree]

15. Please tell us a little bit more about how the workshops made a positive difference to you and your family

16. Please tell us a little more about why you feel the workshops did not make positive difference to you or your family

17. Here are some statements made by parents about Contact's Early Years workshops – how much do you agree or disagree with them? [Options - Strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, strongly disagree]

- "I would recommend the workshops to other families in a similar situation to mine"
- "The information and advice I received on the workshops was useful"
- "I have used the approaches to handle my child's challenging behaviour that were discussed at the workshops"
- "The workshops exceeded my expectations"

18. As a charity, Contact are always looking at ways to improve their services to parents. If you have any suggestions on how they can improve the early years workshops, please tell us in the box below.

19. We would like to speak in more detail with some parents about how things have changed following the workshops. Would you be willing to speak to someone over the phone for about 15 or 20 minutes at a convenient time in the next two or three weeks?

- Yes > Thank you – please enter your email address/mobile number here and one of our researchers will be in touch to arrange a convenient time to speak.
- No

#### How we process your data

This survey is conducted by Fiveways NP on behalf of a charity. The charity is very grateful for your support with this important research and can assure you that your responses to this survey will remain confidential.

Providing your email address or mobile number is optional, by doing so you consent with your personal data being processed as described below.

As personal data, your email address will be kept securely and password protected. It will only be used in relation to this research project and not be passed to anyone else. Only Fiveways, the researchers selected by the charity can access the survey data to analyse the results. (See [www.fivewaysnp.com](http://www.fivewaysnp.com))

This survey uses software called Survey Monkey. Your answers to the survey, including your email address or mobile number if you choose to provide it, will be stored temporarily on Survey Monkey's data servers in America.

Once the research is completed (early 2018) all personal data will be deleted.

20. As a thank you for completing this survey we would like to enter you into a draw to win one of two prizes of £30 of Love2Shop vouchers.

Love2Shop vouchers can be redeemed in over 20,000 stores, restaurants and attractions, with over 150 top brands to choose from such as Argos, Debenhams, Iceland, New Look, River Island, TK Maxx, Matalan, Mothercare, Pizza Express, Superdrug and Halfords.

Would you like to be entered into this prize draw?

- Yes > Thank you – please enter your email address/mobile number here and we will enter you in the draw.
- No

21. Thank you again for your time and feedback. Your answers will help Contact understand how best it can support other parents who are concerned about their child's development or whose child has a disability or additional need. If there is anything else you would like to say to Contact about the workshops please add it here.

## **12.6. Comparison group surveys**

### **12.6.1. Baseline survey**

Thank you for opening this survey. This research is for a charity that helps parents who are concerned about their child's development or whose child has a disability or additional need.

Your answers will help the charity understand how best it can support parents of children aged 0-5.

The survey only takes a few minutes to complete. To say thank you, once you have completed the survey you will be invited to enter a prize draw to win one of two £50 Love2Shop vouchers.

Your answers will be treated as confidential and anonymous. The survey does not ask for your name (although we will ask for contact number or email if you would like to be entered into the prize draw).

Thanks again

Richard Donaldson

Fiveways NP – an independent research company appointed by the charity to conduct this research.

1. Do you have a child aged 0-5 who has been diagnosed with a disability or an additional need?

*(if you have more than one child aged 0-5 who has been diagnosed with a disability or additional need please answer these questions thinking about the older child)*

- Yes
- No

2. How old is your child with a diagnosis? (in whole years)

3. Do you have a child aged 0-5 and you are concerned about their development? *(if you have more than one child aged 0-5 that you are concerned about, please answer these questions thinking about the older child)*

- Yes
- No

4. How old is your child you are concerned about? (in whole years)

5. Have you ever been in touch with the charity Contact (previously called Contact a Family) either by phone or in person?

- Yes
- No

6. Below is a list of support services available to parents of children aged 0-5 who are concerned about their child's development, or whose child has a disability or additional need. Please tell us if you and your child have used them, have tried to use them (but haven't), or have never tried to use them. [Options: We have used this service, we have tried to use this service (but haven't), We have never tried to use this service]

- Speech and Language Therapy (SALT)
- Bladder and bowel support/Continence Service
- Paediatrician
- Portage (home-visiting educational service)
- Family Information Service
- Special Educational Needs Information Advice Service (SENDias)
- Local support groups
- Local parent carer forum
- Other services in your local authority's "local offer"

7. Here is a list of childcare options. Thinking about your child with a disability or additional need, or who you are concerned about, please tell us if you and your child currently uses them, have used them in the past (but not now), have tried to use them (but haven't), or have never tried to use them. [Options: We currently use this, we have used this in the past but not now We have tried to use this, we have never tried to use this]

- A childminder
- A day nursery
- A pre-school or playgroup
- Childcare in your own home (e.g. a nanny or home childcarer)
- Children's Centre

8. If you do currently use any of those childcare options, roughly how many hours a week is your child in childcare? (Please leave blank if you do not use childcare)

9. If you don't currently use childcare, how likely are you to use formal childcare in the future (such as a childminder, nursery or pre-school)?

Choose a number from the list below where 1 is *very unlikely* to use formal childcare, and 9 is *very likely* to use formal childcare). Please tick one box [Leave blank if you do use childcare]

Thank you for your answers so far. You are already about half way through the survey and there are just a few more questions to go.

Remember at the end of the survey you will be invited to take part in a prize draw to win one of two prizes of £50 Love2Shop vouchers.

10. Below is a list of financial benefits. Please tell us if, since the birth of your child aged 0-5 who has a disability or additional need, or who you are concerned about, you have received this benefit, have applied for it (but not received it), or have never applied for it. [Options: We have received this, we have applied for it but not received it We have never applied for it]

- DLA
- Universal credit
- Carers allowance
- Child tax credit (including childcare element)
- Blue badge
- A one-off grant (e.g. equipment or help with specific expenses)

11. Here are some things said by parents who have a child aged 0-5 with a disability or additional need, or who are concerned about their child's development. How much do you agree or disagree with them? [Options: I agree strongly, I agree, I neither agree nor disagree I disagree, I disagree strongly, I don't know/not applicable]

- "I don't know what to do when my child starts behaving badly"
- "I feel alone and don't know anyone in a similar situation as me"
- "When talking to professionals, I don't feel confident that I can stand up for myself and my child"

Next, we would like to ask you two questions about your feelings on aspects of your life. There are no right or wrong answers. For each of these questions you can answer on a scale of nought (0) to 10, where nought is 'not at all' and 10 is 'completely'.

12. Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday? Where nought is 'not at all happy' and 10 is 'completely happy'

13. On a scale where nought is 'not at all anxious' and 10 is 'completely anxious', overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?

As a thank you for completing this survey we would like to enter you into a draw to win one of two prizes of £50 of Love2Shop vouchers. Love2Shop vouchers can be redeemed in over 20,000 stores, restaurants and attractions, with over 150 top brands to choose from such as Argos,



Debenhams, Iceland, New Look, River Island, TK Maxx, Matalan, Mothercare, Pizza Express, Superdrug and Halfords.

14. Would you like to be entered into this prize draw?

- Yes
- No

15. Thank you – so we can enter you into the draw, please enter your email address and/or mobile number here.

- Email
- Mobile number

How we process your data

This survey is conducted by Fiveways NP on behalf of a charity. The charity is very grateful for your support with this important research and can assure you that your responses to this survey will remain confidential.

Providing your email address or mobile number is optional, by doing so you consent with your personal data being processed as described below.

As personal data, your email address will be kept securely and password protected. It will only be used in relation to this research project and not be passed to anyone else. Only Fiveways, the researchers selected by the charity can access the survey data to analyse the results. (See [www.fivewaysnp.com](http://www.fivewaysnp.com))

This survey uses software called Survey Monkey. Your answers to the survey, including your email address or mobile number if you choose to provide it, will be stored temporarily on Survey Monkey's data servers in America.

Once the research is completed (early 2018) all personal data will be deleted. Thanks again for helping us. Your answers will help the charity understand how best it can support parents who are concerned about their child's development or whose child has a disability or additional need.

16. Thank you. We would like to send you another, similar survey to complete in about 10 weeks' time.

If you complete that survey you will personally receive a £10 Love2shop voucher.

Would you be happy for us to send you another survey by email in around 10 weeks' time?

- Yes
- No

17. To help us compare answers to the next survey with this one, please provide the following information.

- What is the first letter of your first name? (e.g. if your name is Jane you would answer J)

- What day of the month is your birthday? (e.g. if your birthday was on the 18th November, you would answer 18)

Thank you very much, we will be in touch with the second survey in around ten weeks time.

Thanks again for helping us. Your answers will help the charity understand how best it can support parents who are concerned about their child's development or whose child has a disability or additional need.

[If not being followed up] Thank you. This survey was conducted on behalf of Contact, the charity for families with disabled children. They support families with the best possible guidance and information. They bring families together to support each other, and help families to campaign, volunteer and fundraise to improve life for themselves and others.

The Contact helpline offers families confidential advice on any issue around raising a disabled child including:

- benefits and sources of financial help
- education advice for additional needs
- sources of support - including groups set up by parents
- services that you might be entitled to - for example, aids and equipment.

If you would like to talk to one of Contact's parent advisers please call 0808 808 3555, 9.30am-5pm, Monday-Friday; free from UK landlines and UK mobiles.

The charity's website ([www.contact.org.uk](http://www.contact.org.uk)) also has information on issues such as education, benefits and family life, and parent resources that cover a range of topics including health and social care services.

[If not eligible] This piece of research is aimed at parents who have a child aged 0-5 who has been diagnosed with a disability or additional need, or parents who have a child aged 0-5 whom are concerned about their child's development. It is also aimed at those parents who have not, as yet, received a service from the charity Contact (previously Contact a Family).

As your answers tell us that you do not fit into this group, the remaining questions will not apply to you.

However, you might still be interested in information and advice from Contact, the charity for families with disabled children.

Contact supports families with the best possible guidance and information. They bring families together to support each other, and help families to campaign, volunteer and fundraise to improve life for themselves and others.

The Contact helpline offers families confidential advice on any issue around raising a disabled child including:

- benefits and sources of financial help
- education advice for additional needs
- sources of support - including groups set up by parents

- services that you might be entitled to - for example, aids and equipment.

If you would like to talk to one of Contact's parent advisers please call 0808 808 3555, 9.30am-5pm, Monday-Friday; free from UK landlines and UK mobiles. The charity's website ([www.contact.org.uk](http://www.contact.org.uk)) also has information on issues such as education, benefits and family life, and parent resources that cover a range of topics including health and social care services.

Thank you so much for making the effort to start this survey.

That's it! Thank you very much for completing this survey.

Please click "Done" to submit your answers results and enter the survey

### **12.6.2. Follow up survey**

Thank you for opening this survey. It is a follow-up to a survey you kindly completed a few weeks ago. This research is for a charity that helps parents who are concerned about their child's development or whose child has a disability or additional need.

Your answers will help the charity understand how best it can support parents of children aged 0-5. The survey only takes a few minutes to complete.

If you have more than one child aged 0-5 that you are concerned about, or who has a disability or additional need, please answer these questions thinking about the older child.

Thanks again

Richard Donaldson

Fiveways NP – an independent research company appointed by the charity to conduct this research.

Those who complete all the questions in the survey will be sent a £10 Love2Shop voucher as a thank you.

1. To help us compare answers to this survey to the last one you completed, please provide the following information

- What is the first letter of your first name? (e.g. if your name is Jane you would answer J)
- What day of the month is your birthday? (e.g. if your birthday was on the 18th November, you would answer 18)

2. Below is a list of support services available to parents of children aged 0-5 who are concerned about their child's development, or whose child has a disability or additional need. Please tell us if you and your child have used them, have tried to use them (but haven't), or have never tried to use them. [Options: We have used this service, we have tried to use this service (but haven't), We have never tried to use this service]

- Speech and Language Therapy (SALT)
- Bladder and bowel support/Continence Service
- Paediatrician
- Portage (home-visiting educational service)

- The Contact freephone helpline
- Family Information Service
- Special Educational Needs Information Advice Service (SENDias)
- Local support groups
- Local parent carer forum
- Other services in your local authority's "local offer"

3. Here is a list of childcare options. Thinking about your child with a disability or additional need, or who you are concerned about, please tell us if you and your child currently uses them, have used them in the past (but not now), have tried to use them (but haven't), or have never tried to use them. [Options: We currently use this, we have used this in the past but not now We have tried to use this, we have never tried to use this]

- A childminder
- A day nursery
- A pre-school or playgroup
- Childcare in your own home (e.g. a nanny or home childcarer)
- Children's Centre

4. If you do currently use any of those childcare options, roughly how many hours a week is your child in childcare? (Please leave blank if you do not use childcare)

5. If you don't currently use childcare, how likely are you to use formal childcare in the future (such as a childminder, nursery or pre-school)?

Choose a number from the list below where 1 is very unlikely to use formal childcare, and 9 is very likely to use formal childcare). Please tick one box [Leave blank if you do use childcare]

6. If you don't currently use childcare, please let us know the reasons why not? - Please leave blank if you do use childcare.

7. Below is a list of financial benefits. Please tell us if, since the birth of your child aged 0-5 who has a disability or additional need, or who you are concerned about, you have received this benefit, have applied for it (but not received it), or have never applied for it. [Options: We have received this, we have applied for it but not received it We have never applied for it]

- DLA
- Universal credit
- Carers allowance
- Child tax credit (including childcare element)
- Blue badge
- A one-off grant (e.g. equipment or help with specific expenses)

8. Here are some things said by parents who have a child aged 0-5 with a disability or additional need, or who are concerned about their child's development. How much do you agree or disagree with them? [Options: I agree strongly, I agree, I neither agree nor disagree I disagree, I disagree strongly, I don't know/not applicable]

- “I don’t know what to do when my child starts behaving badly”
- “I feel alone and don’t know anyone in a similar situation as me”
- “When talking to professionals, I don’t feel confident that I can stand up for myself and my child”

9. Next, we would like to ask you two questions about your feelings on aspects of your life. There are no right or wrong answers. For each of these questions you can answer on a scale of nought (0) to 10, where nought is ‘not at all’ and 10 is ‘completely’.

- Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday? Where nought is ‘not at all happy’ and 10 is ‘completely happy’
- On a scale where nought is ‘not at all anxious’ and 10 is ‘completely anxious’, overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?

10. If you have completed all the questions in this survey, we will send you a £10 Love2Shop voucher. Love2Shop vouchers can be redeemed in over 20,000 stores, restaurants and attractions, with over 150 top brands to choose from such as Argos, Debenhams, Iceland, New Look, River Island, TK Maxx, Matalan, Mothercare, Pizza Express, Superdrug and Halfords.

To do this we need your name, email address and postal address to send them to – please complete the boxes below.

How we process your data

This survey is conducted by Fiveways NP on behalf of a charity. The charity is very grateful for your support with this important research and can assure you that your responses to this survey will remain confidential.

Providing your email and postal addresses is optional, by doing so you consent with your personal data being processed as described below.

As personal data, your addresses will be kept securely and password protected. It will only be used in relation to this research project and not be passed to anyone else. Only Fiveways, the researchers selected by the charity can access the survey data to analyse the results. (See [www.fivewaysnp.com](http://www.fivewaysnp.com))

This survey uses software called Survey Monkey. Your answers to the survey, including your email address or mobile number if you choose to provide it, will be stored temporarily on Survey Monkey’s data servers in America.

Once the research is completed (mid 2018) all personal data will be deleted.

These surveys were conducted on behalf of Contact, the charity for families with disabled children. They support families with the best possible guidance and information. They bring families together to support each other, and help families to campaign, volunteer and fundraise to improve life for themselves and others.

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The charity's website ([www.contact.org.uk](http://www.contact.org.uk)) also has information on issues such as education, benefits and family life, and parent resources that cover a range of topics including health and social care services.

Thank you for completing these surveys.

## 12.7. Fiveways' "Value Creation" framework

Fiveways use a "Value Creation" approach to define and structure the outcomes to be measured in an evaluation.

As summarised in the table below, Contact's programme aims to generate five different types of "value". This evaluation was primarily concerned with three of them: "potential", "applied" and "realised" value.

Value being created	Key question(s)	Measured by (for example)	Type
Immediate	What activities happened? What are people's experience of them?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of workshops</li> <li>• Attendee satisfaction</li> </ul>	Output
Potential	What difference has the programme made to what those that attend <b>think and feel</b> ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes and intention</li> </ul>	Outcome
Applied	What difference has the programme made to what those that attend <b>do</b> ?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes in behaviours (i.e. actions taken)</li> </ul>	Outcome
Realised	What difference has the programme made to achieving its desired objective?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased use of support services</li> <li>• Increased take up of childcare</li> <li>• Increased take up of benefits</li> <li>• Improved parental well-being</li> </ul>	Outcome
Transformative	What difference has been made to the wider environment/context?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Changes in policy context</li> <li>• Changes to accessibility of service/childcare provision</li> <li>• Accessing education/employment</li> </ul>	Impact