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An exploration of children's centre users' experiences of being a parent and of support for the role

Submitted by Jennifer Patricia Townsend to the University of Exeter as a thesis

for the degree of Doctor of Educational, Child and Community Psychology,

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I certify that all material in this thesis which is not my own work has been

identified and that no material has previously been submitted and approved for

the award of a degree by this or any other University.

(Signature) ……………………………………………………………………

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3.   <u>Acknowledgements</u>

4.   Overview of thesis

A review of the literature has identified a need for process studies in order to illuminate how change comes about for parents in the evidence based parenting programmes (Lindsay et al, 2008). The literature also highlights the tension between policy aimed at enhancing parenting skills and its part in a political rhetoric which places individual responsibility with parents whilst playing down socioeconomic factors (Furedi, 2009). This exploratory study is carried out in the context of parents of young children in a city in the South of England. It comprises two linked studies which investigate the perceptions of parents of the parenting role and available support. What sense do they make of their experiences of being a parent and accessing parenting support and how can these be interpreted in the light of the debate around responsibility for child outcomes? The research will be presented in two linked papers. Paper 1 uses a focus group and semi structured interviews to gather data on participants' perceptions of the role of parent in today's society, their parenting experiences, influences and support for the role. Interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) is used to make sense of the data. Paper 2 explores parents' experiences of a 14 week Incredible Years (IY) parenting programme, through semi structured interviews during and following the programme, together with field notes taken during the programme and the perspective of the facilitators elicited through semi-structured interviews. Again, IPA is used to make sense of the data.

Paper 1 findings suggest that for these parents ecological support (including community facilities, employment and social support) was important for their functioning as parents. Their level of engagement with an intensive parenting discourse appeared to be linked to their identity and self-actualisation. Implications are drawn for the way in which parenting support is framed within services and the media. Paper 2 Findings revealed that the group setting was both a challenge to access and a source of peer support. Leader qualities emerged as essential for parental engagement. This was reflected in facilitators' accounts and underpinned by their non-judgmental ethos. Within this accepting

group setting with approachable leaders parents' accounts suggest that change had come about for them through experiential learning putting strategies into practice in their own contexts with opportunities to reflect in group discussion. Issues are raised regarding Social Services nominations and constructs around discipline. Implications are drawn for practice and the role of the EP. Further research directions are suggested. Taken as a whole, the findings support the call for a wider emphasis on ecological factors and wellbeing in supporting parents, rather than a sole focus on parenting skills (Puckering, 2009). This study provides a timely caution in a political climate which emphasises parenting skills at the same time as cutting public services.

Since reflexivity is one characteristic of qualitative research (Robson, 2002) I am including a summary of my personal and professional interest in the subject. My interest in this topic originates from my professional background as an early years teacher, Home-Start volunteer, Portage inclusion worker and trainee educational psychologist. Within each of these roles I have been involved in supporting parents and teachers with concerns around young children's behaviour. I am a white middle class mother with experience of parenting preschool children a decade ago. I am aware that I bring these personal and professional perspectives to bear on this research.

5.   <u>Abstract for Paper 1</u>

Provision of support for parents is recommended at an ecological level in order to be effective since many of the problems associated with poor parenting are linked to social disadvantage (Puckering 2009). Sure Start Children's Centres have developed strength in delivering such holistic support (Barlow et al, 2007). Sure Start Local Programmes were set up in 1998 by the then Labour government as part of its policy to eliminate child poverty. In 2003 Sure Start's initial focus on disadvantaged areas was changed to a universal Children's Centre service accessible by families in all areas (Lewis, 2011). Children's Centres continue to operate a universal service under the current Coalition government, with an emphasis on improving outcomes for the most disadvantaged families (DfE, 2010).

Support for parents sits uneasily within a cultural context in which an intensive parenting discourse is linked to undue expectations of parents (Furedi, 2009; Wall, 2010).This study explores Children's Centre users' experiences of being a parent and of support for the role and uses IPA to analyse the data. Data were collected initially from a focus group discussion which is analysed and integrated into the main study following a protocol for IPA of focus groups developed by Palmer, Larkin, De Visser and Fadden (2010). Further data were collected from semi structured interviews with a purposive sample of four women with both preschool and secondary aged children. The data were analysed following a protocol for IPA outlined by Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009). Findings suggest that for these parents ecological support (including community facilities, employment and social support) was important for their functioning as parents. Their level of engagement with an intensive parenting discourse appeared to be linked to their identity and self-actualisation. Implications are drawn for the way in which parenting support is framed within services and the media.

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8.   Introduction to Paper 1

The professionalisation of parenting

This study represents a psychological exploration of parents' experiences of the phenomenon of parenthood. It is set within the context of sociological concerns raised in September 2011 at the University of Kent Centre for Parenting Studies conference entitled "Monitoring Parents: Science, evidence, experts and the new parenting culture" . Keynote speakers included Frank Furedi and Stefan Ramaekers. I have included their views as cultural commentary relevant to the debate whilst acknowledging that they are taken from non-peer reviewed sources. From their perspective, parenting is seen as the subject of a current political rhetoric which places responsibility for child outcomes with parents, whilst underplaying socio-economic factors (Furedi, 2009). Ramaekers (2011) suggests that Western society is increasingly burdening parents by equating the practice of being a parent with that of being a "professional". This implies standards of proficiency for which parents are not trained.

Wall (2010), writing from a critical feminist perspective, investigated the experiences of mothers in Ontario with regard to the discourse of intensive parenting. This discourse consists of linking children's academic and social outcomes, and specifically their brain development, to high levels of parental involvement. Wall traces the source of the intensive parenting discourse to two areas of psychology: attachment theory and brain development research. I offer an example of a UK publication reflecting this discourse. This extract is taken from a book on attachment and brain development aimed at parents:

> Particular ways of responding to your child will establish pathways in his brain to enable him to manage emotions well, think rationally under pressure, and calm himself down without recourse to angry outbursts, attacks of anxiety or, in later life, alcohol, smoking or drugs. [Sunderland (2006, 2007), p. 11.]

A key finding from Wall (2010) was that these mothers had imbibed the intensive parenting discourse as part of their middle class culture. Wall also found that these mothers' belief that they could control outcomes for their children was contributing to both a sense of accomplishment and a sense of failure and guilt, of never being able to do enough. Despite their conviction that a high level of parental involvement was fundamental to children's success, many of these mothers were finding intensive parenting exhausting and stressful and beginning to question the degree to which their own needs (such as for career and recreation) should be sacrificed for their child's.

Wall notes that the intensive parenting discourse has implications for areas of deprivation, suggesting that it could be used to justify cutting back efforts to tackle poverty by attributing poor child outcomes to individual failures in parenting efforts. She calls for research into how parents from areas of deprivation experience the intensive parenting discourse. One of my research questions addresses this gap in the research.

Bloomfield et al (2005) explored the perceptions of parents and support workers of the challenges of being a parent. One theme which emerged was that of "expectations of others". Rich Harris (2009) finds no convincing evidence to suggest that individual parents have long term influence on their children's socialisation, rather that peer group and neighbourhood effects are in operation (Rich Harris, 2009). This suggests a role for the EP in the community context, not only delivering programmes, but also using research skills to explore local support needs (Sidebotham & the Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children (ALSPAC) Study Team, 2001), in particular how community networks support parents in their role (Nystrom & Ohrling, 2004).

Ecological support

Puckering (2009) pursues the issue of how to reach families who do not currently benefit from parenting programmes in her review of the literature and in particular the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) Guidelines on Parenting Programmes for Children with Conduct Disorder

(NICE, 2006). Puckering notes that many of the risk factors associated with not completing a parenting programme also overlap with those linked to the construct of conduct disorder, cited by NICE (2006) who acknowledge that many of these factors are associated with social deprivation. The author recommends that parenting support takes an ecological perspective, offering support, not just for parent-child interactions, but also for a range of environmental factors such as finances, employment, housing, neighbourhood, health and education. In this way it is hoped that support will reach families who may find formal parenting programmes difficult to access for reasons associated with economic disadvantage.

Barlow et al (2007) used surveys to investigate support for parents in 59 Sure Start Local Programmes across the UK. They used case studies to highlight good practice in 6 of them. A strength identified was ecological support for parents and families. At the time of the study the use of evidence based parenting programmes was sporadic and the authors recommended that staff working with families needed both more training and more awareness of the benefits of offering such programmes to families. It appears that Children's Centres with their resources to be able to provide the holistic community approach to family support, are well placed to deliver parent programmes as non-stigmatising universal services (Barlow et al, 2007).

Lucas (2011), writing from a family therapy perspective, makes the distinction between the concept of support for families with problems, and the dominant discourse around "problem families". She calls for the emphasis of government policy to be changed accordingly. She suggests that the danger of the rhetoric around the success of evidence based parenting programmes is that it can be used to bolster the idea that the solution to antisocial behaviour lies solely with improving parents' skills in managing their children, whilst failing to address more pervasive issues. Parenting support has been identified as a key factor in reducing child poverty by promoting resilience in children and families (Barlow, Kirkpatrick, Wood, Ball & Stewart-Brown (2007). This gives psychology services an opportunity to make an impact on community improvement. My concern,

which underpins this study, is that psychology is not used to burden parents but instead to empower them.

Research Aims

As a response to the above concerns regarding ecological support and the increasing professionalisation of parenting I wanted to explore the issue of parenting from the perspective of parents in an area of deprivation, in this case within a city in the south of England. The rationale for this study is to illuminate the experiences of this particular group of parents in the above context in order to enhance the relevance of services for them. In order to do this I have undertaken an interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) study using a focus group and semi structured interviews to find out how parents perceive their experience of being a parent and support for the role. The aim is to explore their perceptions to increase understanding of how they make sense of their experiences in the current climate of the growing professionalisation of parenting.

9.   <u>Methodology Paper 1</u>

This inquiry lends itself to a phenomenological approach which seeks to understand the meaning which participants attach to their lived experience Robson, (2002). I have chosen to use IPA for two reasons:

1.   I take the view that not only is each individual's experience of a phenomenon such as being a parent unique, but that their interpretation of that experience is distinctive. Phenomenology provides a way of unlocking that meaning (Smith, 2003).

2.   I acknowledge the role of the researcher in enabling the participant to tell their own story and understand their experience. The interpretative aspect of IPA involves the researcher analysing and making sense of the participant's meaning.

I acknowledge that this interpretation is within the bounds of what the respondent chose to divulge within a research situation. Building trust through

rapport building and prolonged involvement has therefore been an important aim of the research design for both Paper 1 and Paper 2.

Research Questions Paper 1

Paper 1 poses two primary research questions:

1. What are the perceptions of the role of parent held by parents of early years children in a Children's Centre in a city in the south of England?

2. What are these parents' perceptions of support for the role of parent?

Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) also suggest that, once interpretation of the participant's account has been made, a second level research question can be posed which relates to theory. I have therefore chosen a secondary research question relating to concerns about the growing professionalisation of parenting:

3. How do these parents' experiences reflect the intensive parenting discourse identified by Wall (2010)?

Context

The context for this research is a Children's Centre in a city in the south of England. This part of the city is within the most deprived 10% of areas in England according to the English Indices of Deprivation (2010). The Children's Centre operates both from shop front premises and from rooms adjoining a nursery class in a nursery school building. Data were collected from parents attending a regular baby and toddler group at the nursery school premises. Participants were a purposive sample of parents who attend a Children's Centre with their preschool children. The sample will be discussed in more detail below in the sections on focus group and semi structured interviews.

The parents were invited to take part by letter given out at the group by Children's Centre staff. The invitation was initially to take part in the focus group

with individual follow up interviews as an option. A variety of times were offered including a twilight session and sessions to coincide with baby and toddler group sessions and nursery drop off times. The focus group was held in an adjoining room during the morning of the baby and toddler group session. Refreshments were provided. Data were collected by means of a focus group and semi structured interviews.

Focus group

The purpose of the focus group was threefold:

1. To elicit the experiences of an already formed group of Children's Centre users in their usual setting.
2. To select participants for the semi structured interviews.
3. To serve as an initial rapport building introductory meeting with me.

The topic guide for discussion in the focus group was as follows:

- Different ages/stages of children (included as an icebreaker)
- Role of parent
- Who supports you?
- Professionals
- Accessing community support

The focus group was recorded with participants' permission and transcribed verbatim. The content was analysed using an IPA protocol for focus groups developed by Palmer, Larkin, De Visser and Fadden (2010). A table displaying the analysis process is included in Appendix 1. IPA usually engages with individuals to allow for an in-depth experiential account to unfold in a confidential 1:1 situation (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). However Palmer et al (2010) assert that focus groups can add a useful dimension to an IPA study since they have the following advantages:

- being in context (linking to the experiential being in the world premise of phenomenology)

- having an interactive element (linking to the relatedness aspect of phenomenology)

The participants for the focus group were three local women who had preschool children and were regular members of the baby and toddler group at the Children's Centre. They formed a purposive sample as is characteristic of IPA studies (Smith, 2003). In other words in this study I was seeking to interpret the meaning of parenthood for this specific group of women rather than to claim the findings to be representative of a whole population of Children's Centre users.

At the end of the focus group session, I asked for volunteers who might like to tell their story another time in an individual session. One focus group member was available for semi structured interview. In order to recruit further participants for semi structured interview I informally conversed with baby and toddler group members at a subsequent group session. From interested parties I selected a purposive sample of three additional parents who had similar aged children as the focus group participant. This purposive sample allowed me to analyse in depth the perceptions of this particular group of people from the same context and demographic as is the aim of studies within the phenomenological approach (Smith, 2003). In practice all four parents in my sample for the semi structured interviews were women who had at least one preschool child and at least one of secondary age. This had the advantage of the parents having considerable experience of parenthood at the same time as accessing early years provision.

The interviews were held in a side room while the baby and toddler group was going on. Two of the participants held their babies on their laps for the duration of their interview. The other two gave their toddlers free access to and from the toddler group during the interview. This flexible arrangement prevented the respondents from being too inconvenienced and kept interruptions to the interview at a minimum.

Semi structured interviews

The purpose of the semi structured interviews was to explore in depth the meaning which parents attach to the role of parenting. This method of data collection is particularly suitable for this research question since it allowed parents to reflect on how they see the role of a parent using open ended questions. I consider that my experience of using Personal Construct Psychology (PCP) (Kelly, 1955) in my professional practice may have influenced my interviewing style. For example my use of questions such as "How did you come to…" (Ravenette, 1992) and in particular my rapport building. IPA shares a number of characteristics with PCP such as the focus on the individual making sense of their world, the use of open ended questions and the importance of rapport building. However they clearly have very different functions inasmuch as IPA is a method of data analysis and PCP is a psychological technique. In practice PCP differs from IPA in that the interviewer helps the participant identify their own constructs and model of the world through techniques such as the repertory grid (Kelly, 1955; Beaver, 2003). IPA on the other hand focuses on the participant's account of a lived experience of a particular phenomenon. The interviewer, through a subsequent process of analysis, brings their own interpretation to bear on the meaning which the participant has gleaned from their experience as expressed in their account (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). I did not actually use PCP during the interviews. However, as I reflect on the links between IPA and PCP outlined above, I consider that my professional experience of PCP may have contributed to my skill in allowing participants to offer detailed and in depth accounts of their experiences.

Following the initial stages of analysis (i.e. reading and rereading and initial noting of the language used such as emotions and metaphors) I made a graphic representation of key words in the form of a tag cloud created using the website Tagxedo.com (see Appendix 2). This form of member checking strengthened the reliability of the study by giving respondents the opportunity to retract, clarify or elaborate on any aspects they wished to. It had been my intention to present the tag cloud to participants in between the focus group and individual

interviews. In practice, only Alice took part in both. I used the tag cloud at the beginning of Alice's individual interview to present some of the key words and phrases she had used in the focus group session. In this way the tag cloud became the stimulus for the beginning of her individual interview so that it built on her previous account. For example, I started by presenting the phrase "absolute intense culture shock" and asking her to elaborate on that. In total, the participants were offered three stages to the interview process to ensure involvement over time between researcher and participant to enable them to tell their story:

1. Introductory rapport building meeting with me in the context of their pre-existing group. In practice this took place for one of the respondents within the focus group session, and for the remaining three informally during the baby and toddler group session.

2. A second meeting to explore their perceptions using a semi structured interview schedule.

3. A third and final member checking session during an informal follow up visit to the toddler group. I used the tag cloud as a stimulus for discussion by presenting key words used in participants' individual accounts.

Analysis process

Appendix 3 contains an example of the complete process of analysis of the data from one participant, Rebecca. I will use Rebecca's case here to provide a narrative of how I progressed from raw data to final theme using the steps of analysis outlined in Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009).

- **Reading and re-reading.** I first listened to the recording in full to get an overview of the whole before beginning to transcribe. The process of transcription entailed repeated replaying of phrases to ensure I was typing the exact words used. This process enabled me to acquire a sense of Rebecca's voice that stayed with me as I re-read the finished transcript and immerse myself in the raw data before bringing my interpretation to it (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009).

- **Initial noting.** This step involved annotating the transcript with any initial thoughts that occurred to me as I read through word for word. These "exploratory comments" can be *descriptive, linguistic or conceptual* (Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) page 84). An excerpt of Rebecca's transcript is included in Appendix 3. Alongside the transcript, in the right hand column, are my exploratory comments, some of which are descriptive: "lack of support from previous partner"; some both conceptual and linguistic as I comment on the meaning behind a metaphor used: "Sleeping well linked to goodness: she sleeps like an angel." At this stage I also compiled a tag cloud, using key words and phrases from Rebecca's account.

- **Developing emergent themes.** Some of the exploratory comments evolved into emergent themes in order to encapsulate what was important to Rebecca. I noted these emergent themes in the left hand column alongside the transcript (an example is presented in Appendix 3). For example, I note "Within child factors given value judgement" as an emergent theme alongside the comments about sleeping like an angel. A full list of the initial themes I identified for Rebecca is also included in Appendix 3.

- **Searching for connections across emergent themes**. My next step in developing the themes was to cluster the emergent themes in order to identify superordinate themes. I did this by literally cutting and pasting: I printed out the list of emergent themes, cut out each one and, with freedom to move them around on a large sheet of coloured paper I sorted them into conceptual groups or clusters. My completed Clustering of Themes for Rebecca can be seen in Appendix 3. I then further distilled these clusters into superordinate themes which are included in Appendix 4. For example, I subsumed two of Rebecca's clusters of themes (Within child factors and Support from family) into a superordinate theme of Circularity because they both pertained to the effects that family members had on each other. For example, as part

of the Within child factors cluster, having a child who was relaxed and "slept like an angel" affected Rebecca positively in terms of mood and sleep. She didn't know how far the baby was relaxed because of her own personality or because of Rebecca's way of relating to her. As part of the Support from family cluster, Rebecca noted that her current partner was helpful and gave her time to chill out and relax. She felt this made her more relaxed with the baby. This brings us back to the possible effects on the baby's sleep patterns. I also identified a similar connection between these two clusters regarding the chain of impact of lack of support and perceived excessive crying. I therefore merged these two clusters of themes and labelled the superordinate theme Circularity.

- **Moving to the next case**. Each stage of the process of analysis described above was applied to each of the four participants' data in turn. I came to each case afresh, setting aside or "bracketing" the findings from previous cases to preserve the individual focus consistent with IPA (Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) page 100). I have chosen to use Rebecca's case as an example of my process of analysis because she was the last of my four participants and so with each stage I was more experienced and sure about what I was doing by the time I came to Rebecca's data.

- **Looking for patterns across cases.** Now that I had completed the analysis of each individual participant, I came to the stage of looking for patterns across cases. My analysis of the first three cases had revealed a theme of *Identity.* This had not been a theme that I had identified in Rebecca's case through my individual analysis. However, when looking for patterns across cases, I could see evidence of a theme of *Identity* within the *Perpetuating an Active Lifestyle theme.*

Appendix 4 includes the Tables of Themes for all four cases.

Ethical considerations

I have observed University of Exeter, British Psychological Society and Health Professions Council ethical guidelines throughout this research project. My attitude, approach and language have been non-judgemental, anti-discriminatory and positive throughout the study.

Initial contact was made by letter inviting parents to take part and informing them of the purpose of the research. I then reiterated verbally the purpose of the research and what it would involve for participants. Prior to data collection, written signed informed consent was obtained from those who chose to participate. I made it clear that participants were under no obligation to take part and that any responses would be anonymous, with their identity known only to the researcher. Reassurance was given that all electronic data (recordings and transcriptions) were stored anonymously and securely on the researcher's laptop. I made it clear that respondents were free to decline to answer any questions with which they are uncomfortable and assured them that they could withdraw at any time. Pseudonyms are used for people and settings throughout the report.

10. <u>Findings: focus group</u>

This section presents the findings from the focus group following analysis using the IPA protocol for focus groups suggested by Palmer et al (2010). Details of this process are presented in Appendix 1

All three women's primary objects of concern, as revealed in their accounts of their lived experience, are reflected in their epithetical views on the most important role of a parent. For Laura, the main goal of parenthood appears to be linked to relatedness:

> Being there for them really, with everything you know, their day to day lives really.

Laura said the least in the group but most of her contributions were linked to her desire to make or keep connections with others. She laments a loss of cooperation as her children age:

> [My daughter] is very back chatty. She was a lovely little girl as a toddler but when she was at school she changed…When she was younger she used to bring me a nappy or wipes but now she's older they fight like cat and dog.

Laura was first to raise a discussion of another local toddler group, pseudonym Green Street, which was picked up by the other two women and became a thread running through the entire focus group session. Her experience of that group was overwhelmingly negative:

> I didn't like it up there: too big, cliquey groups…nobody comes to talk to you…quite isolated…it was just too busy.

Other brief accounts of her experience of the current Children's Centre group revealed that peer support was important to Laura, but that she preferred these encounters to be within small groups of familiar people:

> There's another lady that I used to know that came and I plucked up courage to come….More easy going, more laid back…'cause we knew them all from before so…it used to be just me and Danielle at first…then I met four friends here.

Danielle's view of the central role of parent was expressed succinctly: "to protect them." Danielle's later narratives of two separate negative encounters with a health professional and the Green Street toddler group, suggests that she experiences the world as a socially threatening place. It therefore follows that a central concern of hers would be to protect her child who in her accounts had been the subject of unsolicited comments on his physique. Appendix 2

contains my IPA account of the interactions within the group as Danielle recounts her experiences over the course of the focus group session.

Alice's comments in the focus group and in her subsequent semi-structured interview demonstrate a central concern with social resilience. This is consistent with her summary, at the beginning of the group discussion, of a parent's role:

> I think to make them, you know, to teach them to be good responsible adults you know respectful and to be able to look after themselves, take care of themselves and to stand on their own two feet and to obviously as you say alongside that is to love and nurture them.

11. **<u>Findings: individual semi structured interviews</u>**

In this section I present the findings from the individual semi structured interviews following analysis using the process for IPA suggested by Smith, Flowers & Larkin (2009). Details of this process are contained in Appendix 3. I will present the findings from each of the four respondents in turn, followed by a presentation of cross group themes identified.

Alice

To provide continuity with the focus group findings I begin with an interpretation of Alice's account as the only member of the focus group who was subsequently interviewed individually.
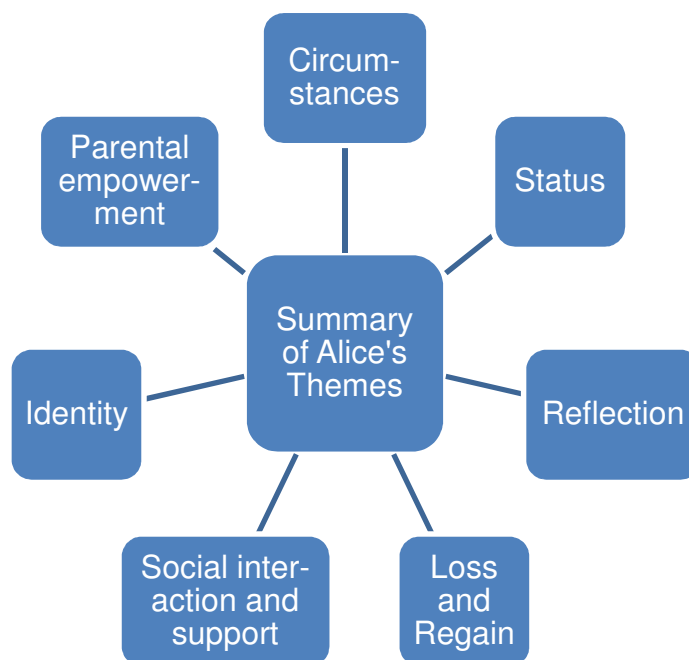
Summary of Alice's themes

Theme 1: Circumstances

Alice's first theme was how a series of interlinked adverse circumstances combined to have a negative impact on her ability to cope:

> So I'd lost my job, my two eldest children went to live with their Dad, I had a relationship breakdown, there was domestic violence going on and I was pregnant, and drug use as well, so a concoction of those things and I just fell to bits a bit really.

Alice recounts how, because she was a parent, what she saw as a mental health problem was construed as a safeguarding issue by social care and she

was required by law to attend an assessment centre with her toddler and go through court proceedings to retain custody.

> It was never my parenting really that was at question. With the eldest two I didn't put my focus in and be the parent that I always was. However I didn't feel that I needed to be in another city and to be on 24 hour observation 'cause that's pretty much what it was with my child. The problem was a psychological problem you know, I was suffering with mental illness really.

Alice uses language to suggest the harshness of the financial loss she faced following the loss of her job as a result of her psychological distress in response to domestic violence:

> It was a complete culture shock…the money's scarce. The money just doesn't stretch… being slashed less than a quarter in income as well.

Theme 2: Status

Status was an important theme for Alice as evidenced by her description of how she had worked hard to gain markers of success:

> I was in employment, I had all my children at home, I managed to work and maintain my house as a single parent , I owned my own home, I had a car, you know I had a job which I had spent seven years to acquire, so I had a pretty good position and my hourly pay was really good.

Her job within the safeguarding field had been a particular source of pride as she demonstrates by use her use of terms relating to achievement: *very good; first; high:*

> And I had a very good job, I was at the first port of call within social services, working alongside the [unintelligible] assessment team and dealing with high case child protection issues all the time.

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This particular status opened her up to opprobrium from the assessment centre staff. Alice's implication is that they felt she should have known better and that their attitude was hostile:

> I did go into a children's assessment centre in [another location] where I spent 12 weeks with [youngest child] although I feel I was very persecuted because of my job. They came down on me like a ton of bricks.

Theme 3: Reflection

Alice's next theme was reflection as she recounted how she had used the therapy she received at the assessment centre to begin her recovery:

> Intense therapy [was] really helpful. I sort of understand myself, why I did things I did…And you know and they helped me to be able to look at my past and address the issues, not necessarily address them – you know problem solved you never have to worry about them again um - And to move on and to be able to carry on getting on with my life on the up again, which I have done ever since really.

Reflection was to be a continuing feature of Alice's life. Alice saw taking part in this research as a benefit of her community involvement and found it a welcome chance to reflect in a structured way:

> It goes back to the social things really, when you attend all the groups you do come across situations like this here what I'm doing now, and I think it gives you opportunity to reflect on your present situation, your circumstances. And it can be a little bit inspirational sometimes to sort of go away and think about things 'cause it brings things to the surface of your attention I guess that you just forget about and you just get on with, and it's little things like this that give you opportunity to….[interruption and end of interview at this point]

All Alice's themes were linked as her story unfolded. Reflection on losing and regaining status was a strong feature of her account including an acceptance of the loss. Although she was working towards regaining some of the outward markers of success she had adjusted her perspective:

> Because I've had it before so to lose it like that is just … maybe it's not other peoples' opinions maybe it's my own personal opinion, but my fear is that other people's opinions are, but that really I was doing well, but it makes me a weaker person because of what happened…Pretty much now that has happened and maybe I may have had a little weakness there, but it's made me stronger really in another way now. So yeah, I'm not that worried about it now, not as worried as I used to be as in it eats away at me, that's why I say I want to have a job and have a car…once I've done that I'll feel so much better then.

Alice's temporary loss of her older children had led to her being more aware of savouring the younger ones' childhoods:

> I think to appreciate them a bit more, and to take more pictures and to have more videos, some things like that appreciation of them I think is a bit more. 'Cause they grow up so quickly…and probably the fact that [the two eldest] went to live with their Dad at during that period of time when I was like I was, you do appreciate, when you are at a low ebb, it's hard to appreciate anything.

Alice used opportunities available through the Children's Centre to re-engage with the community and take steps towards paid work:

> [Being a breastfeeding mentor]'s quite empowering really even though sometimes I think it can, it's quite small in my er …how it's led to me actually working and earning money, but it's a start you know, and it gets me back working in the community and sort of even though it's voluntary

it's still something I can put on a CV and it's also doing what I like at the moment.

Theme 5: Social Interaction and Support

The importance of social interaction had been evident in Alice's focus group contributions and is also reflected in her individual account:

I think that as human beings everybody feels better by being in company and around people…I think it's important for me and for the children.

Alice accessed the Children's Centre provision partly to help her regain social involvement:

And it was sort of like I have to rehabilitate myself into the community really and that's what Emily's role was.

Theme 6: Identity

During the focus group Alice had valued being "loud and outspoken" as positive social skills. Her individual account reveals that being socially outgoing is an important part of her identity:

And I am an outgoing person. I think if you're shy and you don't know anybody, it can be really daunting walking into that room [at the toddler group]. I always have been [outgoing] since primary. At primary school I wasn't at all. Completely the opposite, very shy, didn't really speak to everybody and I was completely different. But I was bullied at primary school, and I remember when I started secondary school thinking I'm not going to put myself in this position and I sort of became a little bit more extrovert a little bit more on the other side of things and it sort of stuck a bit really I don't know why.

Theme 7: Parental Empowerment

This final theme is the culmination of Alice's other themes and in my view is justification for allowing her to tell her story which was not always focused strictly on her parenting role. Following on from her own narrative of resilience

Alice articulated her main role as a parent as fostering strength and independence echoing the view she expressed in the focus group session:

> My personal opinion is that you bring children into the world to grow up, you want to nurture them to grow up to be adults to be able to take care of themselves and to have, to have realistically, a good idea of what is out there in the real world. I'll care for them, I'll do everything I can for them, but they still need to be able to stand on their own two feet as well in situations.

A particular strand to this fostering of strength was assertiveness in relationships. Alice had learnt from her own experiences of oppression to empower her children, particularly her daughters, in their lives:

> And how to deal with situations appropriately. I mean 'cause there was domestic violence in my first relationship as well and for things to be dealt with the proper way, you know, if you have a problem discuss it and that sort of thing. I mean the domestic violence in my first relationship wasn't serious, it didn't happen daily, it didn't happen monthly, it was like probably once a year there would be an incident, but it would be serious. And so there's things like that that I wouldn't want to see my children - when they grow up – I wouldn't want to see my daughters putting up with that sort of behaviour. And even things when they go to school to be confident - but that's because of me being bullied – I wouldn't want that, I guess your own experiences is what you instil in your children.

Martine
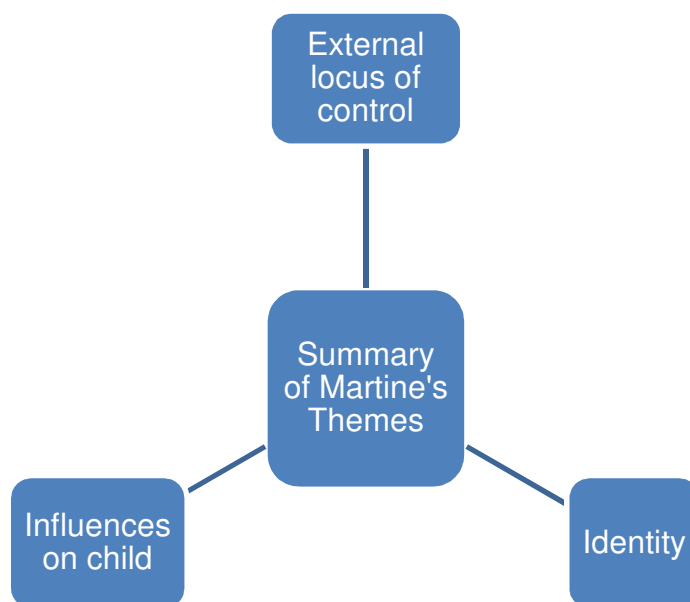
Summary of Martine's Themes

    Theme 1: External Locus of Control

In the sphere of parenthood Martine appears to have an external locus of control, operating under what she sees as a politically correct code of practice which appears to come from school. She hints at a sense that she feels under surveillance by school to follow this code and adopt its language:

> You've got to be really on the ball. Like if he went to school now…. Um, it's just like even down to don't say they're naughty children. Naughty's not a very positive word. You know just anything.

Her point about not describing the children as naughty suggests that she privately holds a different discourse from school around behavioural labels to attach to children but publicly complies with that of the school. Martine was clear that there was a certain way one was expected to be as a parent. Her use of *supposed* to and *got to* suggest that it was imposed rather than chosen:

Just the way you're supposed to do it – what's acceptable now…It's just the whole concept of everything. You've got to be, well, it's sort of what's etiquette of things.

Martine's sense of external pressure to be a certain kind of parent impacts on her self-esteem as she feels the onus is on her to be a teacher to her children, a role which she does not feel equipped to do but yet feels compelled by expectations to fulfil:

You've got to be a bit of everything – you know, so I get frustrated 'cause I'm not very good at teaching, you know when they come home with homework or - just trying to get them to understand more – I'm not very good. 'Cause one of my sons: he won't - try to tell him and he's right and you're wrong and you know you try to teach him anything as well and put that in the equation and it's….Sometimes I think, I'm not a teacher, I'm not this, but I'm expected to be….I feel like I've got to be, yeah.

Theme 2: Identity

Martine appears to view her role as meeting her children's needs without considering her own. She presents a positive view of local amenities offering reasonably priced activities for the diverse ages of her 4 children and these take priority over her own need for leisure activities:

I know what there is to do but I don't have time to do it

Martine describes how investing herself in the role of sacrificial parent has led to an identity change for her. This time, although she uses the phrase *you have to*, there is a sense that she has chosen to subsume herself in the role and that the imperative to change is a result of putting the children first rather than a societal pressure:

Yeah I'm second best and worst, and the lower person, but yeah they come first and that's it, and you do change because of that, you have to. I'm just totally different, I'm all about them and that's it really definitely

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Martine expresses a sense of exhilaration in her use of the *rollercoaster* metaphor as well as a sense of awe at the enormity and implications of the task of being a parent:

> It's just a rollercoaster of emotions, everything. It's the biggest responsibility I've had, ever. I've ever took on. There is nothing [unintelligible]

Theme 3: Influences

Central to Martine's final theme of influences is a gradual loss of parental influence as children's experience widens outside the home. Her use of *lose* and *wildly* suggest a loss of parental ability to control outcomes:

> As soon as they, it's almost like as soon as they start school you lose [unintelligible]. They are then wildly influenced by everything else as well.

In her recall of two decades of parenthood Martine sees a change in the age at which children currently access knowledge previously reserved for a later stage of development:

> And I feel they mature, the children themselves, older now. So like I've got 18 year old and 9 year old girls. Put it this way, the 9 year old now: what they, they, you know, even in school, not just her – her mates - it's all so much older…It might be telly, it might be because they've got older siblings, you don't know. Yeah, so it's a wide range I think.

Martine ends with a vision of her teenage son gaining independence whilst retaining the parental legacy of an internalised morality:

> Obviously your influence at home means, carries something: he goes out the door and thinks I'd better not do that

Fran
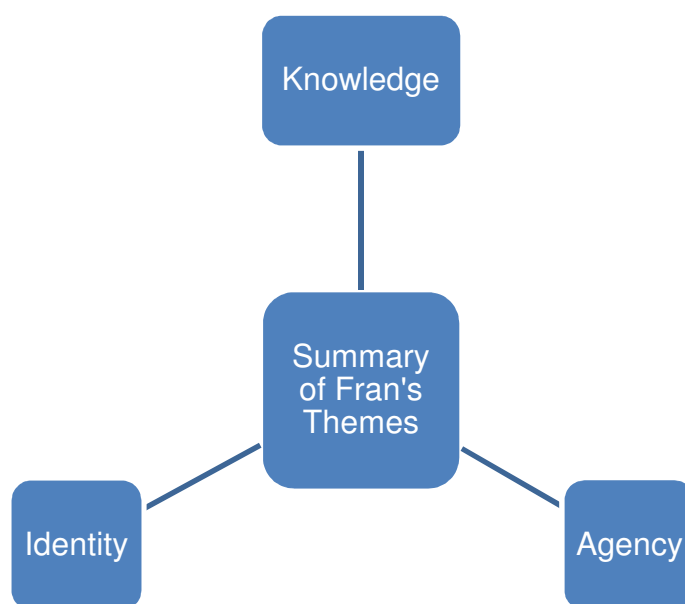
Summary of Fran's Themes

Theme 1: Knowledge

This theme appears important to Fran evidenced by the high number of words she uses in the course of the interview connected with knowledge, acquiring knowledge, and cognition:

> *Understanding; education; research (x2); information (x3); training (x3); recommendations (x2); aware; know/didn't know; hindsight; wisdom.*

Fran appears to discriminate between information easily accessed on the internet and what she sees as the more reliable resource of early years professionals at the Children's Centre. She uses a combination of both her own internet searches and professional advice for reassurance on child care issues:

> Back then, you didn't have that, now there's so much information - maybe too much in some things…When it comes into my head I can just jump on the computer - quick looking up. Then kind of It gives me some idea, some peace of mind maybe, then I talk it over here with people who have the up to date training. Definitely the staff because of their training and recommendations.

Fran also values her own in-service training and although she uses the word *lucky* suggesting an external locus of control, she also acknowledges that she has been proactive in learning about child development through opting for a career in outdoor education:

> I've been quite lucky recently in job choices of training and stuff and getting [unintelligible]. Like I said I did the training on child psychology and stuff like that, so I think that definitely makes you look at things differently.

Fran goes on to show how her thinking has changed. Firstly I think she may be alluding to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1954, 1970):

> As they get older, it's kind of umm yeah, whereas I didn't know that before. You just kind of brought them up, you just kind of kept them clothed, kept them warm and kept them fed. Now I know there's more to it than that: There's the love.

Fran's implication appears to be that prior to studying psychology her aim as a parent was to meet her children's lower order needs. Studying psychology appears to have given Fran a new awareness that, now that their lower order needs have been met, the love she gives her children is a prerequisite for their personal growth. I suggest that the extent of her love for them has not changed but that the experience is more meaningful to her with metacognition.

Secondly she refers to research from the field of attachment which I believe to be a reference to Harlow (1959). This also seems to have contributed to her new perception of the role of the parent as providing for social and emotional as well as physical needs:

> And knowing the research and stuff that's out there, the little things. The thing that really stuck out for me is the baby monkey in the cage, the one with just food and the one with the frame…Yeah and like both and the

different outcomes that come out of that you know. Cuddles are important – yes.

Finally within this theme Fran differentiates between recommendations which in her view are to be heeded (health and safety related advice) and those which are a matter of opinion:

> I think, you see, there's a difference between recommendations of good practice to, compared to, kind of life/death possible scenarios like you know the way you sleep them, that I wouldn't mess with, do you know what I mean, but when you wean them, I think that's a slightly greyer area. It's like, I think it's black and white the way you sleep them.

Theme 2: Agency

A key concept for Fran was her sense of agency as a parent. This is evidenced in her frequent use of the word *choice* in several phrases indicating a sense of autonomy, both for herself:

> *job choices; my own choices; some unwise kind of life choices; informed choice;*

and for her children:

> *for them to make good choices; to be able to make choices.*

Fran attributes her greater autonomy in parenting style to life experience coupled with advances in research

> I think age has made a difference because hindsight, I can see things differently – patience. Back then, I don't know, less understanding, less education as well. I think there's been more research in the last sort of 16 / 18 years.

She shows how this combination of experience and education has helped her to move from unquestioning reliance on her mother the first time round as a young parent to using her own judgement to extract what she valued from each source of information:

> With those three, I very much brought them up under my mum's guidance…Whereas now, it's my own choices – like I said: hindsight. I've thought what did and didn't work then and current information, and kind of just bring it all together to what I feel to be the best…but only what I know worked.

Fran appears to value this autonomy to the extent that she would wish to pass it on to her children:

> Giving them the right information and the love and the security for them to make good choices, as they get a bit, to be able to make choices.

Reflecting on her time as a teenage parent Fran suggests that it had not been part of her culture to access community parenting support:

> Yeah, and um I think age 'cause I'm a different person now that I will go and actively ask somebody. I will go and seek out, whereas when I was younger, it was so uncool. It's like groups and stuff – do one.

Theme 3: Identity

For Fran being a parent is inextricable from her adult identity:

> I've always been a parent: I was a parent at 17 so I guess it has changed what my life would have been if I hadn't been, I guess.

Fran attaches spiritual significance to the role of parent:

> It's like um what we are here to do

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For Fran the experience of being a parent had improved as her preoccupations had changed over her life course:

> Um it's [being a parent] like the best thing ever, and I would say that definitely more so now, 'cause I can appreciate it now…So yeah it kind of changes your priorities, 'cause you know whereas before, kind of going to work and kind of the outside world was more important to me. Now it's very much her and parenting and getting it right, 'cause I've kind of got my son to look at, and it's like I'm responsible for where she could end up.

Expanding on the issue of parental responsibility for child outcomes, Fran both respects and laments her children's move away from her influence.

> Their influences are more from the outside now. Unfortunately. I have less say on - like I've hardly seen my son and all his influences are from his peers. And whatever he does in his day. And I feel I have no say, I mean he is 18, he's an adult

She suggests a sense of optimism that her parental involvement in the early years will be influential when her youngest child gains independence:

> I think, I think very much at that sort of age, I know it will come, but at the moment I am her world. [laughs]. [speaks to 6 month old daughter who is vocalising in response]:You are very vocal today darling.

Rebecca
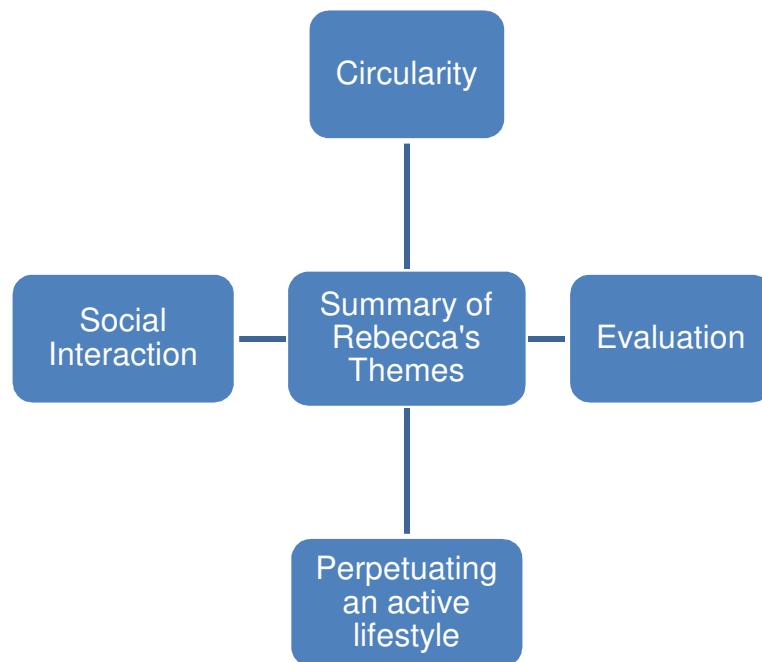
Summary of Rebecca's Themes

Theme 1: Circularity

Comparing her parenting experience with two different children Rebecca found that it was difficult to untangle the effects of family members on each other in terms of temperament, mood and behaviour:

> Well the first one he was a bit more complicated, he used to cry as a baby quite a lot, I did find it hard with him, but I mean he's 11 now so he copes on his own…but this time around I think I'm more relaxed so she seems to - it might just be her personality - but she just seems more relaxed so she sleeps like an angel. Whether that's down to me or down to her personality I don't know.

As well as considering child-parent relations Rebecca introduces a parent-parent dimension. She attributes her differing experiences of parenting to a difference in levels of support from her respective partners. She implicitly raises a gender issue: firstly by describing how with her previous partner she was assuming most of the responsibility for the parenting role and that his role was

merely to help; secondly by mentioning that her current partner grew up in an overwhelmingly female household (*about* six sisters – suggests there were so many it was difficult to count accurately which emphasises the majority and perhaps therefore power as having been with the female members of the family). Rebecca hints that this might have contributed to a more equitable sharing of parenting tasks:

> Probably with the situation I was in before, the partner I had then, he wasn't very helpful um whereas this time around different partner, completely different, completely different he's - well he grew up with about six sisters whether that helped I don't know - but he's fantastic, he comes in and he takes her straight off me and so it's like my time to chill out and relax. I do feed her myself, she's a breast fed baby, but just completely different he's very much hands on, so I just have some time to chill out myself, whereas before I had to do everything myself so I suppose you get uptight and like why doesn't the baby shut up that sort of scenario and if you're uptight then the baby tends to be uptight don't they.

Finally Rebecca extends this circularity outside the family to include the effects of the school environment where her son had experienced bullying:

> Hopefully he will change, 'cause he seems a bit withdrawn sometimes, if not withdrawn, his personality has changed whereas he's more aggressive, 'cause I think he's had a hard day at school – I don't know if aggressive is the right word but – more uptight…So of course I'd be the first one to be moaned at…It's horrible, I feel like I'm doing something wrong…It seems so relaxed with her; when he comes back, sometimes I feel: what's going to happen now? What's happened at school?

Theme 2: Evaluation

This theme concerns evaluation of her children both by herself and by outside agencies such as school. In Rebecca's description of her current positive

experience of support and uninterrupted nights she uses language to describe her daughter that suggests a value judgement connected with goodness:

she sleeps like an angel

Rebecca initially used labels with negative connotations to summarise her older child in relation to aspects of his behaviour:

[regarding sleep] *He was awful*

He was very much a crier

He's a follower

Rebecca's language around her son changes at the point where I ask what he does instead of the computer games which they had limited because they appeared to be affecting his moods. It seems that this allowed Rebecca to reframe her view of her son:

He's a very talented athlete now, he was talent spotted 2 years ago, up on the X, and ever since then he used to go sort of twice a week to athletics, but now he goes almost every night, and it's huge difference 'cause he burns off, he's got so much energy, so he burns off…

Rebecca is aware that in the outside world evaluation of her son is for his achievements as measured against external markers and that athletics is an area that brings him recognition:

He's got somewhere to channel his energy, and it's the only thing I feel that he gets a well done for 'cause he's not very academic at all and um so he struggles with that, but he gets selected for things at school through his sport and I think he's quite happy about that, but he's never I don't think he's rewarded at school for what he does academically.

For Rebecca evaluation of her son's behaviour is relative to personal constructs around expectations of childhood. Her description of an incident in which she and a teacher held differing constructs highlights the imbalance of power as the teacher's attitude appears to be one of judgement suggesting a position of authority. The phrase *being called into school* is evocative of Rebecca's being the passive recipient of a summons. This introduces an implied metaphor of a court case:

> Well this is when he was in the first term at school and so he was 4 years and 3 months, and well that age group don't always do as they are told do they? I remember being called into school, and the teacher said to me we've told him several times to stay off the grass because it's muddy and I said oh you're referring to his trousers then being muddy, you're apologising for his trousers being muddy? I said oh that's alright - it's school uniform isn't it? [Laughs] I said: To me that's school uniform, you expect to get dirty, you expect paint all over it and that sort of scenario.

Rebecca counters the teacher's implied reprimand by reframing the teacher's communication as an apology and going on to present her own construct of childhood as a time for exploring and getting messy. To the teacher the mud appeared to be of secondary importance. The primary issue which the teacher appears to be raising with Rebecca is her son's repeated ignoring of instructions. Rebecca chooses to overlook the compliance issue and make the mud the only issue in question. Rebecca appears to have created this misunderstanding as an oblique defence against the teacher's disapproval and without an intention to resolve the dispute at an authentic level. Rebecca goes on to relate an encounter with the same teacher which sheds light on the miscommunication between them and perhaps why Rebecca did not pursue a more open relating style with this teacher. Here she is more direct in countering what she interprets as the teacher's calling into question her lifestyle at a time when she was a single parent sharing her son's care with her parents who lived upstairs. This time Rebecca renders the law court metaphor explicit by summarising with the concept of accusation:

And she sort of put me down; she said well maybe he's not in an environment where he feels settled. And I actually said to her, in fact he's probably the most settled child going, 'cause if you think it's only me that looks after him, Nanny and Grandad, that's the three key people that look after him…I said you can't tell me he's not well looked after or unsettled that he's in too many environments. He's got to be the luckiest kid here that's actually got three adults in his life, that are continuously in his life. I was a bit cross with that, I didn't like that at all. That teacher saying that, it was like she was accusing me of something…it felt just in a way sort of in a way degrading, horrible …Yeah I was cross for a long time.

Rebecca's escalating description of her negative affect from *a bit cross* through *degrading, horrible* to *cross for a long time* indicates how significant this event was for her on reflection.

Theme 3: Perpetuating an Active Lifestyle

A continuous theme throughout Rebecca's description is the importance for her of an active lifestyle inherited from her own mother:

I was always very active; I was brought up swimming every day.

Rebecca's account suggests that she consciously seeks to incorporate activity into her parenting role and take steps to overcome the constraints of caring for a baby:

Yeah we're very active, I just can't wait till I can get back to being active really…It's just having her [12 week old daughter] with me, I just can't do anything as such…When I go swimming - I am a swimmer - but once she can go in the water, if she will stay in there for 15 minutes I know I can get away with still doing a reasonable amount of exercise with her 'cause I'm a strong swimmer, so I know I can hold her.

Rebecca's self-construct as an active person is also evidenced by her job at a leisure centre and her use of the benefit of free access for the whole family:

> Yeah 'cause I work there [at leisure centre] and it makes a huge difference, 'cause we've just moved into a place and I don't know what money's like at the minute so we just use anything that's free basically...'cause my son can now use the gym, which is a bonus…My partner can get in there free as well and he uses it all the time.

Rebecca further incorporates her active lifestyle into her parenting role by accessing community early years facilities on foot:

> I hate being in, hate being in, so I could just go walking with her. 'Cause now I've found this place [Children's Centre] and everything is free so I just walk up here and see what's on sort of thing.

As well as her own need for activity Rebecca has other reasons for transmitting an active lifestyle to her children. Her purpose in involving them in sport is to keep them healthy and safe both physically and socially as these three extracts demonstrate:

> To keep them off the streets – that's the main reason why [my son] does athletics.

> [Swimming]'s one of those things I think they have got to learn, especially here being near the coast. The 11 year old, I suppose he could go up to [coastal area] and you know you don't know what they get up to when they are on their own do you?

> Yeah healthier and not getting into trouble let's say. 'Cause he is a follower, so I'm sort of aware of that, so that's why I want to keep him more into sport, 'cause he can get into trouble at school. Again it's not 'cause he's naughty; he just follows and gets into trouble.

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<u>Theme 4: Social Interaction</u>

Social support is important for Rebecca and is the main current driver for her accessing early years community facilities such as the breastfeeding support group:

> But it was just having people to talk to, not necessarily talking about feeding but just people to talk to.

At times her and her baby's needs were in conflict:

> I really enjoyed that [baby massage group,] it's just she's not always sociable at that time so we get half way through the massage kind of thing and then she just cries.

Overall Rebecca sees her own need for peer interaction as a current priority which her baby's needs would eventually coincide with to create a win-win situation for them both in their use of the Children's Centre provision:

> The social side yeah, more than for her, she's too young for it. At the minute I come up here just for me, but definitely when she's crawling, or when she's sitting up actually I'll bring her up here for her, just for interaction with other children more than anything.

Relatedness was a key aspect of parenting for Rebecca but not without its tensions. In her view bonding was important role for her as a parent but she observed how her child's growing social world loosened his attachment to her. She appeared to accept and allow this as well as feel some sense of loss. Rebecca gives her view on a key role of parenting:

> Trying to play with the kids I think more than anything, trying to play with them as much as you can, or as much as is possible. I think it's trying to keep them with you as long as you can type of thing…Sometimes I feel that that relationship between me and my oldest boy has broken down. 'Cause he doesn't tend to play with me. Even if it's a game of cards, I

find it hard to get him to play with me; he'd rather be on his computer. Or now, playing out the front type scenario…We've just moved house and he's found some new friends. And we are in that situation where I've got to let him go out, he's got to go out and find out new things first otherwise they're never not free type scenario.

Extended family connections were seen as a bridge to independence which helped Rebecca resolve doubts about not being as involved with her older son's life as with her baby daughter:

He'll go round [to grandparents] for the day, well he invites himself really, he'll go round for the day and stay there for the day and go out and play with his friends, and if he needs the toilet he'll nip in the house, or if he wants a sandwich he'll nip in the house. Well that's the age group difference where I haven't got to take him there and bring him back, so I can concentrate on her [12 week old daughter], but then sometimes I think does he miss out, but then I don't think he does miss out 'cause he gets time to go round there, and he still gets to be here. I don't think he thinks I'm neglecting him type of thing. I think he's got the best of both worlds.

For Rebecca engineering her children's social world is important to her in her role as parent and this links with the theme of an active lifestyle. She concludes with a summary of the importance to her of social interaction and her role as a parent in influencing her children's peer relations:

But you just think that with this generation of kids I don't like them playing outside all the time so we make a point that he does go athletics, but it's very rare that he doesn't want to go anyway though, but I think it's something I would make him do.

Findings from Analysis of Cross Group Themes

Analysis of cross group themes revealed evidence of three threads across all four respondents' accounts:

Theme1: Agency

The respondents showed differing levels of internal/external locus of control and sense of agency in their accounts. As described above Martine's account demonstrated an external locus of control in her sense of obligation to be a certain way as a parent. Fran's account demonstrated an increasing sense of control in her parenting choices. She attributed this to reflecting on previous parenting experience as well as information she had accessed.

Alice's account demonstrated fluctuating levels of control over circumstances with an emphasis on an internal locus of control and strong sense of agency to recover previous lifestyle as these two extracts show:

> It was difficult, embarrassing really I mean, I had a good job I owned my own home, I was a single parent. Things was quite good in my life until I met my ex-partner – the father of my two eldest - er two youngest sorry. So it was that really that impacted on my life, and obviously the way I've dealt, I have to take responsibility for it you know, but I didn't make very good decisions, choices.

> So work to be able to find work, my targets that I don't currently have which I want is, that sounds really like I've not got to that place quite yet that I want to be, is because I'm not in employment or some form of education, and I'm not yet driving. Until those two things are done, then I'll be like yeah that's it done it…So I'm just sort of pursuing that really.

Rebecca's account demonstrated changing levels of control depending on the child's responses:

But she seems more of a textbook baby…Whereas if she cries we just give her a nappy change, if she's still crying feed her, if she's still crying it's definitely her sleep. Whereas the last one did cry for no reason, 'cause I think we still did that with him, from memory, but he just still cried.

Theme 2: Parental Legacy

Although this was not a strong theme across participants I felt it could be identified as all the respondents viewed parents as having a lasting influence on their children, although for some this was minimal in comparison with influences from outside the family.

Resp-ondent	Parental Influence Example Quotation	Outside Influence Example quotation
Martine	Obviously your influence at home means, carries something…But he goes out the door and thinks I'd better not do that	It's almost like as soon as they start School you lose [unintelligible]. They are then wildly influenced by everything else as well
Fran	Now it's very much her and parenting and getting it right, 'cause I've kind of got my son to look at, and it's like I'm responsible for where she could end up herself.	Their influences are more from the outside now. Unfortunately. I have less say on - like I've hardly seen my son and all his influences are from his peers. And whatever he does in his day. And I feel I have no say, I mean he is 18, he's an adult
Alice	I wouldn't want to see my daughters putting up with that sort of behaviour [domestic abuse]. And even things when they go to school – to be confident but that's because of me being bullied – I wouldn't want that, I guess your own experiences is what you instil in your children.	N/A
Rebecca	I think it's just guiding him in his life style has been the important bit for us, I think socialise nicely with others yeah.	'Cause he is a follower, so I'm sort of aware of that, so that's why I want to keep him more into sport, 'cause he can get into trouble at school. Again it's not 'cause he's naughty, he just follows and gets into trouble.

Table 1: Respondents' views on parental and outside influences

<u>Theme 3: Identity</u>

Identity had initially been identified as a strong theme for 3 of the respondents and as such has been discussed above. Further analysis of cross group themes revealed identity as a theme for the fourth, Rebecca. Her experience of being a parent was intertwined with her identity as an active person perpetuating an active lifestyle for her children as these two quotations suggest:

We're very active; I just can't wait till I can get back to being active really

I am a swimmer

The identity of her children as active and part of her role as a parent is to help them find their sporting niche:

He won a few gold medals again last weekend, but yes well I'll definitely keep him to athletics now – he's just good at it. Got to find something for this one now.

For Rebecca the sporty construct is a positive one which she associates with a healthy lifestyle:

But the sporty kids that I've known, they don't seem to take drugs or smoke or anything like that.

The Figure below summarises the theme of identity for each of the 4 respondents.
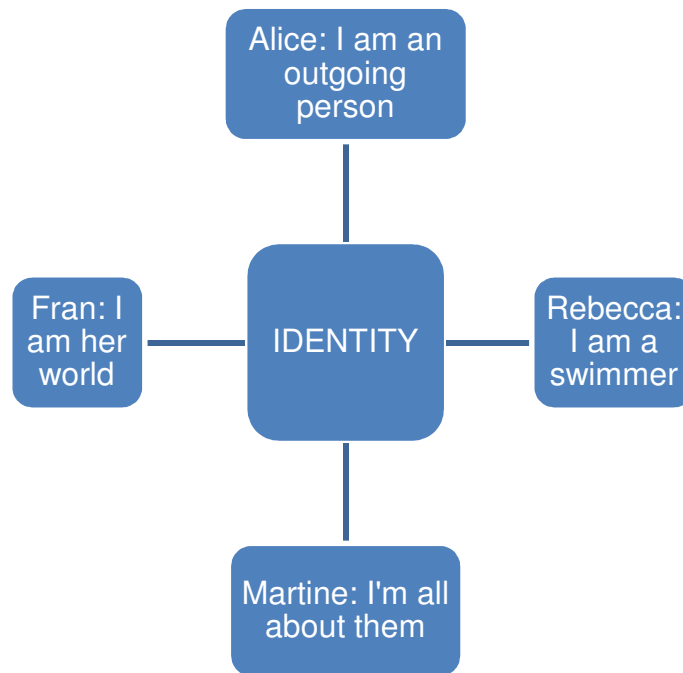
Summary of cross group identity themes

12. Discussion of Paper 1 Findings

In this section I discuss how the findings address each of the research questions in turn and consider the implications in the light of the literature.

Research Question 1: What are the perceptions of the role of parent held by parents of early years children in a Children's Centre in a city in the south of England?

Findings from both the focus group and semi-structured interviews revealed that these parents identified at least one of three main areas of the parenting role as being important to them:

- Protection
- Socialisation
- Independence

Each parent emphasised an aspect of parenting that resonated with their central concerns. Analysis of the semi structured interview data revealed that these parents considered that they had some lasting influence on their children

but that that influence was balanced with child autonomy and shared with outside influences particularly from peers and the media. It seems from these findings that these parents do not hold themselves responsible for child outcomes in contrast to a cultural perspective of parental responsibility suggested by Furedi (2009). However, there is an echo of the finding by Bloomfield et al (2005) that expectations of others matter to parents. In both Martine's and Rebecca's accounts, and in the focus group findings, education and health professionals added to parents' stress by judgmental attitudes. These attitudes appear to come from professionals' constructs around child development. The difficulty arises when these constructs differ from those held by parents, and is exacerbated by insensitive communication. In view of the power imbalance between parent and professional these constructs amount to a dominant discourse. The parents in our study differed in their approaches to the dominant discourse choosing either to follow their own values (Alice and Rebecca); or to use professionals in their process of synthesising knowledge and experience to form their own values; or to reluctantly assent to it. These findings suggest that, although these parents do not view themselves as wholly responsible for child outcomes, they do feel judged by some professionals. This resonates with concerns from Furedi (2009) regarding a culture of blame towards parents. The implications are twofold:

- Firstly, parents may feel undermined in their role and consequently overburdened, as it seems Martine was experiencing.
- Secondly, attention from policy makers may be focused on parenting skills at the expense of making life better for families in terms of employment, housing and community facilities, as suggested by Wall (2010).

Research Question 2: What are these parents' perceptions of support for the role of parent?

Using the protocol devised by Palmer et al (2010) proved to be a worthwhile exercise in eliciting the contextualised views of existing group members to

answer the second research question. The main finding was that the group support available in the area was experienced very differently by parents according to their current social needs. Two parents found a busy group intimidating and preferred the quieter group. The third parent was able to access the group using her social skills and "cultural capital" in the form of an existing social network in the neighbourhood. At the Children's Centre staff reported that part of their role was befriending and supporting parents to access provision. This may have been a further contributor, in addition to the quiet nature of the group, which supported the two parents to engage with it. It may be that the Green Street group which they found intimidating, which included a health visitor clinic, would have benefited from staff to support the social facilitation that might have helped to put these parents at their ease. Part of the reason for one parent finding the group off-putting was personal remarks made by a health visitor. This has implications for training for early years professionals which might benefit from an increased emphasis on interpersonal skills including raising awareness of how their communication can affect parents' confidence and access to community facilities, as well as exploring constructs and attitudes held towards parents.

Ecological Perspective

Also with regard to the second research question, findings from the focus group and from Alice and Rebecca's accounts highlight the importance of ecological support as recommended by Puckering (2009). Children's Centre provision including programmes on domestic abuse and financial matters and opportunities to mentor others had helped Alice to "rehabilitate" herself as she describes it following a "concoction" of negative circumstances, impacting on both herself and her children's current and future lives. Access to free community facilities within walking distance, and extended family and friends in the locality were cited as having a positive impact in Rebecca's parenting role. Martine accessed reasonably priced local activities for her children, and Fran used the Children's Centre provision as a source of information.

In addition to the importance of ecological support through the Children's Centre, the findings suggest that other neighbourhood ecological support is important to these respondents in their parenting role. For example the importance of employment was another key finding. For Alice work had been a source of status and income and the loss had impacted negatively on her parenting ability. She now viewed Children's Centre provision as helping her in her journey back into education and employment. For Rebecca working locally in the leisure industry gave her whole family the opportunity to access free sporting facilities and contribute to her aims of finding a positive peer group and healthy lifestyle for her children. Fran had used child development courses through her work in outdoor education to inform her parenting choices. Martine did not include any reference to the topic of work in her account. I cannot therefore comment on her views on the subject except to assume that it was not a central concern for her in relation to her role as a parent.

Social Support

Peer support was a primary concern for the focus group and for three of the individual respondents. This aspect will be pursued in Paper 2 which focuses on parents' experiences of a group parenting programme. For Fran the social support was for reassurance around parenting matters and linked to her quest for information. For the focus group members the support appeared to be around the need for friendship. For Alice and Rebecca the support was specifically to give them the opportunity to relate to their peer group and take their focus off their preschool children. This is an interesting finding as it appears to be contradictory to the intensive parenting discourse which involves interaction between parent and child (Wall, 2010). In Wall's study the parents were interacting intensively with their preschool children in preference to their own need for space or stimulation. I suggest that in my study the parents were seeking to strike a balance between their own and their children's social needs by promoting peer interaction for both themselves and their children, at the same time as seeking some respite from being in the sole company of their children. A sense of being "stuck in the house on my own" as Rebecca phrased it, is consistent with findings by Bloomfield et al (2005) that the young mothers

in their study felt bored and isolated at home with their small children and without other adult company.

Lupton (2000) found that some mothers expressed reluctance to voice this view in case it resulted in disapproval. In my study Alice and Rebecca did not appear to feel prohibited in this way. Both appeared to view community facilities as a solution to social isolation, perceiving group support as beneficial for their children's social development as well as their own interaction needs. The content of the Children's Centre provision was less important for them both than the social benefits it afforded, a finding which helps to clarify support needs as suggested by Nystrom and Ohrling (2004). For example Alice becomes a breastfeeding mentor in order "to get back into the world" and Rebecca accesses the breastfeeding support group less for the content and more "for someone to talk to". This has implications for the programming of Children's Centre provision to meet the needs of users for their own and their child's peer support as well as information seeking and opportunities for community engagement and personal development. The omission of any reference to social support in Martine's account raises questions about whether Martine was accessing the Children's Centre group primarily for her preschool child and not for herself. However this is an area which I did not probe at the time and can only remain speculative.

Teenage parents

Both Fran and Rebecca allude to their teenage parenting years as being a time when they benefited from support from their own parents and had little access to community support. Barriers to community involvement were cited as either lack of awareness or cultural unacceptability. This has implications for provision for teenage parents. There is currently a group at the Children's Centre for young parents. It would be a useful context in which to explore what sort of support would be valued by young parents.

Research Question 3: How do these parents' experiences reflect the intensive parenting discourse identified by Wall (2010)?

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In relation to the third research question, each of the four respondents revealed a different level of engagement with the intensive parenting discourse (Wall, 2010):

- For Alice there is no evidence that she had been influenced by such a discourse despite time spent in the assessment centre. Alice appears to have a strong sense of purpose in her role as a parent in engendering independence and assertiveness in her children, drawing on her own experience and values.

- For Martine there does appear to be an uneasy engagement with the intensive parenting discourse. She does not allude to brain development but does protest at the expectation that she is to act as teacher to her children and demonstrates how this unwanted role undermines her confidence. In addition Martine appears to be oppressed by a sense of there being a dominant discourse around parenting emanating from school citing language as the very thing that she has to be careful about. Martine differs from the Ontario women in Wall's study who appeared to agree with the discourse (Wall, 2010). Martine acknowledges it and complies with it, but does not appear to have made it her own. This sense of obligation appears to be contributing to parenting stress for her. In addition she does not appear to have a sense of self-efficacy ("I'm not very good at teaching"). This low level of self-efficacy may, according to Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1999), be contributing to a low sense of agency.

- Fran has synthesised her knowledge of child development with her experience to come to her own positive engagement with the intensive parenting discourse. She does not allude to brain development or stimulation. Fran's suggestion of intensive parenting is found in her references to attachment and appears to be something she uses to add meaning to parenting practices

such as cuddling her baby. Reflection in this way appears to have enhanced Fran's enjoyment of parenting the second time around.

- For Rebecca there is perhaps a hint of the intensive parenting discourse. Like Fran, she alludes to attachment and bonding with her child. On the whole, Rebecca's view of being a parent is linked to guiding her children in their social world. Keeping her children "out of trouble" is an important goal and a key reason for involving them in sport. This finding may reflect the relative deprivation of the area in which the research takes place. Neighbourhood effects are important for Rebecca (who seeks to steer her children away from negative peer behaviour) and for Alice (who seeks to equip her children with assertiveness skills to stand up to negative peer behaviour). This may help to illuminate why the brain development discourse has not filtered through to this locality but was attractive to the professional Ontario women in Wall (2010) whose affluence I suggest may have buffered them from the need to concern themselves with keeping their children safe from negative neighbourhood influences (Kohen, Leventhal, Dahinten & McIntosh, 2008).

Identity

Linked to the issue of the intensive parenting discourse are the findings on identity which demonstrated that two parents present their main identity as integral to their children: Martine: "I'm all about them" and Fran: "I am her world". Analysis of the same two parents' accounts revealed some evidence of engagement with the intensive parenting discourse. Further research could usefully investigate the contribution of their strong identification with parenting to their interest in the intensive parenting discourse. It could also consider how involvement with such a discourse may have influenced their identifying themselves strongly with their children's lives. For the other two parents the emphasis appeared to be reversed: the children identifying with the parents' lives with the parental aim of replicating their strengths in their children: Alice: "I

am a sociable person" and Rebecca: "I am a swimmer". An exploration of how their strong identities may have made them impervious to the intensive parenting discourse would serve to inform the debate about the increasing professionalisation of parenthood (Ramaekers, 2011).

In summary, with regard to the third research question, there is no evidence in these parents' accounts of an intensive parenting discourse based on brain development. There is perhaps some evidence of an engagement with an intensive parenting discourse based on attachment theory. Surprisingly a specific study was referred to which I believe to be Harlow (1959). A further finding was that neighbourhood effects were important, either as influences over which parents had no control, or as providing a role for parents in actively equipping their children to deal with either by finding a positive peer group, or by learning assertiveness skills. There is evidence to support Rebecca's view that engaging with a negative peer group could lead her children into antisocial behaviour they would be unlikely to commit on their own (Hartup, 1996).

Limitations

One limitation of this study has been the lack of fathers in a study that was meant to be about parents generally not exclusively mothers. That the respondents were all women reflects the make-up of the Children's Centre group, which has occasional attendance from fathers but, as group members informed me in my field research, usually in the company of female partners. There is a men's toddler group within the area but the scope of this study did not permit my using two groups for samples. The lack of men also reflects the current gender imbalance in caring for young children (Wall, 2010). I acknowledge this but do not consider that there is room to pursue this issue within the remit of this study.

Another limitation has been the self-selecting nature of the participants. This study is idiographic in nature and not seeking to be representative so for the purpose of generalisability it is not a problem to have a self-selecting sample. However one implication that should be borne in mind is that these parents may

have volunteered to take part in the study because they were highly interested in issues around parenting and therefore more engaged with an intensive parenting discourse. Another consequence of this self-selecting sample is that it does not explore the experiences of so called hard to reach parents whose voice is not heard in a parent blaming culture. I take a small step to remedy this in Paper 2 which includes the experiences of a parent who attended a parenting programme under obligation from Social Services.

13. <u>Conclusion to Paper 1</u>

The parents interviewed individually in this study have identified shared concerns with agency, parental legacy and identity. It was notable that the two respondents who had strong identities as parents were the more engaged with the intensive parenting discourse. The respondent who engaged the more positively with it had a strong sense of agency and used psychological knowledge to fit her values as a parent. The woman who appeared to be the more oppressed by it appeared to have a low sense of agency as a parent. The other two women who barely engaged with it had a strong sense of agency as well as a strong sense of identity outside of being a parent and fit their children into their lifestyle to benefit both children and parent. It would be interesting to carry out further research to understand better how the identity and engagement with the intensive parenting discourse influenced each other.

One implication of this for educational psychologists is that they should communicate psychological theory in a way that makes it clear that it is a tool for parents to use if they wish rather than an imperative. Another implication is for educational psychologists working with parents to support them to develop their agency for example through the use of personal construct psychology in consultation.

An implication drawn from the focus group data is that educational psychologists, and other professionals working with parents such as teachers

and health visitors, could support parents by being aware of how their attitudes can affect parents and seek to develop a non-judgemental stance.

A further implication for services for parents of young children is for staff to provide social facilitation to meet the needs of parents who may be less confident in large groups of local people who may already know each other well. This befriending service is already a key feature of Children's Centres, but from this study it was revealed that it was not the case in a toddler group attached to a health visitor clinic.

In conclusion this idiographic study has revealed the concerns of a group of parents who access a Children's Centre in an inner city area of deprivation. These include the need for social support and ecological support including satisfying work and the opportunity to build a strong sense of self. Though the findings are not generalisable to the whole population of children centre users the study can be used as a basis for further research and discussion into prioritising opportunities for parents to develop satisfying lives in which to incorporate their parenting, as opposed to focusing solely on the parenting skills.

14. <u>References Paper 1</u>

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15. <u>Abstract for Paper 2</u>

This exploratory study is set within the context of a national policy that aims to normalise parent training and increase parenting skills in order to improve children's life chances (DfE, 2012; Field, 2010). The local context is a city in the South of England where the Incredible Years (IY) parent training programme (Webster-Stratton, 2004) has been delivered since 2009. There is robust evidence of improved parent and child outcomes from the IY (Lindsay et al, 2008). In this city the IY is offered as both a universal and targeted service with participants either self-nominating or being nominated by involved professionals. This study addresses a gap in the research for process studies to illuminate how change came about for parents on the IY (Lindsay et al, 2008). It also builds on research by Miller and Sambell (2003) into how parents perceive parenting support. A 14 week IY programme was attended by the researcher to ensure prolonged engagement with participants. Semi structured interviews were conducted with a purposive sample of participants during and on completion of the IY course. Semi structured interviews were also conducted following the course with the two facilitators to add another perspective and see how they reflected parents' experiences. Data were analysed following a procedure for IPA outlined by Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009). Findings revealed that the group setting was both a challenge to access and a source of peer support. Leader qualities emerged as essential for parental engagement. This was reflected in facilitators' accounts and underpinned by their non-judgmental ethos. Within this accepting group setting with approachable leaders parents' accounts suggest that change had come about for them through experiential learning putting strategies into practice in their own contexts with opportunities to reflect in group discussion. Issues are raised regarding Social Services nominations and constructs around discipline. Implications are drawn for practice and the role of the EP. Further research directions are suggested.

16. **Introduction and Selected literature – Paper 2**

This is the second of two papers which explores the experiences of early years parents accessing Children's Centre support for the role. Paper 1 focuses on the perceptions of parents accessing universal Children's Centre support for the role. This study goes on to focus on the experiences of parents who are accessing formal parenting support in the form of a 14 week parent training programme. In this section I present some key points arising from selected literature in order to form a rationale for the study. A fuller literature review is included in Appendix 6

The national context

Improvements in parenting skills are linked to improvements in pro social behaviour and academic achievement (Steinberg, Lamborn, Dornbusch & Darling, 1992). In 2005 the Respect Task Force was developed by the Labour government to tackle antisocial behaviour. It asserted that "through strengthening parents' skills and taking preventative action to reduce anti-social behaviour we will strengthen communities." (Respect, 2006, p.6). As a result of the initiative specialist parenting practitioners were appointed to train members of the children's workforce (including parent support advisers, health visitors, social workers, clinical and educational psychologists) to deliver parent training programmes. Most recently, a scheme is being trialled in Camden, High Peak, Derbyshire, and Middlesbrough offering free parenting classes to parents of children under 5. They can access these through vouchers available from Boots the Chemist or from early years professionals and Children's Centres (DfE, 2012).

Parenting support has been identified as a key factor in reducing child poverty by promoting resilience in children and families (Barlow, Kirkpatrick, Wood, Ball and Stewart-Brown, 2007). This gives psychology services an opportunity to make an impact on community improvement. However Puckering (2009) calls for parenting support to be delivered as part of a concerted approach to tackle

poverty through support for finances, employment, housing, neighbourhood, health and education.

In 2010 the Coalition Government commissioned an Independent Review of Poverty and Life Chances (Field, 2010). The Review acknowledged the stigma associated with parenting classes and calls for a renewed emphasis on improving the skills of parents with low parenting skills through normalising parent training, for example, by, including aspects of parenting education in the secondary school curriculum. This is consistent with recommendations by Scott and Dadds (2009) that there should be no element of judgment or blame in parenting programmes. Arthur (2005) also emphasizes the importance of parenting classes being voluntary rather than as part of a Parenting Order with punitive overtones.

The local context

This research study takes place in a city in the South of England. Since 2009 parents of early years children in this area have had access to the Incredible Years (IY) Basic parenting programme to promote positive parenting approaches. The IY programme takes a collaborative approach and is intended to be used in either a targeted or a universal way (Webster-Stratton, 2004). In this context it is used in both, with parents either nominating themselves or being nominated by an involved professional.

The call for process studies

There is robust evidence for the effectiveness of the IY programme (Lindsay, Davies, Band, Cullen, Strand, Hasluck, Evans & Stewart-Brown, 2008). However, Lindsay et al (2008) identify a gap in the research with regard to process studies exploring how elements of the programmes relate to the course outcomes. The ultimate aim of these will be to understand how best to replicate and develop successful practice in the UK context. For example they suggest that further research is needed to untangle facilitators' personal qualities and previous experience from interpersonal skills. Scott, Carby and Rendu (2008)

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found that facilitator skill had a strong impact on child outcomes, and those that displayed the highest skill levels were mental health professionals, nurses, those who had at least 6 months experience delivering the IY programme, and those who had pursued IY accreditation. The authors suggest that the high skill levels of these last two groups could be linked to the supervision arrangements integral to the IY programme, as well as the high motivation to develop skill of those who had chosen to pursue accreditation

The IY programme

The content of the Incredible Years series has its psychological roots in Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1986; Webster-Stratton, 2004). Its central premise is that the child learns appropriate social skills from significant adults modelling desirable behaviour and reinforcing them through attention and positive commentary. Social Learning Theory is also the basis of two other parenting programmes being rolled out in the UK, the Triple P – Positive Parenting Program (Sanders, Markie-Dadds & Turner, 2003) and Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities (SFSC) (Steele, Marigna, Tello & Johnston, 2000). Parent and child outcomes were comparably high for all 3 programmes in terms of parents' mental health; their self-construct as parents; their confidence in their parenting skills and their perceptions of their children's behaviour (Lindsay et al, 2008).

Models of parenting support

From their analysis of focus group interviews with 37 parents reflecting on their reasons for engaging with a variety of types of provision, Miller and Sambell (2003) produced three models of parenting support characterised by different parental requirements:

1. **The Dispensing Model** when knowledge is sought as to how to change child's behaviour.
2. **The Relating Model:** when the emotional and peer support element of parenting groups is valued.

3. **The Reflecting Model:** when questioning why certain behaviours are happening.

The authors make it clear that these models of parenting support are not to be ascribed to individual parents' perceptions. Rather, they see them as context dependent models which individuals may make use of at different times. These models can be a useful way of viewing the IY programme and how it might meet the needs of a group of parents each with subtly different needs at the time of attending the programme. Thematic analysis of qualitative data from parents pre and post completion of the IY programme in the South of England revealed that they had entered the programme largely for reasons concerned with seeking solutions to problems they reported with their children's behaviour (Davis and McAuley, 2008). This can be linked to the dispensing model of parenting support (Miller and Sambell, 2003). Following the IY programme, these parents' accounts of how they had benefited from the IY also had references to peer support and considering reasons behind their children's behaviour (Davis and McAuley, 2008). These can be respectively allied to the relating and reflecting models of parenting support (Miller and Sambell, 2003).

Since its publication Miller and Sambell (2003) has been cited in a number of peer reviewed papers, largely with reference to their findings regarding what parents' valued in parenting support and how these should inform the ideology of parenting groups. For example, the importance of enabling parents to be reflective problem-solvers (Bloomfield et al, 2004); the importance of promoting parental empowerment and confidence (Bloomfield & Kendall, 2007); the importance of leaders who could facilitate peer problem-solving, and a sense of being valued (Zeedyk, Werritty and Riach (2008).

Holt (2010) cites Miller and Sambell (2003) with reference to their findings that parents valued the increased peer support they had gained from parenting groups. Her study is critical of how such positive research findings can be employed to support the argument for compulsory attendance at parenting programmes. Holt notes that Miller and Sambell's research had been

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undertaken with parents who had accessed parenting support in a voluntary capacity. My search of the literature suggests that my study is the first to use Miller and Sambell's models of parenting support as a lens through which to view participants' accounts of their reasons for accessing the IY course and their experiences of it. In doing so I hope to be able to heed Holt's caution regarding the use or abuse of their findings.

Rationale and Research Aims

The above review of the literature has identified a need for different levels of parenting support and for process studies in order to illuminate how change comes about for parents in the evidence based parenting programmes (Lindsay et al, 2008). It has also identified different ways in which parents might perceive and access parenting support (Miller & Sambell, 2003). The rationale for this study is to illuminate our understanding of how parents perceive parenting support and how any reported change comes about for them. This will contribute to a better understanding locally of the processes which support parents and how to improve them. The aim of this study is to explore parents' perceptions of their experiences of the IY and the meaning it holds for them.

In order to better understand the processes at work in the IY programme I wanted to include the perspective of the facilitators whose skill has been identified as a factor in positive child outcomes (Scott, Carby & Rendu, 2008). Lyndsay et al (2008) call for process studies regarding facilitator skill, in particular untangling personal qualities and previous experience from interpersonal skills. I sought to contribute to this by illuminating the role of the facilitator by eliciting their view of their lived experience of the IY programme from their perspective of delivering it.

Research Questions

The primary research question for Paper 2 is:

1. What are the perceptions of parents on an IY course of how change came about for them?

This is an open question, in keeping with IPA's concern with people's understanding of their lived experience (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). They suggest that, to help define the answer, it can be helpful to identify steps along the way. I have identified the following steps towards answering this research question:

Step 1:   *Describe the goals of the parents in attending the programme.*

Step 2:   *Describe the key features of the programme that parents identify.*

Step 3:   *Describe the key changes to thoughts, feelings and actions that parents identify in themselves over the course of the programme.*

Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) also suggest that, once interpretation of the participant's account has been made, a second level research question can be posed which relates to theory. I have therefore chosen a secondary research question:

2. How do parents' experiences of the IY programme relate to the Dispensing, Relating and Reflecting models of parenting support identified by Miller and Sambell (2003)?

My third research question adds the perspective of the facilitator:

3. What are the perceptions of facilitators on their lived experience of delivering the IY course?

Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) note that multi-perspectival designs are a recent development within IPA. One such study is by Kam and Midgley (2006) in the context of a Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS) team. They gained a multi-disciplinary perspective from within the team on the process of deciding when to refer a child for individual psychotherapy. They interviewed 5 members of the team each with a different professional discipline and status to gain a multifaceted view of a shared experience of the decision making process. Another multi-perspectival IPA design is Clare (2002) whose study of how people cope within the early stages of Alzheimer's disease elicits accounts from both the people with the diagnosis, and their partners. I view this as distinct from triangulation i.e. offering another perspective to add validity (Robson,

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2002). In IPA triangulation is not a requirement since it sets out to capture *subjective* lived experience. Instead of triangulation in that sense, I see the multi-perspectival approach as an opportunity to add another facet to our understanding of the *shared* experience of the phenomenon in question. Rather than losing the idiographic nature of IPA, I consider that a multi-perspectival approach can enhance the study in view of the importance of the concept of relatedness in IPA (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). I do this in my study by eliciting the leaders' perspective in order to illuminate what was going on in the IY group.

17.   <u>Methodology and Design of Paper 2</u>

My choice of IPA for this study is based on its strengths as a tool for illuminating participants' experiences and therefore adding to our understanding of the process by which parents received support. IPA gives participants the opportunity to describe their experiences both on the course and at home trying out the strategies they are learning. Their accounts show how they make sense of their experiences of the phenomenon in question i.e. the IY course. I then bring my interpretation to their meaning. IPA is also suited to the group nature of the IY since an important aspect of phenomenology is relatedness since we inhabit a social world (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009).

The context of the research is a 14 week IY course held at a Children's Centre in a city in the South of England. The course was delivered by an educational psychologist as lead facilitator and a parent support worker as co-facilitator. I attended the course each week to make field notes and build a rapport with participants to ensure a deep and prolonged engagement with them, a key feature of IPA in order to elicit data rich enough for analysis (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009).

Participants were the two facilitators and four members of the IY group of ten parents. This yielded a reasonably homogeneous sample of parents in that all were local parents of children in the 3-9 age range whose behaviour they

experienced as challenging. This constitutes a purposive sample consistent with IPA in that it seeks to understand the experiences of a specific group in a particular set of circumstances rather than focus on a sample which is held to be representative of an entire population (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). My selection of participants from the group can be described as opportunistic sampling (Robson, 2002) since my final 4 participants were those members of the group who were willing and able to set aside time to talk at length about their experiences. All the other group members had expressed an initial willingness to participate in my research (and two had taken part in initial interviews) but in practice there were barriers to actually meeting up following the course and I did not persist since I wanted to maintain my ethical practice of not making them feel obliged to participate. Consequently my participants can be deemed to be those with the most to say, either positive or negative, about the IY and perhaps the strongest views and opinions. Since this is not an evaluation requiring a representative sample I do not view this as a problem but it is important to be aware of the fact that my participants were the most willing and able to engage with me with regard to their experiences of the IY. Barriers to participation may have included such factors as constraints of time or reluctance to take part in a research project. As I reflect on possible reasons why some group members did not engage, I think that a rapport had not been built up between myself and them, and this I think was partly due to my respecting their right not to participate and deliberate avoidance of the "hard sell". I felt more at liberty to build a rapport with the 4 participants who were already enthusiastic and committed to taking part in my research.

I have chosen to gain the facilitators' perspective in order to yield a more rounded description of the IY experience. This multi-perspective exploration is characteristic of some IPA studies (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009).

Semi structured interviews

Semi structured interviews were conducted with parents a few weeks into the course to gain their views of their experience of the course so far. Further semi

structured interviews were conducted on completion of the course to elicit their perspective on their experience of the whole programme.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the facilitators following the IY course in order to explore their experiences of delivering the course. In these interviews I asked them to describe:

•   How they came to be delivering the IY programme.

•   What they do in their role as facilitator

•   A good moment on this particular IY course.

•   A moment on the IY course that they felt did not go so well.

•   Their style as facilitator.

Data Analysis

The interviews were digitally sound recorded and transcribed verbatim. The data were analysed following the steps outlined by Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009):

•   Reading and re-reading

•   Initial noting of exploratory comments

•   Developing emergent themes

•   Moving to the next case

•   Looking for patterns across cases

This process enabled me to produce a high level of interpretation of the meaning which their experience holds for participants, as expressed through their account (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009).

Ethical considerations

The same ethical considerations as for Paper 1 were applied to Paper 2. In addition, for Paper 2, consideration was given to the IY group and ensuring that they understood that if they chose not to take part in my research, it would not affect their successful completion of the IY programme. This was particularly

important for those group members who had been nominated by Social Services to attend the IY. In addition, I made it clear that if any member of the IY group was not comfortable with me attending the group as researcher, then I would find an alternative IY group in which to carry out my research.

As for Paper 1 pseudonyms are used throughout the study to preserve the anonymity of parents and settings. In order to distinguish the course facilitators from parent respondents and emphasise their professional roles they are known throughout the study as F1 (the lead facilitator) and F2 (the co-facilitator). I have chosen to keep the gender of the leaders ambiguous in order to preserve their anonymity. Both leaders came from a very small team whose members delivered the IY programme and I considered that revealing their gender would enable them to be identified and that this would be inconsistent with my assurances of anonymity. One limitation of this choice is that I am unable to include the leaders in describing the gender make-up of the group. This means a lost opportunity to reflect on how the leaders' gender may have affected individuals and the group as a whole. For example an all-female leadership pair may have left the men in the group feeling unrepresented and without a male role model; a mixed gender pairing might offer balance but if the lead facilitator had been male it would have raised issues of power with a predominantly female group, as would an all-male leadership pair. It would have been useful to reflect on these issues but I prioritised anonymity as it was important to me for the leaders to feel reassured that their anonymity was preserved and that they could speak freely in view of their rather exposed position as the only one of their kind in the group i.e. either Lead Facilitator or Co-Facilitator, rather than one of a number of parents.

18. Findings for Paper 2

Cross Group themes

In this section I present the themes that were common across the group and show how these themes were reflected in the facilitators' accounts. All four parent respondents shared themes relating to the following central concerns:

• change

• peer group setting

• strategies

• leader qualities

An overview of the themes which were common across the whole group of parents is presented in Table 2   which also shows how some individual themes were echoed in other accounts. The facilitator themes are also tabulated to show how they reflect parents' themes and are also summarised in the main body of the text. Quotations are given as evidence of each theme in the master table of group themes in Appendix 5

Overview of group themes

	Change	Group setting	Applying Strategies to own context	Leaders	Journey metaphor	Reflection/ Cognitive approach	Constructs around discipline	Wellbeing	Financial considerations	Construct of parenting course
Charlotte	Difference in child and parent	Challenge to access Learn from others	Reflection on strategies	Approachability key to engagement		Reflection in action				"It's not a parenting course"
Jess	More peer support	Challenge to access Shared experience	Applying strategies	Intuitive 1:1 support				Physical and mental health problems	Financial considerations central concern	
Kate	Persevere to bring about change	Challenge to access Shared experience	Understanding psychology of strategies	Listening Optimistic	Seeking change of direction for child		Time out not a punishment			
Rachel	Difference in child and parent	Challenge to access Shared experience	Adapting strategies	Key to engagement Nice	On the right path	Reflection in action	Differing construct from school re discipline			
F1	Making a difference to families Parents' change in thinking	Positive challenge of delivering to group	Parents attributing change to strategies	Attitude Aim =Retention Actions		Reframing Reflection in action		Mountain metaphor: Aware of complex issues faced by some parents	Mountain metaphor: Aware of complex issues faced by some parents	
F2	Parents improving children's lives	Catering for group needs	Reinforcing strategies	Ethos Aim=Retention Actions	Some parents a little bit lost					

1

Table 2: Overview of group themes

The parent respondents all shared the theme of change but had differences in terms of what had changed. Following a step by step approach to answering my first research question (i.e. How do parents on an IY course perceive how change has come about for them?) I will begin by describing respondents' goals in attending the IY. Their stated goals from the start of the IY programme are tabulated below:

Participant	Goal for parent	Goal for child
Charlotte	New strategies; become calmer	Self-regulate his emotions
Jess	Calmer, better bond with child, confidence, self esteem	Calmer, be a 4 year old, happier
Kate	Different strategies to encourage child	Able to accept family routine, accept "no", get the best out of child
Rachel	Stronger, able to cope with emotions, stick to guns	Calmer child and happier

Table 3: Goals for IY course elicited from participants by facilitators in Session 1

Kate's account revealed that she was still working on her goal for her child on completion of the IY programme. She was cautiously optimistic that her new way of doing things would bring about the change she wanted to see in her child's behaviour:

> I'm still working on that [initial goals]…I think if I keep with doing the special time and the sticker charts, the reward charts and that, then, then I think if that, I think she'll come round eventually to erm obviously be able to understand that certain things are more acceptable.

Jess reported a change in terms of increased partnership in parenting approaches now that her partner was attending the course with her:

It's been a lot easier now that [partner]'s on board and he knows what he's doing now.

She reported some changes in her child in response to the strategies they had put in place, for example calming himself by using the rocket technique which had been modelled in one of the video clips (Jess Int 1: l. 14). With regard to her goals for herself, Jess's account (as seen in her unique theme of wellbeing summarised in Appendix 6) contained several references to fluctuating moods and progress and suggests a different perspective from that of the facilitators:

F2 and that said my confidence and self-esteem had gone up but - 'cause I said it was down and they said no it's come right up.

Charlotte and Rachel reported changes to their ways of doing and thinking about things, and linked this to a change in their children's behaviour. For example, Charlotte had changed her concept of play sessions with her child:

It's child focused more than it is just sat down playing… I mean there is a big difference in the way we do it… And he really responded well.

Rachel reported a change in her own and her son's feelings which appeared to be linked to changed actions which came about from a new way of thinking:

I think for me it's going back to the praise again. It really has made the difference. Knowing to praise everything because he's happier 'cause I'm not nagging all the time; I'm happier 'cause I'm not nagging all the time so it's not all negative.

In order to address my second research question (i.e. How do parents' experiences of the IY programme relate to the Dispending, Relating and Reflecting models of parenting support identified by Miller and Sambell (2003)?) I applied a second level of analysis to the theme of change. This revealed that the parents' accounts can be matched to the different areas delineated in Miller and Sambell's (2003) models of parenting support. I therefore present the findings on the theme of change under headings from each model of parenting support in which, according to Miller and Sambell (2003), parents access parent support asking one of three types of question:

a) The dispensing model (What can I do to change my child?)

Kate, Charlotte and Rachel had come to the course asking this question. Although Jess expressed similar goals to the others in Session 1 her account revealed that she had not come accessed the course for the purpose of answering this question, but rather in response to other people's goals for her. Charlotte and Rachel found the strategies immediately effective and appeared to extend their view of the IY to include the reflecting model. Kate's account revealed that fine-tuning the IY strategies remained important to her at the end of the course:

> Now I guess I've learned different ways of doing things so it's going to benefit her. Erm and like I feel like, I don't know like, yeah I suppose it's just kind of different strategies, just kind of deal with things in different ways like…'cause obviously her not listening and things like that, and the nagging, with me nagging her all the time together like and with her sticker chart and her trying to do it.

This was reflected in F2's view of why some parents accessed the course:

> Things aren't going well at the moment, little Johnny is playing up, what have you got of the Incredible Years? It is just a reinforcing parenting skills, a new ethos, just something news for you to try

The dispensing model was also reflected in F1's satisfaction at how the strategies can make a difference for families:

> When they say my child has gone to bed this week and I've actually had some sleep, you know it work's and that's lovely.

b) The relating model (How do I feel about this situation?)

Rachel and Kate appeared to have felt better as a result of peer and leader support and might well view the IY in terms of the relating model in addition to other aspects. Jess was asking this question, but not in relation to her experiences of child behaviour problems. The emotional support that Jess valued was from peers who knew how it felt to have Social Services involvement and experience mental health problems:

The fact that I'm not the only one I realised [with] depression and with other people on your back.

This had made a difference for Jess in addition to increased support from her partner in managing the children's behaviour:

We do more things together now…Well 'cause we was talking more and he actually could see what was wrong.

c)   The reflecting model (Why is this happening?)

Charlotte and Rachel's individual themes (see Appendix 4) suggest that they were asking this question. Charlotte had been reflecting on reasons for her son's running away on shopping trips. Rachel had been reflecting on the differing approaches between IY and school and her son's responses to them. Both women had come to the IY expressly for the dispensing model but appeared to bring to it their own reflective stance and find that it resonated with them and caused them to reflect further. I would suggest that accessing the course at this level contributed to these two parents finding more satisfaction in the course compared to the other two parent respondents.

The reflecting model is echoed in F1's account in which their psychological perspective appears to play a part in both their facilitation of parents to reflect and satisfaction in changed understanding:

They all come to the group thinking they have got a problem child and how do they deal with their child and how do they make their child different and normally about week 4 or 5 somewhere someone will say to you: Oh it's me that's got to change isn't it?

This is echoed in Rachel's comment regarding her change in thinking:

You don't pick up on the positives before [IY]. I did the negativity and everything wrong they were doing and not praising them for anything good they did, 'cause you were so focused on the negative that that's all you kind of saw.

The reflective level of accessing the IY also appears to be present in Charlotte's observation, evidenced in my field notes made during the final session, that

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My biggest thing has been working out what matters and what doesn't.

Having presented the findings on the theme of change I will now present the key features of the course that parents identify in the form of the other three cross group themes.

Theme 2: Group setting

The one finding which was not reflected at all in the facilitator accounts was that all four parent respondents reported an initial challenge in accessing the group due to social anxiety in unfamiliar group settings. Charlotte dealt with this challenge by bringing a friend and was planning to accompany another friend who had signed up to the next IY on her recommendation. Jess used the midweek phone call to express herself to F2 outside of the group setting. Kate and Rachel cited the friendliness of the group and leaders as helping them to overcome their initial unease. Rachel also alluded to personal development as an expected outcome of practising scenarios within the group:

Oh God I hated, hated doing the practices…You'd never have thought drama was my favourite subject at school…And I really loved drama, really loved it, and I even tried to get on a course in X College: a arts and drama course…And um but my mum talked me into doing a secretarial course 'cause she says there's no future in drama. And then as I got older my confidence just went and I got [?]. And now I've completely changed and now that person's completely gone and I – when I get to know people a little bit comes out – and toward the end when I got my certificate I bowed in front of everyone, which in the beginning you wouldn't have imagined me doing that…So it takes a while for that girl to come out.

This sense of accomplishment is reflected in F1's account of a man on a previous IY course who had been a challenging group member. F1 describes this man's response to completing the course:

He cried when we gave him the certificate at the end of the course because he said that it was the first thing he had ever, ever been given; the first thing he had ever succeeded in; the first time he had ever

finished anything or succeeded in anything his whole life and he was in – trying to hide the tears.

The other finding regarding the group setting was that peer support was a key positive feature of all four parent respondents' experience. F2 alludes to this with her use of the word camaraderie (F2 l. 123). The nature of the peer support varied between participants. For Charlotte the benefit was learning from others' experiences. For Kate and Rachel the peer support was related to normalising the experience of having a child with behaviour problems. For Jess, the support was allied to normalising the experience of having health problems and Social Services involvement. In addition, in this her second IY experience, Jess now has support from her partner who had been asked to join her.

Both F1 and F2 highlighted the complexities of delivering to a group and balancing group needs with individual needs particularly in their selection of video clips. F2's account includes an emotive reaction to seeing group members question the course content and by implication F1:

> It was a shock because when you are working with a facilitator like F1 who is very on the ball, who is very with the parents and who is moving everything along and for the parents – I know there is always going to be some contention from various members of the group who are quite open about their disbelief about some of the things that IY suggests.

However F1's account reveals that they found delivering to a challenging group exhilarating, in contrast to a less forthcoming group:

> I've got two groups at the moment which I run…the usual Riverview [context of this research] which is this fantastic mix of these very challenging people but there's an energy. There's real characters in the group. And it's challenging but fun. And my group at the Crossroads is the opposite: they are six very quiet people and like [colleague] said it just sucks the life out of you to deliver to them.

F1 develops the sense of the group dynamic by introducing the metaphor of a stand-up comedian:

It's like instant feedback. It's like the opposite of EP work really where you go in and you do a record of consultation and you go back in a month later and things might have moved slightly, but you don't get that instant feedback do you?...Whereas this is kind of you are in a room and it's like a comedian: I think they tell a joke and the audience laugh then they know it is funny don't they? You get that instant – and that's how I feel with that. It's instant feedback that it's working; if it works. When it doesn't it's embarrassing.

The only reflection of the sense of group dynamic from the parents' point of view is from Rachel who made a comment, which I interpret as positive, intimating that there was an energy to the group as they made an equal and assertive contribution:

We were all quite – we all got our two penny's worth in didn't we?

Theme 3: Strategies

Of central concern to all the parent participants was applying the IY strategies in their own contexts. Common to all the accounts was a sense of modification of their previous practice, and the concept of change emerged as a strong theme in its own right. Individuals differed in their thinking around trialling the strategies. Jess's concern was with the contrast between the IY and Social Services versions of time out and her emphasis was on the logistics of applying them. Kate's concern was with the psychological benefits of the strategies for her daughter, such as bonding and calming down. Charlotte and Rachel showed more agency than Jess and Kate in their application of the strategies, perhaps because they had both reported pleasing amounts of change in their own approach and their child's response to it. Charlotte was reflecting and planning how she would use emotion coaching to improve shopping trips. Rachel was reflecting on how she was adapting the strategies to suit her lifestyle and neighbourhood context.

F2's account of telephone calls to participants between sessions reflected a concern with the application of the strategies in parents' own contexts. F2 uses the metaphor of propping up to convey the supportive role of reminding and encouraging through phone calls:

To remind them to do the field trip, to remind them to do their homework. Don't forget the special time. Yes I know the children can be cranky – it's half term: they need structure because that's what they are used to so when they've got all this free time on their hands that's when they get up to mischief. So what are you going to do? What are you going to put in place? So it's just constant propping for want of a better expression. Propping them up to make sure they get through the week.

F1's account also reflected a concern with applying strategies. It differed from F2's account in that F1's primary concern was less with the strategies themselves than with the parents' understanding how a change of approach could bring about a change in the child. This aspect reflected Charlotte and Rachel's accounts particularly in the use of language such as breakthrough and tipping point. It also shows how F1 is bringing their continuing professional development as a psychologist to the role of facilitator and shows an awareness of how a felt need underpins learning:

She really seemed to engage with this vignette…and you could actually see her thinking this is an important session for me to go on, actually, please tell me how do I do it. And um the content of the session is that you model it: you model the correct social behaviour…and we started to talk about how you would model it. I remembered a stat that I was told at a recent conference that how you get meaning from an interaction with somebody, and it was - if I get my percentages right now – it was 65% from body language and 25% from tone of voice and only 10% from the actual words that they say…She said about the non-verbal behaviour; she realised what she was like…And it was like a breakthrough moment. And um it was like they suddenly realised at that moment as a group they suddenly realised that they are the influence on their child because that is the tipping point you get to.

Theme 4: Leaders

All 4 participants cited the leaders' positive qualities as key to their positive experience of IY. For Charlotte and Rachel leader qualities were key to engagement. This theme is strongly reflected in both facilitators' accounts. Both facilitators had a theme of retention which showed that their aim was to

complete the course with all participants still on board and that their positive manner and actions followed from this as F1's comment reveals:

'Cause for me the harder they are to reach, the more challenging they are, they are the people you desperately want. They are going to benefit so much from attending as many sessions as they can. They are the people you bend over backwards – and I know in supervision it was watched and they said I cannot believe you didn't snap and throw him out.

F1 coped with challenging members by reframing interactions:

I don't think he was being rude to me; I think he was being rude to authority and being rude to people telling him how to do it, what to do and you let it go over your head.

Underlying this aim of retention for both facilitators was a non-judgemental attitude which reflected the IY ethos which F2 describes:

We are not above them we are with them which is why one of the things from the IY is that you sit with them; you don't preach from the front

F2 also shows how peer supervision has provided an opportunity to reflect in action on ways of not casting themselves in the role of expert:

You know when you use examples from your own life. When your kids have climbed the shelves in Tesco's…It's just showing that no one's perfect. But you can try and change a little bit just to help yourself…I've done balanced peer appraisal and one of the things is: how do you demonstrate that it's not mastering? Do you understand what I mean? That you are not the master – expertise – that you are not coming from it as – I'm not sure what the word would be – everything is perfect in your world and you are there to preach to them. You're showing that pre-IY you had these things. You are implementing some of these things at home and you are having an improvement.

This may be reflected in Charlotte's comments that F2 was "very approachable" and that if you met F2 in the street "you would stop and have a yap".

F1 relates their non-judgemental stance to their psychologist's perspective of starting from the client's central concern:

> What's important to me is that people want to come back…I give more leeway [than some lead facilitators] but maybe that's because I'm a psychologist I don't know. If somebody starts to say something that's really important to them…I don't feel comfortable in just parking it to one side and just saying sorry I've got to show the next clip.

This may be reflected in Kate's account emphasising the facilitators' listening skills:

> Obviously they were quite happy to listen. Obviously that's what they're there for.

It may also be reflected in Charlotte's comment on the facilitators' manner creating an atmosphere of the sessions that was key to retention:

> I reckon a lot more people would not turn up…It'd be like going to a school and being taught stuff. It just – it wouldn't feel friendly and relaxed…making it just a nice place to be and relaxed.

F2 describes the rationale behind an open and friendly manner:

> I think you have to be quite open and friendly 'cause if you're not open they are not going to speak to you.

This is mirrored in Rachel's account:

> I find it really difficult to communicate with people I don't like so I wouldn't have spoke at all.

Rachel's account had a sense that there was genuine concern from the leaders:

> I felt that they were there to help me and not just to be paid – just doing the job – 'cause some people are: they just do the job to get paid, don't care about anyone else. And I actually felt more from them, that they actually did care and want to help us through our problems, and just nice.

This is reflected in F1's account:

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I've seen how [IY] can - how - the impact it can have on people. So I think with each course that I deliver I become more aware of how important it is that I get it right. It's not just a job. It's not just turn up with your flipchart and deliver it. I think that there's more to it than that.

Both facilitators saw the midweek phone call as a vehicle for keeping participants engaged and expressing genuine interest as F1 describes:

The midweek phone call: How are you getting on? I'm looking forward to seeing you again next week and I think it dawned on him that we did genuinely, genuinely want him there.

F2 notes the benefits of the midweek phone call in allowing individual needs to be addressed:

And it also means they can get a lot of stuff off their chest that we won't have an opportunity to go through.

This opportunity for individual support is reflected in Jess's account. It is not reflected in the facilitators' accounts that for Jess the need for 1:1 conversation was not related to time constraints but to feeling inhibited by the group setting:

I'd talk about it on the phone 'cause I hate talking in group time. One to one rather than in the group.

Individual themes

To maintain the idiographic focus of IPA (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009) I have summarised the unique aspects of each parent's account as well as those common to the group. Due to constraints of the word limits of this report I have included the summary of individual accounts in Appendix 6. However I present two of those individual themes below because they raised issues which seemed particularly important for the respondents and which had resonated with other members of the group when discussed during the IY sessions.

Individual theme 1: Jess's theme of extrinsic motivation

Jess's first theme to emerge was that of extrinsic motivation directly linked to her referral to the IY course by Social Services. In contrast to the other 3 respondents who came on the course to learn how to deal with their child's

behaviour, Jess came to the IY course without any intrinsic motivation of her own.

> They wanted me to do it again as a refresher and they wanted [partner] to join in.

This issue of nomination by Social Services is reflected in both facilitators' accounts. F1 reframes Social Services nominations so that these participants are viewed in the same light as other nominations:

> You know those parents are potentially there under protest. Well that's what I would have thought, but it's normally either they can get their children back or can keep their children if they come on the course. And you kind of think they are only coming just to get Social Services off their back, but then you realise that they are doing it because they want to keep their children. Because they love their children and they want their children. And because they want to keep them. It's not to get Social Services off their back: it's to keep their children and to be better parents to their children. And I think once they – once you see them as parents rather than Social Services nominations. Once they realise that – I think they turn up – they think oh I might stick this…but after a couple of sessions they get to enjoy it and realise that it is actually useful. And then they start to engage with it because if you sit there for two and a half hours why not engage?

F2 described two responses from parents nominated by Social Services:

> There are those who have been told by Social Services or the Courts to do the IY and they are there to tick a box. They sit there. There is no, there is very little interaction. Unless you ask about so and so there is no participation. They are just there to tick the box. And you get other families who are looking at this as a chance to really make a difference to their child's life either to get them back or not to have them taken away. And they do everything: they participate, they do the homework, they are actively involved, they want to learn. Because again maybe they got a little bit lost, but further down the line for them so.

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Jess's account might serve to shed light on two possible reasons for what might present as lack of engagement. One reason might be social anxiety:

> I hate talking in group time…One to one rather than in the group.

The other might be health problems which affect a person's ability to engage:

> On the first one I had severe depression so I don't think I took it all in.

This links to the theme of wellbeing which also unique to Jess and is presented in Appendix 6.

Individual theme 2: Rachel's theme of constructs of discipline

The theme unique to Rachel was that of constructs around discipline. It is linked to her journey metaphor and her divergent views from school on behaviour management:

> I really think that's wrong [keeping him in all week] and it doesn't make a difference with him. It's not going to make him good the next week. He's just missing out on a whole week of play and especially in the IY the punishment should be immediate. It should be immediate."

Repetition of the last line serves to emphasise her opinion. My observational field notes during the IY sessions reveal that Rachel told the group that she had tried to communicate to school the positive approach that had resonated with her on the IY but felt that school had not understood. She revisits this issue in her account:

> And I think that's the other problem: they keep bringing things up all the time nag,nag, nag, like I used to do, nag, nag, nag.

19. **Discussion of Paper 2 Findings**

In this section I consider how the findings address my research questions and will discuss their implications for practice. Research Questions 1 and 3 focused on parents' and facilitators' respective perceptions. I consider that the findings

presented from each group serve to illuminate both of the following research questions and I will therefore discuss them together:

Research Question 1: How do parents on an IY course perceive how change came about for them?

Research Question 3: What are the perceptions of facilitators on their lived experience of delivering the IY course?

<u>Change</u>

Respondents' accounts of how change came about for them appear to be consistent with steps in experiential learning (Kolb, 1984).
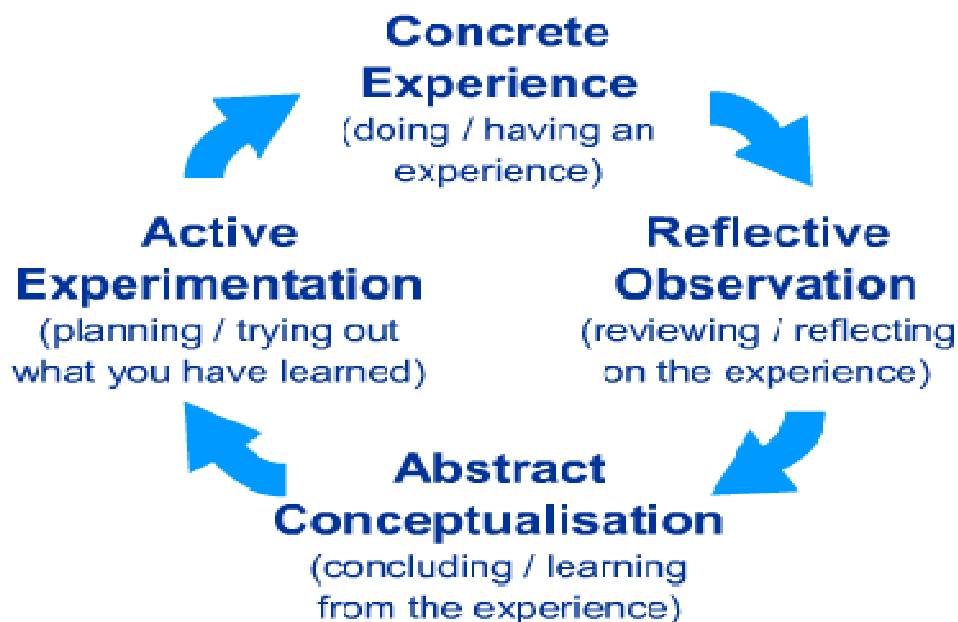
Figure 1: Kolb's experiential learning cycle (Kolb, 1984). Image downloaded from http://www.ldu.leeds.ac.uk/ldu/sddu_multimedia/kolb/static_version.php

F1 appeared to be both using reflection in action as a leader (Schön, 1991) and facilitating its emergence in participants. The two respondents who reported the most change appeared to be those who were already reflective and changed their thinking about interactions with their children as they tried out the strategies.

One implication of this is that reflection could usefully be stimulated using a metacognitive approach. For example, by drawing attention to changes in

thinking when it is happening during group feedback sessions and encouraging members to observe any subsequent changes in actions and feelings. Another implication of this is that EPs, with their psychological skills in reflective practice and eliciting reflection in others, are well placed to lead such groups and offer supervision.

<u>Peer group setting</u>

The group setting appears to be an important environment for change to take place. The peer support served to normalise the experience of behaviour problems which is one of the aims of the IY (Webster-Stratton, 2004). This sense of not being the only one led to a slight change for these respondents as they felt better about their situation.

It was an unexpected finding that accessing a group setting was challenging for respondents. The absence of this issue in the facilitators' accounts suggests that they may have been unaware of the social anxiety experienced by participants when in an unfamiliar group situation and perhaps mistake reticence for lack of interest. Increased awareness on the part of facilitators might serve to focus their interpersonal skills on reassuring and drawing out participants who were less comfortable in groups. Again this is an area of strength for EPs in which they could contribute both as facilitators and through supervision.

The opportunity which the challenge of the group setting provided for self-development for Rachel echoed the finding of Zeedyk, Werritty & Riach (2008) that attending a group parenting programme had been a stepping stone to educational and career development for some participants. I would argue that the challenge is worth undertaking and that the ways in which these participants had overcome the challenge were effective enough for them to engage with the group. For other nominees who never make it to the group, I suggest that social anxiety might be a barrier to accessing the programme. To remediate this I offer Charlotte's suggestion of comments in a leaflet or webpage to reassure potential participants by recalling how they settled into the group. To this end it might also be valuable for facilitators to be accompanied by a previous group member on the pre-course visit. The snowballing technique which one member

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used to overcome her and her friend's reluctance to join the group setting appears to be a promising way of involving people.

<u>Strategies</u>

The respondents' accounts showed that they valued the way the strategies were modelled through video clips and discussed as a group. What adds validity to this finding is the fact that I was present in the group from week to week and observed that participants contributed their opinions on the strategies and principles behind them with reference to their own contexts. As facilitator accounts demonstrate, there were times of debate. I suggest that this opportunity for group discussion may have contributed to these respondents being more active learners than would have been the case with a more didactic approach. Such an approach was associated in Charlotte's view with the construct of parenting course which for her the IY clearly was not but was "just boosting what's already there" (Charlotte l.38). It could be that this respect for parents' existing skills and autonomy is another factor in creating the right conditions for parents to experiment with the strategies in their own lives. Their accounts revealed that they were all continuously implementing them in their own contexts and that this is where changes in thoughts, feelings and actions came about most apparently for respondents as we have seen in the theme of change.

The implication here is for policy. That there is a stigma associated with parenting programmes has been noted (Field, 2010). I suggest that reframing such programmes as the IY as behaviour support rather than parenting courses would help to reduce the stigma. It would distance such programmes from the professionalisation of parenthood (Ramaekers, 2011) discussed in Paper 1 and from the insinuation that parents might be failing in their role. By offering the programmes as behaviour support skills for parent groups (as there are for teacher groups) it would put the focus on the promotion of children's social and emotional competence for interested parties.

<u>Leaders</u>

The finding that leader qualities were vital to engagement in the programme resonates with Scott, Carby and Rendu (2008). They cited supervision

arrangements as instrumental in the high skill level of IY facilitators. Both the facilitators in this study referred to supervision sessions as vehicles for reflecting on their practice and aligning it with their ethos. Scott, Carby and Rendu (2008) had identified four categories of skill:

1. Group process skills; leadership skills; relationship building skills; knowledge
2. Skill in the use of specific techniques
3. Degree of organisation
4. Observed impact on participants

Both facilitators alluded to the importance of preparation and organisation. That this was not reflected in parents' accounts may suggest that the organisation was smooth enough to go unnoticed and might only have been noteworthy if it had not been adequate. The impact on the participants was observed in their accounts which all made reference to the interpersonal skills of the leaders helping them to access the course. Skill in the use of specific techniques such as active listening and reframing were contained in the facilitators' accounts. Listening skills were reflected in the parents' accounts. The most important of the skills sets identified by Scott, Carby and Rendu (2008) was the first with what seems an all-encompassing skill set. I would divide it into three separate skill sets:

1. Group processes and leadership skills

    These skills were evidenced in parent responses that the group was a relaxed and friendly place to be and that they had all been able to contribute. They were reflected in the facilitators' accounts of the challenges and complexities of delivering to a group.

2. Relationship building skills

    These skills were apparent in the parents' accounts of leaders' interpersonal skills and approachability. They were reflected in the facilitators' descriptions of how they went out of their way to take an interest in participants and build a rapport with them. The facilitators' accounts demonstrated that their underlying attitudes were non-judgemental and positive. This genuine positive regard for the parents

was reflected in parents' accounts. These skills echo those of the skilled helper outline by Egan (2002).

3.   Knowledge

This was demonstrated in parents' confidence to consult the leaders regarding the implementation of the strategies. This was reflected in both facilitators' accounts which contained references the principles behind the strategies as well as to an understanding of the situations parents faced and the experiential learning process.

The high skill level on the part of leaders appeared to be complimentary, as remarked upon by Charlotte. Reflected in both the parents' and the facilitators' accounts was a high level of interpersonal and rapport building skill operative within the limits of their designated roles as lead facilitator and co-facilitator. Within these roles their accounts suggest that their practice was influenced by their professional backgrounds. The educational psychologist (F1) appeared to be offering group process skills and a reflective and reframing approach. The parent support advisor (F2) seemed to be offering parents a supportive signposting approach and a listening ear. It may be that these professional backgrounds suit the complementary roles of lead and co-facilitator and could be another facet to a psychologist or parent support advisor's role: as F1 found, another string to their bow.

An issue that might generate collaborative working is that raised by Rachel in her theme of different constructs from school regarding discipline. IY is sometimes hosted by schools in the area and there is a school based version of IY (Dinosaur School) aimed at staff and pupils as well as an IY school readiness focused programme for parents, both of which F2's account referred to. These could afford opportunities for IY providers to promote understanding between parents and schools of the principles behind approaches to promote social and emotional competence. This suggests a role for the educational psychologist which I outline in a later section.

In summary the findings reveal that the peer group setting and the non-judgemental attitude of the leaders together with their good interpersonal skills

were important environmental factors in bringing about change for each of these four IY participants. In this supportive and non-judgemental setting the parents were able to access the course at the level of their felt need. The nature and delivery of the strategies was important as was the opportunity to trial them in parents' own contexts. Participants' responses and the course content appeared to interact together to bring about change. It appeared that parents were open to trialling the strategies when the psychological theory on which they were based resonated with all the parents and fitted with their constructs. For example time out to calm was important to three of the parents because it liberated them from a punitive approach. The modelling of course content through video clips appeared to be an important method of delivery with one parent calling for home access to the clips in order to enhance her learning.

Research Question 2: How do parents' experiences of the IY programme relate to the Dispensing, Relating and Reflecting models of parenting support identified by Miller and Sambell (2003)?

Miller & Sambell propose that parents might access parent support at any level depending on their current situations. The findings from this study appear to suggest that parents had accessed the IY course perceiving it through one of these models and for some two or three models simultaneously. The two respondents who reported the most satisfying changes in themselves and their child had been reflective about their interactions with their child before the course and yet had come asking the dispensing model question: *How can I change my child?* as well as *Why is this happening?* The supportive group setting led them to perceive the programme in terms of the relating model.

In summary the three parents in this study who had chosen to attend the IY perceived the parent support in a multi-dimensional way with reference to the models of parent support identified by Miller & Sambell (2003). The fourth parent who was under obligation by Social Services to attend perceived the IY through the relating model, finding peer support from others with Social Services involvement. This finding resonates with more recent developments of Miller and Sambell's work such as Holt (2010) which voices concerns at the justification of enforced attendance at parenting programmes through such

positive findings as increased peer support. The issue raised by Jess regarding nomination by Social Services echoes concerns by Arthur (2005) that parenting programmes should be voluntary and free from punitive overtones. Jess's themes, unique to her, of wellbeing and financial considerations resonate with Puckering (2009) who calls for ecological support for families with complex needs as opposed to a single focus on boosting parenting skills. The implication of this finding is that parenting programmes such as the IY in this study which was held in a Children's Centre would be more effective if more fully integrated into the work of the Children's Centre. Jess's account shows that she did perceive some benefits from the IY in terms of peer support, enjoyment and behaviour management strategies that she and her partner were implementing with some positive outcomes. F1's account demonstrates an awareness of the limits of their involvement to address the complex problems faced by some families which is consistent with Lucas (2011). F1 describes the difference IY has made to some families and this is resonant of Barlow et al (2007) who have identified parenting programmes as improving the resilience of some families. Jess's account suggests that her current concerns are with the bottom layer of Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1954; 1970). Embedding IY within holistic Children's Centre support for finances, employment, housing, neighbourhood, health and education as Puckering (2009) suggests would further enhance the difference that IY can make as part of a concerted effort to improve families' lives.

Another finding was that Jess received peer support from others on the IY course who also had Social Services involvement. One implication of this is that parents who are currently nominated by Social Services might be better supported in homogeneous groups. The question of voluntary versus obligatory attendance also arises. Both Jess's account and the facilitators' accounts suggest that a friendly approach expressing genuine interest promoted engagement. Obligatory attendance seemed to leave Jess without the felt need requisite for learning (Claxton, 1990) that could have made the IY experience more effective for her. I suggest that IY providers seek to liaise with Social Services and Children's Centre colleagues to explore these issues and work

towards a voluntary attendance through links with Children's Centre holistic support.

My findings regarding participants' positive experience of the leaders, mirrored by the facilitators' strong sense of ethos, are consistent with literature (Bloomfield & Kendall; Zeedyk, Werritty & Riach, 2008) which uses Miller and Sambell's findings of what parents valued to call for parenting programmes to be ideologically based to attune with parents' needs as discovered through the use of the Miller and Sambell models of parenting support.

20. <u>Conclusions to Paper 2</u>

Limitations

The first limitation of the study is that the sample can be viewed as not strictly homogeneous as one participant, Jess, had been referred by Social Services whereas the other three respondents had chosen to come to the IY. My rationale was to be inclusive and, much like, F1 to see participants as parents rather than in terms of the source of their nomination. I consider that Jess's account has given her a voice and illuminated an important issue regarding nominations.

A second limitation is that I have not elicited the experiences of any fathers from the group. There were 2 men within the group and 8 women. As with Paper 1 I consider that this reflects the greater responsibility for childcare placed on women. There were 2 men on the course who were happy to speak to me about their experiences informally but less keen to speak at length to me in the form of semi structured interviews. Perhaps I could have done more to engage with these fathers and communicate to them the value of their contribution. However in the event I was careful to avoid any sense of pressure to participate in interviews with me.

The nature of an IPA study is that it is limited to saying something about the particular sample in their particular context and is not generalisable to whole populations (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). These findings cannot therefore be applied to all IY groups. However, they can be used to illuminate issues as a starting point for future research to be discussed below. It has also been used here to build on existing research, in this case Miller & Sambell, 2003.

Future research

I would suggest that directions for future research around formal parenting programmes could usefully include an action research project linking Social Services with a programme such as IY to give social workers a greater understanding of both its principles and the experiences of parents whom they nominate to attend. I suggest it would also be useful to undertake action research with schools where parents are participating in parenting programmes, focusing on constructs around behaviour management and how teacher and parent paths might meet, to use Rachel's metaphor.

Implications for the role of EP

The EP role lends itself to both the above suggested areas of research due to its links with teachers, and increasingly with social workers within locality teams. The psychological skills of the EP, particularly in personal construct psychology, would also equip the EP to facilitate the exploration of constructs around discipline in such action research projects.

The findings have shown how the psychological and interpersonal skills of the EP enhance their delivery of the IY programme and offer EPs another string to their bow, to use F1's metaphor. In addition I would suggest that these skills would be invaluable in training and supervising facilitators. For example the high level of reflection and reframing could be usefully modelled to develop reflective IY facilitators.

21. <u>Personal reflection</u>

I am aware that my own background including experiences as a parent and as an educational professional working with parents, as well as psychologist, will have impacted on this study. This includes how I approached many of the decisions I made, how I carried out the research and how I interpreted the data. For example, the third research question in Paper 2 regarding the leaders' perspectives is likely to have been influenced by both my reading and my professional interest. This research question and my review of the literature prior to interviewing participants may well have influenced my questioning and probing, particularly in Paper 2 regarding leader qualities, and thus influenced my findings which included a cross group theme of Leader Qualities. In addition my educational psychologist role had perhaps given me a heightened interest in Facilitator 1's perspective since it was a role I might have been asked to perform. This represents both personal and epistemological reflexivity (Willig, 2008) in that my personal interest has impacted the research design which has in turn shaped the information gathered.

In addition to reflecting on how I might have shaped the study, personal reflexivity also pertains to how the research has influenced me (Willig, 2008). I set out with a vague sense that I wanted to capture the voice of parents, particularly in what I perceived was a culture of blame towards parents in areas of poverty. To get from that nebulous desire to this thesis has been a worthwhile learning experience for me and has increased my academic self-concept. It has stretched my capacity to find out what matters to me and focus on it, to plan, to conceptualise and articulate my ideas. By the time I reached the data collection and analysis stage I felt I was working to my strengths and hugely enjoyed the experience of undertaking an IPA study particularly the interpretative aspect. I was greatly helped in the process by Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) which has proved an invaluable resource for me as a novice IPA researcher. I am looking forward to conducting further IPA studies in my future career as an EP. Reflecting on my enjoyment of the interpretative aspect of IPA it is interesting to note how many times respondents included phrases relating to meaning:

I mean… (Charlotte ll. 73 and 105)

Do you know what I mean? (Kate ll. 44, 83 and 173

Does that make sense? (Kate l. 317)

You know what I'm going to say! (Rachel Int. 1: l. 102) [I didn't]

So what I'm saying is… (F1 l. 104)

Do you understand what I mean? (F2 l. 144)

And finally, although Jess didn't use the vocabulary of meaning, she used expressive eye movements that seemed to add meaning to her words, for example:

I'll have his Dad here anyway even though - [expressive eye movement suggesting something negative] - but he keeps the boys entertained. (Jess Int 2: l. 396)

I consider that this demonstrates that it was important to all of the respondents to convey their thoughts and have them understood. The nature of IPA is that the researcher brings their own perspective to bear on the interpretation of the meaning which respondents' experience holds for them (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). It is my intention that my interpretation both offers that recognition and distils their meaning through the process of analysis and discussion.

22. References Paper 2

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23.   Appendix 1: Focus Group Protocol

Analysis of Focus Group data	Line	Example Quotation
IPA Protocol for Focus Group Data Analysis adapted from Palmer et al (2010)		
1. Objects of Concern and Experiential Claims		
Laura's view of key role of parent concerns relatedness	46	"Just to be there for them really, with everything you know, their day to day lives really."
Laura laments loss of closeness and cooperation as child's world expands	11	"She's around 7 now but is very backchatty…was a lovely little girl as a toddler but when she was at school she changed."
	31	"They fight. When she was younger she used to bring me a nappy or wipes but now she's older they fight like cat and dog."
Laura identifies off-putting elements of particular local toddler group ("Green Street") as large size and unfriendly members	71	"I didn't like it up there…too big, cliquey groups…Nobody comes up to talk to you...quite isolated."
Danielle's view of key role of parent: protection	51	"To protect them."
Danielle's dislike of "Green Street" group centres around queue at baby clinic	75	"No I didn't like it either…There was just like a queue of people with babies in nappies waiting to be weighed wasn't there?"
Danielle's dislike of Health Visitor linked to unsolicited comments on baby's weight and size.	62 83	"I hated my health visitor, I mean she was horrible." "Well she was just really horrible to me cause he's short and chubby she just used to say he's too fat for his height. All the time that's all I'd ever hear: *'Don't put him on hungry baby food'*. But he was starving. *'Don't feed him [unintelligible]'*. So we didn't listen did we? [to child] And you're alright. [child vocalises back]"
Alice's view of key role of parent linked to social resilience	53	"I think to make them, you know, to teach them to be good responsible adults you know respectful and to be able to look after themselves, take care of themselves and to stand on their own 2 feet and to obviously as you say alongside that is to love and nurture them."

Alice accesses Green Street for social interaction	208	"See I go with [2 and 4 year old children]. So they keep me on my toes. You know I've got one of them doing gluing and drawing and the other one pushing a pram, then they do snack and in between I see a few friends and I speak to them so for me it's getting out the house; I think oh [Green Street] day today, brilliant."
Alice sees experience of Green Street as dependent on personality and attitude, attributing her own enjoyment of it to her social strengths	224	"It depends on your personality as well you know if some people, friends of mine who's a bit quiet and timid – well not necessarily quiet and timid but – I'm quite loud and outspoken, you know and not everybody are that way and I think that there are a lot of closed people."
Alice values social resilience	228	"Yeah and they don't really care about what they say and there are some rude people there but I tend to realise who's who and stay – avoid them. You know your kids come across each other and you just sort of deal with it….I wouldn't get put off so much by that."
2. Positionality		
Facilitator goes back to follow up Danielle's comment re health visitor, having initially pursued an interjection by Laura. Stance: attempting to allow Danielle to tell her story.	81	"And then you were saying you didn't actually like, take to your health visitor, as a personality?"
Danielle does not answer question re who supports them in parenting role, but instead poses another question on the topic to Alice. Stance: Is Danielle uncomfortable with topic and her question functioning to avoid answering?	22	"Do your older ones help you with the little ones?"

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Alice prepares the way for and makes a challenging statement. Stance: critiquing Danielle and Laura's attitude to the Green Street group as limiting; valuing own social skills as overcoming barrier of rude people.	223	"It's a bit awkward saying this I guess really but I - it depends on your personality … and I think that there are a lot of closed people…there are some rude people there but I tend to realise who's who and stay – avoid them. You know you kids come across each other and you just sort of deal with it….I wouldn't get put off so much by that."

3. Roles & Relationships

Danielle suggests her role is passive in relation to health visitor	91	"It was when she came round to see us a few times…I can't really remember it's when they just do come round. Do they just come round? I had a caesarean so …."
Alice suggests a warm reliance on her mum for social support	211	"Because a lot of groups are mornings so afternoons I'm sort of like hmm what to do now. And you know I live in the same street as my mum so it's my mum who I end up "Hi Mum!" I'm there for the afternoon and then home again."
Laura's response suggests that she receives little support and carries the main responsibility for the role	20	"My husband – just him really, my mum doesn't help."

4. Organisations & Systems

SureStart group viewed as relaxed and friendly provision	114	Laura: "More easy going, more laid back…'cause we knew all of them from before so…it used to be just me and Danielle at first…then I met 4 friends here."
Alice sees SureStart provision as having both direct and indirect benefits for her children as they empower her in her personal development	96	"Surestart, they were immense….they engaged me with things like groups and stuff and also linking me in with other things that I could access…em and groups for the kids, things going on, events, so I've – community wise – you know, to be out and busy and involved in the world as such really me and the kids."

	151	"There was the freedom programme that I went along to, breastfeeding mentoring. I've also done a programme called money money money. ..so it sort of opened up other avenues and options for me um and I've recently been on a first aid course which – I mean at the moment I like to build up as much as I possibly can in order to help me when I start college in September. So things that can go on my CV to keep going so you know it's still fresh as such. So yeah and I've been on the support for parents group. There are things out there and they don't always have to be child focused…obviously it does have an effect on your family even employment advisors you know that sort of thing."
2 contrasting views of another toddler group (pseudonym Green Street) emerge: **Negative:** Danielle experiences system of queuing for health visitor clinic exposing to negative evaluation of her child.	206	"They queue with the babies in their nappies…obviously you could see all his full…"
Laura experiences the group as unfriendly and too busy.	71	"I didn't like it up there…too big, cliquey groups…Nobody comes up to talk to you...quite isolated."
Positive: Alice experiences the group as a valuable social opportunity and respite from time alone with children	210	"I see a few friends and I speak to them so for me it's getting out the house, I think oh [Green Street] day today, brilliant."

5. Stories

The group responses allow Danielle to tell her story and to move forward in the telling. Responses offer support in the form of: **Empathy**, sharing Danielle's sense of outrage at the rudeness of the woman's comments.	199	Danielle: "There was one particular woman; she just kept going on about how fat he is…" ALL: [clamorous expressions of outrage]
Acceptance of diversity of body shapes.	209	"They're all different just like adults. We're all different proportions, it doesn't – he's far from obese isn't he?"

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Challenge to accept that her child's size is bigger than average.	201	"It's perfectly normal and healthy for a little toddler to have a bit of chub on it."

6. Language

Danielle's use of "all the time" and the repetition of health visitor quotations serves to reinforce the strength of Danielle's focus on the health visitor's comments	84	"All the time that's all I'd ever hear." "*'Don't put him on hungry baby food'*" "*'Don't feed him [unintelligible]'*". "*'He's too fat for his height'*"
Danielle's use of the beeline metaphor suggests that she is attributing intentionality to the woman. Danielle again suggests a predominant focus on the comments by her use of the temporal term "always"	205	"She always used to kind of like spot me and then make a beeline for me."
Alice's introduction of the clinical term "obese" serves to add value to health considerations as opposed to body image	209	"They're all different just like adults. We're all different proportions, it doesn't – he's far from obese isn't he?"

7. Adaptation of Emergent Themes

The group were in agreement regarding SureStart provision for developing themselves, social support and child's benefit.	144	Laura: "Yeah good. ….Interesting." Danielle: "Yeah it was really good. It was interesting. It makes you think more." Alice: "Surestart, they were immense….they engaged me with things like groups and stuff and also linking me in with other things that I could access."
There was also a consensus that they were puzzled as to why more people in the area did not engage with the SureStart facilities on offer. Explanations proffered as to why attendance was low differed:		
Laura saw the fact that few people came as random	189	"I don't know; it just happens sometimes…"
Danielle suggested that people may not know what was on offer	252	"Maybe they don't know about it, maybe if they come to SureStart to find out what there is."
Both Laura and Danielle relate their experience of needing social support to come along, implying that that is what others might also need.	253	I only started coming here because at Green Street I bumped into the girl I was in hospital with and she came here."
	255	"There's another lady that I used to know that came and I plucked up the courage to come."

Alice suggested that people who did not engage held individualistic rather than community values.	180	"I think it's, could contribute the fact that it's a more low deprived area, er people have other ideals, what they want to be doing and it's not community based things, I don't really understand why people in this area don't seem to engage but they don't."
There was a potential conflict when Alice made a confrontational statement which implied that Danielle and Laura were not open enough to experience to access the group and were allowing their timid and quiet personalities to act as barriers to joining in. The conflict was managed by Alice's careful wording of the challenge, distancing "quiet and timid" from Laura and Danielle, by backtracking and saying she is talking about "friends of mine". She then describes herself as "loud and outspoken" which on the surface seems self-deprecating but it emerges that she see these as positive social skills which help her access the group.	223	"It's a bit awkward saying this I guess really but I – it depends on your personality as well you know if some people, friends of mine who're a bit quiet and timid – well not necessarily quiet and timid but – I'm quite loud and outspoken, you know and not everybody are that way and I think that there are a lot of closed people…there are some rude people there but I tend to realise who's who and stay – avoid them. You know your kids come across each other and you just sort of deal with it….I wouldn't get put off so much by that."

24. <u>Appendix 2: IPA account of focus group interactions</u>

I consider that using IPA to analyse the focus group data has been interesting in terms of its interactive aspect. The group dynamic, interactive nature of this discussion between an existing group of women reflects the relatedness of the being-in-the-world context-embedded nature of IPA. Following analysis of the data using the protocol suggested by Palmer et al (2010), I present a snapshot of how their interactions helped Danielle and the group to make sense of her experiences:

The focus group was made up of 3 women who regularly accessed group sessions at the Children's Centre. During the focus group discussion Danielle relates two incidents which appear to have affected her deeply. Subsequent analysis reveals that there was an early hint of her primary concern about negative social evaluation. It was present right at the beginning of the session in her response to Laura's comment that she did not like the Green Street toddler group which also served as a health visitor clinic:

> No I didn't like it either. There was just like a queue of people with babies in nappies waiting to be weighed wasn't there?

As the session unfolded Danielle would reveal why both the weighing and the exposing nature of queuing with a half-undressed baby was uncomfortable for her. She begins to tell her story in response to my question regarding any support they may have accessed from professionals. Danielle uses language evocative of strong negative emotions and as she quotes the health visitor she uses a nagging intonation:

> Oh I hated my health visitor, I mean she was horrible…Well she was just really horrible to me 'cause he's short and chubby she just used to say *'He's too fat for his height'*. All the time that's all I'd ever hear: *'Don't put him on hungry baby food.'* But he was starving. *'Don't feed him*

[unintelligible]' But we didn't listen did we? [Addresses her toddler, Harry:] And you're alright. [Harry vocalises back]

The fact that Danielle addresses her last comments to her preverbal infant son suggests that they are forming an alliance against a hostile world. Later Danielle picks up the thread of negative physical evaluation as talk again turns to the busyness of Green Street toddler group. Here the group dynamics appear to both support and challenge Danielle over the course of several exchanges:

DANIELLE   See I think that would put me off coming. I don't like it. See I think as well when I did go to Green Street there was this woman that used to comment on how fat Harry was.

ALICE   It doesn't take a lot to put some people off.

DANIELLE   There was one particular woman, she just kept going on about how fat he is.

ALL   [Responses from other 2 group members and from me all talking at once so difficult to distinguish words]

ALICE   It's perfectly normal and healthy for a little toddler to have a bit of chub on it.

Alice's use of language serves to offer acceptance of Harry, reframing the insulting *fat* as the more friendly and positive *chubby.* At the same time, I would suggest that in Alice's subtext she is gently agreeing that he is overweight. Since this is not a socially acceptable comment to make, Alice implies rather than states it. Danielle receives Alice offering of *chub* by adapting it to *chubby* in her justification of Harry's size. She uses a word with negative connotations (*scrawny*) to further reinforce her argument in which she appears to be linking bulk with masculine gender stereotypes:

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I think little boys should be a bit fat really shouldn't they 'cause if you get a scrawny little boy – they need to be a bit chubby. [Addresses Harry]: Don't you?

Again, Danielle addresses Harry as if for moral support. The next stage of Danielle's account demonstrates how telling her story within a known and trusted group has enabled her to feel more comfortable in acknowledging that her son might be overweight as the group communicate their acceptance of them both. The group continues to support Danielle by allowing her to carry on with her story and empathising with her by expressing outrage at her experience of rudeness. Her use of the "beeline" metaphor suggests that she attributes intentionality to the other woman's comments:

DANIELLE: She always used to kind of like spot me and then make a beeline for me and go 'God yeah he's fat isn't he?'

ALL   [Expressions of outrage from other 2 group members and me all talking at once so as difficult to distinguish individual words]

Support from the group appears to have helped Danielle move forward as evidenced by a shift in her discourse from one of denial:

He never really weighed more than anybody else. It's just 'cause he's short that he looked bigger than everybody else.

Towards a slight hint of doubt:

He never weighed more than anyone particularly at first…

At this point Alice again contributes a response which supports Danielle by showing acceptance of diversity of body shapes:

They're all different just like adults. We're all different proportions. He's far from obese isn't he?

By introducing the clinical term "obese" Alice is drawing attention away from body image to health issues. This has the effect of bringing Danielle to the point of acknowledging that her son was big, even using the word *admit* to suggest that she had been in denial and was now openly agreeing with the assessment that her son was overweight:

> When he was little I admit he did, he looked fatter because his head was [unintelligible] and it was just stuck on his shoulders. He was chubby wasn't he? [turning to Laura] He was big.

Interestingly Laura does not answer this, possibly because whatever she said would be problematic: to disagree would be dishonest, but to agree would be socially unacceptable. She had kept very quiet during Danielle's narrative, perhaps feeling she needed to be silently supportive as a close friend, whereas Alice was further removed and could perhaps raise more uncomfortable topics. Finally Danielle is able to articulate her central concern around exposure and negative evaluation at the Green Street group as a barrier to her accessing it:

> But when they just kept *'Oh my god look at him, look how fat he is'*, I thought I'm not coming here again…and especially when they queue with babies in their nappies…obviously you could see his full…

This completes the picture which is the backdrop to Danielle's choice of protection as the key role for a parent.

At this point Alice steers the thread towards her contrasting experience of the Green Street group which she accesses for the peer interaction at her own level as a respite from being at home in the company of her two young children:

> I go with [2 and 4 year old children] so they keep me on my toes. I've got one of them doing gluing and drawing and the other one pushing a pram, then they do snack and in between I see a few friends and I speak to them. So for me it's getting out of the house; I think: Oh Green Street today, brilliant.

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Alice then goes on to suggest that her next opinion will be challenging:

It's a bit awkward saying this I guess really but…

Perhaps by way of defending the Green Street group, she goes on to attribute a negative experience of the Green Street group to a certain personality ("quiet and timid") and attitude ("closed"). Though the implication is that she is referring to Danielle and Laura, she distances her comments from them by using such phrases as "some people" and "friends of mine". In addition she attempts to soften this by backtracking and casting herself as "loud and outspoken". On the surface this seems self-deferential but the subtext seems to be that these are valuable qualities, enabling her to navigate the social challenges of the Green Street group.

It depends on your personality as well you know, if some people, friends of mine who're a bit quiet and timid – well not quiet and timid but – I'm quite loud and outspoken, you know and not everybody are that way and I think that there are a lot of closed people….There are some rude people there but I tend to realise who's who and stay, avoid them. You know your kids come across each other and you just sort of deal with it…I wouldn't get put off so much by that.

25. Appendix 3: example of IPA process: Rebecca

Tag Cloud

Transcript

Excerpt of transcript showing development of emergent themes for Rebecca		
Emergent Themes	**Original Transcript**	**Exploratory Comments**
	I: So can you tell me about your experience as a parent second time round, you've got an 11 year old and a …	
	R: 12 week old.	
	I: A 12 week old.	
Within child factors affect parent emotions and physiological response	R: Well the first one he was a bit more complicated, he used to cry as a baby quite a lot, I did find it hard with him, but I mean he's 11 now so he copes on his own.	Within child factors affect parent response when negative? (*He used to cry ….I did find it hard*)
	I: Mm	Crying baby difficult to deal with
	R: But this time around I think I'm more relaxed so she seems to …, it might just be her personality, but she just seems more relaxed so she sleeps like an angel. Whether that's down to me or down to her personality I don't know but …	Child's independence and coping come with maturation.
Benefits of support from partner	I: It's hard to say yeah. So you say you're more relaxed, can you give an example of that?	More relaxed as parent second time round When Positive (*relaxed…angel*)
Within child factors given value judgement. Sleep	R: Probably with the situation I was in before, the partner I had then, he wasn't very helpful um whereas this time around different partner, completely different, completely different he's … well he grew up with about six sisters whether that helped I dunno, but he's fantastic, he comes in and he takes her straight off me and so it's like my time to chill out and relax. I do feed her myself, she's a breast fed baby, but just completely different he's very much hands on, so I just have some time to chill out myself, whereas before I had to do everything myself so I suppose you get uptight and like why doesn't the baby shut up	uncertainty about whether child's mood is linked to parent's mood or child's personality. Sleeping well linked to goodness: *she sleeps like an angel*
Negative impact of lack of support from partner.	that sort of scenario and if you're uptight then the baby tends to be uptight don't they.	Lack of support from previous partner negative
	I: So you put your first time around uptightness down to not having any support?	Support from new partner positive, makes a difference.
	R: Yeah I think so yeah	
Gender role expectations re childcare.	I: But this time you've got …	Gender role expectations? Suggests growing up with *sisters* may have influenced
	R: Yeah completely different yeah	~~his involvement with~~

Initial Themes

Respondent A "Rebecca"	
Initial list of themes	**Page number**
Within child factors affect parent emotions and physiological response	1
Benefits of support from partner	1
Within child factors given value judgement (positive)	1
Child's sleep patterns affect parent (positive)	1
Negative impact of lack of support from partner	1
Gender role expectations re childcare	1
Child learns childcare from large family	2
Wellbeing linked to support from partner	2
Negative spiral from lack of partner support	2
Control	2
Confidence	2
Self-efficacy	2
Experts	2
Within child factors affect how strategies work	2
Labelling child	2
Value judgement of child's behaviour	3
Child's sleep patterns affecting parent (negative)	3
Within child factors affect parent's perception of child [or does parent's perception create/perpetuate within child factors?]	3
Different child's sleep patterns affecting parent (positive)	3
Grandparents' support valued	3
Behavioural expectations linked to age	3/4
Behavioural expectations linked to gender	3/4
Behavioural expectations linked to physical stature	3/4
Physical appearance led to bullying	4
Parent seeks to alter child to make them more acceptable to peers	4
Parent respecting child's autonomy	4
Parent accepting of mischievous behaviour	4
Parent and school holding differing constructs re behaviour	4
Labelling child	4
Poor communication from teacher to adults	4
Patronising manner of teacher	4
Value judgement from school to parent (negative)	4
Negative emotions engendered by school staff	5
Identity, self-construct	5
Child bullied for different physical appearance	6
Parent respecting child's autonomy	6
Parent attempts to change child to fit in with peers	6
Child's troubles have negative impact on parent	6
Parent blames self for child's problems	6
One child's moods disrupt relaxed atmosphere with other	6
Parent sets boundaries to shape behaviour	6
Parent channels child's energies into sport	7
Achievement brings praise and reward	7

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Need for space/solitude	16
Bonding with baby through enjoyment of shared activity	16
Appreciative of partner's step parenting role	17
Relating through doing things together	17
Desire to regain previous lifestyle	17
Personal freedom curtailed	17
Self-construct as swimmer	17
Confidence	17
Self-efficacy	17
Guidance of child	17
Values right direction	17
External positive judgement	17
Positives of being younger when better at task than older peers	18
Gender expectations limiting choices	18
Parent promotes child survival skills	18
Desire for protection leads to surveillance, lack of trust	18
Perpetuating positives from own upbringing	18
Trust of own childhood peer group v mistrust of child's current peer group	18
Peer influence for teenagers	18
Positive "sporty" construct	18
Labels child: follower	18
Engineering peer group environment	18
Parent values judgement of right direction	18
Goal for child= socialisation	

Clustering of Themes

Respondent A "Rebecca" - Clustering of themes

Within child factors

Within child factors affect parent emotions and physiological response

Within child factors given positive value judgement

Child's sleep patterns affect parent positively

Within child factors affect how strategies work

Child sleep patterns affect parent negatively

Within child factors affect parent's perception of child

Different child's sleep patterns affecting parent positively

Child's troubles have negative impact on parent

Parent blames self for child's problems

One child's mood disrupts relaxed atmosphere with other

Support from family

Benefits of support from partner

Negative impact of lack of support from partner

Wellbeing linked to support from partner

Negative spiral from lack of partner support

Grandparents' support valued

Partner sharing responsibility

Benefits of extended family

Benefits of partner's support

Extended family increases independence of child

Positive emotion re extended family relations

Within grandparent factors

Benefits from extended family resources e.g. dog

Agency with partner support

Appreciative of partner's step parenting role

Support from family

Within child factors given value judgement (positive)

Labelling child

Value judgement of child's behaviour

Value judgement from school to parent (negative)

Achievement brings praise and reward

Lack of reward for struggle

External positive judgement

Positive "sporty" construct

Judgement

Gender role expectations re childcare?

Behavioural expectations linked to age/gender/physical stature

Construct of normal family

Generational behavioural expectations

Child adjusts to different parenting styles

Positives of being younger when better at task than older peers – defying expectations?

Gender expectations limiting choice of sport

Parent accepting of mischievous behaviour

Parent views "naughty" as acceptable aspect of childhood

Parent and school hold different constructs re behaviour

Age factors

Child learns childcare from large family

Conflicting interests of different aged children

Focus on younger child

Letting go of older child - tension

Advantages of age gap: older child helps younger child and learns caring skills

Logistics of different activities for different ages

Communication with teacher

Poor communication from teacher to adults

Patronising manner of teacher

Negative emotions engendered by teacher communication

Teacher-parent relations

Control

Control, confidence, self-efficacy

Accessing advice "textbook"

Letting go of child

Agency with partner support

Agency second time around as parent

Own choice over expert advice

Image

Physical appearance led to bullying

Parent seeks to alter child to make them more acceptable to peers

Labelling child

Parent respects child's autonomy

Self-construct as swimmer

Positive "sporty" construct

Less positive "follower" construct?

Parent's needs

Parent makes effort to take child to activities

Constraints on freedom

Negative affect of staying at home

Need for space solitude

Desire to regain previous lifestyle

Personal freedom curtailed

Active lifestyle important

Parent channel's child's energies into sport

Parent makes effort to take child to activities

Partner sharing responsibility

Enjoyment of exercise, walking

Community Facilities

Free activities at Children's Centre

Positive affect of exercise

Workplace benefits e.g. free access to swimming pool

Bonding with baby through enjoyment of shared activity

Relating through doing things together

Self-construct as swimmer

Survival skills

Positive "sporty" construct

Parental Guidance

Parent's sets boundaries to shape behaviour

Parent channels child's energies into sport

Predicting future

Guidance of child

Values right direction

Parent promotes child survival skills

Desire for protection leads to surveillance, lack of trust. Tension between supervision and trust.

Perpetuating positives of own upbringing

Engineering peer group environment

Parent values judgement of right direction

Interpersonal relations

Goal for child = socialisation

Play with child important

Bonding with child important

Letting go, loss of closeness

Electronic games impact on relationship with parent and child

Peer group becoming important as child grows

Negative affect of staying at home (too much focus on baby)

Peer support for parent

Baby's needs v parent's

Need number of people to feel like group

Baby's needs and parent's coincide

Social support starts when baby gains more physical control e.g. sitting/crawling skills

Stuck inside house

Need friends in community

Isolated when young first time parent

Need for information on local facilities

Nature of group needs to be explicit in title

Need something to do in the community

Talking to baby to back up point in interview (when something hard to say to me?)

Bonding with baby through enjoyment of shared activity

Relating through doing things together

Trust of own childhood peer group v mistrust of child's current peer group

Peer influence for teenagers

Positive "sporty" construct

Labels child: "follower

Work

Partner's work patterns fit well with family life

Own workplace benefits include free swimming

26. Appendix 4: Tables of Themes

Paper 1: Alice, Fran, Martine, Rebecca

Table of Themes Respondent B "Alice"		
Superordinate theme	**Line Number**	**Example quotation**
Theme 1: Circumstances		
Extra financial constraints on top of parenting unhelpful	1	"It was a complete culture shock."
	26	"The money's scarce. The money just doesn't stretch."
	35	"I was still having the brunt end of feeding them."
	40	"Being slashed less than a quarter in income as well."
Complex interaction of risk factors (domestic abuse, mental health, loss of employment, drug abuse) affecting ability to focus on parenting, resulting in Social Services involvement and Court proceedings.	75-77	"So I'd lost my job, my two eldest children went to live with their Dad, I had a relationship breakdown, there was domestic violence going on and I was pregnant, and drug use as well, so a concoction of those things and I just fell to bits a bit really."
	85-88	"It was never my parenting really that was at question. With the eldest two I didn't put my focus in and be the parent that I always was. However I didn't feel that I needed to be in another city and to be on 24 hour observation 'cause that's pretty much what it was with my child. The problem was a psychological problem you know, I was suffering with mental illness really."
Theme 2: Status		
Job role valued	68-71	"And I had a very good job, I was at the first port of call within Social Services, working alongside the [unintelligible] assessment team and dealing with high case child protection issues all the time."
Expectations: Opprobrium from professionals linked to previous job role	79-83	"I did go into a Children's Assessment Centre in [another location] where I spent 12 weeks with [youngest child] although I feel I was very persecuted because of my job. They came down on me like a ton of bricks. "
Concern re opinion of others on return to home community	103-106	"Oh yeah and you know to sort of come to terms with that breakdown I guess really, 'cause that I struggled with that to go back home 'cause I've lived in the same street since I was 4. And to go back home, what would people say? "
Parental expectations of gender: approval for shyness	198-200	"My Mum and my Dad couldn't understand what on earth happened to me you know all of a sudden, there was this shy lovely little girl that everyone said oh she's so sweet and then turned a bit wild."
Awareness of societal expectations	259-260	"I think I probably had a lot more respect from other people, that I was a better person back then perhaps."
Markers of success: good job, own home, car demonstrate personal achievement	253-256	"I was in employment , I had all my children at home, I managed to work and maintain my house as a single parent , I owned my own home, I had a car, you know I had a job which I had spent seven years to acquire, so I had a pretty good position and my hourly pay was really good."
Respect from others linked to self-respect	274-276	"Maybe it's not other peoples' opinions maybe it's my own personal opinion, but my fear is that other people's opinions are, but that really I was doing well, but it makes me a weaker person because of what happened."
Relative status – values incremental improvements and regains.	271-272	"My status I guess for me, my personal status is probably at a low, but not as low as it has been. You know that's how I try and look at it."
Theme 3: Reflection		
Reflection through therapy empowering	95	"Intense therapy [was] really helpful. I sort of understand myself, why I did things I did."
	108-112	"And you know and they helped me to be able to look at my past and address the issues, not necessarily address them – you know problem solved you never have to worry about them again um - And to move on and to be able to carry on getting on with my life on the up again, which I have done ever since really."
Meta cognitive approach to self determination	168-170	"But I was bullied at Primary School, and I remember when I started Secondary School thinking I'm not going to put myself in this position and I sort of became a little bit more extrovert, a little bit more on the other side of things and it sort of stuck a bit really I don't know why."
	172-175	"Because I sort of forced myself to be able to be more assertive perhaps, I wasn't aware of really I'm being assertive, but in reflection I can see what I actually did. But I remember leaving Primary School and thinking I can't have all this at Secondary School as well 'cause I think you make yourself vulnerable like that."
	181-185	"I don't know how I sort of made that transition, I really can't think I was very conscious of perhaps who I was going to be friends with, maybe there was a lot of learned behaviour at Secondary School and perhaps being hormonal, maturing, I think it was a lot of things that had made that happen that way. I will always remember that strong feeling of leaving Primary School and thinking – 'cause I was quite badly bullied at Primary School
	186-7	R: And I remember that it was quite an intense I: Right feeling of I couldn't be like that anymore.
Reflection	208/209	"I look back and I see things a bit more clearly"
Experience and loss led to greater appreciation of children when parent second time around	296-302	R: I think to appreciate them a bit more, and to take more pictures and to have more videos, some things like that appreciation of them I think is a bit more 'cause they grow up so quickly.
	299	I: What do you think that's down to?
	300-302	R: Experience really, and probably the fact that [the two eldest] went to live with their Dad at during that period of time when I was like I was, you do appreciate, when you are at a low ebb, it's hard to appreciate anything.
Inspirational nature of reflection as a result of taking part in this research	330-334	"It goes back to the social things really, when you attend all the groups you do come across situations like this here what I'm doing now, and I think it gives you opportunity to reflect on your present situation your circumstances, and it can be a little bit inspirational sometimes to sort of go away and think about things 'cause it brings things to the surface of your attention I guess that you just forget about and you just get on with, and it's little things like this that give you opportunity to…."[interruption and end of interview at this point]

Table of Themes Respondent B "Alice"		
Superordinate theme	**Line Number**	**Example quotation**

Theme 4: Loss and Regain		
Loss compounded across several domains.	65-66	"Everything pretty much fell apart round about me, and I consequently lost my job and because I was off sick I wasn't able to pursue that role."
Intense culture shock from loss of income.	10/12	"You find whereas before I could just about say I was comfortable and if I needed a pair of shoes I could go and get them, whereas now it's … and you just take it for granted so it was a complete culture shock."
Coping with loss of social status and taking steps to regain it.	114-117	R: It was difficult, embarrassing really I mean, I had a good job I owned my own home, I was a single parent. Things was quite good in my life until I met my ex-partner – the father of my two eldest - er two youngest sorry. So it was that really that impacted on my life, and obviously the way I've dealt, I have to take responsibility for it you know, but I didn't make very good decisions … choices so um…"
	271-272	R: My status, I guess for me, my personal status is probably at a low, but not as low as it has been. You know that's how I try and look at it.
	273	I: Right and is it important for you to have that status?
	274-276	R: Well yeah because I've had it before so to lose it like that is just … maybe it's not other peoples' opinions maybe it's my own personal opinion, but my fear is that other people's opinions are, but that really I was doing well, but it makes me a weaker person because of what happened.
	277	I: Right, so currently how does that feel now?
	278-280	R: Oh definitely [unintelligible]. Pretty much now that has happened and maybe I may have had a little weakness there, but it's made me stronger really in another way now. So yeah, I'm not that worried about it now, not as worried as I used to be as in it eats away at me, that's why I say I want to have a job and have a car
	282	I: So you have these goals…
	283	R: Yeah once I've done that I'll feel so much better then
Setting goals to regain desired life	227-230	"So work, to be able to find work, my targets that I don't currently have which I want is, that sounds really like I've not got to that place quite yet that I want to be, is because I'm not in employment or some form of education, and I'm not yet driving. Until those two things are done, then I'll be like yeah that's it done."
	247	"All my boxes are being ticked off except those at the moment"
	249-251	"I've sort of - pre that sort of depressed state that I was in and the breakdown and whatever , prior to that those are the things that are missing, and until I've done that I don't feel that I'm back to the past I was before."
Community involvement seen as step towards re-entering training and employment	144-147	"[Being a breastfeeding mentor]'s quite empowering really even though sometimes I think it can, it's quite small in my er …how it's led to me actually working and earning money, but it's a start you know, and it gets me back working in the community and sort of even though it's voluntary it's still something I can put on a CV and it's also doing what I like at the moment."
Regaining independence with getting back driving licence	218-220	The seizures have now stopped, I've got my license back, I've got money saved for a car, well my license is back now, I'm able to drive as of last week. I've driven since I was 19 and then to have no license for two years and I've had no car, I've had a car since I was 19 till 2 years ago.
Re-engaging with community	128-130	"To get back into the world again and be a part of it, 'cause during that period when I was really depressed I was in all the time, didn't go out, I isolated myself a lot and so yeah I was always an outgoing person before that point and that's part of rebuilding my life really it just feeing part of the world again like."

Theme 5: Identity/self determination		
Change in identity	54-55	"There was sort of a slide in my day to day just existent being and there was significant difference in me as a person then to now, or from then to how I was before."
Positive identity as outgoing person	154-155	"And I am an outgoing person. I think if you're shy and you don't know anybody, it can be really daunting walking into that room."
Developed outgoing identity in adolescence	164-201	I always have been [outgoing], since Primary. At Primary School I wasn't at all. . . .
		Completely the opposite, very shy, didn't really speak to everybody and I was completely different. . . .
		"But I was bullied at Primary School, and I remember when I started Secondary School thinking I'm not going to put myself in this position and I sort of became a little bit more extrovert a little bit more on the other side of things and it sort of stuck a bit really I don't know why." . . .
		"It didn't happen overnight, it happened over a few years really. I think it was by the time I got to the third year you know year 9/year 10." . . .
		"Maybe there was a lot of learned behaviour at Secondary School and perhaps being hormonal, maturing, I think it was a lot of things that had made that happen that way. " . . .
		"all of a sudden" . . .
		"I went from angel child to a complete devil. "
Self-development and continuing transformation in adulthood	209-210	"For every 6 months that go by there's sort of 6 months big change from 6 months before it."

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Table of Themes Respondent B "Alice"		
Superordinate theme	**Line Number**	**Example quotation**

Theme 6: Parental role of empowerment		
Strong values as parent	292-296	I: Do you think your view of the role of a parent has changed over the years, between having the older ones and having the younger ones? R: I don't know, that's a quite a good question. To be fair I don't think it's changed that significantly. I always think that my values as a parent have been very strong from when I had my eldest two anyway.
Parent's nurturing role in service to ultimate aim of child becoming self-reliant.	306-310	My personal opinion is that you bring children into the world to grow up, you want to nurture them to grow up to be adults to be able to take care of themselves and to have, to have realistically, a good idea of what is out there in the real world. I'll care for them, I'll do everything I can for them, but they still need to be able to stand on their own two feet as well in situations. And how to deal with situations appropriately.
Parent learning from experience and handing it down to children with the aim of empowering children in relationships, particularly mother empowering daughters.	310-318	R: I mean 'cause there was domestic violence in my first relationship as well and for things to be dealt with the proper way, you know, if you have a problem discuss it and that sort of thing. I mean the domestic violence in my first relationship wasn't serious, it didn't happen daily, it didn't happen monthly, it was like probably once a year there would be an incident, but it would be serious. And so there's things like that that I wouldn't want to see my children - when they grow up – I wouldn't want to see my daughters putting up with that sort of behaviour. And even things when they go to school to be confident - but that's because of me being bullied – I wouldn't want that, I guess your own experiences is what you instil in your children.
	318	I: Can you give an example of how you might go about instilling that?
Parent as role model	320-324	R: Umm well first and foremost is to ensure that when there is any situation that I deal with that correctly you know disputes with their Dad, situations he can get quite nasty. He'll say things about me to the kids and I could say things back and it could get quite nasty but I don't, I rise above it and you know I still value him as a Dad, he's always been a good Dad. Things like that really, trying to be more on the positive things rather than the negative really.
Theme 7: Social Interaction and support		
Role for Children's Centre staff in encouraging involvement in community	132-142	"I became in touch with Emily [pseudonym for Children's C entre worker] through the nursery that [child] attended. She got me involved in the groups, she told me the dates and times and I started to attend. She is like a family support worker as well and she gave me support during the time of when I came home." . . .
		"And it was sort of like I have to rehabilitate myself back into the community really and that's what Emily's role was." . . .
		"Emily mentioned whether I was interested in doing this peer support group so I attended the training and then been doing that since really."
Engagement in community work beneficial socially	147-148	"[Child]'s still young and being amongst parents with children and so yeah it's more of a better social thing to be fair, rather than anything else I think."
Social capital	151-152	"It helped partly because I've lived in the area for so long so when I went to [local toddler group] I knew quite a few people."
Importance of peer group	188-190	I: once you started being assertive at Secondary School, how did that feel? R: Oh much better, I didn't feel alone, I felt more equal to my peer groups um my friends.
Loss of car constraining socially	221-227	I: So how did that feel? [to be without a car] R: Oh terrible! It's like I was - I feel more chained to my home and it restricts me socially as well, 'cause the friends I've got who've got children the same ages as mine are too far away for me to get to, I'd have to catch 2 buses . One friend, close friend, we haven't been in touch with properly for 2 years because she lives in [area], which isn't a long way away but it would be maybe a 45 minute walk at least probably and I'd have to take the 2 girls with me or catch 2 buses and it is so much hassle that things like that slip.
Benefits of social interaction for parent and child	287-291	"I think that as human beings everybody feels better by being in company and around people. My friends, I like to stay in touch with them see them, umm the girls' friends, the children going in nursery, even just seeing people saying hello to who I know or have been at the nursery dropping the girls off Y goes to crèche once a week everything like that really. I think it's important for me and for the children."

Table of Themes Respondent C "Fran"	Line Number	Example quotation
Superordinate theme		
Theme 1: Knowledge		*This theme appears important to Fran evidenced by the high number of words she uses connected with knowledge, acquiring knowledge, and cognition:* *Understanding, education, research (x2), information (x3), training (x3), recommendations (x2), aware, know/didn't know, hindsight, wisdom.*
Benefits of advances in knowledge re parenting/child development	16-17	"Back then, I don't know, less understanding, less education as well. I think there's been more research in the last sort of 16 / 18 years."
Benefits of greater access to research through internet as well as community facilities.	23	"Through things like this [Children's Centre drop in session], and the computer."
Information overload	25-27	"Back then, you didn't have that, now there's so much information - maybe too much in some things."
Easy and quick access to information	29	"But at least you can kinda get a quick answer. "
Information found in response to query leads to some peace of mind, with reassurance also sought from Children's Centre staff.	31-34	"It depends what time, if it comes into my head, cos you know hormones you don't think about things at the right times, when it comes into my head I can just jump on the computer - quick looking up. Then kind of It gives me some idea, some peace of mind maybe, then I talk it over here with people who have the up to date training. Definitely the staff because of their training and recommendations."
Changes in recommended parenting practice over years e.g. weaning age.	48	"It [weaning] was acceptable at sort of like 10 to 12 weeks back then, but now it's like 6 months."
Convinced by evidence in accessible research found on internet	74-76	"But I think definitely the information…is much more accessible now."
First time around as parent, focused on physical needs; second time around as parent sees love as necessary as well as meeting physical needs [Maslow's hierarchy of needs internalised?]	130-139	R: As they get older, it's kind of umm yeah, whereas I didn't know that before. You just kind of brought them up, you just kind of kept them clothed, kept them warm and kept them fed...Now I know there's more to it than that…There's the love. I: How have you come to that different opinion? R: I think for me, um, just hindsight, just looking at those 3 [her teenage children] and also I've been quite lucky recently in job choices of training and stuff and getting [unintelligible]. Like I said I did the training on child psychology and stuff like that, so I think that definitely makes you look at things differently.
Cites attachment study as influential in her changing opinion	141-146	"And knowing the research and stuff that's out there, the little things. The thing that really stuck out for me is the baby monkey in the cage, the one with just food and the one with the frame… and like both and the different outcomes that come out of that you know…Cuddles are important – yes."
Some parenting practices seen as optional, others seen as health and safety issues and therefore not negotiable.	65-72	"I think, you see, there's a difference between recommendations of good practice to, compared to, kind of life/death possible scenarios like you know the way you sleep them…that I wouldn't mess with, do you know what I mean, but when you wean them, I think that's a slightly greyer area…It's like, I think it's black and white the way you sleep them."

Table of Themes Respondent C "Fran"	Line	
Superordinate theme	**Number**	**Example quotation**

Theme 2: Agency		A key concept for Fran was *choice*. Her use of the word in several phrases indicates a sense of autonomy, both for herself: *job choices (Line (l.) 137); my own choices (l. 62); some unwise kind of life choices (l. 7); informed choice (l. 50)* and for her children: *for them to make good choices (l. 127); to be able to make choices (l. 128).*
Own life choices affect parenting experience.	7-8	"Um up and down, I was very young at the time – some unwise kind of life choices back then, so um very much different this time."
Cognitive approach: seeing things differently leads to greater patience; less awareness of parenting issues when young. Benefit from hindsight as a parent second time around.	10-23	R: I think age has made a difference because hindsight, I can see things differently – patience. Back then, I don't know, less understanding, less education as well. I think there's been more research in the last sort of 16 / 18 years. I: Oh right ok. Into… R: What's good, what's not um just parenting I: Ok right yes. Do you sort of take that on board? R: Yes. I think I'm more aware of it now as well. I: Ok. How do you access that? R: Through things like this [Children's Centre drop in session] and the computer.
Personal development led to being more proactive as parent this time around in seeking parenting support	78-83	Yeah, and um I think age, 'cause I'm a different person now, that I will go and actively ask somebody. I will go and seek out, whereas when I was younger, it was so uncool. It's like groups and stuff – do one. I: So it was just your Mum, you didn't go to toddler groups. R: I wasn't even really aware of them to my recollection.
Now more experienced as parent, bringing up 4th child making own choices with benefit of hindsight	60-65	R: With those 3, I very much brought them up under my Mum's guidance…Whereas now, it's my own choices – like I said: hindsight. I've thought what did and didn't work then and current information, and kind of just bring it all together to what I feel to be the best I: And do you retain some of your Mum's? R: Umm I guess bits and pieces, but only what I know worked.
Maturity and wisdom bring changes in parenting approach	93-94	"Just maturity and kind of wisdom and sort of stuff you pick up over the years makes things different anyway."
Appreciate being a parent more with age	100-101	"Um it's [being a parent] like the best thing ever, and I would say that definitely more so now, 'cause I can appreciate it now."
Changed priorities as parent second time around	103-106	"So yeah it kind of changes your priorities, 'cause you know whereas before, kind of going to work and kind of the outside world was more important to me. Now it's very much her and parenting and getting it right, 'cause I've kind of got my son to look at, and it's like I'm responsible for where she could end up."
Changed understanding of child's needs through reflection combined with employment choices and continuing professional development	137-139	I think for me um, just hindsight, just looking at those 3 and also I've been quite lucky recently in job choices of training and stuff and getting [unintelligible] like I said I did the training on child psychology and stuff like that, so I think that definitely makes you look at things differently.
Although she alludes to a loss of her involvement in her children's lives as they grow up, ultimately Fran wants to pass on her own sense of agency to her children.	120-128	Their influences are more from the outside now…Unfortunately. I have less say on - like I've hardly seen my son and all his influences are from his peers. And whatever he does in his day. And I feel I have no say, I mean he is 18, he's an adult I: Sure Yeah. I mean I just want to know 'cause you said you'd be responsible for the way she turned out R: Giving them the right information and the love and the security for them to make good choices, as they get a bit, to be able to make choices.
Theme 3: Identity		Fran uses key phrases relating to a sense of purpose which she attaches to the role of parent: It's what we're here to do; at the moment I am her world;
Fran's adult identity is inextricable from role of parent.	88-90	I've always been a parent: I was a parent at 17 so I guess it has changed what my life would have been if I hadn't been, I guess.
Fran attaches spiritual purpose to the role of parent.	97-101	"It's like um what we are here to do. Um it's like the best thing ever, and I would say that definitely more so now, 'cause I can appreciate it now.
Being a parent later in life, having already had parenting experience of teenage children, has changed Fran's priorities.	103-106	R: So yeah it kind of changes your priorities, 'cause you know whereas before, kind of going to work and kind of the outside world was more important to me. Now it's very much her and parenting and getting it right, 'cause I've kind of got my son to look at, and it's like I'm responsible for where she could end up herself.
Early parental influence seen as important.	109-111	I: And you feel like where she ends up is your responsibility? R: I think, I think very much at that sort of age, I know it will come, but at the moment I am her world. [laughs]. [speaks to 6 month old daughter who is vocalising]:You are very vocal today darling.

Table of Themes Respondent D "Martine"	Line number	
Superordinate theme		**Example quotation**
Theme 1: External locus of control		Martine uses several key phrases relating to external locus of control: Supposed to (Line (l.) 28); have to (l. 88); expected to be (l. 70); acceptable (l. 28); you've got to x5 (ll. 31, 35, 56, 64, 72).
Expectations of parenting role changed over 18 years since first child	28	Definitely, just the way you're supposed to do it – what's acceptable now."
Parent feels under surveillance from school	31	"You've got to be really on the ball. Like if he went to school now…."
Modern parenting manners to be conformed to	35-36	"It's just the whole concept of everything. You've got to be, well, it's sort of what's etiquette of things, do you know what I mean yeah?"
Parent feels pressure of increased expectations of parents	54	"I worry even more about it."
Predominant Discourse: Some words not considered unacceptable, too negative	30-31	"Um, it's just like even down to don't say they're naughty children. Naughty's not a very positive word. You know just anything."
Obligation to be a certain kind of parent: teacher	64-72	"You've got to be a bit of everything – you know, so I get frustrated 'cause I'm not very good at teaching, you know when they come home with homework or - just trying to get them to understand more – I'm not very good. 'Cause one of my sons: he won't - try to tell him and he's right and you're wrong and you know you try to teach him anything as well and put that in the equation and it's….Sometimes I think, I'm not a teacher, I'm not this, but I'm expected to be….I feel like I've got to be, yeah"
Theme 2: Identity		
Parent's own activities constrained by time and focus on children	19	" I know what there is to do but I don't have time to do it"
Parent takes subordinate role in family	87-88	"Yeah I'm second best and worst, and the lower person, but yeah they come first and that's it, and you do change because of that, you have to."
Parent's identity subsumed in children's	85	"I'm just totally different, I'm all about them and that's it really definitely
Investment of self in role	60-62	"It's just a rollercoaster of emotions, everything…It's the biggest responsibility I've had, ever. I've ever took on. There is nothing [unintelligible]"
Theme 3: Influences on child		
Martine observes children growing up faster now	38-45	"And I feel they mature, the children themselves, older now…So like I've got 18 year old and 9 year old girls. Put it this way, the 9 year old now: what they, they, you know, even in school, not just her – her mates…It's all so much older."
Difficult to untangle influences: television, siblings, peers	47-49	"It might be telly, it might be because they've got older siblings, you don't know…Yeah, so it's a wide range I think."
Loss of parental influence once child has started school	74-76	"As soon as they, it's almost like as soon as they start School you lose [unintelligible]. They are then wildly influenced by everything else as well."

Table of Themes Respondent A "Rebecca"		
Superordinate theme	Line Number	Example quotation

Theme 1: Circularity		
Within child factors affect parent emotions and physiological response	5-6	"Well the first one he was a bit more complicated, he used to cry as a baby quite a lot, I did find it hard with him, but I mean he's 11 now so he copes on his own."
Within child factors given positive value judgement	8-10	But this time around I think I'm more relaxed so she seems to - it might just be her personality - but she just seems more relaxed so she sleeps like an angel. Whether that's down to me or down to her personality I don't know."
Child's physiological responses affect how strategies work and which impacts on parent's understanding of child.	30-32	"Whereas if she cries we just give her a nappy change, if she's still crying feed her, if she's still crying it's definitely her sleep. Whereas the last one did cry for no reason, 'cause I think we still did that with him, from memory, but he just still cried."
Different child's sleep patterns affecting parenting experience.	38-42	R: He'd wake up every two hours, that sort of scenario, whereas this one ever since she has been born has slept through, give or take, 11 to 5, and now we are going from 9 to 7, maybe with one hiccup during the night but…
		I: So you're not missing out on sleep too much this time around? R: No, it makes a huge difference, a huge difference.
Child's troubles have impact on atmosphere at home.	102-111	R: : Hopefully he will change, 'cause he seems a bit withdrawn sometimes, if not withdrawn, his personality has changed whereas he's more aggressive, 'cause I think he's had a hard day at School – I don't know if aggressive is the right word but – more uptight.
		I: Ok yeah, so it's affected him. R: So of course I'd be the first one to be moaned at. I: Yeah right, so how does that feel for you? R: It's horrible, I feel like I'm doing something wrong. I: Right R: It seems so relaxed with her; when he comes back, sometimes I feel: what's going to happen now? What's happened at school?
Contribution to mother's wellbeing of comparative levels of partner support.	12-19	"Probably with the situation I was in before, the partner I had then, he wasn't very helpful um whereas this time around different partner, completely different, completely different he's - well he grew up with about six sisters whether that helped I don't know - but he's fantastic, he comes in and he takes her straight off me and so it's like my time to chill out and relax. I do feed her myself, she's a breast fed baby, but just completely different he's very much hands on, so I just have some time to chill out myself, whereas before I had to do everything myself so I suppose you get uptight and like why doesn't the baby shut up that sort of scenario and if you're uptight then the baby tends to be uptight don't they."
	25-26	"[with this partner's support] Just so much easier, so much easier, and because I'm more relaxed and I know if she's crying, just go out for a walk and she'll be asleep and I can do what I want to do again."
	42-44	"And if she did wake up during the night, 'cause I'd actually expressed milk, my partner could do it as well you know, just yeah just so much more relaxed this time as well."
	132-134	"It's taking him there all the time. Although my partner tends to take him more often than not now"
	162-168	"'Cause my partner only works till 2 o'clock, I say only works till 2 o'clock – he goes out at 5 o'clock in the morning – so he comes back earlier, so you've got that support there from 2 o'clock onwards, so I suppose a normal family doesn't get that extra support till about 6 o'clock at night [unintelligible] in most families, whereas he takes her off, so I can cook dinner and it's just so much easier, so I don't have to do everything at the same time. It's so much easier."
Extended family increases independence of child	179-190	"He'll go round [to grandparents] for the day, well he invites himself really, he'll go round for the day and stay there for the day and go out and play with his friends, and if he needs the toilet he'll nip in the house, or if he wants a sandwich he'll nip in the house. Well that's the age group difference where I haven't got to take him there and bring him back, so I can concentrate on her [12 week old daughter], but then sometimes I think does he miss out, but then I don't think he does miss out 'cause he gets time to go round there, and he still gets to be here. I don't think he thinks I'm neglecting him type of thing. I think he's got the best of both worlds."

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Table of Themes Respondent A "Rebecca"		
Superordinate theme	Line Number	Example quotation

Theme 2: Evaluation		
Labelling child	34	"He was very much a crier"
	66, 414	"He's a follower"; "He is a follower"
Expectations of child arising from age , gender and physique	49-54	"Just found it hard, whereas he was a young baby 'cause he was born in August, at the end of August so he had to go to School a lot earlier, he was only 4 and 2 weeks . So um and being a tall one as well, I think the pressure on him to go to School was far too much. A boy, being tall and being young, I think they just expected him to do a lot more or behave maybe a little bit better."
	384-385	"He was talent spotted and he runs with the 14 year olds and bearing in mind that he's 11 so yeah he's good."
	387-391	"He won a few gold medals again last weekend, but yes well I'll definitely keep him to athletics now – he's just good at it. Got to find something for this one [12 week old daughter] now. Being a girl, I'm not sure 'cause they're different activities aren't they this time around? Although swimming and athletics we can still follow that."
Parent and school hold different constructs of behaviour	54-64	" Um yeah his behaviour wasn't … I'm not saying he was naughty, he was more mischievous, but it used to get him into trouble [Laughs]."
		"Well this is when he was in the first term at School and so he was 4 years and 3 months, and well that age group don't always do as they are told do they? I remember being called into School, and the teacher said to me we've told him several times to stay off the grass because it's muddy, and I said oh you're referring to his trousers then being muddy, you're apologising for his trousers being muddy? I said oh that's alright, it's School uniform isn't it? [Laughs]. I said: to me that's school uniform, you expect to get dirty, you expect paint all over it and that sort of scenario. But he's that sort of child, he doesn't always do as he's asked, but he's more mischievous he's not naughty, but he'll get himself into trouble doing silly things."
Teacher's construct of family, communication skills and judgemental attitude affect parent.	67-84	I: So how did that feel, being spoken to by the teacher?
		R: She's one of these, she's wasn't a people person. She could talk to the children, but she couldn't talk to adults, she'd talk to you like you were a child, and I didn't like her at all through that school year. And she sort of put me down, she said well maybe he's not in an environment where he feels settled. And I actually said to her, in fact he's probably the most settled child going, 'cause if you think it's only me that looks after him, Nanny and Grandad, that's the three key people that look after him, and most of these children actually I know go to after School club and Nanny and Grandad look after them as well, you know, and then they might have Mum and Dad or separated I said you can't tell me he's not well looked after or unsettled that he's in too many environments. He's got to be the luckiest kid here that's actually got three adults in his life, that are continuously in his life. I was a bit cross with that, I didn't like that at all. That teacher saying that, it was like she was accusing me of something.
		I: Yeah, and how did that feel?
		R: Well it felt just in a way sort of in a way degrading ,horrible …
		I: You were able to stand up and ….
		R: Yeah I was cross for a long time. Yeah I'm not that sort of character I wouldn't argue back …
		I: You wouldn't argue back?
		R: No I wouldn't argue back, but I just gave her my opinion then and then just left it.
Link between academic/sporty constructs and Reward, achievement and struggle?	123-127	"[Athletics is] the only thing I feel that he gets a well done for. 'Cause he's not very academic at all and um so he struggles with that, but he gets selected for things at school through his sport and I think he's quite happy about that, but he's never, I don't think he's rewarded at school for what he does academically."
Positive "sporty" construct	408	"But the sporty kids that I've known, they don't seem to take drugs or smoke or anything like that."
Child holds/adjusts to different generational constructs of behaviour management	237-244	R: Dad's very old fashioned so he wouldn't let my eldest boy get away with, I wouldn't say he was naughty, but get away with things as much as I would let him get away with things. I: Yeah, have you got an example? R: Possibly the way he maybe speaks to me, 'cause I always tend to give two warnings, and then, well even now I might end up him sitting on the stairs type of thing. Whereas Dad, I wouldn't even say there was always a warning there. My boy actually does relate to that, but he'll only relate to Grandad like that; if I was to do that, I think there would be hell.

Table of Themes Respondent A "Rebecca"		
Superordinate theme	Line Number	Example quotation

Theme 3: Perpetuating an active lifestyle		
Incorporating love of exercise into daily routines	25-26	"I know if she's crying, just go out for a walk and she'll be asleep and I can do what I want to do again"
	213	"I have got a car, but I never use it because I enjoy walking."
Rebecca currently feeling constrained by baby's needs, planning a compromise between own needs and baby's needs, and confident of ultimate return to previous activity levels.	370-377	R: Yeah we're very active, I just can't wait till I can get back to being active really. I: So it's important to you to be important to you to be active? R: Yeah it's just having her with me, I just can't do anything as such. I: How does that feel?
		R: When I go swimming - I am a swimmer, swimmer - but once she can go in the water, if she will stay in there for 15 minutes I know I can get away with still doing a reasonable amount of exercise with her 'cause I'm a strong swimmer, so I know I can hold her.
Benefits to whole family of access to free local activities	357-364	R: Yeah 'cause I work there [at leisure centre] and it makes a huge difference, cos we've just moved into a place and I don't know what money's like at the minute so we just use anything that's free basically.
		I: Yeah excellent, 'cause that's one of the perks of the job, does the whole family get free access?
		R: Yeah they will do yeah, 'cause my son can now use the gym, which is a bonus. That's between I think 8 and 16 so he can use that up to 3 times a week I think it is. My partner can get in there free as well and he uses it all the time. He uses the other centre as well 'cause when I take my son to run, 'cause they're run by the same company, he uses the gym there while he is running, so I get rid of both of them and get to come back with her again for a couple of hours in the evening.
	201-202	"I hate being in, hate being in, so I could just go walking with her. 'Cause now I've found this place [Children's Centre] and everything is free so I just walk up here and see what's on sort of thing."
Parent promotes engagement in sport to keep children safe and out of trouble.	381-382	"To keep them off the streets – that's the main reason why [my son] does athletics."
	393-395	"[Swimming]'s one of those things I think they have got to learn, especially here being near the coast. The 11 year old, I suppose he could go up to [coastal area] and you know you don't know what they get up to when they are on their own do you?"
	412-416	"Yeah healthier and not getting into trouble let's say. 'Cause he is a follower, so I'm sort of aware of that, so that's why I want to keep him more into sport, 'cause he can get into trouble at school. Again it's not 'cause he's naughty; he just follows and gets into trouble."
Rebecca makes her own choices re health and safety despite changing recommendations from pool/medical authorities	344-351	"Because she's not had all her jabs yet I haven't taken her swimming yet, but as soon as she has had all of those, but I do understand this time around they don't actually have to have all their jabs , whereas last time around they had to have had all their jabs before they could go in the pool. Um it's different now, but for my sanity, I don't know, I'd rather she'd had all her jabs before I took her in the water."
Relating as family through shared enjoyment of sport and leisure activities	366-368	"It's nice that he'll take the older one out [to sports activities] being that he's not his son; I think it's their time to bond as well."
	353-355	"Plus apart from that my partner wants to take her [swimming] as well so, yeah he's a bit jealous of that isn't he? [talking to baby]
Benefits of sport for child's wellbeing and behaviour	118-119	"Now he goes [to athletics] almost every night, and it's a huge difference 'cause he burns off, he's got so much energy, so he burns off, he's got somewhere to channel his energy"
Rebecca seeks to perpetuate positive aspect of her own upbringing by engaging her children in sport	397	"I was always very active; I was brought up swimming every day."

Table of Themes Respondent A "Rebecca"		
Superordinate theme	Line Number	Example quotation

Theme 4: Social Interaction		
Rebecca accesses Children's Centre activities for the peer support, initially for herself, and in time for her baby too.	206,216	[Re breastfeeding group]: "But it was just having people to talk to, not necessarily talking about feeding but just people to talk to." "I usually choose the baby massage group 'cause there's more people. At the breastfeeding one there was only 2 every time I turned up and that's just not the same."
	227... 233	"The social side yeah, more than for her, she's too young for it. At the minute I come up here just for me, but definitely when she's crawling, or when she's sitting up actually I'll bring her up here for her, just for interaction with other children more than anything, yeah to teach her that there's naughty kids as well. [Laughs]
At times Rebecca's baby's needs conflict with her own need for social interaction.	210	"I really enjoyed that [baby massage group,] it's just she's not always sociable at that time so we get half way through the massage kind of thing and then she just cries."
Tension between bonding with child and letting them go into their own social world.	251, 253	"Trying to play with the kids I think more than anything, trying to play with them as much as you can, or as much as is possible. I think it's trying to keep them with you as long as you can type of thing."
	256-261	"Sometimes I feel that that relationship between me and my oldest boy has broken down. 'Cause he doesn't tend to play with me. Even if it's a game of cards, I find it hard to get him to play with me, he'd rather be on his computer. Or now, playing out the front type scenario."
	263-265	"We've just moved house and he's found some new friends. And we are in that situation where I've got to let him go out, he's got to go out and find out new things first otherwise they're never not free type scenario."
Rebecca seeks peer interaction to avoid feeling isolated at home with her baby.	274-284	R: Um if I was to be stuck in the house on my own I don't think I would lose my patience I don't think it would be that, it'd just feel like I'm too busy concentrating about her, but if I get out and go somewhere for a walk, she obviously settles down a lot easier and maybe even goes to sleep if I'm really lucky, but then it's just getting out and if you're in different scenery she seems to just, well it's just her character. I: What sort of things do you do when you are out and about? R: Just visit different people to be honest, I've got a lot of my friends are within a 10 minute walk of me, so there's probably about 3 or 4 of them that I could go and pop into at any time if it's a bad day, or not necessarily a bad day, but just makes the day easier, or it just breaks the day up.
Parental responsibility to direct child towards positive social interactions and to shape their social environment	399-401, 414-416	"But you just think that with this generation of kids I don't like them playing outside all the time so we make a point that he does go athletics, but it's very rare that he doesn't want to go anyway though, but I think it's something I would make him do."
		"'Cause he is a follower, so I'm sort of aware of that, so that's why I want to keep him more into sport, 'cause he can get into trouble at school. Again it's not 'cause he's naughty, he just follows and gets into trouble."
	420-422	"Guide, guide them in the right direction, I think I struggled guiding the first one in the right direction sometimes, but he seemed to settle down now. I think it's just guiding him in his life style has been the important bit for us, I think socialise nicely with others yeah."

Paper 2: Facilitator 1, Facilitator 2, Charlotte, Jess ,Kate, Rachel

Table of Themes Facilitator 1	Line	
Superordinate theme	Number	Example quotation

Theme 1: Delivering to a group		
Preparation important: Tailoring vignettes to group, delicate balance between covering content and meeting particular needs of group	35-36	"It's like a 50/50 balance between trying to deliver the content and trying to accommodate the people in the group."
Experiential learning re complexity of delivery	83-90	"[As co-facilitator] I didn't get any idea of the complexity of how difficult it was to deliver."
Group affects F's mood: exhilarated by challenging group; drained by quiet group	182-189	"I've got 2 groups at the moment which I run…the usual Riverview [context of current research] which is this fantastic mix of these very challenging people but there's an energy. There's real characters in the group. And it's challenging but fun. And my group at the Crossroads is the opposite: they are 6 very quiet people and like [colleague] said it just sucks the life out of you to deliver to them."
Instant feedback: stand-up comedian metaphor	251-261	"It's like instant feedback. It's like the opposite of EP work really where you go in and you do a record of consultation and you go back in a month later and things might have moved slightly, but you don't get that instant feedback do you? ...Whereas this is kind of you are in a room and it's like a comedian: I think they tell a joke and the audience laugh then they know it is funny don't they? You get that instant - and that's how I feel with that. It's instant feedback that it's working; if it works. When it doesn't it's embarrassing."
Barriers to good session lack of preparation or flat group	384-405	"I think in gerneral times when it doesn't go so well is when either, it's either of two things. Either the group are flat. You get a week, you get some weeks where you do the homework feedback and sometimes everyone has had a bad week. So if you combine that with quite a quiet group overall then it can be quite difficult. And some sessions aren't as entertaining as others and I think from my point of view, if I'm not 100% sure of the delivery of the session then I'm not confident , and then I think I flounder around. I'm always aware if I'm not sure of what I'm doing the parents seem to pick up on it - they can smell blood. And then it's hard to claw it back."

Table of Themes Facilitator 1	Line	
Superordinate theme	**Number**	**Example quotation**

Theme 2: Retention		
Conflicting responsibilities: fidelity to programme versus responsiveness to individual concerns	38-45	"If you just deliver the content and don't allow for people's comments and the way they might be feeling that week, or what may or may not have happened then I think you would just lose them. But if you become too wrapped up in the individuals in the group then you can end up where you get to the end of the session - you've got 2 hours - and you've not covered half of the content."
Midweek phone calls key to engagement and retention	47-48	"There's a big role in midweek phone calls - so between the sessions it's about keeping those parents engaged and really for me the crux is making sure they turn up again next week."
Midweek phone call essential to convey genuine interest	294-296	"The midweek phone call: how are you getting on? I'm looking forward to seeing you again next week and I think it dawned on him that we did genuinely, genuinely want him there."
Use of humour and coaxing to get emotive members to stay	313-318	"I think it was [partner in couple] really in one particular session. She just challenged everything and in the end she just got up and swore at me and walked out and he stayed and I just kind of coaxed him to stay. And then after about half an hour she just came back into the room, and I made a bit of a joke because in that week we were talking about time out, time out to calm down. So she came back and just looked at me and I said so have you calmed down? Just as a joke and everybody laughed and she just sat back down."
Empty chair seen as failure – negative affect	322-327	"Um you know to me - and I know it sounds a bit twee - I've only just thought of this, but an empty chair to me is a failure. If I've set the chairs up and there is an empty chair then whatever I'm doiong is wasted isn't it because I'm talking to an empty chair, so I hate it. I hate it when people don't turn up."
Make effort to take a personal interest, talk at break	338-344	"I think one of the things you can do [to make people feel welcomed and not judged] is go out and talk to them beforehand or in the break or afterwards. Just to take them to one side and to talk to them and kind of show a genuine personal interest in them. Because there is the group and there is the group dynamic, and there's the content of the session, but if you follow someone out in the break and just collar them and say you know that's our phone number and any troubles and how was this particular thing and what are you doing tonight and how are you going to manage that? Just take a personal interest in them so they know that I suppose they see you as genuinely interested in them because they don't - their experience in life is probably - they brush with people to whom they are a difficulty or a challenge."
Empathy	347-348	"To show them a bit of kindness if you like and a bit of genuine - um show them that you are a person and they are a person and you understand how awful it must be kind of for them."
Measure of success is for all to complete course	424-426	"I think that what's important for me is that people want to come back. If I can start a course with 10 people and end with 10 people because they all feel that they want to come, that's my measure of success."
Personal style of delivery linked to priorities as psychologist	410-433	"[Re personal style of delivery]: [Supervisor] says that I'm relaxed and that I let people have their say and um I don't judge what they say, I kind of let them go with it, but I know it's an implied criticism that I don't shut people up quick enough…And part of me thinks [supervisor] is too inflexible and I'm sure [supervisor] thinks I'm too flexible. And somewhere I'm sure maybe in the middle, and I am aware that sometime people's weeks can run away with the time and we miss out...so probably too laid back and er - what is the word? - amenable maybe to what they want to talk about rather than - I don't plough through the session...What's important to me is that people want to come back. If I can start a course with 10 people and end with 10 people because they want to come that's my measure of success. More so than - because I give more leeway - but maybe that's because I'm a psychologist I don't know. If somebody starts to say something that's really important to them I don't feel very comfortable saying that's OK sorry we can't talk about that now; I'll talk to you about it at the break which is what [supervisor] says to do. But I think sometimes, with the best will in the world, you are opening up a can of worms every time you walk into a session. You've got 6, 7, 8, 10 very challenging people with things they want to say, to get off their chest, and when they do it's all up in the air and I don't feel comfortable in just parking it to one side and just saying sorry I've got to show the next clip."

Table of Themes Facilitator 1	Line	
Superordinate theme	**Number**	**Example quotation**

Theme 3: Cognitive approach

Breakthrough: reframing: tipping point	221-228	"And um it was like they suddenly realised at that moment as a group they suddenly realised that they are the influence on their child because that is the tippoing point you get to. They all come to the group thinking they have got a problem child and how do they deal iwth their child and how do they make their child different and normally about week 4 or 5 somewhere someone will say to you: Oh it's me that's got to change isn't it? And they realise that the way they are with their child is - you reap what you sow don't you; you get what you give or whatever - and um they were hooked then. They were absolutely hooked into the fact that I think they realised that it was working."
Using own psychological knowledge to illustrate point	210-221	"She really seemed to engage with this vignette and she kind of - you could see - so she said OK so if I want to teach my child social skills, if I want to do it actually how do I do it? You could actually see her thinking this is an important session for me to go on, actually, please tell me how do I do it. And um the content of the session is that you model it: you model the correct social behaviour, and then if that doesn't work you prompt...And um we started to talk about how you would model it... I remembered a stat that I was told at a recent conference that how you get meaning from an interaction with somebody, and it was if I get my percentages right now it was 65% from body language and 25% from tone of voice and only 10% from the actual words that they say. And she said oh I'm always telling my husband about tone of voice - no she said about the non-verbal behaviour she realised what she was like. And we've got a couple on the group who said - and the woman said to the man see I've told you how important tone of voice is and that was it - it was like a breakthrough moment."
Non-judgemental approach essential, non-authoritarian	288-294	"I think it's the non-judgemental - the IY is not there to judge and it's just try this you know. Go away and try this. If you can go away and try this and it works. 'Cause you know they are used to dealing with Social Services. And that particular dad every time he has brushed with authority or anyone it's been you know hitting him with a stick you know. He's been doing things wrong and they've been coming down and I think it was the idea that he could come along and openly talk about some of the things that he'd done and said and that nobody judged him and we said OK that's fine, that's great, and we're looking forward to seeing you again next week."
Most challenging members seen as having greatest need therefore need extra effort to retain so they benefit	296-300	"'Cause for me the harder they are to reach, the more challenging they are, they are the people you desperately want. They are going to benefit so much from attending as many sessions as they can. They are the people that you bend over backwards - and I know in supervison it was watched and they said I cannot believe that you didn't snap and throw him out."
Cognitive approach to coping with challenging members: it's not about me.	302-308	"And the pair of them [participants who came as a couple on another course] are as a pair as challenging you can get and they challenged and bucked against everything and - but we didn't ask them to leave. They were incredibly rude and to me but the fact that you are not there as a person, you are not there as a - it's not about me. There is this fantastic wealth of stuff that we can give to you and it's up to you but I'm going to give it to you and take away what you want to, and I don't care. I don't think he was being rude to me; I think he was being rude to authority and being rude to people telling him how to do it, what to do and you let it go over your head."
Reflection in action	327-330	"And I hated it when she left because I thought oh, and you are constantly questioning yourself: Could I have - ? Why has she gone? Have I made her go? Is my attitude - ? Did I come across as irritated by her or -? Why have I lost her?"
Positive affect linked to retaining challenging member	331-332	"And when she came back I was just really, really pleased because of all of the people on the group those two people needed this the most. And the fact that she'd come back; I was just really pleased that she'd come back really."

Table of Themes Facilitator 1	Line Number	
Superordinate theme		**Example quotation**

Positive view of Social Services nominated parents	360-367	"That is a challenge: if you look before the course starts and you've got a number of Social Services nominations you know those parents are potentially there under protest. Well that's what I would have thought, but it's normally either they can get their children back or can keep their children if they come on the course. And you kind of think oh they are only doing it, they are only coming just to get Social Services off their back, but then you realise that they are doing it because they want to keep their children. Because they love their children and they want their children. And because they want to keep them. That's why they need to get Social Services off their back. It's not to get Social Services off their back: it's to keep their children and to be better parents to their children. And I think once they - once you see them as parents rather than Social Services nominations. Once they realise that - I think they turn up - they think oh I might stick this; I might have to sit through 14 weeks and just nod and smile and turn up just to get through it. And I'm sure a lot of them do think that on Session 1 but after a couple of sessions they get to enjoy it and realise that it is actually useful. And then they start to engage with it because if you sit there for two and half hours why not engage. So it doesn't bother me if they are Social Services nominations. And they are the most challenging ones like we said."

Theme 4: Making a difference		
Improved outcome with changed understanding?	228-231	"And the following week they all reported successes and better weeks and they are not really sure why but they think it might be to do with the special time and they have actually been spending time with their child and their child has actually said when am I going to get my special time today"
Questioning own contribution to change	242-244	"It is a real challenge because you're faced - part of me feels impotent really - you've got these parents with these massive, massive problems; families in absolute crisis and terrible, horrible things happening to them and sometimes you think am I making any difference at all? Can I make - can I really do anything for them just by seeing them for 2 hours a week?"
Challenge: mountain metaphor	249	"You always start with like a mountain ahead of you and but yeah so it's lovely actually that you know you are making a difference."
Contrast with generic EP work	250-253	""When they say my child has gone to bed this week and I've actually had some sleep, you know it works and that's lovely. It's like instant feedback; it's the opposite of EP work really where you go in and you do a record of consultation and you go back in a month later and things have moved slightly but you don't get that instant feedback do you?"
Making a difference e.g. of man who "turned it around" and moved to tears at successful completion	267-286	"Just going back to that how important a difference you can make…there's a couple of people who come [to another IY course] and the dad had spent his whole adult life, all his childhood in care; he'd spent his whole adult life in prison. Um and he came to the first session and was the ultimate kind of bad lad and no hope kind of person and um he wasn't but he had had the most terrible upbringing and we saw them last week which is a year on from that course walking along pushing a pram with the same partner. They are still together and they are getting married this year and he is having counselling and really kind of turned it around so that was lovely to see to see that. And they want to sign up, they've tried, they have booked up to go on the next round of courses, so they have booked up for a toddler IY for when the baby is born...He was a proper mean dude you know, and jailed for racist attacks and um you know and he cried when we gave him the certificate at the end of the course because he said that it was the first thing he had ever, ever been given; the first thing he had ever succeeded in; the first time he had ever finished anything or succeeded in anything his whole life and he was in - trying to hide the tears."
Not just a job. Holds meaning of impact on lives e.g. of motivation to engage member with complex issues	439-468	"Having delivered a few [IY courses] now I really, I think that it is - I've seen how it can - how - the impact it can have on people. So I think with each course that I deliver I become more aware of how important it is that I get it right. It's not just a job. It's not just turn up with your flipchart and deliver it. I think that there's more to it than that."

Table of Themes Facilitator 2	Line Number	
Superordinate theme		**Example quotation**
Theme 1: Individual support		
Midweek phone call as personal reminder and support for putting IY strategies into practice	33-51	"Midweek phone calls is: How is your week going? Have you done your homework? I've marked your homework - really good. Are you having problems with anything? Do you remember what your thing that you were going to try at home this week was? Are you keeping up with your 10 minutes of special time? Are you doing some play activities with your child? And it's just like continually pushing in what it is that you have done the last week because half of them walk out and will have fogotten what you talked about by the time they've got to the bus stop. So it's about reminding them: What you are supposed to be doing this week is practising or ignoring or 10 minutes special time. And I know we are moving on to time out, time out to calm down, but are you still practising your special time? Because the number of them that think that you move on: you are doing the next topic but you don't take the first topic with you. So by the time you get to ignore at the very end you are still doing your special time, you are still doing your active play, and you've tried your time out to calm down before you get, you know, to consequences."
Trust issue re answering phone: phoning from mobile reassures participant caller is known	59-68	"A lot of families won't answer the phone if I've dialled from the office because it is an unknown number, a witheld number. They only answer the phone if I dial from my mobile or because they know my number because I have left a message and left my number so they have put my number in their phone so they know who it is but it's funny the number of people who just won't answer."
Phone calls to keep connection over holiday break: support metaphor: "propping them up"	76-89	[If leaving a message]: "It's F2 calling from Incredible Years. Just giving a quick call see how your week is going, a reminder of the topic for this week, don't forget your homework and look forward to seeing you on [day]. I also gave them a ring through the holidays so it wasn't like a 3 week gap before they had contact. I tried to ring them both weeks just to remind them what they were supposed to be doing. I think that was the week they did a field trip. They went up - you know the example was going up to the library or something. To remind them to do the field trip, to remind them to do their homework. Don't forget the special time. Yes I know the children can be cranky - it's half term: they need structure because that's what they are used to so when they've got all this free time on their hands that's when they get up to mischief. So what are you going to do? What are you going to put in place? So it's just constant propping for want of a better expression. Propping them up to make sure they get through the week."
Emphasising parental agency through phone calls	87-88	"So what are you going to do? What are you going to put in place?"
Signposting through phone calls	92-97	"A mother... needed some information because her doctor had dropped it in her that she need to go to some counselling so she didn't know where to look so I was able to say with my [parent support role] hat on: This is where you can look, this is where you can go. So but it is things that can be dealt with without it coming up at the session that are having to take time out of because obviously it's quite packed in."
Midweek phone call as opportunity for participants to offload individually	54-57	[Re midweek phone call]: "And it also means that they can get a lot of stuff off their chest that we won't have an opportunity to go through. Some of it they just want to offload but they get the opportunity to offload over the phone rather than taking up time in session. Obviously there are valid points that do need to come out in session."

Table of Themes Facilitator 2	Line	
Superordinate theme	**Number**	**Example quotation**
Theme 2: Retention		
Didn't lose anybody	112-113	"I think that the whole course went really well, we didn't lose anybody. We are the only group who started with the same number of people we finished with."
Retention despite challenge	115-117	"So I think F1 did really well to keep on board with that, although F1 got a right - I'm not sure what the right word is - slamming some weeks from certain participants, because I think it is quite a successful course."
Retention: Phone calls might contribute	119-120	"Whether it was the fact that the phone calls were done, and maybe they feel obliged to come if someone has rung them."
Retention: Group dynamics might contribute	122-124	"I don't know if it's just the - I'm not sure what the word would be - the atmosphere in the group as we work through things. 'Cause they build up a cameraderie don't they and then towards the end they were actually talking about making up a facebook page - I haven't heard if they actually have."
Retention: Course content might contribute	125	"I don't know if it is the content of the course."
Retention: Motivation of participants to improve families' lives might contribute	125-126	"They are there because they want to improve their families' lives."
Retention: own contribution: rewards/hospitality/friendly/taking interest/equality/no preaching	131-134	"How have I contributed to that [retention]? Sticking a treat on them as they walk through the door on the first week. Being there offering tea or coffee with a smile. Asking them how was this week or what happened last week and just chatting and being seen as a person and not someone who is there to preach to them."
Retention: Both F2 and F1 giving examples from own life	136-138	"You know when you use examples from your own life. When your kids have climbed the shelves in Tescos or when your kids have dismantled something they weren't supposed to. It's just showing them that no one's perfect. But you can try and change a little bit just to help yourself. F1 has done that as well."
Retention: Ethos of equality and non-expert role	141-154	"You know sometimes when something has gone - well not wrong but when you could have thought I could have done that better and when you are sharing with the group - because one of the ethoses is - I've just done balanced peer appraisal and one of the things is: how do you demonstrate that it's not mastering? Do you understand what I mean? That you are not the master - expertise - that you are not coming from it as - I'm not sure what the word would be - everything is perfect in your world and you are there to preach to them. You're showing that pre IY you had these things. You are implementing some of these things at home and you are having an improvement...We are with them. We are not above them; we're with them."
Retention: Normalising problems in family life	151-152	"So to show that everybody's family has different things that show them up, but that there are some things that you can put in place that will help."

Theme 3: Ethos		
Seating reflects non-expert ethos: with them	154-159	"We are not above them we are with them which is why one of the things from the IY is that you sit with them; you don't preach from the front. Do you remember F1 is always sitting - or whoever - when I do my bit I sit in the middle. That is because we are sitting with the parents; we are not preaching to the parents. It's one of the ethoses behind [IY]."
Personal style reflects non-expert ethos in order to engage participants	220-225	"I think you have to be quite open and friendly 'cause if you're not open then they are not going to speak to you. You have to be a bit chatty, a bit you know: I've got kids aswell, I've been there, I know what it is like and be sympathetic but you've also got to show well I have tried this and it does work. Because you have got to be able to show an example of why I should sit here for 14 weeks. What are you going to show me that is different to what I'm already doing? You have to show that you know your stuff. But I think you can get that over by being chatty rather than by just preaching."
Meaning behind F2 role of giving out rewards=leading by example	21-26	"The role of co-facilitator is to - mainly to scribe, to give out the stickers and treats. Because it's leading by example so if someone has a good point or they do something well then you reward them. So we are trying to get across to the parents - as this is how you lead by example."

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Table of Themes Facilitator 2	Line Number	
Superordinate theme		**Example quotation**
Theme 4: Catering to group needs		
Contributing to group staying engaged	26-27	[Role of F2]: "To chip in if we feel that the facilitator hasn't got a point across. It is about keeping the group up to date, staying together and moving on with the information."
F2 role involves a lot of background and paper work	27-31	"I mark the homework, I make sure everything is there: all the homework sheets, all the handouts. I type up the hand outs every week. I do all the midweek phone calls - making sure everything is alright with the families, chasing up the people who didn't attend, so there is quite a lot of background stuff to the co-facilitator role."
F2 shocked on behalf of F1 when challenged by group	166-197	[Re a week that didn't go so well]: "Sometimes when, from a co-facilitators point of view, when F1 says - for example week 13 - F1 was really hyped up: I really love this week, this is problem solving - all the groups they love problem solving. Smack - they might do; this group didn't. Why don't we do that - 6 of the 10 forms had: why didn't we do this in week 1? Why weren't we shown this right back at the beginning? 'Cause I have spent the last 14 weeks - and that is the biggest thing that my kids fight about is because they can't solve out problems between them. And they go in fist first rather than compromise and this is what I needed to learn. Urm and it's actually at the bottom of the triangle but why we don't teach it to the top of the triangle I don't know...They didn't get the vignettes F1 was showing because they were not in the right place, they weren't receptive enough or I don't know why it didn't work but it didn't. And I think F1 was quite devastated because you put a lot of work into planning the sessions and to showing this and doing that and they just weren't having any of it...It was a shock because when you are working with a facilitator like F1 who is very on the ball, who is very with the parents and who is moving everything along for the parents - I know there is always going to be some contention from various members of the group who are quite open about their disbelief about some of the things that IY suggests. They um - but to see them just have no interest and why haven't we done this before? Really questioning F1 as a facilitator on why IY have wasted 14 weeks of my life because this is what I should have been doing in the beginning and then working on everything else on top. So it was quite a shock."
Satisfaction at well organised session	204-205	"I suppose the end of a session you feel yeah that went well. I've got all the handouts, I've got everything, the session went smoothly, everything fell into place."
Planning ahead to meet challenge of tailoring vignettes to particular group needs	231-250	"I think the hardest thing is - you know the vignettes that we show? For each section sometimes there's only 1 or 2 but sometimes you might get 6 or 7 or even 8 choices for different points that you want to get across…And gearing it, making sure that the gearing is right for the group. You have to go with the majority of the group. But I think that making sure that no one's excluded because of something that you do...I think that is going to be the hardest bit, yes...so I'm working on the planning at the moment already for [IY course that F2 will be leading as F1 for first time]."

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Table of Themes Facilitator 2	Line Number	
Superordinate theme		**Example quotation**
Theme 5: Reasons for attending		
Referrals from Parent Support Advisers: IY reinforces parenting skills and offering strategies	264-267	"Sometimes we get referrals from the PSAs so it could be that they are just - have gone to the PSA and oh things aren't going well at the moment, little Johnny is really playing up, what have you got of the Incredible Years? It is just a reinforcing parenting skills, a new ethos, just something new for you to try."
Self-referrals: IY builds confidence in absence of extended family support	270-279	"Some of them are just parents who want to do what is best by their children but who don't have the support or the - everyone moves away. Whereas before in generations past as a mother you would have your mother and everyone had bigger families so you would have your brothers and sisters, your aunts and cousins to go to for advice when you have got problems with your children because your family is in the locality or you are a close knit family. Whereas now we are getting more single mothers who don't want to be seen as failing or we are getting more families who they just come down here for work and they are on their own, so they have got no structure. Perhaps they don't want to be ringing up home and saying little Johnny is doing so and so. So we are getting quite a few families who are coming for themselves or who have suggested coming on the course for themselves just to booster their self-esteem."
Journey metaphor: direction/lost. Not wrong but lost	279-281	"You can parent maybe; you just need a little bit of nudge in the right direction or you've got lost somewhere. Quite often not that you are doing it wrong just a little bit lost."
Social Services referrals: depends on how parent views their attendance: Little engagement if just ticking box. Very engaged if seeing it as chance to make a difference.	283-291	[Re particpants referred through Social Services]: "You get two sets of those. There are those who have been told by Social Services or the Courts to do the IY and they are there to tick a box. They sit there. There is no, there is very little interaction. Unless you ask about so and so there is no participation. They are just there to tick the box. And you get other families who are looking at this as a chance to really make a difference to their child's life either to get them back, or not to have them taken away. And they do everything: they participate, they do the homework, they are actively involved, they want to learn. Because again maybe they got a little bit lost, but further down the line for them so."

Table of Themes "Charlotte"	Line Number	
Superordinate theme		**Example quotation**
Theme 1: Change		
Dramatic change in child: *dumbfounded; amazing; unreal*	41-55	"The first 3 or 4 weeks I was absolutely dumbfounded by the changes in [child]…It was amazing…The difference in him is unreal."
Change in parent's way of playing	43-53	"We - I play every day with the boys for 10 sometimes 20 minutes a day. I try to get 20 minutes a day in. Erm, I never realised why I was doing it - it was just mummy and [child] time, it was just like special time…but it was just the different way of doing it now as opposed to the way we were doing it...I mean we're still doing the colouring, we're still doing the building blocks, but now instead of me joining in with [child], it's more I'm sat back applauding him for what he's doing and how well he's getting on."
Following step by step process	57-64	"I'm just quarter of the way through the book now and already I'm eager now for the next stage…Stage 8 in the book is where I need to be but it says at the beginning 'Don't skip the pages, read all the chapters.' …And I'm - ah, I was so tempted to just read the bits I needed to know, and I was like: No, let's do it right, let's get it right."
Change in parent and child through child led play	71-75	"It's child focused more than it is just sat down playing…I mean there is a big difference in the way we do it…And he really responded well."
Theme 2: Reflection		
Cognitive approach/reframing:	Field notes	"My biggest thing has been working out what really matters and what doesn't."
Emotion coaching to improve outings with child	184-204	"At the moment I know I can walk through town now with [child] and although he's not picking up on the key words yet like all the emotions that we're doing…I'm trying to teach him 'bored' at the moment. I really need him to know 'bored' 'cause I think half of my problems if we're in town and we're clothes shopping is he's getting bored so he's running off...I'm looking at clothes; he's gone....Then it's hold on he's seeking my attention because I'm too busy here with clothes...If he could say 'Mummmy, I'm bored', we'll move on; we'll go elsewhere. As soon as we've got that I think we'll get a lot further. That'll stop a lot of his temper tantrums because most of his tantrums aren't in the house, they're out of the house. In the house he can just - if he's bored he'll go and do something different."
Reflecting on strategies already in use e.g. planned ignoring	211-224	"Turning your back on him as well, that worked before we even knew about it…Again, we was out shopping, clothes shopping and he just ran off from me. I turned my back and just trundled towards the doors. I thought it's the only way out of the building so he's going to come past. Rather than chasing him around the store and giving him that attention I'll just sit at the door and wait for him to come to me, and he soon did: he ran up: 'Mummy, Mummy, I'm sorry , I'm sorry, I'll be good, I'm sorry.'…I thought: Ah, turning your back works does it!"
DVD would be useful for parents to have	227-264	"Maybe giving a disc, the same disc as what F1 plays on the TV…Just so we can sit down and see it for ourselves and work through it. And then if something doesn't go right at home we've got it there and then in front of us; you haven't got to wait a week to see [F1] again...And then we can just sit there and pause it, play it, rewind it, and play it again until we get it right in our own head. Instead of try and read it, it's visual so it's easier to understand. And if that situation occurs again in the week, try it again. And if it doesn't work then at the end of the week when you do see [F1] ask again...Not everybody's got the time like I have to sit down and read the book if something's not going right...Everybody can spend 10 minutes of an evening sat down watching the TV and then think through the same strategies as what they're going through like writing it out on a piece of paper: how, what was happening, what the response was and then you've got it there as well then for the next time. Stick it on your fridge and then you: 'Oh yeah I remember now'. It's just another simple solution isn't it."

Table of Themes "Charlotte"	Line	
Superordinate theme	Number	Example quotation

Theme 3: Construct of parenting course

Recommendation through leaflet	276-296	"Get somebody that's done the course to do a leaflet…I would, yeah, because it has made a dramatic improvement to [child]. I would do a leaflet stating that it's not a parenting course, it just enhances on what you've already got…And it does work: I'm living proof that it works...Erm and just simple statements like that. After 5 weeks of - the big change in [child] was amazing...Rather than just sending out people to talk to you, send out something that somebody that's actually sat through the course themselves, so they see it from their point of view, not just the trainer.
Construct of parenting course	5-7	"I thought it was like a parenting course and there's nothing wrong with my parenting skills otherwise [older child] wouldn't be where he is now."
Home visit sold concept of IY	9-23	"But when [F1] actually spoke to me about what it actually entails I was more than happy to go along with it then…Basically that it was all going to be a group of parents and they've got a crèche facility which was a major thing for me, um but it's a group of parents all with similar problems and basically we all get together and just talk about all our different strategies, about different ways people have found to deal with different situations.. And I thought if I can learn something by somebody else's mistake more than like have to learn by my own."
Negative view of parenting course v IY (not seen as parenting course)	29-38	"[When referred through CAMHS] Not presented right at all. No way. I thought it was a parenting course and I was like I don't think so…[A parenting course would be] erm where you're all sat down. It's very similar to what we got in the set up. It'd be sat down talking about all the different strategies of dealing with different problems but it'd be more parent focused: You *mustn't* do this around your child; you must *not* smack your children; you must *not* do this with your children...This isn't; it's just boosting what's already there."

Theme 4: Challenge of unfamiliar group

Friendship support to access unfamiliar group	90-97	"I'm very wary on new circumstances. I don't like going into a group full of strangers; I can't stand that…That's why I brought [another participant] along, so I had somebody. I couldn't walk into that room on my own. No way could I."
Snowballing	99-109	[indicating friend in kitchen] "And she's the same [wary of group of strangers]. She's going to be doing the course as well...As long as you can bring somebody yourself. I mean if you've got the get up and go to do it on your own then go for it and that's amazing, but if you haven't it's nice to know that you can bring someone with you...And if they're going to learn from it as well, all the more reason to do it."

Theme 5: Leader qualities

Leadership roles valued (and complementary)	115-161	"There's respect there for F1 and F2…for different reasons I think more than anything. F1 is the more focused on the book person; 'cause everything F1 comes out with I'm now reading in the book…And F2's respect I think is just because [they're] always there and you can always talk to F2, always. F2's very approachable...But I think together they work well...Yeah it really does work well because with one you can ask all the questions for one 'cause [they've] got all the answers but the other one [they're] more approachable about general home life."
Approachable leaders essential for retention	167-174	[If facilitators not approachable] "I reckon a lot more people would not turn up…It'd be like going to a school and being taught stuff. It just - it wouldn't feel friendly and relaxed…making it just a nice place to be and relaxed."

Table of Themes "Jess"	Line Number	
Superordinate theme		**Example quotation**

Theme 1: Extrinsic Motivation		
Under obligation from Social Care	Int 1: 3-4	"They wanted me to do it again as a refresher and they wanted [partner] to join in."
Monitoring by social worker motivates Jess to tidy house	459-474	"So that's why I was trying to pick up before you came…But you know [social worker] might turn up at any time…cos he may think he's done the wrong decisions [taking them off Child Protection Register] and I do try to keep up to date, but I had a bad day yesterday; I couldn't do anything at all."
Feels under obligation from Social Care to keep house tidy regardless of pain	484	"They've said it's like to me it's like whether I'm sore or not you've still got to keep the house tidy."
Motivated by desire to keep off Child Protection register	486-487	"They think clutter is too much for [the children]. And I don't want to end up back on the Child Protection Register so I'm trying my best."
Theme 2: Wellbeing		
Not fully able to benefit first time due to depression	Int 1: 6-7	"I was fine by it because it just gives me a refresher. On the first one I had severe depression so I don't think I took it all in. This time is more better - more support and help."
Factors such as child response to parent stress affect outcomes	Int 1:15-16	"I have bad days and good days a bit like everyone. 'Cause I'm stressed this week [the children] are picking up on it so…"
Health impacted on ability to work	383-385	"[partner] has to work 'cause I can't work still at the moment…I can't hardly walk."
Heat affects wellbeing	399-402	"I'm hoping not to cook because I'm going to be too hot. Last night I struggled to eat my tea…it's so bad I've got no appetite."
IY versus own perspective of confidence and self esteem	451-457	"[F2] and that said my confidence and self-esteem had gone up but…'Cause I said it was down and they said no it's come right up."
Own well-being affects ability to tidy house	457	"At the moment [confidence and self-esteem] is down 'cause everytime I'm down the house is…It keeps going up and down, up and down, but that's also my mood. Not my mood - it's more like trying to control my body with the pain."
Uses music to boost mood and motivate self	492-494	"I'll just stick on my music - but it's too hot - it keeps - it just boosts me and I like just do the housework to music."
Clutter: literal	492	"At the moment I feel cluttered at the moment."
Clutter: metaphorical	499-501	"It's 'cause I worked hard the other day, top to bottom. There's not one room tidy apart from the dining room. I've got a lawnmower in the kitchen. That can't go in the kitchen because of the cut grass on the lawnmower."
Construct of clutter	502-503	"I don't think it [clutter] did [matter to us]. It's - we was told it was a petty case but they thought the kids were at risk…In a lack - clutter feeds the mind and…"
Theme 3: Financial Considerations		
Complexities around Consequences: Initially Jess presents her as the stronger enforcer of consequences. Jess goes on to reveal that she is reluctant to take away Dance as she had paid for it.	301-313	"I asked [child] twice and I said you don't get dressed and Daddy will take away your dance, and that's the last resort. But he said I don't care but I thought you do care…So then he went up and got dressed 'cause I mentioned the Dance word…We don't likes using it…Dad will yes; he's stronger than me and he will actually keep to the dance...'cause I'm the one that pays for it…I pay £5 and that's for 2 days. Otherwise it's £3.50 for one session."
Financial considerations	315-355	"So each week I keep back £5 [for Dance] that's why [younger child] this week I had enough money; I got him a magazine and then he conned me out of a pair of sunglasses as well! [Older child] can't wear sunglasses 'cause of his prescription so I've got to like see if I can get a prescription pair sunglasses for him…It's like, he'd like - he'll have to wear clip-ons or get a pair of prescription ones which is not really on the NHS...'Cause he's got one bad eye and one good eye, so he can wear proper sunshades, but he can't see out of his left eye properly...I'll just have to ask if he can have prescription sunglasses on the prescription literally free; you're allowed a pair a year. He's broken enough but under new prescription 'cause he only had one pair for his last prescription, he might be able to get another pair, I just have to pay £10 difference."
Children's material needs come before own needs	509-519	"I'm not neglecting my kids - they get more than I do. They get more new clothes than I do: I recycle mine. The boys are more - my birthday money: I had £50; 30 of it went on [the children]…It's school uniform, it's for lunch club, it's for hot dinners oh and his dance."
Financial considerations around provision of rewards and necessities	520-530	"Well when I did have more money put through it still went into the other yeah. [Younger child] got the main reward he usually gets it at the end of the week but while I had the money I got it mid-week but he did not get loads of buttons anyway. He got a magazine and glasses. And yesterday he had to have new shoes - not planned - and that's the rest of my money gone."
Financial considerations: Council Tax comes before own needs	532-538	"The extra bit was going to pay Council Tax but I had to do an emergency and Council Tax are now saying you've got to pay it. It would be fine if you could combine the two. I've got two separate payments: One's 60 and one's 30 so they want £90 per month. I struggle with the 60 and now they want me to pay 90."

Table of Themes "Jess"	Line	
Superordinate theme	Number	Example quotation

Theme 4: Social Support		*(An important theme? Jess refers to other adults several times throughout her account: peers and facilitators from IY, partner, friends, family, neighbours, professionals)*
Peer support	18-25	"It's like someone else there understanding as well…the parents…the fact that I'm not the only one I realised [with] depression and with other people on your back."
Intimidated by group setting, limits own contribution	446-451	"I'd talk about it on the phone [to F2] 'cause I hate talking in group time. One to one rather than in the group…It's a confidence…"
Doing course with partner helpful	3	"It's been a lot easier now [partner]'s on board and he knows what he's doing now."
Social networking	48-49	"We've set [Facebook group] up. No one's - I've added [friend] from my last course, my first course, 'cause she's been on it and that lot and she accepted."
More support from partner and peers through doing IY together	347-374	"Probably [things are different] because I have more support with [partner]. And people are in the same situation. [In the first IY course] the only one I actually linked with was [friend] but she's the total opposite to me because she's got OCD. If she came round now it would be like get off your arse! We keep in touch through Facebook."
Pros and cons of more time with partner	347-374	"We do things more together now…Well 'cause we was talking more and he actually could see what was wrong…I think he understood - he was there - but he seems to help me more now…I think it was his hours, 'cause his hours have been cut so he's around more. But it makes us fight so it's struggling."
Resources from friends outside of IY	417-422	"Puzzles I've got 'cause my friend had this - she had her house done up by the Council - a big bit of plasterboard left over. It's being, it's going to be cut up for puzzle board so I'm going to have one big puzzle board and they can do their puzzles as well."
Extended family support	396-397	"I'll have [partner]'s dad here anyway so, even though [expressive eye movement suggesting unspoken drawback] but he keeps the boys entertained while I'm in the kitchen."
Practical support from extended family	479-481	"It's trying to do things, so my cousin came round yesterday and helped me pick the kids up and when I eventually managed to tidy up I just did the basics like the dishes, picked up the sitting room, folded up the washing."
Reliant on partner for practical support	501	"I'm waiting for [partner] to come and shift the lawnmower outside."
Costs and benefits of neighbours	552-572	"There's people out there giving false allegations and - I was actually reported by an old neighbour…I've got nice neighbours now. They keep themselves to themselves. I only see them once in a blue moon. They said [younger child] could go and get used to their dog 'cause [younger child] goes I want a puppy but I said you don't like dogs, you can't stand dogs; how are we going to get a puppy when you are afraid of dogs? So the only way we are going to get him used to it is my friend's got a puppy and [neighbours] have got a big dog. That puppy is going to grow into the size of that big dog. So he's going down there each day to get used to it."
Theme 5: Strategies		
Time Out strategy beginning to work	Int 1: 13-15	"Time out that was more thing 'cause now [older child] is older he actually does. This morning he had to calm 'cause he had a right wobbler. He did rockets [breathing technique taught on IY course] and even [younger child] has tried doing the rockets."
Lost ground; more Consequences than Time Out to Calm Down	63-70	"[Older child] has been having more consequences at the moment than time out and [younger child] has gone backwards at the moment. He's come to that stage when he starts school in September so he gets a bit high so he's on - he goes up to his room to calm down a bit. It's the only place because we could close the gate and then we know he's safe."
Different constructs of Time Out	107-122	"'Cause Social Services' [version of time out] he could be on there forever…It's 4 minutes and if they don't sit still he's got to sit back on it again, stay on it; restarts time - time starts again every time. So in a minute he could be on there for about an hour. At least then [with IY version] 10 we know is the maximum and when we reach 10 it's ok I'll go. Virtually on the 9th [older child]'s learning now that when I get to - 'cause he's 6 I have to start from 6 - then he goes it's getting to 8; I don't want to have 10 minutes. I went 9 he goes to sat down."
Hate Consequences but effective	124-141	"Well I hate the consequences but he's kind of learning 'cause he still hasn't had his toys back yet…'Cause he was breaking them; he was fighting with his brother. He trashed his bedroom 'cause I went through top to bottom. One day I went from top to bottom and then he came home and pine cones everywhere...It's 'cause they made a mess, they wouldn't pick it up. I says one toy put it away change over. So I thought well then you just lose your toy then. At the moment all his toy box is in my room. He hasn't even - he's been reading more. So I'm being [unintelligible] and you're not getting your toys back."
Doing more Special Time	226-230	"I'm doing more special time, like adding it on. That's every day regardless."
Adjustments to behaviour chart	237-251	"[Younger child] has got a behaviour chart. I was doing it anyway, but we was stuck on what to do 'cause he was hitting me badly but I said that on the IY and that's when the behaviour chart started. It was fine up until just before half term and then - kicked off. He hasn't hit me as much, but it's getting better again. It's because I've said to him right if you complete all 6 or even just get 4 by the end of the day, because he gets a button every time he gets praise, on his wall, on his chart, it's got velcro on it."
Praise	261-266	"[praise them for] anything, if they're being generally good."
Planned ignoring variable	344-345	"If it's a good day I'm good at ignoring, but if it's a bad day I like try and ignore it, but I end up out there [other room] most of the time."
Positive affect re special time	404	"They love it when they get their Special Time especially when I say you can have 5 extra, for being so good and playing together, we'll have 5 minutes group time. One game on the computer providing I know the password: Pepper Pig, Snakes & Ladders: Me and the boys, [partner] does one with each."
Theme 6: Leaders responding to individual needs		
Individual needs	24	"The leaders have been helpful. When they remember to put my stuff on yellow paper."
Leader picking up parent's emotions	441-443	"[F2] could tell when I've had a bad week and down week...by the tone of my voice."
Opportunity to talk 1:1 as alternative to group	446-449	"She'd say talk about it so I'd talk about it on the phone - 'cause I hate talking in group time…One to one rather than in the group."
IY v own perspective of confidence and self esteem	451-457	[F2] and that said my confidence and self-esteem had gone up but…'Cause I said it was down and they said no it's come right up.

Table of Themes "Kate"	Line Number	
Superordinate theme		**Example quotation**
Theme 1: Seeking change of direction		
Motivated by child's behaviour to ask for suggestions	2	"After [child]'s behaviour and that, and then I asked the school was there anymore I can try to do to help her, and they advised me to do the IY."
Effort on behalf of child	7	"I was quite happy [to go on the IY course] 'cause obviously I was trying my best to help her."
Within child factor	116-126	"[Daughter] is a child who knows her own mind, she is very strong minded. Even those at the nursery said that when she was two and a half/three: she's so strong minded for a child. So if she wants to do that, she'll do it and [laughter] and if she wants something she's going to have it basically, and that causes a lot of problems."
Parent making effort to improve child's behaviour	127-128	Like I said hopefully, and I mean hopefully, she will grow out of it and obviously we're going to work on her and make her a bit better like, the way forward like."
Desperation caused Kate to be open to suggestions on IY	166-173	"Obviously 'cause I felt like I was at my wit's end; I didn't know where else to go, which direction to go, so I said I was willing to try anything so - to try and help her so - and yeah that's why I thought, maybe, I'm always willing to try something different so - do you know what I mean like?"
Strategies seen as steps towards long term goal	104-114	"[Personal goal for self and child on IY course]: It was to learn new strategies and learning to accept rules and things like that but [laughter] I'm still working on that one…I think if I keep with doing the special time and the sticker charts, the reward charts and that, then, then I think if that, I think she'll come round eventually to erm obviously be able to understand that certain things are more acceptable."
Needed direction	326	"I didn't know which direction to go in."
Right path	349-350	"I would say that if you've got a child that is quite well behaved then obviously no [need to go on IY] 'cause obviously you are going on the right path."
Child's behaviour and moods affect family	175-178	"So if it makes her happy and it makes her better - well 'cause if she's happy I'm happy; when she's upset obviously I'm upset; when she behaves the way she does when obviously that has an effect on all of us as well."
Metaphor of direction: turning around child	364	"Once she's turned around."
Optimism and persevering and self-efficacy	364-365	"Once she's turned around and hopefully, like I said, I'm going to keep up this and keep going."
Theme 2: Psychological basis of strategies		
Tweaked reward charts, now working better than pre IY	39-66	"The sticker charts and that 'cause I'd done them before but they weren't quite working. But obviously they was like trying um - I don't know how to explain it - trying, sort of going back to basics, do you know what I mean sort of thing like?...Making it achievable, to make her feel special, that she can actually achieve that, moving on. It was obviously like, I didn't realise it was too - I was doing them too hard sort of thing like...But obviously like they taught us a different way so it was one that you can, that she will actually achieve than then she's going to think - I don't know, I feel as though I can't explain it properly...Yeah [she thinks] I done something and get her confidence as well."
Special time seen as bonding time, 1:1 attention	71-90	"Obviously the special time, obviously like just me and her and shutting the whole world out. It's like bonding time as well. I think sometimes you're like so busy you forget. When you're gone all day and you've got other things just to deal with and sort out and things like that. So it's nice to have that so as I said we do more than ten minutes. But it's nice to have just me and her time you know...I think maybe I'd forgotten, obviously I always give her my attention, but it was attention with other things happening. Do you know what I mean like obviously the baby, do you know what I mean? It is just the three of us, but now when we do our special time we just do it with me and her in her bedroom."
Child responds to special time with positive affect	89-91	"Making her feel like you - just like it's all for her like...she loves all that."
Previous version of time out not effective so discarded	183-185	"I tried time out before and it wasn't working with her but obviously I was trying the naughty step and obviously it was the wrong way - well not the wrong way but it didn't work for her."

Table of Themes "Kate"	Line Number	
Superordinate theme		**Example quotation**
IY version of time out to calm down adapted to suit knowledge of child	187-195	"I tried ages ago with: Right sit there for 5 minutes, and obviously she just wouldn't do it you know, but then now I've explained to her what time out is, to calm down like, and I've only ever used it once and that was about two weeks ago. And with her behaviour this week, I knew for a fact, I wouldn't, I just wouldn't be able to do it with her...I know 'cause I know her behaviour so I know how far to push it like 'cause if I told her to sit down and calm down for 5 minutes she would be like no way you know what I mean, 'cause that's her personality like. I knew for a fact that it wouldn't work when she's in that kind of a mood."
Setback attributed tentatively to school issues	296-300	"But it's this week that - I don't want to keep going back to it - but like it's been really hard like…It could be school, you know it's changes with [child] you know but with her hitting me and that. She's never normally done that not with her hitting me like."
Adapted time out to calm down, with emphasis on calming down	305-317	"Like I said with [child] time out has got to be not when she's up in the air, but when she's in the - more in the middle like - when she's actually listening like. 'Cause when she's up there, there's like nothing you can do. The way I calm her down is I say like give me a cuddle or I normally hold her, and then she just like lets go...Sometimes I just sit there and I don't say nothing and I just, you know what I mean like, I just let her tell me something, does that make sense?"
Parent changed way of doing things: less nagging; adapted sticker chart	280-292	"Now I guess I've kind of learned different ways of doing things so it's going to benefit her. Erm and like I feel like, I don't know like, yeah I suppose it's just kind of different strategies, just kind of deal with things in different ways like…'cause obviously like her not listening and things like that, and the nagging, with me nagging her all the time together like and with her sticker chart and her trying to do it."
Theme 3: Social and emotional aspects of accessing group course		
Nervous of speaking in unfamiliar group situation	14-17	"I was nervous because I'm not very good at speaking up in front of people and things like that."
Peer support: friendly and in similar situation	19-24	"It was just like the first initial like meeting people and things like that. But I was fine then just obviously because they were friendly. You know you had people in the same situation sort of thing. It was fine to listen like to people obviously knowing there was other people out there going through the same things."
Peer support: shared experience of struggle	149-153	"Stuff I could relate to or I knew sort of, or what they had been through or what they were going through sort of thing. I mean not all of them like, but they were saying something and it had either happened or it was happening."
Maybe keep in touch through Facebook but not meet up – too busy	159-162	"Life is so hectic you know. They were on about a Facebook page weren't they. I would speak to them on there but I wouldn't like personally I don't think I would have the time to go and visit them or meet up or that."
Theme 4: Leaders		
Leaders' role as listeners	134	"Obviously they were like quite happy to listen. Obviously that's what they're there for."
Leaders providing optimism: light at end of tunnel metaphor	136-137	"They just give you like extra support I suppose. They make you feel like there is some light at the end of the tunnel like."
Felt better after talking to leaders one week when upset	139-146	"I was really upset on one of the sessions…I was crying but obviously I'd had a bad week with the school as well and F2 just had a chat to me and made me feel better I suppose…I just suppose being able to talk to her and just, I don't know, letting it out sort of thing."

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Table of Themes "Rachel"	Line	
Superordinate theme	Number	Example quotation

Theme 1: Change		
Change	Int 1: 16	"There is a difference at home."
Optimism leading to perseverance	Int 1: 16-19	"I keep thinking if it's only week 6 now and there's a difference then - and if I stick with this - then like in a year or two's time it - how much better it will have improved by then. My concerns were what [child] was going to be like at secondary school so I think by then hopefully if I stick with all this stuff it's going to be a lot better."
Doing things a little bit wrong: small changes needed	Int 1: 47-50	"It's just shown me that you kind of are on the right path as a parent; you're just doing things a little bit wrong, just a little bit. If you just tweak the things how you're doing, yeah. And that's what I've found. I've tweaked the things: the praise and the emotional coaching and the play times has made a massive difference."
Child directed play	Int 1: 51	The way you - it's child directed. You play with your children quite often - most parents do - but it's not that child direct, erm child directed, yeah."
Parent adapting to within child factors	Int 1:54-59	"I have to learn to live with that. He's a very hyperactive child and I personally believe and it may come in the end that they diagnose something but I - his stepbrother has ADHD and autism and a couple of other things and I - knowing how very similar they are - I do believe that um he's got a slight something in him and that's why I have to learn to live with that because I'm not willing - if they ever diagnose - I'm not actually willing to let them put him on medication or anything like that. I want to learn to cope with my emotions of how he behaves."
Change in verbal responses attributed to praise and reward charts.	Int 2:100-109	"That's another thing I've noticed though is the language has improved…He's doing star charts and all the positiveness of praising when he's using nice words - kind words, and things like that - it's not as bad. And he had a falling out with his dad the other day and what I noticed was that he would normally swear at his dad or say something really rude, but he kept on saying ching chong ching chong, walking off going ching chong ching chong. But that's such a difference 'cause he's never been known to say such [unintellible] stuff. I know he was still saying something, but it was nothing, not swearing or rude.
Pre-emptive praise questioned by other adults	Int 2: 116-120	"People think I'm really weird. I have my sister over and all the boys were playing in the garden. I said one minute - I popped my head out the back door and I said aah you guys are all playing so nice together, and you're all being really friendly and sharing. And she said why are you doing that? And I said well becasue they could be out there for a good hour and not have any contact with me, so I've had to notice."
Praise led to less nagging and improved parent's mood	Int 2:130-140	"I'd do nothing but nag and whinge and be upset before the IY and I have found that the best thing for me is that I'm praising him all the time. I've nagged him less than I ever have before and that's a nice thing - I expect for him and for me. 'Cause it's tiring nagging all the time, and it gets you down. I do have problems with my emotions sometimes, and I think that's why we fell out yesterday, 'cause I'd had a bad day and I was feeling down."
Change from negative to positive focus	Int 2: 151-153	"You don't pick up on the positives before [IY]. I did the negativity and everything wrong they were doing and not praising them for anything good they did, 'cause you were so focused on the negative that that's all you kind of saw."
Impact of praise	Int 2: 155	[Re noticing the positives]: "So that's where there's been a massive difference, there really has."
Positive affect re time out strategy	Int 2: 155	"Time out - I love time out: the fact that I can give him something, 'cause I was never good at consequences and sticking to them."
Time out reduces need for consequences	Int 2: 158-172	"The fact that I can give him a time out to calm down, which isn't a punishment but it does work: it brings him back out of the urrggh where he was. And then he can go off or we can carry on playing and we can do something and I haven't had to have that consequence; I haven't had to ruin it. I haven't had one consequence. So that's brilliant, that's good. A few time outs but I'd rather have time out a couple more than you've got to start with consequences."
Praise increased positive affect for parent and child	Int 2: 232-234	"I think for me it's going back to the praise again. It really has made the difference. Knowing to praise everything because he's happier 'cause I'm not nagging all the time; I'm happier 'cause I'm not nagging all the time so it's not all negative. So for me the praise is the highest one up there for me."
Child led play increased bond between parent and child	Int 2:235-236	"The soundtrack for play would be up there as well because it gives us that time together but I do feel it has that bond - it causes that bond between us."
Learnt to adjust reward chart so goals achievable – now effective	Int 2:238-243	"Star charts - they work well. They're down a little bit 'cause he has had star charts before. They have been a bit wrong 'cause they've been too many things. So whereas now I [unintelligible] concentrate on one thing and he does always achieve it."
Change and positive affect led to wanting more	Int 2: 422-426	"So I really want to do some more 'cause I know I've seen a difference in [child] with the IY, and because I've enjoyed it, I want to do more. I don't want to just let it lie now and just manage and cope with how things have improved a little bit. I want them to improve some more."

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Table of Themes "Rachel"	Line	
Superordinate theme	Number	Example quotation

Theme 2: Adapting strategies to own context		
Clear about what works well so not prepared to tamper with it	Int 2: 62	[Re bedtime routine]: "It's never been an issue so I don't want to change something that works so well."
Adaptation of Time Out to emphasise calming down aspect	Int 2: 192-205	"Whatever I'm doing at the time - whatever room I'm in - so if I'm cooking in the kitchen the time out will be in the kitchen. He'll be sat on the chair at the table. I always let him take something with him…Whatever he's doing [I say] you know you can't do that, you're going to 5 minutes time out now and now he'll automatically go and get something. Whereas before I'd say you can have this but now he will get something whether it will be plasticene or just anything yeah."
Adaptation of script to find own voice	Int 2: 207-221	"I use the script we've learnt for everything and just kind of adapting it a little bit to my words obviously…I think because he knows who I am so if I stick to the script solely - so for child directed play for example with the what, when you're saying oh wow that's really good you're doing blah blah blah, you're playing with that red car, he knew that wasn't me and he kept saying I'm happy to do this with you but don't talk to me in that weird voice...In that stupid voice he'd say. He knows - 'cause he knows me - and he knew that wasn't me and that I was putting on like fon de de de da... So I have to tone it down a little bit: be more me."
Adapted problem solving strategy to suit own experience of neighbourhood	Int 2: 247-280	"I've struggled with the um what did we learn last? The problem solving. I struggled with that 'cause whatever I said: is it dangerous? No. Is it safe? Yes. So even though he answers the questions we know that if you are going to punch someone that is dangerous, it's not safe, but he doesn't care. In his head it's what he wants to do so yeah, yeah, yeah, it's going to make things better...So what I do, instead of asking him those questions, if he comes in upset or something I say oh well. I'll repeat what he said obviously and that makes him feel blah de blah, and I ask what do you think we can do about that? And then I give him ideas and he can pick and choose any of them if he wants. 'Cause I - 'cause he won't come up with anything. If he wants to smash his head in, that's what he wants to do, that's it. He's not thinking of anything else, anything reasonable or that's going to help the situation. So I give him ideas...I say what if you go and say this or say that and he'll go mmmm. So I say what if you and me do something and I still go back to what we always do and that's I take him out of the situation. So I'll say well I'll tell you what I need help 'cause I'm making dinner - can you come and chop some carrots for me? So that's how I've always got around it. I'll bring him away from the situation and kind of make him think about something else...OK so it's not always the best thing 'cause they are not solving the problem at hand but with the children round here - well with any children - one minute they're friends, the next minute they're not and 5 minutes later they're friends again. And I've made the mistake before of sticking my nose in with another family and the parents and it's all escalated and the police have been involved and it's all dragged on for months and months until they finally left. So I know now never to make the mistake and get involved. 'Cause 5 minutes later they could be friends again 'cause they sorted it out or they forget about it or 'cause that was 5 minutes ago."
Openness to trying new strategies attributed to confidence in evidence base of IY	Int 2: 289-305	"As soon as they come up with different things I tried it every week. They set homework and we talked about it in class that week or when they told us to do it I gave it a go. 'Cause to me there is no point being on this course if you are not going to do the ideas you have been given...You're there for a reason aren't you, they're there to help, it's a proven course so it makes sense for me to give everything a go...I trust it because it's a course."
Trial and adaptation	Int 2: 299-308	"And it if doesn't completely work then I adapt it to my way a little bit. So I tried everything they asked us to do - I tried and put in place…I'm one of them people who when they say do this, try this because it's good, you have to try it 'cause you're not going to know unless you try anyway."
Using own judgement, optional, non-coercive, resonated	Int 2: 328-331	"I know that a lot of people are there because obviously they have to, through the social workers and stuff like that, but that wasn't my situation. I'm there because I've been asking for help for a long time through school and I just need to learn a little bit more so I'm there for me really as well...It made sense what they were saying. It's not like I went in and they were teaching me law and it was all going over my head...So everything they were saying to me made sense. In effect you do most of the things but not on the bigger scale that they were telling you to do. So you praise your child now and again but not everyday."
Praise now habitual	Int 2: 411	"The praise isn't a problem. I find that is almost a part of my daily routine now."
Scheduling in valued strategy (Child led play)	Int 2: 413-414	"The child directed play: like I said we are going to have to sort that out and schedule it in because I think that it makes a massive difference and I don't want to let it slide kind of thing."

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Table of Themes "Rachel"	Line	
Superordinate theme	**Number**	**Example quotation**
Theme 3: Constructs around discipline		
Parents reframing Time Out as calming down not punitive	Int 2: 174-182	[Re IY version of time out]: "The first time, oh he was not very happy, when we tried to describe it. 'Cause they see it as a punishment if you're going to have to sit somewhere and think about what you have done, well not think about what you have done, but relax and say I can calm down. But still he's having to do something for something he's done. So it took him a little while to realise that and sometimes still now when he's sat down and I can see him wailing, I say remember it's just 5 minutes to calm down so that you don't get a punishment. And then I think that makes him think yeah this is just to calm down."
Different approach from school re behaviour management	Int 2: 499-510	"I got called in this week 'cause a boy had gone to about 7 of them or whatever and had said I can bash your head in and they all ignored him and he walked away. But when they said it to [my child he] said well come on then if you think you can. So they got in a scrap and obviously [my child] got into trouble as well and the teacher said OK I realise he was provoked. And I said to [my child] you should have just walked away. So he was talking to me about this and I said to the teacher well thank you for telling me all this but I don't know what you want me to do about this because this was at school. It's not happened at home; I'm not part of it; I'm not here to help and he said no that's fine I realise that blah blah blah blah. And sometimes I feel like you're telling me just 'cause you want me to take him home and punish him. And I said I'm not going to punish him at home because it happened at school. I wasn't part of it and his punishment should be immediate. And that's the other thing that annoys me is that when he does something bad they keep him in for the whole week and I really think that's wrong."
Philosophy and psychology of discipline	Int 2: 512-514	"I really think that's wrong [keeping him in all week] and it doesn't make a difference with him. It's not going to make him good the next week. He's just missing out on a whole week of play and especially in the IY the punishment should be immediate. It should be immediate."
Parent has changed approach but school hasn't	Int 2: 518-519	"And I think that's the other problem: they keep bringing things up all the time nag, nag like I used to do, nag nag, nag."
Theme 4: Group setting		
Peer group normalises challenges of parenting	Int 1: 94-98	"I like being able to listen to other parents with their ideas and actually - it's not nice to see someone getting upset - but it almost gives you that feeling of it's not just you aswell. So having other parents there and everybody's kind of in the same situation, just slightly different, but it does make you feel a little bit more - normal."
Positive affect re group	Int 2: 381 and 394	"Oh I loved the group thing." and "I liked everyone so it was nice."
Initial reluctance to engage with group	Int 2: 381-383	"I didn't [like group setting] in the beginning 'cause I'm quite shy and I thought it was going to be horrible and that I'm not interested in everyone's life stories, that I just needed help for me and I don't want to listen to everyone else. Not selfishly, but I just wanted help for me."
Peer support: listening, shared experience	Int 2: 383-388	But it worked out great 'cause just hearing their stories, and finding out that you're not the only person who feels the way you do and there's other people who are having trouble and when someone says something and you go: Oh God yes! That's what I went through as well! And that took - from the middle onwards it was nice. And having those people who were listening and were interested in any ideas you came up with they could take home with them as well and try and yeah I think it was a nice group as well so I think that made a difference."
Equal contributions in group	Int 2: 393-394	"We were all quite - we all got our two penny's worth in didn't we?"
Continuing support post IY through social networking	Int 2: 396-401	"They've set up the Facebook…It will just be nice to now and again have a chat and see how things are going and if I'm stumped with anything maybe ask anyone what they are doing in that situation."
Isolation	Int 2: 429-434	"I think it would make a massive difference him being there [i.e. child who would take part in Strengthening Families Programme]. I think it is hard for me also because obviously my partner can't come because he's asleep during the day and working at night. It's very difficult that kind of situation, It is very much me doing this. He'll see what I'm doing and kind of get the gist of it and try and go along with it but it's not the same as being there is it as actually learning it and taking it all in and putting it into practice."
Outside comfort zone: negative affect and growth in confidence	Int 2: 437-450	"Oh God I hated, hated doing the practices [i.e. role play] … yeah and you'd never have thought drama was my favourite subject at school…yeah and I really loved drama, really loved it, and I even tried to get on a course in X College: a arts and drama course...And um but my mum talked me into doing a secretarial course 'cause she said there's no future in drama. And then as I got older my confidence just went and I got [unintelligible]. And now I've completely changed and now that person's completely gone and I - when I got to know people a little bit comes out - and towards the end when I got my certificate I bowed in front of everyone, which in the beginning you wouldn't have imagined me doing that...So it takes a while for that girl to come out."

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Table of Themes "Rachel"	Line	
Superordinate theme	**Number**	**Example quotation**

Theme 5: Leaders		
Importance of interactive nature of IY	Int 2: 539-544	"If it was on the computer or someone just gave you the paperwork and said try and do this I don't think it would have worked. It's the fact of going somewhere every week and sitting down and spending that time and discussing things. And if you've got a problem understanding what they're trying to say then you can ask and they will make it make sense. So you go away knowing what is expected of you and understanding what you've got to do. Whereas if you're just given a booklet it's like urgh OK I'm reading it but it just doesn't make sense. "
Engagement dependent on liking leaders	Int 2: 546-552	"So having that time with people and having course leaders that are nice 'cause I think I kind of withdraw when I don't like the people. I find it really difficult to communicate with people I don't like so I wouldn't have spoke at all…I wouldn't have asked any questions. I think that that makes a massive difference what leaders you have as well."
Non-judgemental approach from leaders	Int 2: 555	"I felt I could talk to them without being judged."
Genuine caring from leaders - more than just a job	Int 2: 555-558	"[I felt] that they [the leaders] were there to help me and not just to be paid - just doing the job - 'cause some people are: they just do the job to get paid, don't care about anyone else. And I actually felt more from them, that they actually did care and want to help us through our problems, and just nice."
Theme 6: Journey Metaphor		
Journey metaphor: home and school on diverging paths	Int 1: 38	"I think this is going to be a stumbling block for me: I'm going to do so well at home but then because school's not on the same path then that will always effect how [child] is on a Sunday night, how he is after school for that first hour when he gets home and I have to come and tell him: right school's gone now; we need to forget about that: you're home. Let's have - let's chill out and have a good time and stuff like that."
Journey metaphor: on right path as parent	Int 1:47	[Re attending IY]: "It's just shown me that you kind of are on the right path as a parent, you're just doing things a little bit wrong."
Right direction	Int 2: 329-330	"You're parents: you know what to do kind of but sometimes you need a little bit of help to push you in the right direction or give you some other ideas of things what are not working in your household and different ideas of what to try."
Desire to keep moving forward (journey metaphor?) and make progress with approaches at school as well as home	Int 2: 486-490	"I just don't want anything to stop here and I don't want them [i.e. school] to say well CAMHS have put you on this course that's it now. 'Cause I want to keep going forwards now. I don't want to stop and then fall back. 'Cause I'm worried that's what's going to happen...I'm making the effort. I want things to change."

27. Appendix 5: Master Table of Themes for the Group

Paper 1

<u>Control</u>

The respondents showed differing levels of internal/external locus of control and sense of agency in their accounts.

Martine's account demonstrated an external locus of control in her sense of obligation to be a certain way as a parent:

Definitely, just the way you're supposed to do it – what's acceptable now. [l. 28]

You've got to be really on the ball. [31]

It's just the whole concept of everything, you've got to be well - it's sort of what's etiquette of things, do you know what I mean yeah? [l.35-36]

Fran's account demonstrated an increasing sense of control in her parenting choices. She attributed this to reflecting on previous parenting experience as well as information she had accessed:

With those 3, I very much brought them up under my Mum's guidance…Whereas now, it's my own choices – like I said: hindsight.   I've thought what did and didn't work then and current information, and kind of just bring it all together to what I feel to be the best. [ll. 60-63]

Alice's account demonstrated fluctuating levels of control over circumstances with an emphasis on an internal locus of control and strong sense of agency to recover previous lifestyle:

It was difficult, embarrassing really I mean, I had a good job I owned my own home, I was a single parent. Things was quite good in my life until I met my ex-partner – the father of my two eldest - er two youngest sorry. So it was that really that impacted on my life, and obviously the way I've dealt, I have to take responsibility for it you know, but I didn't make very good decisions … choices so um…" [ll. 114-117]

So work to be able to find work, my targets that I don't currently have which I want is, that sounds really like I've not got to that place quite yet that I want to

be, is because I'm not in employment or some form of education, and I'm not yet driving. Until those two things are done, then I'll be like yeah that's it done it…So I'm just sort of pursuing that really. [ll. 228-233]

Rebecca's account demonstrated changing levels of control depending on the child's personality:
Just so much easier, so much easier, and because I'm more relaxed and I know if she's crying, just go out for a walk and she'll be asleep and I can do what I want to do again…But she seems more of a textbook baby…Whereas if she cries we just give her a nappy change, if she's still crying feed her, if she's still crying it's definitely her sleep. Whereas the last one did cry for no reason, 'cause I think we still did that with him, from memory, but he just still cried. [ll. 25-32].

<u>Parental Legacy</u>
Although this was not a strong theme across participants all the respondents viewed parents as having a lasting influence on their children, although for some this was minimal in comparison with influences from outside the family.

Martine
It's almost like as soon as they start School you lose [unintelligible]. They are then wildly influenced by everything else as well. [ll. 74-75].
Obviously your influence at home means, carries something…But he goes out the door and thinks I'd better not do that. [ll. 78-80]

Fran
Giving them the right information and the love and the security – erm- for them to make good choices, as they get a bit, to be able to make choices. [ll.127-128].

Alice
And how to deal with situations appropriately, I mean 'cause there was domestic violence in my first relationship as well and for things to be dealt with

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the proper way, you know, if you have a problem discuss it and that sort of thing. I mean the domestic violence in my first relationship wasn't serious, it didn't happen daily, it didn't happen monthly, it was like probably once a year there would be an incident, but it would be serious. And so there's things like that that I wouldn't want to see my children - when they grow up – I wouldn't want to see my daughters putting up with that sort of behaviour. And even things when they go to school – to be confident but that's because of me being bullied – I wouldn't want that, I guess your own experiences is what you instil in your children. [ll. 312-320]

Rebecca

But you just think that with this generation of kids I don't like them playing outside all the time so we make a point that he does go athletics, but it's very rare that he doesn't want to go anyway though, but I think it's something I would make him do. [ll. 399-401]

Guide, guide them in the right direction, I think I struggled guiding the first one in the right direction sometimes, but he seemed to settle down now, I think it's just guiding him in his life style has been the important bit for us, I think socialise nicely with others yeah. [ll. 420-422]

Identity

Identity had initially been identified as a strong theme for 3 of the respondents. Further analysis identified identity as a theme for the fourth, Rebecca, in connection with her identity as an active person perpetuating an active lifestyle for her children.

Martine

I'm just totally different, I'm all about them and that's it really definitely. [85]

Fran

I've always been a parent, I was a parent at 17…So I guess it has changed what my life would have been if I hadn't been. I guess. [ll. 88-90]

Alice

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There was sort of a slide in my day to day just existent being and there was significant difference in me as a person then to now, or from then to how I was before. [ll. 54-55]

Rebecca

We're very active, I just can't wait till I can get back to being active really. [l. 370]

When I go swimming I am a swimmer, swimmer, [*sic*] but once she can go in the water, if she will stay in there for 15 minutes I know I can get away with still doing a reasonable amount of exercise with her. [ll. 374-375]

He won a few gold medals again last weekend, but yes well I'll definitely keep him to athletics now – he's just good at it. Got to find something for this one now. [ll. 387-388]

Paper 2

Group setting

Challenge of accessing group setting

Charlotte: I'm very wary on new circumstances. I don't like going into a group full of strangers; I can't stand that…That's why I brought [another participant] along, so I had somebody. I couldn't walk into that room on my own. No way could I. [ll. 90-97]

Jess: I'd talk about it on the phone [to F2] 'cause I hate talking in group time. One to one rather than in the group…it's a confidence … [ll. 446-451]

Kate: I was nervous because I'm not very good at speaking up in front of people and things like that. [l. 14]

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Rachel: Oh I loved the group thing. I didn't in the beginning 'cause I'm quite shy and I thought it was going to be horrible and that I'm not interested in everyone's life stories, that I just needed help for me and I don't want to listen to everyone else. [Interview 2: ll. 383-383]

Peer support

Charlotte: [IY communicated to her as] And I thought if I can learn something by somebody else's mistake more than like have to learn by my own. [ll. 21-26]

Jess: It's like someone else there understanding as well…the parents…the fact that I'm not the only one I realised [with] depression and with other people on your back [Interview 2: ll.18-25]

Kate: It was just like the first initial like meeting people and things like that. But I was fine then just obviously because they were friendly. You know you had people in the same situation sort of thing. It was fine to listen like to people obviously knowing there was other people out there going through the same things. [ll.19-24]

Rachel: I like being able to listen to other parents with their ideas and actually - it's not nice to see someone getting upset – but it almost gives you the feeling of it's not just you as well. So having other parents there and everybody's kind of in the same situation, just slightly different, but it does make you feel a little bit more – normal. [Interview 1: ll. 94-98]

Use of Strategies

Charlotte: Although he's not picking up on the key words yet like all the emotions that we're doing…I'm trying to teach him 'bored' at the moment. I really need him to know 'bored' 'cause I think half of my problems if we're in

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town and we're clothes shopping is he's getting bored so he's running off
[ll.184-189]

Jess: 'Cause Social Services' [version of time out]:he could be on there forever…At least then [with IY version] 10 we know is the maximum and when we reach 10 it's ok I'll go…I went 9 he goes to sat down [Interview 2: ll. 107-122]

Kate: The sticker charts and that 'cause I'd done them before but they weren't quite working…But obviously they taught us a different way…making it achievable, to make her feel special, that she can actually achieve that [ll.39-48]

Rachel: If it doesn't completely work then I adapt it to my way a little bit [Interview 2: l. 299]

Leaders matter

Interpersonal skills of leaders

Charlotte: I reckon a lot more people would not turn up [if facilitators not approachable]. It'd be like going to a school and being taught stuff. It just – it wouldn't feel friendly and relaxed. [ll. 167-171]

Jess: F2 could tell when I'd had a bad week and down week…by the tone of my voice [Interview 2: ll.441-443]

Kate: Obviously they were quite happy to listen. Obviously that's what they're there for…They just give you like extra support I suppose. They make you feel like there is some light at the end of the tunnel. [ll. 134-137]

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Rachel: So having that time with people and having course leaders that are nice 'cause I think I kind of withdraw when I don't like the people. I find it really difficult to communicate with people I don't like so I wouldn't have spoke at all…I wouldn't have asked any questions. I think that that makes a massive difference what leaders you have as well. [Interview 2: ll. 546-552]

Change

Charlotte: It's child focused more than it is just sat down playing…I mean there is a big difference in the way we do it…And he really responded well [ll.71-75]


Jess: Probably [things are different] because I have more support with [partner doing the course]. And people are in the same situation [Interview 2: ll. 347-349]

Kate: [Goal] was to learn new strategies and learning to accept rules and things like that but [laughter] I'm still working on that one…I think if I keep with doing the special time and the sticker charts, the reward charts and that, then, then I think if that, I think she'll come round eventually to erm obviously be able to understand that certain things are more acceptable [ll. 104-114]

Rachel: I think for me it's going back to the praise again. It really has made the difference. Knowing to praise everything because he's happier 'cause I'm not nagging all the time [Interview 2: ll. 232-233]

28.   Appendix 6: Individual Findings from Paper 2

Charlotte
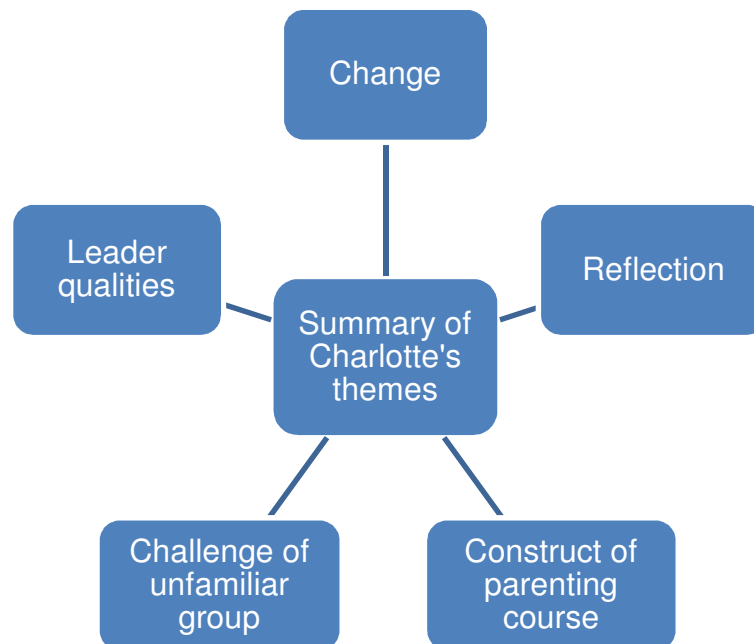
Summary of Charlotte's themes

Charlotte's theme of reflection is shared with one other parent and with F1. Charlotte's account revealed that she had already been a reflective parent as evidenced in her account of a shopping trip prior to IY:

> Turning your back on him as well, that worked before even we knew about it…I thought rather than chasing him around the store and giving him all that attention I'll just sit at the door and wait for him to come to me…and he soon did…I thought: Ah, turning your back works does it?

What Charlotte appears to be gaining from the IY is the opportunity to mentally rehearse and analyse the strategies which she puts in place. This is apparent in her wish to access the vignettes on DVD in her own home to further enable her to do this:

And then we can just sit there and pause it, play it, rewind it and play it again until we get it right in our own head…And then think through the same strategies as what they're going through like writing it out on a piece of paper: how; what was happening; what the response was and then you've got it there as well then for the next time. Stick it on your fridge and then you: Oh yeah I remember now.

The other unique theme to Charlotte was that of the construct of a parenting course. Charlotte had first heard about the IY from CAMHS who were involved with her 3 year old son regarding "suspected ADHD and autism" and challenging behaviour: "terrible 2s is not the word for it". Charlotte's initial reaction to being referred to the IY course by CAMHS had been frosty in part because they had made the referral having mentioned the IY to her but without her active agreement:

They sent me a letter saying I'd already been enrolled on it and I thought: OK – news to me.

Her other reservation was to do with the implied association of a parent training course with a negative evaluation of her parenting skills:

To start with I was very reluctant. I thought it was like a parenting course and there's nothing wrong with my parenting skills otherwise [older child] wouldn't be where he is now.

Charlotte's openness to trying the course came about following the initial IY home visit in which F1 presented the course as a collaborative problem solving group which appeared both to be more conceptually sound to Charlotte and to offer practical support in the form of childcare:

Basically that it was all going to be a group of parents and they've got a crèche facility which was a major thing for me, um but it's a group of parents all with similar problems and basically we all get together and just talk about all our different strategies, about different ways people

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have found to deal with different situations…And I thought if I can learn something by somebody else's mistake more than like have to learn by my own.

In my view this represents Charlotte's motivation for being there: to learn. I would suggest that this motivation contributes to her reflectiveness. Interestingly, although Charlotte is keen to learn, she made it clear that a didactic approach would be off-putting when I probed further to elicit her construct of a parenting course:

It's very similar to what we got in the set up: it'd be sat down talking about all the different strategies of dealing with different problems but it'd be more parent focused: You *mustn't* do this around your children; you must *not* smack your children; you must *not* do this with your children…but this isn't; it's just boosting on what's already there.

Charlotte later echoed this view when she suggested that participants could usefully communicate the nature of the course in addition to trainers:

I would do a leaflet stating that it's not a parenting course; it just enhances on what you've already got…Rather than just sending out people to talk to you, send out something that somebody that's actually sat through the course themselves, so they see it from their point of view not just the trainer.

Jess

Summary of Jess's themes

Jess's first theme to emerge was that of extrinsic motivation directly linked to her referral to the IY course by Social Services. In contrast to the other 3 respondents who came on the course to learn how to deal with their child's behaviour, Jess came to the IY course without any intrinsic motivation of her own.

> They wanted me to do it again as a refresher and they wanted [partner] to join in.

This issue of nomination by Social Services is reflected in both facilitators' accounts.

F1 reframes Social Services nominations so that these participants are viewed in the same light as other nominations:

> You know those parents are potentially there under protest. Well that's what I would have thought, but it's normally either they can get their children back or can keep their children if they come on the course. And you kind of think they are only coming just to get Social Services off their back, but then you realise that they are doing it because they want to keep their children. Because they love their children and they want their

children. And because they want to keep them. It's not to get Social Services off their back: it's to keep their children and to be better parents to their children. And I think once they – once you see them as parents rather than Social Services nominations. Once they realise that – I think they turn up – they think oh I might stick this…but after a couple of sessions they get to enjoy it and realise that it is actually useful. And then they start to engage with it because if you sit there for two and a half hours why not engage?

F2 described two responses from parents nominated by Social Services:

There are those who have been told by Social Services or the Courts to do the IY and they are there to tick a box. They sit there. There is no, there is very little interaction. Unless you ask about so and so there is no participation. They are just there to tick the box. And you get other families who are looking at this as a chance to really make a difference to their child's life either to get them back or not to have them taken away. And they do everything: they participate, they do the homework, they are actively involved, they want to learn. Because again maybe they got a little bit lost, but further down the line for them so.

Jess's account might serve to shed light on two possible reasons for what might present as lack of engagement. One reason might be social anxiety:

I hate talking in group time…One to one rather than in the group.

The other might be health problems which affect a person's ability to engage:

On the first one I had severe depression so I don't think I took it all in.

This links with a second theme unique to Jess, that of wellbeing. Jess's account contained several references to her fluctuating physical and mental health:

At the moment [confidence and self-esteem] is down 'cause every time I'm down the house is…It keeps going up and down, up and down, but that's also my mood. Not my mood - it's more like trying to control my body with the pain.

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In addition, both literal and metaphorical references to clutter seemed to symbolise this issue of decreased wellbeing for her:

> At the moment I feel cluttered at the moment…I've got a lawnmower in the kitchen.
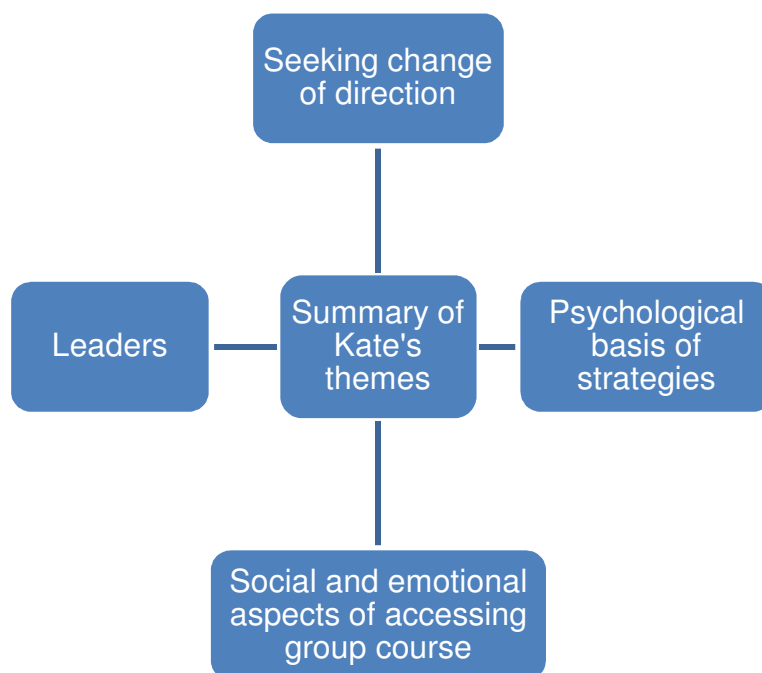
A third unique theme for Jess was that of financial considerations. She made several references to money and the cost of providing for her children and household:

> I'm not neglecting my kids - they get more than I do. They get more new clothes than I do: I recycle mine. The boys are more - my birthday money: I had £50; 30 of it went on [the children]…It's school uniform, it's for lunch club, it's for hot dinners oh and his dance.

Both Jess's wellbeing and financial themes may be reflected in F1's account which contains a reference to the complex problems faced by some participants:

> It is a real challenge because you're faced – part of me feels impotent really – you've got these parents with these massive massive problems; families in absolute crisis and terrible, horrible things happening to them and sometimes you think am I making any difference at all? Can I make - can I really do anything for them just by seeing them for two hours a week?

Kate

Seeking change of direction

Leaders — Summary of Kate's themes — Psychological basis of strategies

Social and emotional aspects of accessing group course
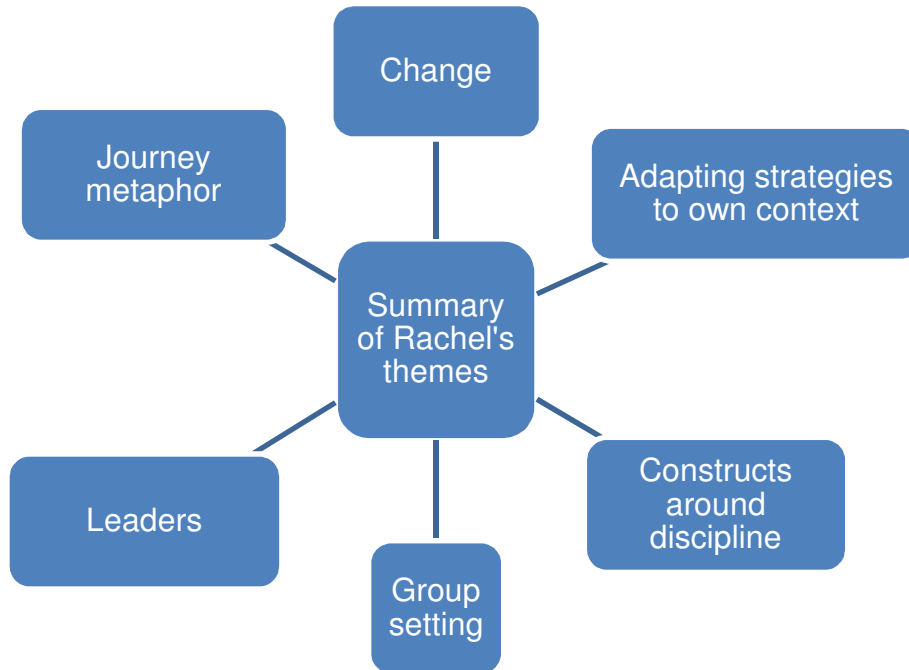
Summary of Kate's themes

In addition to the cross group themes, Kate had a theme of seeking change of direction. This was evidenced by her frequent use of words relating to direction and journeys: *way forward; direction; turned around; keep going; path*. This metaphor is echoed in Rachel's account (*on the right path*) and in F2's account (*a little bit lost*). For Kate it was linked to her reason for coming on the IY course:

> Obviously 'cause I was at my wit's end; I didn't know where else to go, which direction to go.

It seems that for Kate the IY is a possible route to her destination of changing her daughter's behaviour. Again Kate expresses this using the metaphor of direction:

> Once she's turned around, and hopefully, like I said, I'm going to keep this up and keep going.

Rachel

Summary of Rachel's themes

Rachel's theme of journey metaphor had a slightly different emphasis from Kate's. Rachel used the metaphor to demonstrate differences in approaches to behaviour management between herself and her son's school. Not only are they on diverging paths but she also sees school as obstructing her own journey:

> I think this is going to be a stumbling block for me: I'm going to do so well at home but then because school's not on the same path then that will always effect how [child] is on a Sunday night, how he is after school for that first hour when he gets home and I have to come and tell him: right school's gone now; we need to forget about that: you're home.

Rachel's development of the journey metaphor suggests that some paths are superior to others:

It's just shown me that you kind of are on the right path as a parent, you're just doing things a little bit wrong.

The theme unique to Rachel was that of constructs around discipline. It is linked to her journey metaphor and her divergent views from school on behaviour management:

I really think that's wrong [keeping him in all week] and it doesn't make a difference with him. It's not going to make him good the next week. He's just missing out on a whole week of play and especially in the IY the punishment should be immediate. It should be immediate."

Repetition of the last line serves to emphasise her opinion. My observational field notes during the IY sessions reveal that Rachel told the group that she had tried to communicate to school the positive approach that had resonated with her on the IY but felt that school had not understood. She revisits this issue in her account:

And I think that's the other problem: they keep bringing things up all the time nag,nag, nag, like I used to do, nag, nag, nag.

29. <u>Appendix 7: Literature Review</u>

Support for Parents

A Literature Review

EDPS08

Doctorate in Educational Psychology

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First submission: May 2012

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<u>Overview</u>

This literature review begins with an introduction to the field of research into parenting support. There follows a critical analysis of several key papers and a synthesis of their findings into the current state of the debate, leading to a consideration of the wider context of parenting support. It will conclude by identifying gaps in the research literature.

<u>Literature search and selection of papers</u>

Literature searches were carried out using the following sources: ASSIA; PsycINFO; Web of Knowledge; Google Scholar. The following search terms were used: Parent; parenting programme (or *program* in order to include American studies); parent training. Abstracts were read, and the criteria for initial downloading were if papers were:

- relevant to parenting
- relevant to the IY programme, and were either outcome studies or reviews of outcome studies
- relevant to any parenting programme and were process studies or reviews of process studies.

Key papers were identified by influence (number of citations), key contributors to the field, and particular relevance to the focus of the planned research. Balanced views were sought by selecting papers with differing perspectives.

<u>Introduction</u>

In my view, parenting in the literature is the subject of two polarised perspectives. On the one hand parenting is seen as the subject of a current political rhetoric which places responsibility for child outcomes with parents, whilst underplaying socio-economic factors (Furedi, 2009). Ramaekers (2011) suggests that Western society is increasingly burdening parents by equating the practice of being a parent with that of being a "professional". This implies standards of proficiency which parents are not trained for. Wall (2010) found that middle class Canadian mothers felt under pressure to provide their children with stimulating activities in order to influence their brain development. Wall suggests a further investigation into whether this perception of controlling outcomes can also be seen in mothers in less advantaged areas (Wall, 2010). On the other hand, support for parents whose children are displaying challenging behaviour is seen as an area for psychological intervention leading to better outcomes for children (Lindsay et al, 2008). Thus there appears to be a tension between the argument for a move away from placing the onus for child outcomes on parents, and the argument for supporting parents to increase their skills.

<u>Improving parenting skills</u>

Improvements in parenting skills are linked to improvements in pro social behaviour and academic achievement (Steinberg, Lamborn, Dornbusch & Darling, 1992). In 2005 the Respect Task Force was commissioned by the Labour government to tackle antisocial behaviour. It

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asserted that "through strengthening parents' skills and taking preventative action to reduce anti-social behaviour we will strengthen communities." (Respect, 2006, p.6). In response, specialist parenting practitioners were appointed to train members of the children's workforce (including parent support advisers, health visitors, social workers, and clinical and educational psychologists) to deliver parent training programmes.

In 2010 the Coalition Government commissioned an Independent Review of Poverty and Life Chances (Field, 2010). The Review calls for a renewed emphasis on improving the skills of parents with low parenting skills through normalising parent training, for example, by including aspects of parenting education into the secondary school curriculum. Most recently, a scheme is being trialled in Camden, High Peak, Derbyshire, and Middlesbrough offering free parenting classes to parents of children under 5. They can access these through vouchers available from Boots the Chemist or from early years professionals and Children's Centres (DfE, 2012).

The wider context of parenting support

Puckering (2009) pursues the issue of how to reach families who do not currently benefit from parenting programmes in her review of the literature and in particular the National Institute for Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE) Guidelines on Parenting Programmes for Children with Conduct Disorder (NICE, 2006). Puckering notes that many of the risk factors associated with not completing a parenting programme also overlap with those linked to the construct of conduct disorder, cited by NICE (2006) who acknowledge that many of these factors are associated with social deprivation. The author recommends that parenting support takes an ecological perspective, offering support, not just for parent-child interactions, but also for a range of environmental factors as finances, employment, housing, neighbourhood, health and education. In this way it is hoped that support will reach families who may find formal parenting programmes difficult to access for reasons associated with economic disadvantage. Puckering (2009) is writing from the perspective of the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS). Her work does not address the professional quandary shared with EPs when confronted with the political implications of the link between social deprivation and children with challenging behaviour. Are we making it less likely that the underlying economic issues will be tackled, by running parenting programmes that perpetuate the government, media and popular placing of blame for challenging behaviour squarely with parents and not with inequalities in society which impact upon family wellbeing? Many of the authors in this literature review are writing from the medical perspective, using the term *conduct disorder*, whereas the term *behavioural, emotional and social difficulties* is considered good practice within Education and Children's Services reflecting the social model. The latter term leaves room for environmental factors whereas the term *conduct disorder* has connotations of within-child deficits. Whilst my stance as an educational psychologist is predominantly within the social model, I can see the advantages of the medical model in this context. For example, in my experience as a trainee EP, I perceive that the social model can lead education professionals to adopt a parent blaming stance if they attribute a child's challenging behaviour to lack of parenting skill and disregard

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other environmental factors. Such other factors might include issues from home such as housing, or might include issues at school such as classroom management .The medical model, with its suggestion of within -child factors (such as a diagnosis of Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder), may serve to release parents from blame and at the same time hold out hope that they can acquire strategies to manage challenging behaviour.

Lucas (2011), writing from a family therapy perspective, makes the distinction between the concept of support for families with problems, and the dominant discourse around "problem families". She calls for the emphasis of government policy to be changed accordingly. She suggests that the danger of the rhetoric around the success of evidence based parenting programmes is that it can be used to bolster the idea that the solution to antisocial behaviour lies solely with improving parents' skills in managing their children, whilst failing to address more pervasive issues. Parenting support has been identified as a key factor in reducing child poverty by promoting resilience in children and families (Barlow, Kirkpatrick, Wood, Ball & Stewart-Brown (2007), giving psychology services an opportunity to make an impact on community improvement, with the awareness that economic factors need to be addressed. Though it may not be within our remit to do so, we have a responsibility to call for political change alongside the psychological input that we offer parents.

Arthur (2005), commenting on Parenting Orders as a lawyer from outside the field of psychology, maintains that the State has a legal obligation to provide children with an adequate standard of living as laid out in United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, and the Children Act 1989, rather than positioning the responsibility for tackling antisocial behaviour with parents. He suggests that parenting programmes are a good thing when offered as a voluntary early intervention rather than as part of a Parenting Order with punitive overtones. This is consistent with recommendations by Scott and Dadds (2009) that there should be no element of judgement or blame in parenting programmes. My view is that through the supervision and delivery of evidence based parenting programmes, psychologists have something to offer that can empower parents to make changes that can improve their children's behaviour, family interactions and wellbeing, as reported by many parents in Davis & Macauley (2008).

Nevertheless, in view of the above debate around those parents who have experienced barriers to benefiting from these programmes I consider that psychology service involvement needs to be combined with continued action research to develop ecological support with our Children's Services colleagues alongside the parenting programmes, in addition delivering an on-going critique of the parent blaming and social exclusion rhetoric.

Barlow et al (2007) used surveys to investigate support for parents in 59 Sure Start Local Programmes across the UK. They used case studies to highlight good practice in 6 of them. A strength identified was ecological support for parents and families. At the time of the study the use of evidence based parenting programmes was sporadic and the authors recommended that staff working with families needed both more training and more awareness of the benefits of offering such programmes to families. It appears that Children's Centres with their resources to be able to provide the holistic community approach to family support, are well placed to deliver parent programmes as non-stigmatising universal services (Barlow et al, 2007).

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Evaluation of parenting programmes

The Pathfinder Evaluation by Lindsay et al (2008) was commissioned by the then Labour Government's Department for Children Schools and Families. Their brief was to assess 3 aspects of the roll out of 3 parenting programmes in a number of Local Authorities (LAs) throughout the UK. The 3 parenting programmes were:

- Incredible Years (IY) Parent Training Program (Webster-Stratton, 2004).
- Strengthening Families, Strengthening Communities (SFSC) (Steele, Marigna, Tello & Johnston, 2000).
- Triple P – Positive Parenting Program (Sanders, Markie-Dadds & Turner, 2003)

The 3 aspects of the roll out to be evaluated were:

1. Parent and child outcomes
2. Cost effectiveness
3. Processes effecting delivery

They carried out the evaluation with a sample of 18 Pathfinder LAs, both urban and rural, spread across England. Parent and child outcomes were measured using 4 parent questionnaires:

1. The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (Goodman, 1997)
2. The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (Tennant et al, 2006)
3. The Parenting Scale (Irvine et al, 1999)
4. Being a Parent (Johnston & Mash 1989)

Parent and child outcomes were comparably high for all 3 programmes in terms of parents' mental health; their self-construct as parents; their confidence in their parenting skills and their perceptions of their children's behaviour.

To evaluate cost effectiveness data were also collected from LAs concerning the number of facilitators trained, the number of groups run, and the number of parents starting and completing the programmes. The IY programme had a higher average cost per parent completing than the other 2 programmes due in part to the longer duration of the IY programme which meant that fewer groups were running in the evaluation period.

To explore processes effecting delivery, semi structured interviews were held with key people at various stages of the roll out. These included LA strategic and operational leads; 5-10 facilitators from each LA; 5 parents from each LA; and head teachers. The latter were included to explore links with schools and extended schools programmes.

Among the many recommendations made from their findings, the authors clearly advocate the systematic delivery of parenting support throughout the UK. Emerging from Lindsay et al (2008) is one recommendation that concerns the processes of course delivery, in particular the skill of the facilitator:

Research is needed to explore the personal qualities and interpersonal skills needed to be effective as a facilitator and not just to base this on previous experience and qualifications *(Lindsay et al, 2008, p. 13).*

Facilitator skill

The need for facilitator skill is consistent with findings by Scott, Carby and Rendu (2008) where facilitator skill was linked to outcomes within the context of an IY programme. The authors developed the Therapist Skill Scale as a measure of facilitator skill. Each author was a mental health professional with accreditation and considerable experience of IY programme delivery (one of them an IY trainer). Together they agreed on 10 constructs derived from the IY programme manuals and group leader evaluation forms to identify what skills were expected of a facilitator (called therapist in the study). They identified four main categories of skill:

1. Group process skills; leadership skills; relationship building skills; knowledge
2. Skill in the use of specific techniques
3. Degree of organisation
4. Observed impact on participants

For each construct in each category, the authors created a checklist of skill criteria, with a five point rating scale for each item. Data were collected by means of observation of videotape, with every fifth videotape being coded by two authors to ensure inter-rater reliability. 4 sessions from each of 15 parenting groups were observed, with a total of 13 therapists' skills being rated. Outcomes were measured using the Parent Account of Child Symptoms interview (Taylor, Schachar, Thorley & Wieselberg , 1986). There was a strong relationship between therapist skill and positive outcomes. They identified those with the highest skills as being mental health professionals, nurses, those with at least 6 months' experience of course delivery, and those pursuing IY accreditation. They attributed the high skill levels of those with at least 6 months' experience to the effects of supervision. The authors do not address the question of whether experience alone might increase the level of skill. For those pursuing accreditation, the authors suggest that the fact that they were motivated enough to pursue accreditation would contribute to their high skill levels.

According to the authors, these findings have implications for the training and supervision of facilitators as well as assessment and continuing development of their skills. They point out that this is provided for in the form of IY accreditation for facilitators, but this is not the case for all parenting programmes. Lindsay et al (2008) note the high cost of the IY programme compared to the equally effective Triple P and SFSC programmes. However, they suggest that the extensive levels of training, supervision and accreditation are where the extra costs lie as well as the longer course length. They also hint that this monetary cost may be outweighed by the benefits of such attention to the skill development of facilitators.

Theoretical roots of the IY programme

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Within the scope of this literature review I have chosen to narrow my focus to one of the 3 parenting programmes evaluated by Lindsay et al (2008), namely the IY which is currently being delivered in the LA in which I practice as a trainee EP. In common with the SFSC and Triple P programmes, the content of the IY series has its psychological roots in Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1986; Webster-Stratton, 2004). Its central premise is that the child learns appropriate social skills from significant adults modelling desirable behaviour and reinforcing them through attention and positive commentary. They also emphasise the community context and group, rather than individual, focus (Webster-Stratton & Herbert, 1994). Rich Harris (2009) finds no convincing evidence to suggest that individual parents have long term influence on their children's socialisation, rather that peer group and neighbourhood effects are in operation (Rich Harris, 2009). This suggests a role for the EP in the community context, not only delivering programmes, but also using research skills to explore local support needs (Sidebotham & the Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children (ALSPAC) Study Team, 2001), in particular how community networks support parents in their role (Nystrom & Ohrling, 2004).

Bloomfield et al (2005) explored the perceptions of parents and support workers of the challenges of being a parent. One theme which emerged was that of "expectations of others". In my view this reflects the parental responsibility discourse, which I would also suggest the authors were reinforcing with their development of a self-efficacy tool (Bloomfield et al, 2005).

In addition to the psychological principles underpinning the course content, the IY programme is also consistent with psychological theory in the way it is delivered. Table 1 shows the factors listed by Hutchings and Lane (2006) which are associated with effective parenting programmes. Hutchings and Lane (2006) argue that the last four factors (highlighted in blue in Table 1 overleaf) are key to reaching families who are under considerable social and environmental stress and who may feel judged by professionals. They consider that the IY series is delivered in such a way as to include those four factors.

Factor associated with successful outcomes	Identifying research study
Skills practice during session	Hutchings, Lane & Kelly, 2004
Behavioural principles taught so that parents can apply them to their own situations	McMahon & Forehand, 2003; Webster-Stratton & Hancock, 1998
Putting skills into practice at home	Patterson, 1982
Combination of both non-violent sanctions for negative behaviour, and building positive relationships through play and praise	Hobbs, Walle & Hammersley, 1990
Difficulties in adult relationships must be addressed	Dadds et al, 1987
Building a collaborative alliance with parents (Webster-Stratton & Herbert, 1994)	Hubble, Duncan & Miller, 1999 Lambert, 1992
Mobilising parents' resources and working in a way that is compatible with their beliefs and values	Hubble et al, 1999 Lambert, 1992

Accepting parents' goals at face value	Hubble et al, 1999 Lambert, 1992
Conveying an attitude of hope	Hubble et al, 1999 Lambert, 1992

Table 1: *Factors associated with successful outcomes of parenting programmes, listed by Hutchings and Lane (2006)*

Complementary theoretical tools

Scott and Dadds (2009) note that although parenting programmes based on Social Learning Theory are effective in terms of parent and child outcomes from most participants, there are no reported benefits for a large minority of at least 25%. For these parents, the authors suggest that complex factors might be contributing to their difficulties which Social Learning Theory and the collaborative problem solving approach of programmes such as the IY may not be enough to address. They propose 4 theoretical tools to enhance these parents' experience of parenting programmes. The facilitator can draw on them according to the needs of the parent. These complementary tools are outlined in Table 2 below:

Complementary Theoretical Tool	Suggested Context
Attachment Theory	When parents practice hostile discipline.
Cognitive Attribution Theory	When parents hold conflicting or negative beliefs.
Structural Family Systems Theory	When one family member is interacting better but other not.
Motivational Interviewing	When parent reluctant to engage or resistant to intervention.

Table 2: *Complementary Theoretical Tools and the circumstances in which programme facilitators might use them on the IY programme (Scott & Dadds, 2009, p. 1442)*

The authors have not made it explicit whether these complementary tools are to be employed within the IY programme, or in addition to it. My understanding is that they are to be drawn on during the IY group sessions. If this is the case, the authors appear to be giving a great deal of autonomy to the practitioner to reflect in action (Schön, 1991). This has implications for the recruitment and training of facilitators: As Lindsay et al (2008) intimate there would need to be more to the selection of facilitators than warm personal qualities. They would need to be developing their own reflective practice at a high level.

The call for process studies

Lindsay et al (2008) go on to identify a gap in the research with regard to process studies exploring how elements of the programmes relate to the course outcomes. The ultimate aim of these will be to understand how best to replicate and develop successful practice in the UK

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context. For example they suggest that further research is needed to untangle personal qualities and previous experience from interpersonal skills. Scott, Carby and Rendu (2008) found that facilitator skill had a strong impact on child outcomes, and those that displayed the highest skill levels were mental health professionals, nurses, those who had at least 6 months experience delivering the IY programme, and those who had pursued IY accreditation. The authors suggest that the high skill levels of these last two groups could be linked to the supervision arrangements integral to the IY programme, as well as the high motivation to develop skill of those who had chosen to pursue accreditation.

Key Papers

Intensive parenting

Wall (2010), writing from a critical feminist perspective, investigated the experiences of mothers in Ontario of the discourse of intensive parenting. Wall maintains that this discourse links children's academic and social outcomes, and specifically their brain development, to high levels of parental involvement. The study used semi structured interviews to ask 14 mothers of preschool children open ended questions on the following topics:

- A description of time spent with their children on a typical weekday and weekend
- Extra-curricular activities which they arranged for their children
- Their perceptions of parenting advice, particularly that pertaining to brain development
- Their opinion on what good motherhood entails and barriers to attaining it.

Patterns and themes were produced using several stages of analysis derived from ground theory procedures. A key finding was that these mothers had imbibed the intensive parenting discourse as part of their middle class culture. Wall also found that these mothers' belief that they could control outcomes for their children was contributing to both a sense of accomplishment and a sense of failure and guilt, of never being able to do enough. Despite their conviction that a high level of parental involvement was fundamental to children's success, many of these mothers were finding intensive parenting exhausting and stressful and beginning to question the degree to which their own needs (such as for career and recreation) should be sacrificed for their child's. Wall notes that the intensive parenting discourse has implications for areas of deprivation, suggesting that it could be used to justify cutting back efforts to tackle poverty by attributing poor child outcomes to individual failures in parenting efforts. She calls for research into how parents from areas of deprivation experience the intensive parenting discourse.

Models of parents' perceptions of support

In order to contribute to optimising the delivery of support for parents, Miller and Sambell (2003) conducted a qualitative study of parents' perceptions of how they could be supported in their role as parents. Participants were parents who had received formal parenting support in a

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Health Action Zone in Northumberland. They conducted in-depth interviews with 37 parents in 7 focus groups. The focus groups comprised of 4 groups of parents of teenagers; 1 group of parents of children with special educational needs (SEN); 1 group of parents of preschool and primary school children; and 1 group of parents who were themselves teenagers.

The data collected in this first stage were subjected to phenomenographic analysis. This method of analysis was chosen in order to shed light on how parents perceived parenting support as a construct. It differs from interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) in that it does not involve the authors bringing their own interpretation to bear on the participants' experience of the phenomenon (in this case, parenting support) (Smith, Flowers & Larkin, 2009). It involved the authors making an initial analysis of the focus group data in order to identify the ways in which these parents perceived the experience of parenting support. The next stage was to jointly further refine this analysis and agree on models of parenting support. The authors do not discuss reflexivity in this process. Reflexivity is a legitimate aspect of qualitative research but does need to be addressed, in part because an awareness of one's own reflexivity can help a researcher to keep their bias in check (Robson, 2002). In this case it might have been appropriate to acknowledge that their findings may have been influenced by the authors' preconceptions about parenting models as they analysed the data. Perhaps this lack of reflexivity stemmed from the nature of phenomenography which does not involve interpretation on the part of the researcher. From their analysis, Miller and Sambell (2003) produced 3 models of parenting support which they found parents had identified:

- **The Dispensing Model**, characterised by a parent seeking knowledge as to how to change their child.
- **The Relating Model,** characterised by the need for emotional support, and attaches value to the peer support element of parenting groups.
- **The Reflecting Model,** characterised by the parent wondering why certain behaviours are happening.

The authors make it clear that these models of parenting support are not to be ascribed to individual parents' fixed perceptions. They see them as context dependent models which individuals may make use of at different times. These models can be a useful way of viewing the IY programme and how it might meet the needs of a group of parents each with subtly different needs at the time of attending the programme. For example, a parent coming with a predominant need for a dispensing model would have their needs met at the level of having a strategy to employ. The authors point out that this can be a useful model for practical strategies but that there is a danger of dependency and disillusion since not all problems are easily solved and dealt with by a strategy. The IY programme, with its collaborative problem solving ethos, goes beyond the dispensing model and can also be accessed at the relating and reflecting models. It may be that one of its strengths is that parents who come with a felt need for the dispensing model, may benefit incidentally from what the IY can offer in terms of peer support and reflective parenting. This would be an interesting area of research to pursue.

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There is some evidence to suggest that the IY programme functions at the level of the relating model because it offers it offers peer support which is highly valued by parents (Davis & McAuley, 2008). Miller and Sambell (2003) draw some interesting insights from those parents who identified with the relating model. They found that feeling accepted and not judged enabled parents to open up to new possibilities and to begin to reframe situations. This led them on to be in a position where the reflecting model became relevant to their needs.

It was also an interesting finding that only the parents who had been through a formally accredited parenting programme expressed the need for a reflective model as well as the relating and dispensing models. This highlights a possible weakness of unstructured group parent support. The authors seem to suggest that there is a developmental journey from the dispensing, through relating, to the reflective model which empowers parents to find their own solutions. They describe effective programme facilitators as giving parents the autonomy to use the principles that have been presented and to adapt them to their own situations. This calls for a high skill level in which the facilitator needs to provide support in a subtly complex way which demands more than just warmth of personality and knowledge of psychological theories relevant to parenting.

> The educator is viewed as a critical friend, who facilitates the parent's own responses and asks questions that stimulate, but do not prescribe thought. *(Miller & Sambell, 2003, p. 38).*

Processes of effective service delivery

Another study which sheds light on the processes of effective parenting programme delivery is that of Kane, Wood and Barlow (2007). In order to conceive of what was happening at the process level, they conducted a systematic review and synthesis of the literature reporting qualitative studies of parenting programmes using a meta-ethnography approach. Their initial literature search produced 367 papers. 40 relevant papers were then selected from information in the title and abstract. These 40 were read in full, and were further narrowed down to 6 relevant studies which strictly adhered to the following inclusion criteria:

- Pertaining to parents' perceptions of parenting programmes
- Set in Western cultures
- Using qualitative data collection and analysis
- Pertaining to parenting programmes for parents of children with behaviour problems

The remaining 6 studies were then evaluated for methodological quality using as a guideline the suggested interrogations for qualitative research from the Critical Appraisal Skills Programme (CASP) (Critical Appraisal Skills Programme, 2006). This selection process produced a final 4 papers to be included in the study.

Among the findings from their meta-ethnographic analysis was the importance of acceptance and support from both peer group and professionals alongside the development of knowledge, skills and understanding. This is consistent with the relating model of parenting support (Miller & Sambell (2003). In identifying that parents perceive support and a non-judgemental approach

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helpful in addition to the course content, Kane, Wood and Barlow (2007) claim to have gained an insight into what may attract parents to parenting programmes, and sustain their commitment to them once they are there. Since systematic parenting support is highly recommended (Lindsay et al, 2008; Field, 2010) this seems to be a timely and relevant finding.

Peer support

Zeedyk, Werritty and Riach (2008) sought to gain a long term perspective on the processes of the Parents Altogether Lending Support (PALS) programme in Dundee. This was to provide a balance in view of the short term nature of most outcome studies of parenting programmes. They carried out structured interviews with 20 parents at least a year after they had finished the PALS programme. The authors made a point of not collecting demographic data as they discovered that this threatened trust between participant and interviewer. In addition to the effect this would have on the responses in interview, the authors considered that to break down trust in this way would put the research at odds with the ethos of PALS itself, which, like the IY programme, seeks to be collaborative in nature. I suggest this problem could be overcome by building trust first, through involvement over time, and collecting demographic data at a final member checking meeting, making it clear that the contribution of such data would be optional. The authors do not address the limitation of retrospective studies, namely that of recall bias or inaccuracy after a lapse of time (Molloy, Woodfield & Bacon, 2002). They cite the benefits of the retrospective study as facilitating the exploration of the enduring positive outcomes for parents by asking them to reflect on what they got out of the PALS programme with a year's hindsight. The retrospective accounts were analysed using thematic analysis. A key finding was that participating in the PALS group had impacted on several participants' lives in ways additional to parenting behaviours which were positive and sustained for the majority of the participants. The main other area affected was that of better ability to access family and community support networks. In some cases participants suggested that continued group support would have helped them persevere with a consistency of approach. This was from both those who had and had not been able to sustain changes over time. It would be interesting to see how this compares with parents responses to the IY programme which runs for 14 weeks rather than the 6 week PALS programme, to ascertain whether a longer course helps to maintain changes. As well as increased access to social support, some parents attributed taking part in the group as giving them increased confidence, resulting in them taking steps to progress in education and employment, and confidence in joint parenting. In view of this the authors suggest that outcome studies should include measures of the effects of parenting programmes on such constructs as parental confidence and empowerment as well as on specific parenting techniques. This distinction between parenting behaviours and group support would appear to corroborate the dispensing and relating models of Miller and Sambell (2003). The group support appears to go further than just peer support in that it was the experience of speaking up in a group that led to one parent having the confidence to enrol at college. It would have been interesting to investigate the contribution of the structure of the programme and how the group

was led, to the positive influence of the group processes as reported by participants to their wider lives.

A further study found that using parents who had been through the course to co-lead subsequent courses, was well received by participants and could be a promising development:

> Thus peer led parenting interventions may offer a viable means of increasing provision in ways that local parents find acceptable and relevant to their needs, while also providing a mechanism for building social capital *(Day, Michelson, Thomson, Penney, & Draper , 2012, page 53).*

Eliciting parents' perspectives on the IY programme

Davis and McAuley (2008) conducted a mixed methods study looking at outcomes for parents who had completed the IY parenting programme in 3 areas in the South of England. They collected data by means of parent questionnaires pre and post intervention. There was no control or even comparison group, making this a weak experimental design. To mitigate this limitation, the authors explain that their aim was to measure change over time from the parents' perspectives. The questionnaires used were the following:

- My Child's Behaviour questionnaire (Hampton Trust, 2008)
- The Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (Goodman 1997)
- The Parenting Daily Hassles Scale (Crnic & Greenberg, 1990)

Analysis of this data revealed a positive change in scores between the first and last parenting session, reaching statistical significance for the constructs of conduct, hyperactivity, and total difficulty.

The authors also collected qualitative data by means of parent focus groups. Their aim was to understand parents' views of their needs and how the programme had met them, pre and post intervention and to combine these insights with quantitative outcomes above. In this way, they claimed to have achieved greater insight into how to support children and families.

The topic guides for the focus group interviews pre and post intervention were as follows:

Pre Intervention Topic Guide

- Parents' reasons for attending
- Parents' expectations of the programme
- Parents' major parenting problems
- Parents' hopes for the programme and the difference it could make
- One main difference parents would like the programme to make.

Post Intervention Topic Guide

- Parents' initial hopes and expectations for the programme
- Parents' original problems identified in the first focus group
- Any other problems emerging

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- Any changes in problems identified
- Reasons for any changes
- Changes due to the parenting programme.

The data from the focus groups were analysed using thematic analysis. The views of parents before the course appear to tie in with the dispensing model of parenting support needs (Miller & Sambell, 2003), being predominantly concerned with seeking solutions:

- New ways to manage their child's behaviour
- Better relationships with children
- Problems included non-compliance, temper tantrums and violence (with parents also volunteering examples of positive behaviour)
- Parents giving in to demands to prevent tantrums or to avoid child's chastisement from other parent
- Lack of bonding or control
- Main hopes for difference: to enjoy being together

At the focus group interviews following the IY programme, the authors observed parents to appear more relaxed and noted a sense of peer support among them. This time their responses included elements of the relating and reflecting models (Miller & Sambell, 2003) with references to social support and reflections on the reasons why certain behaviours might be happening. Parents valued support from facilitators but there was no mention of how. A stronger theme was peer support and the way in which it had reduced their sense of isolation, with some friendships being formed over the course.

Conclusion

This literature review has identified a gap in the research regarding the process of how evidence based parenting programmes come to achieve their successful outcomes (Lindsay et al, 2008). The research has highlighted certain factors which seem to contribute to successful training, such as facilitator skill (Scott, Carby & Rendu, 2008). From the papers examined in this study the gap seems to be, implied by Lindsay et al (2008), process issues such as how parents came to make changes which improved outcomes. In order to examine in detail how changes in parent perceptions were realised the theoretical perspective of Miller and Sambell's models of parenting support (Miller & Sambell, 2003) may well provide a useful insight into the processes of a group parenting programme. A further gap identified is the tension between support for parents and the pressure on parents to be proactive in their children's development (Ramaekers, 2011; Wall, 2010). Wall (2010) calls for further research into the experiences of less advantaged parents to explore whether the findings would be different for different cultural groups. It would therefore be interesting to explore the experiences of UK parents from an area of deprivation.

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30. <u>Appendix 8: Ethical Approval</u>

UNIVERSITY OF
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Graduate School of Education

Certificate of ethical research approval

STUDENT RESEARCH/FIELDWORK/CASEWORK AND DISSERTATION/THESIS
You will need to complete this certificate when you undertake a piece of higher-level <u>research</u> (e.g. Masters, PhD, EdD level).

To activate this certificate you need to first sign it yourself, then have it signed by your supervisor and by the Chair of the School's Ethics Committee.

For further information on ethical educational research access the guidelines on the BERA web site: http://www.bera.ac.uk/publications/guides.php and view the School's statement in your handbooks.

Your name: Jennifer Townsend

Your student no: 560028620

Degree/Programme of Study: Doctorate in Educational, Child and Community Psychology

Project Supervisor(s): Dr Tim Maxwell

Your email address: jpt208@ex.ac.uk

Tel: 01884 829 210

Title of your project:

Parents' perceptions of parenting support

[This title has changed from my previous submission in August 2011 which was entitled "XXXXXX parents' perceptions of the processes of the Incredible Years parenting programme. Changes have been made to my research plan for Paper 1, and these are outlined below.]

Brief description of your research project:

This project is a phenomenological study exploring how parents perceive their role and support for their role as parents.

Chair of the School's Ethics Committee
last updated: September 2007

The aim is to explore their perceptions to help me understand how they make sense of their experiences. This will in turn inform local service delivery of support for parents.

The research questions are as follows:

1. How do parents of early years children in a nursery in a city in the south of England perceive the role of parent?

2. How do these parents perceive the challenges in being a parent and where do they perceive any support coming from?

3. How do these parents perceive parenting programmes as a potential source of support for them in their parenting?

Give details of the participants in this research (giving ages of any children and/or young people involved):

The research will take place in an area of deprivation in a city in the south of England. Participants will be parents who use the services of a nursery school and children's centre in the locality. All these service users will be invited by letter to take part in the focus group, with sessions offered at two different times, with refreshments provided.

Give details regarding the ethical issues of informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality (with special reference to any children or those with special needs) a blank consent form can be downloaded from the GSE student access on-line documents:

I will be following the ethical guidelines laid out by the British Psychological Society, the Health Professions Council, and the University of Exeter. Issues regarding respect, anonymity and confidentiality and informed consent will be carefully considered as detailed below.

Respect: The study aims to give parents a voice. I will take a non-judgemental approach and will ensure that participants' views are heard and respected. I will also respect individual, cultural and role differences, including those involving age, disability, education, ethnicity, gender, language, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, marital or family status and socio-economic status.

Anonymity and Confidentiality: Records of the data collected (including transcripts and digital audio recordings) will be stored in a secure and safe place. Electronic information will only be accessed by the researcher with their username and password. This information will be stored on a secure system with recognised virus protection. Electronic and paper information will be locked in a secure building. Information will also be coded to ensure anonymity. This will remain anonymous in the write up of the research, as will the name of the nursery and children's centre. The geographical location will be described as "a City in the south of England" so as not to be identifiable. Collected written information will be destroyed by shredding and securely disposing when it is no longer required. Audio recordings will also be disposed of digitally.

Informed Consent: It will be essential to obtain signed informed consent from participants before collecting any data. I will use the University of Exeter Graduate School of Education consent form. I will ensure that participants are aware of what the research will involve by means of an initial information letter at least two days before the initial focus group and by further verbal explanation if they are interested in taking part. Participants will be made aware of how the research findings will be used. Participants will be reminded that they have the right to withdraw from the research at any given time and that data related to them will be destroyed.

Give details of the methods to be used for data collection and analysis and how you would ensure they do not cause any harm, detriment or unreasonable stress:

Data will be collected by means of a focus group and semi structured interviews.

Focus group

The purpose of the focus group is fourfold:

1) To gain the wider perspective of all parents from this one nursery.

2) To inform the schedule for the semi structured interviews.

3) To select participants for the semi structured interviews.

4) To serve as an initial rapport building introductory meeting with me.

The topic guide for discussion in the focus group will be as follows:

- The job of a parent in the modern day world
- What it means to you to be a parent
- How you cope
- Where you get ideas from for job of bringing up children
- Parenting programmes

I will begin by introducing myself and purpose of research and explaining that I would like their views to help me focus on what parents' experiences have been and what they want. I will ask people to discuss in pairs to avoid the problem of too dominant or reticent members (Morgan, 1993). I will ask pairs to respond to each prompt with discussion and see where they agree/disagree. I will provide marker pens for them to jot down one word answers on a page divided into 2 to indicate same/different opinions. I will then ask pairs to feedback verbally in the larger group. In this way I aim to encourage a variety of views and address one limitation of focus groups, that of people's reluctance to differ in opinion from the group (Morgan, 1993).

The focus group will be recorded with participants' permission and written and oral responses from each pair will be transcribed. The content will be analysed using thematic analysis.

At the end of the focus group session, I will ask for volunteers who might like to tell their story another time. I will then make arrangements to set up the interviews with interested parties and get them to leave me their contact details. In this way the focus group will also serve to select participants for the semi structured interviews.

Semi structured interviews

The purpose of the semi structured interviews is to explore in depth the meaning which parents attach to the role of parenting. This method of data collection is particularly suitable for this research question since it will allow for parents to reflect on how they see the role of a parent using such questions as "what is important to you about being a parent?" and giving time for the parent to respond through talking and further probing in a way which the same question in the questionnaire did not allow for. Participants will be selected from volunteers during the focus group session. A purposive sample of 6 participants will be selected from this group with the aim of specificity. This will allow me to analyse in depth the perceptions of this particular group of people from the same context and demographic as is the aim of studies within the phenomenological approach (Smith, 2003). To strengthen the reliability of the study, I will return for a third meeting with the interviewees to go through the transcription that I have made of their interview. I will check with them that what I recorded is what they meant to say, giving them the opportunity to retract, clarify or elaborate on any aspects they wish to. In total, the participants will have had three stages to the interview process to ensure involvement over time between researcher and participant to enable them to tell their story:

1) Introductory meeting in focus group alongside other nursery parents.
2) A second meeting to explore their perceptions using a semi structured interview schedule using questioning techniques taken from Personal Construct Psychology.
3) A third and final meeting to check that my transcription of their perceptions accurately reflects what they meant to say.

The recording of the semi structured interviews will be transcribed verbatim and analysed using Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis.

In both the focus group and the semi structured interviews, I will ensure that no harm or distress is caused to participants by making it clear that they are under no obligation to comment or discuss any topic they are uncomfortable with, and by being aware of participants' reactions.

Give details of any exceptional factors, which may raise ethical issues (e.g. potential political or ideological conflicts which may pose danger or harm to participants):

N/A

This form should now be printed out, signed by you below and sent to your supervisor to sign. Your supervisor will forward this document to the School's **Research Support Office** *for the Chair of the School's Ethics Committee to countersign. A unique approval reference will be added and this certificate will be returned to you to be included at the back of your dissertation/thesis.*

I hereby certify that I will abide by the details given above and that I undertake in my dissertation to respect the dignity and privacy of those participating in this research.

I confirm that if my research should change radically, I will complete a further form.

Signed:...date:...29.2.12...

N.B. You should not start the fieldwork part of the project until you have the signature of your supervisor

This project has been approved for the period: Feb 2012   until: Feb 2013

By (above mentioned supervisor's signature): ....date: 8th March 2012

N.B. **To Supervisor:** *Please ensure that ethical issues are addressed annually in your report and if any changes in the research occurs a further form is completed.*

GSE unique approval reference:...................D|11|12|37

Signed:...SAMuel........date:...14|3|2012...
Chair of the School's Ethics Committee

UNIVERSITY OF
E**X**ETER

Graduate School of Education

Certificate of ethical research approval

STUDENT RESEARCH/FIELDWORK/CASEWORK AND DISSERTATION/THESIS
You will need to complete this certificate when you undertake a piece of higher-level _research_ (e.g. Masters, PhD, EdD level).

To activate this certificate you need to first sign it yourself, then have it signed by your supervisor and by the Chair of the School's Ethics Committee.

For further information on ethical educational research access the guidelines on the BERA web site: http://www.bera.ac.uk/publications/guides.php and view the School's statement in your handbooks.

Your name: Jennifer Townsend

Your student no: 560028620

Degree/Programme of Study: Doctorate in Educational, Child and Community Psychology

Project Supervisor(s): Tim Maxwell

Your email address: jpt208@ex.ac.uk

Tel: 01884 829 210

Title of your project:

X̸y̸x̸x̸x̸x̸t̸h̸ parents' perceptions of the processes of the Incredible Years parenting programme

Brief description of your research project:
A review of the literature has identified a need for process studies in order to illuminate how change comes about for parents in the evidence based parenting programmes (Lindsay et al, 2008). The proposed research, to be carried out in the context of the IY parenting programme in X̸b̸x̸x̸x̸x̸x̸t̸x̸ comprises two linked studies which investigate this from different angles:

- Paper 1: an explanatory study using a retrospective telephone survey of all parents that completed the IY programme one year ago.

- Paper 2: an ethnographic study of the perceptions of a group of parents of their learning during the course of a 12 week IY programme.

Chair of the School's Ethics Committee
last updated: September 2007

The overall purpose of the investigation is to inform practice in the immediate XXXXXX setting as well as contributing to UK wide research in the field of parenting support.

Give details of the participants in this research (giving ages of any children and/or young people involved):

Paper 1 participants:
The entire cohort of around 50 parents who completed an IY programme in XXXXXX during the autumn term of 2010/11 will be invited to take part in the study. It is anticipated that at least 20 of these parents will respond to the survey.

Paper 2 participants:
Participants will be members of a group of 6 to 10 parents undertaking a 12 week IY programme in a XXXXXX Children's Centre. It is hoped that the entire group will consent to take part, but I will take steps to ensure that no member feels pressured into doing so, by explaining that there is no obligation to take part and that members can withdraw at any time. In order not to jeopardise any group member's access to the IY programme, I would also make it clear that I would find an alternative group if a member was not comfortable with me researching within their group.

Give details regarding the ethical issues of informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality (with special reference to any children or those with special needs) a blank consent form can be downloaded from the GSE student access on-line documents:

I will be following the ethical guidelines laid out by the British Psychological Society, the Health Professions Council, and the University of Exeter. Issues regarding respect, anonymity and confidentiality and informed consent will be carefully considered as detailed below.

Respect: The study aims to give parents a voice. I will take a non-judgemental approach and will ensure that participants' views are heard and respected. I will also respect individual, cultural and role differences, including those involving age, disability, education, ethnicity, gender, language, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, marital or family status and socio-economic status.

Anonymity and Confidentiality: Records of the data collected (including transcripts and digital audio recordings) will be stored in a secure and safe place. Electronic information will only be accessed by the researcher with their username and password. This information will be stored on a secure system with recognised virus protection. Electronic and paper information will be locked in a secure building. Information will also be coded to ensure anonymity. This will remain anonymous in the write up of the research, as will the name of the Children's Centre in Paper 2. Collected written information will be destroyed by shredding and securely disposing when it is no longer required. Audio recordings will also be disposed of digitally.

Informed Consent: It will be essential to obtain informed consent from participants in both Paper 1 and Paper 2. Records of when, how and from whom consent was obtained, will be recorded. I will ensure that they are aware of what the research will involve by means of an initial information letter and by further verbal explanation over the telephone or in person if they are interested in taking part. Participants will be made aware of how the research findings will be used. Informed consent

will be an ongoing process throughout **the research. Participants will be** reminded that they have the right to withdraw from the research **at any given time and that** data related to them will be destroyed.

Give details of the methods to be used for data collection and analysis and how you would ensure they do not cause any harm, detriment or unreasonable stress:

Data Collection and Analysis for Paper 1

Data will be collected by means of a survey in the form of an open ended telephone questionnaire to asking participants to reflect on their experiences of the IY programme and any lasting benefits they identify. The survey draws on that of Zeedyk, Werritty & Riach (2008) and was piloted on contacts outside the P**xxxxxx** area who have attended a parenting programme. Open ended questions were chosen over closed questions in order to elicit reflections from parents about what was meaningful to them without giving them options that might suggest responses that the researcher was looking for. In this way I will avoid harm, detriment or unreasonable stress for participants. In addition I would not pursue any topic that the respondent seemed uncomfortable with.

Data analysis will be by means of thematic analysis within a theory driven structure. Responses regarding the nature of lasting change will be coded initially from themes arising from Zeedyk, Werritty & Riach (2008). An initial hypothesis is that these themes will map onto the three models of parenting support identified by Miller & Sampbell (2002), namely dispensing, relating and reflecting. Openness to other emerging themes and patterns will be maintained by adding new codes to responses which cannot be allocated an existing code. This will allow for unexpected findings, or disconfirming of the expected results, and thereby ensuring that the study is not so rigid as to predetermine the findings (Coolican, 1999).

Cross-case analysis will be undertaken to make a stronger case for the patterns identified. The aim is to identify the processes which participants perceive led to lasting change for them. The expectation is that there will be lasting change, drawing on evidence from outcome studies, and that this process study will shed light on how that change came about (Lindsay et al, 2008).

For respondents who do not perceive that there has been lasting change, their data will be analysed separately from those identifying lasting change which will be mapped onto the Miller & Sampbell 92002) models. Responses as to what might have helped or what might have been a barrier to change, will be analysed using thematic analysis. I will be careful to avoid language or tone of voice that attaches any judgement surrounding the maintenance or otherwise of changes.

Data Collection and Analysis for Paper 2

In this mini-ethnographic study, data will be collected in collaboration with parents during a 12 week IY programme. I will attend the programme each week and make field notes as a participant observer from conversations with parents at coffee break, from group discussions during the sessions, and from evaluations and home activity feedback. Group discussions and conversations at coffee break will be recorded with permission from the group as a whole as well as programme facilitators. I will start conversations over coffee by asking a question on the subject of learning in the area covered each week, and probing further to explore the answer. An initial structure will be based on the topic for each week, with the flexibility to respond to items arising in the group discussion that will have

just taken place as well as or instead of the listed questions. As for Paper 1, I will avoid harm, detriment or unreasonable stress for participants by allowing them to respond to my questions in ways that are meaningful to them, and by not pursuing lines of enquiry that they are uncomfortable with.

Data analysis
Data will be analysed using a template approach to thematic analysis (Robson, 2002). Since one aim of this study is verification of processes identified in Paper 1, initially codes will be derived from those findings, and new themes will be identified as they arise from the data. This approach allows for some structure to support the analysis of large amounts of rich data by beginning from a theory but allowing for change to the template if necessary. In this way, it allows for flexibility and calls for researcher interpretation, in keeping with the immersion approach characteristic of the ethnographic tradition (Robson, 2002). The large amount of data collected will be managed by the researcher identifying themes and patterns after each session. Further data will be collected each session and analysed against those codes and new themes coded as they emerge, and so on in a continuous recursive process. Participants will be involved in refining analysis as they respond to feedback from the researcher each week on emerging themes so far. Their responses may confirm, or disconfirm, the findings, a feature of ethnographic research (Robson, 2002).

Give details of any exceptional factors, which may raise ethical issues (e.g. potential political or ideological conflicts which may pose danger or harm to participants):

N/A

*This form should now be printed out, signed by you below and sent to your supervisor to sign. Your supervisor will forward this document to the School's **Research Support Office** for the Chair of the School's Ethics Committee to countersign. A unique approval reference will be added and this certificate will be returned to you to be included at the back of your dissertation/thesis.*

I hereby certify that I will abide by the details given above and that I undertake in my dissertation to respect the dignity and privacy of those participating in this research.

I confirm that if my research should change radically, I will complete a further form.

Signed:...... *JP Townsend* ......date:... 1.9.11

N.B. You should not start the fieldwork part of the project until you have the signature of your supervisor

This project has been approved for the period: 2010   until: 2012

By (above mentioned supervisor's signature): ...... *signature* ......date: 2 Sept 2011

N.B. To Supervisor: Please ensure that ethical issues are addressed annually in your report and if any changes in the research occurs a further form is completed.

Chair of the School's Ethics Committee
last updated: September 2007

GSE unique approval reference:........... D |.10|.11|. 83

Signed:... *signature* ...date:... 12/9/2011
Chair of the School's Ethics Committee

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
31.   Appendix 9: CONSENT FORM

I have been fully informed about the aims and purposes of the project.

I understand that:

> there is no compulsion for me to participate in this research project and, if I do choose to participate, I may at any stage withdraw my participation

> I have the right to refuse permission for the publication of any information about me

> any information which I give will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include publications

> If applicable, the information, which I give, may be shared between any of the other researcher(s) participating in this project in an anonymised form

> all information I give will be treated as confidential

> the researcher(s) will make every effort to preserve my anonymity

...............................……………….. ....
(Signature of participant) (Date)

…………………………………
(Printed name of participant)

One copy of this form will be kept by the participant; a second copy will be kept by the researcher(s)

Contact phone number of researcher(s):   01752 224 962

If you have any concerns about the project that you would like to discuss, please contact:

> Jennie Townsend (Email: jennie.townsend@aol.com)

OR

> Dr Tim Maxwell (Email: T.Maxwell@exeter.ac.uk)

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