

## Bath Area Play Project – Family Play Partnerships

### Evaluation and Impact Report



November 2016



“Our relationship has greatly improved; I have more understanding of behaviour and why she does it. I just let her come to us, rather than pushing her.”

*Parent, Family Play support records*

Prepared by the Foundation for Social Improvement (FSI)

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## Executive Summary

The Bath Area Play Project (BAPP) successfully secured three years funding from Big Lottery Fund in 2014 for their Family Play Partnerships work.

The purpose of the funding is to support vulnerable Bath families to become more engaged with their communities and improve the relationship and behaviour of parent and child through the medium of play. Over the course of the project BAPP have worked with their families to increase the confidence of parents, improve their behaviour around their children and improve attachment, whilst increasing their engagement within their local communities, building their resilience and in turn reducing social isolation.

Over 70 families have been engaged to date, the majority of whom reside in the 5 most deprived wards in Bath and North East Somerset (Bath& NES), many of whom face multiple disadvantage that impact their daily lives such as substance misuse or learning difficulties, all of which result in low community engagement and self-esteem. However, this is not an issue that is going away, with predictions of significant growth in the number of households, in the area, over the next 20 years.

The FSI used monitoring and evaluation data collected by BAPP, case reports, interviews and a focus group to inform this report. The majority of the data used relates to families that have completed the programme, although many still continue to engage with BAPP.

## Findings

It is clear from the evaluation undertaken by the FSI, that the support and provision delivered by BAPP is having impact not only on the family beneficiaries they work with, but the wider stakeholders that they engage with.

### **Understanding the child's behaviour**

Through their playworkers' support, parents are seeing a significant improvement in their understanding of their child's behaviour, with over 70% of parents (who accessed and exited support) having felt that they had developed their understanding further. It is no surprise, therefore that BAPP's work is also increasing the parent's ability to manage their child's behaviour, with 75% of parents experiencing an improvement in their ability to do so. In one case a parent's initial perception score was 3 out of 10, following support from BAPP their ability to manage their child's behaviour had improved so significantly that their final score improved to 10 out of 10.

This is echoed in feedback from parents, who also shared that the greatest change experienced within the family unit, through their support from BAPP, was their child's behaviour, which is also reflected in family play support records kept by the playworkers and assessments.

### **Improving parent's confidence, behaviour and the relationship between parents and children**

Play is at the heart of BAPP's approach and is used to improve the relationship and attachment of parent and child. Through their support over half of the parents felt that their confidence in play had improved, which was also reflected in the child's experiences of having greater play with their parents.

It is clear to see that the work of BAPP has not only affected parents within the family, but also had a positive impact on the children.

## Increasing engagement within their local communities

By working with the whole family, playworkers have been able to increase the family's ability to try new things. By working with other organisations, such as local museums, BAPP has been able to introduce families to new experiences and access community facilities and services that they would not ordinarily access (69% of parents who had completed assessments had seen an increase in using community facilities). Similarly, by working with local food banks, BAPP have introduced families to new foods such as asparagus and kumquats. Parents also improved their understanding about healthy eating and healthier lifestyles, developing their confidence, attitudes and behaviours towards healthy eating too.

These changes in parental attitudes, whether in trying new things or eating healthier, all help towards the parents becoming role models within their families.

It is likely that BAPP's ability to broaden the families' experiences and grow their confidence in trying new things, has increased their propensity to meet new people, which was demonstrated during a focus group where all children felt that they had made new friends as a result of BAPP's support.

From the data review and research, we have undertaken, it is clear that BAPP are creating happier families through play and it's therefore no surprise that on exit, on average, families had marked their experiences with BAPP as 9 out of 10.

## Wider Benefits

In addition to the impact on the families they work with, BAPP have also had positive impacts on both staff and stakeholders alike. Playworkers are clear that they have had many positive experiences and learning through working with the families, and that they gain greatly from seeing the differences that they can make to local families, building their resilience and supporting the wider community.

Stakeholder and partners that BAPP have collaborated with have been explicit in their feedback, indicating that their joint working has helped them to access and support families better and in some cases, improve engagement with families to their services, especially those families that would not ordinarily access their type of service. With some services, such as the museums, this has led to the development of new processes and procedures to improve family engagement in the future. Some stakeholders felt that the engagement with BAPP also helped to give their services credibility in the eyes of the families and the robust collaboration had led to shared ownership of interventions in some cases, including the sharing of resources and space. Stakeholders often commented upon the strength of collaboration with BAPP and their ability to 'go the extra mile'.

## Challenges & Recommendations

As with all things, there are challenges that BAPP have faced. The lack of facilities that families can access to develop play in parts of Bath was raised by the Playworkers, especially in the East Bath area. This made it difficult for the staff to develop sustainable play solutions for families that they could access beyond BAPP support. By engaging the local authority through the sharing of data, BAPP can demonstrate the importance of families being able





to access facilities locally and its impact on those families achieving positive outcomes. This may help influence the local authority to allocate relevant funds long term to increase these types of facilities.

A strong message raised by the families was their concern about the closure of BAPP services due to funding cuts and the lack of ongoing support they would receive, especially where families have complex needs and long term support requirements. By creating tailored programmes, BAPP can allocate time dependent upon the needs of the family to ensure that resources are used efficiently, family support groups run by small clusters of families can also provide long term sustainable support.

BAPP has good monitoring processes in place and should continue to consistently measure and evaluate the outcomes of their support. This will enable BAPP to regularly review services and ensure that they are fit for purpose, as well as share their impact with key stakeholders, such funders, going forward.

**To conclude, the research so far suggests that BAPP is providing an important support service to the many disadvantaged families of Bath and North East Somerset, and that every effort should be undertaken to continue their work in the future.**



“... thank you for all of the amazing work that you do with children and families in Bath. A few of the families I work with have received a service from you whether they be through Play Rangers or the Playful Families groups that you run, and they have had nothing but positive things to say about you! You have provided a efficient and consistent service that has made a huge difference to my families’ lives.

Fantastic service, please keep up all the amazing work!”

*Sally Dean - Social Worker  
Bath & NES Disabled Children’s Team*

## Introduction and Background

Bath Area Play Project (BAPP) is a registered charity that promotes and facilitates opportunities for children and young people to play and participate in positive activities. BAPP recognises and promotes the importance of self-directed play in relation to child development and the rights of children and young people.

BAPP was set up in 1979 to provide and promote quality play opportunities for school age children during school holidays and since its inception has supported thousands of children through its open-access holiday playschemes, playdays and family play sessions. Through BAPP's play offer, these families have exercised their right to play and their development has been enhanced and enriched by the experience.

BAPP are a small, well established voluntary organisation who have developed from the ground up, building a strong reputation with local commissioners but keeping the play needs of children and young people at their heart.

### Big Lottery – Family Play Partnerships

In 2013, BAPP was awarded funding by Big Lottery Fund to embark on a three-year project called Family Play Partnerships. Family Play Partnerships is a professional family support service which BAPP have developed using the model of family partnership, the strengths perspective and play as an engagement tool. It is an effective process which supports and strengthens family relationships. Children are referred for many reasons including recognition that they are socially isolated, play deprived, have poor attachment, are disabled and lack access to playing with peers, or concerns about the child's development which play can support.

Social inequality is often used as an index to reflect poorly functioning families and below standard child development. Data taken from the Bath and North East Somerset (Bath & NES) Joint Strategic Needs Assessment Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)<sup>1</sup> identifies that whilst Bath and North East Somerset remain one of the least deprived areas in the country, five wards are within the most deprived 20% of the country, with one, Twerton West, entering the most deprived 10% for the first time.

It is parents from these areas who themselves have had disadvantaged childhoods, often with poor educational attainment and therefore struggle to function effectively. They will not necessarily have had play experiences and opportunities to develop confidence in their ability to parent, make connections with their children and put appropriate boundaries in place.

BAPP have supported 75 families over the last 2 years, with 71% of those children residing in the 5 wards, highlighted in B&NES JSNA report, with the most deprivation in B&NES. In every case, the parents have been socially isolated. This has been due to impacting factors such as substance misuse,

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<sup>1</sup> [http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/bnes\\_jsna\\_15\\_page\\_summary\\_v.1.6\\_final\\_0.docx](http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/bnes_jsna_15_page_summary_v.1.6_final_0.docx). - V1.6 – dated 30/05/12

learning difficulties, poor communication skills and difficulties in managing their children’s behaviour. These factors have resulted in lack of peer contact, poor community relationships and low self-esteem.

Family Play Partnership has worked directly with families, children and young people to tackle the intergenerational disadvantage that effects these families, helping the parents to improve the relationships with their children, and also those families living with mental health issues struggling to nurture their children by supporting greater attachment between parent and child. The project has helped to tackle social isolation faced by parents due to the child’s behaviour, helping to reconnect them with their local community, establishing meaningful connections and building on their strengths, resilience and self-esteem.

However, whilst BAPP continue to support and tackle the issues faced by these families, need continues to grow with predictions that the number of households will have risen by 27<sup>2</sup>% in 2033 across Bath & NES and in turn a growing need for family support.

## Outcome Indicators

The project proposal identified two key outcomes that would be achieved through the project:

**Outcome 1** – Parents will become more confident, have improved appropriate behaviour around their children and have better resilience as a result.

**Outcome 2** – Families will become more engaged in communities and reduce their social isolation and have improved attachment.

These outcomes were then built into the monitoring and evaluation systems implemented by BAPP from 2013.

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>Outcome 1 Parents will become more confident, have improved appropriate behaviour around their children and have better resilience as a result</b> | <b>Indicator 1:</b> Parents will have confidence to take on and understand the importance of specific roles within Playful Families groups to replicate outside the group at home |
|   | <b>Indicator 2:</b> Parents will have developed better understanding of how their behaviour impacts children and makes changes accordingly  |
|   | <b>Indicator 3:</b> The number of parents with improved resilience through better understanding of each other   |

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.hbf.co.uk/media-centre/news/view/bath-housing-crisis-set-to-deepen-as-plans-for-10000-homes-are-slashed/>

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Outcome 2 Families will become more engaged in communities and reduce their social isolation and have improved attachment</b> | <b>Indicator 1:</b> The number of parents/ children who are regularly involved in their community play provision independent of support              |
|  | <b>Indicator 2:</b> Number of parents attending Playful Families groups, other parenting courses or increased involvement with school / TAF meetings |
|  | <b>Indicator 3:</b> The frequency of positive partnerships including playing together is increased and reductions in negative patterns of behaviour  |

### **Request for Support (Referral)**

The Family Play Partnerships project uses the term “Requests for Support” rather than referral, believing that requesting the support of a service is more empowering than being referred to a service. This makes the service more accessible to parents, not only for them to be able to access it themselves but also for professionals discussing the service with families, reducing any negative ‘referral’ stigma previously experienced when accessing more statutory services such as Social Care.

### Reasons for Request

The BAPP team state that the three main reasons for families to request support are:

- To increase confidence and self-esteem of family members
- For families to benefit socially and emotionally from play
- For families to develop emotional resilience around peers



The service is made available through a Request for Support process, with requests coming from;

- Schools via Head teachers, Parent Support Advisors (PSA) and Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCo)
- Health professionals including GPs, Health Visitors and School Nurses
- Social Care workers through post assessment, Child Protection reviews and Integrated Assessment Panels looking at Common Assessment Frameworks
- Self-referrals (BAPP believes that the ability to self-refer is empowering, with parents recognising that both parent and child benefit from support, and an excellent starting point).

Chart 1 provides a visual representation of the main referral routes to BAPP.

### Evaluation Methodology

In order to evaluate the work of the Bath Area Play Project the FSI have worked closely with the BAPP team to collect and analyse a mix of qualitative and quantitative data, collected from families, staff, partners and wider stakeholders. In Table 1 we have set out how the FSI engaged with each stakeholder group.

Whilst 74 families have been engaged by BAPP the data i.e. Initial and Exit Questionnaires was taken from all 74 families, equating to over 175 individual records.

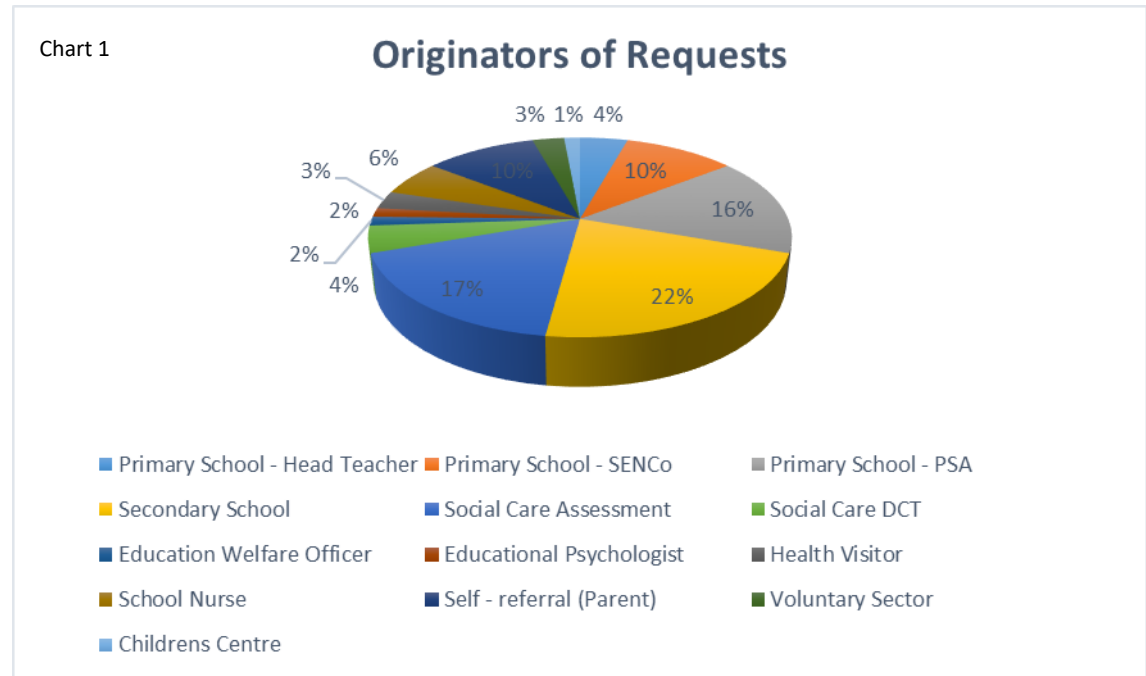


Table 1: Stakeholder Engagement

| Stakeholder                   | Engagement Method   | Number of people, families or organisations in group | Sample size or Detail   |
|-------------------------------|---|--|---|
| <b>Beneficiaries</b>          | Family Play Support Records – Case Reviews                    | 7  | 14%   |
|                               | Family Play Support Records – Initial and Exit Questionnaires | 75   | 83% of total families supported<br>Completed Questionnaires:<br>Parent :Initial -76 / Exit -75<br>Lead Child: Initial -83 / Exit – 78 |
|                               | Focus groups  | 1  | 7 Adults<br>11 Children   |
|                               | Report  | 1  | FPS Report Apr 13   |
| <b>Staff</b>                  | Interviews  | 3  | 1 Ex- staff member and 2 existing   |
|                               | Focus Groups  | 5  | 2 Ex- staff members and 3 existing  |
|                               | Report  | 1  | Dissertation  |
| <b>Stakeholders/ Partners</b> | Interviews  | 5  | Local Museums, School, Local Authority including Social Care, Other local community services.   |
|                               | Reports   | 1  | Community Engagement Report July 2014   |

## **Family Play Support Records, Questionnaires and Surveys**

Upon referral, a BAPP Playworker engages with the family, establishing a picture of their life together including opinions from both the child and parent. This is through a combination of Home Visits and discussion with the referrer plus other agencies that are working with the family using the Family Partnership model.

Starting with the play needs of the child, the Playworker discusses what gets in the way of play and identifies any specific barriers with the family. Using the family partnership model, BAPP help the family identify strengths and use these as a starting point for a Play Action Plan. This consists of achievable steps for positive change that the parent and child can agree on.

Alongside the Family Play support records kept by the playworkers, the BAPP team developed a suite of questionnaires that would enable the playworkers to measure the impact of their support on the individual family members, and as a whole family. A baseline questionnaire is used at the engagement stage, completed by Parents and Children with support from the Playworker. This provides a baseline tool to measure and assess the family, helping them to understand and agree where they are and what needs to be done differently. Review questionnaires are then completed by Parents and Children throughout their journey, enabling outcomes to be tracked, but also any challenges or issues highlighted and resolved. An exit survey is completed to get overall feedback about the BAPP service and wider impact on the family.

All questionnaires are undertaken with Parent and Child separately, to ensure an accurate reflection of each person's needs are obtained, and to reduce any potential influences from family members in the responses. Copies of questionnaires are included at Appendix 1.

## Focus Group

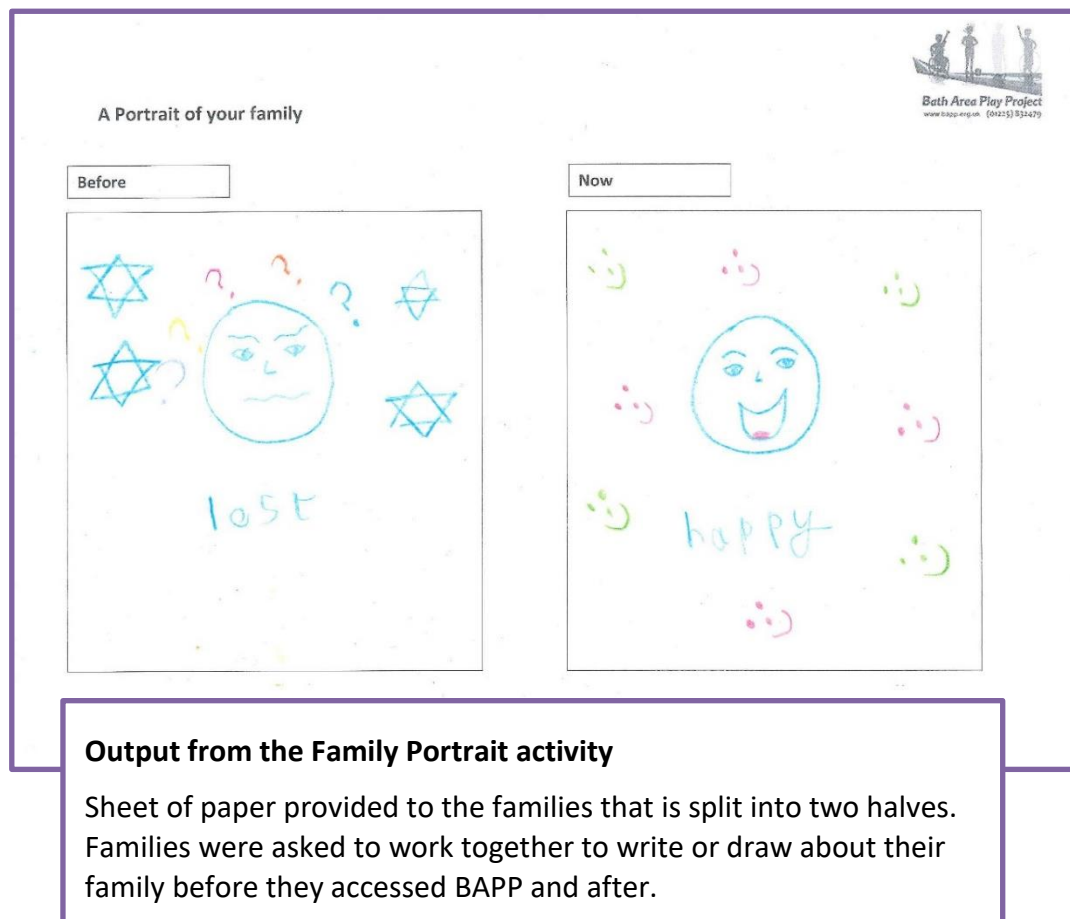
A family focus group session was held on 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2015 at Odd Down Community Centre where a group of families that had engaged with the services came to feedback their experiences. This incorporated a Christmas celebration session with party food and Christmas activities. The demographics of the focus group were as follows:

- Male adults: 3
- Female adults: 4
- Male children: 8
- Female children: 10
- Children in receipt of Free School Meals: 10
- Children with Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND):5

Special educational needs and disabilities can be a challenging cohort as it (SEND) can affect a child or young person's ability to learn. They can affect their behaviour or ability to socialise, for example they struggle to make friends, read or write, e.g. because they have dyslexia. They may struggle or lack the ability to understand things, or have poor concentration levels for example because they have ADHD. Further information about the format and structure of the focus group is included at Appendix 2.

## Interviews

A set of structured interviews were undertaken to gather information from a mix of stakeholders who were involved in the Family Play Project. Sample interview questions are included at Appendix 3.



## Other Sources

Additional data was provided by stakeholders that the Family Play Project had collaborated with, especially where they had supported other local projects such as Bath Museums Partnership Community Engagement Project. Data from these sources have been used to supplement the questionnaires, focus group and interviews.

## Profile of Beneficiaries and Support Needs

In the first two years the referral data shows that the beneficiary families are made up of the demographics detailed in table 2. It is recognised within the region that BAPP work with some of the most disadvantaged families in Bath. This is reflected in Table 2 where over 40% of children were SEND. In addition around 50% of children were accessing free school meals.

Table 2 – Beneficiary Demographics

| Group    | Number  |
|----------|---|
| Families | 75  |
| Adults   | 92 (31 Male and 61 Female)  |
| Children | 83 (29 Female and 54 Male)  |
|          | 24 with Health Issues (children have a disability or have additional needs) |
|          | 11 from BAME backgrounds  |

“We were particularly keen to get BAPP families involved as they were often the most disadvantaged families in Bath and most unlikely to access the museum and miss accessing the cultural heritage within Bath”

*Polly Andrews, Bath Preservation Trust.*

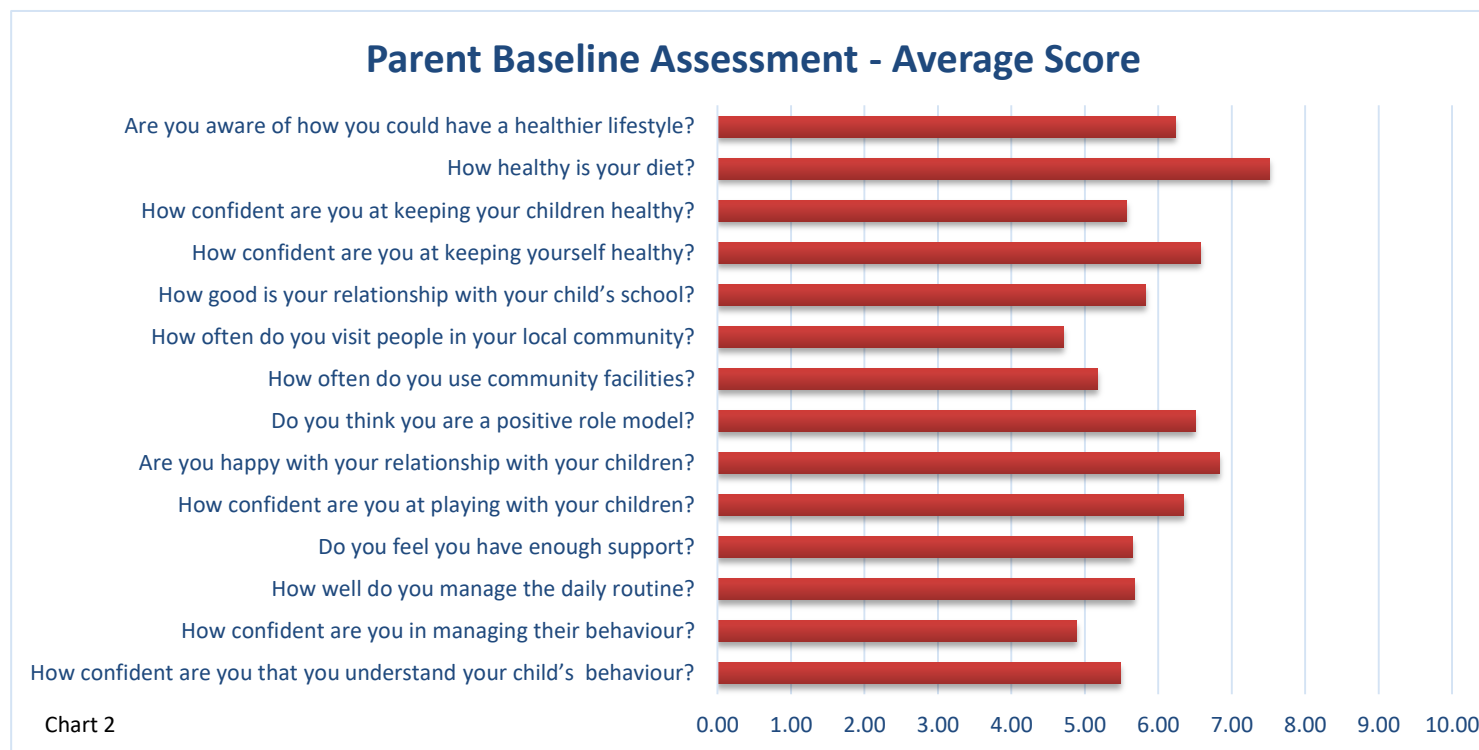
## Establishing Need - Parents

Using the baseline assessment data (chart 2), across all parents starting the programme we can see that the areas where parents believe they have the greatest support needs are:

- Engaging with the local community and accessing community facilities
- Understanding and managing their child's behaviour.

Both directly link to the project outcomes, but were also reiterated during the focus group session where parents reflected on their children's poor behaviour and their confidence to access local community facilities prior to accessing BAPP services.

The baseline assessment uses a scale of '1 to 10' for parents and '1 to 5' for children, where one is the lowest rating for both. For example, if a parent scored themselves as an 8 on 'How healthy is my diet?' then this suggests that the parent believes they have a healthy diet.





The qualitative data suggests that parents are left feeling isolated and removed from the community as a result of their child’s behaviour, or other people’s perception of that behaviour.

**Establishing Need - Children**

As Chart 3 illustrates, when completing the initial assessment more children perceived their development to be;

- Controlling their anger and fighting
- Communicating their feelings
- Playing with their parents/ carer
- Improving their confidence, plus meeting new people and engaging/enjoying school

“I realised that people in the community don’t understand my children and their behaviour. BAPP is my only real community.”  
*Parent, Focus Group*

areas of

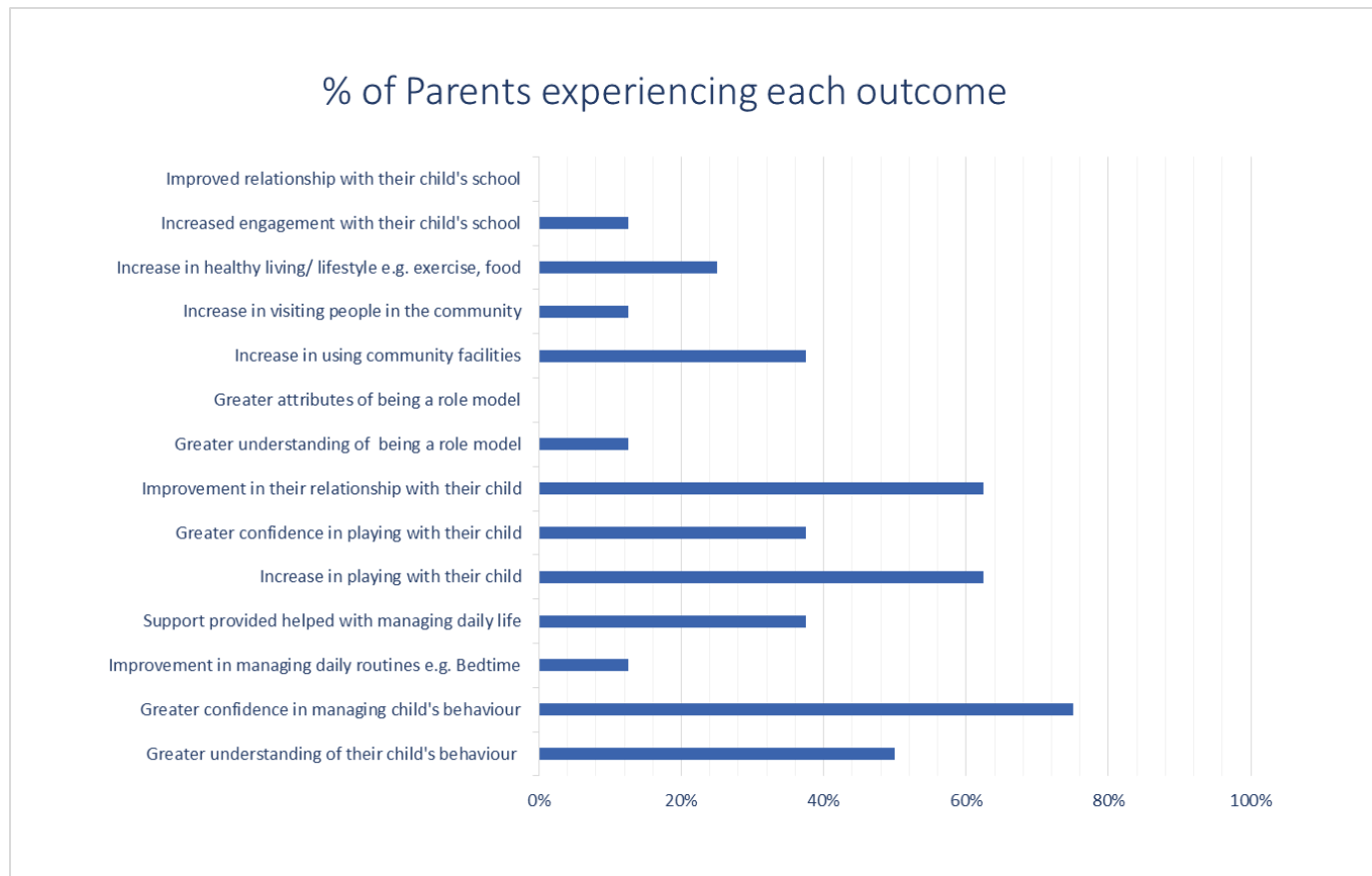


Chart 3

## Findings

BAPP have consistently demonstrated that they have improved the parent and child relationships through their play support, not only helping to improve appropriate behaviours but also ensuring parent and child are supported to feel more confident in themselves and their abilities to manage behaviours.

The data shows that BAPP are meeting the two outcomes by the families achieving key indicators; including improved understanding and managing of child's behaviour, effect in child's behaviour, increase in parent/ child play and confidence to try new things.



### Improvement in understanding child's behaviour

The following chart 4 (based upon the Family Play support record case review) demonstrates that of the Family Play support records reviewed 75% of parents had greater confidence in managing their child's behaviour following BAPP support. Similarly the data from the overall assessment showed 75% of completer parents' experienced an increase in understanding their child's behaviour.

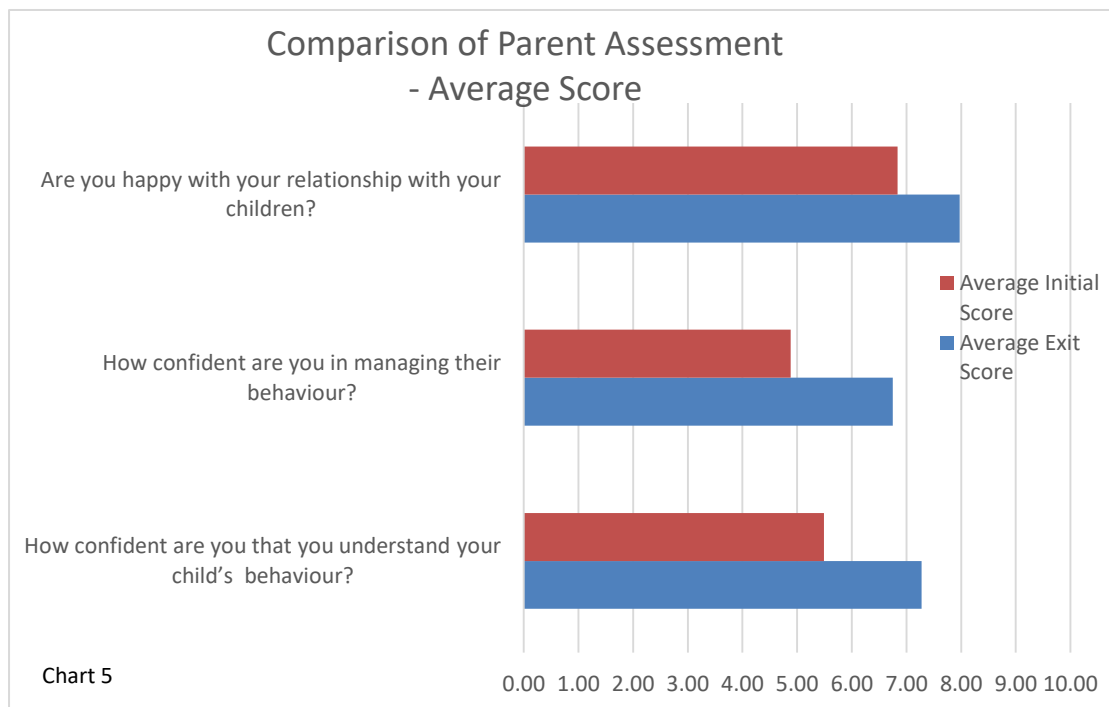
Chart 4

“School have also been able to communicate more positively with parents through our support, as a means of reassuring parents of the schools actions and that their child is happy at school. For example, the parents of a child were always keen to attend school trips with them, as they were concerned that the child did not have the confidence or would be safe. We worked with the child to increase their confidence but also worked with the parents to reassure them too. We worked with the child to use ‘thumbs up, middle or down’ responses to communicate how things had gone. This enabled Mum to see her daughter give a really positive happy ‘thumbs up’ response to going on a school trip.

We introduced a play diary to support Mum and Dad helping them to understand the importance of active play and risk taking, as her physical play experience and development was quite limited for her age. Since working together, and recorded by the play diary, this child has learnt to swing on the swing, climb climbing frames, ride a scooter and bike confidently.

Photos have been an important tool in order for mum to feel involved (as she has limited mobility) but also for the child to see and understand her progress, and explain and show this to Mum and school and link all areas of her life, building her confidence by evidencing her ability to tackle new and unexpected things!”

*Playworker, Anecdote*



#### Improvement in managing child's behaviour

It was also clear that the parents have improved their ability to manage their child's behaviour (Chart 5), with an average scale increase from 4.88 to 6.75 when looking at their confidence to manage behaviour, with one parent showing a 233% increase in confidence (i.e. Initial score of 3 and final score of 10) .

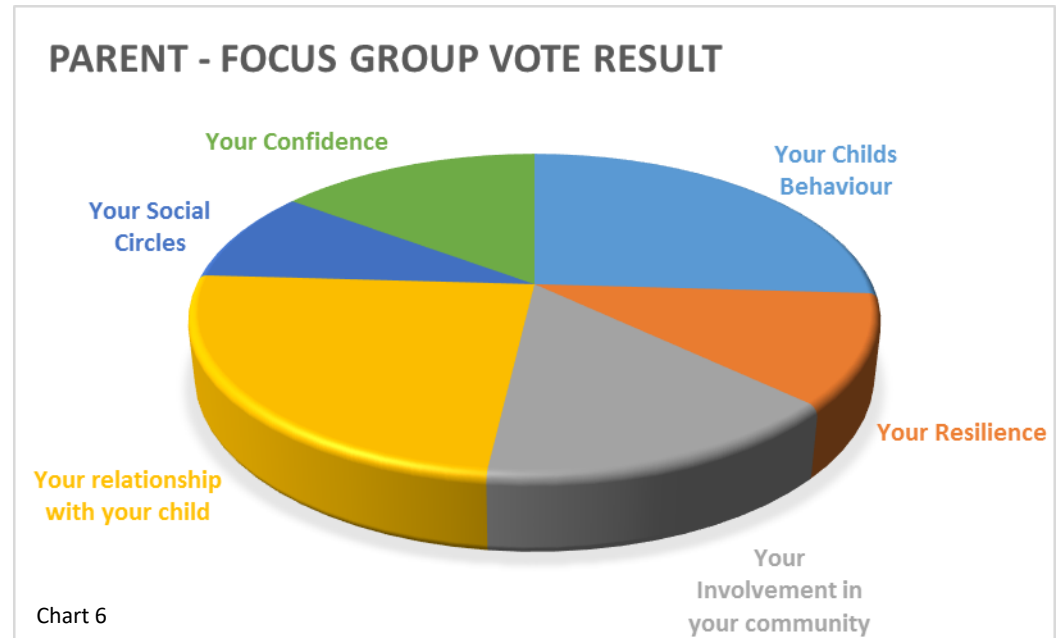
"I have observed 'A' putting in place some boundaries. 'B' wanted to sit on the lion sculpture. However there was a sign which said this was not allowed, 'A' did explain to 'B' why they were not allowed to and did not give in to 'B'."

*Playworker, Family Play support records*

## Improvement in child behaviour

During the parent focus group, each was provided with a set of votes which could be used across 6 outcome indicators. As evidenced in chart 6 (based upon the Focus Group Output), 'Your Childs Behaviour' received the greatest volume of votes. Further examples of a perceived improvement in the child's behaviour was seen in the Family Play support record case review, where over 50% of reviewed Family Play support records saw an improvement, for example one parent commented on their child no longer 'parallel plays'. Parallel play is where the child plays independently, but the activity chosen naturally brings them among other children.

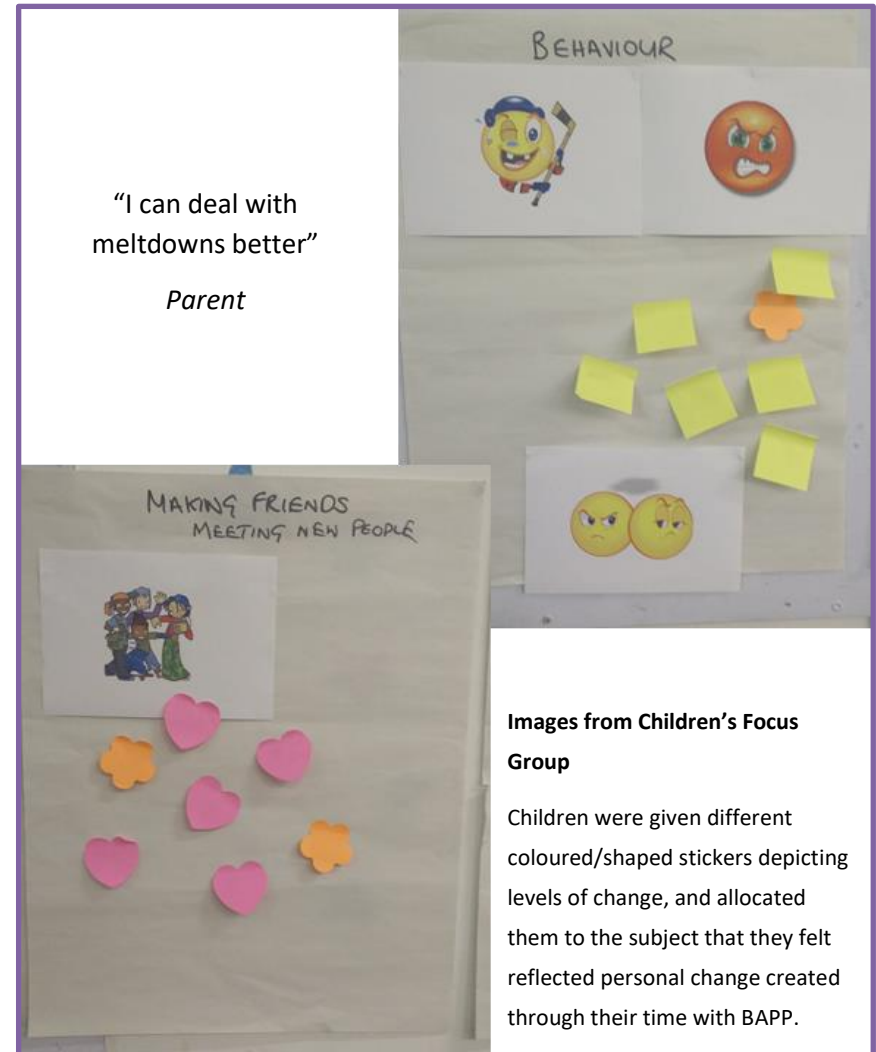
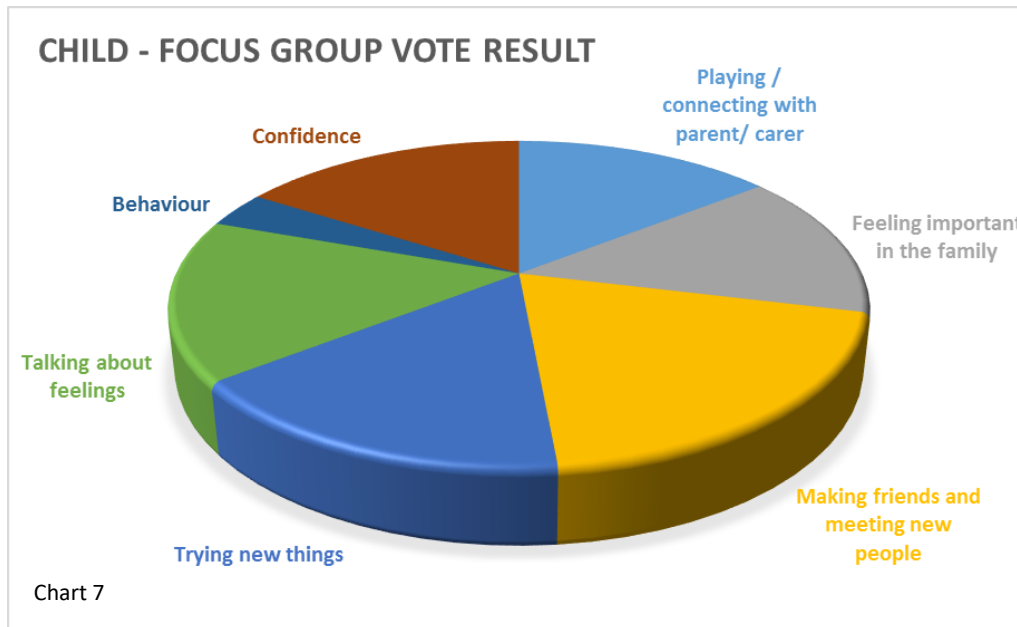
They will play with toys that are like those other children around them are using but they play beside rather than with the other children. In this scenario, the parent recognised that their child had begun to play with other children or the parent, which is associative play. This is seen as a progression in the developmental levels of social play<sup>3</sup>. Anecdotally, parents also commented that their children have a calmer approach to play, which demonstrates a change in behaviour.



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<sup>3</sup> Berk, 2002; Caster, 1984; Frost,1992

However, it is important to recognise that the children themselves did not receive that their behaviour had changed, and this was strongly evidenced during the children’s focus group (Chart 7 - based upon the Focus Group Output). Whilst this could be due to the children not being aware of the change in their behaviour, it is also likely that the parents had become better equipped to understand and manage their child’s behaviour, leaving them with the perception that their child’s behaviour had changed.





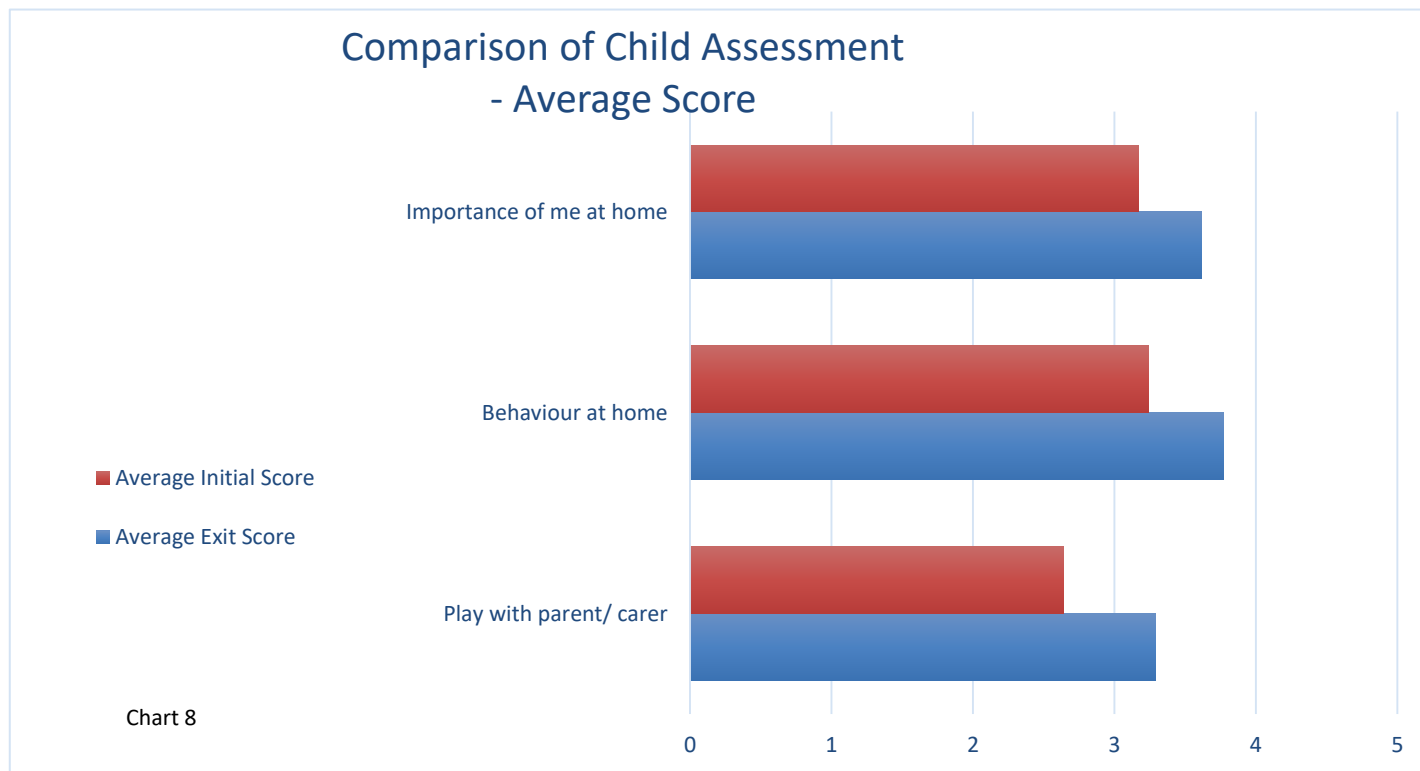
## Increase in parent involvement in play

Both parent and child felt that there had been an improvement in joint play as a result of their work with BAPP. This was evidenced in the child's assessment where 42% of children perceived an increase in play (Chart 8), along with parent/ carer play featuring significantly within the Family Play support record case review, as detailed in Chart 9. Comparably, 58% of parents felt that their confidence in play had increased (Chart 10).

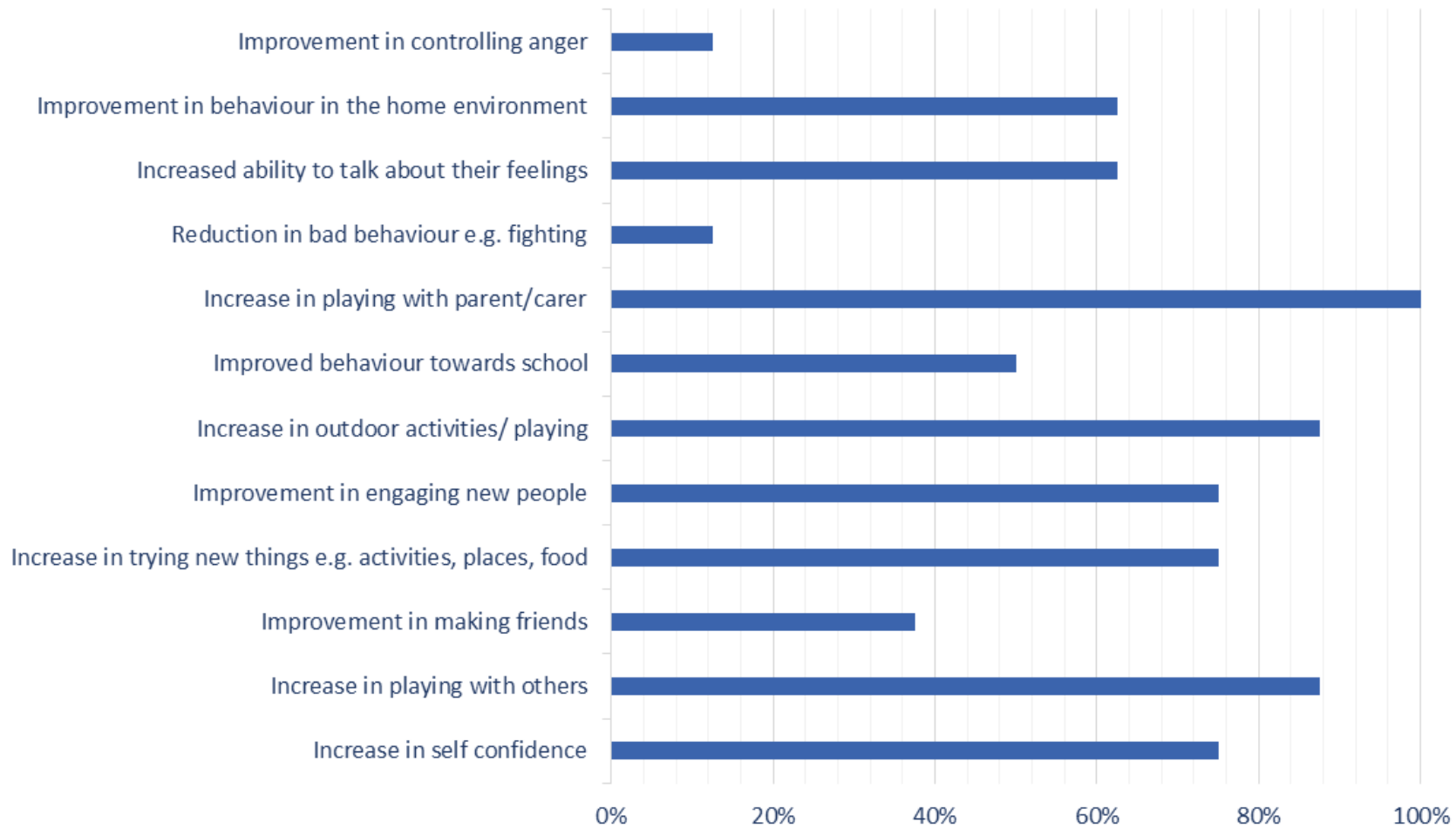
"I feel I have added confidence to take on life"

*Parent*

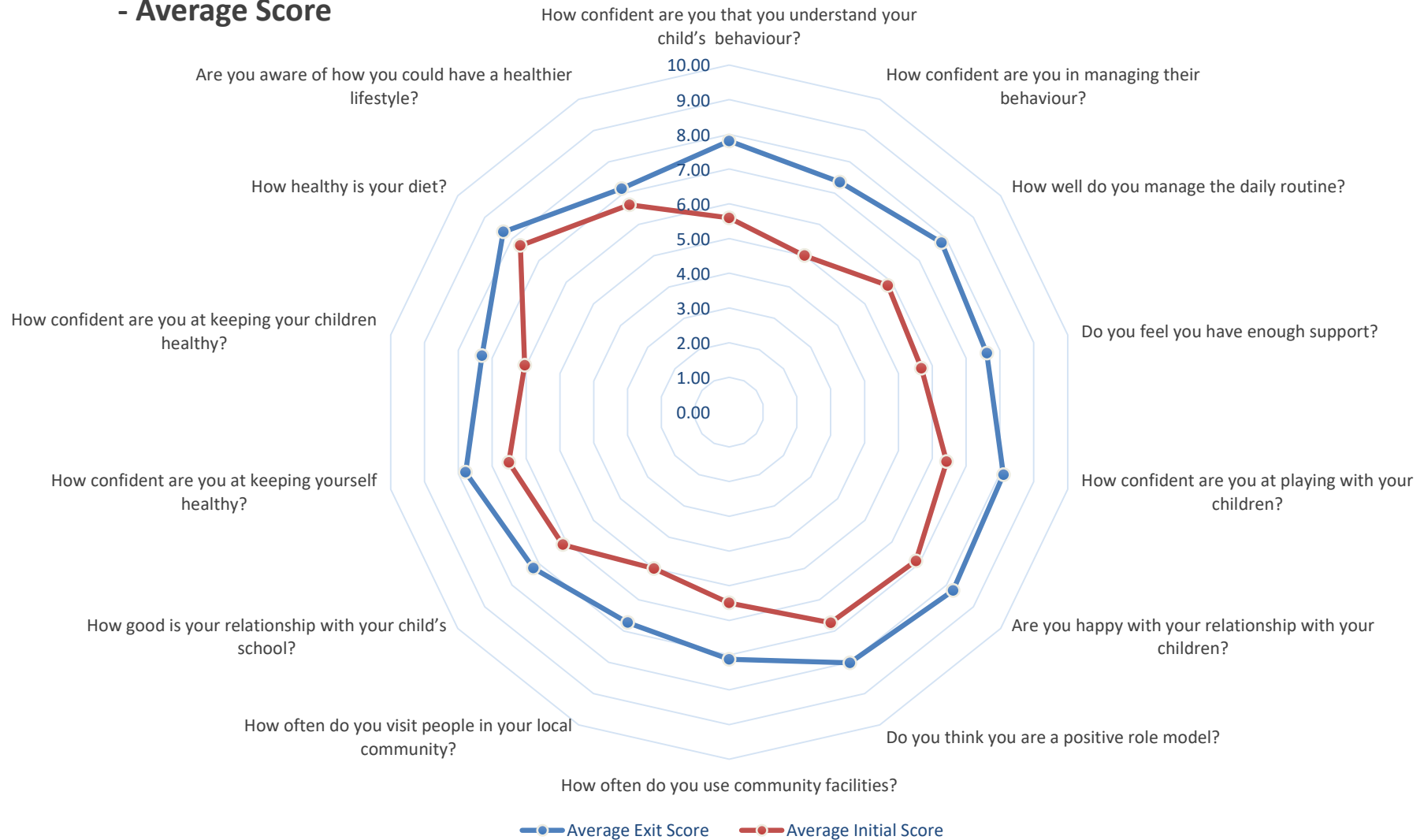
The average score from initial to exit score also demonstrated an improvement in the relationship between parent and their child (Chart 10). Staff observations at family play sessions also saw an increase in parental engagement in their child's play. Particularly noted was the increasing ability of some parents to intervene appropriately and wait for their child's play cues as a result of their increased confidence.



## % of Children experiencing each outcome



## Comparison of Parent Assessment - Average Score



## Increase in trying new things by both parent and child

Both parent and child demonstrated an increase in confidence to engage with new activities, people and the community. The child assessment showed 47% of children had an average increased score from 3.12 to 3.74 for trying new activities (including food, places) and 31% had an average increase score from 2.88 to 3.06 for meeting new people (Chart 11). BAPP worked with a number of local organisations e.g. museums, supporting their families to access these services and increasing their confidence in doing so

During the children's focus group 100% of the participants felt that they had increased their ability to make new friends. This is understandable as the children are likely to associate BAPP as a place of play and where they have met new friends through the programme.

### Comparison of Child Assessment - Average Score

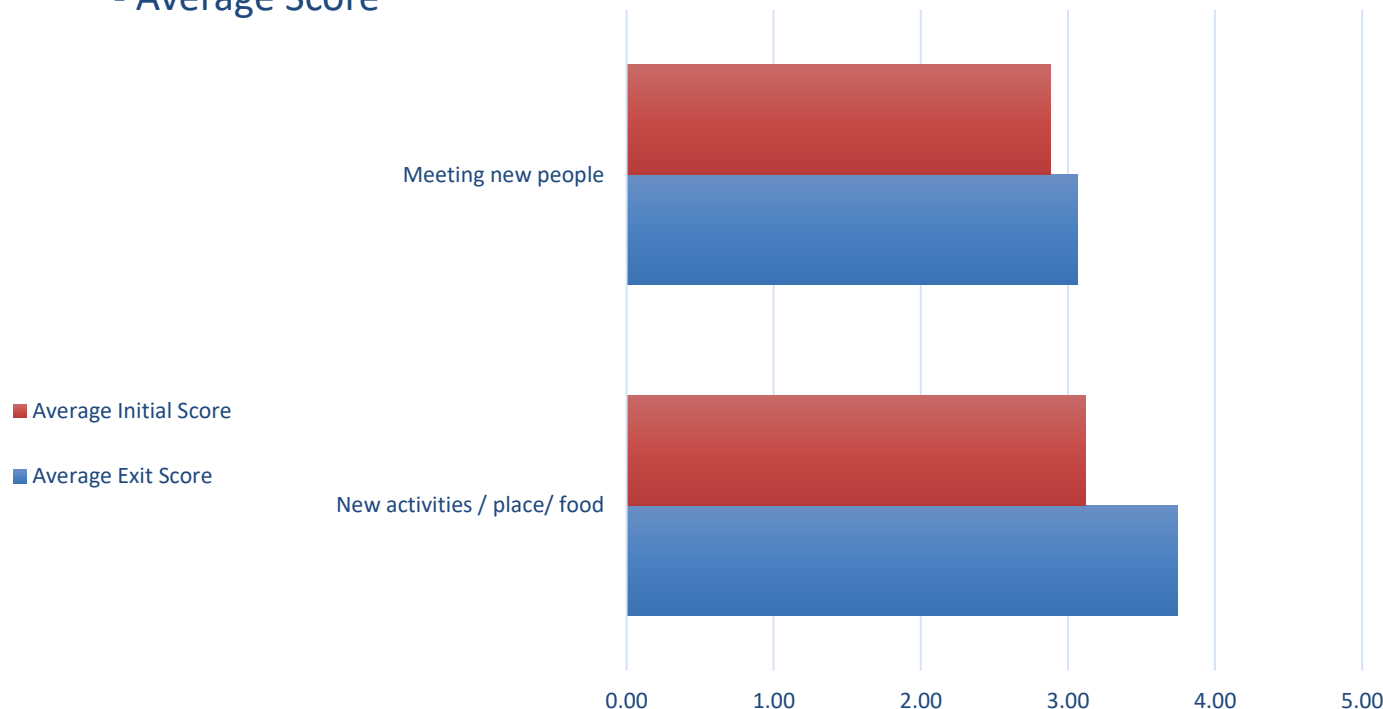


Chart 11

“He is more confident to visit ‘Wheels for All’ on his own now!”

*Parent, Family Play support*

Not surprisingly, the parent assessment data (Chart 12) shows an increase in the average score for 64% of parents when measuring their response to 'visiting people in the local community', whilst 69% of parents saw an increased in their score when responding to their use of community facilities within the assessment.

"I get more involved in their school work e.g. science projects, and do more things 1to1 now"

"I now do a lot of voluntary work for example at school, swimming, day trips etc".

*Parents - Focus Group*



Comparison of Parent Assessment  
- Average Score

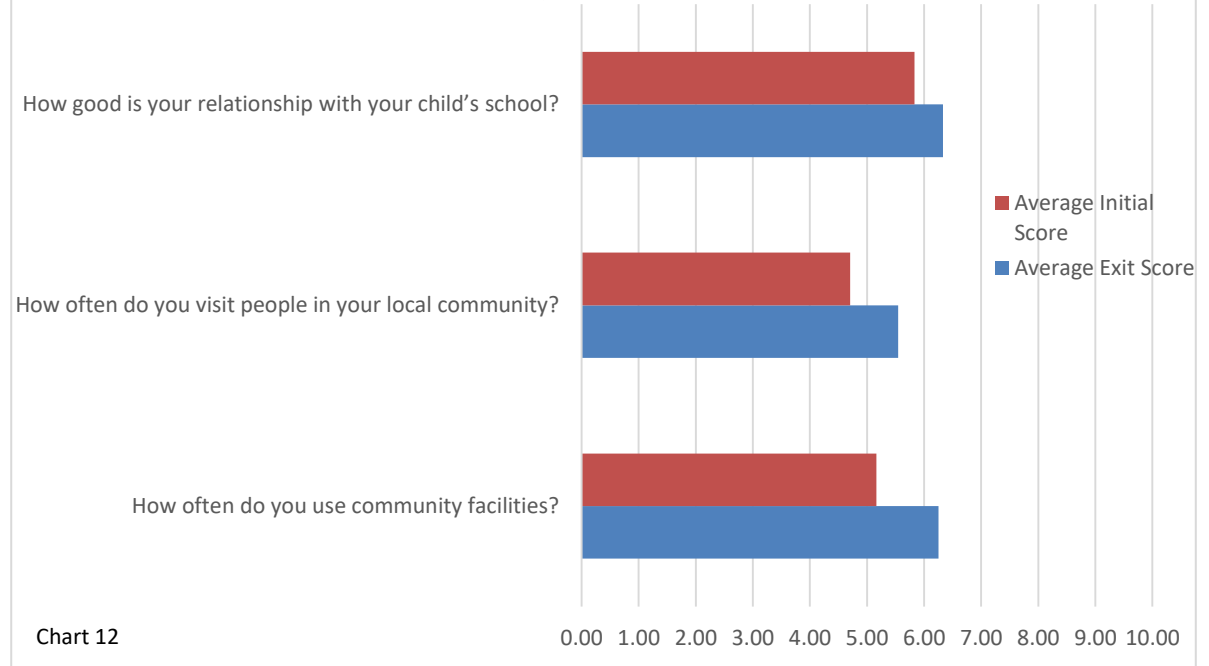


Chart 12

## Happier families through play

Charts 10 and 13 demonstrates that the support BAPP provided had many positive outcomes for the family. For example the children felt a growth in confidence and ability to control their anger and feelings. They also saw an improvement in how they felt about their place within the family (Importance of me at home). For the parent, they felt a growth in their ability to manage their daily routine, and being a positive role model.

At the end of the support, the families are asked to complete an exit survey covering a summary of their support, the difference the service has made to their family, any improvements and to share examples of them. They are finally asked to rate BAPP and the work that it has done with the family on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being 'not helpful at all' and 10 being the 'most helpful support'. The Average score on final exit questionnaire was 9 of our 10.

"Julie and her colleagues at BAPP create magical experiences that allows children to play with the freedom to be themselves. Each time I pick them up from a play session they are happy, glowing and worn out. Thank you."

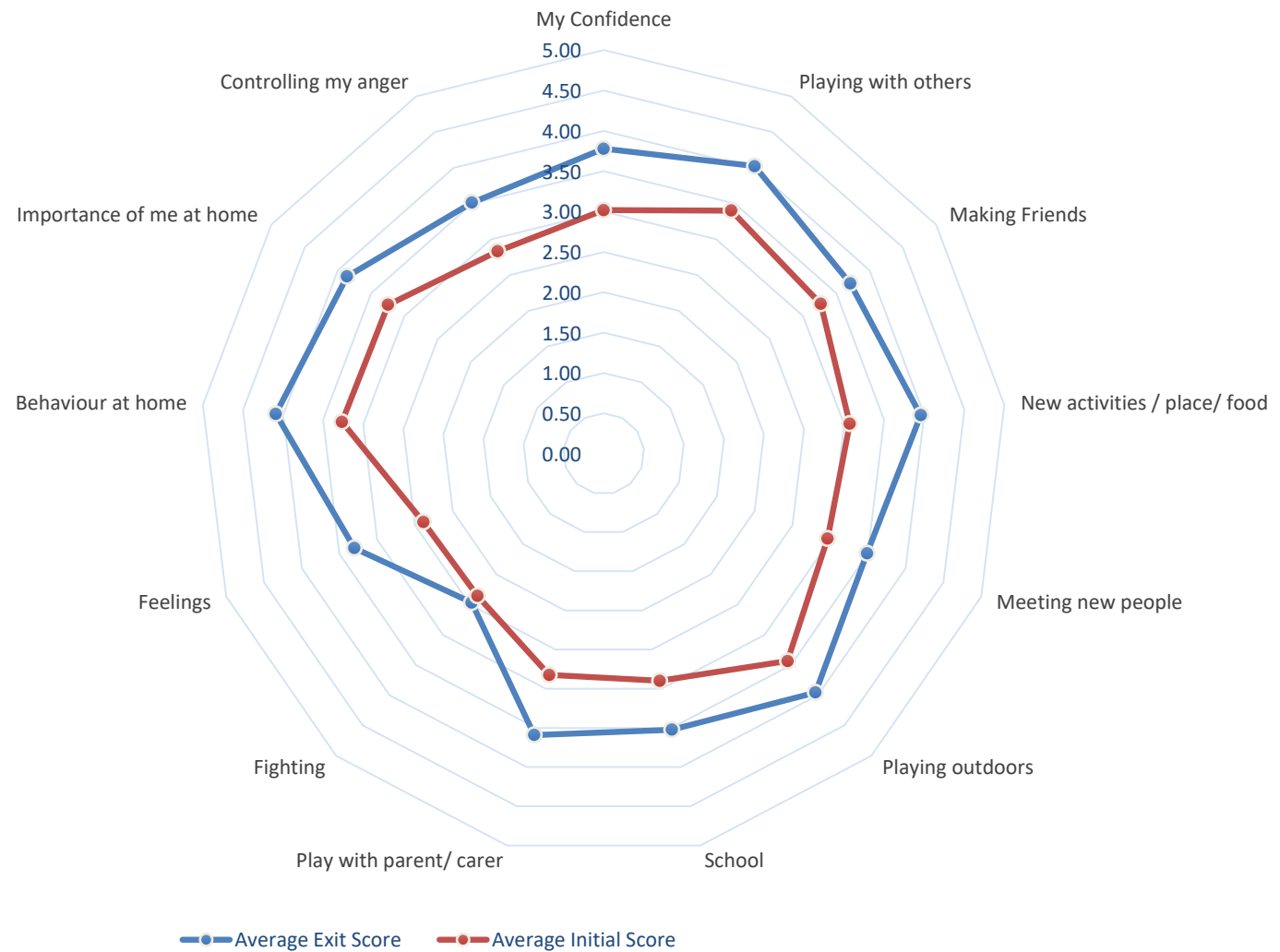
*Parent, Focus Group*

"One family I worked with now has the confidence to play together and try new things as a family. This was one of the initial outcomes set by the child's school. The child was an only child in the family, where both parents had their own needs including mobility issues and learning difficulties. This was a barrier to accessing positive activities for both parents and the child. We supported the family to try new things and see the positives of getting, out at their own pace. The family have become more confident in their ability to do things together. They have become more independent trying things they didn't do before, such as visiting museums, using local parks to play football and fly kites. All free and accessible play for their child. In addition, they have been doing this more regularly, at least once a week.

In addition, this family are now accessing weekly swimming lessons for their child. They were all very anxious about attending to begin with but through initial visits to prepare them, and get used to accessing it – via lifts and supporting the child to get used to the changing rooms and meeting a new teacher- they are now all attending as a family, accessing the sports centre plus the café facility to make a weekly event of it."



## Comparison of Child Assessment - Average Score



## Increase in understanding about healthy eating and healthier lifestyles

Another indicator of 'improved appropriate behaviour around their children' has been the improvement in healthier lifestyles of the parents and their families. Over the life of the project, BAPP have developed group rules and roles at Playful Families groups, which both parents and children have been part of. This has included a focus on healthy lifestyles and joint activity, for example parents preparing a healthy snack, with their children, for the rest of the group to consume.

The focus on healthy snacks at the group has encouraged many parents and children to try new foods, with the parents pro-actively taking a role model position with their children, many of which have had very limited diets prior to BAPP support. One example saw families who mainly ate baked beans and cheese sandwiches increase their habits to include peppers and pasta. One playworker observed that children had improved eating habits both in and outside of their BAPP group.

Through BAPP work, parents have recognised that their attitude to food, and whether they like something or not, greatly influences how their children react to food.

"One parent always screwed her face up at Hummus, her children also refused to try it. A playworker explained how much this was influencing the children, and the parent asked if they could try it away from the children, and she loved it! At the next group session the parent happily used carrot sticks to eat the Hummus without drawing attention to what she was doing, and within minutes her children were tucking in too."

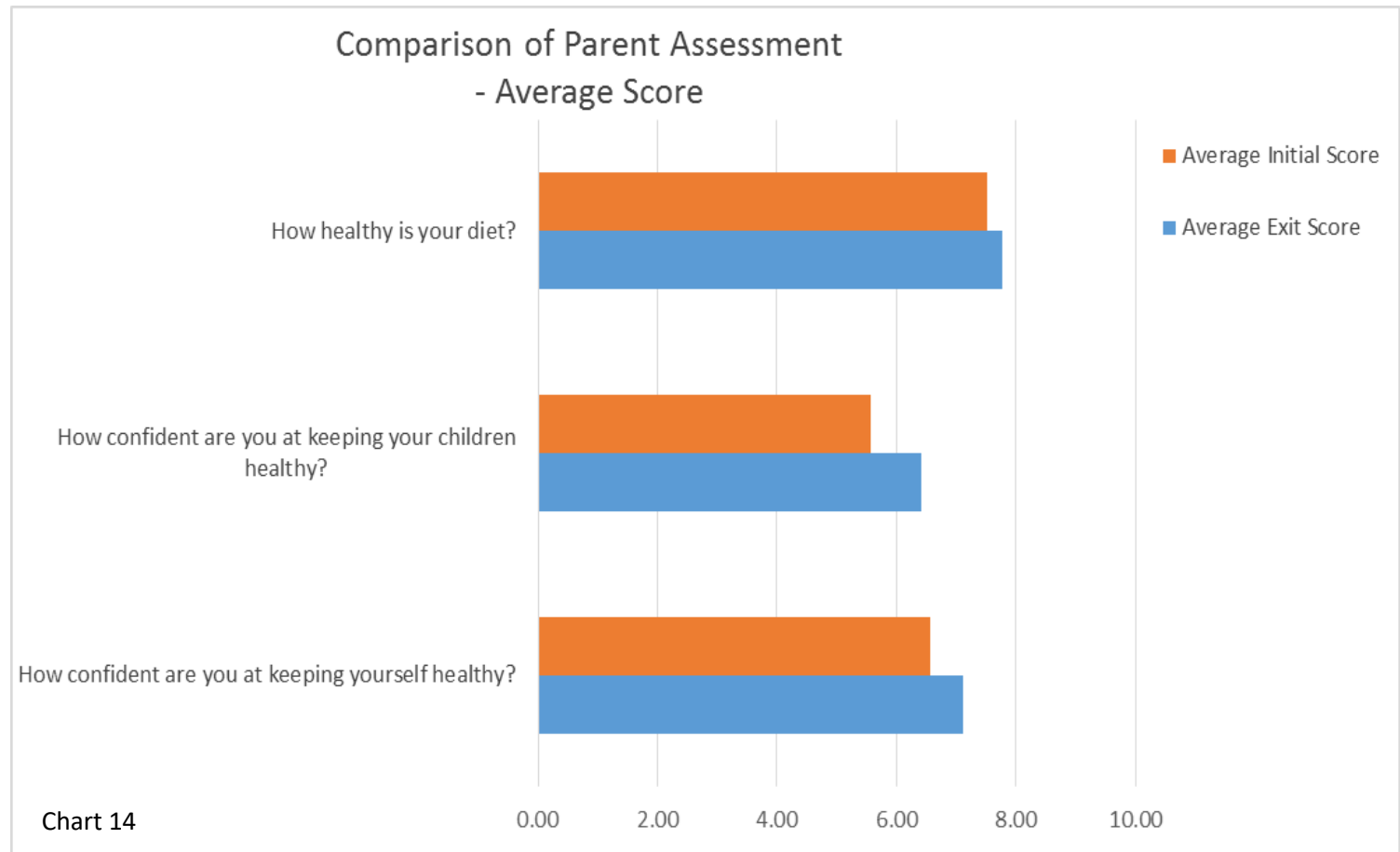
*BAPP Director, Parent Anecdote*

A partnership project with FareShare (South West), Neighbourly and Marks and Spencer's has enabled BAPP to provide a variety of fruit, vegetables and food for families, many of which they hadn't tried before. Children and parents have enjoyed asparagus, kumquats, Sharon fruit, greengages,



Cornish sardines, venison and brie to name but a few. BAPP have been fortunate to have access to this fantastic resource, providing families with access to food which they can also prepare and cook and enjoy together at home. This type of activity has provided children and parents with a joint goal and positive interaction, building on skills and creating positive communication channels through a shared interest.

This is also reflected in chart 14 demonstrating the increase in parental attitude and behaviour to healthy eating, as well as growth in confidence in this aspect of parenting.



“One young person really wanted to be involved in sport and become more fit, but expressed how she felt ‘self – conscious’ about this. It was a barrier to her being able to enjoy taking part in sport, or feeling it was something she could do, ‘it’s not really me’. One of the anxieties that created a barrier to accessing sport and the gym was concerns about meeting other young people who ‘didn’t like her’ or who had bullied her in the past at the gym or sports clubs. However, through identifying the kind of things she would like to try, which was the gym, we were able to set-up 1:1 trial sessions through a connection in another organisation which provided access to a specialist young person’s gym solely for our use. This was initially just to check out the gym and meet the coach, however the young person was really excited about this opportunity and wanted weekly sessions. Throughout these sessions she was able to set her own goals, which provided her with an opportunity to achieve, praise herself and be proud of the progression.

Not only has this opportunity motivated her but her grandparents, whom she lives with, have supported this by now offering healthy food and also setting her a challenge on the exercise bike, so that she is able to earn money ‘£4 per 4km she cycles.’ She is now hoping to continue this through attending the gym alone and attending girls only gym session which is led by the same coach. She now has the confidence to take part in this and has built up her own skills in relation to the gym. The young person’s feedback has been ‘you’re so nice and smiley, you always put me first, I’m not used to that’ and ‘I have been offered lots of people to talk to but talking doesn’t help, I wanted practical support, and I get this by being able to go to the gym’. The outcome of this work has also begun to impact on her school life, as she reported that she was able to run the whole lap of the pitch during a P.E. lesson, which she never normally does, surprising both her friends and teachers. She expressed feeling really proud of herself as a result!”

*Playworker, Child Observation Summary*

## Wider Benefits

The benefits experienced were not limited to the families involved in the project. Through their work BAPP are able to demonstrate a wider impact resulting from their support. Other outcomes include;

### Staff Feedback and Experiences

Both BAPP and partner staff reported a positive impact from engaging in the programme, both professionally and personally during interviews. The staff team and partner staff offered numerous anecdotes and experiences that demonstrated that the introduction of play within the family setting had significant impacts on the families, as seen in the example case study above.

### Supporting families better

Other stakeholders including referral partners and local authority staff all reported that their experience of the programme improved engagement with the families, but also helped them as organisations to make better decisions about their work and support they gave to the families.

### Credibility

In some cases the partners felt that their engagement with BAPP helped to give their service 'credibility' with the families they were working with. , creating positive associations with their services. Partners referred to the BAPP team having a positive impact on the families' behaviour, even by simply being visible.

### Economies of Scale

BAPP's robust partnership working has also led to shared ownership of interventions, for example they provided a Playworker alongside the Wheels for All staff member to enable activities to be delivered. This helped to manage the staffing pressures on both organisations, and also removed the risk of lone working.

"Without BAPP the outcome could have been very different for some families."

*Becky Wills, B&NES Council Social Worker*

"At every meeting you could see the progression and it was just lovely to see."

*Hannah Hobbs, Parent Support Adviser, St Michael's Church of England C of E School*

"We learnt more about how as a staff and volunteer team we need to engage and support this type of family."

*Zoe Dennington, American Museum – Bath Preservation Trust Project*

"They understood what we wanted to know about the families in order to work with them better...seeing a familiar face, created a better connection between the family and Wheels for All".

*Chris Revill, Wheels for All*

### **Case Study: Bath Museums - Access Charter**

Polly Andrews, Education Officer at Bath Preservation Trust engaged with BAPP during their Community Engagement Project. The project was to bring in new audiences into three large Bath museum organisations (The Holburne, American Museum in Britain and Bath Preservation Trust). They decided to engage BAPP as part of their local community engagement work. BAPP facilitated visits to the Museums (including providing transport), such as organising outreach sessions to ensure the project team understood how best to structure the sessions in the museum and making it a success. Between 12 – 25 adults and children attended the museums each week.

#### **Outcomes**

As a result of the learning, the three museums developed an Access charter for all the museums. It includes how to tailor the welcome/engagement for certain groups of visitor. For example those families that maybe socially marginalised/ disadvantaged and would not usually access the museum. The charter includes appropriate museum behaviour to help engage and welcome the families. This included preparing staff and volunteers in advance of visits.

*“There has been significant two way learning and particularly vital learning for us. The museums have changed their behaviours with volunteers and staff now trained and prepared to support these families such as how we manage open displays with families. We learnt that it wasn’t the best idea to take them in as a big group as children ran around the building – as they didn’t know the appropriate behaviour. Behaviour is usually a learned experience, but if you haven’t been to a museum, how would you know?”*

Polly has been asked to do a talk for Bath & NES Volunteer centre and share experiences of working with visitors. She will call upon her experiences of BAPP’s disadvantaged families and the ongoing impact of how museums approach their work to welcome and engage visitors better.

## **Communication and Collaboration**

In a number of instances, the partners referred to BAPP’s strong collaboration or going the extra mile. It was also noted that over 17 people from a breadth of public and not-for-profit organisations were listed as partners through the staff interview process.

An example of BAPP’s collaboration included how they provided “Friends of Wheels for All” with space to hold their monthly meetings. This group helped to fundraise for the project which benefited Wheels for All, but in turn helped the BAPP families accessing funded services. Other partners referred to the excellent communication of the team too.

## Challenges, Learning and Recommendations

The project is still ongoing with new families accessing BAPP's services. The data will need further review at the end of the project, but there are significant outcomes being achieved already.

To date one family has had to leave the programme without completing due to the child moving into care, as well numerous families still being supported by the project two years on. It is clear from the data that BAPP provides a crucial community and network for those families that struggle to engage with mainstream society, often feeling that their local community isn't a place for them, and that they have to create their own community for their families to exist in. It is also a concern for many of the families, past and present that this service will not be available to continue to support the needs of their families in the future.

Our analysis has identified the following recommendations for consideration:

**Whole family partnership**- BAPP achieved successful outcomes where the whole family were brought into the processes, and involved as equal partners in reaching the outcomes. Feedback from staff was that from initial visits through reviews and at exit, they could see where a partnership was not genuine and if the commitment was not there then the support they provided had less of an impact to the family. BAPP should continue to use this model as it informs delivery, supports staff development, shows the strengths that everyone brings to the relationship and in turn creates a mutual agreement on all aspects of the family's journey.

**Monitoring and evaluation** – A number of systems and tools have been put in place to measure the outcomes of BAPP as part of the Lottery funding. Significant work was undertaken by the FSI to create and transfer paper information into a database part-way through delivery. It is essential that BAPP staff continue to use and update these tools to review provision regularly but also for future project evaluations. This information will help BAPP to review and refine all their services and is therefore important for the team to embed these practises into all provision.

**Consistent Data Collection** – BAPP should ensure that all data is collected, for example ensuring exit surveys are undertaken for all family leavers.

**Case Reviews** – BAPP should put in place regular case reviews by senior staff, using the Family Play support record sample template created. This will support regular monitoring of Family support workers and also provides an ongoing sample of Family Play support records in a more quantitative format.

“My child was very disappointed when our community club closed on a Wednesday, now we have nothing to do together.”

“We had a nice group, but sadly our centre closed.”

“Every other place our children didn't want to go to, but BAPP they did.”

“We are sharing a common experience.”

“I realised that people in the community don't understand my children and that BAPP is my only real community”

“Can't imagine BAPP not being here.”

*Comments from the Parent Focus Group*



**Tailored and proportionate programme** – A number of families have been with BAPP from inception and have not completed the programme of support two years on. BAPP should use the monitoring and evaluation data to develop a structured journey, with milestones to ensure families are actively progressed through stages to support the long term sustainability of services.

**Measuring Impact** – BAPP should establish and measure the long term outcomes through six monthly and yearly follow ups.

**Removing the cliff by creating and maintaining social networks** - Stakeholders believe that a key aspect of BAPP’s success is that the families are not ‘dumped’ at the end, but that they have the opportunity to move into other programmes. It is clear that bonds develop between families during the group interventions. Social networks are critical to successful development of children and healthy families as a whole. BAPP should continue to support these groups to meet regularly, ensuring relationships and connections continue long term. This will help to mitigate the feeling of isolation that some families feel as a result of the behaviour of their children. These groups create safe places for families with similar challenges to socialise without the stigma of wider society.

**Honeymoon Initial Assessment** – A proportion of initial assessments had been subsequently amended down by the families after accessing the service. This is where families may rate themselves highly during early engagement but subsequent support highlights the reality of their situation, and they amend accordingly. It is recommended that either a pre – assessment and then subsequent formal baseline assessment is undertaken within a specific timeframe, to mitigate this. Or more visual tools such as the outcome star are used, so that families can see the impact of their scoring early on.

**Resourcing** – Feedback from staff is that time and resource are a key challenge. This was attributed to a lack of time allocated to the project along with working hours (i.e. short afterschool window). Flexibility in staff time allocation and succession planning for staff turnover is critical to managing this challenge, along with obtaining buy-in from schools to access children at and during the school day.

**Support Services availability in specific Locations** - Bath Eastern is not as well serviced by clubs and community spaces. This has led to a difficulty in providing sustainable accessible facilities for children in this area i.e. there is little to no point in proposing something on the other side of town, as a parent cannot continue to get the child there after BAPP support. BAPP should work with the local authority and other local services to improve access. This could include preparing joint funding bids.

“The service is so valuable.”

*Hannah Hobbs, Parent Support Adviser, St Michael's Church of England C of E School*

“I liked that once the objectives were met they could then refer them on to other BAPP services (like playful families). So they were not just dumped at the end, they still had them in their service and oversee them. This provided a continuous journey and onward support after intensive work.”



*Stakeholder*





## Appendices

### Appendix 1 – Monitoring and Evaluation Questionnaires

|   |                             |                                   |                                 |                                       |                                      |
|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>CHILD Name</b> _____   |                             |                                   |                                 |                                       |                                      |
| <b>My confidence</b> (how happy are you with yourself?)<br>          | <b>No confidence</b>        | <b>A Little bit of confidence</b> | <b>Quite confident</b>          | <b>Mostly Confident</b>               | <b>Confident all the time</b>        |
| <b>Please tick one box</b>  |                             |                                   |                                 |                                       |                                      |
| <b>Playing with others</b>  | <b>I find it difficult</b>  | <b>I can a little bit</b>         | <b>I can sometimes</b>          | <b>I can mostly</b>                   | <b>I do all the time</b>             |
| <b>Please tick one box</b>  |                             |                                   |                                 |                                       |                                      |
| <b>Making friends</b><br><i>(Have at least one real friend)</i><br> | <b>Not good at all</b>      | <b>I can a little bit</b>         | <b>Quite good</b>               | <b>Good</b>                           | <b>Very good</b>                     |
| <b>Please tick one box</b>  |                             |                                   |                                 |                                       |                                      |
| <b>New things - activities/ places/food</b>   | <b>I don't like trying</b>  | <b>I like to try a little bit</b> | <b>I quite like to try</b>      | <b>I like to try most of the time</b> | <b>I always try</b>                  |
| <b>Please tick one box</b>  |                             |                                   |                                 |                                       |                                      |
| <b>Meeting new people</b>   | <b>I don't like meeting</b> | <b>I like meeting new</b>         | <b>I quite like meeting new</b> | <b>I mostly like meeting new</b>      | <b>I love meeting all new people</b> |

|  | <b>new people<br/>at all</b>                  | <b>people a<br/>little bit</b>                    | <b>people<br/>sometimes</b>                    | <b>people</b>                                   |   |
|--|---|---|--|---|---|
| <b>Please tick one box</b>   |   |   |  |   |   |
| <b>Playing outdoors</b><br><i>(parks and gardens)</i><br> | <b>I never play<br/>outside</b>               | <b>I play outside<br/>a little bit</b>            | <b>I play outside<br/>quite often</b>          | <b>I usually play<br/>outside</b>               | <b>I always play<br/>outside</b>        |
| <b>Please tick one box</b>   |   |   |  |   |   |
| <b>School</b>  | <b>I never like<br/>school</b>                | <b>I rarely like<br/>school</b>                   | <b>Sometimes I<br/>like school</b>             | <b>I often like<br/>school</b>                  | <b>I love school</b>                    |
| <b>Please tick one box</b>   |   |   |  |   |   |
| <b>Playing with<br/>Parent/Carer</b>   | <b>Never</b>                                  | <b>Not often</b>                                  | <b>Sometimes</b>                               | <b>Mostly</b>                                   | <b>Whenever I<br/>want</b>              |
| <b>Please tick one box</b>   |   |   |  |   |   |
| <b>Fighting</b><br>                                     | <b>I never fight</b>                          | <b>I have to<br/>fight a little<br/>bit</b>       | <b>I have to fight<br/>sometimes</b>           | <b>I have to fight<br/>most of the<br/>time</b> | <b>I have to fight<br/>all the time</b> |
| <b>Please tick one box</b>   |   |   |  |   |   |
| <b>Feelings</b>  | <b>I can't talk<br/>about them<br/>at all</b> | <b>I can talk<br/>about them a<br/>little bit</b> | <b>I can talk<br/>about them<br/>sometimes</b> | <b>I can talk about<br/>them often</b>          | <b>I can talk about<br/>them always</b> |

|   |                         |                                       |                                   |                              |                            |
|---|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
|                              |                         |                                       |                                   |                              |                            |
| <b>Please tick one box</b>  |                         |                                       |                                   |                              |                            |
| <b>I think my behaviour at home is...</b>   | <b>Never good</b>       | <b>Not often good</b>                 | <b>Good sometimes</b>             | <b>Good most of the time</b> | <b>Good all the time</b>   |
| <b>Please tick one box</b>  |                         |                                       |                                   |                              |                            |
| <b>In my home I am.....</b>   | <b>Not important</b>    | <b>Not really important</b>           | <b>Important some of the time</b> | <b>Mostly important</b>      | <b>The most important</b>  |
| <b>Please tick one box</b>  |                         |                                       |                                   |                              |                            |
| <b>Controlling my anger</b>  | <b>I feel I can not</b> | <b>I feel I can a bit of the time</b> | <b>I feel I can sometimes</b>     | <b>I feel I can mostly</b>   | <b>I feel I can always</b> |
| <b>Please tick one box</b>  |                         |                                       |                                   |                              |                            |

Parent Initial Baseline - Family Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

- How confident are you that you understand your children's behaviour?



- How confident are you in managing their behaviour?



- How well do you manage daily routines including bedtime?



- Do you feel you have enough support to help you manage daily life?



- How confident are you at playing with your children?



- Are you happy with your relationship with your child/ren?



• Do you think you are a positive role model for your children?



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Not at all



Very

• How often do you use community facilities? (Park,



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

None



Daily

• How often do you visit people in your community?



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Never



Daily

• How confident are you in keeping yourself healthy?



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Not At All



Very

• How confident are you in keeping your children healthy?



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Not At All



Very

• How healthy is your diet?



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Not At All



Very

• Are you aware of how you could have a healthier lifestyle?



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Not At All



Very

• **How good is your relationship with your child's school?**



September 2014

Family Exit Questionnaire

Family Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ FPW: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Summary of support provided (including how you found out about the service)
2. How has the support made a difference to you and your family? (examples)
3. What are the next steps for you and your children? (Other support? From whom? Other services?)
4. Have you and your child/ren attended play sessions/ play opportunities/ accessed services/ groups/events in the community that were new to you and your children? If yes, can you give some examples?  
-Have you and your children met new people through this support?  
- If no, could we have done anything differently to help you to attend these?
5. Has the relationship between you and your child/ren improved? (In what ways?)
6. Do you feel you now better understand your child's behaviour? (in what ways?)
7. Do you feel you now better understand your child's play choices?

8. Bath Area Play Project Staff Team

For each of the areas listed, please rate your support worker on the following scale of 1 to 3.

|  | 1 = Needs improvement/<br>Area for growth | 2 = Capable/ Competent | 3 = Very Capable/ Area of<br>strength |
|--|---|------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Established positive, responsive and cooperative relationships with myself and the members of our family |   |                        |                                       |
| Used effective strategies to help my child understand how to behave appropriately                        |   |                        |                                       |
| Helped my child learn how to socialize and get along with others   |   |                        |                                       |
| Was well-organized and effectively manages the classroom or group  |   |                        |                                       |
| Presented herself/himself in a professional manner   |   |                        |                                       |

9. On a scale of 1- 10 (1 being not helpful at all and 10 being the most helpful support) how would you rate the service and the work we have done together?

Not helpful at all      1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10      The most helpful support

10. Thank you for taking the time to support Bath Play Project in responding to this questionnaire. Do you have any other comments, questions or feedback?

## Appendix 2 - Focus Group Agenda

| <u>03/11/2015</u> | Thursday   |
|-------------------|--|
| 15:15-15:30       | Families arrive from school<br>Refreshments given  |
| 15:30 – 16:00     | <p><b>Family exercise</b> - A portrait of your family</p> <p>Sheet of paper provided to the families that is split into two halves. Ask the family members to work together to write or draw their family before they accessed BAPP and after.</p> <p>This can be given out as the families come in and get their refreshments.</p>  |
| 16:00 – 16:05     | Welcome Speech – Caroline H<br>FSI Introduction – Amber S  |
| 16:05 – 16:35     | <p><b>Parents Session:</b></p> <p>Part 1 – Opportunity for Parents to reflect upon their experiences with BAPP</p> <p>6 flipchart sheets are put up with the following headings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Your Confidence</li> <li>- Your Childs Behaviour</li> <li>- Your Resilience</li> <li>- Your involvement in your community</li> <li>- Your social circles</li> <li>- Your relationship/ connection with your child (ren)</li> </ul> <p>(15 mins) Parents will be given 9 (single colour) post-its/ stickers and allocate them to the heading or headings that they feel most reflects the changes created through their involvement with BAPP. They will be given another post it to provide a quote(s)</p> <p>Part 2 - (15mins) Discussion about their choices</p> <p>FSI to capture anecdotes</p> |



|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
|                      | <i>BAPP team to undertake activities with children whilst parents are in session.</i>  |
| <b>16:35 – 17:05</b> | <p><b>Children Session:</b></p> <p>As with the parent’s session this will give the children an opportunity to reflect upon their experiences with BAPP.</p> <p>6 flipchart sheets are put up covering the same headings, but using different terminology and more visual/ images – based upon the children’s baseline questionnaire:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Your Confidence</li> <li>- Your Behaviour – Fighting / Controlling anger / playing with others</li> <li>- Your Resilience – talking about feelings</li> <li>- Your involvement in your community - trying new things – activities/ food/ places / school / playing outdoors</li> <li>- You social circles – Making Friends / Meeting new people /</li> <li>- Your relationship/ connection with parent/ carer – Playing with them / Importance at home</li> </ul> <p>Children are given colour stickers and allocate them to the heading or headings that they feel most reflect the changes created through their time with BAPP.</p> <p>Question their choices, further questions could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- What was your favourite activity? Why?</li> <li>- Have you always enjoyed coming to BAPP? Why?</li> <li>- What has changed at home since coming to BAPP?</li> <li>- How has BAPP made you feel?</li> <li>- What has changed at school since coming to BAPP?</li> </ul> <p>FSI and BAPP to capture anecdotes</p> <p><i>BAPP team to undertake activities with parents whilst children are in session.</i></p> |
| <b>17:05 – 17:15</b> | <p>Thank you – Amber S</p> <p>Closing speech – Caroline H</p>  |

## Appendix 3 – Stakeholder Interview Questions

| <b>Introduction</b>   |  |
|---|--|
| 1. How do you know about BAPP?  |  |
| 2. Why did you get in contact with BAPP? (referral / Signpost)  |  |
| 3. What were your expectations or expected outcomes for engaging with BAPP?   |  |
| <b>Your Experience</b>  |  |
| 1. How did you find the engagement with the BAPP team?  |  |
| 2. Did the BAPP team respond promptly to any queries raised by you?   |  |
| <b>Experience of your Service Users or BAPP Service Users</b>   |  |
| 1. Did BAPP increase engagement of service users? (Example or stats/volume)<br>a. If yes, how did it increase engagement?       |  |
| 2. Did BAPP change the behaviour of service users accessing your services?  |  |
| a. If yes, how did it change? E.g. increase in confidence to access your service or increase in attendance, improved behaviour? |  |
| 3. Did you learn more about your service user?  |  |
| 4. What additional value did they bring to you?   |  |
| 5. Would /Do you continue to engage/ refer/ signpost to BAPP (again)?<br>a. Why?  |  |

## Stakeholder Interviewees

A set of structured interviews were undertaken to gather information from a mix of stakeholders who were involved in the BAPP activities. The following table details the stakeholders and their involvement with the project.

| <b>Stakeholder Name</b> | <b>Stakeholder Type</b>                       |
|-------------------------|---|
| Harriet Rose            | BAPP Family Play Support Worker               |
| Julie Bennett           | BAPP Community Play Support Worker            |
| Matt Hudson             | BAPP Community Play Support Worker            |
| Becky Wills             | B&NES Council                                 |
| Chris Revill            | B&NES Council – Wheels for All                |
| Zoe Dennington          | American Museum in Bath                       |
| Polly Andrews           | Bath Preservation Trust                       |
| Hannah Hobbs            | B&NES Council – School Parent Support Advisor |