



Early Learning Initiative

National College of Ireland

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

basis.point GA18 ParentChild+
Final Impact Report 2021





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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 has enabled 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, through your generosity, these families have received:

- **Two weekly virtual or outdoor 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.**
- **Opportunities to participate in parent support sessions hosted by ELI's Home Visitors both in local outdoor facilities and online.**

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.

At this point, you should note the high level of need displayed by these children and parents on entering the programme, in comparison to the national average. 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 14,234 people took part in one of ELI's programmes last year - almost 6,000 of these were children and a further 6,000 were parents. Satisfaction rates remain high at 96% (n=1,096). Our programmes have adapted to the new conditions presented by COVID-19 and we are still 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 improved 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.

ParentChild+ basis.point Cohort: Demographics and Data

The following report presents and analyses the collated data from all families engaging with ParentChild+ that have benefitted from funding from basis.point across the three sites (Dublin Docklands, Garryowen and Ballinasloe). This includes families that were engaged through previous funding streams GA 2 and GA18. Families who have not yet completed the programme will be transferred across and included in GA31 Report throughout 2021/22 and 2022/23.

If individual detailed reports for each of the site cohorts would be preferable in the future, please let us know and we would be happy to oblige.

Demographics

Thus far, 154 families engaging in ParentChild+ across the three sites have benefitted from funding from basis.point. A breakdown of these families and their status is provided in Table 1.

Table 1. Breakdown of basis.point families across sites and funding streams.

Site	Number Active Families	Number Completed Programme	Number Left Programme Early
Dublin Docklands (GA 2)	0	24	11
Dublin Docklands (GA 18)	13	9	10
Garryowen, Limerick (GA 2)	0	24	10
Garryowen, Limerick (GA 18)	17	7	6
Ballinasloe, Galway (GA 18)	17	0	6
Total	47	64	43

As the ParentChild+ Programme has expanded nationally over the past few years, and as the systems of data collection have become more secure since 2019, we have been able to collect a range of demographic data from all ParentChild+ sites nationally. As 30 of the families in the Garryowen cohort (Grant 2) had completed the programme before this stage, demographic data such as parents' nationality and educational status is unknown for these families.

The families engaging in ParentChild+ funded by basis.point come from diverse backgrounds spanning 16 countries across four continents, illustrated in Figure 1. The nationality with the highest number of families is Irish (n=83), followed by six families from Nigeria. In keeping with this diversity, participants list a total of 21 different languages spoken in their homes, including Mandarin, Urdu, Slovakian and Creole.

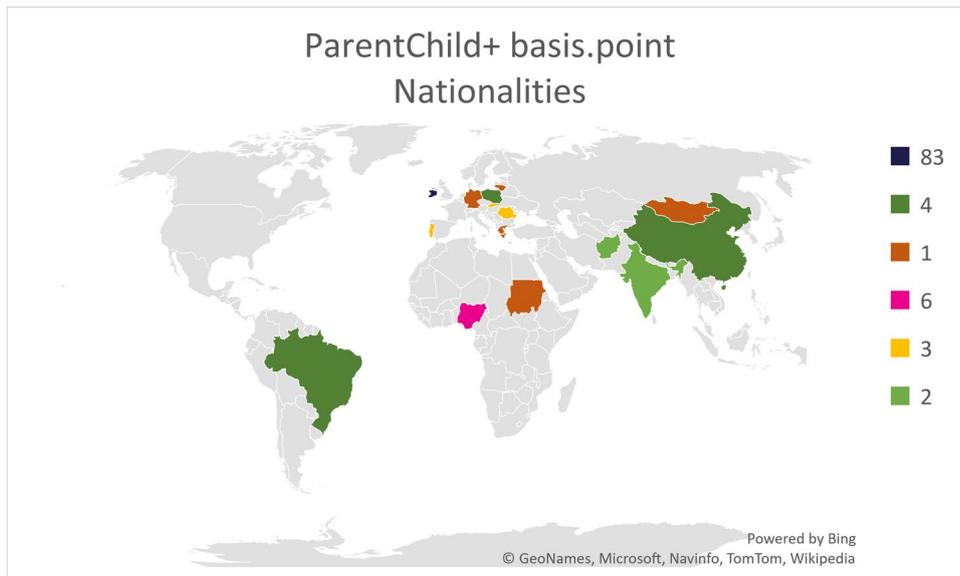


Figure 1. Map illustrating the nationalities of ParentChild+ basis.point families (N=154).

The vast majority of the primary caregivers that are engaging in the programme with their children are mothers, with just two fathers participating alone, and another three fathers participating alongside the mothers. Most of the parents participating completed their own educational journey at second level (51%, n=77), with 26% (n=40) proceeding to third level education and 3% (n=3) finishing at primary school.

Child and Parent Observational Assessments

In line with the programme manual, each year a family is on the programme the Child Behaviour Trait (CBT) assessment and the Parent and Child Together (PACT) assessment are completed twice by the Home Visitors, 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.

In this report data from the CBT and PACT assessments for all basis.point funded families across the three sites are collated and reported on together. Comparisons are made with this cohort and the total ParentChild+ 2020/21 national cohort (N=350), totalling nine sites across Ireland.

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 142 children who have engaged in ParentChild+ funded by basis.point, CBT 2 has been completed for 112 of the children, 76 have CBT 3 and 62 children have completed the full assessment cycle and have CBT 4 completed.

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 cohort. The percentage of children in the basis.point cohort reaching their developmental milestones also increase by 58% from CBT 1 (21%, n=142) to CBT 4 (79%, n=62).

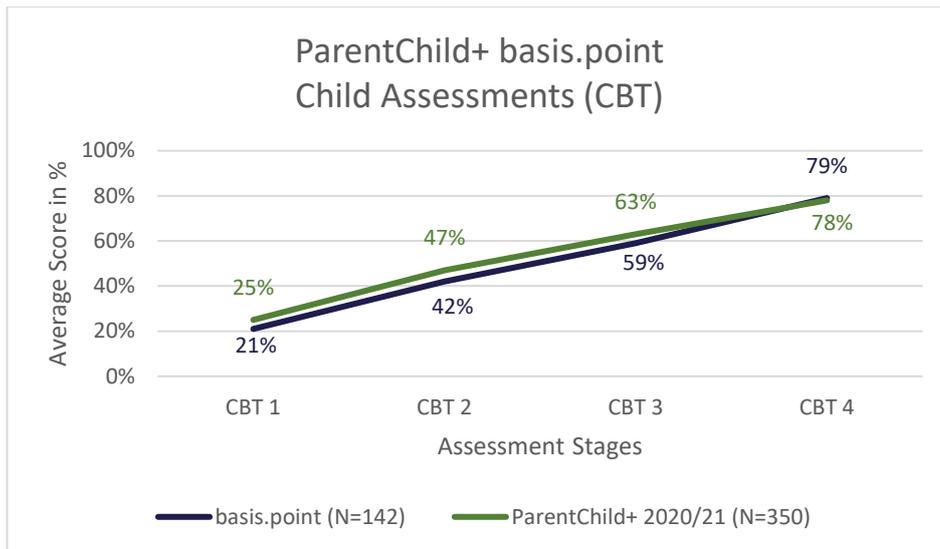


Figure 2. Comparison of ParentChild+ basis.point cohort (N=142) and ParentChild+ 2020/21 cohort (N=350) CBT Assessment Stages. Percentage of children reaching their developmental milestones i.e. scoring 3 (often) or 4 (always).

A breakdown of this development across the three subscales of the CBT assessment (cognition, behaviour and language) is presented in Figure 3 below. The percentage of children from the basis.point cohort reaching their developmental milestones increased throughout each of the three CBT subscales. The greatest increase was in both the domains of cognition and language which increased by 67% each. Finally, the percentage of children exhibiting positive behaviour also increased by 51%. Although the basis.point cohort experience greater increases in each domain, the pattern of development is quite similar to what was exhibited by the ParentChild+ 2020/21 cohort, which experienced increases of 61%, 48% and 57% cognition, behaviour and language respectively.

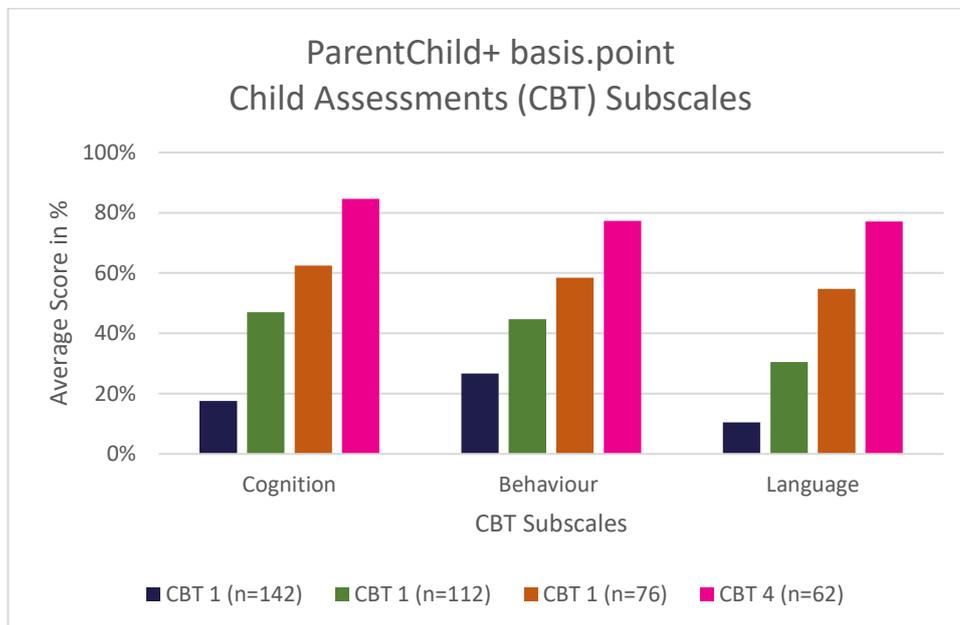


Figure 3. ParentChild+ basis.point cohort (N=142) CBT Subscales (Cognition, Behaviour and Language) for CBT 1 to 4. Percentage of children reaching their developmental milestones i.e. scoring 3 (often) or 4 (always).

Parent and Child Together (PACT) Assessment

The PACT assessment was introduced to ParentChild+ Ireland in 2017 to measure the development of positive parent-child interactions observed in the families engaging in the programme. As a number of the basis.point families from the Grant 2 cohort began the programme before this assessment was introduced, a complete set of PACT data is unavailable, thus there are some disparities between the CBT and PACT cohort sizes.

PACT 1 assessments have been completed for 137 of the families funded by basis.point. PACT 2 has been completed for 102 of the families, PACT 3 for 72 and, finally, PACT 4 has been completed for 58 of the families funded by basis.point that have graduated from the programme.

As can be seen in Figure 4 below, the basis.point families assessed by PACT have increased their level of positive parent-child interactions by 39% from PACT 1 (46%, n=137) to PACT 4 (85%, n=58). Although the basis.point cohort of parents entered the programme with a slightly higher level of need, they have progressed well and are developing comparably to the national cohort in their parent-child interactions.

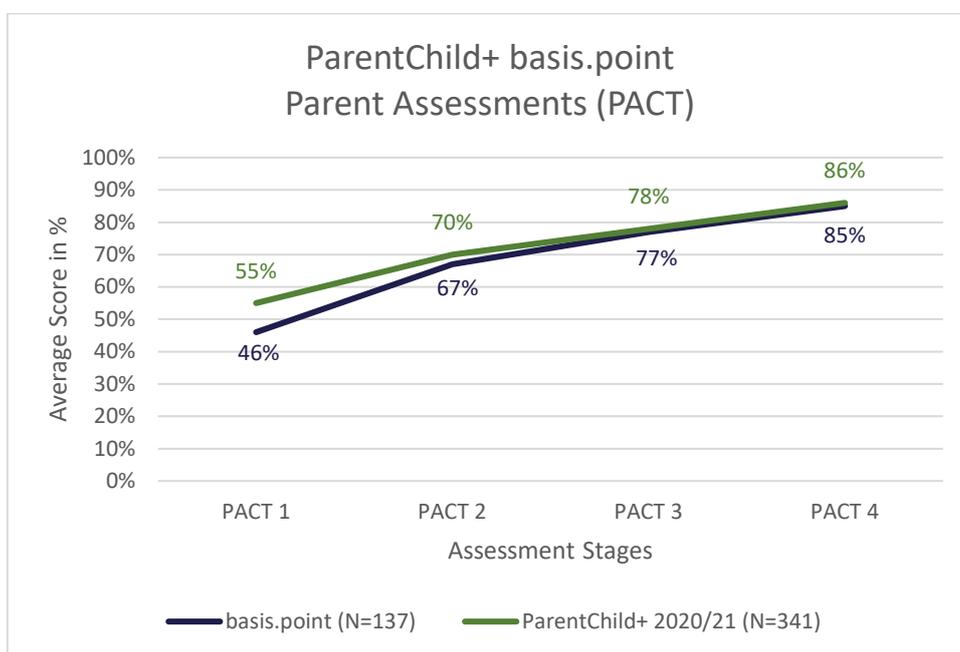


Figure 4. Comparison of ParentChild+ basis.point cohort (N=137) and ParentChild+ 2020/21 Cohort (N=341) PACT Assessment Stages. Percentage of parents having positive interactions with their children i.e. scoring 3 (often) or 4 (always).

Figure 5 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 parents' consistency with their children in which 48% more families were having positive parent-child interactions at PACT 4 (80%) than PACT 1 (32%). This was followed by a 47% increase in parents positive communication with their children, and a 41% increase in parents' responsiveness to their children. The final subscale, parents' affection towards their children increased by 26%. These percentage increases are all greater than the increases experienced by the ParentChild+ 2019/20 cohort which were 30%, 22%, 37% and 37% for responsiveness, affection, communication and consistency respectively.

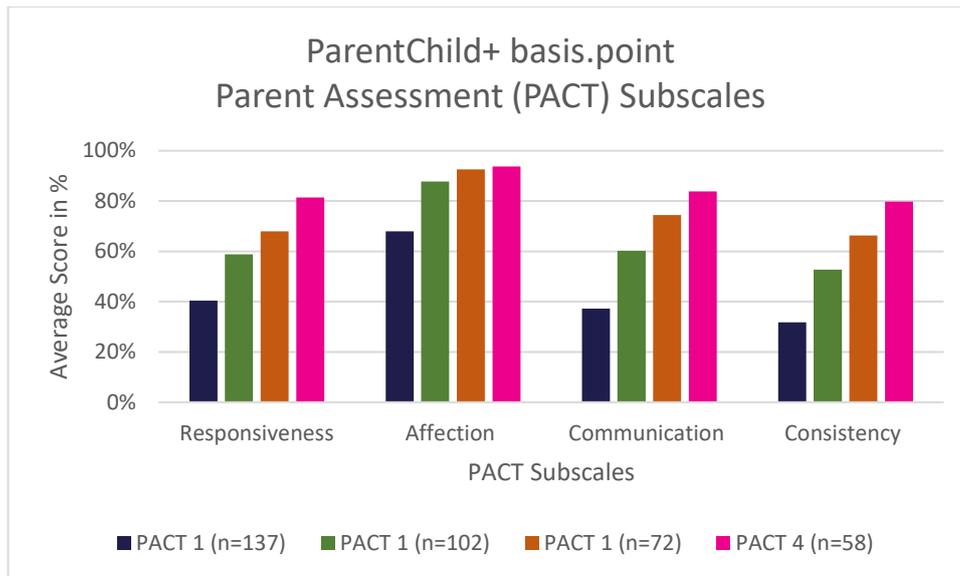


Figure 6. ParentChild+ basis.point cohort (N=137) PACT Subscales (Parent's responsiveness to the child, Parent's affection towards the child, Parent's communication with the child and Parent's consistency with the child). Percentage of parents having positive interactions with their child i.e. scoring 3 (often) or 4 (always).

Home Visitor Feedback

Home Visitors from each 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:

- *"Mother participates fully on every visit and shows a huge interest in child's learning, always encouraging."*
- *Child is over 3 years old now. He is in playschool. His teacher has said he is one of the smartest boys in the class. Very advanced for his age. Really enjoyed doing the programme with this family. They have been through a lot and child was always thankful and happy when I called to his home. Programme has made a big difference to this family.*
- *Exceptional engagement from the parents, especially father. He always reads in clear calm voice, encourages child to participate. They have lots of educational materials around the house for example child knows many different types of animal species."*
- *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.*



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For more information

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Twitter: [@ELI_Docklands](https://twitter.com/ELI_Docklands)

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