



**Ards and North Down LPG
Direct Participation
Exercise Report**

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Background

CYPSP have commissioned Parenting NI to carry out a number of engagement exercises in-line with their strategy for Parental Participation in order to ensure that the voice of parents inform and have a voice in planning support and services in their local area.

A parent participation exercise was identified to take place within the South Eastern Trust area to get views and feedback from parents on the services that are provided in the local area and what as parents and families would help support them.

In collaboration with the CYPSP staff and Chair of the Ards and North Down Locality Planning Group a questionnaire was developed to gain the relevant information from the participants to enable the planning and delivery of initiatives to improve the lives of children living in the Ards and North Down Area.

Survey Findings

The 31 participants completed the questionnaire and had a total of 65 children ranging in age from a few months old to over 18 years old. The children from the 31 participants were in nursery/preschool, primary school, secondary school and post secondary school.

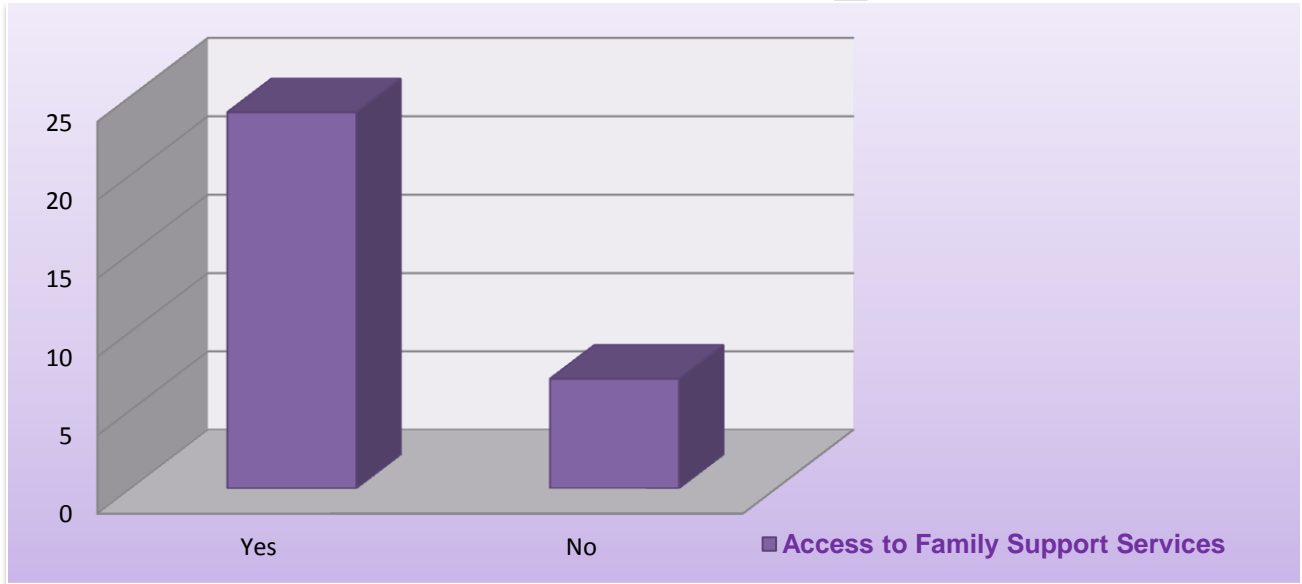
Demographic overview and details of participant's

Demographic Details	Numbers
Male	3
Female	28
Age Band	
19-30	7
31-50	22
51-65	2
Number of children	65
0-5	30
6-11	10
12-18	3
18+	9
<i>9 children were not categorised by their age</i>	
Child disabled and/or additional needs	2
Area lived in	
Ards	20
North Down	9
Other	2

Two participants had a child with a disability/ additional needs/ special education needs they provided these details:

- Asperger's
- Learning - additional need

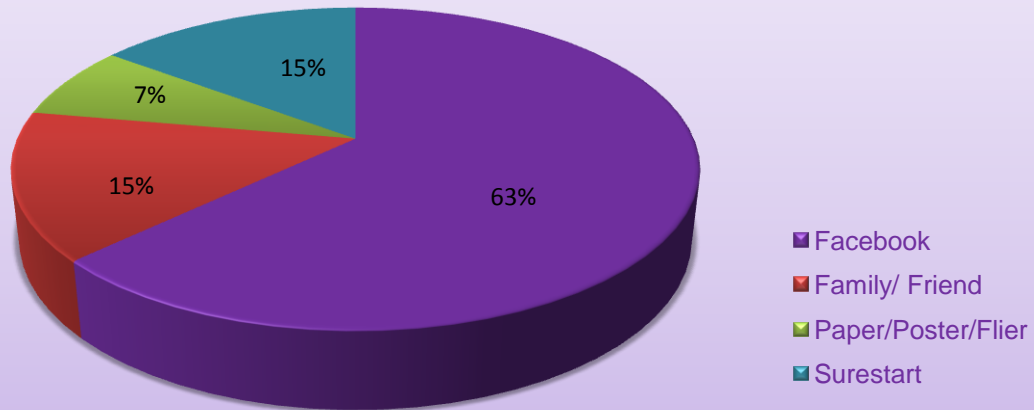
Are you able to access family support services, programmes, information services, events in your area?



Participants also commented on the difficulties they had accessing services, which were:

- There's not much in my area (that I know of)
- Childcare/Doctors
- Haven't heard of services

How did you find out about today's event?



What would you suggest to help improve your local area to support you and your families' health, education and wellbeing?

Participant's feedback to this included:

- We are a local football club and the prices of Londonderry Park are scandalous need to reduce them, it would encourage more teams to use their local area.
- Few more events in the evening especially in winter
- Council buildings closed on Sundays in Ards, pools closed Ards borough council needs to be brought up to 2017.
- Well equipped where I live, there are outside activities, primary school, football, the community officer is good (Westwinds).
- Opportunities for the family to all learn/have fun from each group session.
- Summer Programmes
- Parenting programmes for my area.
- Palypark in Scrabo estate
- Outdoor forest parks, doctors, street litter.
- Parks could be cleaner especially Westwinds.
- More baby groups
- More activities for children between 2-13.

- Parks always full of young people and smashed bottled, one time there was glass superglued to the bottom of the slide.
- More for under 2's.
- More access to mother and toddlers outside certain postcodes as these mummies need company and support too.
- More spaces for kids with working parents and more play spaces.
- Summer schemes – community centre at Breezemount
- Play area needs tidied up more classes for adults in the community centre.
- Information
- More summer programmes, play spaces and training for parents (homework, stress etc).

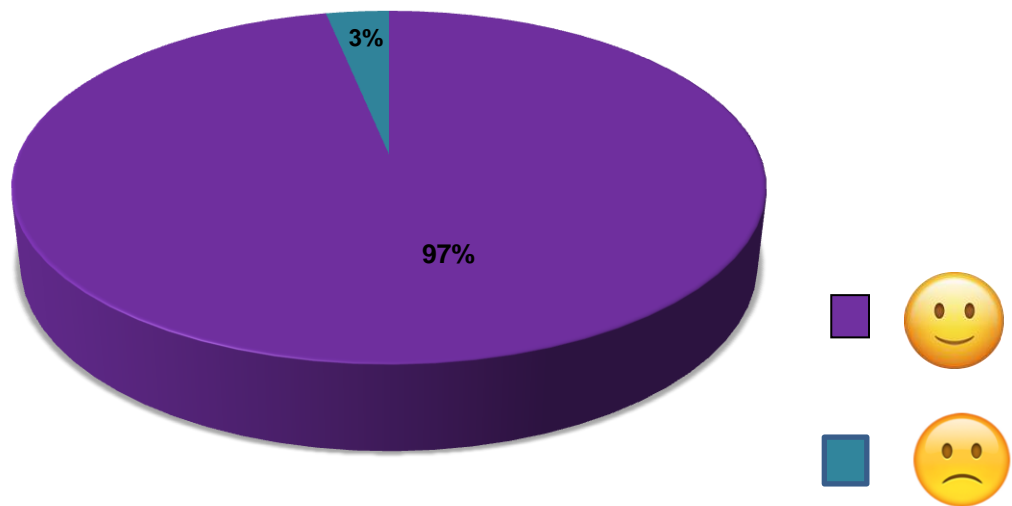
What did you enjoy most about the Family Fun Day?

- Free for everyone to enjoy. Kids had a blast.
- Lots of nice free stuff.
- Information.
- Lots to do and very welcoming.
- Kids enjoyed the puppet show.
- My son enjoyed the football most.
- Loved it all kids had a ball, Thank you!
- Everything is free and so many activities for children, which is unusual.
- Lots of information available.
- There was plenty to do for everyone. Well done you guys!!
- Face painting, police interacting with the kids.
- Children's activities.
- Getting information on different activities e.g. boxercise.
- Time to spend with the family.
- Everything was awesome.
- Bouncy castle.
- How engaging the services were to discuss what they offer.
- Cup of tea and all different stalls.
- Smell of burgers.

What could we have done better during the Family Fun Day?

- Nothing, all good.
- All good.
- Fantastic day.
- More stuff for babies.
- Nothing, as it was a brilliant day Thank you.
- Nothing, maybe more advertising.
- Nothing, everything was great.
- Signs for registration clearer.
- Sorted the sunshine – only joking.
- More activities.
- Thought it all went well.

Overall how would you rate this event



Any further comments:

Look forward to the next one!

Great!!

Lovely afternoon, better if schools were off as various school pick ups. Sunday events.

Well done more of these

Great day – Lots for kids to fo and great for parents as free!!

Brilliant – Thank you!!

Very good well organised.

Had a super day child enjoyed it thank you very much.

Great day for all the family 😊

Great day!

Limited activities apart from football and bouncy castle.

Conclusion

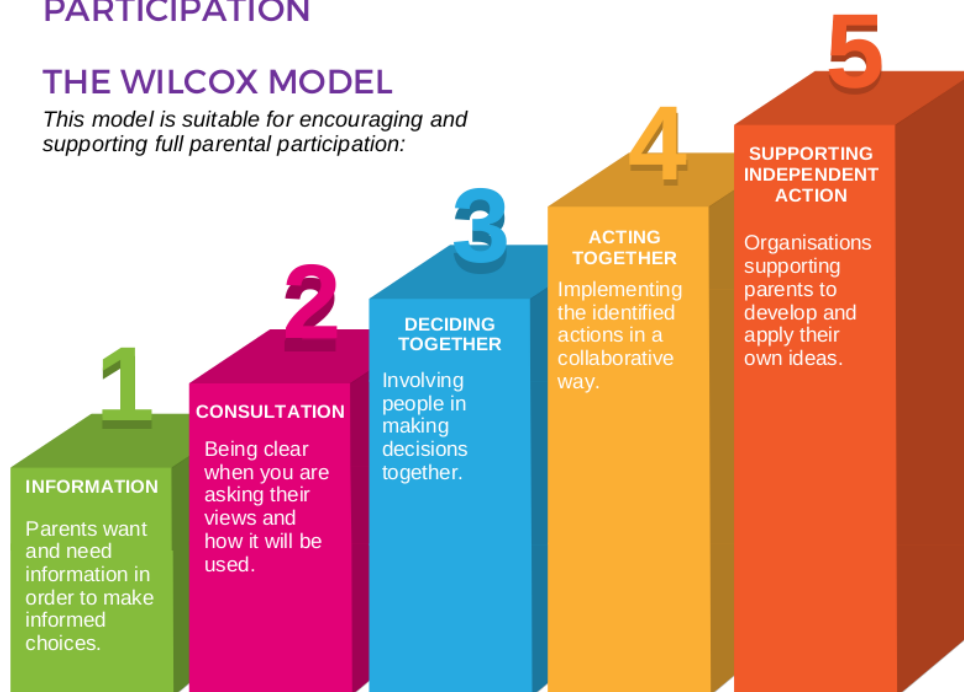
The report includes the feedback and opinions of the participants who completed the questionnaire.

This direct parental participation exercise was extremely successful and with the family fun day having such good attendance this ensured there was a wide range of participants engaged in the exercise to gain important feedback; for the Ards and North Down Locality Planning Group. This feedback highlights the issues arising from the local parents/ carers and this should directly influence and help inform and the Ards and North Down Locality Planning Group to implement the recommendations for support and services being planned. This direct participation exercise has successfully enabled level one of the Wilcox Model to be applied and directly engage the parents into the CYPSP structure. To further develop this parental participation with the Ards and North Down Locality Planning group taking the findings of this exercise to develop a further engagement with focus groups with parents to then be able to get more in depth detail would be extremely advantageous for this group to enable the best coordination of children's services planning.

FIVE STEPS TO PARENTAL PARTICIPATION

THE WILCOX MODEL

This model is suitable for encouraging and supporting full parental participation:



Parenting NI

Parenting NI is the lead voluntary organisation which focuses on parents. The mission of the organisation is to support families. We work with parents to improve outcomes for children and young people and to influence policy and practice on parenting. The work is based on the principle that by empowering and working with parents, outcomes for children are improved.

There are four key areas of Parenting NI's work:

- ▶ **Parents Helpline** - The Parenting NI Helpline offers a freephone service based here in Northern Ireland. The team who offer this bespoke service have been specifically chosen to ensure that all callers receive the most appropriate support and guidance in relation to family issues or if simply wishing to book into up and coming programmes.
- ▶ **Parents Counselling / Face to Face appointments** - Face to Face Support focuses on finding realistic, manageable solutions for the parent and their family, empowering them to meet their own needs and goals. We offer a confidential, professional service, in a warm, friendly atmosphere, where the parent will be listened to and given space to explore any issues relating to parenting.
- ▶ **Parental Participation** - We have been engaging parents through consultation since 1999. The consultation process is an important opportunity for parents to share their views. In consulting with parents it enables us to highlight the key issues and needs of parents in order to influence policy, planning and service delivery.
- ▶ **Parenting Programmes** - We offer a range of parenting programmes throughout Northern Ireland to help you build on parents skills and knowledge about parenting.

Parenting NI has been advocating on behalf of parents since 1979, and are keen to ensure that the views of parents are taken seriously in the planning and delivery of all services for children in Northern Ireland.

Seeking parental feedback is now an integral part of the work Parenting NI, and as such the organisation has developed an effective methodology to carry out such consultations. It is important that parents are confident that the consultation process is worthwhile and that they feel comfortable sharing their views. Consultation with parents requires skilled and experienced facilitators who are capable of working sensitively with diverse groups.

If any parent indicates distress or the need for support during a consultation process, Parenting NI Facilitators can signpost them to the free Parenting NI telephone helpline service (0808 8010 722), or to other support services as appropriate.

Parenting NI responds regularly to various government strategies and policies and as such produce organisational responses. However, when we undertake consultations with parents our facilitators remain impartial and independent.

This report provides an accurate summary of what was provided from the participant's feedback when completing the questionnaire and has not been influenced by any organisational views on the subject in question.

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