



Early Learning Initiative

National College of Ireland

Supporting Parents, Communities & Schools
in the Education of Disadvantaged Children

ParentChild+ basis.point GA18 Report 2020





Early Learning Initiative

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This report is to thank you for your ongoing sustained support for the Early Learning Initiative (ELI) and to keep you informed of how your generous donation of €225,660 from October 2019 to June 2021 is enabling 72 vulnerable children and their parents who live in Dublin's Inner City, Garryowen, Limerick City and Ballinasloe Co. Galway take part in the ParentChild+ Programme. This report also includes the remaining families (35) who were initially funded by basis.point Grant 2 and are still completing the ParentChild+ Programme.

Over the past year, these families have received

- Two weekly indoor, outdoor or virtual visits, during which the Home Visitor models language, social skills and positive parenting approaches.
- A range of high-quality educational books and toys, which cater to the children's developmental stage.

More details of the programme, family engagement and data measuring children's developmental outcomes and parent-child interactions are outlined in the rest of the report. You should note the high level of need displayed by these children and parents, when compared to the national average, when entering the programme. The children were mostly non-verbal and were not reaching their developmental milestones. However, we are delighted to say that family engagement is high, children's language skills are improving and there are more quality parent-child interactions.

It is promising to see that these children are experiencing a comparable level of progression to the other children in the programme. Of course, ParentChild+ has been an essential lifeline for these children and families during Covid-19, improving their morale, mental health and home learning environment. We expect over the next year that, due to your generosity, these at-risk children will reach their developmental norms and be ready to enter primary schools with the skills needed to succeed.

These families have also benefitted from their wider involvement in ELI, including access to other integrated community support services. Approximately 14,683 people took part in one of ELI's programmes last year - an increase from 12,000 in 2018/19. Satisfaction rates remain high at 94% (n=1,462). Our programmes have adapted to the new conditions presented by COVID-19 and we are offering a blend of online and face-to-face activities (when permissible) to support children, families and young people on their continued educational journeys.

Without the support and active engagement of partners like basis.point, ELI would not be successful in improving educational outcomes for children and their families in Dublin's Docklands, Garryowen, Limerick City and Ballinasloe, Co. Galway. Thank you for your support in these uncertain times. You are making a real difference to these children's futures. If you have any questions, please contact me.

Dr Josephine Bleach
Director of ELI

The ParentChild+ Programme

Originally from the US, the ParentChild+ Programme is an innovative, home-based literacy and parenting programme that strengthens families and prepares children to succeed academically. Home Visitors model oral language, reading and play in their twice-weekly visits/virtual visits over a 92-visit period. The families then continue the activities in their own time, thereby enabling the ParentChild+ child and his/her siblings to develop their language, literacy and numeracy skills.

Expected Outcomes:

- The educational outcomes for children, particularly in pre-numeracy and pre-literacy skills, will be improved as result of their engagement in ParentChild+. They will start school ready to learn, thereby maximising their chances of success in education and life
- Parent involvement in their children's educational development will increase. Parents will have the self-confidence and skills to support their children's learning as they progress through the education system and on to employment

Short-term Targets:

- Parents will continue the learning activities with the children in their own time
- Children's oral language, literacy, and numeracy skills will improve

Medium-term Targets:

- The oral language, literacy, and numeracy levels of ParentChild+ children will be on a par with the national norms when they start school
- Parents will have an understanding of their children's development in oral language, literacy and numeracy, and be able to monitor and support their children's progress
- Parenting strategies, personal skills and involvement of the parents in their children's learning will be improved

Long-term targets:

- Increased parental awareness and engagement in children's education
- Improvement in the long-term educational outcomes for the children.

Local Employment & Capacity Building

All ParentChild+ Home Visitors are employed from their local communities, and many were originally parents on the programme. This has brought considerable value to both the delivery of home visiting and to creating transformational change in the local community. Home Visitors are champions for education and life-long learning in their communities. Building capacity in the home environment which then filters through extended families and onto local level is not possible without the employment, expertise and training of a locally-based Home Visiting team.

I. basis.point Dublin Docklands Cohort

Attendance

In total, 62 families engaging with ParentChild+ in Dublin's Docklands have benefitted from funding provided by basis.point. Thirty-five of these families became engaged through basis.point GA2 (September 2017 – June 2019), and now an additional 27 through basis.point GA18 (October 2019-June 2021). Unfortunately, 14 of these families had to leave the programme prematurely due to reasons such as moving from the catchment area or the child receiving a place in a crèche. Any family that dropped off early were replaced by a new family, to ensure that 24 families complete the full programme from each grant cohort.

Thus far, 23 families have graduated from the programme and either attended a ParentChild+ Graduation Ceremony at the National College of Ireland (January 2020), or a socially distanced ‘doorstep graduation’ during the COVID-19 lockdown period. Many of the families’ first interactions with any college has been through events run by ParentChild+ in NCI. Children with their immediate and extended family members, gather to celebrate their child and parents' achievements. This graduation is a very big celebration for all involved and it marks a significant milestone in their journey through education. The remaining 25 families are expected to continue engaging in the programme until they reach 92 visits and will graduate within the next two years.

In total 5,412 appointments were scheduled with families linked to the basis.point cohorts in Dublin’s Docklands. Thirty-two percent (n=1,508) of these visits did not occur due to a range of factors, including illness or the family needing to attend other appointments. This is slightly higher than the percentage of scheduled visits that did not occur for the entire Dublin Docklands cohort in 2019/20 (28%). These missed visits are added on to the recurring appointments until every family completes 92 visits.

Child and Parent Engagement

One of the benefits of the CRM system is the ability to track parent and child engagement within the programme. The home visits for which parents and children are either ‘fully engaged’ or ‘somewhat engaged’ suggest positive levels of engagement by families during home visits. As can be seen in Figure 1, parents in the basis.point Dublin Docklands cohort were fully engaged for 75% (n=2,367) of their total appointments, somewhat engaged for 18% (n=565), and not engaged for a small minority (3%, n=96) of the appointments held between September 2017 and October 2020. Children in the basis.point Dublin Docklands cohort were fully engaged for 61% (n=1,940) of their total appointments, somewhat engaged for 28% (n=902), and not engaged for a small minority (6%, n=183) of the appointments held between the same timeframe. The percentage parents and children not engaging with their appointments is comparable to those in the total Dublin Docklands 2019/20 cohort.

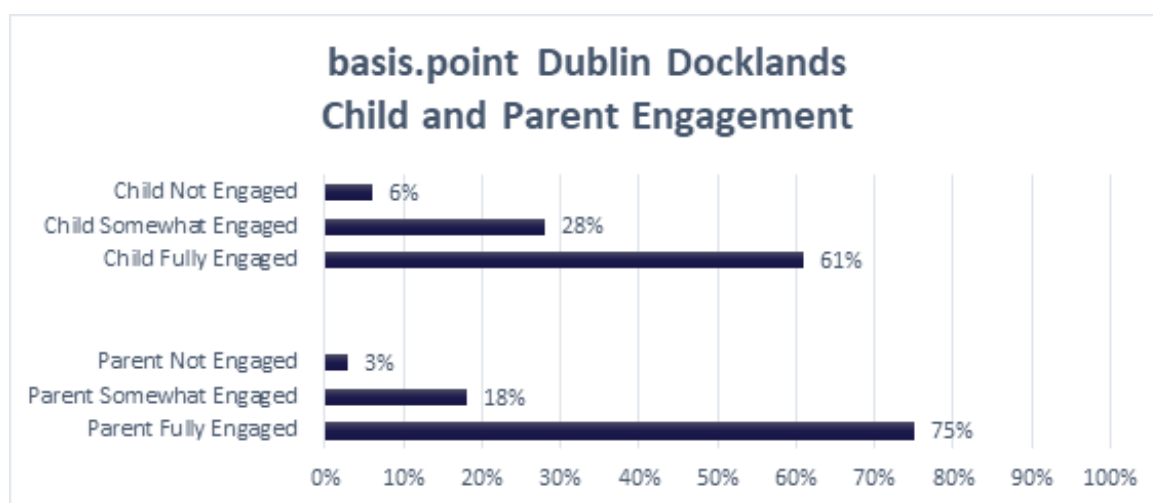


Figure 1. ParentChild+ basis.point Dublin Docklands cohort. Percentage of child and parent engagement levels in appointments.

The families engaging in ParentChild+ are targeted for their needs, many face a multitude of stresses and challenges, one being homelessness. Home Visitors have noted various challenges in working with homeless families such as lack of space to play, social isolation and the psychological effects of homelessness. This could be one reason for the figures of non-engagement in both children and parents during the appointments. Another reason could be the time it takes for the family and Home Visitors relationship to develop. At the beginning of the programme, the family may be uncomfortable in engaging with a new person in their home but as they get to know the programme and the Home Visitor, engagement levels normally increase.

Child Development Encouraged in the Home Environment

During the home visit, the Home Visitor is actively encouraging the child's developmental stages through the medium of play and reading. The Home Visitor now captures this data on the CRM system, individual to each appointment. This gives us a more holistic insight into the home visit and tells a story in itself. We can now see the quantitative data to back up the assessments, parents' evaluations as well as the qualitative narratives we receive from progress notes and talking to parents. This data informs plans for the year ahead especially with developing the appropriate VISM (book and toy list) list for the next year. An example of this in practice is that the number for pre-writing and marking are very low which can indicate that there is a need to add more materials to work on this development throughout the programme.

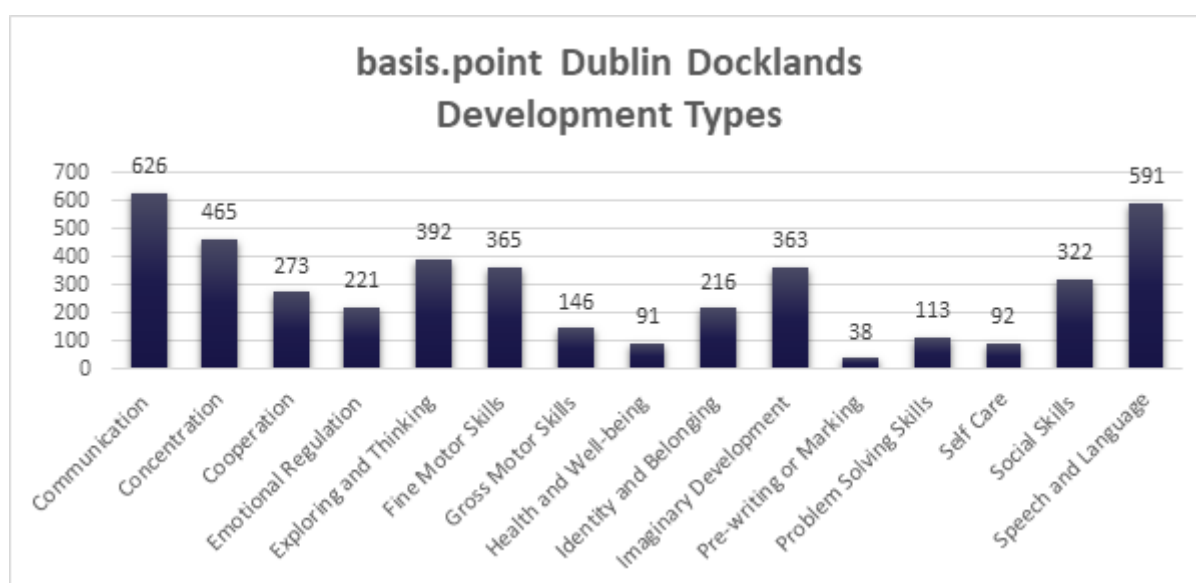


Figure 2. ParentChild+ basis.point Dublin Docklands cohort overall Home Visitor Strategies/Child Development Encouraged in the Home Environment from September 2017 to June 2020.

Continuous Professional Development

As part of the ongoing commitment to professional development there is a continued focus on the upskilling on the home visiting team. Across 2019/20 this included further education opportunities including training in:

- Paediatric and basic first aid;
- Children First Guidelines (Tusla);
- Life for children with Autism (As I Am);
- Getting Started - Restorative Practice
- Engaging children with additional needs
- Speech and language
- Cultural, diversity and inclusion
- Attachment
- Play therapy

In addition, the team were actively encouraged to attend and present at conferences and complete FETAC level courses in Early Childhood Care and Education from levels 5 to 8 Degree standard.

Child and Parent Assessments

In line with the programme manual each year, the Child Behaviour Trait (CBT) assessment and the Parent and Child Together (PACT) assessment are completed by the Home Visitors at the start and at the end of the year, which allows us to see the developmental trajectory of the children across the year and the interaction between them and their parents.

Home Visitors are asked to complete the first of the forms (CBT 1 and PACT 1) after the sixth visit with the child and their parent/guardian, the second forms (CBT 2 and PACT 2) between the 44th and 48th visit, the third forms (CBT 3 and PACT 3) between the 68th and the 72nd visit and the end of programme forms (CBT 4 and PACT 4) between the 89th and 92nd visit. Due to the rolling/circular way of enrolling children in ParentChild+ that was introduced in 2017, and the fact that Home Visitors complete the assessments at particular stages of the home visits, large differences can often be found in the sample sizes between each of the assessment stages. Thus, caution should be taken when interpreting results. Due to logistical reasons full sets of both CBT and PACT data are not available for every family, thus there are slight differences in CBT and PACT sample sizes. For the purposes of comparison, assessment results of each of the cohorts below are presented alongside the results of the total cohort of children in ParentChild+ Ireland 2019/20 (N=339).

In the following graphs the percentages displayed are calculated based on the proportion of Home Visitors answering 'often' or 'always' in the CBT and PACT assessments. According to the coding scheme of the two forms, children scoring 'often' (=3) or 'always' (=4) tend to meet their developmental milestones, and parents scoring 'often' (=3) or 'always' (=4) indicate positive parent-child relationships.

Child Behaviour Trait (CBT) Assessment

Baseline (CBT 1) assessments have been completed for 56 children who have engaged in ParentChild+ in Dublin's Docklands funded by basis.point, CBT 2 has been completed for 43 of the children, 30 have CBT 3 and 21 children have completed the full assessment cycle. Due to logistical errors, CBT 3 data is unavailable for one child, and CBT 4 data is unavailable for two of the children that have completed and graduated from the programme.

As can be seen in Figure 3 the basis.point Dublin Docklands children are progressing well with an increase of 56% between CBT 1 (30%) to CBT 4 (86%). Figure 3 also provides a comparison of this data with complete ParentChild+ 2019/20 Cohort (N=339). As can be seen below basis.point funded families are developing throughout the assessment cycles comparably to the ParentChild+ cohort, suggesting a positive level of progression for the basis.point Dublin Docklands cohort.

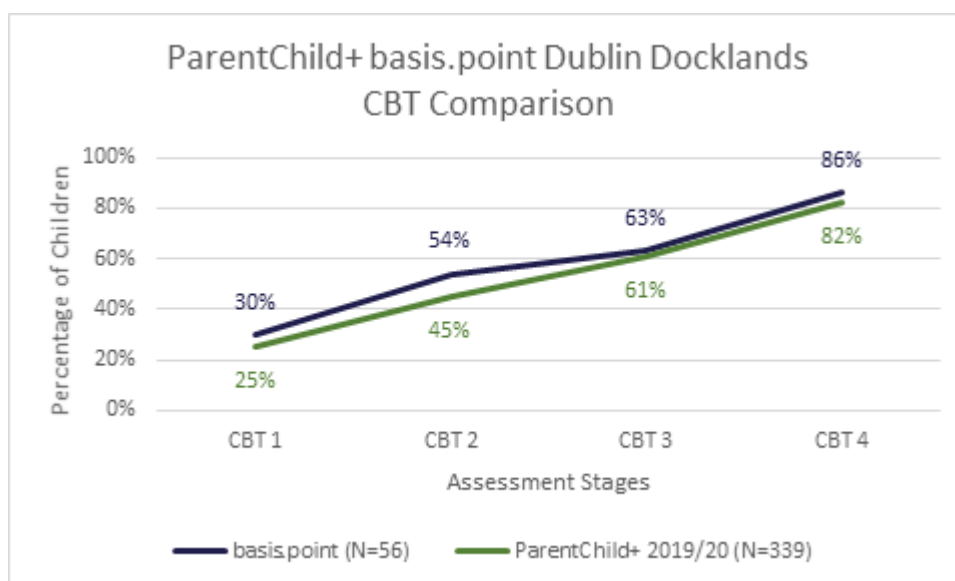


Figure 3. Comparison of ParentChild+ basis.point Dublin Docklands cohort (N=56) and ParentChild+ 2019/20 cohort (N=339) CBT Assessment Stages. Percentage of children reaching their developmental milestones i.e. scoring 3 (often) or 4 (always).

A breakdown of this development across the three subscales of the CBT assessment (cognition, behaviour and language) is presented in Figure 4 below. The percentage of children from the basis.point Dublin Docklands cohort reaching their developmental milestones increased throughout each of the three CBT subscales. The greatest increase was in the domain of language which increased by 75% from CBT 1 (15%) to CBT 4 (90%). This was followed by an overall increase of 66% in the cognition subscale. Finally, the subscale of behaviour also experienced an increase of 44%. This pattern of development is similar to what was experienced by the ParentChild+ 2019/20 cohort, which experienced increases of 67%, 49% and 64% cognition, behaviour and language respectively.

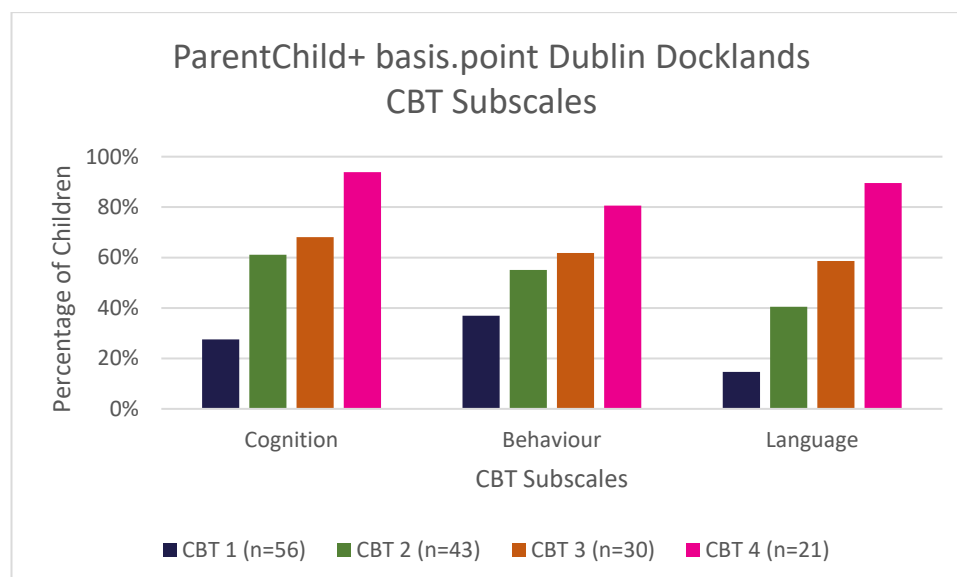


Figure 4. ParentChild+ basis.point Dublin Docklands Cohort (N=56) CBT Subscales (Cognition, Behaviour and Language) for CBT 1 to 4. Percentage of children reaching their developmental milestones i.e. scoring 3 (often) or 4 (always).

Parent and Child Together (PACT) Assessment

PACT 1 assessments have been completed for 55 of the families funded by basis.point in Dublin's Docklands. PACT 2 has been collected for 42 of the families, PACT 3 for 31 and, finally, PACT 4 has been completed for 21 of the families funded by basis.point that have graduated from the programme. As with the CBTs, due to logistical errors there are some missing data, although for the PACT assessment it has occurred at each assessment stage.

As can be seen in Figure 5 below, the basis.point Dublin Docklands families assessed by PACT have increased their level of positive parent-child interactions from PACT 1 (61%) to PACT 4 (85%), with an overall increase of 24%. This increase is lower than the 33% increase experienced by the ParentChild+ 2019/20 cohort, however, the basis.point Dublin Docklands cohort entered the programme with a higher baseline level and experienced a positive and comparable trajectory throughout.

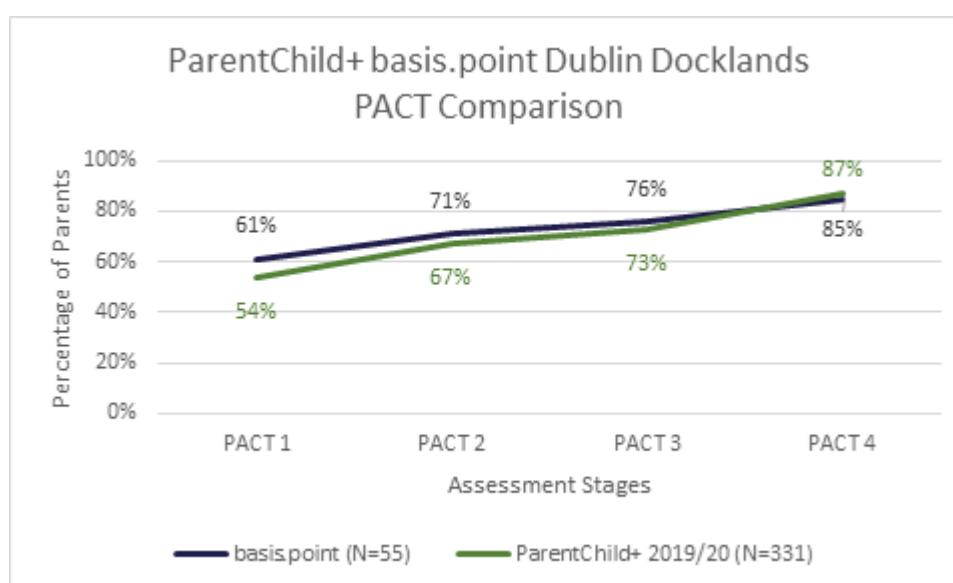


Figure 5. Comparison of ParentChild+ basis.point Dublin Docklands cohort (N=55) and ParentChild+ 2019/20 Cohort (N=331) PACT Assessment Stages. Percentage of parents having positive interactions with their children i.e. scoring 3 (often) or 4 (always).

Figure 6 illustrates a breakdown of the development of positive parent-child interactions across the four PACT subscales. Each of the four subscales experienced an increase in positive parent-child interactions from PACT 1 to PACT 4. The greatest increase was in parent's communication with their child in which 32% more families were having positive parent-child interactions at PACT 4 (87%) than PACT 1 (55%). This was followed by a 31% increase in parent's consistency with their child, and a 27% increase in parent's responsiveness to their child. The final subscale, parent's affection towards their child, had the slightest of increases. That said, this domain began at the highest level at PACT 1 (81%) and rose to 90% by PACT 4. These percentage increases are all slightly lower than the increases experienced by the ParentChild+ 2019/20 cohort which were 33%, 23%, 39% and 42% for responsiveness, affection, communication and consistency respectively. However, it must be noted that the baseline for each domain was also considerably lower in the ParentChild+ 2019/20 cohort, whereas the PACT 4 figures are comparable.

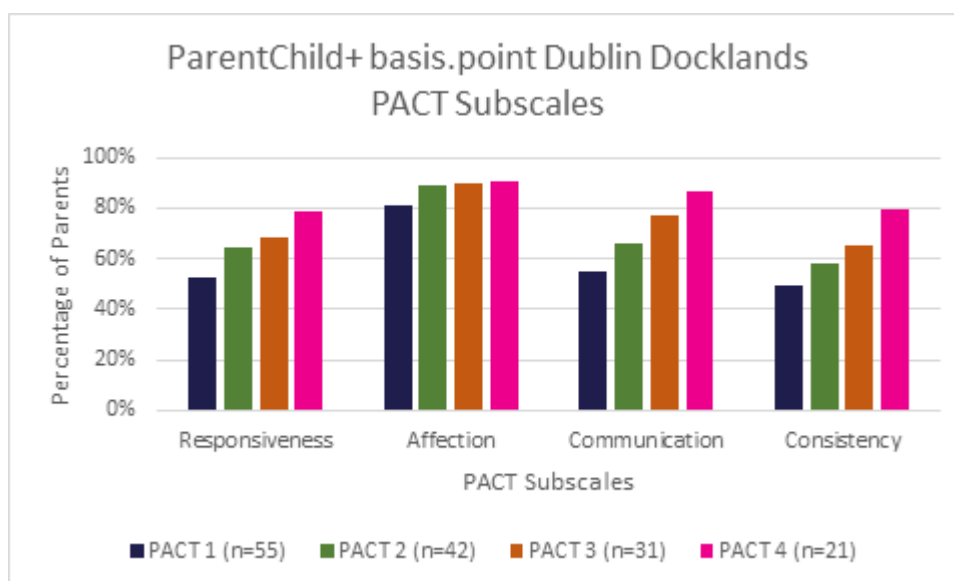


Figure 6. ParentChild+ basis.point Dublin Docklands Cohort (N=55) PACT Subscales (Parent's responsiveness to the child, Parent's affection towards the child, Parent's communication with the child and Parent's consistency with the child). Percentage of parents having positive interactions with their child i.e. scoring 3 (often) or 4 (always).

Home Visitor Feedback

Home Visitors from Dublin's Docklands site had the opportunity to share their comments relating to children's developmental milestones and parent-child interactions in their progress notes. For the purposes of a more thorough understanding of the results presented above, several indicative comments from Home Visitors are listed below:

"At the start [he had] no words, just sounds and some expressions, and from the last visit [he was] full of chat and tells mam about his feelings when he is not happy and why he is not happy etc."

"Child was diagnosed with autism halfway through the programme and more recently diagnosed with global developmental delay. He struggled with social interaction and concentration, but I've seen improvements in both these areas during the programme. He is preverbal but now has several words, 'dad', 'listen', 'no', 'yes'. He loves sequences and counting and recently said eight after I counted to seven."

"The programme was very successful with this family, always fully on board. Child has gained a lot and mam too. He has improved so much since starting the programme... it was challenging at times but also very rewarding."

"Child is starting to take the lead and her language is beginning to improve, she is becoming more confident."

"At the start some assurances were needed from ELI that mam was supporting the child's needs and welfare as much as possible, now she could work for ELI as she has took on so much and has even taught me a few bits!"

Virtual Visits

In response to the COVID-19 restrictions, all face to face home visits were suspended in March 2020 until further notice and the decision was made to offer families visits over video calls. Some families decided that they wanted to put their participation on the programme on hold while the majority of families continued to engage. Across the entire Dublin Docklands cohort of Parentchild+ families, 1,496 video calls were made,

255 phone calls and 389 texts sent. Families were also provided with activity packs, with simple age appropriate educational materials containing art and craft supplies, books, toys and physical activity equipment.

While conducting these virtual visits Home Visitors were asked to complete reflections, assessing how parent and child were transitioning to virtual visits, and addressing any challenges that may be faced. Parents were also asked to reflect on their experience in their end-of-year Evaluations. Responses from these for the entire Dublin Docklands cohort were combined and reported on below.

Parental engagement reduced somewhat throughout the virtual visits, with 70% (n=40) of parents agreeing that they found it easy to engage, and 71% (n=871) of Home Visitors' reflections reporting strong parental engagement. Engaging with the children was also a greater challenge with just 54% (n=31) of parents agreeing that their child found it easy to engage and only 32% (n=545) of Home Visitor reflections reporting strong child engagement.

The most frequently reported challenge with virtual visits was keeping the child engaged (61% of parents and 24% of Home Visitor reflections). Other challenges experienced were the home environment being busy (16% of parents and 11% of Home Visitor reflections), child too young (16% of parents and 5% of Home Visitor reflections), child's frustration (12% of parents and 7% of Home Visitor reflections), and finding time for calls within the family's schedule (12% of parents and 7% of Home Visitor reflections).

II. basis.point Garryowen Cohort

Attendance

A total of 56 families engaging with ParentChild+ in Garryowen, Limerick have benefitted from funding provided by basis.point. Thirty-three of these families became engaged through the second basis.point grant in Garryowen (GA02 2017-19), and an additional 24 on the third grant (GA18 2019-21). Nine of these families have had to leave the programme before completing for various reasons such as, moving from the catchment area or the child receiving a place in a crèche. Any family that drop off early are replaced by a new family to ensure that 24 families will complete the full programme for each cohort. Twenty-one of the families have completed the full programme and attended a ParentChild+ Graduation Ceremony in Garryowen, Limerick. The rest of the families will continue in the programme until they complete 92 visits and graduate in the coming years.

Events

Families also enjoyed attending Parent and Toddler Group held weekly during school term up to March 2020. This further supported the engagement and ideals of the ParentChild+. At Christmas, all the families were invited to 'Tonnes of Fun', a play centre and a bus was arranged from Garryowen C.D.P. to transport them there. This event was well attended, and all the children enjoyed meeting Santa and playing together.

In June 2020, the ParentChild+ Graduation event did not go ahead as the previous year due to COVID-19 restrictions. Alternatively, Home Visitors visited children's doors, delivering *The Places You'll Go* by Dr Seuss and congratulating the family for completing the programme.

Referral Process

Home Visitors and the Coordinator in Garryowen have built up relationships with other early years' professionals in the local community in order to create a streamline process for referrals to the programmes. Most referrals come from Speech and Language Therapists and Public Health Nurses, but

families have self-referred too. Other referrals come from homeless hubs, direct provision centres and social workers. Building relations has proven very successful with referrals from professionals increasing and families that are most in need receiving the programme. Garryowen also work in close partnership with services in the area including ABC Start Right, Barnardos Family Support Unit, Barnardos Homemakers, PAUL Partnership, Community Wraparound and Community Mothers. Home Visitors currently visit families in the inner city of Limerick including the Southill and Moyross areas.

Continuous Professional Development

As part of the ongoing commitment to professional development, there is a continued focus on the upskilling on the home visiting team. All Home Visitors are supported through group supervision on a weekly basis and last year all Home Visitors received 12 hours of refresher training (September) which was facilitated by the ParentChild+ Coordinator. Five of the Home Visitors attended Marte Mao training over six days from September to February. In February, the ABC Start Right hosted a day for Home Visitors from different home visiting organisations to get together to exchange ideas and talk about the services each group provides.

The coordinator completed the European Computer Driver's Licence and Barnardo's Supervision for Support Staff. The coordinator also attended Enhancing Practice with Parents and Families: How ACES Inform Our Practice, in November and the Community of Practice sessions in NCI. As this year's ParentChild+ conference in America was held via Webinar, Garryowen CDP were delighted that all staff had access to attend.

Child Behaviour Trait (CBT)

Baseline CBT assessments have been completed for 56 basis.point funded children engaging with ParentChild+ in Limerick. CBT 2 assessments have been completed for 26 of these children, and CBT 3 and 4 assessments have been completed for 20 families that have graduated from the programme. Due to logistical challenges CBT 1 and 2 assessment data are not available for one of the children that has completed the programme, and CBT 3 and 4 data unavailable for another. As can be seen in Figure 7 below the basis.point Garryowen cohort of children began the ParentChild+ programme at a greater level of need than the 'typical' ParentChild+ child, starting at a baseline 16% lower. Although the percentage of children in the Garryowen cohort reaching their developmental milestones continues to remain lower than the ParentChild+ 2019/20 cohort, the trajectory of the Limerick cohort is steadily increasing. On completion of the programme 67% more children in the basis.point Garryowen cohort are reaching their developmental milestones than at baseline, and the difference between cohorts reduced to just 6%.

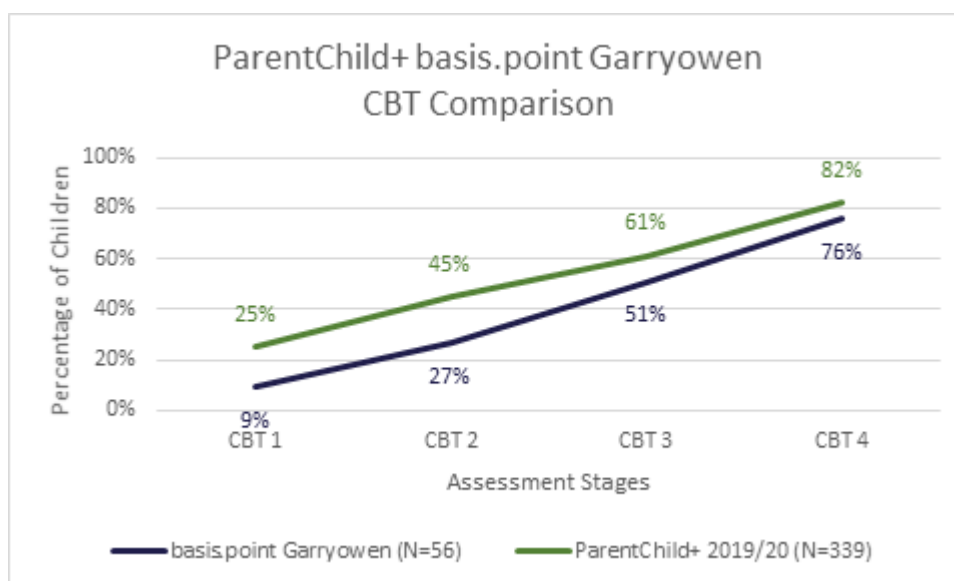


Figure 8. Comparison of ParentChild+ basis.point Garryowen cohort (N=56) and ParentChild+ 2019/20 Cohort (N=339) CBT Assessment Stages. Percentage of children reaching their developmental milestones i.e. scoring 3 (often) or 4 (always).

Looking at the breakdown of this developmental progression across the three subscales of the CBT in Figure 9, it can be seen that the greatest increase was in the area of cognition in which children reaching their developmental milestones increased by 72% from CBT 1 (6%) to CBT 4 (78%). This was followed by a 65% increase in the subscale of behaviour and a 64% increase in language. Although the percentage increase experienced by the ParentChild+ 2019/20 cohort for language was the same (64%), greater increases were displayed by the basis.point Garryowen cohort for cognition and behaviour, which were 67% and 49% in the ParentChild+ 2019/20 cohort respectively.

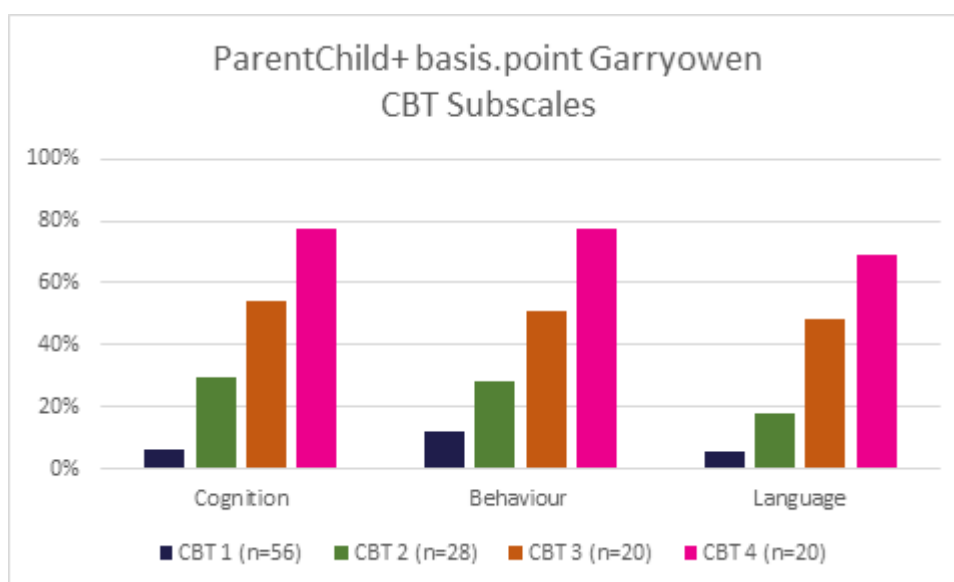


Figure 9. ParentChild+ basis.point Limerick cohort (N=56) CBT Subscales (Cognition, Behaviour and Language) for CBT 1 to 4. Percentage of children reaching their developmental milestones i.e. scoring 3 (often) or 4 (always).

Parent and Child Together (PACT)

The PACT Assessment was introduced to ParentChild+ Ireland in 2017 to measure the development of positive parent-child interactions experienced by the families engaging in the programme. As a number of the basis.point Limerick cohort began the programme before this assessment was introduced, a complete set of PACT data is unavailable.

PACT 1 assessments have been completed for 47 families at this time, PACT 2 has been completed for 22 families, PACT 3 and PACT 4 have been completed for 14 families. Figure 10 provides a comparison of the trajectory of the basis.point Limerick cohort with the 'typical' ParentChild+ family. Again, it is evident that families engaging with ParentChild+ in Garryowen funded by basis.point began the programme with a greater level of need. As can be seen below there is a 27% difference in positive parent-child interactions at baseline. That said the families in Limerick have experienced an increasing trajectory throughout the stages of assessment, reducing the difference between cohorts to just 5% at PACT 4. Overall, the Limerick families who have completed the full cycle of PACT assessments experienced a 55% increase in positive parent-child interactions.

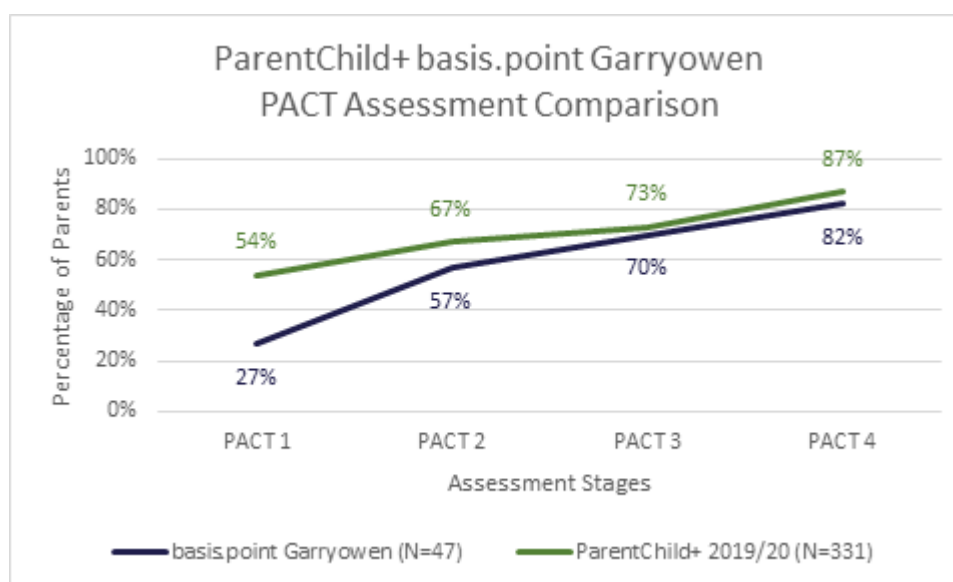


Figure 10. Comparison of ParentChild+ basis.point Garryowen Cohort (N=47) with ParentChild+ 2019/20 Cohort (N=331) PACT 1 to 4. Percentage of parents having positive interactions with their children, i.e. scoring 3 (often) or 4 (always).

These increases were experienced in each of the four PACT subscales, illustrated in Figure 11. The greatest increase experienced by these families was in the domain of consistency the child which increased by 66% from PACT 1 (13%) to PACT 4 (79%). This was followed by a 58% increase in parent's responsiveness to their child, a 55% increase in positive communication with their child and finally, a 44% increase in interactions of affection towards their child. These percentage increases are all greater than the increases experienced by the ParentChild+ 2019/20 cohort which were 33%, 23%, 39% and 42% for responsiveness, affection, communication and consistency respectively.

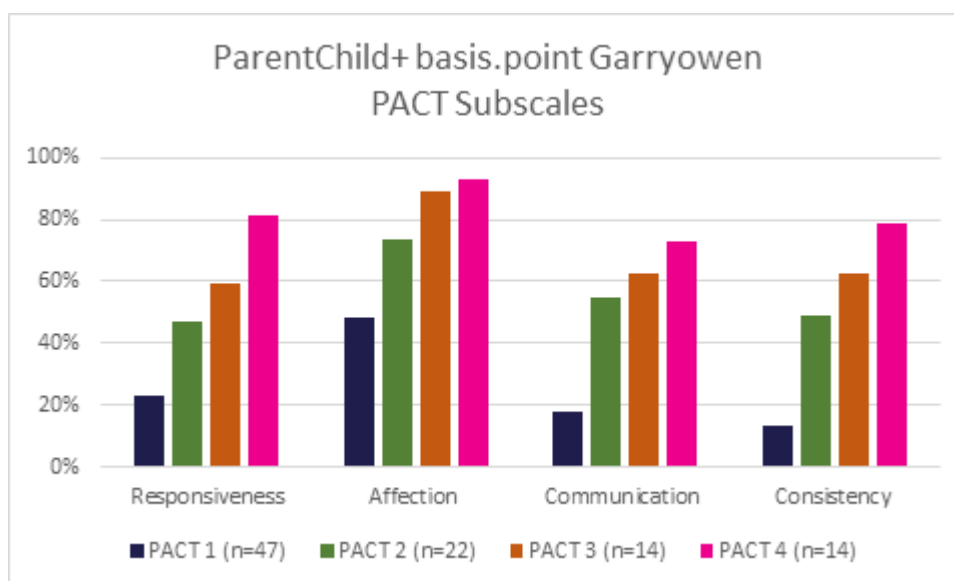


Figure 11. ParentChild+ basis.point Garryowen Cohort (N=47) PACT Subscales (Parent's responsiveness to the child, Parent's affection towards the child, Parent's communication with the child and Parent's consistency with the child). Percentage of parents having positive interactions with their child i.e. scoring 3 (often) or 4 (always).

Home Visitor Feedback

Home Visitors and parents in Limerick also had the opportunity to share their comments relating to children's developmental milestones and parent-child interactions. For the purposes of a more thorough understanding of the results presented above, several indicative comments from Home Visitors and parents are listed below:

"Child is always very willing to take part in any activity. She shows excitement on every visit. Both mother and child participate fully during visits. Child can recognise colours, numbers and shapes."

"Mother participates fully on every visit and shows a huge interest in Child's learning, always encouraging."

"Child has very supportive parents and enjoys new ways of supporting child."

"One child was signed off the Speech and Language Therapy list. As always, mum is accrediting this to the Home Visitor. The Home Visitor told the mum that it was all the hard work mum is doing as the Home Visitor is only there for a half hour, twice a week."

"Child has improved immensely since the start of the programme. Her speech was very slow in the beginning. She is now able to hold a conversation."

"Child is very advanced for his age. His parents say that the programme has been fantastic for his development and would highly recommend it. I told Dad today that thanks to them and the effort they put into it, the programme for child has paid off in abundance."

Virtual Visits

In response to the COVID-19 restrictions, all face-to-face home visits were suspended until further notice and the decision was made to offer families to continue their visits over video calls. Four families decided that they wanted to put their participation on the programme on hold while the majority of families continued to engage. Across the entire Garryowen cohort of ParentChild+ families, 434 video calls were

made, 170 phone calls and 312 texts sent. Eighty families were also provided with activity packs, with simple age appropriate educational materials containing art and craft supplies, books, toys and physical activity equipment.

Included below are some comments from Home Visitors on the positive impact their support has had on families throughout the pandemic:

“One family declined video calls at first but yesterday decided to try one, now has asked for one every day!”

“Been very busy this month researching and exchanging ideas to keep children engaged and learning during video calls. Adaptability is what it’s all about!”

“Home Visitors were given resources to help hold child’s attention, they are finding plenty of interaction on the video calls.”

III. basis.point Ballinasloe Cohort

Attendance

Thus far, seven families engaging with ParentChild+ in Ballinasloe, Galway have benefitted from funding provided by basis.point. These families began during 2019/20 and there were no families from previous years included in this cohort. As families continue to join the programme in Ballinasloe they will be added to the basis.point cohort to reach the total of 24 families. As basis.point’s commitment continues with families in Ballinasloe over a protracted period, we will be able to provide more information in future reports on the cumulative impact of basispoint’s involvement in Ballinasloe.

Events

In order to combat isolation and encourage diversity and inclusion, ParentChild+ ran ad hoc events in the local library. Events such as Valentine’s, Halloween Craft, Creative and the Christmas Storytelling session have proved very successful, with families expressing that they are a great opportunity for their children and indeed themselves to meet others with similar interests. All families in ParentChild+ are encouraged by their Home Visitor to attend these events along with other families in the community and has proved a great source for new referrals to the programme. During the COVID-19 restrictions families were referred to online groups and resources as events and activities in the library were not feasible.

Referral Process

Coordinators in each site, including Ballinasloe, build up relationships with other early years’ professionals in their local communities in order to create a streamline process for referrals to the Programme.

Continuous Professional Development

As part of the ongoing commitment to professional development there is a continued focus on the upskilling on the home visiting team. All staff members have engaged or are currently engaging in accredited early years Fetac Level 5/6 courses and have also completed AIM Diversity, Equality and Inclusion Charter and Guidelines Programme, which is very beneficial considering the diverse needs of families they work with. The staff also completed many CPD courses, that are available through the ParentChild+ CPD Booklet provided by ELI. In addition, the Coordinator also attend on-going Coordinator Community of Practice days in the National College of Ireland, which focus on supporting all site Coordinator with practical training to ensure quality practices and programme fidelity.

Child Behaviour Trait (CBT)

To date, baseline CBT assessments have been completed for 6 of the basis.point funded children engaging with ParentChild+ in Ballinasloe. A comparison of the data indicates that the basis.point Ballinasloe cohort of children entered the programme at a greater level of need, with 16% of the Ballinasloe cohort reaching their developmental milestones in comparison to 25% of the ParentChild+ 2019/20 cohort. That said, these results must be interpreted with caution due to the considerable disparity in sample sizes in the Ballinasloe (N=6) and ParentChild+ 2019/20 (N=339) cohorts.

The breakdown of these baseline figures across the three CBT subscales (cognition, behaviour and language) is illustrated in Figure 12 below. As is evident below a greater percentage of the basis.point Ballinasloe cohort of children (20%) are reaching their developmental milestones in the domain of language in comparison to the ParentChild+2019/20 cohort (15%), whereas a lesser percentage of children in the Ballinasloe cohort are reaching their developmental milestones in the subscales of cognition (5%) and behaviour (21%) which were 22% and 33% at CBT 1 for the ParentChild+ 2019/20 cohort respectively.

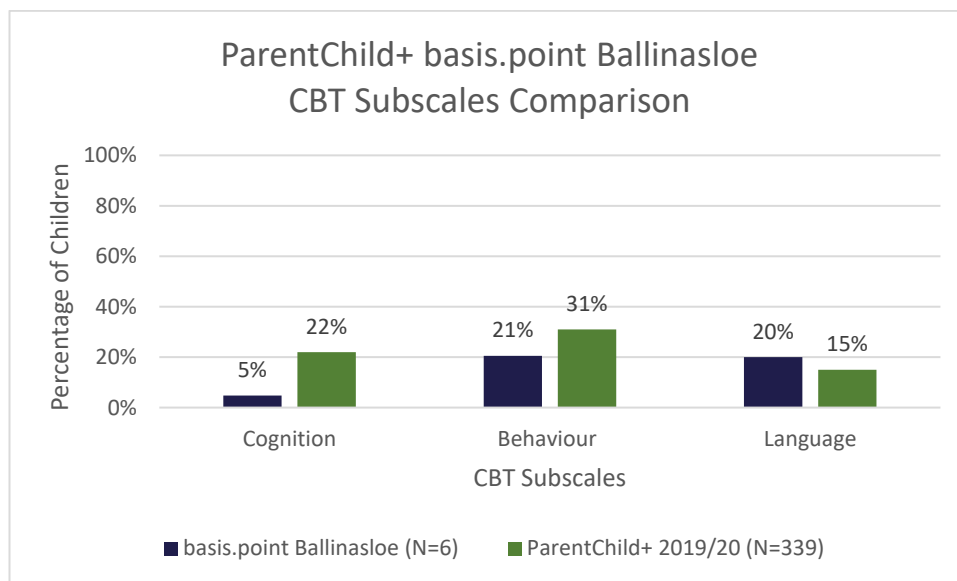


Figure 12. Comparison of ParentChild+ basis.point Ballinasloe cohort (N=6) and ParentChild+ 2019/20 Cohort (N=339) baseline CBT Assessments. Percentage of children reaching their developmental milestones i.e. scoring 3 (often) or 4 (always).

Parent and Child Together (PACT)

PACT 1 assessments have been completed for 6 families at this time. In contrast to the CBT assessment scores, a greater percentage the basis.point Ballinasloe cohort of parents are demonstrating positive interactions with their children, 60% in comparison to 54% of the ParentChild+ 2019/20 cohort. However, once again these results must be interpreted with caution. A breakdown of these interactions across the four PACT subscales (parent's responsiveness towards their child, parent's affection towards their child, parent's communication with their child and parent's consistency with their child) is presented below. As can be seen in the graph the basis.point Ballinasloe cohort of parents were exhibiting a greater level of positive interactions across each of these four domains.

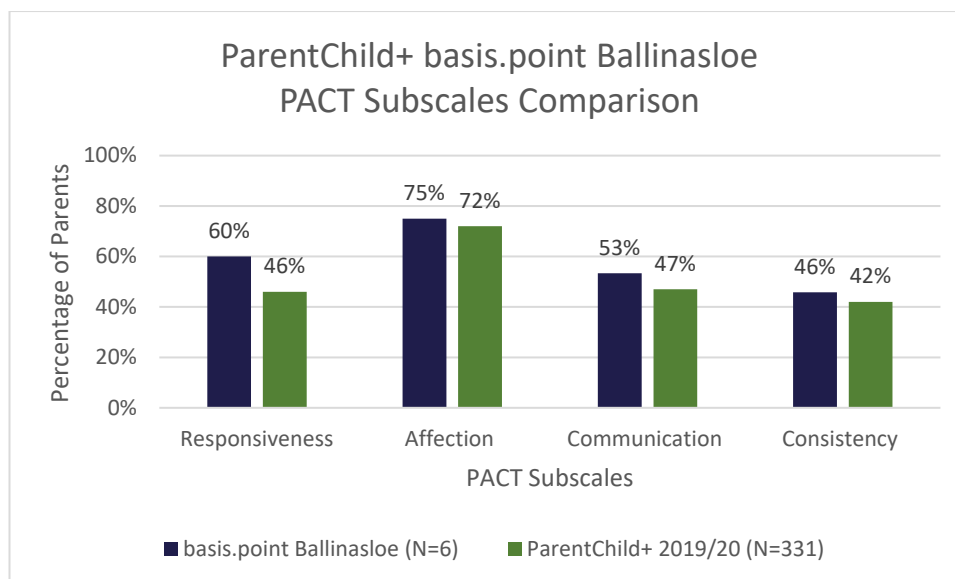


Figure 10. Comparison of ParentChild+ basis.point Ballinasloe Cohort (N=6) with ParentChild+ 2019/20 Cohort (N=331) PACT 1 Subscales (Parent's responsiveness to the child, Parent's affection towards the child, Parent's communication with the child and Parent's consistency with the child). Percentage of parents having positive interactions with their child i.e. scoring 3 (often) or 4 (always).

Home Visitor Feedback

Home Visitors and parents in Limerick also had the opportunity to share their comments relating to children's developmental milestones and parent-child interactions. For the purposes of a more thorough understanding of the results presented above, several indicative comments from Home Visitors and parents are listed below:

"Time is always given to child by mammy during the sessions"

"Child is quite young, but eager to participate over video calls, he has few words but loves the books which will help with his language skills."

"Mum has expressed her appreciation for the programme, she tries to help and praise the child's efforts."

"Child has a few English words, she has settled really well into the video calls."

"Child has autism, he has no verbal or listening skills as informed by parents. When achieving goals he shows some excitement."



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