



# **Evaluation of the Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities Programme 2005/6 and 2006/7**

**Full Report**

**Jenny Wilding and Mark Barton**

**Evaluation of the Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities  
Programme 2005/6 and 2006/7**

Full Report

ISBN 978 1 873912 77 3

© Race Equality Foundation  
January 2009

Race Equality Foundation, Unit 35 Kings Exchange, Tileyard Road, London N7 9AH.

# Contents

|                   |  | <b>Page</b> |
|-------------------|--|-------------|
|                   | Acknowledgements   |             |
|                   | Executive Summary  | 1           |
| Section One       | Introduction   | 6           |
| Section Two       | The Evaluation Methodology   | 9           |
| Section Three     | The Reach of the Programme: Locations, Agencies and Course Details               | 13          |
| Section Four      | The Reach of the Programme: The Participants                                     | 17          |
| Section Five      | Fidelity of Delivery of the Programme  | 31          |
| Section Six       | Course Attendance  | 36          |
| Section Seven     | The Participants' Views of the Programme and Future Plans                        | 40          |
| Section Eight     | Impact of the Programme on the Participants and their Children                   | 45          |
| Section Nine      | Conclusions  | 58          |
|                   | References   | 62          |
| <b>Appendices</b> |  |             |
| Appendix 1.       | Responses to the Pre and Post Assessment Questionnaires                          | 63          |
| Appendix 2.       | Statistical Tests on the Responses to the Pre and Post Assessment Questionnaires | 77          |

## Acknowledgements

We would like to thank everyone who contributed to the evaluation:

- All the participants and facilitators who took time to complete the forms and questionnaires that formed the basis of the evaluation. We trust that we have represented their views fairly and accurately.
- Jabeer Butt, Deputy Chief Executive of the Race Equality Foundation, who commissioned us to undertake the analysis of the data and advised us on what was required.
- Leandra Box, Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities Programme Manager at the Race Equality Foundation.
- Yangna Li, Lauren Ashi and Azim Mirza who undertook the data input and made corrections to the data.

Mark Barton and Jenny Wilding

March 2009

## About the Race Equality Foundation

The Race Equality Foundation promotes race equality in social support (what families and friends do for each other) and social care (what 'workers' do for people who need support).

- We do this by exploring what is known about discrimination and disadvantage.
- We develop interventions that will overcome barriers and promote equality.
- We disseminate good practice through training, conferences and written material.

We are a registered charity and more information is available at

[www.raceequalityfoundation.org.uk](http://www.raceequalityfoundation.org.uk).

## About Research Plus

**Research Plus+** is a Norfolk based independent research and consultancy organisation. It specialises in undertaking research and evaluation on contemporary social issues and business research. It carries out projects for voluntary, statutory and commercial organisations both locally and nationally. It has experience of evaluating projects from a number of perspectives and of measuring performance against agreed standards.

Projects undertaken cover a wide range of topics including parenting programmes, housing, criminal justice, substance misuse, mental health, carers, health promotion, work related stress, sexual health, teenage pregnancy and disability. Most of the work has been used to inform the development of organisations' policies and practices.

For further details visit the **Research Plus+** website: [www.research-plus.co.uk](http://www.research-plus.co.uk)

# Executive Summary

## 1. Introduction

- This report presents the findings of the evaluation of the Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities parenting courses held over two years, between April 2005 and March 2007. This programme is based on a culturally sensitive curriculum originally developed in the USA in the early 1990s.
- The programme is designed for parents / carers with children aged three to eighteen years. It consists of an introductory session followed by 12 three hour sessions held on consecutive weeks. Information is presented within a cultural framework covering five areas: cultural / spiritual, rites of passage, positive discipline, enhancing relationships / violence prevention and community involvement. The course is designed to enhance parent competence, parent / child interactions, child competence, parent relationships and community involvement. The course is based on developing the participants' strengths using a facilitative approach.

## 2. The Evaluation Methodology

### 2a. The Evaluation Design

- As part of the programme's built in evaluation process a Course Summary Report (CSR) was completed on each course by the course facilitator(s) and three forms were completed on or by the individual participants.
- The facilitator completed the CSR at the end of the course. It provided a combination of quantitative and qualitative information on the course and the participants. Three forms were completed on individual participants – a registration form completed by the course facilitator, a pre course assessment questionnaire and a post course assessment questionnaire, both completed by the participant her/himself. The pre and post course assessment questionnaires were designed to measure whether there were any differences in the participants' responses to a series of statements before and after attending the course. The questionnaires covered community activities, participant / child interactions, participant competence and child competence.

### 2b. Information Available for the Evaluation

- Information was provided on 205 courses and there was a CSR for 204 of them.
- Data on individual participants was provided for 152 (74%) of the courses.
- Forms were provided on a total of 1,919 individual participants:
  - Registration forms were provided for 1,748 participants (91%).
  - All three forms were provided for 874 (46%) of the participants.
  - Both the pre and post course forms, but no registration forms, were returned for an additional 23 participants (1%).
- Therefore, a total of 897 (47%) of the 1,919 participants completed both the pre and post course assessment questionnaires. This 'paired sample' was used to assess the impact of the course in terms of quantitative changes in the participants and their 1,249 children.

## **2c. Limitations of the Data**

- A strength of this evaluation model is that the information required for the evaluation was built into the process of running the course. However, in practice there were a number of limitations, including:
  - There were difficulties in ensuring that all the required forms were completed and returned to the Race Equality Foundation.
  - Some of the forms that were returned were not fully completed.
  - This evaluation model mainly focuses on those who successfully completed the course and provides only limited information on participants who dropped out of the course.
  - As the data was incomplete, it was not possible to use the information from the registration forms and the pre course assessment questionnaires to compare the characteristics of those who dropped out with those who successfully completed the course.
- The evaluation design provided information to evaluate the programme in terms of process, outputs and immediate outcomes. The design did not cover medium or longer term outcomes and there was no control group to compare the results against.
- Although the data was incomplete, a wealth of information was provided on a large number of participants and courses. This evaluation was therefore based on a much larger number of participants than has been possible with a single UK based parenting course to date. The results are therefore less likely to be due to chance. In addition many of the results are similar to those found for the evaluation of the 2004/5 programme, which further validate the findings of this report.

## **3. Reach of the Programme: Locations, Agencies and Course Details**

- Courses were held in all of the nine English regions, except North East England. Around two thirds of the courses were held in London.
- The courses were run by a wide range of agencies – voluntary, statutory and partnership organisations, and community groups. During the two years a number of new agencies became involved with the programme.
- Each broad type of agency was able to access a range of ethnic groups. In some cases, where courses were arranged by organisations serving specific ethnic or religious groups, this assisted with recruiting participants from specific ethnic backgrounds.
- The courses were usually held on a weekday morning. This favoured attendance by people who did not work normal office hours.
- Just under half of the courses were targeted at specific groups. This included parents/carers of children at specific schools, specific geographical areas, including Sure Start areas, parents of youth offenders, specific ethnic groups, refugees, single parents and teenage parents.
- The most frequently used methods of recruitment used by the course organisers were flyers / brochures and announcements and by talking to parents / word of mouth. Just over half of the courses also had some parents referred to them by agencies.

## **4. Reach of the Programme: The Participants**

### **4.1 Overview**

- The courses reached a wide range of ethnic groups and 86% of the courses had participants from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. Overall, 61% of the participants were of black and minority ethnic origin: over a quarter of the participants were 'Black' or 'Black British', 20% were 'Asian' or 'Asian British', and the remaining 14% were of 'Chinese', 'Mixed Heritage', 'Middle Eastern' or 'Other' ethnicity.
- The courses included people from a wide range of countries of origin as well as people who were born in the UK and there were participants from some new countries, which did not feature in the previous evaluation.
- Over a third of the participants had a first language other than English. A total of 46 languages were mentioned as a first language.
- The participants had achieved a range of educational levels. They also had a range of annual household incomes but these were concentrated in the lower income bands.
- Over half of the participants were living as a two parent family, 43% were a single parent, 3% were grandparents and 3% had 'Other' relationships with the children.
- Just over half of the participants' children were male.
- Nearly a quarter of the participants had attended a parent education course in the past. Most people (84%) stated that they were attending the Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities course to become a better parent, a third said that they were having problems with a child, 10% came with the intention of learning about drugs and violence and 3% were ordered to attend by the court.
- The participants had heard about the course through a variety of methods, but very few had heard about it through a newspaper or the radio.

### **4.2 The male participants**

- Overall 10% of the participants were male and just over half of the courses included at least one male participant. The two agencies that organised courses for the largest number of people (for over 150 participants each), attracted between 15% and 17% male participants onto their courses. These two agencies have been organising Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities courses for a number of years.
- The characteristics of the male participants were examined to see if they were significantly different to the characteristics of the female participants. The most noteworthy differences were in their current status in relation to the children, previous experience of parenting courses, their reasons for taking the course and how they heard about it.

### **4.3 Comparison of the participants by ethnic background**

- The characteristics of the participants were examined by ethnic background to see if there were any significant differences.
- The most noteworthy differences were in the age at which different ethnic groups left school, their current status in relation to the children, previous experience of parenting courses, their reasons for taking the course and how they heard about it.

## **5. Fidelity of Delivery of the Programme**

The Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities Programme clearly states the structure and format for the courses. The fidelity of the delivery of the programme was examined in terms of adherence to the programme format and the curriculum.

### **5.1 Adherence to the programme format**

- **Number of facilitators:** The programme is designed to be run by at least two facilitators for each course. This was adhered to in 99% of cases.
- **Length of the course:** The course is designed for 12 to 14 sessions. Nearly three quarters of the courses complied with this but just over a quarter did not, and most of these had fewer sessions.
- **Number of participants on each course:** Most of the courses had the recommended size of 8 to 20 participants. However, at least 12% were smaller or larger than the recommended size.
- **Ages of the participants' children:** The course is designed for participants with children aged 3 to 18 years. The available figures suggested that at least 90% of the participants on the courses had at least one child aged 3 to 18 years.

### **5.2 Adherence to the curriculum**

- There was evidence that in some cases the curriculum was delivered as specified and that in some cases changes in emphasis to the components of the curriculum and modifications to the content had been made.

## **6. Course Attendance**

### **6.1 Course attendance**

- Looking at just the drop out figures by course, in 80% of the courses either no one dropped out (22%) or only one to three people dropped out (58%).
- Attendance information, that was internally consistent, was provided for 126 of the 204 courses (62%). Out of the 126 courses, three quarters of the participants who attended at least two sessions also completed / graduated from the course. A further 10% attended at least half the sessions but did not graduate. The drop out rate for participants who attended at least two sessions was 15%. These figures are very similar to those for 2004/5 and the drop out rate was identical.

### **6.2 Support provided to encourage attendance**

- The programme recommends a number of actions to encourage participants' attendance. Nearly all of the courses provided parent manuals (98%) and refreshments (97%) and over 80% provided phone calls as needed and childcare. Weekly phone calls, special incentives, reminder notes and help with transport were provided less often.
- At the end of the course nearly all of the courses provided certificates for those completing the course (95%) and held a graduation ceremony (93%).

### **6.3 Reasons for dropping out of the course**

- On just over half of the courses some people dropped out due to personal / family problems and on a third of the courses people dropped out due to a conflict in schedule.
- The most striking difference between these figures and the figures for reasons for drop out in 2004/5 was the increase in the number of courses that reported participants dropping out due to medical problems. Only 13% of courses recorded people dropping out for due to medical problems in 2004/5 compared with 29% for these two years.

## **7. The Participants' Views of the Programme and Future Plans**

The impact of the programme was examined in relation to the participants' views of the course and their future plans.

- The participants rated the course very highly but they viewed the information on community involvement less favourably than the information on the other components of the curriculum.
- 86% of the participants said that they planned to participate in a parent group after graduating from the course and over 90% of the facilitators said that the participants planned to continue meeting after the course.
- However fewer than half the agencies ran parent support groups after the course and even fewer offered child support groups.
- It therefore appears that the parents' expectations for support after completion of the course were unlikely to be met directly through parent support groups provided by the agency that organised the course they had attended.

## **8. Impact of the Programme on the Participants and their Children**

- The impact of the course was also measured by looking at the participants' response to a series of statements and questions in an assessment questionnaire that was completed at the beginning and end of their participation in the course.
- The changes in the participants' responses to the statements in five areas were all statistically significant, except for one statement, and the results indicated that the course led to:
  - An increase in family activities and discussions.
  - An increase in the use of positive discipline and communication strategies.
  - A decrease in the use of negative discipline and communication strategies.
  - An increase in the participants' competence.
  - An increase in the children's competence.
- There were two statistically significant differences in the changes in the participants' responses to the five questions on community focus. These were for youth group activities and having a support network of friends and family. The changes in the responses to the other three questions were not statistically significant. This indicated that the course had limited immediate impact on the participants' level of community involvement.
- Overall, the changes in the responses to the pre and post assessment questionnaires indicated that the course had a positive impact on the participants and their children.

## **9. Overall Conclusions**

The Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities Programme continues to be an important programme nationally. It delivers parenting programmes through a wide range of agencies to a diverse range of participants. It successfully reaches black and minority ethnic participants and members of social groups that have been identified as key target groups for parenting courses.

The programme has a structured format and content that is generally adhered to but has some built in flexibility to cater for the needs of specific groups. The drop out rate is within acceptable limits for this type of course. The participants have very positive views of the course. The measurement of the impact of the course through before and after questionnaires indicate that the participants and their children benefited from the course.

# Section One

## Introduction

### 1.1 Introduction

This report presents the findings of the evaluation of the Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities parenting courses held between April 2005 and March 2007. This section describes the development of the programme, sets out the objectives of the programme and identifies some key issues in organising parenting programmes.

### 1.2 The Development of the Programme

The Race Equality Foundation's Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities Programme is based on a culturally sensitive curriculum originally developed in the USA by Dr. Marilyn Steele, Jerry Tello, Ronald F Johnston and Marilyn R Marigna in the early 1990s. The programme was further developed by Dr. Marilyn Steele and Marilyn R Marigna and eventually became the 'Multi Ethnic Families and Communities: A Violence Prevention Parent Training Program'. The programme demonstrated positive results in the USA with participants from a variety of different ethnic / cultural backgrounds.

In 1999 the Race Equality Foundation (at that time the Race Equality Unit) was funded by the Home Office to review and develop parenting materials appropriate and sensitive to the needs of black and minority ethnic parents. The 'Multi Ethnic Families and Communities: A Violence Prevention Parent Training Program' was identified as being suitable for adaptation for use in the UK. The Race Equality Foundation worked closely with Dr. Marilyn Steele, parents and professionals to adapt the programme for use in the UK and it was renamed 'Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities: An Inclusive Parent Programme'.

The programme is designed for parents / carers with children aged three to eighteen years. Information is presented within a cultural framework covering five areas: cultural / spiritual, rites of passage, positive discipline, enhancing relationships / violence prevention and community involvement. The course is designed to enhance parent competence, parent child interactions, child competence, parent relationships and community involvement. The course is based on developing the participants' strengths using a facilitative approach. The course facilitators attend an intensive five day training programme to be trained as course facilitators. As the programme has progressed a number of parents, who originally attended the course as participants, have trained as course facilitators.

Local agencies are now responsible for the setting up and delivery of the courses. The main role of the Race Equality Foundation is to provide the facilitator training and the evaluation of the courses. Although the Home Office originally funded the courses, they are now funded from a wide range of national and local sources, which are obtained by the agencies responsible for delivering the courses.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Programme**

The Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities Programme is based on the belief that 'a co-ordinated and supportive community involved effort that integrates parent education and community resource awareness will increase the use of and the delivery of comprehensive services that can enhance parent and child functioning' (Steele et al, 2000).

The objectives of the programme as described in the Facilitators' Manual (Steele et al, 2000) are as follows:

*'The Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities parent programme uniquely and creatively empowers parents. It provides techniques and strategies to achieve the following objectives:*

- 1. Provide parents with information that will empower them with the courage and commitment needed to change any destructive parenting of their childhood, along with specific alternatives to the use of physical punishment as a primary teaching tool.*
- 2. Assist parents in understanding, reviewing and utilising a "Process of Discipline" to create guidelines for modelling and teaching respectful behaviour. To enhance parent ability to "respond" as opposed to "react" to disrespectful behaviour.*
- 3. Connect parents to the healthy aspects of their childhood, while also providing parents with strategies, skills, techniques and information needed to break the cycle of violence to self and others.*
- 4. Present information within a "cultural framework" that validates and takes into consideration different cultural learning styles, different ethnic/cultural/spiritual values, and different family and historical experiences.*
- 5. Provide parents with specific information and activities to assist them in teaching both younger and older children to understand and appreciate family/cultural values as they relate to the development of social skills needed to function successfully as an adult in this society.*
- 6. Assist parents in building special relationships with their children that provide support and guidance. This is achieved by encouraging parents to clarify their own emotions and in so doing, encourage their children to express feelings in a respectful manner.*
- 7. Decrease the sense of isolation by supporting parents in a parent programme, and provide parents with a mechanism for connecting to informal and formal community resources that are needed in order for meaningful and lasting changes to occur.'*

### **1.4 Evaluation of this and other parenting programmes**

During 2006, the Race Equality Foundation obtained funding from the Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE) for the evaluation of the courses in 2004/5. Research Plus+ was commissioned by the Race Equality Foundation to collate and analyse the forms completed by the course facilitators and participants, which provided the basis for the evaluation of the programme. The subsequent report was published in 2007 (Wilding and Barton, 2007).

In late 2007, Research Plus+ was again commissioned by the Race Equality Foundation, this time to report on the evaluation of the next two years of the programme: 2005/6 and 2006/7.

There is now a growing body of literature on parenting programmes in the UK. A review of what works in parenting support (Moran et al, 2004) highlighted that participation in parenting support by minority ethnic groups and fathers is generally low and there is a subsequent lack of evidence on what works with them. Similarly a report on the market for parental and family support services and a follow up review of capacity in the parenting support market (PricewaterhouseCoopers, 2006 and 2007) highlighted that a number of groups, most particularly fathers and minority ethnic groups, but also parents of disabled children and low income groups, were under-represented in the use of mainstream parenting support services.

During 2006 - 2008 a major evaluation of the Parenting Early Intervention Pathfinder (PEIP) projects was undertaken (Lindsay et al, 2008). This evaluated and compared three different parenting programmes across eighteen Local Authorities with courses run between September 2006 and March 2008. The three parenting programmes included the Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities Programme alongside the Incredible Years and the Triple P Programme. This report draws on some of their findings for comparative purposes.

Some of the key issues identified in organising parenting programmes are:

- The training of and support for facilitators, including parent facilitators.
- Sources of recruitment / referral routes to the programme.
- The suitability of the programme for all parents.
- Targeting specific groups of parents.
- The suitability of programmes for and inclusion of black and minority ethnic participants.
- The suitability of programmes for and inclusion of male participants, and, linked to this, the timing of courses.
- The suitability of programmes for and inclusion of grandparents.
- Adherence to the programme design and issues related to flexibility of the programme.
- Course attendance, drop out rates and methods used to support attendance.
- The impact of the courses in term of reported behavioural change, including the impact on different groups.
- Availability of follow up support on completion of the course.

This report explores all but the first of these issues.

## **Section Two**

### **The Evaluation Methodology**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This section describes the evaluation methodology, the limitations of the evaluation, the information provided to undertake the evaluation and how it was analysed.

#### **2.2 The evaluation design**

As part of the programme's built in evaluation process a Course Summary Report (CSR) was completed on each course by the course facilitator(s) and three forms were completed on or by the individual participants.

The facilitator completed the CSR at the end of the course. It provided a combination of quantitative and qualitative information on the course. This included: name of the agency and individuals running the course, timing and location of the course, recruitment methods, number and ethnic background of the participants, course attendance numbers, measures to support attendance, reasons participants dropped out, modifications to the curriculum content, invited community speakers, participants' response to the course and their group plans for after the course, whether any participants were especially impacted by the course and / or identified for follow up, issues related to the facilitation process, the facilitator's experience of running the course, their agency's plans for future use of the curriculum and suggestions for improving / enhancing the curriculum.

Three forms were completed on individual participants – a registration form completed by the course facilitator, a pre course assessment questionnaire and a post course assessment questionnaire, both completed by the participant her/himself. In some cases the forms were translated into other languages for non English speaking groups.

The registration form included the participant's contact details, age, gender, how long they had been in the UK, their ethnic background and first language, their relationship to the child(ren), their educational attainment, household income, whether they had ever attended a parenting course before, their reasons for taking the course and how they had heard about the course.

The pre and post course assessment questionnaires included questionnaires designed as 'before' and 'after' measures to test the impact of the course on the participants. The questionnaires covered community activities (5 questions), participant / child interactions (16 statements), participant competence / ability (10 statements) and child competence / ability (8 statements on up to two children). The relevant child(ren)'s age and gender were also requested. The post course assessment questionnaire included additional questions on the participants' views of the course, its impact on them and whether they planned to participate in a parent group after graduation.

#### **2.3 Limitations of the evaluation and information provided for the evaluation**

A strength of this evaluation model is that the information required for the evaluation was built into the process of running the course. However, in practice there were a number of limitations:

- There were difficulties in ensuring that all the required forms were completed and returned to the Race Equality Foundation.

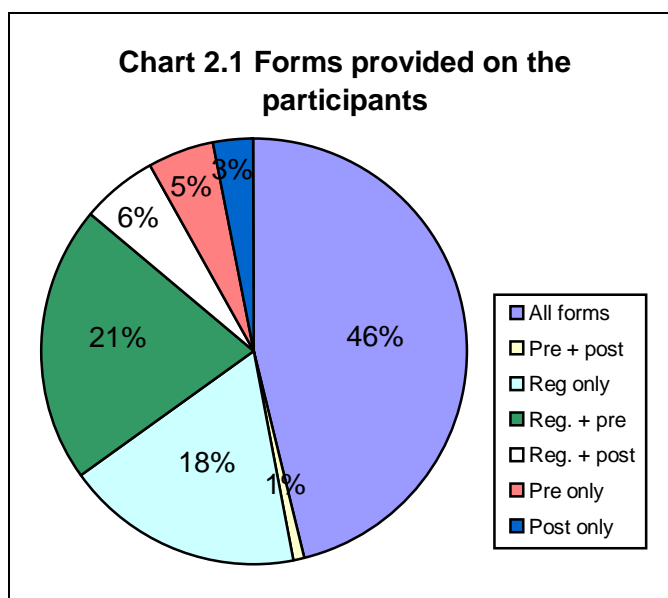
- Some of the forms that were returned were not fully completed.
- This evaluation model mainly focuses on those who successfully completed the course and provides only limited information on participants who dropped out of the course.
- As the data was incomplete, it was not possible to use the information from the registration forms and the pre course assessment questionnaires to compare the characteristics of those who dropped out with those who successfully completed the course.
- There were some difficulties in interpreting the results of the pre and post course assessment questionnaires.
- There was no control group of parents to compare the impact of the course on the participants, compared with people who had not attended the course.
- Like most parenting programmes, the outcomes were based on perceptions of the participants themselves, rather than direct measures of behavioural change.
- There was no medium or long term follow up to assess the impact of the course on the participants.
- The objectives of the programme were written in a way that made it difficult to directly address some aspects of them using this evaluation model alone.

Information was provided on 205 courses run during the period April 2005 to March 2007. This covered all the courses held in that period. A CSR completed by the course facilitator(s), was received for all but one of the courses. For some of the courses, although there was a CSR, no forms/questionnaires completed on individual participants were provided to the researchers. Data on individual participants was provided for 152 (74%) of the courses. Three quarters of the courses where there was no data on individual participants were for courses run in the first of the two years (April 2005 to March 2006). Therefore the findings relating to the participants are weighted in favour of year two.

Although three forms could be provided on each participant attending the course, in practice the number of forms provided on each participant varied considerably, both within courses and between courses. There were a variety of reasons for this. Chart 2.1 below summarises the information provided on the participants. Forms were provided on a total of 1,919 participants covering 152 programmes:

- Registration forms were provided for 1,748 (91%) of the participants.
- All three forms were provided for 874 (46%) of the participants.
- Both the pre and post course forms, but no registration forms, were returned for an additional 23 participants (1%).

Therefore, data from 897 (47%) of the 1,919 participants could be analysed to assess changes in the participants' responses to the assessment questionnaires before and after the course. This included data on 1,249 children.



Source: Participants' data: n = 1919, missing cases = 0

This was a slightly higher response rate than for the previous evaluation in 2004/5 (Wilding and Barton, 2007). Whether the missing data would have provided different information to inform the evaluation is not known. Although the data was incomplete, a wealth of qualitative and quantitative information was provided on a large number of participants and courses. The previous report (*ibid*) explored the qualitative data in some detail as well as presenting the quantitative data. This report focuses on the quantitative data only.

#### 2.4 Analysis of the data and statistical tests

The quantitative data (numerical figures) were analysed using Excel and SPSS, a computer software package for the analysis of statistical data. Two statistical tests were used to test the statistical significance of the responses to the pre and post course assessment questionnaires – the Wilcoxon Matched Pairs Signed Rank Test and the McNemar test.

The Wilcoxon Matched Pairs Signed Rank Test is the non parametric equivalent of the Paired-Samples Two Tailed T Test. The Wilcoxon test has less stringent requirements of the data than the parametric T test. The Wilcoxon Matched Pairs Signed Rank Test ranks the absolute values of the differences between the data in two paired samples and calculates the number of positive and negative differences. It was assessed as being the most suitable test for testing the statistical significance of the responses to the pre and post course assessment questionnaires where the participants could choose from a range of response options. The McNemar test was used for the questions where there were only two response options.

#### 2.5 Location of the courses

The location of the courses was determined by their postcode and allocated to one of the nine English government regions.

## **2.6 Summary of Section Two**

- The evaluation was based on information from the Course Summary Reports (CSRs) completed on each course by the course facilitator(s) and three forms completed on or by the individual participants, as part of the programme's built in evaluation process.
- A number of limitations of the evaluation were pointed out.
- Information was provided on 205 courses and there was a CSR for 204 of them.
- Data on individual participants was provided for 152 (74%) of the courses. Due to some missing data, the data on participants was weighted in favour of the courses held in 2006/7.
- Forms were provided on a total of 1,919 individual participants:
  - Registration forms were provided for 1,748 participants (91%).
  - All three forms were provided for 874 (46%) of the participants.
  - Both the pre and post course forms, but no registration forms, were returned for an additional 23 participants (1%).
- Therefore, data from 897 (47%) of the 1,919 participants could be analysed to assess changes in the participants' responses to the assessment questionnaires before and after the course. This included data on 1,249 children.
- Although the data was incomplete, a wealth of information was provided on a large number of participants and courses.

# Section Three

## The Reach of the Programme: Locations, Agencies and Course Details

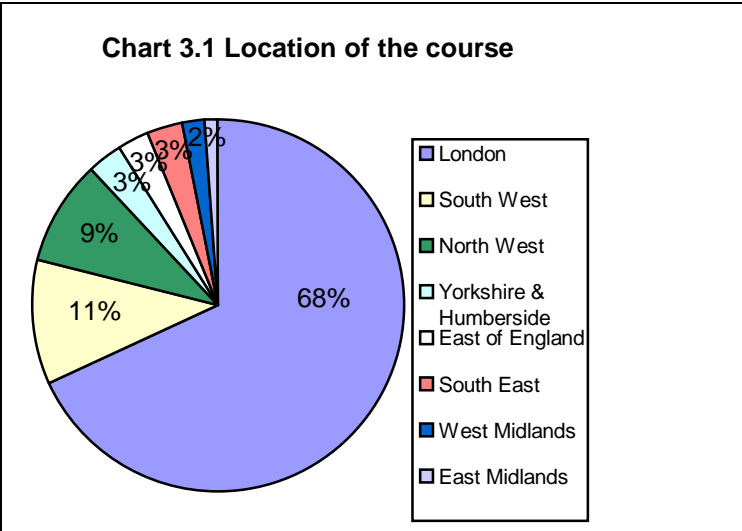
### 3.1 Introduction

This section considers the reach of the programme in respect of the location of the courses and the range of agencies that organised the courses. It also covers the date and the timing of the courses and how participants were recruited.

The information in this section is primarily based on the information provided by the facilitators in the 204 Case Summary Reports (CSRs).

### 3.2 Location of the courses

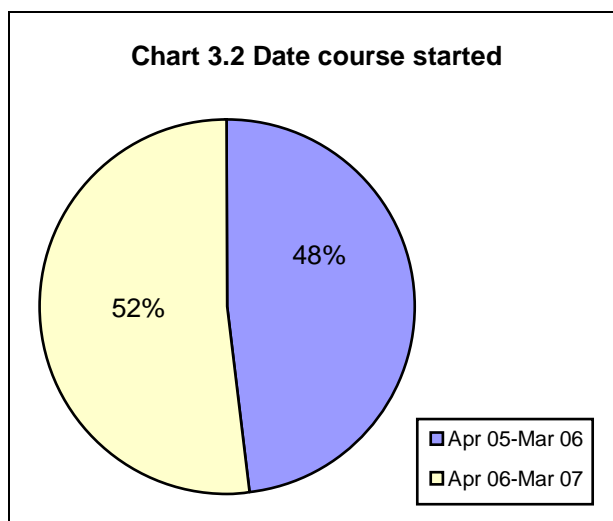
Courses were held in eight of the nine English government regions. As in 2004/5, around two thirds of the courses (138 courses, 68%) were held in London, see Chart 3.1. The other two main areas were South West England and North West England. Twenty three courses (11%) were held in South West England and 19 courses (9%) were held in North West England. In the remaining areas, between two and seven courses were held in each area. No courses were held in North East England.



Source: CSR data: n = 204

### 3.3 Start date of the courses

Data was provided in the CSRs on the start date of 203 courses. They were fairly evenly split between the two years with slightly more courses held in the second year: 98 courses (48%) commenced between April 2005 and March 2006 and 105 courses (52%) commenced between April 2006 and March 2007, see Chart 3.2. The start date for one course was not specified.



Source: CSR data: n = 203

The location of the courses was examined by the start date. The courses in London, Yorkshire and Humberside and the North West were fairly evenly distributed between the two years. In the South West there were more courses in year one than in year two (61% of the courses started in year one). In contrast in the East of England and the South East there more courses in year two than in year one (83% and 67% of the courses started in year two, respectively).

### 3.4 The agencies providing the courses

As in 2004/5, the courses were run by a wide range of agencies – voluntary, statutory and partnership organisations, and community groups. The statutory organisations included Social Services, Youth Offending Teams and Adult Education Services. The voluntary and partnership organisations included local agencies of wider national organisations / initiatives (such as Sure Start and Barnardos), and a range of locally based voluntary and community organisations. During 2005/6 and 2006/7 a number of new agencies became involved with the programme.

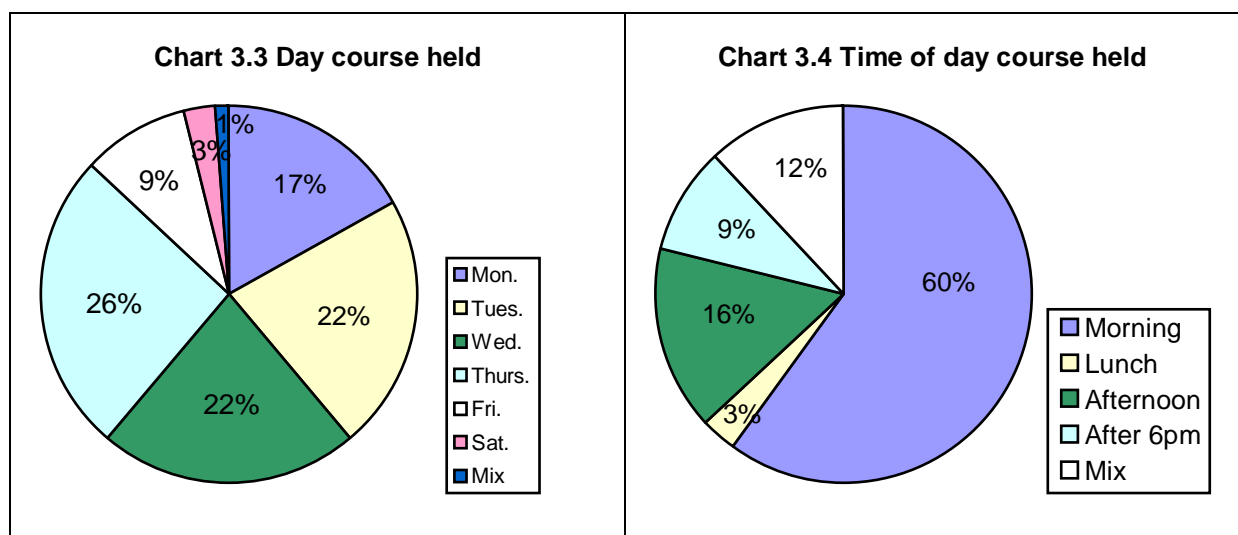
Each broad type of agency was able to access a range of ethnic groups. The local voluntary organisations and community groups included organisations serving specific ethnic groups and religious organisations. This assisted with recruiting participants from specific ethnic backgrounds.

The largest number of courses, were run by:

- Coram Strengthening Families Project in East London: 13 courses
- Newham African Caribbean and Asian Project (NACAAP) in East London: 9 courses
- Support For Learning Services (Support FLS) in East London: 8 courses
- Barnados' Church and Neighbourhood Development in London (CANDL) in East London: 8 courses
- Depaul Trust in Manchester: 7 courses
- Coram Strengthening Families Project in Milton Keynes: 6 courses
- Southwark Youth Offending Team (YOT) in East London: 6 courses.

### 3.5 Timing of the courses

The courses were usually held on a weekday morning, most frequently on a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday, see Charts 3.3 and 3.4. There were more afternoon courses than in 2004/5 (16% compared to 5% in 2004/5). Few courses were held in the evenings or at the weekend. This meant that the courses were most accessible to those who did not work normal office hours from Monday to Friday.



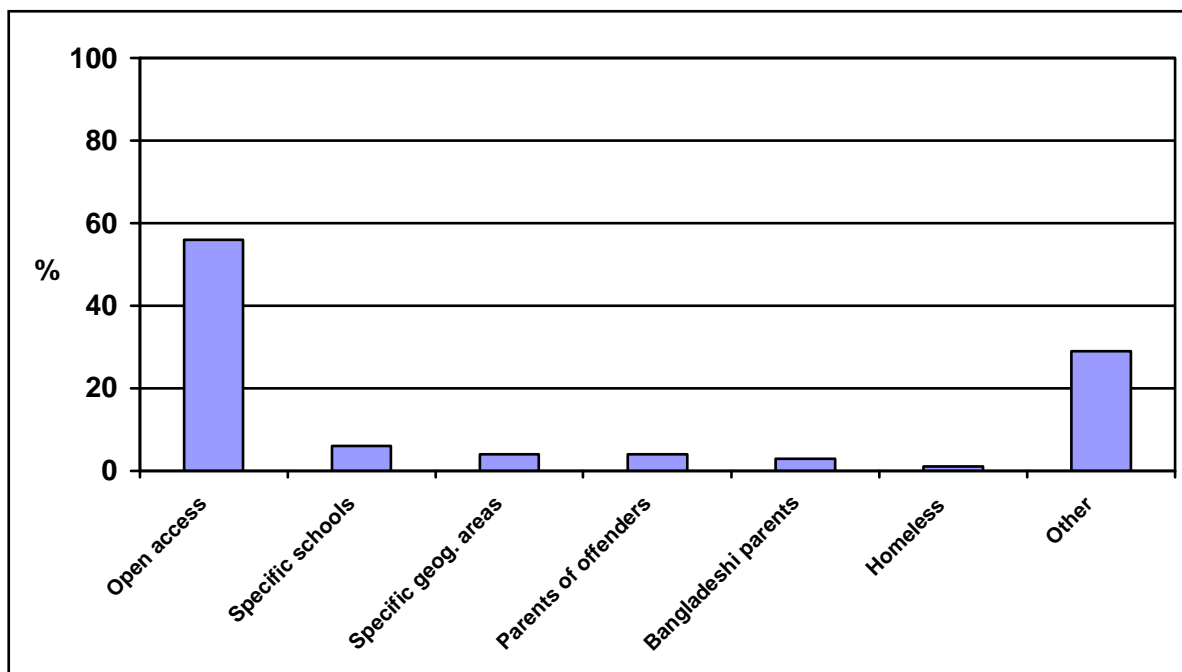
Source: CSR data: n = 199

Source: CSR data: n = 200

### 3.6 Targeting of participants

Just under half of the facilitators (44%) reported that the courses were targeted at specific groups, see Chart 3.5. In many cases this referred to parents/carers of children at specific schools (6%) or in specific geographical areas, including Sure Start areas (4%). Nine courses (4%) were specifically for parents of youth offenders. Six courses (3%) were specifically for Bangladeshi parents. In practice some other courses were also targeted at Bangladeshi parents and other specific ethnic groups, these are described in Section 4.4. In addition there were also courses specifically for refugees, single parents and teenage parents.

**Chart 3.5 Courses targeted at specific groups**



Source: CSR data: n = 203

### 3.7 Methods of recruitment to the courses

The facilitators reported that the most common forms of recruitment to the courses were through flyers / brochures and announcements, used for 92% of courses, and by talking to parents / word of mouth, used for 80% of courses. Just over half of the courses (54%), also had some parents referred to them by agencies. A tenth (10%), also made use of newspapers and / or the radio to find participants. A further 13% reported using other recruitment methods.

### 3.8 Summary of Section Three

- Courses were held in all of the nine English regions, except North East England.
- Around two thirds of the courses were held in London. The other two main areas were South West England and North West England. In the remaining areas, between two and seven courses were held in each area.
- The courses were run by a wide range of agencies – voluntary, statutory and partnership organisations, and community groups. During the two years a number of new agencies became involved with the programme.
- Each broad type of agency was able to access a range of ethnic groups. In some cases, where courses were arranged by organisations serving specific ethnic or religious groups, this assisted with recruiting participants from specific ethnic backgrounds.
- The courses were usually held on a weekday morning. This favoured attendance by people who did not work normal office hours.
- Just under half of the courses were targeted at specific groups. This included parents/carers of children at specific schools, specific geographical areas, including Sure Start areas, parents of youth offenders specific ethnic groups, refugees, single parents and teenage parents.
- The most frequently used methods of recruitment used by the course organisers were flyers / brochures and announcements and by talking to parents / word of mouth. Just over half of the courses also had some parents referred to them by agencies.

# Section Four

## Reach of the Programme: The Participants

### 4.1 Introduction

This section considers the reach of the programme in respect of the characteristics of the participants, particularly their gender, ethnic and language mix. It also includes information on their other characteristics (age, education, household income, their relationship to the children, the age and gender of the children), their reasons for taking the course and how they heard about it.

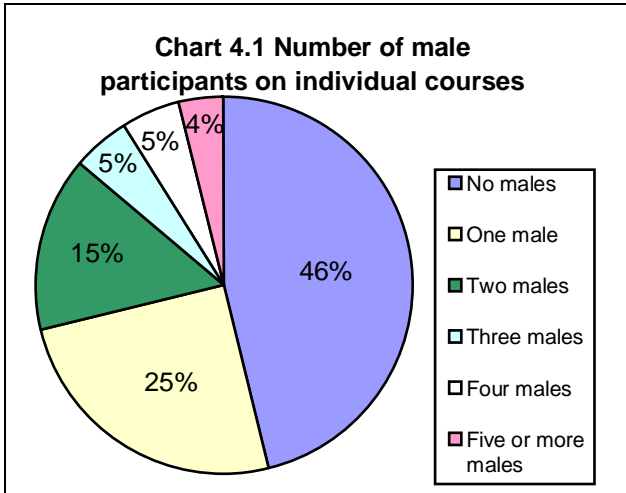
The information is mainly based on the data from the registration forms that were returned on the participants. A total of 1,748 registration forms were provided. Information on the age and gender of the children is from the pre course questionnaire. Some of the information is based on the CSRs.

### 4.2 Gender of the participants

Information on the gender of the participants was available on 1,744 people. Whilst most of the participants were female, a small, but significant, proportion were male (10%). This is similar to the 11% in 2004/5. In year one 7% of the participants were male, in year two this increased to 12%. The main differences between the male and female participants are explored in section 4.13.

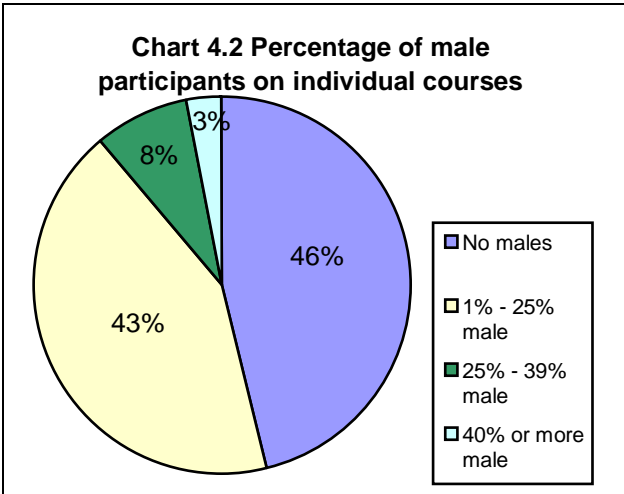
#### 4.2.1 Distribution of the of the participants across the courses by gender

Based on an examination of the data on participants, just over half of the courses (54%) included at least one male participant, see Chart 4.1. This was higher than in 2004/5 when 39% of courses had a male participant. There was one male on a quarter of the courses (38 courses) and two males on 15% of the courses (22 courses). A further 10% of the courses attracted three or four males and 4% of the courses had between five and eight male participants. One course in Yorkshire was organised for men and this attracted 8 Asian participants.



Source: Participants' data on courses. Number of courses = 151

The percentage of males on individual courses was also examined, see Chart 4.2. On 11% of the courses (16 courses) male participants accounted for at least a quarter of the participants on the course. On four of these courses (3% of all courses) males accounted for 40% or more of the participants.

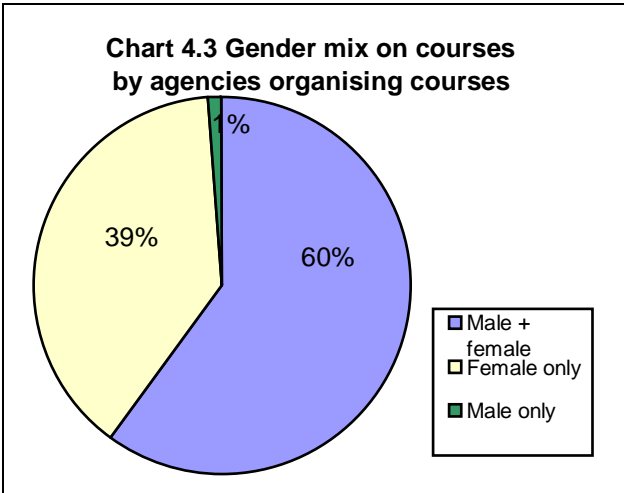


Source: Participants' data on courses. Number of courses = 151

**4.2.2 Distribution of the participants across the agencies by gender**

Based on the data on participants, the distribution of the participants by gender across the organising agencies was also examined, see Chart 4.3. Out of the 87 agencies that organised courses, over half of the agencies (60%) ran courses with both male and female participants (52 of the agencies); 39% did not run any courses with male participants (34 of the agencies) and one agency ran a course with only male participants.

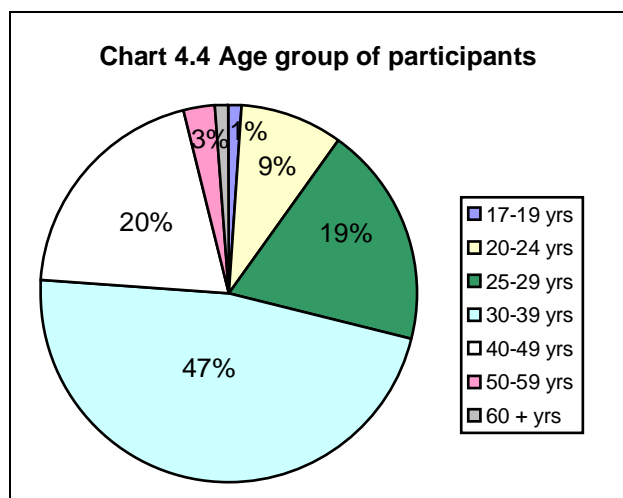
The two agencies that organised courses for the largest number of people (for over 150 participants each), attracted between 15% and 17% male participants onto their courses. These two agencies have been organising Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities courses for a number of years.



Source: Participants' data = 1744. Number of courses n = 151

### 4.3 Age of the participants

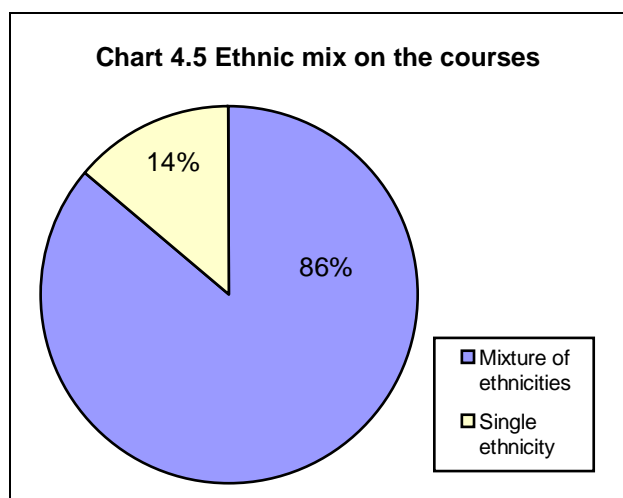
The age range of the participants was from 17 to 77 years. Approaching half (47%) were aged between 30 and 39 years, see Chart 4.4. Those aged 20 – 49 years accounted for 86% of the participants.



Source: Participants' data n = 1,642

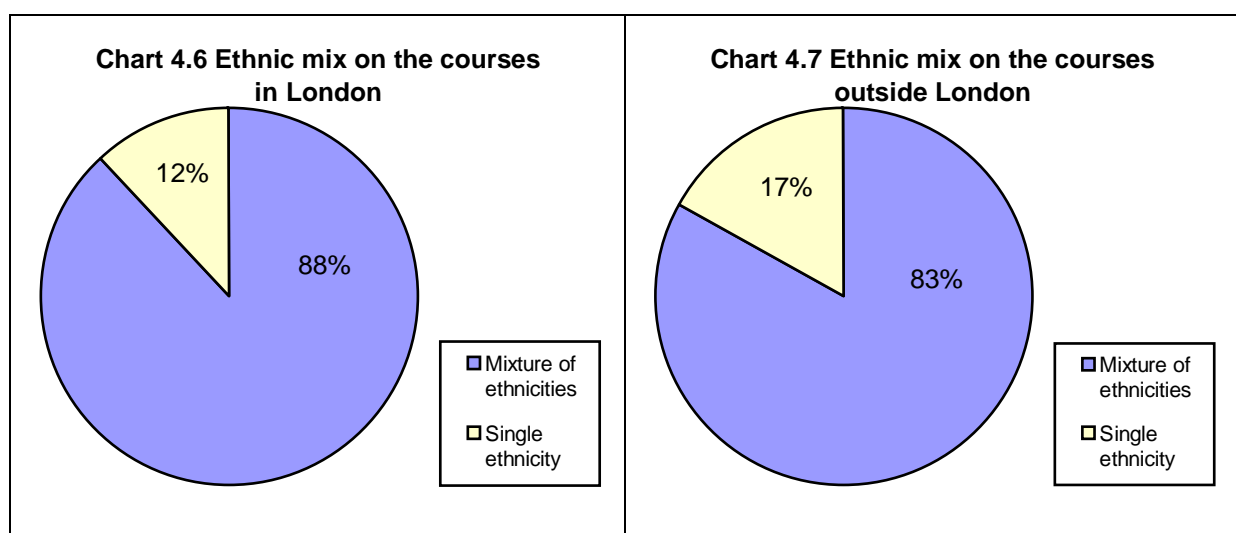
### 4.4 Ethnic mix of the participants on the courses

Based on information from both the CSRs and the parents' registration forms, the ethnic background of the participants on each course was examined. Overall 86% of the courses had participants from a variety of ethnic backgrounds and 14% of the courses had participants from a single ethnic background, see Chart 4.5.



Source: CSR data: n = 204, checked against participants data: n = 1,919 on 151 courses

The picture was slightly different for courses within and outside London, see Charts 4.6 and 4.7. Outside London there were more courses with participants from a single ethnic background (17% outside London compared with 12% in London). This is significantly less than in 2004/5, when the figures were 43% outside London and 18% in London.



Source: CSR data: n = 204, checked against participants data: n = 1,919 participants on 151 courses

Some courses were targeted at specific ethnic groups. Table 4.1 shows the number of courses with participants from one broad ethnic background only. All the participants on nine of the courses (4%) were White British, this compares with 2% in 2004/5. Seven of these courses were in South West England. The course facilitators reported that the targeting of specific ethnic groups had mainly been for people of Bangladeshi origin, this accounted for eight courses (4%). Although not recorded by the facilitators as being aimed at specific ethnic groups, four courses had nearly all Turkish / Kurdish participants, three courses had all African participants, two courses had all Afro-Caribbean participants and another two courses had all Chinese participants. In addition to the courses shown in Table 4.1, some churches ran courses for their members, who were mainly of Afro-Caribbean origin or Mixed Heritage.

**Table 4.1 Courses with participants from one broad ethnic background only**

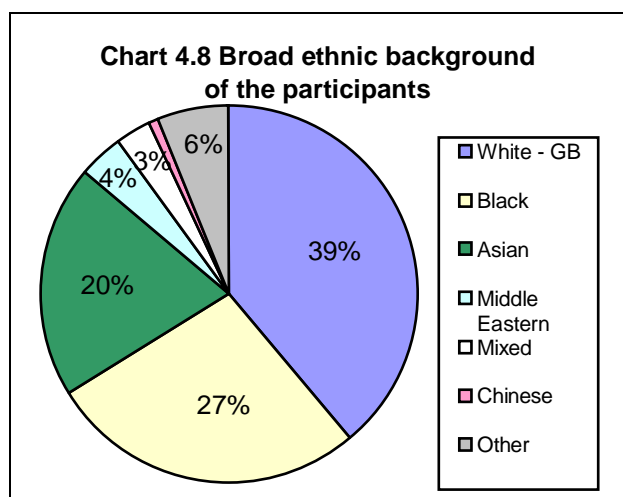
| Ethnic background | Number of courses | % out of all 204 courses |
|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| White British     | 9                 | 4%                       |
| Bangladeshi       | 8                 | 4%                       |
| Turkish / Kurdish | 4                 | 2%                       |
| African           | 3                 | 2%                       |
| Afro Caribbean    | 2                 | 1%                       |
| Chinese           | 2                 | 1%                       |
| <b>Total:</b>     | <b>28</b>         | <b>14%</b>               |

Source: CSR data: n = 204, checked against participants data n = 1,919

#### 4.5 Ethnic background of the participants

Chart 4.8 shows the ethnic background of the participants by broad ethnic group. Overall, 61% of the participants were of minority ethnic origin. Just over a quarter (27%) of the participants were 'Black' or 'Black British', 20% were 'Asian' or 'Asian British', and the remaining 14% were of 'Chinese', 'Mixed Heritage', 'Middle Eastern' or 'Other' ethnicity.

In addition, there were two courses run by a local Chinese organisation, with only Chinese participants. However as only the CSR data was available for these courses they are not included in Chart 4.8 or the remainder of the charts in this section.



Source: Participants' data n = 1,381

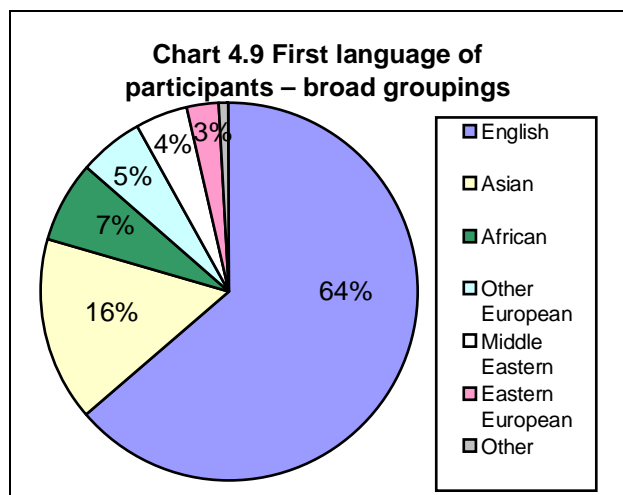
The participants provided a total of 78 different descriptions of their ethnic background:

- The 'Black' group included Africans from Somalia, Nigeria, Ghana, The Congo, Zambia, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Morocco, Algeria and Eritrea; and Afro-Caribbeans who described themselves as Afro-Caribbean, Jamaican, Guyanan/Trinidadian and Dominican. Additional countries to those in 2004/5 included Ethiopia, Tunisia, Uganda, Mauritius and Burundi.
- The 'Asian' group included people who described themselves as Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, Vietnamese, Malaysian, Nepalese, Filipino and Asian. Additional descriptions to those in 2004/5 included Japanese, South Korean, and Tamil.
- The 'Middle Eastern' group included people from Iran, Iraq the Yeman, and Afghanistan and people who described themselves as Arab or as Kurdish.
- The 'White' group included people who described themselves as English, Irish, Scottish, Welsh, German, Spanish, Italian, Polish, Portuguese, French, Turkish Cypriot, Albanian, Greek and Bulgarian. Additional descriptions to those in 2004/5 included Norwegian, Ukrainian, Croatian, Kosovan and Czech.

#### 4.6 Language of the participants

Over a third of the participants (38%) had a first language other than English. This was somewhat lower than the 46% in 2004/5 and reflects the increase in White participants.

Chart 4.9 shows the broad language groupings. The two most frequent broad language groups, after English, were Asian languages (16%) and African languages (7%).

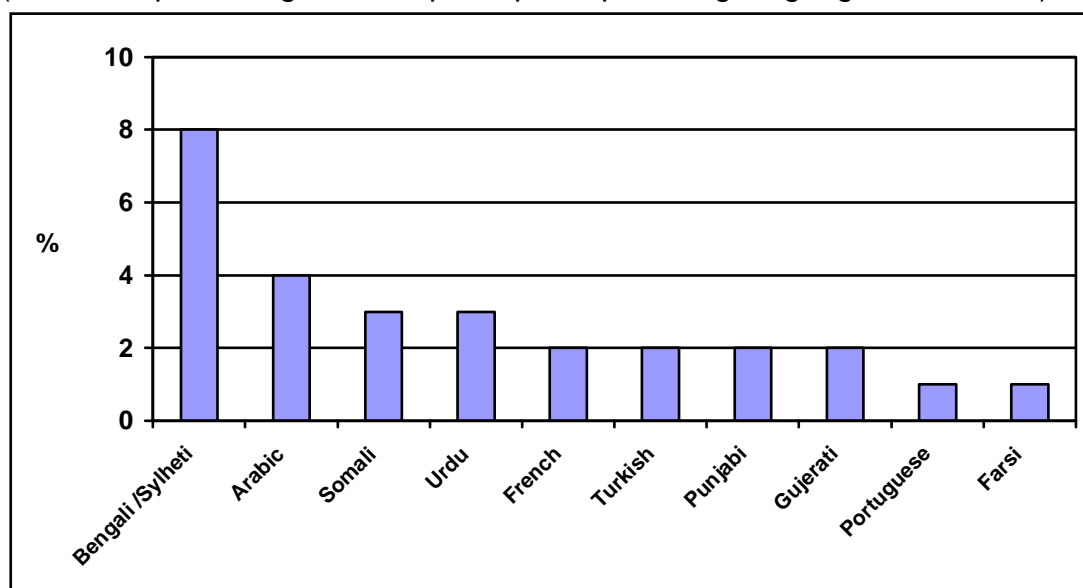


Source: Participants data: n = 1,669

Note 'English' is 64% not 62% as fewer participants answered this question than the question on whether they spoke English as a first language, and the distribution of their responses was slightly different.

A total of 46 languages were mentioned as a first language. Based on their individual descriptions, the main languages, after English, were: Bengali/Sylheti, Arabic, Somali, Urdu, French, Turkish, Punjabi, Gujarati, Portuguese and Farsi, see Chart 4.10. Eighteen of the 29 participants who spoke French as a first language were of African origin.

**Chart 4.10 First language of participants – main languages excluding English** (shown as percentage of total participants providing language information)

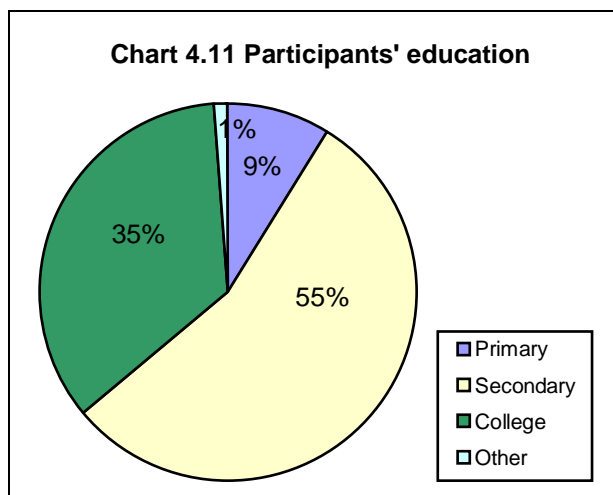


Source: Participants data: n = 1,621

#### 4.7 Participants' education

Some participants provided information on their education. Some of the participants had a challenge answering this question as they did not receive their education in the UK and therefore the categories provided did not apply to them.

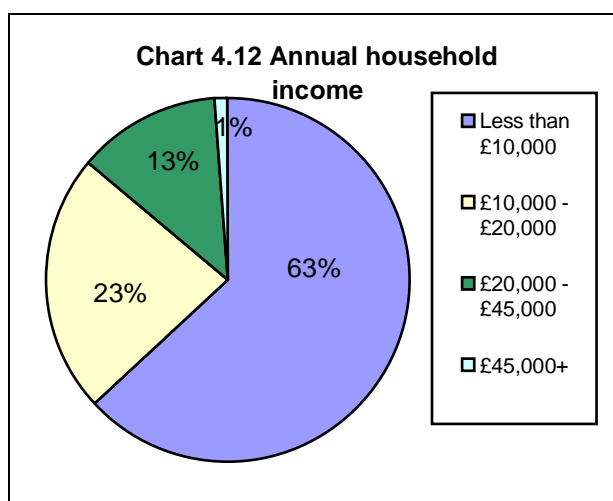
Just under a tenth of the participants (9%) had completed their education by the end of primary school. Over half (55%) had completed their education by the end of secondary school and a third (35%) had completed a college course / degree, see Chart 4.11.



Source: Participants data: n = 1,367

#### 4.8 Household income

Some participants provided information on their annual household income, see Chart 4.12. The largest grouping (63%) had an annual household income of under £10,000. Approaching a quarter (23%) had a household income of between £10,000 and £20,000. Under 15% had a household income of over £20,000. Looking at education and household income: 29% of the participants with an income of under £10,000 had received a college education.

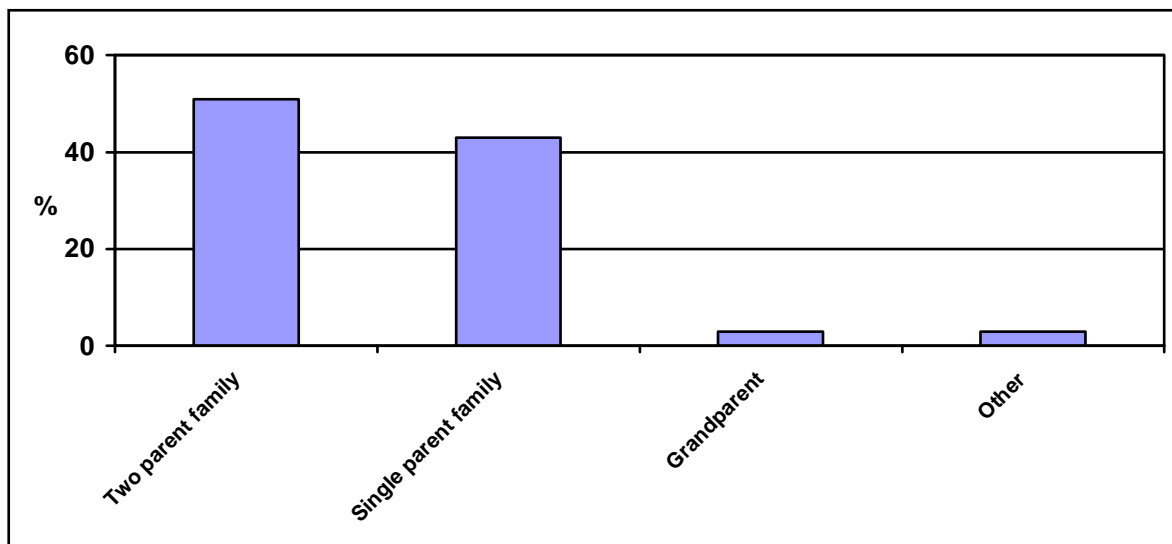


Source: Participants data: n = 1,132

#### 4.9 Participants' current status in relation to the children

The participants were asked about their relationship to the children see Chart 4.13. It was possible to answer 'Yes' to more than one of the responses, however most people did not. Over half (51%) were living as a two parent family, 43% were a single parent, 3% were grandparents and 3% had 'Other' relationships with the children. The 'Other' group included parents who did not have custody of their children, step parents, foster parents and relatives/family friends. A few people were educators/advocates who were taking the course for professional reasons.

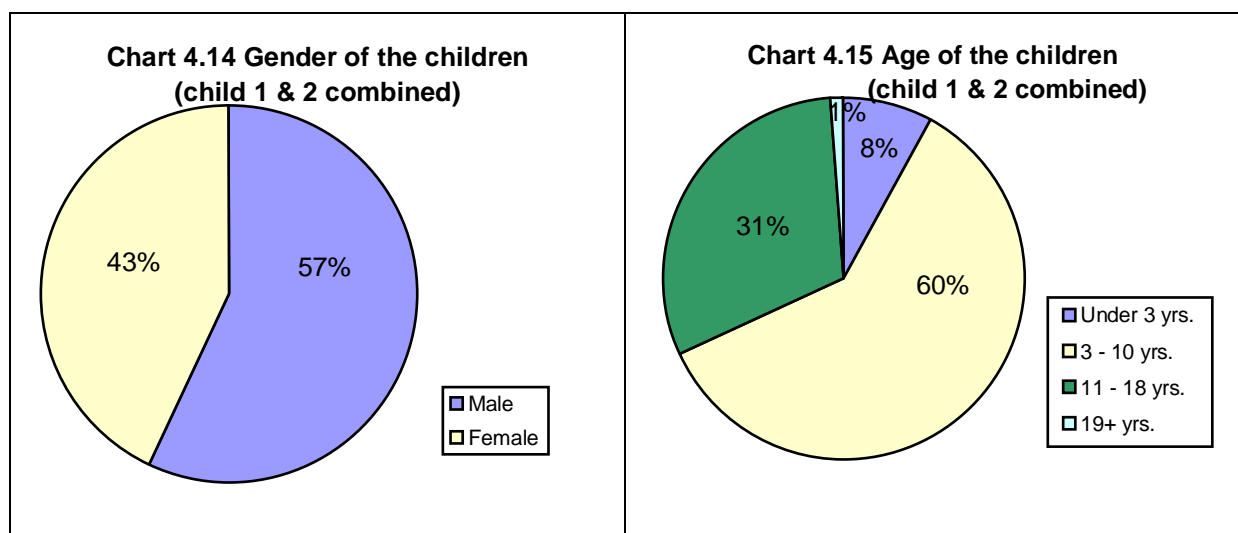
**Chart 4.13 Participants' current status in relation to the children**



Source: Participants data: n = 1,714 – 1,716

#### 4.10 Children's age and gender

Participants were asked to provide information on the gender and age of up to two children, aged 3 to 18 years, on the pre and post course questionnaires. Just over half of the children were male (57%), see Chart 4.14. Over half of the children (60%) were aged between three and ten years and nearly a third (31%) were aged between 11 and 18 years, see Chart 4.15. Some participants provided information on children who were under 3 years (8%), and a few (1%) provided information on children over 18 years.



Source: Participants data: n = 1,110

Source: Participants data: n = 1,117

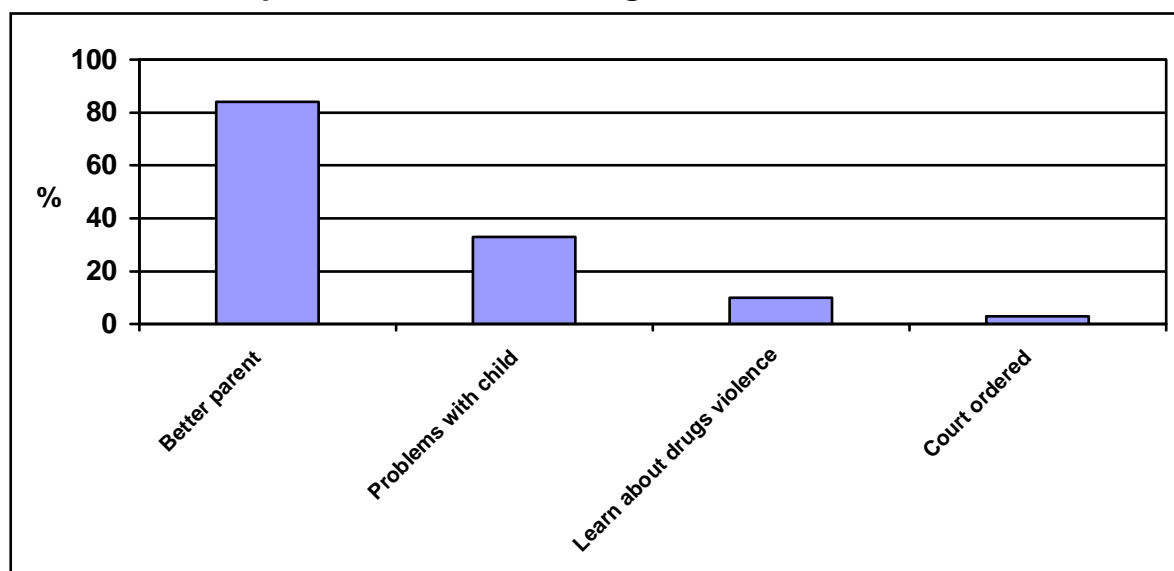
#### 4.11 How participants heard about the course

The participants reported how they had heard about the course. Over a quarter of the participants (29%) had heard about the course through flyers and announcements and nearly a quarter (24%) said that they had been referred by an agency or were ordered to attend by a court. Participants also heard through friends or relatives (21%). Very few participants had heard about the course through a newspaper or the radio (1%).

#### 4.12 Previous experience of parent education courses and reasons for taking the course

Nearly a quarter (22%) of the participants had attended a parent education course in the past. This was twice as much as in 2004/5 (11%). The participants were also asked why they were taking the Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities course, they could answer 'Yes' to more than one of the responses. Most people (84%) stated that they were attending the course to become a better parent, a third (33%) said that they were having problems with a child, 10% came with the intention of learning about drugs and violence and 3% were ordered to attend by the court, see Chart 4.16. These are similar figures to 2004/5, except for learning about drugs and violence, which had reduced from 16% in 2004/5.

**Chart 4.16 Participants' reasons for taking the course**



Source: Participants data: n = 1,697

#### 4.13 Characteristics of the male participants

This sub section identifies ways in which the male participants differed from the female participants. As already noted in section 4.2, 10% of the participants were male. As the courses were usually held on a weekday morning (see section 3.5) this may have contributed to low participation by males.

The distribution of male participants across the country was different to the distribution of the female participants. There were significantly more males on the courses in the South East, Yorkshire and Humberside and the North West, where they accounted for 19%, 15% and 13% of the participants respectively. There were significantly fewer males on the courses in the South West, where they accounted for only 3% of the participants.

The male participants tended to be slightly older than the female participants. There were no male participants in the 17-19 year old age group. They accounted for 25% of the participants aged 50 – 59 years and 44% of those aged 60 and over. However each of these age groups covered only a small proportion of the participants overall.

The ethnic backgrounds of the male participants were not significantly different to the ethnic backgrounds of the female participants. However it is worth noting that slightly more of the male participants were of ethnic minority origin than the female participants (66% of males compared with 61% of females). The most noticeable difference was in the Middle Eastern participants where only 3% were male compared with 10% males overall.

The age at which the male participants left school and their household income levels were similar to the female participants.

There were some significant differences in the male and female participants' current status in relation to the children. Over half (58%) of the male sample lived as part of a two parent family compared with 50% of the female participants. Only 24% of male participants were single parents, compared with 45% of the female participants. 7% of the male participants did not have custody of their children, compared with fewer than 1% of the female participants.

Only 12% of the male participants had taken a parent education class before, compared with 22% of the female participants. The proportion of males and females taking the course to 'become a better parent' and/or due to 'having problems with the children' and /or 'to learn about drugs/violence' was similar. However there was a significant difference in the proportion that had been ordered by the courts to take the course: 7% of male participants were court ordered compared with 2% of the female participants.

This was reflected in their response to how they heard about the course. Males were less likely than females to have heard about the course through flyers/announcements, a friend/relative or through the newspaper/radio. Just over a third (34%) reported that they had heard about the course through an agency referral or were court ordered, compared with 23% of female participants. This suggests that the proportion of male participants that came through the courts or an agency referral was higher than for female participants.

#### **4.14 Comparison of the participants by ethnic background**

This sub section presents the differences between participants by ethnic background. The black and minority ethnic participants are compared with the White British participants and where there are significant differences between different minority ethnic groups these are also commented on. As already noted in section 4.5, overall 61% of the participants were of black and minority ethnic origin. In year two this increased to 64%.

The distribution of black and minority ethnic participants across the country was different to the distribution of the White British participants. As might be expected, there were significantly more black and minority ethnic participants in London than in other areas: 77% of black and minority ethnic participants attended the London courses compared to 61% of White British. This was compensated for in four other areas where the proportion of black and minority ethnic participants was slightly lower than the proportion of White British participants. These were in the South East,

the South West, the East of England and Yorkshire and Humberside. An examination by broad ethnic group revealed that in Yorkshire and Humberside and in the North West there were similar numbers of participants of Asian and of White British origin (30 – 40 of each group in each area) and considerably fewer Black African / Afro-Caribbean participants.

The age distribution of the black and minority ethnic and the White British participants was almost identical. There were no significant differences by broad ethnic group.

English was the first language for 42% of the black and minority ethnic participants. The next largest first language was Bengali/Sylheti, which was the first language for 13% of the black and minority ethnic participants. An examination by broad ethnic group revealed that English was the first language for 59% of the Black African / Afro-Caribbean participants and Somali was the first language for a further 11% of them. Bengali/Sylheti was the first language for 46% of the Asian participants.

There were some significant differences in the age at which the black and minority ethnic participants left school compared with the White British participants. Although slightly more black and minority ethnic participants left school at primary school level compared with White British participants (9% compared with 6% respectively), significantly more went onto college or gained a degree, 44% compared with 22% of their White British counterparts. However, the household income levels of the black and minority ethnic participants were similar to the White British participants.

An examination by broad ethnic group revealed that a considerably higher proportion of Asian participants left school at primary school level, 15%. This figure increased to 22% for the Bangladeshi participants. However, despite this, 27% of the Bangladeshi participants had gone onto college or gained a degree.

There were some significant differences in the participants' current status in relation to their children by ethnic background. An examination by broad ethnic group revealed that a considerably higher proportion of Black Other and Afro-Caribbean participants were single parents (63% and 60% respectively) and a considerably lower proportion of Asian and Middle Eastern participants were single parents (22% and 25% respectively). Amongst African participants 44% were single parents. Just over half (52%) of the White British participants were single parents.

The proportion of participants that did not have custody of their children was highest amongst participants of Mixed Heritage, White British, White Other and Afro-Caribbeans (5%, 3%, 2% and 2% respectively).

A fifth (20%) of the black and minority ethnic participants had taken a parent education class before, compared with a quarter (25%) of the White British participants. There were some significant differences in the black and minority ethnic and White British participants' reasons for taking the course. Under a quarter (23%) of black and minority ethnic participants were taking the course to due to 'having problems with the children' compared with 49% of the White British participants. Slightly more of black and minority ethnic participants were taking the course to 'become a better parent', 87% compared with 81% of the White British participants. Less than 4% of each group reported that they were ordered by the court to take the course. The proportion of black and minority ethnic participants and White British taking the course to 'learn about drugs / violence' was similar, about 10%.

Black and minority ethnic participants were more likely than White British participants to have heard about the course through flyers/announcements, a friend / relative or through the newspaper/radio. Less than a fifth (18%) reported that they had heard about the course through an agency referral or were court ordered compared with 29% of White British participants. This suggests that the proportion of White British participants that came through the courts or an agency referral was higher than for black and minority ethnic participants.

## **4.15 Summary of Section Four**

### **4.15.1 Overview**

- Overall 10% of the participants were male, in year two this increased to 12%. Just over half of the courses included at least one male participant and one course was organised for Asian men.
- The two agencies that organised courses for the largest number of people (for over 150 participants each), attracted between 15% and 17% male participants onto their courses. These two agencies have been organising Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities courses for a number of years.
- The age range of the participants was from 17 to 77 years. Approaching half were aged between 30 and 39 years. Those aged 20 – 49 years accounted for 86% of the participants.
- The courses reached a wide range of ethnic groups and 86% of the courses had participants from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. Some courses were targeted at specific ethnic groups: mainly for Bangladeshis, but also for people of other ethnic backgrounds.
- Overall, 61% of the participants were of black and minority ethnic origin. Over a quarter of the participants were 'Black' or 'Black British', 20% were 'Asian' or 'Asian British', and the remaining 14% were of 'Chinese', 'Mixed Heritage', 'Middle Eastern' or 'Other' ethnicity.
- The courses included people from a wide range of countries of origin as well as people who were born in the UK and there were participants from some new countries, which did not feature in the previous evaluation.
- Over a third of the participants had a first language other than English. A total of 46 languages were mentioned as a first language. The main languages, after English, were: Bengali/Sylheti, Arabic, Somali, Urdu, French, Turkish, Punjabi, Gujarati, Portuguese and Farsi.
- The participants covered a range of educational levels. Just under 10% had completed their education by the end of primary school. Over half had completed their education by the end of secondary school and a third had completed a college course / degree.
- The participants had a range annual household incomes, but they were concentrated in the lower income bands. Over 60% had an annual household income of under £10,000 per year. Approaching a quarter had a household income of between £10,000 and £20,000. Under 15% had a household income of over £20,000.
- Over half of the participants were living as a two parent family, 43% were a single parent, 3% were grandparents and 3% had 'Other' relationships with the children.
- Just over half of the children were male. Over half of the children (60%) were aged between three and ten years and nearly a third were aged between 11 and 18 years.
- Approaching a tenth of participants provided information on children who were not within the age range that the course was designed for (children aged 3 to 18 years).

- Nearly a quarter of the participants had attended a parent education course in the past.
- Most people (84%) stated that they were attending the Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities course to become a better parent, a third said that they were having problems with a child, 10% came with the intention of learning about drugs and violence and 3% were ordered to attend by the court.
- The participants had heard about the course through a variety of methods, but very few had heard about it through a newspaper or the radio.

#### **4.15.2 Characteristics of the male participants:**

- The distribution of male participants across the country was different to the distribution of the female participants. There were significantly more males on the courses in the South East, Yorkshire and Humberside and the North West.
- The male participants tended to be slightly older than the female participants.
- The ethnic background of the male participants were not significantly different to the ethnic background of the female participants.
- The age at which the male participants left school and their household income levels were similar to the female participants.
- There were some significant differences in the male and female participants' current status in relation to the children. More male participants lived as part of a two parent family and more did not have custody of their children. Fewer male participants were single parents.
- There were some significant differences in the male and female participants' previous experience of parenting courses, their reasons for taking the course and how they heard about it:
  - Fewer of the male participants had taken a parent education class before, compared with the female participants.
  - More of the male participants had been ordered by the courts to take the course.
  - Male participants were more likely than female participants to have heard about the course through an agency referral or were court ordered.

#### **4.15.3 Comparison of the participants by ethnic background**

- The distribution of black and minority ethnic participants across the country was different to the distribution of the White British participants. As might be expected, there were significantly more black and minority ethnic participants in London than in other areas.
- The age distribution of the black and minority ethnic and the White British participants was almost identical.
- Under half (42%) of the black and minority ethnic participants spoke English as a first language. The next largest first language was Bengali/Sylheti, which was the first language for approaching half of the Asian participants.
- There were some significant differences in the age at which the black and minority ethnic participants left school compared with the White British participants. Although slightly more black and minority ethnic participants left school at primary school level compared with White British participants significantly more went onto college or gained a degree. The household income levels of the black and minority ethnic participants were similar to the White British participants.
- The proportion of participants that were single parents was highest amongst Black Other, Afro-Caribbean and White participants parents (63%, 60%, and 52% respectively).

- The proportion of participants that did not have custody of their children was highest amongst participants of Mixed Heritage, White British, White Other and Afro-Caribbeans (5%, 3%, 2% and 2% respectively).
- There were some significant differences in the black and minority ethnic and White British participants' previous experience of parenting courses, their reasons for taking the course and how they heard about it:
  - Fewer of the black and minority ethnic participants had taken a parent education class before, compared with the White British participants.
  - Fewer of the black and minority ethnic participants were taking the course to due to 'having problems with the children', compared with the White British participants.
  - Fewer of the black and minority ethnic participants reported that they had heard about the course through an agency referral or were court ordered, compared with the White British participants.

# Section Five

## Fidelity of Delivery of the Programme

### 5.1 Introduction

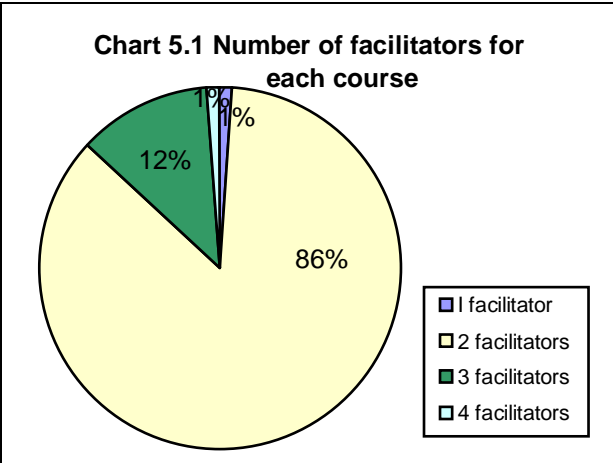
This section considers the fidelity of the delivery of the programme, in terms of adherence to the programme format and the curriculum.

On adherence to the programme it presents information on the number of facilitators running the courses, the length of the courses, the numbers on each course and the age of the participants' children. On adherence to the curriculum it explores the extent to which there was a change in the emphasis given to different curriculum components and whether they were modified.

Most of this section is based on information provided in the CSRs. The information on age of the participants' children is based on the information provided in the pre assessment questionnaires.

### 5.2 Number of facilitators

The programme is designed to be run by at least two facilitators for each course. This recommendation was adhered to in 99% of cases: only two courses did not have at least two facilitators, see Chart 5.1.

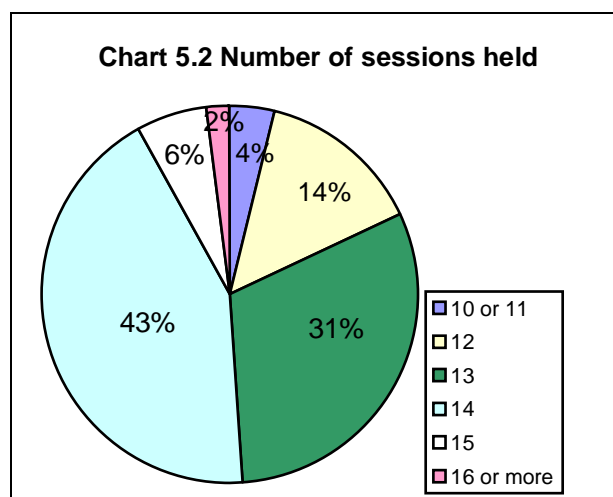


Source: CSR data: n = 203

### 5.3 Length of the course

The course format, as set out in the manual, consists of an Introductory Session followed by 12 three hour sessions taught in consecutive weeks. In practice there is some flexibility and many courses run an extra session for the graduation ceremony, making a total of 13 or 14 sessions.

Most of the courses complied with this format: almost three quarters of the courses (74%) consisted of 13 or 14 sessions, see Chart 5.2. Thirty five courses (18%) had only ten, eleven or twelve sessions, and sixteen courses (8%) had 15 to 17 sessions. Thus 26% of courses did not comply with the format for the course.



Source: CSR data: n = 194

#### **5.4 Number of participants on each course**

Most of the courses had the recommended size of 8 to 20 participants. However some of the courses were smaller or larger than the recommended size.

Based on an examination of the attendance and the ethnic origin figures in the CSRs and the number of participants on each course in the participants' data, at least twenty courses had more than 20 participants and at least six of these had 25 or more participants. It was somewhat harder to discern and definitely identify courses with fewer than eight participants but, based on the same sources, it appears that at least five courses had fewer than five participants. Therefore out of 204 courses at least 25 courses (12%) were smaller or larger than the recommended size.

#### **5.5 Ages of the participants' children**

The Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities Programme was designed for participants with children aged 3 to 18 years. As already noted, in section 4.10, approaching a tenth of participants provided information on children who were not within the age range that the course was designed for. This suggests that at least 90% of the participants on the courses had at least one child aged 3 to 18 years.

#### **5.6 Overview of the content of the curriculum**

The Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities Programme manual sets out five curriculum component areas to be covered during the course. In the CSRs the facilitators reported on each of the five curriculum component areas. They indicated whether they had emphasised each component 'more', 'less' or the 'same' as specified in the programme manual and whether they had modified or added to the component area. Tables 5.1 and 5.2 and Charts 5.3 and 5.4 summarise the facilitators' comments on this for each area of the curriculum.

On 60% or more of the courses the rites of passage component, the cultural/spiritual component and the community involvement component were emphasised the 'same' as stated in the curriculum. On just over half the courses (52% of courses) the relationship enhancement / violence prevention component was emphasised the 'same'. The positive discipline component was more frequently emphasised 'more' (on 52% of courses). Although the community involvement component was emphasised the 'same' on 60% of the courses, it more frequently emphasised 'less' than the other components (on 14% of courses).

On 60% or more of the courses the curriculum for the rites of passage and the community involvement components were not modified. For the positive discipline and cultural/spiritual components between 50% and 60% of the courses were not modified. The relationship enhancement / violence prevention component was modified most often (on 48% of courses).

**Table 5.1 Changes to the emphasise of the component areas of the course curriculum**

|                    | <b>Curriculum component area:</b> |  |                  |                     |                       |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|--|------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Emphasised:</b> | Cultural /spiritual               | Relationship enhancement / violence prevention | Rites of passage | Positive discipline | Community involvement |
| Same               | 62                                | 52   | 66               | 41                  | 60                    |
| More               | 28                                | 37   | 17               | 52                  | 14                    |
| Less               | 4                                 | 6  | 11               | 1                   | 14                    |
| Unclear            | 6                                 | 5  | 6                | 6                   | 12                    |
| <b>Total</b>       | <b>100</b>                        | <b>100</b>                                     | <b>100</b>       | <b>100</b>          | <b>100</b>            |

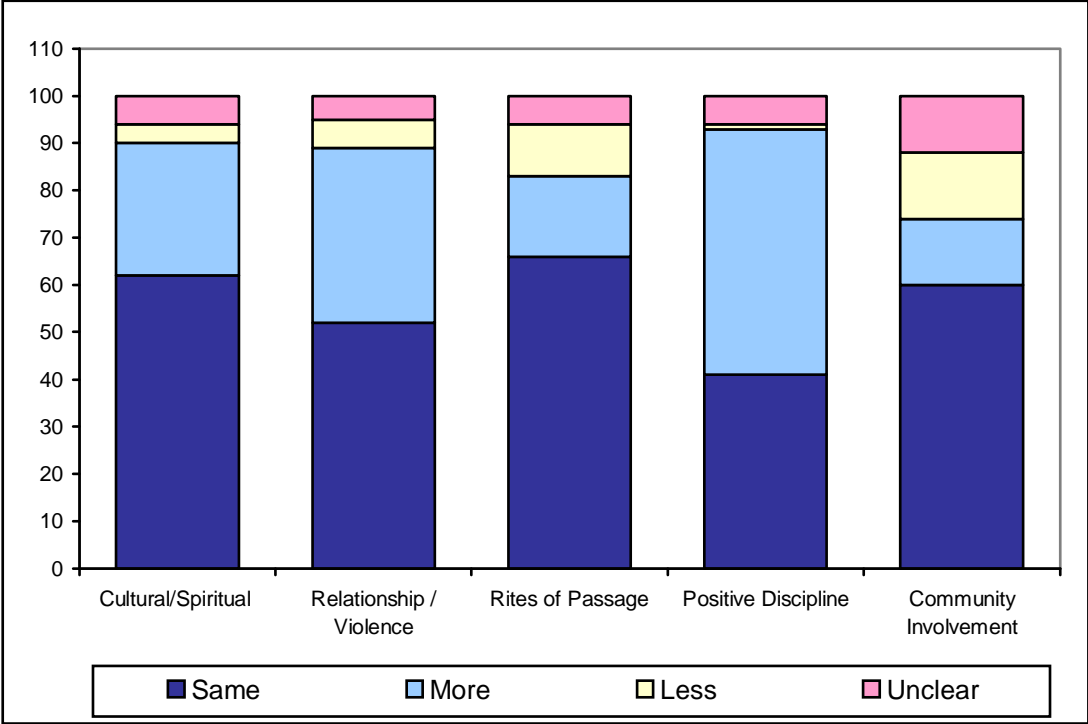
Source: CSR data: n = 203 - 204

**Table 5.2 Modifications to the component areas of the course curriculum**

|                              | <b>Curriculum component area:</b> |  |                  |                     |                       |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Modified or added to:</b> | Cultural /spiritual               | Relationship enhancement / violence prevention | Rites of passage | Positive discipline | Community involvement |
| No                           | 58                                | 46   | 60               | 51                  | 62                    |
| Yes                          | 37                                | 48   | 32               | 40                  | 26                    |
| Unclear                      | 5                                 | 6  | 8                | 9                   | 12                    |
| <b>Total</b>                 | <b>100</b>                        | <b>100</b>                                     | <b>100</b>       | <b>100</b>          | <b>51</b>             |

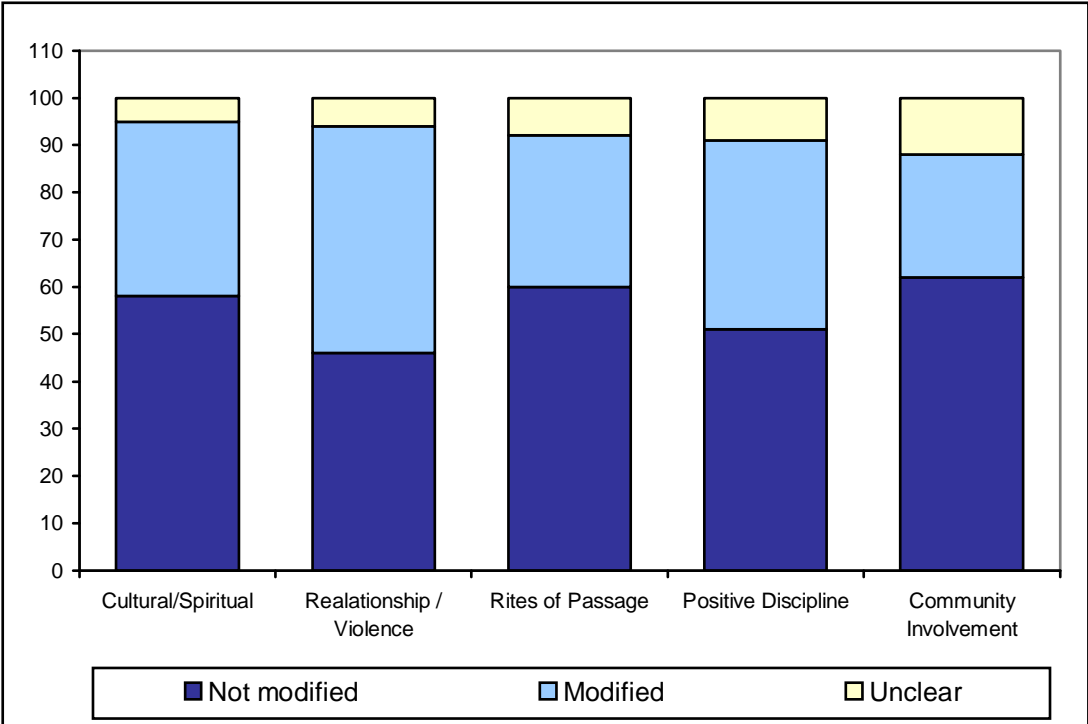
Source: CSR data: n = 202 - 204, missing cases = 1 - 2

**Chart 5.3 Extent to which the facilitators emphasised the component areas of the course curriculum**



Source: CSR data: n = 203 - 204

**Chart 5.4 Extent to which the facilitators modified the component areas of the course curriculum**



Source: CSR data: n = 202 - 204

## 5.7 Summary of Section Five

### 5.7.1 Adherence to the programme format

- **Number of facilitators:** The programme is designed to be run by at least two facilitators for each course. This was adhered to in 99% of cases.
- **Length of the course:** The course is designed for 12 to 14 sessions. Nearly three quarters of the courses complied with this but just over a quarter did not, and most of these had fewer sessions.
- **Number of participants on each course:** Most of the courses had the recommended size of 8 to 20 participants. However, at least 12% were smaller or larger than the recommended size.
- **Ages of the participants' children:** The course is designed for participants with children aged 3 to 18 years. The available figures suggested that at least 90% of the participants on the courses had at least one child aged 3 to 18 years.

### 5.7.2 Adherence to the curriculum

- There was evidence that in some cases the curriculum was delivered as specified and that in some cases changes in emphasis to the components of the curriculum and modifications to the content had been made:
  - On 60% or more of the courses the rites of passage component, the cultural component and the community involvement component were emphasised the 'same' as stated in the curriculum.
  - On just over half the courses the relationship enhancement / violence prevention component was emphasised the 'same'
  - On just over half the courses the positive discipline component was emphasised 'more'.
  - On 60% or more of the courses the curriculum for the rites of passage and the community involvement components were not modified.
  - For the positive discipline and cultural components between 50% and 60% of the courses were not modified.
  - The relationship enhancement / violence prevention component was modified most often, on 48% of the courses.

## **Section Six**

### **Course Attendance**

#### **6.1 Introduction**

This section presents information on course attendance. It is based on the quantitative information provided in the CSRs on course attendance, the support provided to encourage attendance and the reasons why some participants did not complete the course.

#### **6.2 Attendance figures as reported in the CSRs**

The facilitators provided information on the number of people participating in the courses. They recorded the number of people who were registered before the class started, the number who attended at least two sessions, the number who completed / graduated, those who participated but did not graduate and the number that dropped out.

Looking at just the drop out figures by course, in 80% of the courses either no one dropped out (22%) or only one to three people dropped out (58%). The highest number that dropped out of a single course was 13 people.

For the Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities Programme the drop out rate is calculated on the number of participants who drop out as a proportion of the number of participants who attend at least two sessions. However in some cases information was not provided for all questions (6 courses) and in some cases the figures provided were not internally consistent (i.e. the number that completed / graduated from the course, participated but did not graduate or dropped out did not add up to the number of people that attended at least two sessions).

The information provided was internally consistent for 62% of the courses (126 of the 204 courses). This was higher than the 59% in 2004/5. The combined attendance figures for these 126 courses were examined. A total of 1,388 people were registered before the class started (but some more would have been registered later), 1,335 people attended at least two sessions, 995 completed / graduated from the course, 137 attended at least half the sessions but did not graduate and 203 dropped out. Based on these figures, 75% of those who attended at least two sessions also completed / graduated from the course. A further 10% attended at least half the sessions but did not graduate. The drop out rate was 15%. This information is shown in Table 6.1 and Charts 6.1 and 6.2.

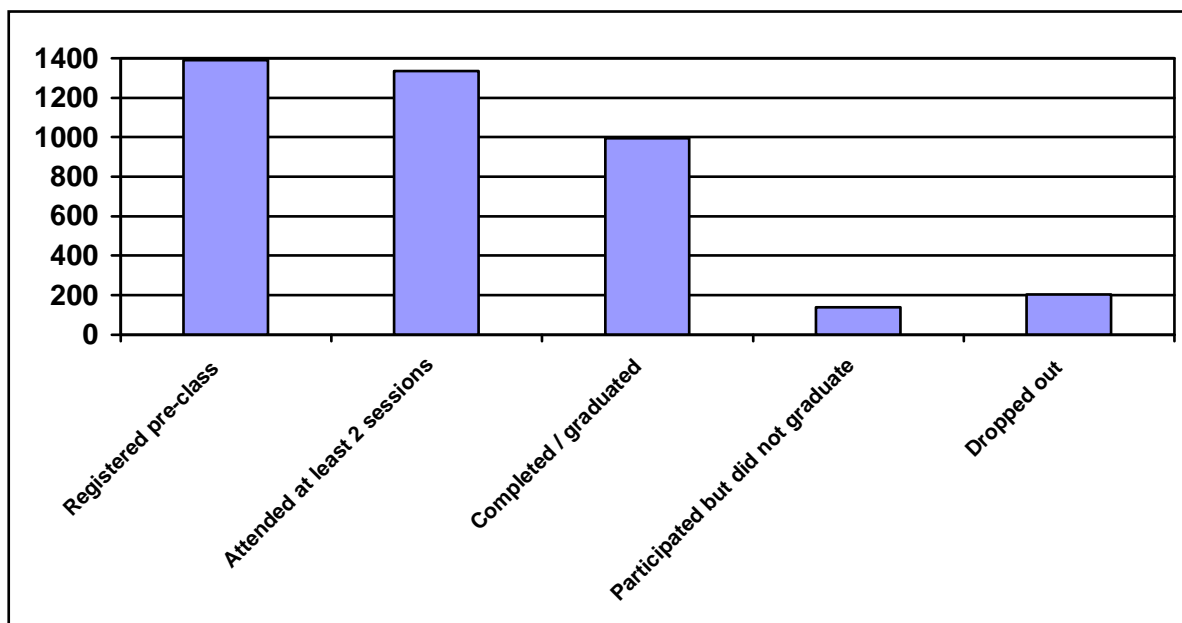
These figures are very similar to those for 2004/5 when 77% completed / graduated from the course, 8% attended at least half the sessions but did not graduate and the drop out rate was identical at 15%.

**Table 6.1 Course attendance figures**

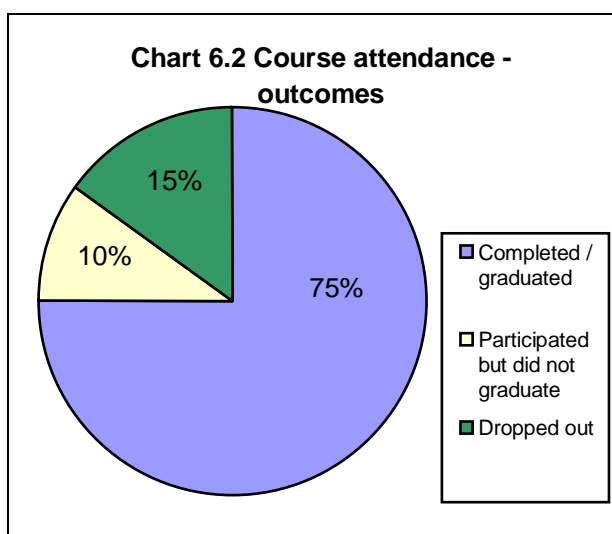
|   | Number      | % out of 1,335 |
|---|-------------|----------------|
| Registered before start of course   | 1,388       |                |
| Attended at least two sessions  | 1,335       | 100%           |
| Completed / graduated (attended more than half the sessions)                                  | 995         | 75%            |
| Participated but did not graduate (did not drop out but attended less than half the sessions) | 137         | 10%            |
| Dropped out (attended two or more sessions)   | 203         | 15%            |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>1335</b> | <b>100%</b>    |

Source: CSR data. Based on 126 courses that provided consistent information

**Chart 6.1 Course attendance figures – Numbers participating**



Source: CSR data. Based on the 126 courses that provided consistent information



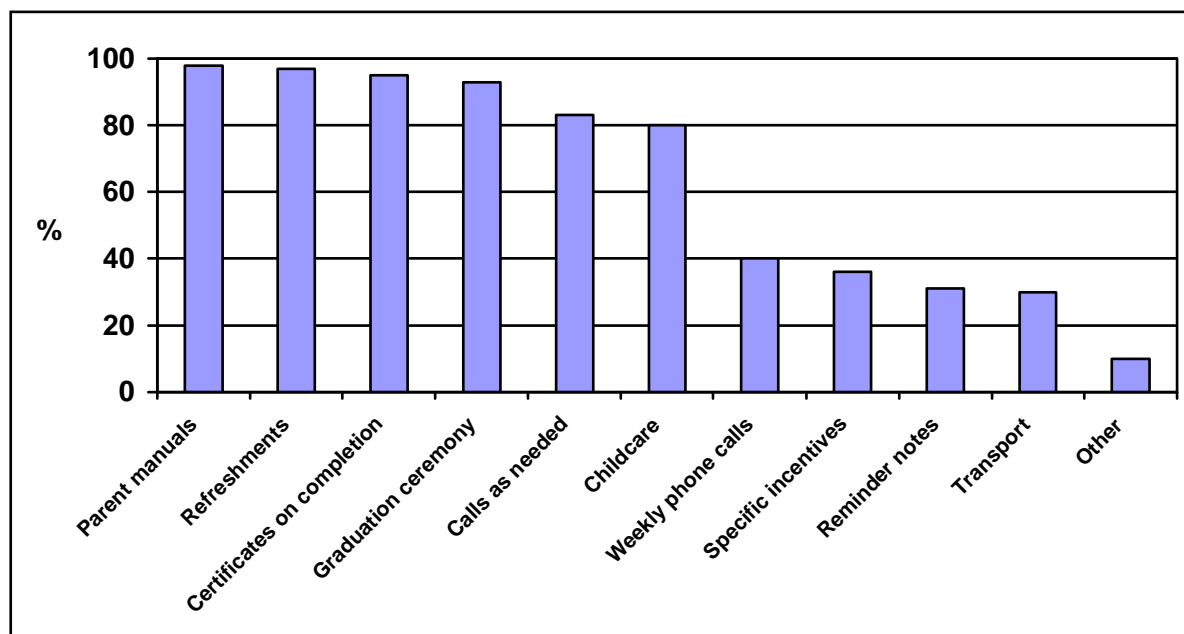
Source: CSR data. Based on the 126 courses that provided consistent information

### 6.3 Support provided to encourage attendance

The programme recommends a number of actions to encourage participants' attendance. Nearly all of the courses provided parent manuals (98%) and refreshments (97%) and over 80% provided phone calls as needed (83%) and childcare (80%), see Chart 6.3. Other support was provided on 30% to 40% of the courses: weekly phone calls (40%), special incentives (36%), help with transport (30%) and reminder notes (31%).

At the end of the course nearly all of the courses provided certificates for those completing the course (95%) and held a graduation ceremony (93%).

**Chart 6.3 Support provided to encourage attendance**



Source: CSR data: n = 202 - 203

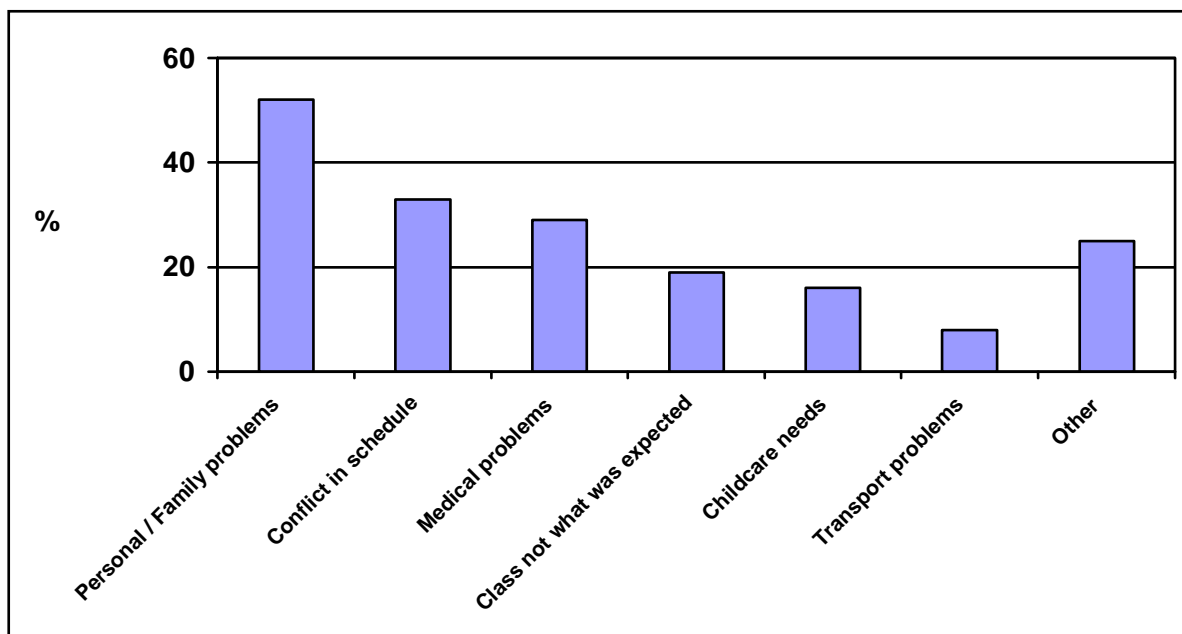
### 6.4 Reasons for dropping out of the course

The facilitators reported the reasons why people dropped out of the course, see Chart 6.4. Please note that the figures relate to the number of courses that had participants experiencing these reasons for dropping out, not the actual number of participants dropping out.

On just over half of the courses (52%) people dropped out due to personal / family problems and on a third of the courses (33%) people dropped out due to a conflict in schedule. On 29% of the courses people dropped out due to medical problems. On under 20% of the courses people dropped out as the course was not what they were expecting (19%), they had childcare needs (16%) or transport problems (8%). On a quarter of the courses people dropped out for 'Other' reasons.

There were some similarities between these figures and the figures on reasons for drop out in 2004/5. The most striking difference was the increase in the number of courses that reported participants dropping out due to medical problems. Only 13% of courses recorded people dropping out for due to medical problems in 2004/5 compared with 29% for these two years.

**Chart 6.4 Reasons for dropping out of the course**



Source: CSR data: n = 199 - 200

## **6.5. Summary of Section Six**

### **6.5.1 Course attendance**

- Looking at just the drop out figures by course, in 80% of the courses either no one dropped out (22%) or only one to three people dropped out (58%).
- Attendance information, that was internally consistent, was provided for 126 of the 204 courses (62%). Out of the 126 courses, three quarters of the participants who attended at least two sessions also completed / graduated from the course. A further 10% attended at least half the sessions but did not graduate. The drop out rate for participants who attended at least two sessions was 15%. These figures are very similar to those for 2004/5 and the drop out rate was identical.

### **6.5.2 Support provided to encourage attendance**

- The programme recommends a number of actions to encourage participants' attendance. Nearly all of the courses provided parent manuals (98%) and refreshments (97%) and over 80% provided phone calls as needed and childcare. Weekly phone calls, special incentives, reminder notes and help with transport were provided less often.
- At the end of the course nearly all of the courses provided certificates for those completing the course (95%) and held a graduation ceremony (93%).

### **6.5.3 Reasons for dropping out of the course**

- On just over half of the courses some people dropped out due to personal / family problems and on a third of the courses people dropped out due to a conflict in schedule.
- The most striking difference between these figures and the figures for reasons for drop out in 2004/5 was the increase in the number of courses that reported participants dropping out due to medical problems. Only 13% of courses recorded people dropping out for due to medical problems in 2004/5 compared with 29% for these two years.

## Section Seven

### The Participants' Views of the Programme and Future Plans

#### 7.1 Introduction

This section presents information on the impact of the course in terms the participants' ratings of the quality of the course and their future plans.

It is based on information from the participants who completed a post course questionnaire (1,081 participants). Therefore only about half of the participants (56%) were actually asked these questions and not all of them responded to all of the questions. The information on future plans also includes information provided by the facilitators in the CSRs.

#### 7.2 Participants' views on the information presented in the curriculum

At least 90% of the participants rated three aspects of the information presented in the curriculum as 'Very good' or 'Good' – ethnic / cultural roots and traditions, enhancing relationships and positive discipline techniques. Over 80% of the participants rated the other two aspects as 'Very good' or 'Good' - the rites of passage topics and activities and the community involvement activities. The participants viewed the information on community involvement less favourably than the information on the other components of the curriculum: although 85% rated it as 'Very good' or 'Good', 13% rated it as 'So-so'. Very few participants rated any aspect of the information presented in the curriculum as 'Very Poor' or 'Poor', see Table 7.1 and Chart 7.1. These responses are similar to the responses for 2004/5.

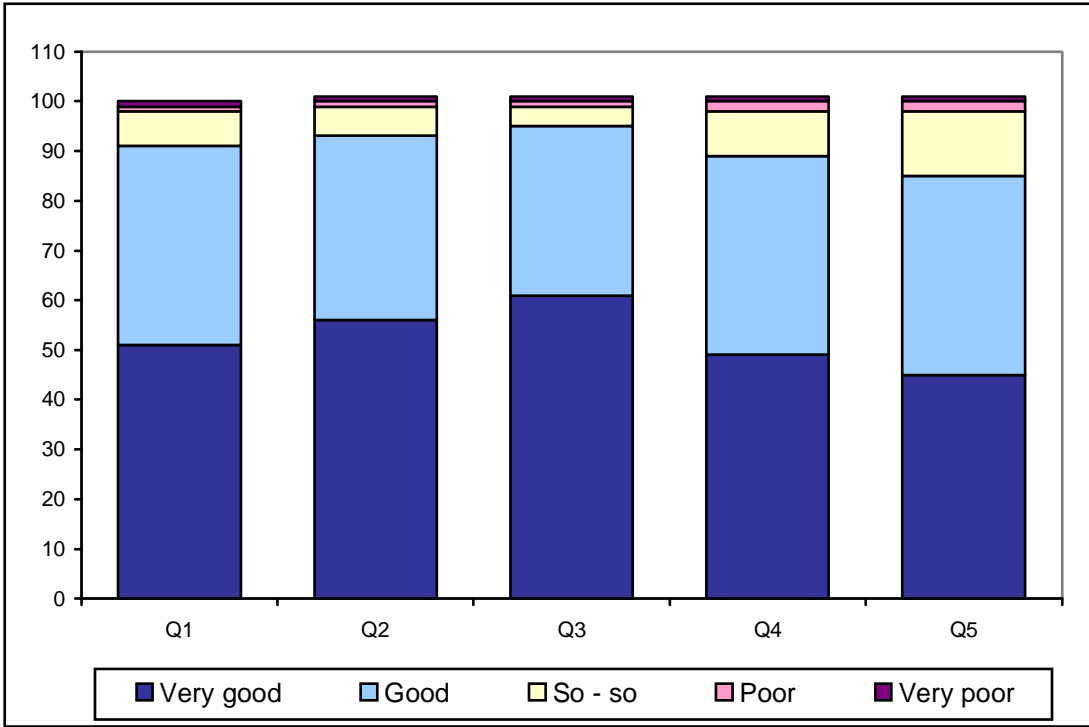
**Table 7.1 Participants' views on the information presented in the curriculum**

| How would you rate the information presented in the curriculum: | Very good | Good | So - so | Poor | Very poor | Sample size |
|---|-----------|------|---------|------|-----------|-------------|
| 1. Ethnic / cultural roots and traditions                       | 51        | 40   | 7       | 1    | 1         | n = 893     |
| 2. Enhancing relationships                                      | 56        | 37   | 6       | 1    | 1         | n = 893     |
| 3. Positive discipline techniques                               | 61        | 34   | 4       | 1    | 1         | n = 896     |
| 4. Rites of passage topics and activities                       | 49        | 40   | 9       | 2    | 1         | n = 892     |
| 5. Community involvement activities                             | 45        | 40   | 13      | 2    | 1         | n = 884     |

All figures shown as a % out of 100% across each row.

Source: Participants data: n = 884 - 896

**Chart 7.1 Participants' views on the information presented in the curriculum**



Source: Participants data: n = 884 - 896

**7.3 Participants' views on the way that the course was conducted**

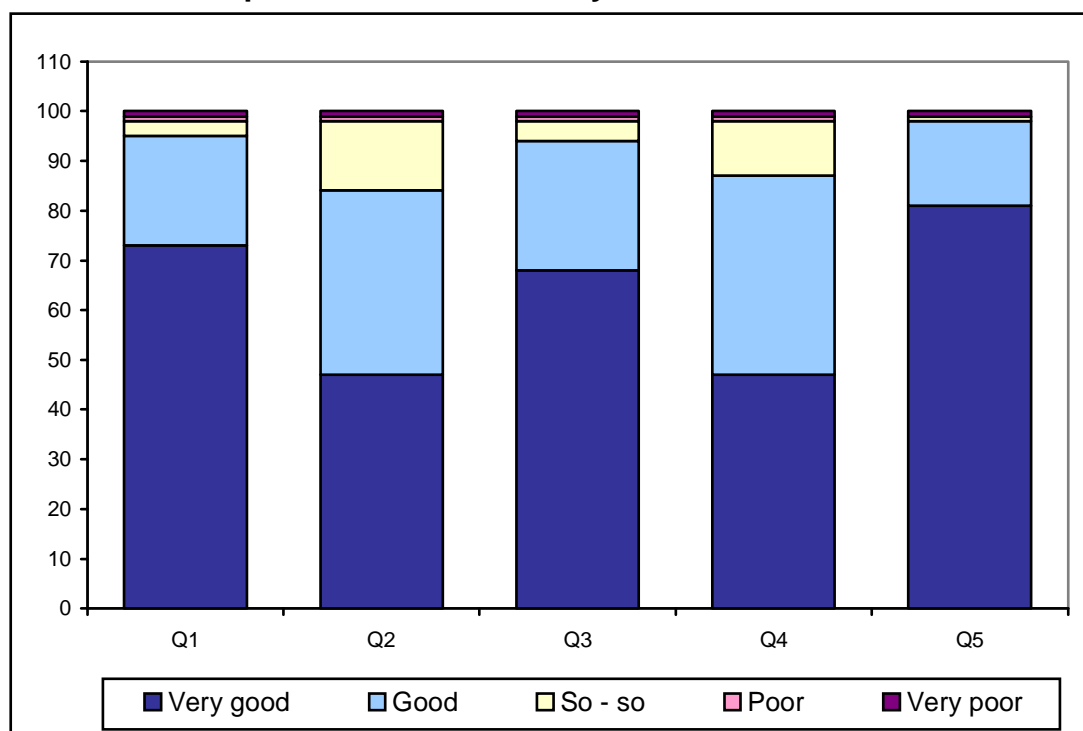
Over 90% of the participants rated three aspects of the way that the course was conducted as 'Very good' or 'Good' – the opportunity to exchange ideas and ask questions during the class, the parent manual and the instructor's knowledge and skill in conducting the class. Over 80% of the participants rated the other two aspects as 'Very good' or 'Good' – the role play activities and the follow up activities. Very few participants rated any aspect of the information presented in the curriculum as 'Very Poor' or 'Poor', see Table 7.2 and Chart 7.2. These responses are similar to the responses for 2004/5.

**Table 7.2 Participants' views on the way that the course was conducted**

| How would you rate the way the class was conducted:                  | Very good | Good | So - so | Poor | Very poor | Sample size |
|--|-----------|------|---------|------|-----------|-------------|
| The opportunity to exchange ideas and ask questions during the class | 73        | 22   | 3       | 1    | 1         | n = 893     |
| The role play activities   | 47        | 37   | 14      | 1    | 1         | n = 889     |
| The parent book  | 68        | 26   | 4       | 1    | 1         | n = 880     |
| The follow up activities   | 47        | 40   | 11      | 1    | 1         | n = 881     |
| My instructor's knowledge and skill in conducting the class          | 81        | 17   | 1       | 0    | 1         | n = 887     |

All figures shown as a % out of 100% across each row. Source: Participants data: n = 880 - 893

**Chart 7.2 Participants' views on the way that the course was conducted**



Source: Participants data: n = 880 - 893

#### **7.4 Participants' views on recommending the course to their family and friends**

The participants were asked whether they would recommend the course to their family and friends. Nearly all the participants (99%) said that they would.

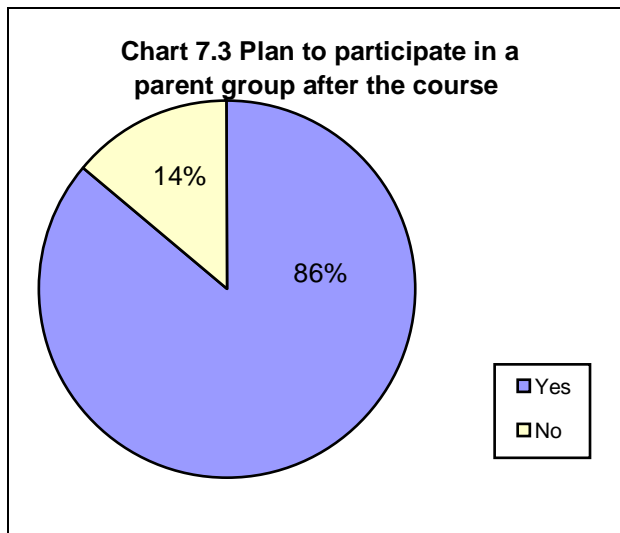
#### **7.5 Future plans**

The seventh objective of the Programme as set out in the Facilitator's Manual is to:

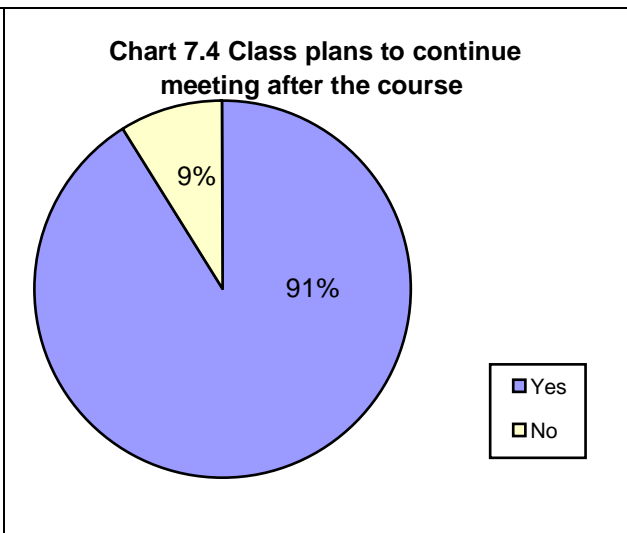
*'Decrease the sense of isolation by supporting parents in a parent programme, and provide parents with a mechanism for connecting to informal and formal community resources that are needed in order for meaningful and lasting changes to occur.'*

Both the participants and the facilitators were asked about their future plans. The participants were asked if they planned to participate in a parent group after graduating from the course and 86% said that they did, see Chart 7.3. The facilitators were asked a more general question about whether the participants planned to continue meeting after the course, and 91% said that they did, see Chart 7.4.

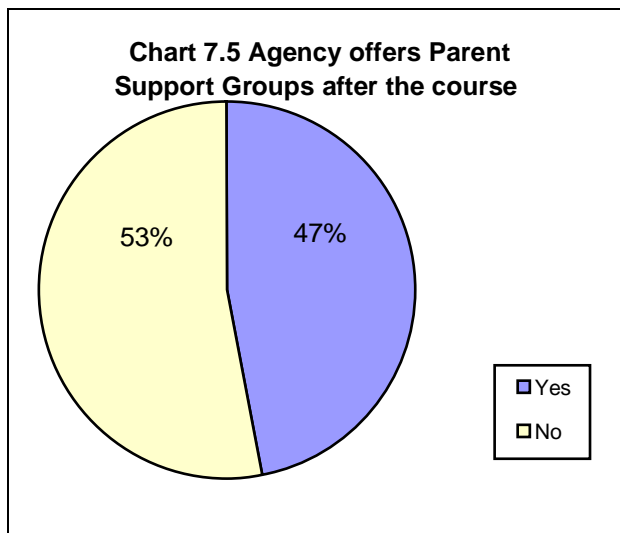
The facilitators were also asked whether their agency ran parent support groups after the course or offered child support groups. Fewer than half reported that they ran parent support groups after the course (47%) and even fewer offered child support groups (21%), see Charts 7.5 and 7.6. This was considerably less than in 2004/5, when 73% of facilitators reported that their agency ran parent support groups after the course. This could impact on the follow up support available to the participants.



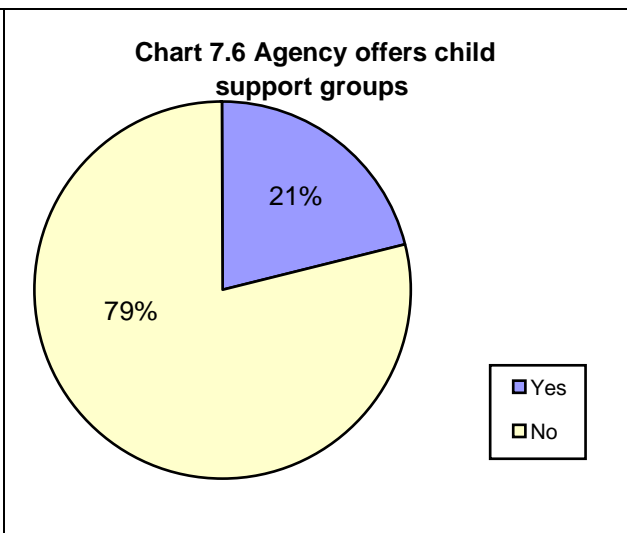
Source: Participants data: n = 954



Source: CSR data: n = 203



Source: CSR data: n = 196



Source: CSR data: n = 197

## **7.6. Summary of Section Seven**

### **7.6.1 Participants' views of the course**

- The participants rated the course very highly:
  - Over 80% of the participants rated all aspects of the information presented in the curriculum as 'Very good' or 'Good', and some aspects were rated as 'Very good' or 'Good' by over 90%.
  - Over 80% of the participants rated all aspects of the way that the course was conducted as 'Very good' or 'Good', and some aspects were rated as 'Very good' or 'Good' by over 90%.
  - Nearly all the participants (99%) said that they would recommend the course to their family and friends.
- The participants viewed the information on community involvement less favourably than the information on the other components of the curriculum.

### **7.6.2 Participants' future plans**

- 86% of the participants said that they planned to participate in a parent group after graduating from the course and over 90% of the facilitators said that the participants planned to continue meeting after the course.
- However fewer than half the agencies ran parent support groups after the course and even fewer offered child support groups.
- It therefore appears that the parents' expectations for support after completion of the course were unlikely to be met directly through parent support groups provided by the agency that organised the course they had attended.

## **Section Eight**

### **Impact of the Programme on the Participants and their Children.**

#### **8.1 Introduction**

This section considers the impact of the programme in terms of reported behavioural changes in the participants and their children and thus provides a quantitative indication of the impact of the programme. It is based on the pre and post course assessment questionnaires completed by the participants. There were 897 participants who completed both a pre and post course assessment questionnaire and they covered 1,249 children. The pre and post course assessment questionnaire covered six topics:

- Family activities and discussions
- Positive discipline and communication strategies
- Negative discipline and communication strategies
- Participants' competencies
- Children's competencies
- Community focus.

Before running any statistical tests on the pre and post course responses to the assessment questionnaire, the characteristics of the participants in the 'paired' sample were compared with the participants in the full sample to identify any substantial differences in the two samples, see section 8.2 below. The responses of the paired and full sample to the pre course questionnaire were also compared, see Appendix 1.

To test whether or not any differences in the responses to the pre and post course assessment questionnaires by the 'paired' sample were statistically significant they were subject to statistical tests for paired samples. The responses to the statements on five of the six topics were tested for statistical significance using the Wilcoxon Matched Pairs Signed Rank Test. The responses to the community focus questions were tested using the McNemar test. The results are commented on in each sub section below. The detailed pre and post course responses by the paired sample are provided in Appendix 1 and the full findings on statistical significance are set out in Appendix 2.

In each sub section the differences in the responses to the pre and post course questionnaires by the paired sample are presented in two charts. The first of these compares specific differences in the pre and post responses. The second chart shows how many individual participants changed their response between completing the pre and the post questionnaires. It also shows how many participants responded 'Always', 'Never', 'Very Good/Good' or 'Yes' (depending on the statement / question) on the pre course questionnaire and therefore could not 'improve' on their response in the post course questionnaire.

Some of the responses were also examined by gender and ethnic group. Although there were some statistically significant differences there was no consistent pattern in these differences.

## **8.2 Comparison between the paired sample and the full sample**

The characteristics of the 'paired sample' were first examined to identify how similar it was to the full sample and whether there were any major differences. It was found that the number of differences between the full sample and the paired sample were very few and the actual differences were small. Areas where there was a difference of four or more percentage points were as follows:

- The percentage of two parent families was 51% in the full sample and 55% in the paired sample. This was reflected in the percentage of single parents in each sample: 43% of participants were single parents in the full sample and 40% were single parents in the paired sample.
- The household income data showed that in the full sample 63% had an income of under £10,000 and 23% had an income of between £10,000 and £20,000. The figures for the paired sample 58% and 26% respectively.
- In the full sample one agency organised courses for 10% of the participants. In the paired sample this decreased to 6%.

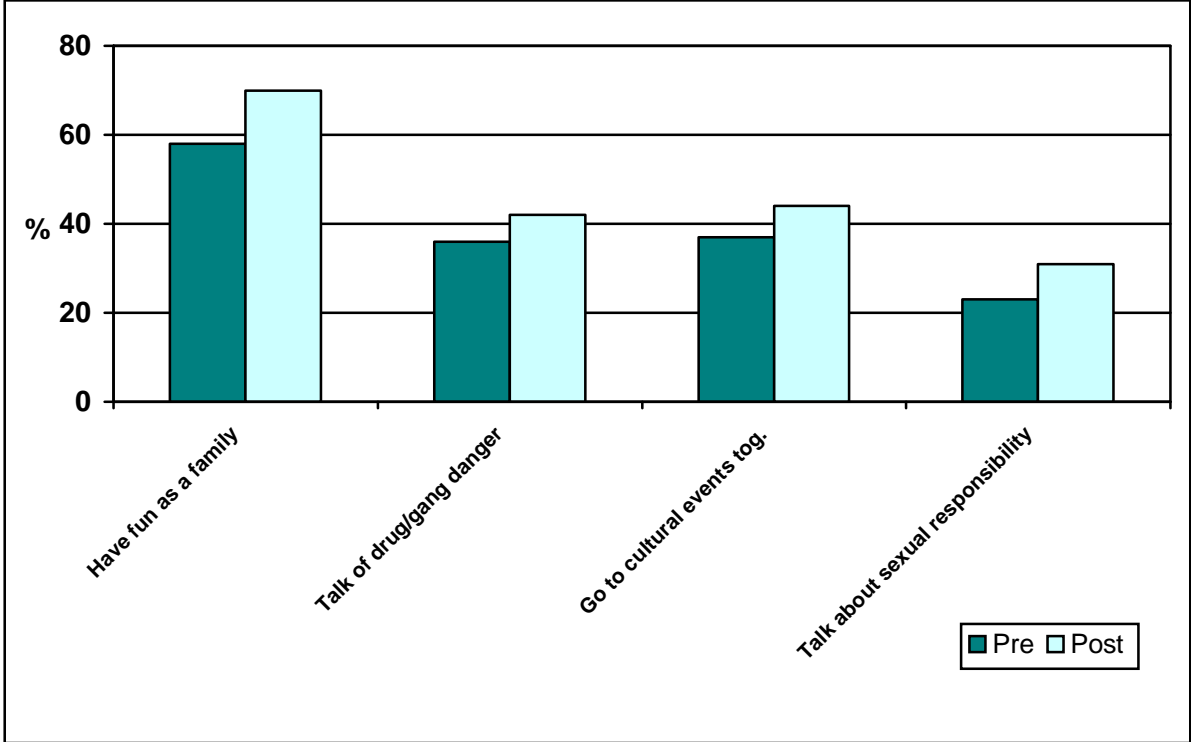
The responses by the paired sample to the pre course assessment questionnaires were compared with the responses by the full sample to the pre course assessment questionnaires and all the responses were found to be very similar.

## **8.3 Family activities and discussions**

The participants responded to four statements about family activities and discussions. The detailed pre and post course responses by the paired sample are provided in Appendix 1, Section A1.2.

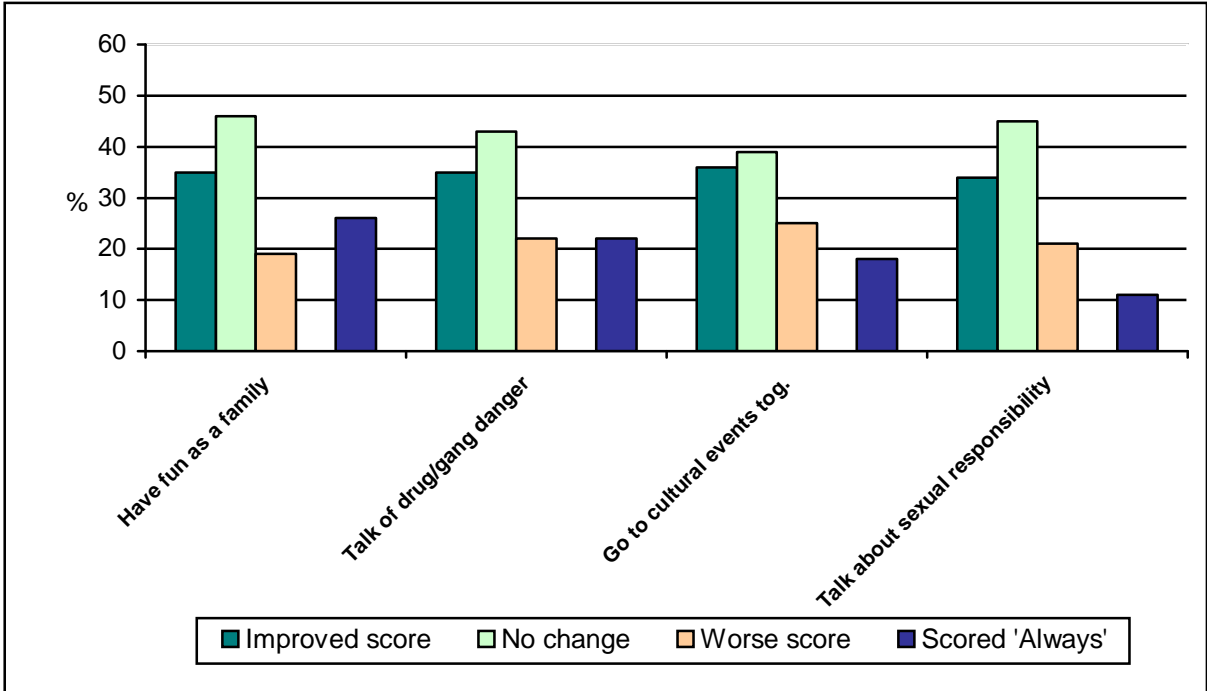
The responses to the pre and post course questionnaires for the paired sample were compared. Chart 8.1 shows that the percentage who responded 'Always' / 'Usually' in the post course questionnaire increased for all four statements. Chart 8.2 shows that for all four statements the number of those who responded with an increased score was more than the number who responded with a decreased score. For three of the four statements over 40% did not change their response. The Wilcoxon Signed Rank test confirmed that these differences were all statistically significant. These results indicate that the course led to an increase in family activities and discussions.

**Chart 8.1 Family activities and discussions**  
**Comparison of pre and post responses ('Always' / 'Usually' combined)**  
**(Paired sample)**



n varied between 739 and 885

**Chart 8.2 Family activities and discussions**  
**Changes in the pre and post scores**  
**(Paired sample)**



n varied between 739 and 885

### 8.4 Positive discipline and communication strategies

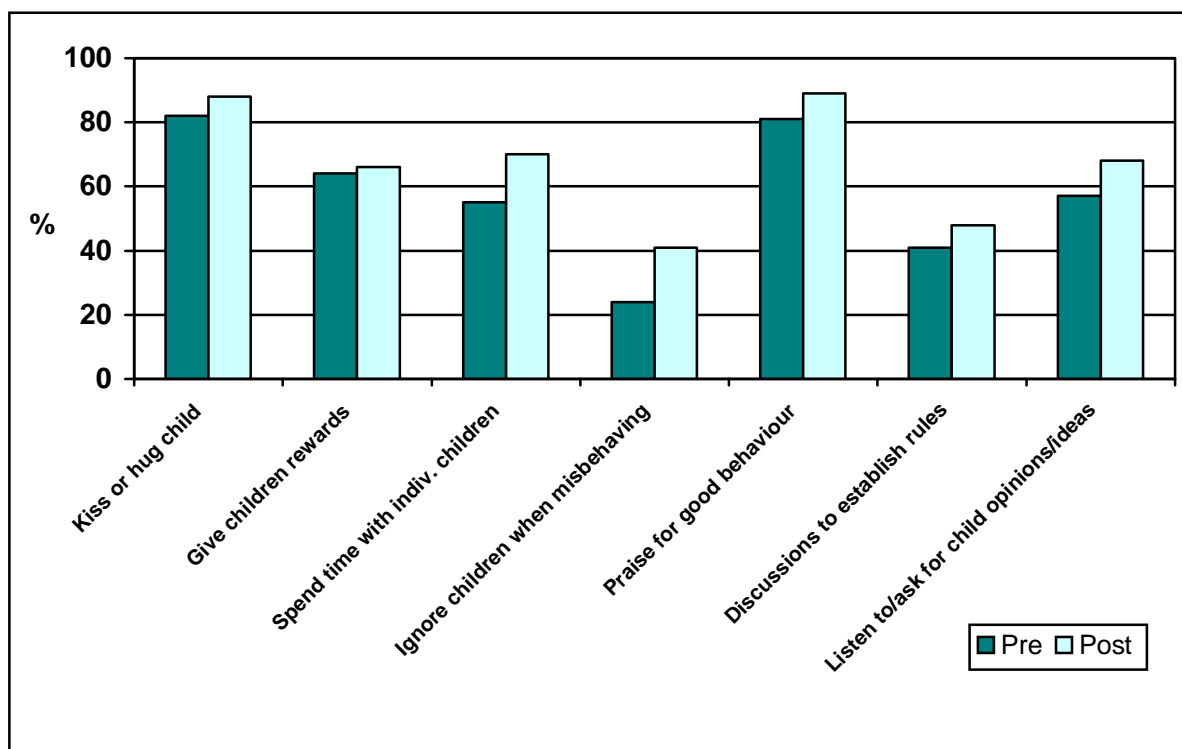
The participants responded to seven statements about positive discipline and communication strategies. The detailed pre and post course responses by the paired sample are provided in Appendix 1, Section A1.3.

The responses to the pre and post course questionnaires for the paired sample were compared. Chart 8.3 shows that the percentage who responded 'Always' / 'Usually' in the post course questionnaire increased for all seven statements.

Chart 8.4 shows that for all seven statements the number of those who responded with an increased score was more than the number who responded with a decreased score. For five of the seven statements over 40% did not change their response. In response to the statement on kissing and hugging their children, 70% did not change their score. This statement also had 67% who responded 'Always' for the pre course questionnaire.

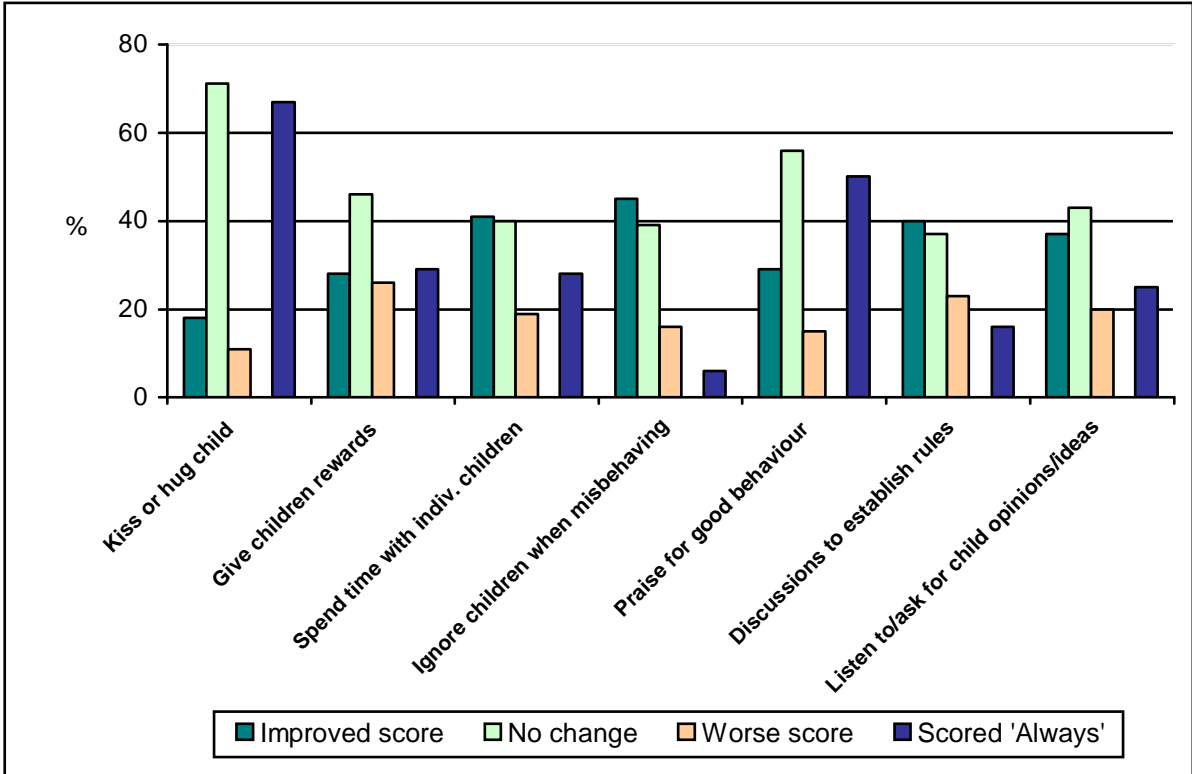
The Wilcoxon Signed Rank test confirmed that all but one of the differences were statistically significant. The exception was for 'Give children rewards'. Overall, these results indicate that the course led to an increase in the use of positive discipline and communication strategies.

**Chart 8.3 Positive discipline and communication strategies**  
**Comparison of pre and post responses ('Always' / 'Usually' combined)**  
**(Paired sample)**



n varied between 848 and 891

**Chart 8.4 Positive discipline and communication strategies questions**  
**Changes in the pre and post scores (Paired sample)**



n varied between 838 and 878

**8.5 Negative discipline and communication strategies**

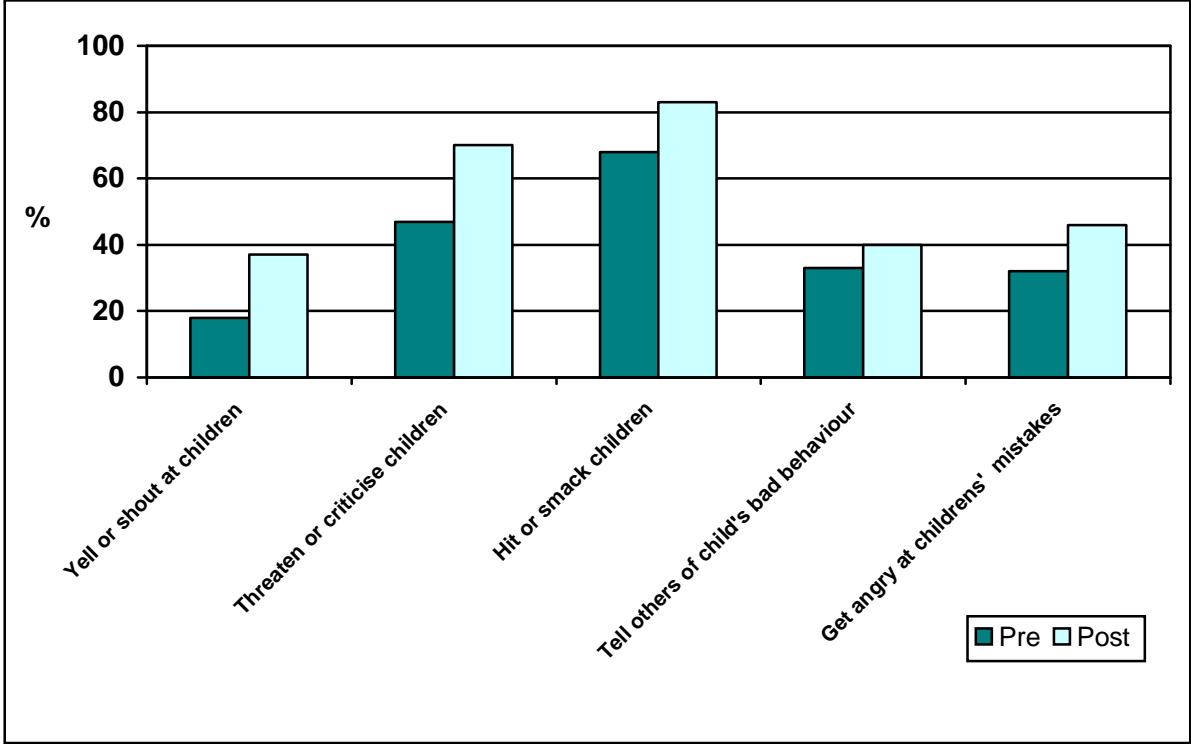
The participants responded to five statements about negative discipline and communication strategies. The detailed pre and post course responses by the paired sample are provided in Appendix 1, Section A1.4.

The comparison of the responses to the pre and post course questionnaires for the paired sample shows that the percentage who responded 'Rarely / Never' in the post course questionnaire increased for all five statements, see Chart 8.5.

Chart 8.6. shows that for all five statements the number of those who responded with an increased score was more than the number who responded with a decreased score. For four of the five statements over 40% did not change their response. In response to the statement on hitting or smacking their children, 49% did not change their score. This statement also had 27% who responded 'Never' for the pre course questionnaire.

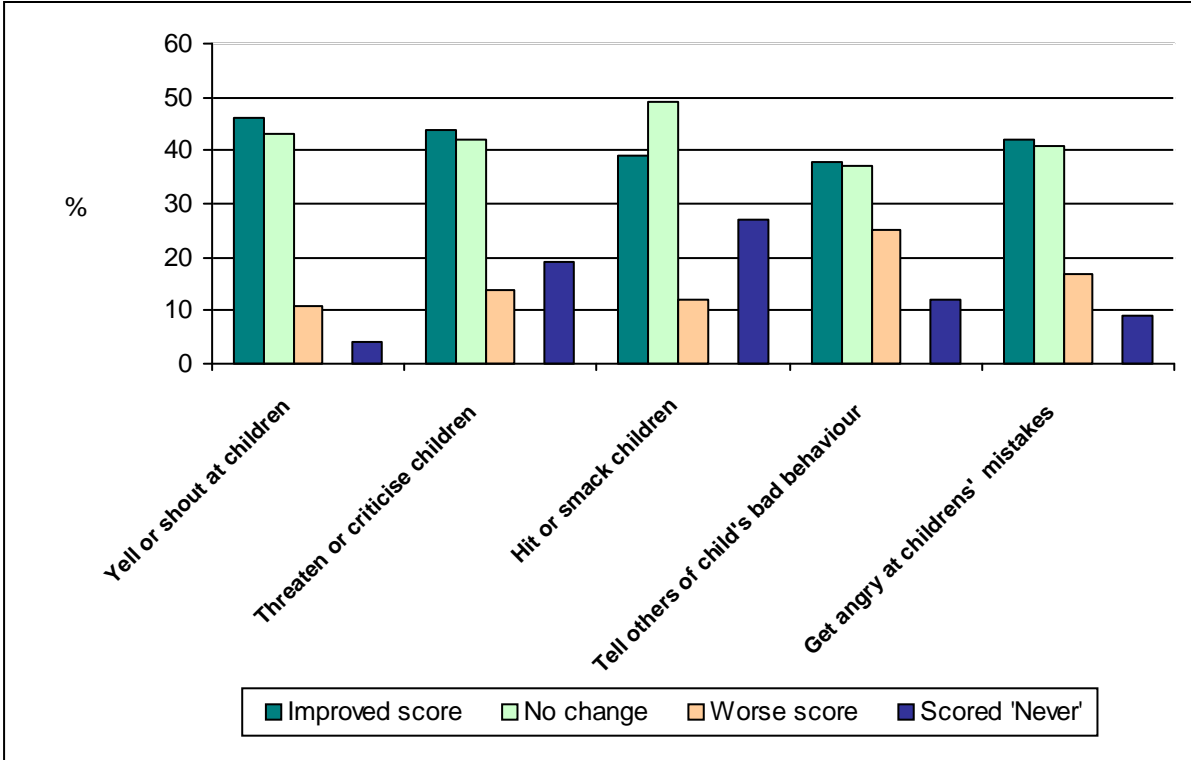
The Wilcoxon Signed Rank test confirmed that all of the differences were statistically significant. These results indicate that the course led to a decrease in the use of negative discipline and communication strategies.

**Chart 8.5 Negative discipline and communication strategies**  
**Comparison of pre and post responses ('Rarely' / 'Never' combined)**  
**(Paired sample)**



n varied between 862 and 882

**Chart 8.6 Negative discipline and communication strategies**  
**Changes in the pre and post scores (Paired sample)**



n varied between 846 and 866

## **8.6 The participants' competence**

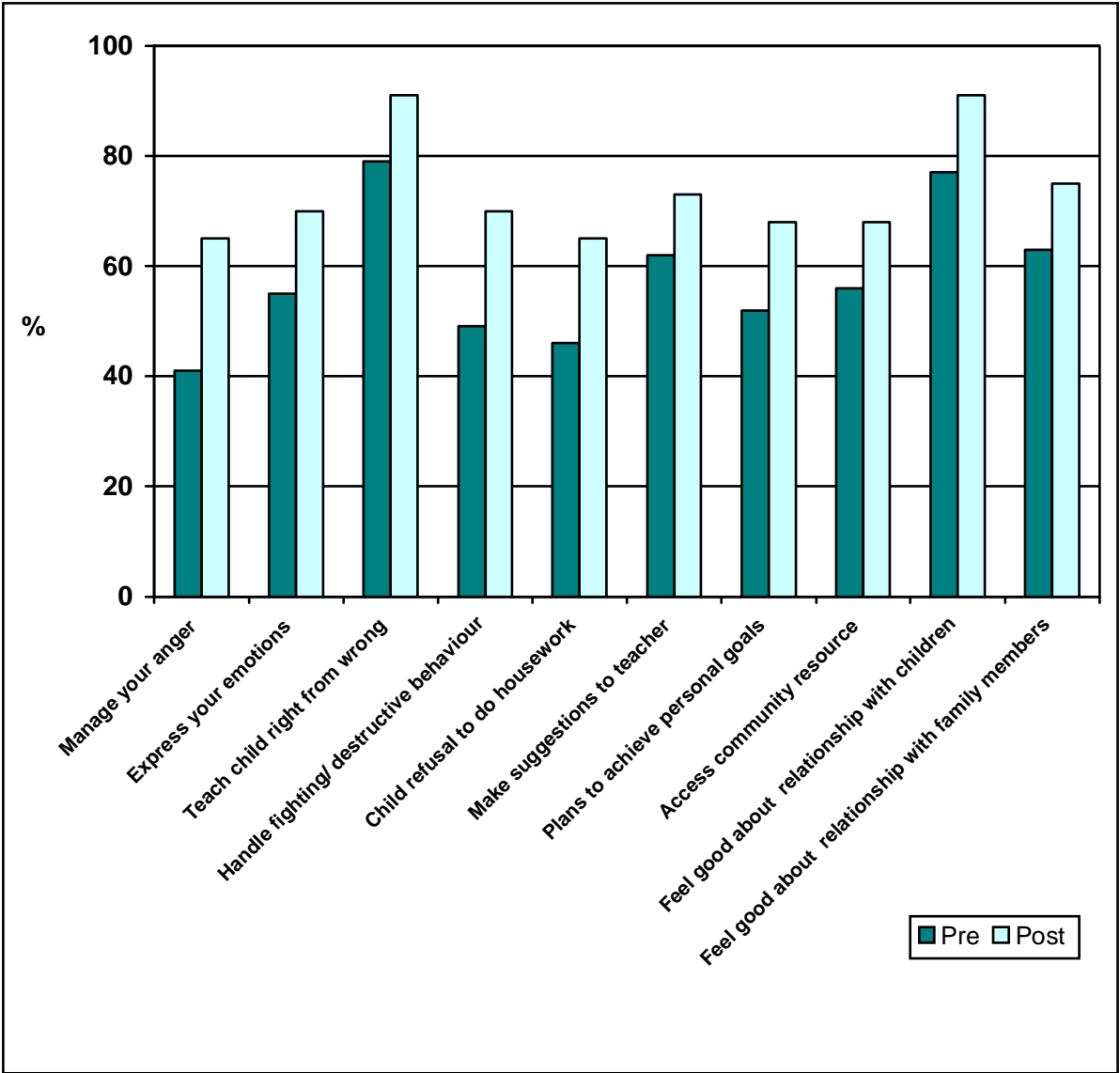
The participants responded to ten statements to assess their level of competence before and after participating in the course. These related to four areas: anger management, child management, problem solving skills and relationships. The detailed pre and post course response by the paired sample are provided in Appendix 1, Section A1.5.

The responses to the pre and post course questionnaires for the paired sample were compared. Chart 8.7 shows that the percentage who responded "Very good" or 'Good' in the post course questionnaire increased for all ten statements.

Chart 8.8 shows that for all ten statements the number of those who responded with an increased score was more than the number who responded with a decreased score. For seven of the ten statements at least 40% did not change their response. For one of these statements ('How good do you feel about your relationship with your children?'), over 50% did not change their response. This statement also had the highest percentage who responded 'Very good' for the pre course questionnaire.

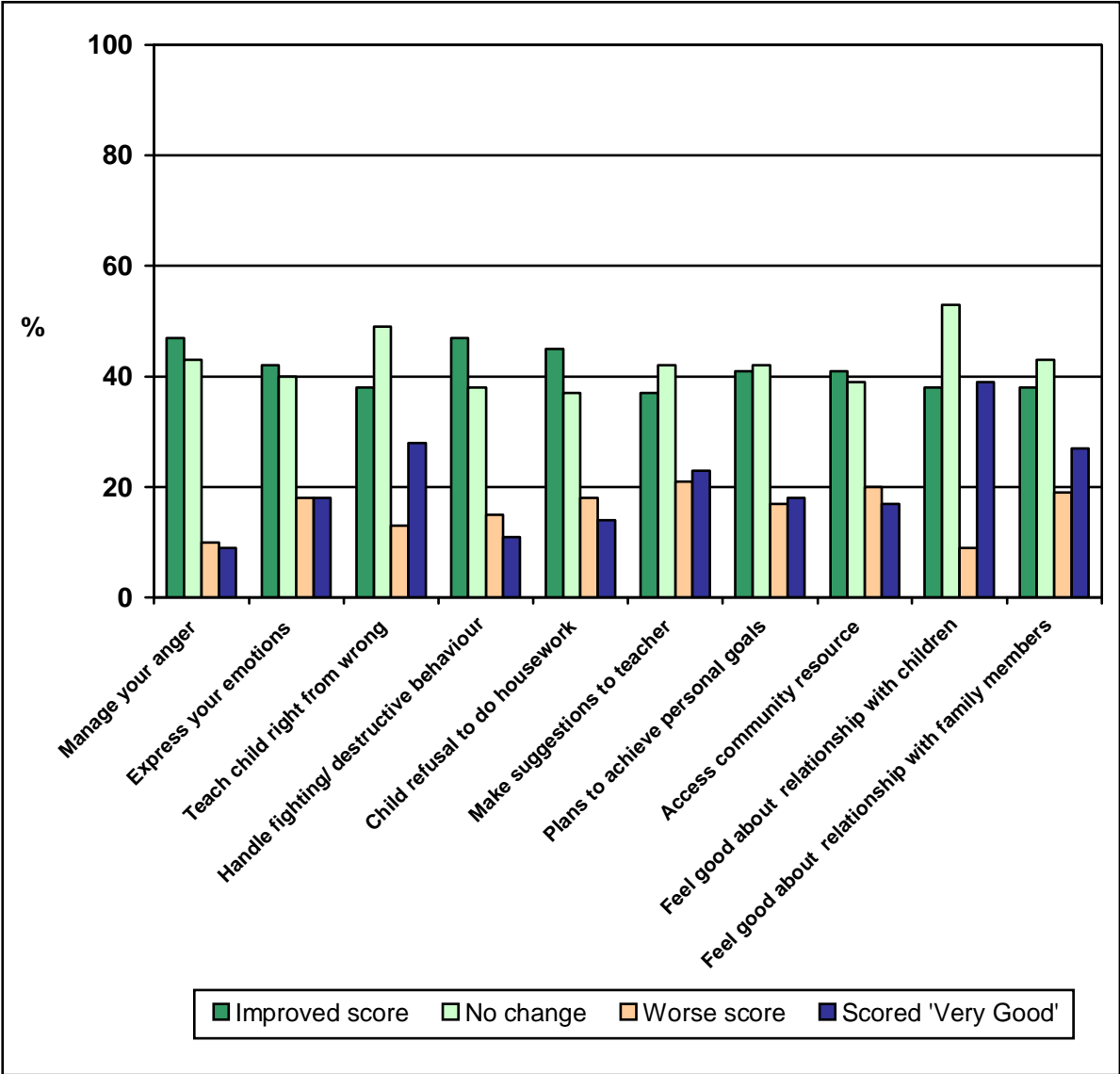
The Wilcoxon Signed Rank test confirmed that all of the differences were statistically significant. These results indicate that the course had a positive impact on the participants' competence in all four areas.

**Chart 8.7 Participants' competence**  
**Comparison of pre and post responses ('Very good' / 'Good' combined)**  
**(Paired sample)**



n varied between 810 and 888

**Chart 8.8 Participants' competence – Changes in the pre and post scores (Paired sample)**



n varied between 775 and 870

## 8.7 The children's competence

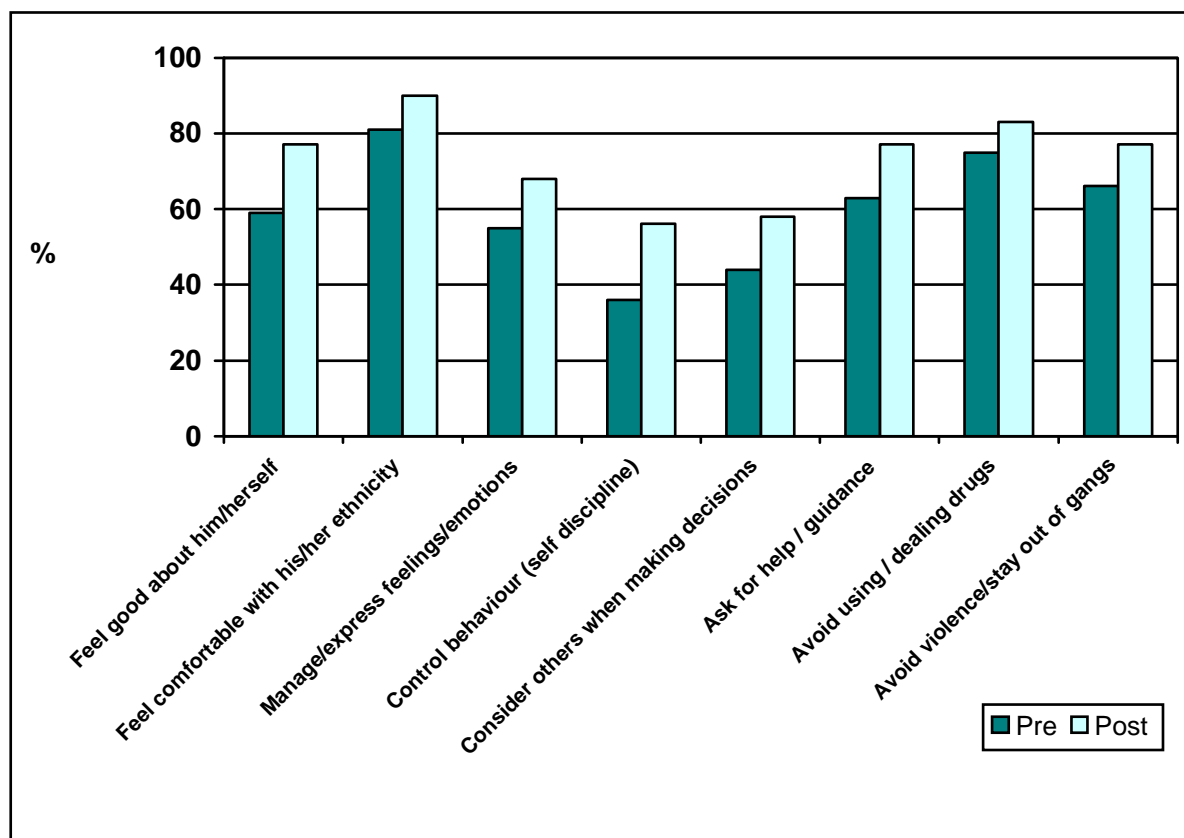
The participants responded to eight statements to assess their child(ren)'s level of competence before and after participating in the course. These related to four areas: self esteem, self discipline, problem solving skills and choices and violence. The detailed pre and post course response by the paired sample are provided in Appendix 1, Section A1.6.

The responses to the pre and post course questionnaires for the paired sample were compared. Chart 8.9 shows that the percentage who responded "Very good" or 'Good' in the post course questionnaire increased for all eight statements.

Chart 8.10 shows that for all eight statements the number of those who responded with an increased score was more than the number who responded with a decreased score. For six of the eight statements at least 40% did not change their response. For two of these statements, over 50% did not change their response. These two statements also had the highest percentage who responded 'Very good' in the pre course questionnaire.

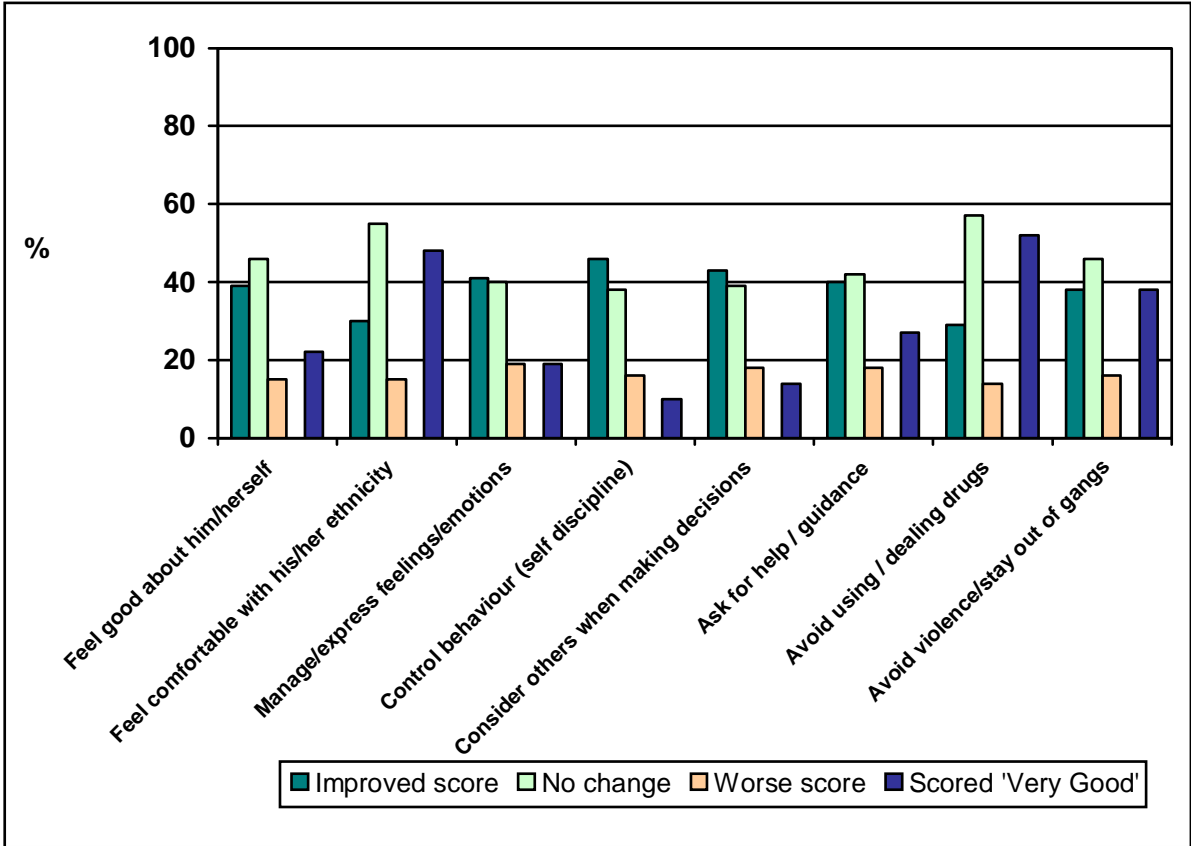
The Wilcoxon Signed Rank test confirmed that all of the differences were statistically significant. These results indicate that the course had a positive impact on the children's competence in all four areas.

**Chart 8.9 Children's competence**  
**Comparison of pre and post responses ('Very good' / 'Good' combined)**  
**(Paired sample)**



n varied between 679 and 1158

**Chart 8.10 Children's competence – Changes in the pre and post scores (Paired sample)**



n varied between 580 and 1074

**8.8 Community Focus**

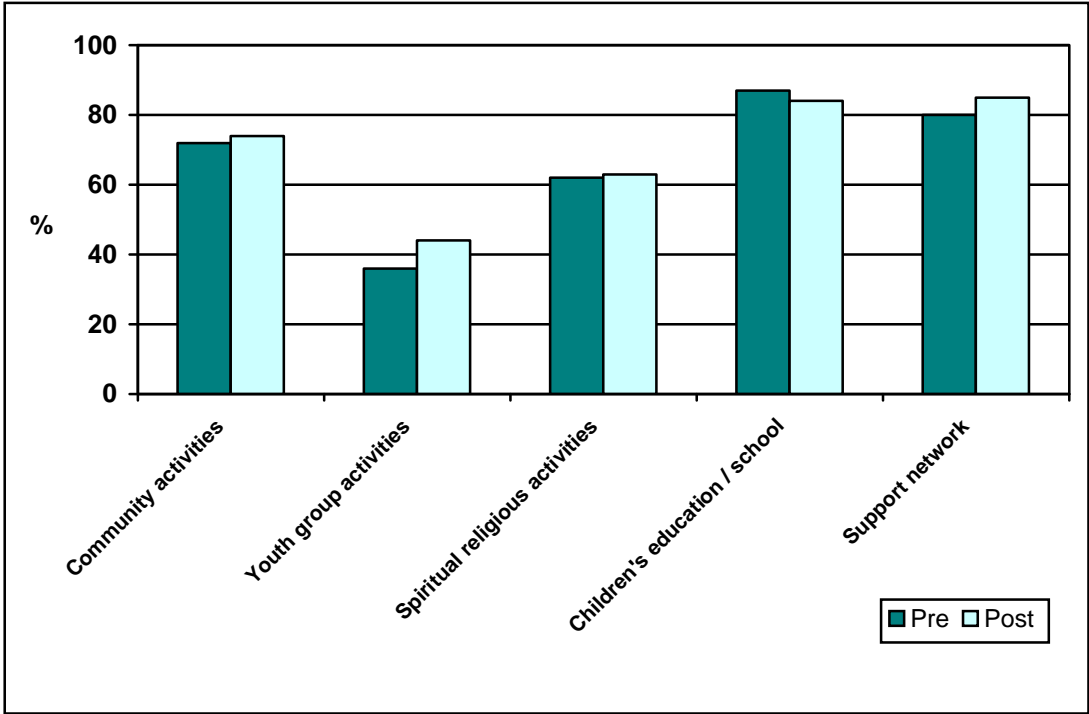
The participants responded to five questions about their involvement in community activities. The detailed pre and post course responses by the paired sample are provided in Appendix 1, Section A1.7.

The responses to the pre and post course questionnaires for the paired sample were compared. The percentage who responded 'Yes' in the post course questionnaire increased slightly for four of the five questions, see Chart 8.11. There was a very slight increase in participation in spiritual/religious activities, this compared with a slight decrease in 2004/5. For participation in children's education/schooling the percentage decreased slightly (from 87% to 84%).

Chart 8.12 shows that for all five questions over 60% did not change their response in either direction. For four out of the five questions the number of those who changed their response from 'Yes' to 'No' was more than the number who changed their response from 'No' to 'Yes'.

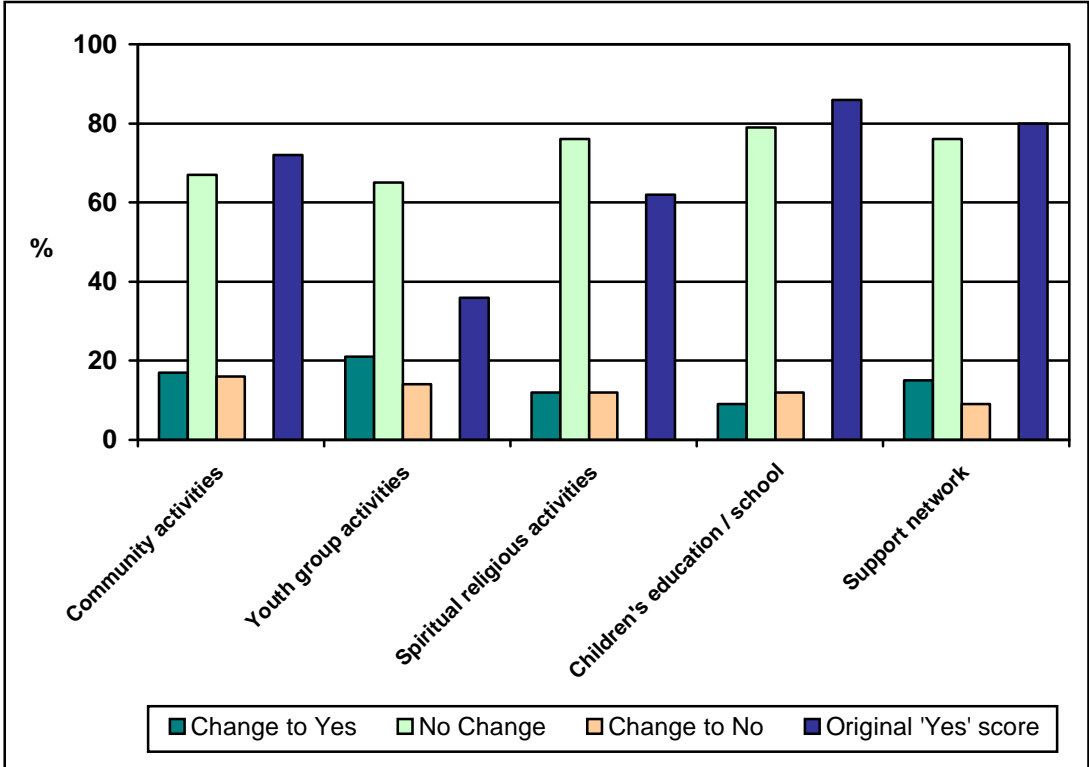
The McNemar Test confirmed that the increases in youth group activities and in having a support network of family and friends were statistically significant. The small changes in the other three questions were not statistically significant. These results indicated that the course had limited immediate impact on the participants' level of community involvement.

**Chart 8.11 Community focus – Comparison of pre and post ‘Yes’ responses (Paired sample)**



n varied between 817 and 883

**Chart 8.12 Community focus – Changes in the pre and post scores (Paired sample)**



n varied between 781 and 861

## 8.9 Summary of Section Eight

- A total of 897 participants completed both the pre and post course questionnaires. This 'paired sample' was used to assess the impact of the course in terms of quantitative changes in the participants and their children.
- In most respects the characteristics of this 'paired sample' were very similar to the characteristics of the full sample. The most noteworthy differences were in respect of household income and the participants' status in relation to their children.
- The responses of the paired sample and the full sample to the pre course questionnaire were also very similar.
- The changes in the participants' responses to the statements in five areas were all statistically significant, except for one statement, and the results indicated that the course led to:
  - An increase in family activities and discussions.
  - An increase in the use of positive discipline and communication strategies.
  - A decrease in the use of negative discipline and communication strategies.
  - An increase in the participants' competence.
  - An increase in the children's competence.
- There were two statistically significant differences in the changes in the participants' responses to the five questions on community focus. These were for youth group activities and having a support network of friends and family. The changes in the responses to the other three questions were not statistically significant. This indicated that the course had limited immediate impact on the participants' level of community involvement.
- Overall, the changes in the responses to the pre and post assessment questionnaires indicated that the course had a positive impact on the participants and their children.

## **Section Nine**

### **Conclusions**

#### **9.1. Introduction**

This section presents conclusions based on the quantitative data provided for the evaluation of the Strengthening Families Strengthening Communities Programme.

The evaluation covered data from a total of 205 courses with over 1,900 participants. Nearly 900 participants completed 'before' and 'after' assessment questionnaires. This evaluation was therefore based on a much larger number of participants than has been possible with a single UK based parenting course to date. The results are therefore less likely to be due to chance. In addition many of the results are similar to those found for the evaluation of the 2004/5 programme, which further validate the findings of this report.

#### **9.2 Limitations of the Evaluation**

The completion of all the documents continues to be a challenge for some facilitators. No data on individual participants was provided for a quarter of the courses and the data on individual participants that was provided was often not fully completed. In addition, not all the CSRs were completed with sufficient rigour to enable cross checking with the participants' data. It would enhance the evaluation if the challenges associated with the completion of the forms could be addressed. It may then be possible to compare those who complete the course with those who drop out of the course to investigate if there are any differences between the two groups.

#### **9.3. Locations, Agencies and Course Details**

The Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities Programme continues to expand and agencies have now delivered the course in eight of the nine English regions. However, London is still the core area where courses are provided.

A wide range of agencies – voluntary, statutory and partnership organisations and community groups – are involved in delivering the courses. As the programme has expanded a number of new agencies, both statutory and community based have become involved with the programme.

The agencies use a range of methods to recruit participants to the courses and are not just reliant on agency referrals. Each broad type of agency is able to access a range of ethnic groups. In some cases, where local ethnic minority organisations and community groups organise courses, this clearly assists with reaching specific ethnic groups.

Most of the courses are held on a weekday morning. This is not conducive to participation by people in full time work and is likely to affect male participation more than female participation. The organising agencies may need to consider alternative times for courses if they wish to attract more male participants and those in full time employment.

#### **9.4 The Participants**

The programme continues to reach a number of important groups both in terms of the aims of the Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities Programme and government policy.

It continues to attract participants from a diverse range of ethnic backgrounds with a wide variety of first languages. This includes people who have recently arrived in the UK as well as people in more established communities. There were also participants from some new countries, which did not feature in the previous evaluation. Overall 61% of the participants were of black and minority ethnic origin.

This compares well with the Parenting Early Intervention Pathfinder (PEIP) project (Lindsay et al, 2008), (which included Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities courses), where overall only a quarter of the participants were of black and minority ethnic origin.

Some courses were organised for specific ethnic/religious groups so that their specific needs could be catered for. Most of the courses had a mix of ethnic backgrounds and this could make an important contribution to increasing community cohesion in local areas.

There were more White British participants compared with 2004/5. They were more likely to have been referred to the course by the courts or an agency. These have been identified as an important target group for parenting courses.

Overall, the involvement of male participants remains low, although it increased to 12% in year two. This is the same as for the PEIP project (Lindsay et al, 2008). Over half of all the courses now have at least one male participant. Agencies that organise a large number of courses and have been running the Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities Programme for a number of years succeed in attracting a larger percentage of male participants, up to 17%.

The male participants are less likely to have custody of their children, compared with the female participants. They are more likely to have been referred to the programme by the courts or an agency and to have no previous experience of a parent education class. These have all been identified as important target groups for parenting courses.

The programme also successfully reaches people from a range of other social groups and / or people facing a range of social issues. This includes:

- People on low incomes
- Single parents
- Teenage parents
- Refugees
- People with varying levels of education
- People on court orders and / or referred through the criminal justice system
- Parents who do not have custody of their children.

A few grandparents also attended the courses. A review of research on parenting programmes and minority ethnic families pointed out that minority ethnic grandparents were keener to participate in parenting programmes than White grandparents (Barlow et al, 2004), so this is an important group of participants.

The above list includes people who are sometimes viewed as 'hard to reach' or 'seldom heard'. By working through local agencies and community groups, the Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities Programme demonstrates that these groups can be reached and encouraged to participate in this type of course.

### **9.5 Fidelity of Delivery of the Course – Adherence to the Programme**

Most of the courses follow the programme requirements most of the time. A small number of the courses did not follow the recommended model for the course in respect of: the number of facilitators; the length of the course; the number of participants on each course and the ages of the participants' children. Some courses had as few as 10 sessions. The extent to which these changes to the recommended format of the programme affected the outcomes of the course is not known.

### **9.6 Fidelity of Delivery of the Course – Adherence to the Curriculum**

There is evidence that in some cases the curriculum was delivered as specified and that in some cases changes in emphasis to the components of the curriculum and modifications to the content had been made. The degree to which this is a matter for concern is open to debate. The report of the PEIP project suggests that concerns related to adherence to the curriculum might be misplaced given the fact that similar outcomes are produced by very different programmes (Lindsay et al, 2008). They recommended that: 'The notion of fidelity which is considered so important by programme leads might need serious thought given the fact that similar outcomes are produced by very different programmes.' (page 159, Lindsay et al, 2008). The extent to which the success of parenting programmes is based on fidelity to the prescribed programme or on the processes that occur as part of the course is not known.

The Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities Programme has been carefully constructed and has a deliberate format and content. We would suggest that there is a need to optimise fidelity whilst at the same time recognising the need for some flexibility so that the facilitators can respond to the needs and concerns of specific groups of participants. The previous evaluation report on the Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities Programme, which examined the facilitator's comments as well as the quantitative data (Wilding and Barton, 2007), identified a variety of reasons why the facilitators deviated from the curriculum. These were usually based on the needs of the participants taking the course. As the Case Summary Report (CSR) contains questions on adherence to the curriculum, this can continue to be monitored.

### **9.7 Course Attendance**

Some research has indicated that better attendance leads to more change, with 8 – 10 sessions usually needed to achieve substantial improvements (Scott et al, 2006). The facilitators took a number of actions to support participants' continued attendance on the courses and, out of those who attended at least two sessions, only 15% dropped out. This is a satisfactory figure for this type of course.

Other studies (Barlow et al, 2004) have indicated that the average drop out rate for parents in some parenting programmes is in the region of 30% and can be as high as 50%. The recent PEIP project (Lindsay et al, 2008) reported a 27% drop out rate. However the PEIP completion rate was based on all participants who started a course rather than those who completed at least two sessions.

### **9.8 The Participants' Views**

The participants had very positive views of the course and nearly everyone reported that they would recommend it to their family and friends.

## **9.9 Community Involvement and the Participants' Follow Up Plans**

The evaluation highlighted some issues in relation to developing community involvement as a result of participation in the course:

- The facilitators reported that the community involvement component of the curriculum was more frequently emphasised 'less' than the other components.
- The participants viewed the information on community involvement less favourably than the information on the other components of the curriculum.
- Whilst both the participants and the facilitators indicated that the participants were keen to continue meeting after completion of the course, it appeared unlikely that their expectations for support would be met by the agencies organising the courses.
- The responses to the questions on community focus in the before and after questionnaires indicated that there had been less change in this area than in other aspects of the participants' lives.

The report of the PEIP project (Lindsay et al, 2008) also identified this as an issue for concern and suggested that explicit attention should be given to addressing this matter. In addition, the number of people who are taking a parenting course again is increasing. It is not known if these people have been on a previous SFSC course or another parenting course. As more people complete courses then this number could rise further. It is not known why people attend a parenting course again. Possible reasons could be to learn the new skills required as their children grow into a new stage of life. Another possible reason could be that there are insufficient follow up courses or support.

## **9.10 Impact of the Programme on the Participants and their Children**

The changes in the responses to the pre and post assessment questionnaires indicated that the course led to:

- An increase in family activities and discussions.
- An increase in the use of positive discipline and communication strategies.
- A decrease in the use of negative discipline and communication strategies.
- An increase in the participants' competence.
- An increase in the children's competence.
- Limited immediate impact on the participants' level of community involvement.

Overall, the changes in the responses to the pre and post assessment questionnaires indicated that the course had a positive impact on the participants and their children.

## **9.11 Overall Conclusions**

The Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities Programme continues to be an important programme nationally. It delivers parenting programmes through a wide range of agencies to a diverse range of participants. It successfully reaches black and minority ethnic participants and members of social groups that have been identified as key target groups for parenting courses.

The programme has a structured format and content that is generally adhered to but has some built in flexibility to cater for the needs of specific groups. The drop out rate is within acceptable limits for this type of course. The participants have very positive views of the course. The measurement of the impact of the course through before and after questionnaires indicate that the participants and their children benefited from the course.

## References

- Barlow, Jane; Shaw, Richard and Stewart-Brown, Sarah in conjunction with the REU (2004) 'Parenting programmes and minority ethnic families. Experience and outcomes' National Children's Bureau for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, York.
- Lindsay, Geoff; Davies, Hilton; Band, Sue; Cullen, Mairi Ann; Cullen, Stephen; Strand, Steve; Hasluck, Chris; Evans, Ray and Stewart-Brown, Sarah (2008) 'Parenting Early Intervention Pathfinder evaluation' Department for Children, Schools and Families.
- Moran, Patricia; Ghate, Deborah and van der Merwe, Amelia (2004) 'What Works in Parenting Support? A Review of the International Evidence' DfES Research Report RR574.
- PricewaterhouseCoopers (2006) 'The Market for Parental & Family Support Services' DfES Children's Services.
- PricewaterhouseCoopers (2007) 'Review of Capacity in the Parenting Support Market' Final Report. DfES Children's Services.
- Scott, Stephen; O'Connor, Thomas and Futh, Annabel (2006) 'What makes parenting programmes work in disadvantaged areas?' Findings Joseph Rowntree Foundation, York.
- Steele, Marilyn and Marigna, Marilyn R; in collaboration with Jerry Tello and Ronald Johnston (2000) 'Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities: an inclusive programme. Facilitator Manual' Race Equality Unit.
- Wilding, Jenny and Barton, Mark (2007) 'Evaluation of the Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities Programme 2004/5' Race Equality Foundation.

# Appendix 1

## Responses to the Pre and Post Assessment Questionnaires

### A1.1 Introduction

This appendix provides the pre and post assessment results for the paired sample. These are the figures that were subject to statistical testing to assess whether or not there had been statistically significant changes in participants' pre and post assessment scores. These figures provided the basis for the commentary and charts in Section Eight and the statistical results in Appendix 2

In each sub section of this Appendix the responses to the pre and post course questionnaires by the paired sample are presented in two tables and two charts. The responses to the pre course questionnaires are commented on and it is also noted whether there were any noteworthy differences in the responses to the pre course questionnaires by the full sample and the paired sample.

### A1.2 Family activities and discussions

In the pre course questionnaire over half of the paired sample participants (58%) reported that they 'Always' / Usually' had fun together as a family, see Table A1.1 and Chart A1.1. Less than half of the participants reported that they 'Always' / Usually' talked about the dangers of drugs/gangs (36%), went to cultural events together (36%) or talked about sexual responsibility (23%). These responses by the paired sample were very similar to the responses by the full sample. Table A1.2 and Chart A1.2 show the responses to the post course questionnaire.

**Table A1.1 Family activities and discussions – Pre course responses (Paired sample)**

| How often do you:                    | Always | Usually | Sometimes | Rarely | Never | Sample size |
|--------------------------------------|--------|---------|-----------|--------|-------|-------------|
| 1. Have fun together as a family     | 26     | 32      | 29        | 10     | 3     | n = 885     |
| 2. Talk about dangers of drugs/gangs | 22     | 14      | 20        | 14     | 30    | n = 777     |
| 3. Go to cultural events together    | 17     | 19      | 30        | 16     | 18    | n = 874     |
| 4. Talk about sexual responsibility  | 11     | 12      | 20        | 17     | 40    | n = 742     |

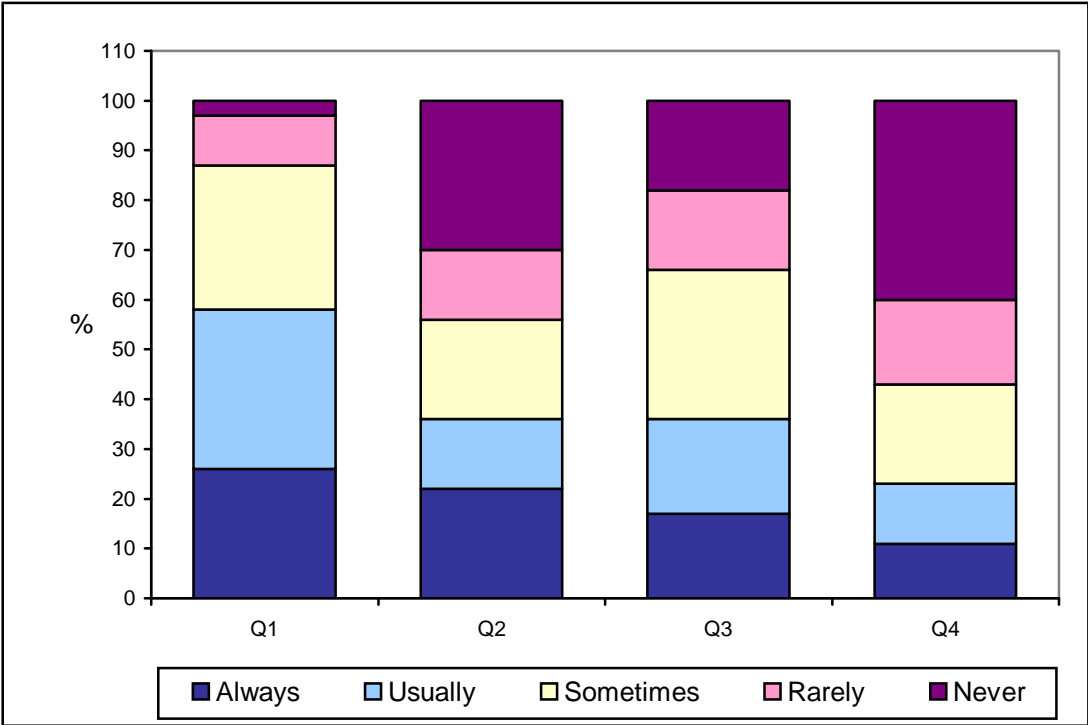
All figures shown as a % out of 100% across each row.

**Table A1.2 Family activities and discussions – Post course responses (Paired sample)**

| How often do you:                    | Always | Usually | Sometimes | Rarely | Never | Sample size |
|--------------------------------------|--------|---------|-----------|--------|-------|-------------|
| 1. Have fun together as a family     | 32     | 38      | 21        | 7      | 2     | n = 884     |
| 2. Talk about dangers of drugs/gangs | 27     | 15      | 24        | 13     | 21    | n = 767     |
| 3. Go to cultural events together    | 19     | 24      | 31        | 15     | 11    | n = 879     |
| 4. Talk about sexual responsibility  | 15     | 15      | 20        | 16     | 34    | n = 739     |

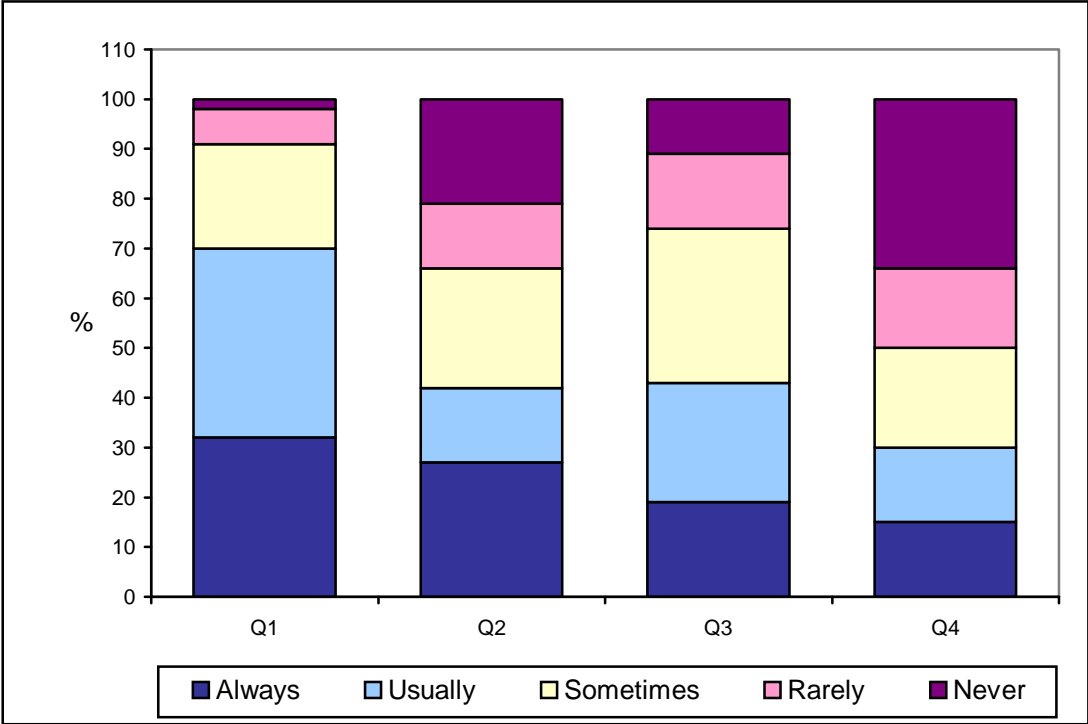
All figures shown as a % out of 100% across each row.

**Chart A1.1 Family activities and discussions – Pre course responses (Paired sample)**



n varied between 742 and 885

**Chart A1.2 Family activities and discussions – Post course responses (Paired sample)**



n varied between 739 and 884

### A1.3 Positive discipline and communication strategies

In the pre course questionnaire, over 80% said that they 'Usually or Always' hugged or kissed their child (82%) and acknowledged or praised them for good behaviour (80%), see Table A1.3 and Chart A1.3. Over half said that they 'Usually or 'Always' gave their children rewards, (64%), listened to or asked for the child's opinion or ideas (58%) and spent time with individual children (55%). Considerably fewer (23%) said that they 'Usually or Always' ignored their children when misbehaving. These responses by the paired sample were very similar to the responses by the full sample. Table A1.4 and Chart A1.4 show the responses to the post course questionnaire.

**Table A1.3 Positive discipline and communication strategies  
Pre course responses (Paired sample)**

| <b>How often do you:</b>                        | <b>Always</b> | <b>Usually</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Rarely</b> | <b>Never</b> | <b>Sample size</b> |
|---|---------------|----------------|------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------------|
| 1. Kiss or hug your children                    | 67            | 15             | 12               | 4             | 2            | n = 884            |
| 2. Give children rewards                        | 29            | 35             | 29               | 6             | 1            | n = 878            |
| 3. Spend time with individual children          | 28            | 27             | 28               | 13            | 4            | n = 867            |
| 4. Ignore children when misbehaving             | 6             | 17             | 47               | 17            | 13           | n = 871            |
| 5. Acknowledge (praise) for good behaviour      | 50            | 30             | 13               | 5             | 2            | n = 875            |
| 6. Have family discussions to establish rules   | 16            | 25             | 28               | 19            | 12           | n = 856            |
| 7. Listen to/ask for child's opinions and ideas | 25            | 33             | 29               | 8             | 5            | n = 858            |

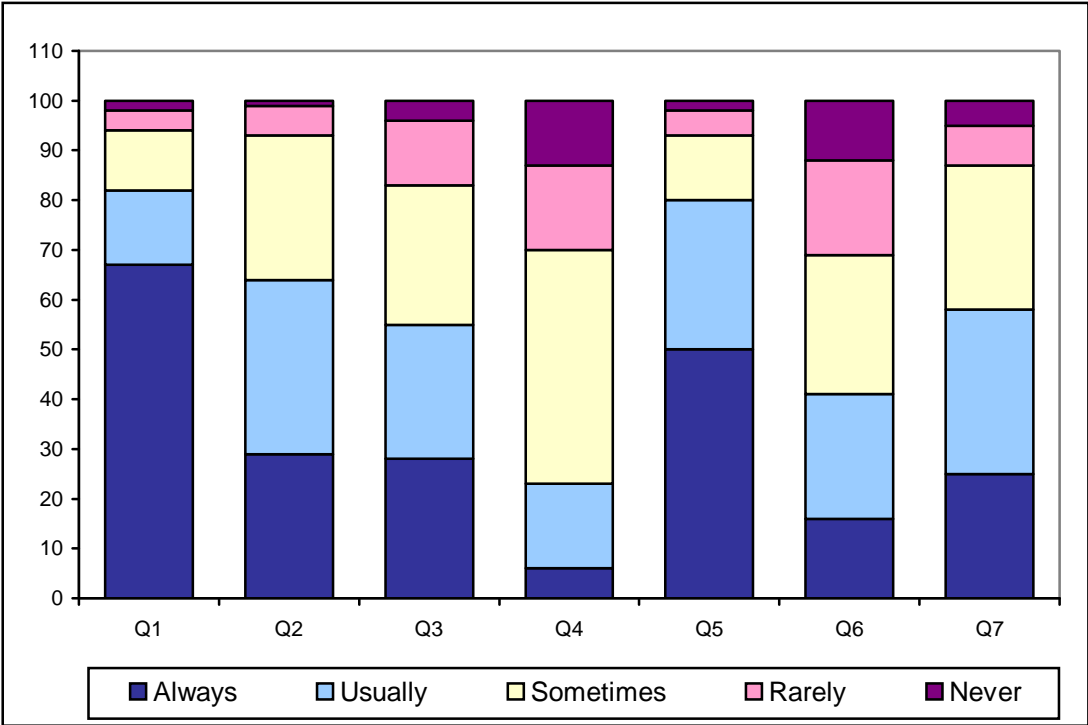
All figures shown as a % out of 100% across each row.

**Table A1.4 Positive discipline and communication strategies  
Post course responses (Paired sample)**

| <b>How often do you:</b>                        | <b>Always</b> | <b>Usually</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Rarely</b> | <b>Never</b> | <b>Sample size</b> |
|---|---------------|----------------|------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------------|
| 1. Kiss or hug your children                    | 72            | 16             | 7                | 2             | 3            | n = 891            |
| 2. Give children rewards                        | 26            | 40             | 29               | 4             | 1            | n = 880            |
| 3. Spend time with individual children          | 39            | 31             | 23               | 5             | 2            | n = 883            |
| 4. Ignore children when misbehaving             | 11            | 30             | 45               | 10            | 4            | n = 876            |
| 5. Acknowledge (praise) for good behaviour      | 60            | 29             | 6                | 2             | 3            | n = 873            |
| 6. Have family discussions to establish rules   | 21            | 27             | 30               | 15            | 7            | n = 848            |
| 7. Listen to/ask for child's opinions and ideas | 33            | 35             | 24               | 5             | 3            | n = 862            |

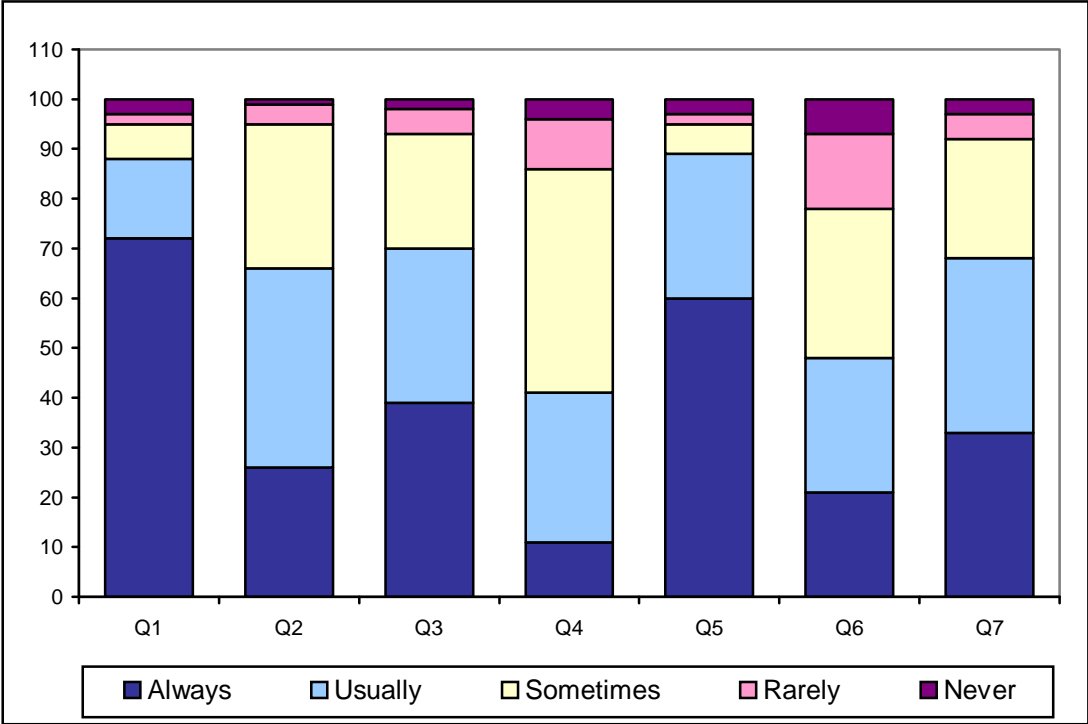
All figures shown as a % out of 100% across each row.

**Chart A1.3 Positive discipline and communication strategies  
Pre course responses (Paired sample)**



n varied between 856 and 884

**Chart A1.4 Positive discipline and communication strategies  
Post course responses (Paired sample)**



n varied between 848 and 891

#### **A1.4 Negative discipline and communication strategies**

In the pre course questionnaire, over a fifth said that they 'Usually or Always' yell or shout at children (35%), told others about child's bad behaviour (32%) and get angry when children made mistakes (25%), see Table A1.5 and Chart A1.5. Fewer participants said that they 'Usually' or 'Always' threaten or criticise children (16%) or hit or smack children (9%). These responses by the paired sample were very similar to the responses by the full sample. Table A1.6 and Chart A1.6 show the responses to the post course questionnaire.

**Table A1.5 Negative discipline and communication strategies  
Pre course responses (Paired sample)**

| <b>How often do you:</b>                    | <b>Always</b> | <b>Usually</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Rarely</b> | <b>Never</b> | <b>Sample size</b> |
|---|---------------|----------------|------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------------|
| 12. Yell or shout at children               | 14            | 21             | 47               | 14            | 4            | n = 878            |
| 13. Threaten or criticise children          | 6             | 10             | 37               | 28            | 19           | n = 862            |
| 14. Hit or smack children                   | 3             | 6              | 23               | 41            | 27           | n = 876            |
| 15. Tell others about child's bad behaviour | 13            | 19             | 35               | 21            | 12           | n = 871            |
| 16. Get angry when children make mistakes   | 7             | 18             | 43               | 23            | 9            | n = 867            |

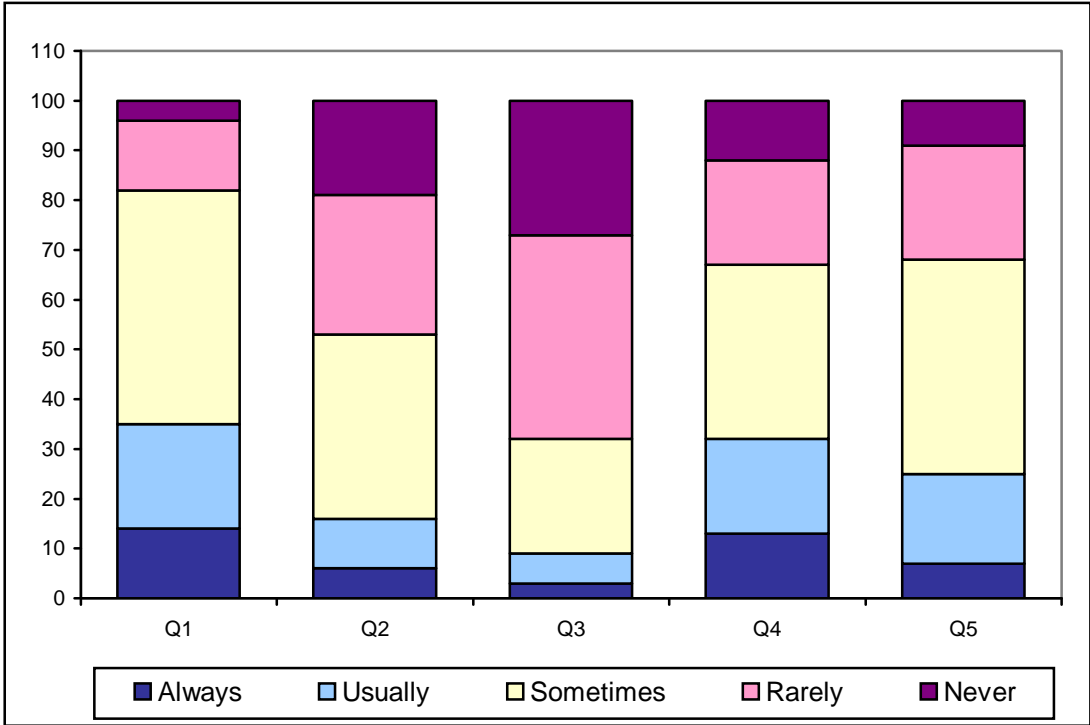
All figures shown as a % out of 100% across each row.

**Table A1.6 Negative discipline and communication strategies  
Post course responses (Paired sample)**

| <b>How often do you:</b>                   | <b>Always</b> | <b>Usually</b> | <b>Sometimes</b> | <b>Rarely</b> | <b>Never</b> | <b>Sample size</b> |
|--|---------------|----------------|------------------|---------------|--------------|--------------------|
| 1. Yell or shout at children               | 4             | 12             | 47               | 30            | 7            | n = 881            |
| 2. Threaten or criticise children          | 3             | 5              | 22               | 37            | 33           | n = 876            |
| 3. Hit or smack children                   | 2             | 4              | 11               | 38            | 45           | n = 882            |
| 4. Tell others about child's bad behaviour | 9             | 18             | 33               | 26            | 14           | n = 871            |
| 5. Get angry when children make mistakes   | 3             | 10             | 41               | 33            | 13           | n = 871            |

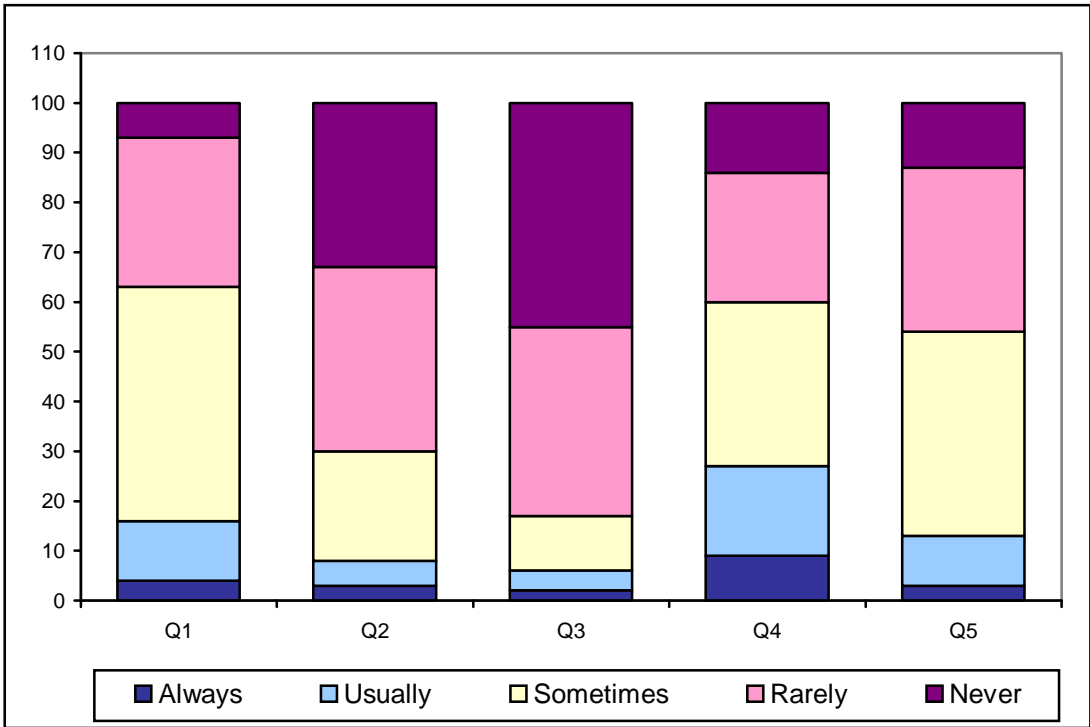
All figures shown as a % out of 100% across each row.

**Chart A1.5 Negative discipline and communication strategies  
Pre course responses (Paired sample)**



n varied between 862 and 878

**Chart A1.6 Negative discipline and communication strategies  
Post course responses (Paired sample)**



n varied between 871 and 882

### A1.5 Participants' competence

In the pre course questionnaire, the participants felt most confident about their relationship skills. Over 60% of participants felt 'Very good' or 'Good' about these, see Table A1.7 and Chart A1.7. Over three quarters of participants (79%) felt 'Very good' or 'Good' about teaching their child right from wrong. However fewer participants felt 'Very good' or 'Good' about their other child management skills.

Over half of the participants felt 'Very good' or 'Good' about their problem solving skills. Slightly fewer of the participants felt 'Very good' or 'Good' about their anger management and problem solving skills.

The highest response for 'Poor' / 'Very poor' was 20%, this was for managing anger. These responses by the paired sample were very similar to the responses by the full sample.

Table A1.8 and Chart A1.8 show the responses to the post course questionnaire.

**Table A1.7 Participants' competence – Pre course responses (Paired sample)**

| How do you feel about your ability:  | Very good | Good | So - so | Poor | Very poor | Sample size |
|--|-----------|------|---------|------|-----------|-------------|
| <b>Anger management</b>  |           |      |         |      |           |             |
| 1. To manage your anger  | 9         | 32   | 39      | 14   | 6         | n = 879     |
| 2. To express your emotions  | 18        | 37   | 31      | 10   | 4         | n = 873     |
| <b>Child management skills</b>   |           |      |         |      |           |             |
| 3. To teach your child right from wrong                                    | 28        | 51   | 17      | 3    | 1         | n = 875     |
| 4. To handle child fight or destructive behaviour                          | 11        | 38   | 35      | 12   | 4         | n = 864     |
| 5. To handle child refusal to do housework                                 | 14        | 32   | 35      | 15   | 4         | n = 810     |
| 6. To make suggestions to child's teacher                                  | 23        | 39   | 26      | 8    | 4         | n = 822     |
| <b>Problem solving skills</b>  |           |      |         |      |           |             |
| 7. To make plans to achieve personal goals                                 | 18        | 34   | 33      | 12   | 3         | n = 872     |
| 8. To access community resource  | 17        | 39   | 26      | 14   | 4         | n = 864     |
| <b>Relationships</b>   |           |      |         |      |           |             |
| 9. How good do you feel about your relationship with your children         | 39        | 38   | 17      | 5    | 1         | n = 865     |
| 10. How good do you feel about your relationship with other family members | 27        | 36   | 24      | 8    | 5         | n = 872     |

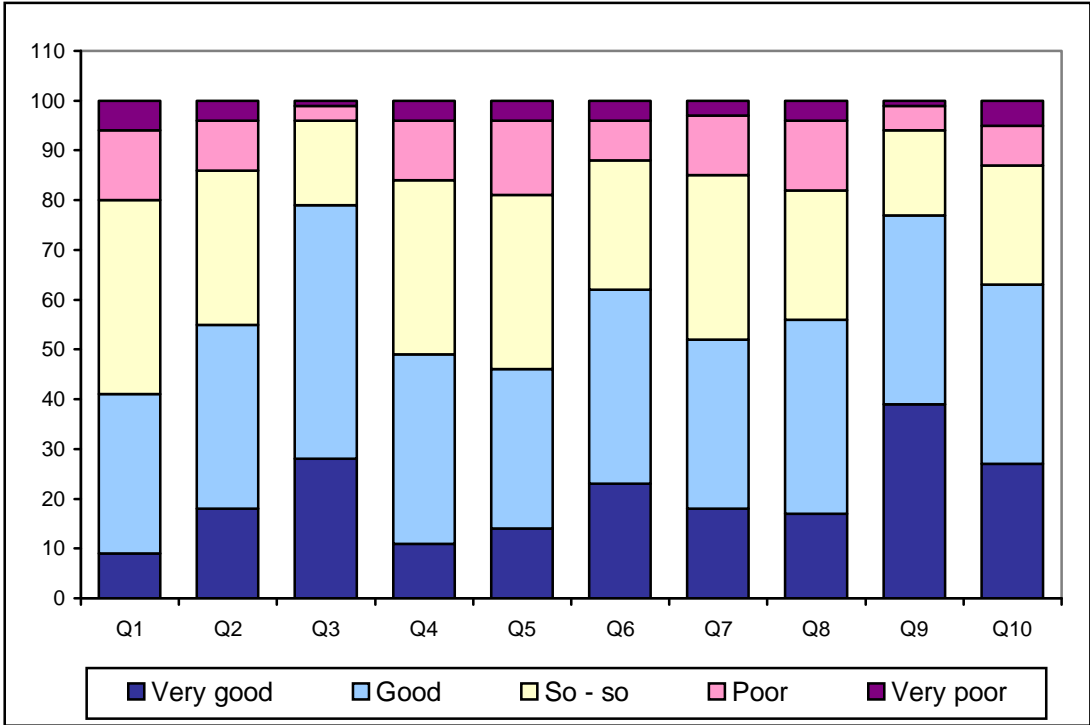
All figures shown as a % out of 100% across each row.

**Table A1.8 Participants' competence – Post course responses  
(Paired sample)**

| <b>How do you feel about your ability:</b>                                 | <b>Very good</b> | <b>Good</b> | <b>So - so</b> | <b>Poor</b> | <b>Very poor</b> | <b>Sample size</b> |
|--|------------------|-------------|----------------|-------------|------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Anger management</b>  |                  |             |                |             |                  |                    |
| 1. To manage your anger  | 19               | 46          | 30             | 3           | 2                | n = 888            |
| 2. To express your emotions  | 26               | 44          | 23             | 5           | 2                | n = 883            |
| <b>Child management skills</b>   |                  |             |                |             |                  |                    |
| 3. To teach your child right from wrong                                    | 43               | 48          | 7              | 1           | 1                | n = 884            |
| 4. To handle child fight or destructive behaviour                          | 20               | 50          | 26             | 3           | 1                | n = 877            |
| 5. To handle child refusal to do housework                                 | 23               | 42          | 28             | 5           | 2                | n = 838            |
| 6. To make suggestions to child's teacher                                  | 30               | 43          | 19             | 6           | 2                | n = 841            |
| <b>Problem solving skills</b>  |                  |             |                |             |                  |                    |
| 7. To make plans to achieve personal goals                                 | 27               | 41          | 26             | 5           | 1                | n = 885            |
| 8. To access community resource  | 27               | 41          | 24             | 6           | 2                | n = 882            |
| <b>Relationships</b>   |                  |             |                |             |                  |                    |
| 9. How good do you feel about your relationship with your children         | 59               | 32          | 7              | 1           | 1                | n = 879            |
| 10. How good do you feel about your relationship with other family members | 35               | 40          | 18             | 4           | 3                | n = 886            |

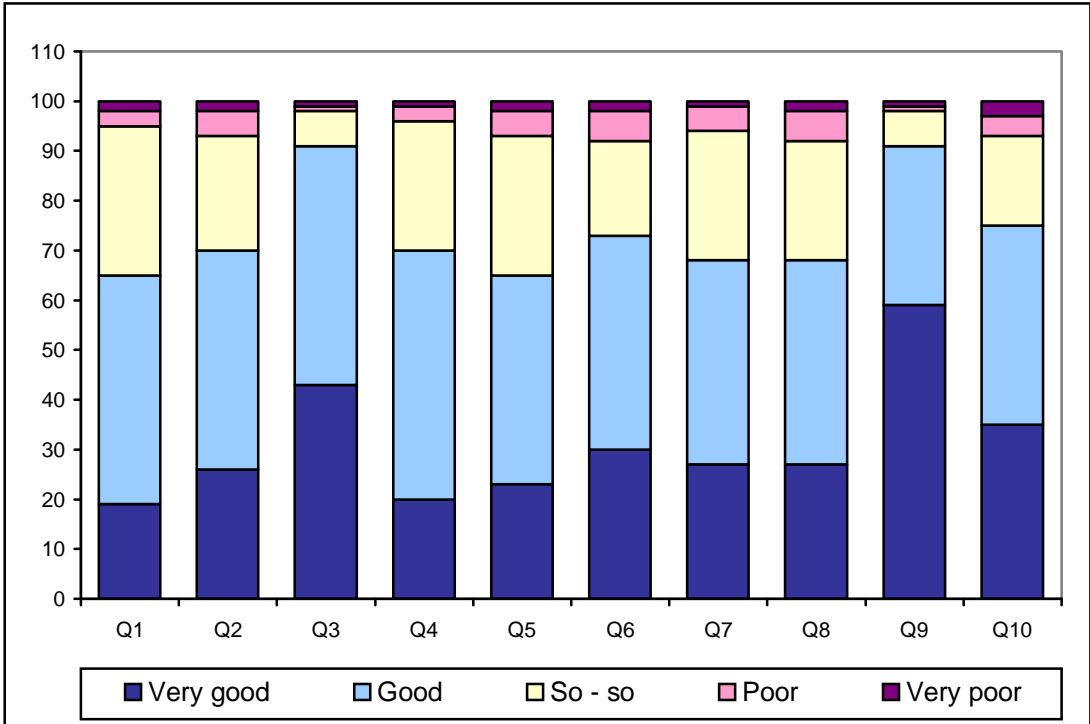
All figures shown as a % out of 100% across each row.

**Chart A1.7 Participants' competence – Pre course responses (Paired sample)**



n varied between 810 and 879

**Chart A1.8 Participants' competence – Post course responses (Paired sample)**



n varied between 838 and 888

## A1.6 Children's competence

In the pre course questionnaire, the participants felt most confident about their children's competence in relation to their ethnicity, and avoiding dealing drugs, between 70% and 81% of participants felt 'Very good' / 'Good' about these. Over 60% of participants felt 'Very good' / 'Good' about their children's competence in relation to their staying out of gangs and asking for help if needed.

Participants felt less confident about their children's competence in relation to feeling good about him/herself, ability to express feelings and consider others when making decisions, nevertheless between 40% and 60% of participants felt 'Very good' / 'Good' about all of these.

The lowest score was for ability to 'control behaviour (self discipline)', 36% felt 'Very good' or 'Good' about this, see Table A1.9 and Chart A1.9.

Table A1.10 and Chart A1.10 show the responses to the post course questionnaire.

**Table A1.9 Children's competence – Pre course responses (Paired sample)**

| How do you feel about your child's ability:   | Very good | Good | So - so | Poor | Very poor | Sample size |
|---|-----------|------|---------|------|-----------|-------------|
| <b>Self esteem</b>                            |           |      |         |      |           |             |
| 1. To feel good about him/herself             | 22        | 37   | 28      | 10   | 3         | n = 1090    |
| 2. To feel comfortable with his/her ethnicity | 48        | 33   | 15      | 3    | 1         | n = 1004    |
| <b>Self discipline</b>                        |           |      |         |      |           |             |
| 3. To manage / express feelings & emotions    | 19        | 36   | 27      | 14   | 4         | n = 1085    |
| 4. To control behaviour (self discipline)     | 10        | 26   | 35      | 20   | 9         | n = 1083    |
| <b>Problem solving skills</b>                 |           |      |         |      |           |             |
| 5. To consider others when making decisions   | 14        | 30   | 34      | 15   | 7         | n = 1060    |
| 6. To ask for help / guidance if needed       | 27        | 36   | 24      | 9    | 4         | n = 1070    |
| <b>Choices and violence</b>                   |           |      |         |      |           |             |
| 7. To avoid using or dealing drugs            | 52        | 23   | 14      | 6    | 5         | n = 679     |
| 8. To avoid violence and stay out of gangs    | 38        | 28   | 18      | 10   | 6         | n = 811     |

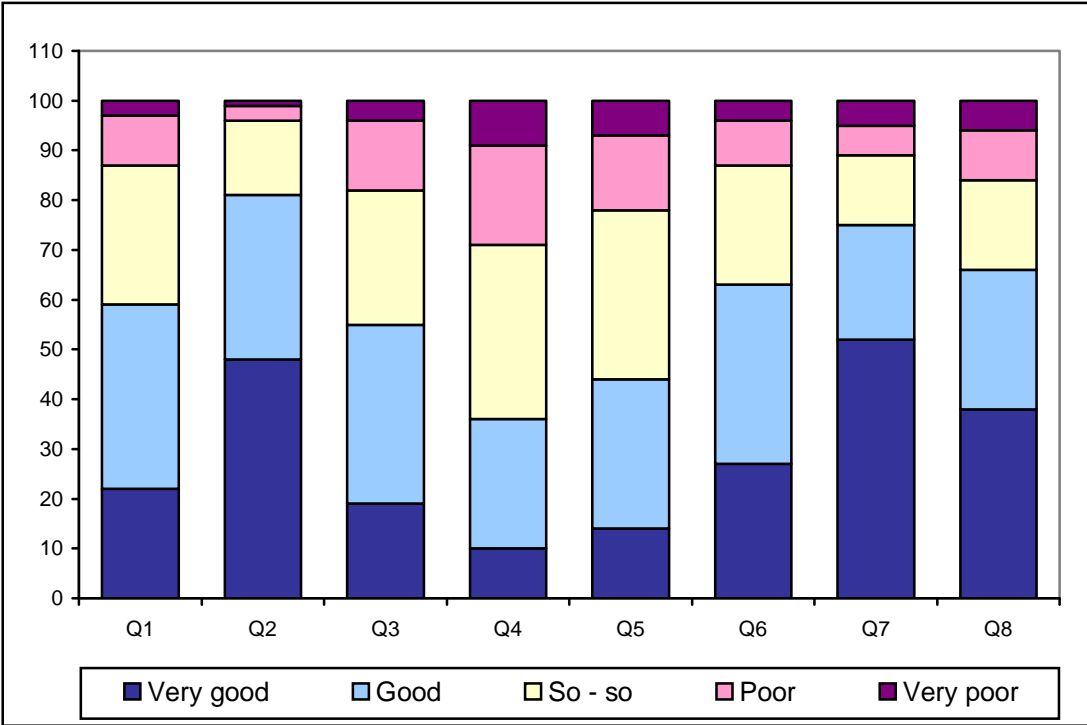
All figures shown as a % out of 100% across each row.

**Table A1.10 Children's competence – Post course responses  
(Paired sample)**

| <b>How do you feel about your child's ability:</b> | <b>Very good</b> | <b>Good</b> | <b>So - so</b> | <b>Poor</b> | <b>Very poor</b> | <b>Sample size</b> |
|--|------------------|-------------|----------------|-------------|------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Self esteem</b>                                 |                  |             |                |             |                  |                    |
| 1. To feel good about him/herself                  | 31               | 46          | 18             | 4           | 1                | n = 1158           |
| 2. To feel comfortable with his/her ethnicity      | 56               | 34          | 8              | 1           | 1                | n = 1084           |
| <b>Self discipline</b>                             |                  |             |                |             |                  |                    |
| 3. To manage / express feelings & emotions         | 26               | 42          | 23             | 7           | 2                | n = 1156           |
| 4. To control behaviour (self discipline)          | 15               | 41          | 31             | 10          | 3                | n = 1152           |
| <b>Problem solving skills</b>                      |                  |             |                |             |                  |                    |
| 5. To consider others when making decisions        | 20               | 38          | 32             | 8           | 2                | n = 1130           |
| 6. To ask for help / guidance if needed            | 35               | 42          | 17             | 5           | 1                | n = 1132           |
| <b>Choices and violence</b>                        |                  |             |                |             |                  |                    |
| 7. To avoid using or dealing drugs                 | 61               | 22          | 10             | 3           | 4                | n = 769            |
| 8. To avoid violence and stay out of gangs         | 49               | 28          | 16             | 4           | 3                | n = 872            |

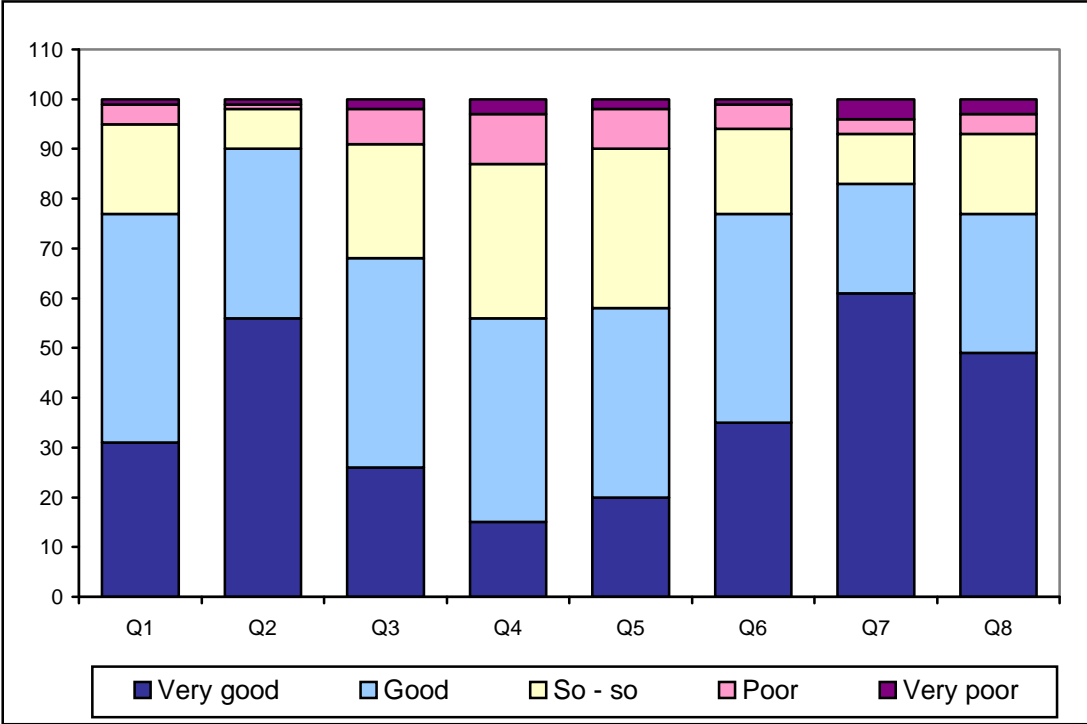
All figures shown as a % out of 100% across each row.

**Chart A1.9 Children's competence – Pre course responses (Paired sample)**



n varied between 679 and 1090

**Chart A1.10 Children's competence – Post course responses (Paired sample)**



n varied between 769 and 1158

### A1.7 Community Focus

In the pre course questionnaire, 87% were actively involved in their child's education or school, 80% said that they had a support network of friends and family to help in times of need, 72% took part in community activities, 62% participated in spiritual / religious activities and 36% participated in youth group activities, see Table A1.11 and Chart A1.11 below. These figures were very similar to the full sample. Table A1.12 and Chart A1.12 show the responses to the post course questionnaire.

**Table A1.11 Community Focus – Pre course responses  
(Paired sample)**

| <b>Participation in:</b>               | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> | <b>Sample size</b> |
|--|------------|-----------|--------------------|
| 1. Community activities                | 72         | 28        | n = 883            |
| 2. Youth group activities              | 36         | 64        | n = 842            |
| 3. Spiritual / religious activities    | 62         | 38        | n = 882            |
| 4. Children's education / school       | 87         | 13        | n = 850            |
| 5. Support network of friends & family | 80         | 20        | n = 871            |

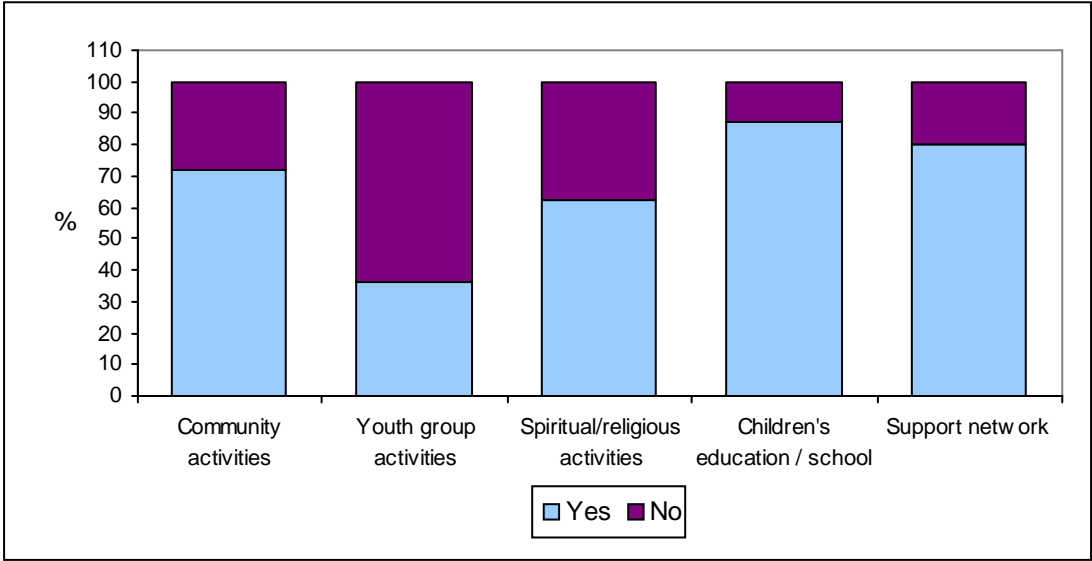
All figures shown as a % out of 100% across each row.  
n varied between 842 and 883

**Table A1.12 Community Focus – Post course responses  
(Paired sample)**

| <b>Participation in:</b>               | <b>Yes</b> | <b>No</b> | <b>Sample size</b> |
|--|------------|-----------|--------------------|
| 1. Community activities                | 74         | 26        | n = 875            |
| 2. Youth group activities              | 44         | 56        | n = 817            |
| 3. Spiritual / religious activities    | 63         | 37        | n = 875            |
| 4. Children's education / school       | 84         | 16        | n = 849            |
| 5. Support network of friends & family | 85         | 15        | n = 877            |

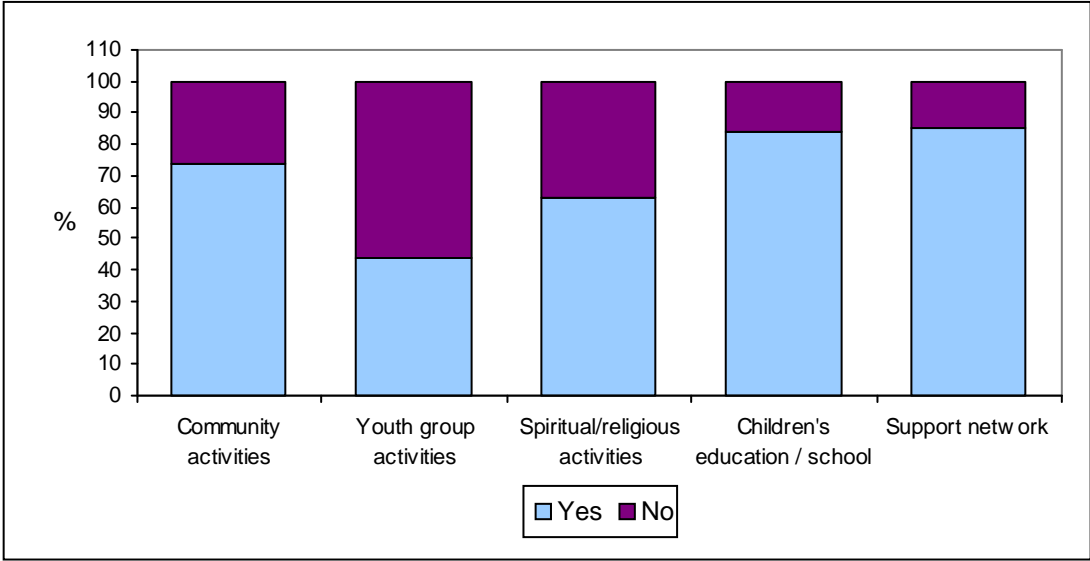
All figures shown as a % out of 100% across each row.  
n varied between 817 and 877

**Chart A1.11 Community Focus – participated in activities  
Pre course responses (Paired sample)**



n varied between 842 and 883

**Chart A1.12 Community Focus – participated in activities  
Post course responses (Paired sample)**



n varied between 817 and 877

## Appendix 2

### Statistical Tests on the Responses to the Pre and Post Assessment Questionnaires

#### A2.1. Introduction

This appendix provides the results of the tests for statistical significance on the responses by the paired sample to the pre and post course questionnaires. These figures provided the basis for the commentary on statistical significance in Section Eight.

#### A2.2. Results for the Parent / Child Interaction, Participant Competence and Child Competence questions

The Wilcoxon Matched Pairs Signed Rank Test was used for the statements which had a number of response options using a Lickert type scale ('Usually', 'Always' etc). All of the results, except one, were statistically significant at the 95% confidence level, i.e. all of the significance values (*p*) were 0.05 or less, see Tables A2.1 and A2.2.

**Table A2.1 Parent / Child Interaction – Results of the Wilcoxon Matched Pairs Signed Ranks Tests**

|   | Negative ranks | Positive ranks | Ties | Sig <i>p</i> value |
|---|----------------|----------------|------|--------------------|
| <b>Parent / Child Interaction – How often do you:</b>   |                |                |      |                    |
| <b>Family activities and discussions</b>                |                |                |      |                    |
| 1. Have fun together as a family                        | 305            | 168            | 399  | .000               |
| 2. Talk about dangers of drugs/gangs                    | 249            | 155            | 310  | .000               |
| 3. Go to cultural events together                       | 311            | 214            | 335  | .000               |
| 4. Talk about sexual responsibility                     | 224            | 143            | 303  | .000               |
| <b>Positive discipline and communication strategies</b> |                |                |      |                    |
| 1. Kiss or hug your children                            | 161            | 99             | 618  | .000               |
| 2. Give children rewards                                | 239            | 230            | 396  | .298               |
| 3. Spend time with individual children                  | 351            | 162            | 344  | .000               |
| 4. Ignore children when misbehaving                     | 386            | 141            | 330  | .000               |
| 5. Acknowledge (praise) for good behaviour              | 249            | 124            | 481  | .000               |
| 6. Have family discussions to establish rules           | 327            | 190            | 304  | .000               |
| 7. Listen to/ask for child's opinions and ideas         | 312            | 167            | 359  | .000               |
| <b>Negative discipline and communication strategies</b> |                |                |      |                    |
| 1. Yell or shout at children                            | 97             | 394            | 375  | .000               |
| 2. Threaten or criticise children                       | 116            | 374            | 356  | .000               |
| 3. Hit or smack children                                | 102            | 336            | 425  | .000               |
| 4. Tell others about child's bad behaviour              | 215            | 318            | 317  | .000               |
| 5. Get angry when children make mistakes                | 145            | 353            | 351  | .000               |

**Table A2.2 Participant and Child Competence – Results of the Wilcoxon Matched Pairs Signed Ranks Tests**

|  | <b>Negative ranks</b> | <b>Positive ranks</b> | <b>Ties</b> | <b>Sig p value</b> |
|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------|--------------------|
| <b>Participant Competence – How do you feel about your ability:</b>        |                       |                       |             |                    |
| <b>Anger management</b>  |                       |                       |             |                    |
| 1. To manage your anger  | 84                    | 408                   | 378         | .000               |
| 2. To express your emotions  | 157                   | 360                   | 345         | .000               |
| <b>Child management skills</b>   |                       |                       |             |                    |
| 3. To teach your child right from wrong                                    | 109                   | 330                   | 424         | .000               |
| 4. To handle child fight or destructive behaviour                          | 124                   | 397                   | 326         | .000               |
| 5. To handle child refusal to do housework                                 | 143                   | 349                   | 283         | .000               |
| 6. To make suggestions to child's teacher                                  | 166                   | 291                   | 329         | .000               |
| <b>Problem solving skills</b>  |                       |                       |             |                    |
| 7. To make plans to achieve personal goals                                 | 150                   | 354                   | 357         | .000               |
| 8. To access community resources   | 169                   | 353                   | 330         | .000               |
| <b>Relationships</b>   |                       |                       |             |                    |
| 9. How good do you feel about your relationship with your children         | 78                    | 326                   | 445         | .000               |
| 10. How good do you feel about your relationship with other family members | 162                   | 325                   | 376         | .000               |
|  |                       |                       |             |                    |
| <b>Child Competence – How do you feel about your child's ability:</b>      |                       |                       |             |                    |
| <b>Self esteem</b>   |                       |                       |             |                    |
| 1. To feel good about him/herself  | 163                   | 421                   | 490         | .000               |
| 2. To feel comfortable with his/her ethnicity                              | 141                   | 283                   | 523         | .000               |
| <b>Self discipline</b>   |                       |                       |             |                    |
| 3. To manage / express feelings & emotions                                 | 207                   | 437                   | 423         | .000               |
| 4. To control behaviour (self discipline)                                  | 168                   | 490                   | 403         | .000               |
| <b>Problem solving skills</b>  |                       |                       |             |                    |
| 5. To consider others when making decisions                                | 191                   | 439                   | 400         | .000               |
| 6. To ask for help / guidance if needed                                    | 188                   | 411                   | 440         | .000               |
| <b>Choices and violence</b>  |                       |                       |             |                    |
| 7. To avoid using or dealing drugs   | 81                    | 167                   | 332         | .000               |
| 8. To avoid violence and stay out of gangs                                 | 111                   | 272                   | 324         | .000               |

### **A2.3. Results for the Community Focus questions**

The McNemar test was used for the Community Focus questions, as these had 'Yes' / 'No' responses. Two of the results were statistically significant at the 95% confidence level, i.e. with significance values ( $p$ ) of less than 0.05, see Table A2.3. These were: being involved in youth group activities and having a support network of friends and family.

**Table A2.3 Community Focus – Results of the McNemar Test**

|  | <b>Sig<br/><i>p</i> value</b> |
|--|-------------------------------|
| <b>Community Focus – Participation in:</b> |                               |
| 1. Community activities                    | .373                          |
| 2. Youth group activities                  | .001                          |
| 3. Spiritual / religious activities        | .780                          |
| 4. Children's education / school           | .068                          |
| 5. Support network of friends and family   | .003                          |