

Session 1:

Early Beginnings: Strengthening Parental Support in Pregnancy and the First Months

NSPCC



Lancaster University 



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Understanding parents' experiences of Early Pregnancy Support

A Together for Childhood Research Project
Glasgow (Govan)



Who we are...



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Self-care

This session discusses themes of a sensitive nature. Please take a break at any time during the session.



About Together for Childhood



A place-based approach

Together for Childhood was the NSPCC's long-term project working in four towns across the UK to make them safer for children.

Made up of local partnerships that:

- Share expertise and knowledge with each other
- Learn to address social problems together
- Prevent abuse and neglect



About the research



Understanding the context of support



Every child should have the best start in life



Reducing health and wellbeing inequalities from the earliest point



Understanding and responding to local need through partnership working



In-depth research identified as a need and funded by The Promise Partnership

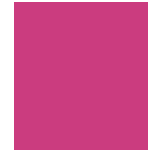


Research to understand local Govan parents' needs and access to support during pregnancy.

Our research approach



Qualitative research
interview method



Support for local
families

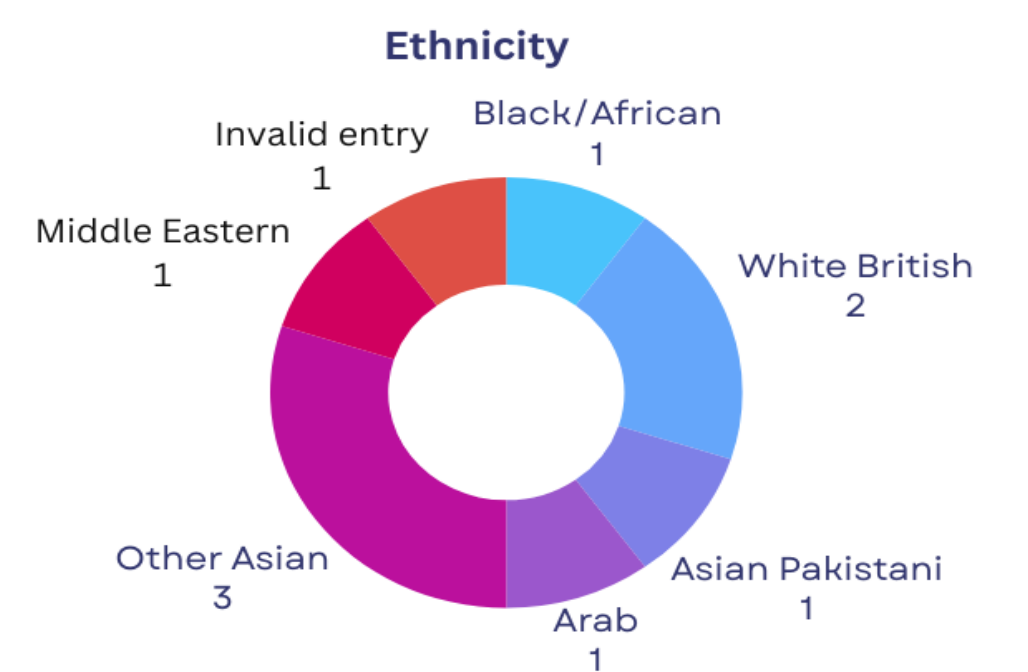
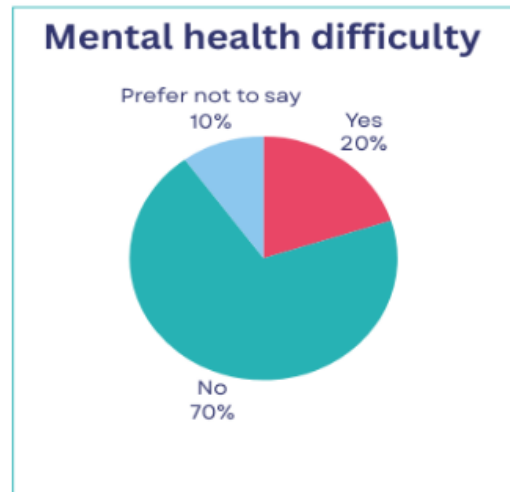
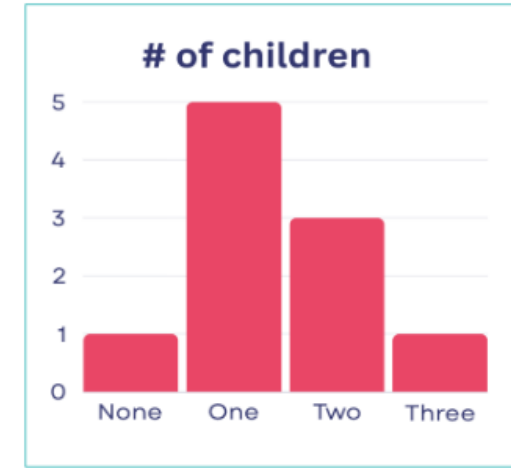
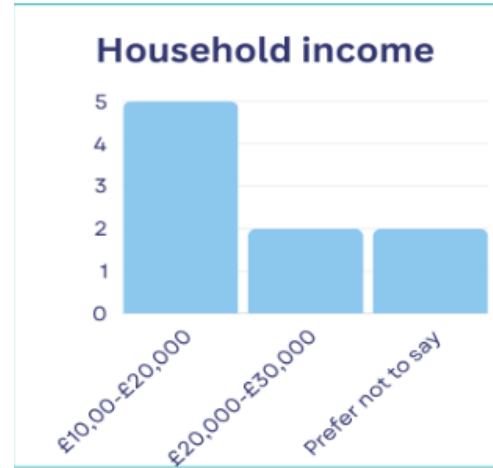


Community outreach



Ensuring equality,
diversity and
inclusion

Our diverse research participants





Listening to parents

1. Almost all participants felt they had no support at all during the very early stages of pregnancy

“

“But anything over and above [the 12-week check-up] I wasn't made aware of from my angle, from any professional or any organisation. Nothing. You're just left to deal with it yourself.”

“Like I think just being able to say it, “I'm pregnant and I don't know if I want to be”.

2. Timely, consistent and compassionate medical care is essential

“

“If [antenatal classes were] available to me, then I think that would have made quite a big impact on how I went about in dealing with the new-born baby when they were born.”

“I think the second pregnancies and pregnancies after that as well kind of get a little bit forgotten [...] But then in some ways you need more support.”

3. Reliable medical information needs to be accessible

“

“Because no question is too small [...] or insignificant, but obviously [...] if you’re phoning about 10 numbers, you’re likely to give in and just Google it. And that’s not good. Don’t Google. Don’t Google wee things because there’ll be a mountain.”

“She said the main problem is the English. If she knew the language she would have [known]. Probably maybe the midwife tried to tell her the first time but she didn’t understand” – parent via interpreter.”

4. Community-based family and peer support from the very early stages of pregnancy is key

“

“[When I get home from work] I’m alone home. [...] I cry a lot and it’s quite hard. [...]. I wish I have someone who [...] could be come along [...] like go for lunch, like go for walk, that really help a lot – [because I am new here in Govan].”

“Like that’s what I need, [another] mother with experience. But I have to deal with myself for everything, like I never, I not even meet one single [...] mum [living with my disability]. I only meet normal mum. That’s why I need that help. [...] that will help me a lot to make [me] more confident that I’m ready to have baby.”

5. The wider impacts of social and economic inclusion and exclusion need to be considered

“

“I really would have loved to have been able to speak to someone about finances earlier in pregnancy. I think that’s something that kind of get missed a little bit.”

Parent recommendations



Parents' recommendations

- Empathic spaces of care are needed at the earliest point
- Mental wellbeing needs to be prioritised alongside physical wellbeing
- Further support to access reliable medical information, incorporating diversity into communication materials
- Continued funding for community initiatives that offer opportunities for peers to connect, including parents with diverse needs
- Medical, wider statutory and community services should be more joined up.

Policy considerations

- Scotland has set high aspirations within legislation and national practice guidance **to make Scotland the best place to grow up**
- Each of the parents' recommendations sit within existing policy priorities - GIRFEC 2012 strategy
- Support pathways exist, and practice frameworks are strongly supportive

However...

Asking different questions

1. How can we ensure expectant parents have access to consistent and reliable support from the earliest point in pregnancy?
2. What can we do to build support that is inclusive and accessible to all expectant parents?
3. What can we do differently to collaborate with the diverse support services that families need, taking a trauma-informed and poverty-aware approach?

**What's
happened since?**



Immediate value

- *“What we hear every day - as proper research”*
- *“We are thinking of so much more support moving forward that we can offer to all expectant mothers at the nursery.”*
- The research findings are informing and shaping our work in Scotland

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Thank You



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