



# **EMPOWERING PARENTS EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES**

*Prepared for* **MURDOCH CHILDREN'S RESEARCH INSTITUTE**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Murdoch Children's Research Institute received funding from the Tasmanian Early Years Foundation in September 2011 to implement a pilot of a peer-led parenting program developed by the Centre for Parent and Child Support in South London. This report represents an evaluation of the pilot of Empowering Parents – Empowering Communities (EPEC) in Tasmania. The evaluation involved an analysis of program documentation and consultation with project staff, parent facilitators and parents, observation of training sessions and analysis of a range of feedback tools.

EPEC is a peer led model, in that it involves pairs of trained parent facilitators delivering a program to groups of parents over the course of eight weekly, two and a half hour sessions. EPEC in Tasmania has successfully trained eighteen parent facilitators to deliver Being a Parent courses around the state. Parent facilitators report satisfaction with the skills provided through the EPEC model and early indications are that confidence and self-esteem have improved along with reinforcement of the specialised skills taught in BAP. In fact, there has been a surprising level of personal growth amongst the parent facilitators.

One parent facilitator reports:

*You come together as a group, with common ground, with a desire to make a difference. You feel important because you have the knowledge; you can spread the message and do some good. You become an important person in your community. It's exciting*

Ninety four parents have completed the BAP course in seven communities around Tasmania during the pilot phase of EPEC in Tasmania. The BAP project has demonstrated a high retention rate with 79 per cent of participants completing the course. The data presented in this report demonstrates that BAP has achieved substantial impact on parenting skills of these parents. The content of the course strikes a chord with parents and feedback shows that parents who have undertaken the BAP training report thinking more and listening better. They have embraced the knowledge and tools provided in BAP and report significant improvements in their children's behaviour.

*I had little epiphanies all the way through...keeping the jug full, not using don't...it all makes you think and I use it when I start to feel I'm getting frustrated*

The main difference between EPEC and other parenting courses is that the groups are led by other parents. While the premises behind EPEC are sophisticated, they are presented in subtle, simple and easily digested ways; but the main impact appears to be that the information is somehow more powerful when delivered by 'someone like me':

*I found that when the information was coming from another parent made a big difference to me. It made it more pertinent*

All parents and parent facilitators consulted for this report recounted stories of increased self-worth and increased connection with their fellow students and the wider community indicating that EPEC has been successful in empowering both the parents and their communities in Tasmania.

The evaluator offers the following recommendations:

***Recommendation 1:***

The success of the pilot program suggests that on-going funding is sought to maximise the number of Tasmanian parents who have access to this well developed and evidence based parenting program.

***Recommendation 2:***

The structure of the pilot worked well with having supervision and support available in both the North and the South of the state. It is recommended that this model is adopted in future development of EPEC in Tasmania.

***Recommendation 3:***

The pilot trialled a shorter version of the facilitation training program; however is recommended that future renditions of EPEC in Tasmania use the original UK model of 10 week training for facilitators.

***Recommendation 4:***

It is recommended that some Australian multimedia tools are developed to provide local context to the course materials.

***Recommendation 5:***

To a certain extent the program has increased parent facilitators' confidence to the level that they are seeking further training and new opportunities. The turnover of parent facilitators will need to be carefully monitored to ensure a critical mass of facilitators is available for program rollout.

***Recommendation 6:***

It is recommended that the feedback tools are reviewed both for applicability to Australian contexts and to provide optimum information to assist in project planning.

***Recommendation 7:***

It is recommended that administrative roles and the financial management of the project are reviewed in the event of on-going funding being sourced.

## PROJECT BACKGROUND

In recent years there has been increased emphasis on the crucial influence of the early years on the social and emotional health of children. Whilst most children in the developed world enjoy a healthy and positive start in life, too many have poor physical or emotional health which is manifested as emotional difficulties or behavioural problems. Disruptive behaviour, including aggression, non-compliance and opposition or antagonism, and other challenging behaviours impact considerably on the quality of life of both the children involved and their families. Trajectories linked to disruptive behaviours include academic failure, crime, unemployment and involve significant social and economic costs (Day, Michelson, Thomson, Penney, & Draper, 2012).

Research has suggested that involvement in high quality early childhood and parenting support programs can alleviate some of the negative impacts of disadvantage on young children and families (Gross, Fogg, Garvey, Julion, & et al., 2003; McDonald, 2010). The ultimate goal of a parenting intervention is that the parent becomes an independent problem solver who has the resources, knowledge and skills to maintain any gains achieved and the ability to tackle future problems with the same child or other family members. Parenting interventions based on social learning theory and those that use a relationship based approach have been found to improve disruptive behaviour in children in clinical trials (Dretzke et al., 2009). While parenting interventions have not been common in mainstream services for families, there is evidence that children's disruptive behaviour responds well to parental management training, even when delivered in a variety of real-world conditions (Michelson, Davenport, Dretzke, Barlow, & Day, 2013),

Effective parenting, defined as parenting 'characterised by consistent, supportive and responsive child rearing practices' (Barlow & Underdown, 2005) is seen as critical to the achievement of positive outcomes in the social and emotional development of children. A parent's capacity to change their own behaviour in response to cues and information about the current needs of their children is fundamental to successful adaptation to the role of being a parent. Although somewhat shaped by the social, economic and cultural contexts surrounding parenthood, parents have the capacity to determine specific behaviours, skills and values they wish to promote, and the methods of parenting they wish to adopt including the ways they promote or discourage particular behaviour in their children (Sanders & Mazzucchelli, 2013). This capacity to change parenting behaviour involves parents recognising that a change in their own behaviour may be necessary. While some changes might be minor, such as attending more frequently to a specific child behaviour they wish to encourage, other changes are more difficult to implement, such as not reacting to problem behaviour. Achieving this change requires a complex but somewhat ill-defined blend of cognitive, behavioural and affective processes including abilities to plan and anticipate, regulating parental emotions, solve problems and seek help where necessary.

**Session 1: Being a Parent**

- 'Good enough' vs 'perfect' parent
- Taking care of ourselves

**Session 2: Feelings, Communication and Culture**

- Remembering what it was like to be a child
- Acknowledging, accepting and expressing feelings

**Session 3: Play and listening**

- Non-directive play ('special time')
- Practicing listening

**Session 4: Labels and Praise**

- Avoiding labels when describing behaviour
- Using descriptive praise to change behaviour

**Session 5: Understanding children's behaviour**

- Understanding children's behaviour in response to needs
- Discipline

**Session 6: Setting boundaries**

- Understanding boundaries
- Rewards
- Assertive versus aggressive behaviour
- Time Out, challenging and saying no

**Session 7: Listening****Session 8: Review and coping with stress**

The literature observes that families who are most in need of treatment often drop out early or are unable to engage from the outset (Cortis, 2012; McDonald, 2010). Some of the difficulty with engagement can be explained by logistical issues, such as time constraints and difficulties with transport, but perhaps may equally stem from parents' negative expectations about parenting courses and concern about how they may be judged.

This suggested that there was a need for programs that both support parenting and prevent the sort of parenting that may be damaging to a child's future social and emotional wellbeing.

Developed in the UK by the Centre for Parent and Child Support<sup>1</sup>, the Empowering Parents, Empowering Communities (EPEC) was developed to reduce child problems (number and severity), parental stress and parenting competency. At the same time as developing individual parental capacity, community access to effective parenting support is increased through peer-led group intervention; and thus community capacity for effective parenting is improved.

EPEC is a peer led model, in that it involves pairs of trained parent facilitators delivering a program to groups of parents over the course of eight weekly, two and a half hour sessions. Peer led parenting programs have mostly been developed and evaluated in the context of one-to-one home visiting programs rather than in a group setting. Results show that while these programs are popular with recipients, unless they include detailed manuals to support consistent delivery and are delivered in conjunction with professional

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.cpcs.org.uk/>

supports, they do not change outcomes (Stewart-Brown, 2008).

The EPEC parenting course is delivered via a structured manual based on cognitive behavioural, social learning, attachment, structural and relational theories and methods. Parents learn to utilise different tools and skills to change their parenting practices. The program includes parents determining their own parenting goals, selecting their own change strategies, evaluating their progress and rewarding themselves for goal attainment.

Group sessions involve sharing of information, group discussion, demonstration, role play and reflection. The program focuses strongly on relationship skills – listening, empathising, and expressing and accepting feelings; and more so than the more well-known parenting courses such as Triple P. The facilitators themselves are parents from the local community who complete an accredited training program involving workshops, a written portfolio and a period of supervised practice. Parent facilitators receive regular supervision to provide personal support and enhance their skill development.

The EPEC peer led parenting intervention has a sound evidence base. Research undertaken by the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Research team from King's College in London in a randomised control trial found that EPEC significantly reduced children's behavioural problems and improved the competencies of parents in a population that was considered hard-to-reach (Day et al., 2012). This and other UK research found that peer-led parenting training groups have a much higher retention rate than conventional parenting group formats (Day et al., 2012; Hutchings et al., 2007; Scott et al., 2001).

## **EPEC IN TASMANIA**

The EPEC model is being piloted in Tasmania by the Murdoch Children's Research Institute (MCRI) in partnership with the Tasmanian Department of Education. The project has been funded by the Tasmanian Early Years Foundation (TEYF)

The project has received funding to provide in a 12 month period

- A minimum of eight 'Being a Parent' (BAP) courses (4 in the North and 4 in the South)
- A minimum of 2 EPEC Facilitator courses
- Research and evaluation strategy to test the effectiveness of EPEC in the Tasmanian context
- Clinical supervision for practitioners

The principal objectives of EPEC in Tasmania are:

1. To produce confident and skilled parent facilitators to deliver EPEC with parents in their communities
2. Parent participants are confident and socially competent
3. Communities are enhanced by the implementation of EPEC

In 2010, Dr Sue Jenkins from the Tasmanian Early Years Foundation (TEYF) visited the EPEC project in Southwark and believed that the project was complementary to the learning and development strategy that was in place for the Tasmanian Child and Family Centre policy. In March 2011, TEYF allocated \$50,000 for Dr Caroline Penney, Dr Lucy Draper and Kellie George (parent facilitator) from the UK to run a five day training course and two forums, in the North and South of the state. The Child and Family Centre Learning and Development team were asked to manage the facilitator training. The training course attracted seventeen participants. Between May and December 2011 six Being a Parent (BAP) courses were conducted at the facilitator's place of work. Two courses were run at George Town and one each at Ravenswood, Geeveston and Devonport. A further course was run in Hobart for child protection workers.

EPEC Being a Parent courses are designed to improve parent-child relationships, reduce child behaviour problems and increase parenting confidence. Being A Parent (BAP) courses run for eight 2.5hour sessions with between 7-14 parents and two facilitators.

Being a Parent is delivered using a structured manual with content from a varied theoretical base including principles and methods from attachment, social learning, relational and cognitive-behaviour theory. Sessions involve sharing of information, group discussion, demonstration, role play, reflection and planning.

In September 2011, TEYF granted \$152,000 to the Murdoch Children's Research Institute (MCRI) to implement a pilot project of EPEC in Tasmania to run 8 BAP courses to conclude at 31 December 2012. The Tasmanian Department of Education is also a partner in the project, being responsible for financial disbursement.

In February 2012, MCRI appointed a coordinator to the project. In December 2012 the TEYF granted a further \$100,000 to run an additional twelve BAP courses and one additional parent facilitator course to run in 2013 and \$50,000 for further parent facilitator courses in 2014.

This evaluation report covers the period from February 2012 to end June 2013.

## **Governance**

EPEC in Tasmania does not have formal steering committee structure. Representatives of the project partners and the group facilitator supervisors have met twice yearly in Campbell Town for feedback and strategic planning purposes. Specifically these meetings are attended by interested “original” facilitators trained in Tasmania by EPEC UK, Paul Prichard representing MCRI and Sue Jenkins representing TEYF (and also an ‘original’ facilitator). The coordinator of EPEC has regular meetings and informal communication with TEYF, MCRI and the Department of Education as required. The coordinator also has on-going liaison with Caroline Penney and Lucy Draper from EPEC UK.

## **Administration**

The coordinator role is part-time and has fluctuated between 2 and 3 days per week over the pilot project. The role has developed into a combination of parent support/facilitator support and administration.

## **Supervision**

The group of seventeen 2011-trained facilitators assumed the role of mentors. Mentors act as co-facilitators with Parent facilitators over their first BAP course, as distinct from Supervisors whose role is defined below. There are two EPEC supervisors in the Tasmanian pilot – Cindy de Jong in the north (also project coordinator) and Lynne Bradshaw in the south who was officially appointed in February 2013 in response to the need to have supervision more readily available in the south. The role of the supervisor is to support and supervise facilitators of the Being a Parent (BAP) course by:

- Assisting Parent Facilitators to initiate courses in discussion with Child and Family Centre (CFC) staff and EPEC coordinator.
- To meet with Parent Facilitators prior to course commencement to ensure that all arrangements (BAP Course Checklist) have been attended to, and to work with Facilitators to resolve any difficulties they may be encountering.
- Ensuring that Parent Facilitators have access to the resources they require (scrap books, folders, butchers paper, bags, name tags, manuals etc.)
- Ensuring that Parent Facilitators have a current police check and have signed EPEC Parent Facilitator Agreement at completion of training.

- To organise dates/time for fortnightly BAP session visits, viewing the last hour of session and then providing debrief, support and supervision through discussion with facilitators for at least a further hour.
- These discussions would include: reflections on each individual group member, reflections on how they are going as facilitators and the operational aspects of facilitation (i.e. resources, time, childcare etc.).
- To be available by phone/email for Parent Facilitators to discuss any concerns they may have between session visits.
- To discuss with EPEC coordinator any concerns that arise from these contacts.
- To attend Clinical Group Facilitator Supervision sessions at least once during the duration of the BAP course and ensure that Parent Facilitators know of and attend these sessions.
- Ensuring that all evaluation forms and group member details are forwarded to the EPEC coordinator at conclusion of course.
- To collect and assess documents for Polytechnic Assessment as required.

Each parent facilitator has a fortnightly support session with an EPEC supervisor, and then clinical supervision in a group setting. Group supervision is conducted by Nicky Beamish (Child Psychiatrist) in the south and Paul Bertoia (Educational Psychologist) in the north.

Two to three group supervision sessions are held over the course of each BAP course. Both groups of parent facilitators have had three sessions with their clinical supervisor. In addition, Paul Bertoia has also provided clinical supervision for the mentor/facilitators and the coordinator. Clinical supervisors provide backup support for EPEC supervisors, advice and referral. They are also engaged to provide sessions for any parent participant or parent facilitator for discussion, advice and referral. This is an important component of the program in supporting parent facilitators. To date he has provided additional support for one parent participant and one parent facilitator.

## EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

Dr Romy Winter has been engaged by the Murdoch Children's Research Institute to conduct an independent evaluation of EPEC in Tasmania.

### *Quantitative research*

The methodology included a number of instruments provided by the original research team of EPEC in the UK as well as one developed specifically for this evaluation.

At the first training session, parent facilitators completed a demographic profile adapted for the Tasmanian pilot (Appendix A), a multiple choice questionnaire (MCQ) to test knowledge (Appendix B), and a self-efficacy form (SEQ) (Appendix C). On completion of the 8 week course, parent facilitators completed the MCQ, SEQ and an evaluation of their training (TARS) (Appendix D). On completion of the first co-facilitation, parent facilitators completed the MCQ and SEQ for a third time.

Parents attending Being a Parent, completed a 'Concerns about my Child' instrument at the first session and the final session. Concerns about my child scale is a visual analogue scale that requires parents to nominate, prioritise and rate up to three key concerns about their child. The same concerns nominated at base-line are re-rated at follow-up, providing an individualised index of change. At the final session, they also completed an instrument developed for the Tasmanian pilot (Appendix G).

### *Qualitative research*

Qualitative components of this evaluation were a suite of interviews and discussions with EPEC workers, seven parent facilitators and a sample of seven parent participants, as well as the review and analysis of records and reports from the EPEC coordinator. Desktop research was also undertaken to gain insight into current thinking around best practice in the field of peer led parenting.

The evaluator also attended four sessions of a Being A Parent course and two sessions of parent facilitator training in southern Tasmania in order to observe participant engagement and group dynamics.

### *Ethics*

The consultant is a professional social researcher and thus aware of the necessity to maintain a strict code of confidentiality. This evaluation has been conducted within the NHMRC's guidelines for ethical conduct in research.

### *Analysis*

Interview data was transcribed and coded into thematic areas. Quantitative data analysed using Excel and SPSS.

## FINDINGS

### Program uptake

EPEC in Tasmania aimed to run eight Being a Parent courses during the pilot of the project. To date eleven Being a Parent courses have been held in seven Tasmanian local government areas. Up to the end of June 2013 two courses were completed at George Town, New Norfolk, Chigwell, Clarence Plains, Ravenswood and East Devonport and one course at Geeveston. Courses which were originally planned for Campbell Town, Burnie and the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre (TAC) have taken longer to organise. There is no local facilitator in Campbell Town, but courses will proceed in Burnie and the TAC later in 2013.

The EPEC program has developed a postcard and also a promotional DVD that promotes the BAP course during the pilot period.

Depending on the area or township, courses were run at Child and Family Centres but also in a church hall and schools when CFCs were not an option. During 2012 and 2013, Tasmania's specialised Child and Family Centres have opened and these facilities are proving ideal locations for engaging parents. The centres have on-site child care (adjunct care is considered a priority to running the course) and are ideally placed for facilitators to connect with these communities and develop the relationships that are crucial to engaging vulnerable families.

While Child and Family Centres have also been opened in the municipalities of Break O'Day and Queenstown; scheduling BAP courses in these locations has proven to be more difficult logistically. Two parents from the township of St Helens attended the Ravenswood BAP and will attend Parent Facilitator training in early 2014. Negotiations are ongoing regarding taking BAP to Queenstown.

**TABLE 1 PARTICIPATION IN BEING A PARENT, TASMANIA 2012-13**

Site	Groups	Number of sessions attended								Total
		8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	
Georgetown	2	12	5	3	2	3			1	26
East Devonport	2	10	4	2	1	1	2	2	2	24
Ravenswood	2	7	1	3		1		1	5	18
Derwent Valley	2	9	4	2	1		1			17
Chigwell	1	3	1	3	2	1	2			12
Clarence Plains	1	1	2	2	4		1	1		11
Geeveston	1	3	6		1		1			11
Total	11	45	23	15	11	6	7	4	8	119

One hundred and nineteen parents commenced a Being A Parent course during the evaluation period. Ninety-four parents received certificates for attending five sessions or

more. This equates to a completion rate of 79 per cent. More than one third (38 per cent) attended every session.

A further eight courses are scheduled for the remainder of 2013. The next phase of EPEC introduces four new sites to Being a Parent in the second half of 2013, namely the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre in Launceston, Bridgewater and Burnie. Courses are commencing in Burnie, Derwent Valley, Beaconsfield and Ravenswood in August; Bridgewater, Dover and TAC Launceston in September. The BAP courses scheduled at Burnie and Bridgewater will be the first courses facilitated by Parent Facilitators working without mentors, therefore representing a significant milestone for EPEC in Tasmania.

**TABLE 2 BEING A PARENT COURSES SCHEDULED FOR REMAINDER OF 2013**

Location	Term 3 2013	Term 4 2013
Derwent Valley	1	
Geeveston	1	1
Bridgewater		1
Ravenswood	1	
Beaconsfield	1	
Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre Launceston		1
Burnie	1	
Total	5	3

## Peer led parenting

The first objective of EPEC in Tasmania is to produce a cohort of parent facilitators:

***Objective 1: To produce confident and skilled parent facilitators to deliver EPEC with parents in their communities***

*Facilitation of the 'Being a Parent course' requires a confident facilitator. The training helps the participants to discover and unwrap their own knowledge and expertise relating to parenting. Facilitation skills will be improved through direct co-facilitation of EPEC courses and subsequent supervision.*

Data for this section comes from analysis of course documentation, demographic profiles of trainee facilitators (Appendix A), the UK designed multiple choice questionnaire (Appendix B), the UK designed Self Efficacy Scale (Appendix C), the Training Acceptability Rating Scale (Appendix D) and transcripts of interviews with seven parent facilitators using the interview guide at Appendix H.

Two parent facilitation training courses were held during the evaluation period. A group was held in the North of Tasmania in September 2012 at the Beaconsfield Child and Family Centre. A second group was held at the Chigwell Child and Family Centre in October 2012.

In the UK, the facilitation course is run for 60 hours over ten weeks before trainee facilitators take a parent class. In the Tasmanian pilot, it had been decided to run the classroom component of the course over 7 weeks due to the availability of supervisors. The Beaconsfield group however added an eighth and ninth week at the request of parents and agreement of trainers. The Tasmanian model then required pairs of parent facilitators lead their first BAP course alongside a mentor facilitator.

Parent facilitator training has been accredited against the Polytechnic Trainer Skill set (Certificate III and IV). Being A Parent is accredited towards Certificate 1 Work and Skills and negotiations are continuing to accredit BAP to some units in Certificate II in Community Services.

Parent facilitators are reimbursed for their travel costs and receive free child care and lunch during their training. They are paid at \$15 per hour for 5 hour for each BAP session for their initial 'mentored' course and then at \$20 per hour for 5 hours per session thereafter when facilitating a course. Parent Facilitators are also paid to attend clinical supervision sessions.

Twenty parents commenced training as facilitators. The Tasmanian pilot of EPEC used an adapted version of the demographic details devised by the UK program (see Appendix B). The Tasmanian trainee facilitators were nineteen females and one male. One parent withdrew from the course in order to return to school to do Year 11 and 12 after completing the initial 9 week training (Northern group) and another for personal reasons during the training (Southern group), leaving 18 to proceed to facilitate mentored BAP courses as parent facilitators.

The parents ranged in age from 25 years to 46 years. Sixty per cent of the group were in their thirties. All bar one was born in Australia. Three identified as Aboriginal. Half were in some form of employment. Four of these parents were Community Inclusion Workers within Child and Family Centres. It was decided to include where possible workers from centres so that there was on-going support for Parent Facilitators from someone who had intimate knowledge of the program. This was a measure adopted in response to the geographical challenges presented within Tasmania as compared to the 4 mile radius of the program rollout in the UK.

**TABLE 3 EMPLOYMENT STATUS PARENT FACILITATORS, TASMANIAN PILOT**

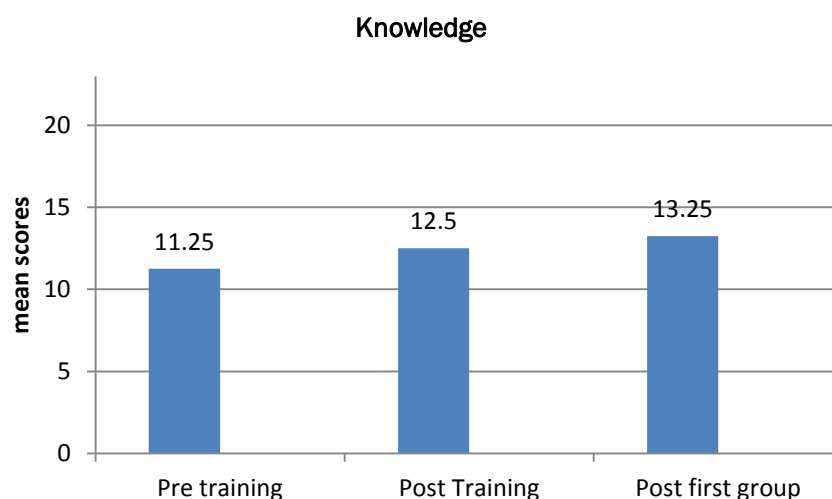
	Frequency	Percent
Full-time permanent employment	5	27.8
Part-time permanent employment	4	22.2
Working at home - childcare, sewing, etc.	1	5.6
Unemployed by choice	6	33.3
Unemployed	1	5.6
Temporary employment	1	5.6
Total	18	100

These eighteen trainee facilitators were parents to forty six children. In the case of fifteen facilitators, they were the biological parent of the children. One was both a biological parent and a stepparent, and there was one grandparent amongst the trainees. Number of children ranged from one child to six children with the average being 2.8 children. The children's ages ranged from 6 months to 21 years.

The majority of the parent facilitators had partners (90 per cent). More than two thirds of the partners were employed.

### Knowledge base

Trainee facilitators were assessed on a multiple choice questionnaire (MCQ) provided by the Centre for Child and Parent Support (UK). This instrument is provided as Appendix B. The trainees were tested on three occasions. The first application was at the beginning of the facilitator training course; the second at the end of the training period (and before facilitating their first group); and finally, after completing their first parent group. The maximum score for this questionnaire is 23. The majority of trainees increased or maintained their scores on the MCQ between the three administration periods.



**FIGURE 1 SCORES ON MCQ TASMANIAN PILOT**

In a recent seminar paper by the course architects, it appears that the average pre-training scores achieved in the UK are around 16 and average scores for post-training assessment is twenty (Day & Michelson, 2013). Tasmanian trainee facilitators scored lower on the knowledge scales than the British trainees. Interestingly, in the case of four trainee facilitators, scores decreased between baseline and the end of classroom training, and one trainee scored fewer correct answers after the 'prac' compared to her score on previous occasions, suggesting that there may have been a level of over-confidence at baseline.

Problematic questions on the multiple choice instrument appear to be:

- Question 1: Many trainees were still giving the answer 'Strives to be a better parent every day' instead of correct answer 'allows children to make mistakes'

- Question 3: Majority of trainees got this incorrect after the prac. Most answered b (example of conditional praise) instead of either c (uses labelling) or d (not specific enough to be reinforcing).
- Question 7: Most common answer is 'Asking Ben to give his reasons for not putting away his toys....'
- Question 8: most answered C (explain why he shouldn't use swear words) or D '(show him how he can express himself better) rather than ignore the behaviour
- Question 11: Most chose 'She's an impossible child' or 'Her behaviour is impossible' rather than 'I'm angry'
- Question 12: very few chose the right answer but no pattern in answer choice
- Question 13: People either left this blank or got it wrong.
- Question 14: comfortable chairs was common choice
- Question 15: Most thought neither was evidence of neglect
- Question 16: Most categorised washing mouth out with soap as negative reinforcement rather than abusive behaviour
- Question 19: Number of correct answers for this one dropped between baseline and end of training. Checking if parent would like an interpreter was most common answer.
- Question 20: Answer is 'both A and C' but most people put A only (not technically incorrect, rather 'partially correct')

It is highly likely that the difference in scores between the trainee facilitators in Tasmania and London is that the parent facilitator training component of the pilot of EPEC in Tasmania was run over two less weeks than the UK model. These results suggest that increased time is required for the trainee facilitators to achieve greater clarity around what is abusive and neglectful behaviour, praise and dealing with cultural diversity. The Tasmanian population is highly homogenous (over 90 per cent have an Anglo background) and thus it would be rare for trainee facilitators to experience cultural diversity.

It is recommended that EPEC look carefully at some of the items on the MCQ as there may be differences in lifestyle between the UK and Tasmania that blurs the boundaries between items on the instrument. Question 15 is one example where trainee facilitators commented that a seven year old could be left to play unsupervised in an enclosed back yard but not outside in the street.

### Self efficacy

Trainee facilitators completed a second instrument evaluating their efficacy on 21 questions. This instrument is reproduced at Appendix C. The maximum score on the SE questionnaire is 126. In most cases, trainee facilitator's perception of their efficacy in teaching parents and facilitating a group has improved over the course of their training.



**FIGURE 2 SCORES ON SEQ TASMANIAN PILOT**

At the time of writing seven out of the eighteen trainees have completed their first practical training session with a parent group. The Tasmanian group had very similar means scores to the English parent facilitators both pre and post training.

While caution should be exercised in reading

Table 4 below because of the small sample size, it nonetheless shows some interesting patterns. Some of the parent facilitators were less confident about teaching knowledge components to parents (such as the use of star charts) after running their first group, but also report increased confidence in managing participant behaviour and group dynamics.

**TABLE 4 TRACKING CONFIDENCE LEVEL ACROSS SELF ASSESSED SKILLS TASMANIAN PILOT**

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Q16	Q17	Q18	Q19	Q20	Q21
	realistic expectatio ns	non- directiv e play	praisin g childre n	needs behind behavio ur	communicati ng children	star charts	boundari es	ignore problem behavio ur	conQuenc es	time out	negativ e thought s	safe learning environme nt	emotionall y distressed parents	bored parent s	discriminato ry attitudes	managin g conflict	self disclosur e	feedbac k	barriers to involvme nt	child protectio n issues	variety of teachin g
Baseline <sup>2</sup>	66%	72%	71%	62%	66%	65 %	62%	61%	58%	63 %	60%	79%	65%	60 %	68%	62%	69%	65%	60%	59%	64%
Training	75%	75%	79%	71%	69%	73 %	73%	71%	67%	75 %	69%	83%	69%	69 %	73%	68%	77%	72%	71%	74%	77%
Prac <sup>3</sup>	69%	67%	69%	69%	67%	61 %	69%	72%	72%	78 %	78%	89%	86%	78 %	78%	75%	83%	72%	81%	75%	83%

<sup>2</sup> Scores of eighteen trainee facilitators at baseline and completion of training

<sup>3</sup> Based on scores of seven parent facilitators completing training and facilitation of first group

### Training Acceptability Rating Scale (TARS)

Trainee facilitators also completed an evaluation instrument on their classroom training experience. The majority of participants reported that their understanding of positive parenting and being a peer educator had improved a great deal, with the remainder reporting it had improved quite a lot.

**TABLE 5 TARS IMPROVEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING**

	Frequency	Per cent
A great deal	11	61.1
Quite a lot	7	38.9
Total	18	100.0

The majority of participants answered that the training had helped them to develop the skills necessary to be an effective peer educator a great deal or quite a lot. One person thought it had only improved skills a little.

**TABLE 6 TARS DEVELOPMENT OF NECESSARY SKILLS**

	Frequency	Per cent
A great deal	10	55.6
Quite a lot	7	38.9
A little	1	5.6
Total	18	100.0

For more than half the group, their confidence in their skills as a peer educator had improved a great deal, for a third it had improved quite a lot. Two participants reported that their confidence had increased a little.

**TABLE 7 TARS INCREASED CONFIDENCE**

	Frequency	Per cent
A great deal	10	55.6
Quite a lot	6	33.3
A little	2	11.1
Total	18	100.0

Over three quarters of the trainees expected to make use of a great deal of what they had learnt in the training. The remainder expected to use quite a lot.

**TABLE 8 TARS MAKE USE OF WHAT WAS LEARNED**

	Frequency	Per cent
A great deal	14	77.8
Quite a lot	4	22.2
Total	18	100.0

All participants completing the training reported the facilitators having a great deal<sup>4</sup> of competence.

**TABLE 9 TARS COMPETENCE OF INSTRUCTORS**

	Frequency	Per cent
A great deal	18	100.0

Over three quarters reported a great deal of satisfaction with the training. The remainder reported quite a lot.

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<sup>4</sup> I would change the rating categories on this question for future courses – from not competent through to very competent

**TABLE 10 OVERALL SATISFACTION**

	Frequency	Per cent
A great deal	14	77.8
Quite a lot	4	22.2
Total	18	100.0

Over three quarters reported a great deal of topics that had been set out to cover had been covered<sup>5</sup>. The remainder reported quite a lot of expected topics had been covered.

**TABLE 11 EXPECTED TOPICS**

	Frequency	Per cent
A great deal	14	77.8
Quite a lot	4	22.2
Total	18	100.0

The vast majority of the group felt that the trainers had related extremely well<sup>6</sup> to the group.

**TABLE 12 TARS RELATING**

	Frequency	Per cent
A great deal	17	94.4
Quite a lot	1	5.6
Total	18	100.0

The vast majority of the group felt that the trainers had provided a great deal of motivation to the group.

**TABLE 13 TARS MOTIVATING**

	Frequency	Per cent
A great deal	17	94.4
Quite a lot	1	5.6
Total	18	100.0

The TARS instrument invited the participants to reflect on *What were one or two most helpful things of the training for you?* Trainee facilitators responses fell into three main categories; facilitation skill, course content review and personal growth.

Responses around facilitation skills were:

- Group work - how to manage a group, different stages in groups. Qualities of a facilitator, clarify your role
- Learning about the different personalities and ways to deal with them. Learning to listen better/more
- Learning once again about being non-judgemental and I learn every time I walk in the room and listen, look and be aware of people's feelings/opinions
- I found the information provided about adult psychology very insightful. I now deal with adults on a different level of understanding. Reflective listening is also a useful tool on so many levels
- Reflective listening, learning the importance of 'the observer'
- The fish bowl and scenario practice; 'Name it and do no harm'

<sup>5</sup> Again, I would reword the question or change the rating categories from very dissatisfied through to very satisfied.

<sup>6</sup> Ditto, hard to relate to the group 'a great deal' – needs rewording perhaps ranging from poor to very well.

- The quick facilitating with issues (day 7) and the noting and watching one in day 6

Responses around personal growth were:

- Having a lot more confidence within myself
- Helping me to learn that I am 'good enough', developing a better, more positive relationship with my husband and children through using the content of EPEC
- Knowing that it is normal to feel nervous and Suzanne and Cindy were upfront about it from the start
- The self-belief that I can do it! Concreting that I truly believe this is a fantastic course

Responses around course revision and reinforcement were:

- Demonstrations, Readdressing BAP course, revision as a whole
- Listening skills and directive play
- Reflection of the topics to make sure we are clear about them and understand
- Feelings and behaviours
- To always fill my jug and acknowledging my children's feelings
- Understanding how groups work; ABC, Feelings, reflection, filling up jug

Trainee facilitators were also asked *What change, if any, would you recommend to the content or teaching of the course?*

A significant proportion of the trainee facilitators recommended additional time

1. An extra couple of days, felt a bit rushed
2. Felt rushed
3. I don't think that the time and squeezing it into a smaller timeframe was helpful to some within the group
4. I think it would be beneficial to have the original time allocation as in the UK. I feel with the extra time, participants understanding of course content would increase and confidence would grow
5. If possible extra day so as not too rushed through the program
6. Not rushing into a smaller time frame
7. Not to compact course into a too limited period of time, to allow more time for some subjects so as not to

Other practical comments were:

- The feedback forms could be adapted to suit Tasmania a bit more
- More exploration around attachment theory
- Share the travel e.g. one week Beaconsfield, next week East Devonport

Other participants did not suggest any changes.

- It's all been good, I enjoyed all of it
- I found the course spot on :)
- None, it was excellent
- None.

#### ***Any other comments***

- Absolutely fantastic. Great, professional facilitators. I cannot thank you enough
- FANTASTIC
- Found course empowering

- I'd like to say a big thank you to Lynn and Cindy's compassion on days that I haven't been good
- Suzanne and Cindy did a great job for their first time
- Thanks for giving me the opportunity to do this training. As a former participant on a BAP course, I really value the content and am excited about sharing it with other parents

### Parent facilitator interviews

Seven parent facilitators were interviewed using the semi-structured interview guide reproduced at Appendix H. All these interviewees had completed their first practical session, six had co-facilitated in pairs and one had co-facilitated with a mentor as their co-facilitating parent partner was unexpectedly unavailable.

Parent facilitators talked about being motivated by a desire to share the power of change that BAP was able to bring about.

*I thought 'I can do this. I can pass the word around'. A lot of stuff is common sense and I want to share it with like-minded parents who want to make a difference*

Some parents talked about being ready to do something different, starting to look at career options and seeing the facilitation training as a type of soft entry back to the workforce.

An overwhelming consensus from the parent facilitators emerged regarding what they got out of their training. They all spoke of the remarkable energy created in the room where all parents were motivated to achieve the same thing. There was a sense of a level playing field and at the same time a sense of achievement in stepping up to do the course.

*You come together as a group, with common ground, with a desire to make a difference. You feel important because you have the knowledge; you can spread the message and do some good. You become an important person in your community. It's exciting*

The parent facilitators talked about a range of challenges they faced while undertaking their training; for some it was dealing with personal issues; others spoke of managing difficult personalities in the group; but most spoke of the challenge of doing something out of their comfort zone.

*Knowing whether you are going to be good enough. I've been out of the workforce for some time. Was I going to be a 'good enough' facilitator? I want to be professional. I want to be heard but I have a small voice, was I going to speak loudly enough?*

*I found role play really hard. I was sweating and bright red. Really nervous and not comfortable at all.*

Parent facilitators, in the most part reported feeling prepared for taking their first group.

*In terms of knowledge I felt very prepared. Facilitation came quite easily, but holding the course was a bit daunting, but I just took it one step at a time. It was more physically draining than I expected, and a lot of work organising the family so I could get there every week.*

Some reported that they found they needed more preparation time, or were annoyed with themselves because they relied on their notes too much.

*I needed to read notes, know the content and the schedule. I fear I relied on the notes too much. It was good for the co-facilitator or supervisor to give you cues as sometimes you go blank, lose your place... have a sudden fit of anxiety. I want to get to the point where I don't look at the manual*

*I knew the stuff but didn't prepare well enough for the first session. I then had to organise myself so I had time to do the prep.*

One facilitator reported feeling nervous because there was a substantial gap between having done the training and facilitating the first course. Manuals were also delayed and she reported a sense of momentum being lost.

Parent facilitators reported being satisfied with their facilitation skills.

*When you are doing it it's a whirlwind for the first few weeks. I felt really comfortable and continually amazed at what people were sharing.*

*I think I did a damn good job.*

*I was really nervous at the start. My co-facilitator was sick and I had to do it with my supervisor. But I think it made me step up.*

Facilitators generally felt that they had been suitably prepared for their facilitation task, but one reported wishing she had had more practice at standing in front of a group and talking. Another raised the issue of the training being shorter than the UK course and that she had felt that they would have benefited from allowing more time. In particular Week 2-3 when discussing childhood and the session on discipline generated a lot of intense discussion and the group could have used more time. Another participant commented that it wasn't possible to practice for every eventuality as each group was individual.

The experience of co-facilitation was positive for all parent facilitators interviewed for this report. Facilitators spoke of the advantages of tag-teaming during facilitation and the

benefits of debriefing and sharing lesson planning. In two cases the facilitators were running BAP in communities other than their own, and they commented that they felt it was particularly beneficial to have a team approach in this situation.

Facilitators spoke positively about the support they received from their **mentors**, supervisors, the clinical supervisors and the coordinator throughout their facilitation training and practical.

*They made you feel important and part of the team*

*It was great to reflect on things with Paul (Bertoia)... especially how we coped with the hurdles*

Facilitators also applauded the staff at the Child and Family centres in which they held their BAP courses, commenting that the support of staff at the centres helped ease the process of facilitation.

The facilitators found minor issues with the language used in the BAP manual which related to it being developed in the UK. Words such as 'china' and 'sitting room' are not used widely here; however facilitators also mentioned that because they didn't go through the manual word-for-word but rather tweaked and selected content which fitted with the composition of their group

The facilitators shared stories about their facilitation experiences, including when content had a major impact on their group

*The session about feelings led to tears in the group. They kept wanting to talk about it the following week.*

*The feelings session is powerful. You see the light bulb moment.*

*The session on smacking was the most interesting because it is the most personal. It challenges people's thoughts and by the end of the day their goals for themselves and their kids has totally changed and they have a load of new disciplining skills.*

*I loved to see the look on people's faces when they realised they were not alone. That most other parents were going through the same things.*

Facilitators spoke about the way that the BAP course is organised. The consensus was that the size of the groups with 10-12 parents is ideal. One of the benefits of using the Child and Family centres was that often the younger children would have the same carer, so parents were comfortable because the care was stable over the eight week period. One facilitator had participated in the BAP course in a church building and then facilitated in a Child and Family centre and noted that there was a huge difference with

the CFC venue being 'perfect'. One parent facilitator found that it was 'quite tough' keeping to time in a big group and felt bad when she had to cut people off in order to get through the material. She suggested extending the course an additional week. Another parent suggested trialling running BAP over a shorter time frame e.g. Monday, Wednesday and Friday over three weeks to maximise the momentum.

The facilitators did not have any issues to raise about the feedback forms and assorted paperwork with BAP.

It was evident that the parent facilitators were very dedicated and passionate about BAP. One commented that she would like to see courses run continuously and open to groups such as teachers and carers.

*If we could tailor the program to teachers who are also parents. Teachers can be as influential or damaging as parents.*

One of the facilitators made the comment that while it had required substantial groundwork to get a core group of people to attend the information session, she is now getting at least two calls a week asking when the next BAP course will be run. Several facilitators commented that their BAP groups were continuing to meet informally on a regular basis; with strong friendships arising amongst participants due to the intense level of sharing and disclosure.

It is also evident that the process of becoming facilitators of BAP has had a profound effect on this group of parents. They report having more confidence and a greater sense of purpose in life.

*I'm confident, feel important. I'm doing something I want to do, something good. Suddenly I feel like I'm making a difference. When you feel good you give back more good.*

*I treat myself differently, even on my bad days. I know only I can do this for myself. These are things that make me feel good. I trust myself more. I really feel I'm all right, I'm okay. I've let go of a lot of negative things in my life including some unproductive friendships.*

*It's been huge. I have soaked up a lot of stuff. It has changed how I parent and grandparent. Using 'I' statements has become second nature. I am able to step back, listen and acknowledge my adult children, my colleagues, my friends. It is a life changing experience.*

*I have more self-esteem. I can now speak in public places. I am a better parent, friend and partner. And I want to share this with everyone.*

*This has changed my whole life. Two or three years ago I didn't have a voice, wouldn't speak up. Now I get up in front of group.*

Parent facilitators have had repeated exposure to the material in the BAP course and so were asked what difference this has made to their relationships with their children. The stories were quite moving. Parent facilitators mentioned 'talking the talk' and how people have been noticing the change in behaviour of their children and have asked how it was done. All the facilitators mentioned improved relationships with their children and partners.

*The biggest thing has been my relationship with my teenage daughter. We had communication issues. I started to sit and listen to her point of view and stopped trying to fix things for her. She became a brighter, more beautiful child before my eyes.*

*They are so proud of me. See me in a different light.*

*I am more assertive with the children and more confident around other people's children.*

## **Confident parents**

The second objective of EPEC in Tasmania is to improve the capacity of parents:

### ***Objective 2: Parent participants are confident and socially competent***

*Through participation in the Being a Parent course, parents are supported to discover and learn practical communication skills for everyday life and to develop their abilities to parent with greater confidence. Many parents will go on to be supported to become facilitators of the Being a Parent course.*

Data for this section comes from analysis of feedback from course evaluation sheets (Appendix G), the UK designed Concerns about my Child, and transcripts of interviews with seven parents using the interview guide at Appendix I.

### ***Feedback from evaluation sheets***

Parents were asked what they enjoyed most about the Being a Parent course. For almost half the parents, the most enjoyable component was sharing their experiences with other parents in the group.

<b>What enjoyed most about Being a Parent</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
<b>Sharing</b>	40	48%
<b>Tools/content</b>	26	31%
<b>Not alone</b>	13	15%
<b>Acknowledgment</b>	4	5%
<b>All</b>	1	1%
<b>Total</b>	84	100%

Examples of comments made about sharing:

*Hearing about the experiences of other parents and what they found useful each week. I liked the focus on feelings about being a parent as well as practical strategies to manage behaviour (Chigwell parent)*

*I have learnt that I am only human. I don't need to be or have everything perfect all the time. Making new friends, time to vent, listen, learn and receive feedback with no judgement (New Norfolk parent)*

For a third of parents the most enjoyable component has been learning new tools to parent with, and information about parenting, for example:

*I have loved the information; the support from the facilitators; the empathy from the other parents (Ravenswood parent)*

*Learning new parenting strategies and getting tips; talking and listening (East Devonport)*

For about fifteen per cent of parents, the most important and enjoyable component was knowing they were not alone:

*Listening to other people's problems and understanding that I am not alone (George Town)*

Full response sets are provided in Appendix J.

### **Concerns About My Child**

Collection of this data was somewhat problematic; less than half the parents who attended five sessions or more of the BAP course (45) submitted their concerns about my child tool. Of these 45 parents, all listed at least one problematic issue, 36 parents listed a second issue, and 27 parents logged a third issue.

These 45 parents raised 109 different issues that they had with their children. The most common issues were tantrums, not listening, talking back, eating issues, bedtime issues and fighting with siblings.

The Concerns About my Child tool asked parents to rate the seriousness of the problem on a visual scale. The evaluator converted these visual cues to numeric scores on a six point scale where 0 = not an issue and 5 = couldn't get any worse and calculated changes. The average change between the beginning and end of the course was -1.4.

There were 26 cases where parents had rated the behaviour as 'not able to get any worse' (5); on average this issues had decreased by a score of 2.4; to where the issue

was only of moderate concern. For one parent, whose issue was the child running away at the shops; the issue had been completely resolved.

Issues raised as 'fairly serious' (4) on average were rated as 1.6 points lower on the scale. In five cases, the issues of tantrums, head butting, hitting siblings, refusing to leave the house and stubborn behaviour were completely resolved.

Issues of medium level concern (3) had an average reduction in score of 1.7 with a child that had eating issues and another that was loud and always running around, completely resolving their issues.

It is recommended that the use of this tool is reviewed to establish whether this information is useful to the ongoing data collection of the program and, if so, that more parents are encouraged to submit their completed forms.

### *Problems and strategies*

In the post-course evaluation form parents reported a myriad of problems experienced before undertaking the Being a Parent course. The strategies described that have been used to deal with specific problems provide further evidence that the tools provided through the course are of great benefit to parents.

<b>Problem</b>	<b>Strategy</b>
attitude and behaviour	The course helped me realise I need to ask my child why he is behaving badly. Listening and rewarding has played a big part in curbing the behaviour
Backchatting	I have learnt how to ignore her more and say things in a different way
Behaviour	Listening and understanding how to solve problems through communication
Behaviour	Using 'I need you to' does work at times
Being late for everything	It hasn't but I'm ok with it now I know I'm not the only one
Boundaries, attitude, respect	I've taken lots home and tried different things. Talking. It helped
Can't remember	It has helped in all areas where there may have been a problem
Child eating whole veggies instead of soup	I don't need to deal with it now, he will do it in his own time
Child getting angry and frustrated	Reflecting back to him how he feels
Child not always recognising me as a person with feelings etc	Ran with 'I need you to' - this works!
Children coming to me all the time and not going to their father	It has helped me understand my children's feelings and helped me deal with the situations at hand better so not needing partner's support as much
communication between siblings	Through listening, understanding each child has feelings;

Problem	Strategy
	getting them to problem solve for themselves, being respectful and giving time to each child. These are all areas covered in the course and I find myself stopping and thinking about my response to situations.
conflict and behaviour	lots of different strategies and new ways of communicating
constant crying of middle child	more tools to handle behaviours
Daughter sleeping in her own bed	Star/reward chart has enabled daughter to be excited about getting rewards and stickers and sleeping in her bed
Daughter to communicate more	acknowledging daughters feelings and how she must feel with not being understood
discipline	finding easier if I give a consequence first
Feeling not listened to	Listening to him more so that his feelings can also be expressed and instead of arguments we would have meaningful conversation and both be heard
Finding the right ways to deal with your child	I have tried to be calm, stop and listening and talking in a better way
Getting annoyed with them.	Identifying ways that can limit the annoyance developing, listening, giving clearer instructions, being more assertive, taking time to stop - when I can catch myself
Getting the children to listen and help out	By making us think about things from a different perspective. Understanding feelings
Interacting with 12 year old son without butting heads and disagreements	Our interaction has improved greatly and we are both learning how to listen to each other's opinions etc without it always turning into a disagreement or argument
Jealousy - learning to juggle time with both children	Not stated
Kids fighting	Using lots of positive praise and trying to stop the fights before they get too far
Listening	this course has helped me lots e.g. using the thinking chair when misbehaving
loss of father; acceptance of new partner; destructive behaviour	Just talking about the problems alone helped me to deal emotionally with it
My main problems with my son were getting him to listen to my requests, him knowing he will get his own way in the end and there were not consequences.	I now follow through with my consequence instead of jumping straight into a punishment. Also I have learnt ways to control my anger before it ends in a huge explosion
Not listening	Changing the way I speak to my children
not listening	given me a different approach
not listening with eldest child	new ways of handling behaviour
not listening, laziness	

<b>Problem</b>	<b>Strategy</b>
Not listening, running away, not eating	I have learnt a new way to handle it
Not listening; day to day organisation, sharing food/resources; wanting what she can't have	Not stated
Not stated	The positive praise is working really well. Each week the topics seemed to enhance the week before. Over all trying to use ideas discussed in class has been very successful
Not stated	to keep calm with the children; to make more love; understanding how the children are and what I could do to help them for example I need you to put your washing out''
Not stated	The course has helped me to think before acting, to listen more
Not stated	the course hasn't fully helped
Not stated	Being calm at all times and filling up their jugs as well as mine
Not stated	My communication and relationship with my daughter has improved by doing this course as I have learnt to take the time to stop and think about how she is feeling and about the behaviour I want to change and how best to achieve that
Not stated	Am less stressed about it all now.
Not stated	Express her feelings, don't say no to her, different ways to get the same message across
Not stated	Different way of communicating and seeing things and doing things get different reactions
Not stated	Picking your battles, learning to really listen to your children and find out their immediate needs
Not stated	Being a better listener; considering children's ways of feeling
Not stated	Acknowledging my children's feelings. Not having to feel the guilt with smacking. We found time out works and is a lot easier and makes me happier
Not stated	Getting rid of the bad parent definition
Not stated	It has given me options to try
Not stated	It has helped with more than one issue. It has increased my understanding of all my children's benefits and my own problem of high expectations of being the perfect parent
Not stated	I now spend more time listening and acknowledging my other children
Not stated	The I statement, don't get angry

<b>Problem</b>	<b>Strategy</b>
Not stated	It has helped me to be more patient, resilient, calm and more tolerant of situations
Not stated	Saying no and meaning no and soft no's so they know they can do what it is they want but have to wait for it. Star charts and naming up the behaviour I want rather than saying no or don't
Not stated	Being a parent course has had a domino effect in every aspect of the dynamics of family relationship
Not stated	I can take the course and look back at what we have learned and go through the book, see people. Great people that understand me even though got a language barrier
Not stated	I have four children. I have tried new ways to address problems and to be able to find different solutions
Not stated	taking the time to think before reacting
Not stated	Taking the time to spend some non-directive play with her, acknowledging her feelings. Made me mindful of both girls needs
Not stated	It has helped me a lot with my own feelings. I have really enjoyed the Being a Parent course
Not stated	It has helped to talk about the problems and to listen to others. This makes me feel I am not alone and everyone who is a parent has the same or different problems
Patience	taking time to talk calmly
Problems escalating into arguments	listening and acknowledging feelings has helped to bring calmness to the house. Problems are dealt with more quickly and quietly
Respect; children not listening; sleep problems; hyper anger	"I" statements have helped. Putting boundaries in place (respectfulness) Better organisation, put time in for listening to the kids, their thoughts and feelings. Helps to control the anger and hyperactivity
Self-esteem and patience	It has helped me greatly with my self-esteem. I understand my children's and partners needs a lot more. My patience level is a lot better
Separation	Getting to the feelings behind the behaviour
Sibling rivalry	listening to each child and what they need as they are different age groups and the same thing doesn't always work with every child
Son sleeping in his own bed	I have learnt that in the big scheme of things that if that is all I have to worry about, then I am very lucky. It is no longer a big deal
Son's behaviour	Helping him deal with his frustration and help him find an acceptable way of dealing with his feelings. The course has helped me acknowledge his feelings so he can express himself more openly

<b>Problem</b>	<b>Strategy</b>
Sooking	Hearing all the other parents stories has helped me to not feel alone and has given me new skills
Stubbornness	This course has given me insight to the core of this and many other issues
Swearing	It has helped heaps
taking my child out in public	can handle them better and not get as stressed
Tantrums	I distract my 2 year old with something else and it usually works
Tantrums	I am doing a lot more with him
Tantrums	Remove child from situation and meet their needs
Tantrums, nagging	How to deal with tantrums and remain calm, to learn and understand them more so don't nag, open up and feel our emotions
to get children to listen more	I have learnt new tools and strategies in dealing with conflict within our family
Toilet talk - mean words	Using the thinking spot more; using consequences for actions; trying to acknowledge feels behind actions
Toileting	Helped me look at the situation and talk it over with her; star chart rewarding for small achievements
Understanding hormone changes in grandchildren	It has helped me to take time to listen to them more and not judge, also to make up their own minds on things instead of me doing it for them in some situations
Unwilling to go to school	Getting to feelings instead of trying to fix it
Various	Spending more time with them and listening to their feelings has helped solve a few problems. Having a set routine so we all know what we are doing
Various	Have been given lots of helpful tips that can be used for a range of issues
Various	The support has helped me to get over my dark days and has helped me settle into a new community
Various	taught me that communication and patience are very important
Various	Helped me in more than one way. Able to cope more as a single parent
Violence	It helped calm me down and ask what he was feeling and why he felt the need to be violent
Violence	I learnt to control the hitting 'Please can you not raise your fist...'
Whinging	Explaining and talking and listening to him has helped
Yelling	Now I can stay calm.
Yelling	I have learnt to stop and take breath so I do not yell as much. I have also started a rewards chart and this is working well

### ***How successful were these strategies?***

Parents were asked to rate the success of the strategies included in Being a Parent to help with their parenting goals on a 5 point Likert scale where 1 reflected 'no help at all' and 5 reflected the goals were 'completely achieved'. Feedback from 85 parents showed the mean score at 4.03 and median of 4 meaning that they found the course 'a lot of help'.

### ***What is the most important thing you have learnt?***

Parents reported that acknowledging children's feelings was an important component of their new knowledge along with listening and communication skills.

*More confidence in my own abilities. Increased awareness of the importance of really listening to my child and trying to see things from his point of view (East Devonport)*

*Different ways to handle situations. Remembering to keep our 'jug' full. Understanding behaviour (Chigwell)*

*I have learnt that I am only human. I don't need to be or have everything perfect all the time. Making new friends, time to vent, listen, learn and receive feedback with no judgement (Derwent Valley)*

### ***What are parents doing differently?***

Parents reported listening more closely to their children, speaking differently to their children, staying calmer and thinking things through before acting.

### ***Is there any part of the course that needs to be explained in a different way?***

The vast majority of parents did not answer this question. Feedback was received from four parents only.

*Some handouts need to be worded better so understanding them after course is finished  
Rules - sometimes consequences work and sometimes they don't; How to get my child to stick to it*

*Role plays are uncomfortable sometimes*

*It needs a different name "Being a Parent" has too many negatives associated with it*

### ***Information or skills that are missing***

Parents were asked if there were information or skills missing from BAP that they would have liked to have seen included. Suggestions included dealing with specific issues and ongoing support for parents.

- 1. Dealing with guilt*
- 2. Help when I need it at the time, advice at the time I am frustrated and angry*
- 3. Birth placement - birth order explains why children may act in particular ways*
- 4. How to talk to someone when they are angry; Keep cool and keep your voice/tone at the same level*
- 5. More demonstration, hands on*
- 6. Still trying to work out the tools needed to get child to talk about feelings*

### **Administrative changes**

Parents were given the opportunity to suggest changes to the running of BAP. Feedback included having the course run over a longer period or three hour sessions each week instead of 2.5. Some parents had a break in their course due to a school holiday period and reported that they would have preferred to have the course run continuously. Other suggestions included an out of hours course so that fathers could attend. Additional suggestions included promoting the course to more fathers.

### **Longer term outcomes**

Parent interviews provided evidence that the Being a Parent knowledge and skills remain with the participants over the longer term. All parents interviewed had attended courses that were facilitated by the first groups of parent facilitators.

Many parents spoke of increased confidence about their parenting, using the tools to resolve behavioural issues

*Being able to stay calm, the right way to discipline, spending one on one time with each kid....If I want to spend time with one and the other is hassling, I say 'I'll be able to spend time with you in half an hour'*

*The stuff about the good enough parent has been invaluable... I now choose my battles. Things that used to stress me out don't any more. And confidence.*

*We are talking a lot more as a family. It has brought us closer together. We talk things through and discipline is not so much of an issue.*

*It has made a helluva lot of difference. We used to have a naughty corner before for the five year old and he had to wait five minutes before he apologised but we had so many issues with it. Now he has to give a reason for his behaviour. And its smooth sailing pretty much.*

*It is keeping our house happy. We very rarely have frantic moments now and deal with things as they arise.*

*I've got a lot more confidence. I'll go out and talk to people. Go out and play with the children*

*Before I started the course I had a bit of claustrophobia or maybe agoraphobia. I would get nervous around other people, around any big group. I can now tolerate crowds, which is pretty amazing.*

Parents talked about what had been the biggest challenges for them. For some it was speaking in a group and doing role plays, others found ignoring behaviour a challenge as

well as seeing the world from a child's point of view. Some parents commented about the intensity of the emotional material covered.

*The first day of the course had the most impact on me... when we started talking about really deep things with strangers. I was the only male and found that a bit challenging.*

*It gets quite personal. The tissues definitely got used as a few were having a really hard time. But it felt like we could really open up. Like a domino effect. The facilitators were just normal mums. Salt of the earth, casual, dressed like mums; and we knew they understood us and had been there*

Parents reported being surprised that most of the techniques worked on their families, some gave examples of sharing adult feelings with children 'that makes me feel sad' or surprising success with recommended tools for rewarding good behaviour.

*I had little epiphanies all the way through...keeping the jug full, not using don't...it all makes you think and I use it when I start to feel I'm getting frustrated*

*I found that when the information was coming from another parent made a big difference to me. It made it more pertinent*

*I loved how the course pinpointed every parent's main concern. And the hand-outs were great to jog your memory.*

*My partner has seen how is working and has started doing it too*

Three out of the parents interviewed for this section of the report had expressed interest in becoming parent facilitators.

The evidence presented above strongly supports the achievement of the project objective in regard to parents. There is evidence of confidence and improvement in communication skills as well as evidence that behavioural issues that have been creating family stress are being dealt with. Parents are enthusiastic supporters of the BAP course and significant numbers are interested in becoming parent facilitators.

## **Empowered Communities**

The third over-arching objective of EPEC in Tasmania is to improve the capacity of local communities:

### ***Objective 3: Communities are enhanced by the implementation of EPEC***

An anticipated by product of parent empowerment and improvements in social competence is that the local community will benefit through improvement in facilitation skills, social connectedness and parent confidence.

There is early indication that EPEC has the capacity to empower communities involved in running BAP courses. The use of Child and Family Centres as venues mean that these organisations are being reinforced as hubs for parenting support. Facilitators are also becoming more engaged with their wider communities as a result of their involvement in EPEC. Many have become involved in the Child and Family centre in their area and spoke about increased links with their community

*I am enjoying being involved in the CFC. The course has opened my eyes to there being more to the world than what is going on in our little family bubble. There are people that need us.*

*I am volunteering at the CFC. I am finding I love dealing with people. BAP works; works on so many levels. And the knowledge is reinforced every time you use it and share it.*

*This course impacts on everything you do. I am using it everywhere I can. I feel I have new life skills. Plus I find if people see you using it, other people will emulate. I know now I want to become a Community Worker.*

*I have the strong conviction that we need to run more courses in this area. But we do not have a CFC and there are limited venues available. I am currently pretty active around the community looking for a venue that will be as close to a CFC as possible until we get one.*

*I feel privileged to have met these people in my community through BAP. We have really strong links with people who were strangers. That is one of the amazing outcomes.*

Many parents talked of taking the skills learned during BAP into the community

*The course teaches you not only how to deal with and communicate with children. The listening and not labelling and nurturing empathy. Four from our group are now pretty involved with the Child and Family Centre. We want to give others the support we have had.*

*I'm heavily involved in my children's education and sports activities. I want to share what I know with the mums that I engage with at school. I want to share it, to spruik the benefits. I'm also hoping that the effects on my children rub off on other children.*

EPEC has prepared some significant groundwork in delivering parenting skills training at grass roots levels in low socioeconomic status communities. The EPEC model works on both formal and informal levels; core groups in the community receive formal training but improved parenting practice has the capacity to spread via informal routes in a community.

## CONCLUSIONS

The literature on engagement of hard to reach families suggests there are four key features of success, which are to:

- Go to where the families are
- Promote and deliver programs in non-threatening and non-stigmatising way
- Empower families; and
- Develop relationships (Brackertz, 2007).

EPEC in Tasmania has achieved engagement with the target group through its use of community hubs such as schools and Child and Family Centres. Because this infrastructure are recognised parts of community life – schools being existing and Child and Family Centres welcomed as new support services for parents – EPEC has engaged the target group very well. In fact there is early indication that parent facilitators increasingly become involved in the organisations in which they run BAP courses and this creates a neat feedback loop in creating additional capacity in these communities and strengthening relationships.

Confidence in one's self are linked to social capital (Tett & Maclachlan, 2007). Social capital is one of three kinds of capital often discussed when framing the needs of disadvantaged people. These are:

1. Human capital: being the skills and knowledge needed to effectively engage in activity that is of benefit – usually paid work, but also voluntary and community work
2. Social capital: the capacity for individuals and communities to create and maintain structures which help to preserve and strengthen a decent standard of living; perhaps including neighbourhoods, political and community groups, family and kinship networks; and
3. Identity capital: the ability of individuals to develop and maintain a sense of self-worth and control over their lives. This sense of identity is crucial to well-being and mental health (Fullick, 2009).

People living in poverty often lack these capitals. Their qualifications and skills are often low and their networks restricted, particularly if they live in areas of concentrated disadvantage. They can also experience shame and vulnerability and low self-esteem. However, adults who suffer the most economic and social disadvantage are also likely to have had the lowest participation in learning. One of the key successes of EPEC in Tasmania is the level of empowerment reported by parents who have undertaken BAP. All parents and parent facilitators consulted for this report gave detailed stories of increased self-worth and increased connection with their fellow students and the wider community indicating that EPEC has been successful in nurturing all three kinds of capital.

Parents reported significant reductions in problem behaviours and improved family relationships. There is a high level of interest in undertaking facilitation training with

each new BAP group to enable more parents to benefit from the knowledge and skills provided by BAP. Stakeholders consulted for the evaluation report a high level of unmet need in terms of parenting programs in Tasmania. Suggestions for additional target groups for engagement have included marketing BAP more intensively with fathers and to include placements in each new BAP group for parents who are engaged with Child Protection to empower these families.

Piloting EPEC in Tasmania involved several adjustments to the UK model due to the substantial difference in geographic coverage. EPEC in the UK is run within a small densely populated urban area within a radius of a few kilometres; the Tasmanian program was piloted in the whole of Tasmania over an area of sixty thousand kilometres with a widely dispersed population living in suburban areas of towns and cities as well as rural areas. The pilot therefore involved setting up a structure which would provide the best support and coverage over a large area. Key elements contributing to the success of the pilot are that supervisors were recruited in both the North and South of the state; parent facilitator training was held in both the North and the South and community inclusion workers were trained to provide BAP within localised Child and Family Centres. Also in response to the geographic dispersion of the population, the pilot also trialled running the parent facilitator training over a shorter time frame; although feedback overwhelmingly suggests that the original 10 week training format should be retained.

The use of Child and Family Centres became a key strength of the program, however it should be noted that BAP will also work using school communities, neighbourhood houses or other central facility available in a given community

The successful empowerment of parent facilitators is demonstrated by trained facilitators making life choices that move them on from EPEC. This shows that the program is successfully providing soft entry into employment and further education through the combined provision of accreditation and income for parent facilitators. However one of the challenges with the parent facilitation model is the retention rates among parent facilitators. At the end of 2012, 18 facilitators had completed their training and at the time of writing seven have conducted their first BAP. Of the remainder, two are pregnant, one has returned to school to undertake Year 11 and 12; and another two have commenced training as teacher's aides. Some parent facilitators are employed as community support workers at Child and Family Centres and while this provides an ideal pool of back-up facilitators, they tend to be geographically inflexible due to their CFC roles. The success of the program will result in challenges in terms of maintaining sufficient parent facilitators to run courses, without generating an oversupply so that all trained parent facilitators do not get the opportunity to run regular courses to maintain their skills and confidence. The pool of parent facilitators will need to be carefully monitored to ensure a critical mass is available for program rollout.

It appeared that EPEC in Tasmania maintained a good level of fidelity to the manual developed by EPEC in the UK. The BAP course is well designed in terms of structure to

meet its objectives. One of BAPs strengths is its presentation of fairly sophisticated cognitive skillsets presented in simple, subtle and easily digested ways. A further strength of EPEC in Tasmania is that the coordinator and the supervisors and mentors demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of course components and were able to transfer these well to the parent facilitators.

There are indications that a few minor adjustments need to be made to the UK model to transfer more effectively to Tasmania. For example, some of the descriptive language needs to be Australianised. It is recommended that the Tasmanian project develop some Australian multimedia tools as feedback suggests these are 'too English'. It has been suggested that the course manual warrants inclusion of occupational health and safety checklists for parent facilitators' awareness. It is recommended that the feedback tools are reviewed both for applicability to Australian contexts and to provide optimum information to assist in project planning.

EPEC in Tasmania followed the clinical supervision model provided by EPEC in the UK and worked within the guidelines provided. Supervision sessions were structured in three sections; a review session, general discussion, and an instructive component followed by informal discussions. The feedback from the Northern group is that three sessions of clinical supervision worked well and that the ideal spacing of these is early in the parent facilitation course, midway and at the end. These clinical sessions are in addition to fortnightly EPEC facilitation with the parent facilitators. Clinical supervision is also available to EPEC supervisors as required. Feedback from all involved in this supervision model has established that the model worked extremely well and should be maintained in future EPEC programs.

The parent facilitation component has been accredited and the next group of parent facilitators will be simultaneously enrolled in the Polytechnic. Parent facilitators already trained are able to apply for accreditation retrospectively. This will be an additional enhancement to the human capital of parent facilitators, formalising their recognition as skilled trainers in their communities. BAP participants will also be able to apply for accreditation retrospectively.

The EPEC Coordinator role warrants some additional consideration as this is quite a demanding role. However the roles of all workers in the project have been clarified over the course of the pilot project and a set of formal agreements and contracts have been developed (Appendix E outlines the responsibilities of facilitators and Appendix F represents the agreement signed by facilitators when receiving the manual). Additional agreements have been developed to outline the details for each BAP course including course dates and times and also with venues hosting BAP courses. The project has encountered some challenges regarding the disbursement processes within the Department of Education. It is recommended that the financial management of the project is reviewed in the event of ongoing funding being sourced.

In conclusion, EPEC in Tasmania has completed a highly successful pilot program. EPEC in Tasmania has made substantial progress in engaging parents in local government areas that have been identified as containing a high proportion of vulnerable families. Parents and parent facilitators have reported increases in social, human and identity capital, targets have been met in terms of numbers of courses run and communities involved with EPEC are demonstrating increased community capacity around parenting skills. There is evidence of an on-going demand for BAP courses in areas in which have had contact with the pilot program. The partnership between EPEC and Child and Family Centres has worked to mutually benefit each organisation; providing access to communities for EPEC and introducing the beneficial programs available to families via CFCs. Parents have provided glowing reports of the changes that have been observed in children's behaviour and family dynamics as a result of implementing the material in BAP. The peer-led model appeared to foster excellent relationships and led to outstanding retention rates. Parent facilitators reported significant personal growth – at times life-changing. This provides significant evidence that EPEC is a valuable inclusion to family support services in Tasmania and merits further investment.

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## APPENDIX A: BEING A PARENT FACILITATOR TRAINING DEMOGRAPHICS – TASMANIAN PILOT

### Information about you

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Gender      ☐ Male                      ☐ Female

Date of  
Birth\_\_\_\_\_

Have you previously attended a parenting group? Yes/ No

Please  
specify\_\_\_\_\_

### Your level of education

- ☐ Did not complete primary school: Left school before the age of 11
- ☐ Completed primary education: Attended school up to the age of about 11
- ☐ Attended secondary education but did not pass HSC
- ☐ Passed HSC
- ☐ University Education
- ☐ Any other qualification, e.g. Diploma in childcare:  
Please specify\_\_\_\_\_

### Your background

#### Were you born

- ☐ in Australia
- ☐ Elsewhere: Please specify\_\_\_\_\_

#### Are you of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Unsure

What is (or was) your specific job or occupation? (If retired, give occupation before retirement.) Please be as specific as possible. If there is a job title, please include it.

\_\_\_\_\_

**Are you working right now?**

- ☐ Yes, in full time permanent employment.
- ☐ Yes, in part time permanent employment.
- ☐ Working at home (child care, sewing, etc.)
- ☐ Unemployed by choice (e.g. homemaker, retired)
- ☐ Unemployed
- ☐ Temporary employment

**Information about your children**

**Number of children**\_\_\_\_\_

**Children's ages**\_\_\_\_\_

**Relationship with child**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biological mother | <input type="checkbox"/> Stepparent                           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biological father | <input type="checkbox"/> Other adult relative                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adoptive mother   | <input type="checkbox"/> Other                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adoptive father   | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent's Partner (in same household) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Foster parent     | <input type="checkbox"/> Sibling                              |

**Information about your partner**

**If you have a partner, what is (or was) his/ her specific job or occupation? (If retired, give occupation before retirement.) Please be as specific as possible. If there is a job title, please include it.**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Is she/ he working right now?**

- ☐ Yes, in full time permanent employment.
- ☐ Yes, in part time permanent employment.
- ☐ Working at home (child care, sewing, etc.)
- ☐ Unemployed by choice (e.g. homemaker, retired)
- ☐ Unemployed
- ☐ Temporary employment

**All languages spoken at home**

\_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX B: MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS (MCQ) FOR FACILITATORS

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Course leader: \_\_\_\_\_

Please read each question carefully and then pick the best answer by circling one of the four options.

1. **The “good enough” parent:**
  - a) **Allows children to make mistakes.**
  - b) Strives to be a better parent every day.
  - c) Places their children’s needs first.
  - d) Takes responsibility for their children’s actions.
2. **Non-directive play:**
  - a) Has no rules.
  - b) **Follows the child’s lead.**
  - c) Should not have a time limit.
  - d) Avoids repetition.
3. **“Good boy.” This statement:**
  - a) Is too specific to be reinforcing
  - b) Is an example of conditional praise
  - c) **Uses labelling**
  - d) **Is not specific enough to be reinforcing**
4. **A child goes into her parents’ bedroom after a bad dream. Which of the following needs is she probably trying to meet by doing this?**
  - a) A need for attention.
  - b) **A need for security.**
  - c) A need for affection.
  - d) A need for approval.
5. **Which of the following is not a form of reflective listening?**
  - a) Repeating the gist of what someone else has said.
  - b) Making agreeing noises.
  - c) **Sharing advice.**
  - d) Asking open questions.
6. **When are behavioural modification techniques most effective?**
  - a) **When the target behaviour is very specific.**
  - b) When the system allows room for punishment, such as removing stars from a reward chart.
  - c) When the child is given responsibility for adding stars to a reward chart.
  - d) When a range of positive and negative behaviours are selected.

7. **Ben has not responded to an initial request to put away his toys before going to bed. What might be an effective way for his father to deal with this?**
  - a) Asking Ben about his reasons for not putting away his toys, and then considering a compromise such as putting away just the bigger ones.
  - b) Giving Ben a time out.
  - c) Giving Ben the option of putting away his toys or losing a sticker from his star chart.
  - d) **Calmly repeating the command, "Please put away your toys in the toy box."**
  
8. **Your young child uses a swear word that you don't like, for the first time. How would you best deal with this?**
  - a) Use time out
  - b) **Ignore him/her**
  - c) Explain why he shouldn't use swear words
  - d) Show him how he can express himself better
  
9. **Natural consequences:**
  - a) Are more effective than logical consequences.
  - b) **Allow children to learn from their mistakes.**
  - c) Are easier for children to understand than logical consequences.
  - d) Do not need to be age appropriate
  
10. **When comparing Time Out to smacking as a method of discipline:**
  - a) Smacking can be a more effective form of discipline as it is more immediate.
  - b) **Smacking is less likely to teach self-regulation**
  - c) What works best will depend on the child and the family
  - d) Time Out and smacking are less effective with aggressive children.
  
11. **Which of the following is not an example of a negative automatic thought?**
  - a) "I'm hopeless."
  - b) **"I'm angry."**
  - c) "She's an impossible child."
  - d) "Her behaviour is impossible"
  
12. **Which of the following would not be an appropriate ground rule for running a group?**
  - a) Everyone has the right to be silent.
  - b) Everyone has the right to challenge a statement that they feel is unacceptable.
  - c) **Everything that's said in the group is confidential.**
  - d) Everyone has the right to be treated with respect.

13. **Kolb's learning cycle includes which of the following?**
- a) **Concrete experience.**
  - b) Setting boundaries.
  - c) Reducing barriers to new information.
  - d) Both a) and c) above.
14. **According to group process theory, which of the following is not a group maintenance task?**
- a) Introducing a new member of the group.
  - b) **Checking that everyone understands descriptive praise.**
  - c) Checking that everyone has comfortable chairs.
  - d) Checking that everyone understands ground rules.
15. **Which of the following would be an example of child neglect?**
- a) Leaving a seven-year-old to play outside without supervision.
  - b) Not making breakfast for a six-year old.
  - c) **Both a and b**
  - d) Neither a nor b
16. **A father washes his son's mouth out with soap after he was rude. This would be an example of:**
- a) Critical parenting behaviour.
  - b) Child neglect.
  - c) Negative reinforcement.
  - d) **Abusive parenting behaviour.**
17. **A parent in the group repeatedly checks her phone and sends text messages. How might you deal with this?**
- a) Ban phones from future groups
  - b) Find out who the person is texting before making any comments
  - c) **Quietly remind her of the ground rules about phones.**
  - d) Ask the rest of the group whether they have any objections to the use of phones
18. **A parent in the group gives several examples of their own parenting that seem to involve child neglect. How might you deal with this?**
- a) Remind the parent about confidentiality rules.
  - b) **Wait and discuss the issue with your supervisor.**
  - c) Contact child protection services as soon as possible.
  - d) Get some more details from the parent, and then contact child protection services with any concerns.
19. **You have a parent in the group for whom English is not the first language and who seems to have problems following the group. How might you deal with this?**
- a) Encourage everybody to speak slowly and clearly.
  - b) Check back with the parent now and again to see if she has understood.
  - c) Check if parent would like an interpreter.
  - d) **Try all of the above**

20. **A parent in the group makes a critical remark about the ethnicity of another group member. How might you deal with this?**
- a) Talk to the person making the remarks privately, and discuss the need to be accepting of other group members.
  - b) Give them a warning and if they do it again, ask them to leave the group.
  - c) Engage the group in a discussion about cultural diversity
  - d) **Both a and c above.**
21. **In a group session, two parents begin to argue after one of them makes a comment about the eating habits of someone else's child. What would your first step in managing this situation be?**
- a) Calmly change the subject and move on to the next topic.
  - b) **Acknowledge the strong feelings involved but ask the parents to be respectful of one other.**
  - c) Take the opportunity to discuss challenging eating behaviours.
  - d) Wait until the argument comes to an end and then remind the parents about ground rules.
22. **In a discussion on discipline, a facilitator describes a time when she tried using Time Out with her own child. How might you deal with this?**
- a) This is inappropriate as facilitators should not use their own children as examples.
  - b) This would only be appropriate if she provides a clear example with a positive outcome.
  - c) This may help the facilitator to clarify their own feelings on Time Out.
  - d) **This may be helpful if the facilitator describes a complex situation that shows the challenges involved in using Time Out.**
23. **In a discussion on "good enough" parenting, a parent becomes tearful after revealing details of their own childhood. How might you deal with this?**
- a) Use reflective listening skills to show the parent that they have been heard and understood.
  - b) Acknowledge the impact on other members of the group.
  - c) Don't let it take up too much time.
  - d) **All of the above**

## APPENDIX C: SELF-EFFICACY QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FACILITATORS

Your name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Course leader: \_\_\_\_\_

How well do you think that you will be able to do the following? (Please circle one response for each of the listed tasks.)

**1. Helping parents to develop realistic expectations of what a good parent should be like.**

<i>Not at all well</i>	<i>Slightly well</i>	<i>Somewhat well</i>	<i>Moderately well</i>	<i>Very well</i>	<i>Extremely well</i>
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**2. Teaching parents how to use non-directive play, in which the child takes the lead.**

<i>Not at all well</i>	<i>Slightly well</i>	<i>Somewhat well</i>	<i>Moderately well</i>	<i>Very well</i>	<i>Extremely well</i>
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**3. Teaching parents when and how to praise their child.**

<i>Not at all well</i>	<i>Slightly well</i>	<i>Somewhat well</i>	<i>Moderately well</i>	<i>Very well</i>	<i>Extremely well</i>
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**4. Helping parents to understand the needs behind their child's behaviour.**

<i>Not at all well</i>	<i>Slightly well</i>	<i>Somewhat well</i>	<i>Moderately well</i>	<i>Very well</i>	<i>Extremely well</i>
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**5. Teaching parents how to talk and listen most effectively with their child.**

<i>Not at all well</i>	<i>Slightly well</i>	<i>Somewhat well</i>	<i>Moderately well</i>	<i>Very well</i>	<i>Extremely well</i>
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**6. Teaching parents when and how to use star charts.**

<i>Not at all well</i>	<i>Slightly well</i>	<i>Somewhat well</i>	<i>Moderately well</i>	<i>Very well</i>	<i>Extremely well</i>
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**7. Teaching parents how to set boundaries with their child.**

<i>Not at all well</i>	<i>Slightly well</i>	<i>Somewhat well</i>	<i>Moderately well</i>	<i>Very well</i>	<i>Extremely well</i>
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**8. Teaching parents when and how to ignore problem behaviour.**

<i>Not at all well</i>	<i>Slightly well</i>	<i>Somewhat well</i>	<i>Moderately well</i>	<i>Very well</i>	<i>Extremely well</i>
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**9. Teaching parents when and how to use natural and logical consequences for problem behaviour.**

<i>Not at all well</i>	<i>Slightly well</i>	<i>Somewhat well</i>	<i>Moderately well</i>	<i>Very well</i>	<i>Extremely well</i>
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**10. Teaching parents when and how to use "time-out" for problem behaviour.**

<i>Not at all well</i>	<i>Slightly well</i>	<i>Somewhat well</i>	<i>Moderately well</i>	<i>Very well</i>	<i>Extremely well</i>
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**11. Helping parents to identify and control their own negative thoughts.**

<i>Not at all well</i>	<i>Slightly well</i>	<i>Somewhat well</i>	<i>Moderately well</i>	<i>Very well</i>	<i>Extremely well</i>
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**12. Creating a safe and comfortable learning environment for parents.**

<i>Not at all well</i>	<i>Slightly well</i>	<i>Somewhat well</i>	<i>Moderately well</i>	<i>Very well</i>	<i>Extremely well</i>
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**13. Dealing with emotionally distressed parents.**

<i>Not at all well</i>	<i>Slightly well</i>	<i>Somewhat well</i>	<i>Moderately well</i>	<i>Very well</i>	<i>Extremely well</i>
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**14. Dealing with bored or distracted parents.**

<i>Not at all well</i>	<i>Slightly well</i>	<i>Somewhat well</i>	<i>Moderately well</i>	<i>Very well</i>	<i>Extremely well</i>
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**15. Dealing with discriminatory attitudes that may be presented by parents.**

<i>Not at all well</i>	<i>Slightly well</i>	<i>Somewhat well</i>	<i>Moderately well</i>	<i>Very well</i>	<i>Extremely well</i>
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**16. Managing conflict within a group of parents.**

<i>Not at all well</i>	<i>Slightly well</i>	<i>Somewhat well</i>	<i>Moderately well</i>	<i>Very well</i>	<i>Extremely well</i>
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**17. Using self-disclosure appropriately as a group facilitator.**

<i>Not at all well</i>	<i>Slightly well</i>	<i>Somewhat well</i>	<i>Moderately well</i>	<i>Very well</i>	<i>Extremely well</i>
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**18. Giving constructive feedback to parents on their learning.**

<i>Not at all well</i>	<i>Slightly well</i>	<i>Somewhat well</i>	<i>Moderately well</i>	<i>Very well</i>	<i>Extremely well</i>
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**19. Identifying and overcoming potential barriers to parents' involvement in learning.**

<i>Not at all well</i>	<i>Slightly well</i>	<i>Somewhat well</i>	<i>Moderately well</i>	<i>Very well</i>	<i>Extremely well</i>
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**20. Identifying and dealing appropriately with child protection issues.**

<i>Not at all well</i>	<i>Slightly well</i>	<i>Somewhat well</i>	<i>Moderately well</i>	<i>Very well</i>	<i>Extremely well</i>
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**21. Using a variety of teaching techniques to help parents to learn most effectively.**

<i>Not at all well</i>	<i>Slightly well</i>	<i>Somewhat well</i>	<i>Moderately well</i>	<i>Very well</i>	<i>Extremely well</i>
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## **APPENDIX D: TRAINING ACCEPTABILITY RATING SCALE (TARS) FOR EDUCATORS**

Please provide the following information.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Course leader:** \_\_\_\_\_

The following 12 questions focus on your impressions of the teaching process and outcomes, i.e. how completely you think the training was conducted and whether it was helpful or not. For each question, please circle the statement that best expresses your opinion.

PLEASE CIRCLE ONE ANSWER.

- 1. Did the training improve your understanding of positive parenting and being a peer educator?**

Not at all                      A little                      Quite a lot                      A great deal

- 2. Did the training help you to develop the skills necessary to be an effective peer educator?**

Not at all                      A little                      Quite a lot                      A great deal

- 3. Has the training made you more confident in your skills as peer educator?**

Not at all                      A little                      Quite a lot                      A great deal

- 4. Do you expect to make use of what you have learnt in the training?**

Not at all                      A little                      Quite a lot                      A great deal

- 5. How competent were the training facilitators?**

Not at all                      A little                      Quite a lot                      A great deal

- 6. In an overall, general sense, how satisfied are you with the training?**

Not at all                      A little                      Quite a lot                      A great deal

**7. Did the training cover the topics it set out to cover?**

Not at all                      A little                      Quite a lot                      A great deal

**8. Did the trainers relate to the group effectively?**

Not at all                      A little                      Quite a lot                      A great deal

**9. Were the group leaders motivating? (e.g. energetic, attentive and creative)**

Not at all                      A little                      Quite a lot                      A great deal

**10. What were the one or two most helpful things of the training for you personally?**

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**11. What change, if any, would you recommend? (e.g. to the content or teaching of the course)**

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**12. Please make any other comments that you would like to offer.**

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## **APPENDIX E: EPEC “BEING A PARENT” COURSE FACILITATOR RESPONSIBILITIES**

- Always facilitate the BAP course with your co-facilitator and at the times and dates, as set out in your agreement, unless with the agreement of the EPEC coordinator. **If you are unable to attend a session, let your EPEC Supervisor know asap, as the session will need to be re-scheduled.**
- Meet with your co-facilitator before the start of your course and make agreement about how you are going to work together. You may want to discuss: your goals for the course, how to share tasks, how you will resolve disagreements, your strengths and challenges, time and place to meet for course planning.
- Time guidelines – 5 hours per week should include:
  - Group session 2.5hrs
  - 30 mins before and after group for setting up and clearing away
  - 1 hour per week reflection and planning with co-facilitator
  - 1 hour per fortnight with EPEC supervisor
  - Minimum of one 2 hour session with Clinical Supervision
- With your co-facilitator you will need to share the tasks of:
  - Working through BAP Course Checklist.
  - Organising catering with centre staff from centre where group is held.
  - Organise adjunct childcare with staff from centre where group is held.
  - Photocopy course handouts.
  - Ensure that you have course resources from your supervisor.
  - Keep course attendance register up to date.
  - Discuss with EPEC supervisor any follow up of course participants that needs to occur.
- It is your responsibility to make sure you know the course material well and are well prepared for each session.
- Be in plenty of time to make sure that you have the room set up and are ready to welcome parents.
- Childcare workers are booked at least 15 minutes before and after group session times. Get to know the Child care workers, if possible explain the course to them, discuss settling of children and ask for feedback each week (from parents and child carers). Let supervisor know if there are any challenges.
- At the last session of course, have Certificates ready, collect Evaluation forms and ensure that you have completed your claim for payment form.
- **If anything you see or hear gives you cause for concern about the safety or wellbeing of a child or parent, contact your EPEC Supervisor immediately.**

## APPENDIX F: PARENT FACILITATOR AGREEMENT



The Empowering Parents Empowering Communities (EPEC) program was developed by the Centre for Parent and Child Support (UK) and has been developed for use in Tasmania through an agreement with the Tasmanian Early Years Foundation Board and the Murdoch Children's Research

Institute. It is important that we do everything possible to honour the agreement we have with the developers of the EPEC Program in the UK in order to maintain the quality of the program. For this reason it is useful to provide an agreement for all BAP facilitators which outline the roles and responsibilities of the Being a Parent (BAP) facilitators and those responsible for managing EPEC in Tasmania.

This is an agreement between....., a Facilitator of the Being a Parent Course (BAP) and ....., Co-ordinator, representing MCRI, of the Empowering Parents, Empowering Communities (EPEC) program in Tasmania.

As the co-ordinator, I undertake to ensure that, when you are facilitating a BAP course, you will receive support and supervision in the following ways:

- Have access within all reasonable time to your BAP Course Supervisor who will support you in the implementation and delivery of the BAP Course.
- Have on site visits fortnightly by your BAP Course Supervisor for the duration of the course.
- Have access within the duration of facilitating a BAP course, to at least one group supervision sessions with a qualified clinical supervisor.
- Have access to the coordinator to discuss any concerns you have in regard to the above points.
- And ensure that any payment due, or reasonable out of pocket expenses, be paid, to you within a reasonable.

As a Facilitator of the BAP Course I agree to the following:

- To only facilitate the BAP Course with the knowledge and agreement of the Co-ordinator and as part of the coordinated state-wide EPEC program.
- To always facilitate the BAP course together with another BAP facilitator.
- To facilitate the course as set out within the BAP Course Facilitator Manual.
- To treat all BAP Course participants, and others that I have contact with in my role as Facilitator, in a non-judgemental and respectful manner.
- To inform your Supervisor of any concerns you may have about the welfare of Course participants, partners or their children.
- To be available for group supervision, on site supervision, training sessions or group get-togethers as required.

Signed ..... Facilitator.....

Co-ordinator

Date .....

## APPENDIX G: BEING A PARENT COURSE EVALUATION FORM

*We would like to ask a few questions so that we can get an understanding of how well this course is working for parents. You do not need to put your name on the form.*

Course location:

Month:

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What have you enjoyed most about the Being a Parent course?

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*At the beginning of the course, you wrote down the main problems you had with your child. Can you tell us how the course has helped you to deal with it?*

Name of problem

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*Please comment here about how Being a Parent has helped if you had more than one problem:*

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*Thinking back to the beginning of the course, you also set some goals for yourself. Can you rate the Being a Parent course on giving you the knowledge and skills to achieve your goals? Please circle one of these*

No help at all

a bit of help

Some help   A lot of help

Completely

What do you think has been the most important thing you have learnt from the course?

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What kinds of things are you doing differently as a result of this course?

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Is there any part of the course that needs to be explained in a different way?

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Is there anything (information or skills) missing from the course that you feel you need to help you to be a better parent?

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Is there anything that needs to be done differently in running this course (for example length of course, times, locations, trainers)?

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Would you recommend that your family and friends do this course? Yes      No

Are you                      Female                      Male

Age    ☐ 18-24    ☐ 25-34    ☐ 35-44    ☐ 45-54    ☐ 55-64    ☐ 65 and over

*Thank you very much for your feedback!*

## **APPENDIX H: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FACILITATORS**

1. What motivated you to taken on the training?
2. What did you enjoy the most about your facilitation training?
3. What was the biggest challenge?
4. How prepared for the group did you feel?
5. How happy were you with your facilitation skills?
6. What else would you have liked to have known or had practice at?
7. How did co-facilitation work for you?
8. Do you have any comments about the support you received during your facilitation?
9. As you may know, Being a Parent was devised in the UK and this has been a pilot project to introduce it into Tasmania. Do you think there is anything that needs to be different in regards to the content for Tasmanian families?
- 10.What part of the content seems to have the biggest impact on parents in the group you facilitated? Why?
- 11.Do you think anything needs to change around how Being A Parent is run? This might be venues, the size or makeup of the group, the timing etc.
- 12.Do you have any comments about the feedback forms, multiple choice questions etc.
- 13.Any other comments or observations about the effectiveness of BAP and your training experience
- 14.What difference has becoming a facilitator made to you as a person?
- 15.Has it made a difference to how you relate to your children? How?
- 16.Are there any changes to how you relate to your wider community as a result of being involved in this project?

## **APPENDIX I: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PARENT PARTICIPANTS**

Icebreakers...How many children, ages... When did course.... Had done parenting courses before etc?

1. What has stayed with you from the Being a Parent course?
2. How have you been putting these skills into practice with your family?
3. What difference has it made to your family?
4. What has been the biggest challenge?
5. Has anything surprised you?
6. Has the course made any difference to how you related to others in your community?
7. As you may know, Being a Parent was devised in the UK and this has been a pilot project to introduce it into Tasmania. Do you think there is anything that needs to be different in regards to the content for Tasmanian families?
8. What part of the content had the most impact on you? Why?
9. Do you think anything needs to change around how the course is run? This might be the venue, the size or makeup of the group, the timing etc.
10. Have you thought about doing the Facilitator's course?  
Barriers, thoughts etc.

## APPENDIX J: FULL DATA SETS

### *Enjoyed most*

1. Accepting feelings, acknowledging feelings, knowing others have similar problems/feelings as I do
2. all of it
3. All the tools I have learnt to better manage my child
4. Being able to talk to other parents and feel that you aren't alone in different situations
5. Being informed and encouraged, meeting new friends and sharing stories and concerns
6. Being involved in a group of other parents who have the desire to become good enough parents
7. Being listened to. Learning to listen to feelings
8. Being open with my problems
9. Being together, making new friends, feeling that I'm not alone with some issues. Acknowledging my feelings a lot more than I was
10. being with a great group of girls that understand me and being able to learn more tools to understand feelings and children's behaviour
11. Being with friendly people discussing parenting issues and finding out new ways/ideas to deal with issues
12. Being with other lovely people, sharing stories and learning from them. Great facilitators, very easy going and delivered the course really well. Learning new techniques of ways to parent; new ideas
13. Connecting with other mums; learning different techniques; knowing that I'm not alone
14. Connection with other parents
15. Content
16. Everyone being prepared to share issues about themselves and their children and how to deal with them.
17. Everyone is friendly, open and non-judgemental
18. Everything! Meeting people, the laughs, the lows, new skills
19. Getting advice and help and knowing I'm not alone
20. Getting feedback from other parents in the group, makes you feel more confident, and to have support, positive
21. Getting tips and ideas, sharing with others, hearing others stories and ideas. Childcare.
22. Getting to know more to help with my child, meeting and getting to talk to people
23. Getting to know other peoples experiences to help me with my own
24. having 'me' time; knowing that somebody else has the same issues
25. having time to mix with other mums and realise that we all have the same issues and our kids behaviour is just being normal kids. Finding different ways to handle different behaviours and being able to develop excellent parenting skills that bring harmony and clear guidance to my child as he develop
26. Hearing about people's different experiences in parenting
27. Hearing about the experiences of other parents and what they found useful each week. I liked the focus on feelings about being a parent as well as practical strategies to manage behaviour
28. hearing other peoples stories and ideas
29. Help and opinions from other mothers and new friendships
30. I enjoyed all aspects; meeting new people with similar issues
31. I have enjoyed sharing stories with other parents and doing demos with parents but mostly have enjoyed learning new ways to help my family stay happy and loved

32. I have learnt that I am only human. I don't need to be or have everything perfect all the time. Making new friends, time to vent, listen, learn and receive feedback with no judgement
33. I have loved the information; the support from the facilitators; the empathy from the other parents
34. I have really enjoyed listening to everyone's struggles with their children, not meaning in a nasty way, but it's nice to know there are others in the same boat as me
35. I learned a lot. It was fun. Feel valued
36. I liked it because it was in walking distance and involved more communication and resolving the problem with my children
37. Interacting with other parents
38. It has helped me to fill my tool box up as being a single parent is hard work. I have also met lovely people and it makes it so much better
39. It has made me more aware of my children's feelings and given me more choices on how to deal with stress
40. It makes you stop and think about the way you handle situations. Lots of helpful points.
41. It was fun and you learn lots
42. It's been very good to have a different perspective on relationships with my children and acknowledging their feelings
43. Just having a break and listening to other people's stories
44. Learn new skills, meet new parents with different age groups and feel confident to talk about how we feel
45. Learning all the skills; coping with yourself; tantrums and patience
46. Learning from each other; knowing that there is no perfect way to parent
47. Learning how to teach my children how to deal with different emotions
48. Learning new parenting strategies and getting tips; talking and listening
49. Learning new solutions for my daughter and the help from the other ladies
50. learning new strategies to help with being a calmer parent; meeting new people; realising that I'm not the only person feeling the way I do at times
51. Learning new tools to deal with things
52. Learning new ways of dealing with problems, new strategies and listening skills
53. Learning other ways to speak to children. Listening to other parents
54. Listening to everyone's stories and thinking its ok to not be the best mum
55. Listening to other people's problems and understanding that I am not alone
56. Listening to others and knowing you're not alone
57. Listening, sharing, learning from other parents; being 'allowed in' to others lives and situations. A feeling of belonging
58. Made me feel like a pretty normal parent. Helped me walk in my children's shoes by understanding my own and others' childhood experiences
59. Meeting new people and having adult time with everyone. Knowing I'm not the only one having problems. Learning new skills
60. Meeting new people and knowing I'm not the only one that has struggles
61. Meeting other parents and learning from them about their parenting and issues that they face working together to get some solutions. Seeing changes in self and others from the beginning to the end.
62. Meeting other parents in similar circumstances, learning strategies for behavioural change
63. Meeting people, and knowing its not just me with problems and learning how to understand my son, and try a new approach
64. Meeting some lovely ladies with similar issues. Being able to speak freely about our family

- life etc. Learning new ways to deal with feelings and our children's behaviour
65. realising that I don't have to be perfect to raise my boys
  66. Relaxed, non-judgemental environment
  67. sharing common ground and support from people in the same boat. Laughs.
  68. Sharing experiences actually boosted my confidence as I realised lots of my/our parenting skills are ok and effective
  69. Sharing experiences with other parents. Lovely social outlet, comfortable, friendly, accepting
  70. Talking to other parents
  71. Talking with others; hearing their stories and learning new ways of parenting
  72. The company of other likeminded parents
  73. The company of others, being able to talk to others and making new friends
  74. The content and meeting others experiencing similar issues
  75. The group as a whole
  76. The interaction and information from other parents
  77. The openness of the course; everyone is free to speak about their own life, it's friendly, helpful and great for the kids too
  78. The people in the course. Learning different way to help me to communicate in different ways with my child
  79. The support and understanding of other parents/carers. Brainstorming problems
  80. The therapy; talking to people
  81. The whole lot; I have learnt to accept my son's feelings
  82. Time to sit and think about parenting. Hearing other parents take on issues and meeting some new people
  83. Trust, listening, making friends
  84. we had a wonderful group of mothers. It was great to share experiences about ourselves and our children

### ***Most important thing learnt***

1. A refreshed focus to evaluation my day by day parent reactions and their effectiveness
2. about feelings and non-directive play
3. acknowledge feelings; descriptive praise; behaviour you want to see
4. Acknowledging feelings
5. acknowledging feelings along with needs and behaviours
6. Acknowledging feelings, following through with discipline and consequence, praising the good things. Non-directive play, balancing thinking and feelings, full attention on your kids when it's 'our time'
7. Acknowledging my children's feelings more. Listening. Making more effort to listen without offering solutions straight away
8. Being a good enough parent is ok
9. Being good enough, listening, label the behaviour not the child, too many to list
10. Being good is good enough. Every parent is going through the same stuff with the kids
11. Being ok is good enough
12. better communication and patience
13. communicating, listening, feelings
14. Definitely acknowledging my children's feelings. Just doing this small thing has changed my children's behaviour

15. Descriptive praise
16. Different ways to handle situations. Remembering to keep our 'jug' full. Understanding behaviour
17. different ways to speak to children and accepting their feelings
18. Don't need to get angry
19. everything
20. Great friendships and being able to deal better with L's tantrums and moods, and ways I can and should be with his good behaviour
21. How to be a more effective listener
22. How to deal with my children's needs
23. How to get to the feelings behind the behaviour
24. How to help son deal with his anger
25. I could see the difference attending the group has made for those people who attended the group. Some members appeared more confident in their parenting. I could see they used some of the skills they had learnt in other settings like at playgroup or the school playground
26. I have learnt to sit and listen to their feelings
27. I need you
28. 'I' statements, open and closed questions, discipline, acknowledge feelings
29. Increased general awareness of how I react
30. Knowing how to deal with temper with my child also knowing I need time to be happy too
31. knowing more about things I can do for both positive and negative behaviours
32. Learning about feelings
33. Learning new ways of communicating and being more assertive
34. Learning to defuse anger - both mine and child's by taking different approaches to confrontation (getting communication of feelings happening, disracting, finding perspective, exploring consequences etc)
35. Learning to listen to their feelings
36. Listen to my kids; watch how I react to them
37. Listening
38. Listening to my children and acknowledging their feelings more
39. listening to others
40. Listening to others; using what you have learned and practicing at home with the children
41. Listening to the child's needs. How to listen. Acknowledging feelings
42. Listening, using I statements
43. Meeting my own needs
44. More confidence in my own abilities. Increased awareness of the importance of really listening to my child and trying to see things from his point of view
45. No one's perfect and I'm doing a good job at being a parent
46. Non directive play
47. not to be as hard on yourself as a parent if things are not working the way you would like, to try a different approach
48. Not to stress so much; things will work out in the end
49. Not to use labels; stating positives rather than negatives e.g. to say can you sit on the couch instead of saying don't jump on the couch. Accepting feelings, praising
50. Praise, labels, ignore, command, sticker chart
51. Realisation of their feelings and helping them become better people. But also for me. It's ok to take time to refill my jug.

52. Realising that my boys are just kids and need attention and need to be listened to. They want to be more involved with their disabled sister and that you have to acknowledge feelings
53. Reflective listening/needs and behaviour. Learning to discipline successfully and following through
54. refresher
55. Re-introduction to looking after self to look after children
56. remembering that there is no such thing as a perfect parent and that children need to feel that their feelings are being acknowledged
57. self-confidence knowing that my parenting skills are good and helpful tips can improve this
58. Taking the time out to listen to my child's feelings
59. Taking time to listen, understanding that children have feelings. Praise and how to use it for the most positive effect on children and adults. This course was designed for 0-11 but has great possibilities for older children and adults
60. That as long as I continue to care and listen as a parent, things can be achieved when we are challenged
61. That I am not perfect BUT THAT'S OK!!
62. That I'm not alone
63. That it is ok to talk to others about your problems, we are going through similar things
64. That it's ok not to be perfect
65. that there are many others with similar parenting issues
66. That there is always something you can do differently; and that children need to be listened to and treated with respect
67. That there is no perfect parent; we are all doing the best we can. We need to ask for help and that's ok
68. That there's no such thing as the perfect mum
69. the friendships and the openness shared from the women in the group. Thankyou it was wonderful
70. there has been so much to take in and I am still processing all of it. Learning to reflect on the girls feelings
71. to be able to spend time with my kids even if it is 10 mins away from the housework because it will get done
72. to be more calm, not stressed and I don't feel alone, about my children. I wish this course could go on to the next step or level
73. to deal with kids playing up
74. To listen more to what my children are going through and what they need from me and also listening more to friends and family and just being there and not always trying to be the fixer
75. to listen to each other
76. To listen to my kids and others and the most important is that I am filling my tool box up so I can have more skills on ow to deal with problems when they occur. I am very thankful for programs like this
77. To make me happy plus my daughter. Filling our jugs
78. To not be so hard on myself
79. Understanding where my children are coming from in their behaviours. That we can talk to people about our issues because they might have similar issues
80. We are not perfect parents but we are 'good enough'. Listening and acknowledging have been the most important things
81. We take into account children's feelings and life from their point of view

### *What parents are doing differently*

1. addressing problems a bit better. Calmer and trying to talk calmly and clearly to get best results
2. Being a more relaxed person and listening and enjoying my children more
3. being calmer, not stressing as much
4. discipline, listening, general parenting, I have learnt so much
5. Filling my jug and ignoring particular behaviours
6. finding different ways to say no and still getting my point across
7. follow through with discipline
8. Having a thinking corner. I statements, to say yes more often
9. how I view people and label them
10. I am doing a lot of things differently. I am getting my son to do jobs around the house
11. I am enjoying my children a lot more, not taking every situation as life or death. I've learnt that it's the little things that matter. My way of dealing with difficult situations has totally changed
12. I am trying to stop and think before I act and reflect on reasons for the issue occurring
13. I am working with reward charts and listening much more. I am not getting so hot headed when problems occur and trying very hard not to yell
14. I feel I am a lot better in social situations now as I am a lot less anxious taking my kids with me. My parenting skills have improved! I listen to my partner and children more and try to come to a conclusion together.
15. I need you
16. 'I need you to'; listening better, not just hearing; empowering others/reflective listening
17. I speak more calmly to her
18. 'I' statements, open and closed questions, discipline, acknowledge feelings
19. 'I' statements; reflective listening, giving descriptive praise
20. I'm not saying 'don't' anymore, I say 'stop'. Feelings, no one's perfect
21. I'm talking more, playing more, making star charts
22. It's still hard but I'm now listening to what he is saying
23. less yelling, more communication
24. Listening
25. Listening
26. Listening better; more confidence in my role as a parent; more flexible
27. Listening more carefully. Using different communication styles
28. Listening more to feelings
29. Listening more, respecting my child's needs for space and love and emotional nourishment
30. Listening more; not brushing aside the kids problems. Been praising more, and thanking the kids for good behaviour and actions
31. listening to my child and understanding her feelings
32. Listening to their feelings; knowing what they want, setting boundaries with the 'I' statements
33. Listening, being calmer
34. Listening, setting goals and boundaries

35. Listening; reward charts to change challenging behaviours
36. Making time to do things together
37. More aware of constructive praise, feelings and listening
38. more listening; reward strategies; letting the boys be more involved with their sister; descriptive praise and catching the good behaviour
39. more patient. I've slowed down, take time for myself
40. Negotiating better, listening, finding time for myself and my children. Thinking before acting
41. no smacking - more time out. No labelling my children. Children have feelings as well
42. No yelling. Rewards chart. Staying calm. Giving positive praise
43. Not getting so angry
44. not just saying 'good job' now expanding on that. Listening better and emotion coaching
45. Not putting as many expectations on myself
46. Patience, listening, not labelling
47. Playing more, set routines, listening to feelings
48. refresher
49. relaxing more
50. Rewards chart. Understanding and acknowledging feelings, ignoring tantrums
51. Saying things in a different way. Pointing out feelings
52. spending a lot more time with my kids than my housework
53. Spending more time with him
54. Staying calmer in difficult situations
55. stop yelling and listen more
56. stopping and thinking and finding the feelings helping to work it out
57. Taking the time to stop and think what you're about to say and how the child/children are going to feel. Smacking won't be the first option, take time to think first about the situation etc
58. Talking better to my child; showing respect for each other; quality time together; time for just myself
59. talking calmly and listening to my sons point of view
60. Talking to my child instead of arguing about problems
61. thinking before reacting
62. Thinking things through first before reacting to bad behaviour straight away
63. trying not to use labels and trying not to say don't, listening better, and communicating, understanding needs and their relationship to behaviour
64. Trying to keep calmer, listening more
65. Trying to take the time to use some tools
66. Trying to teach my partner about consistency
67. understand his feelings, no yelling, I talk to him
68. Using the I statement, listening more

### *Changes to how Being a Parent is run*

1. 2 hours is good

2. A continuum of weeks, not with intervals between
3. All very good
4. allow more time for parents to talk about their personal problems and issues
5. An out of school hours or weekend course could be offered for working parents
6. As long as a big variety of different parents, backgrounds, stages I believe course is good
7. chairs; role play
8. Cindy was very lovely and very great in running the course
9. I believe all child protection workers should do this course
10. I could maybe go a bit longer
11. I think it needs to be in the workplace or corporate environment with everyone from the CEO down can become aware of the important role parents play in society
12. I think it would be great for a male community worker so males feel they can be a part and I also think that if there were more workers there could be more one on one or home visits
13. I think they should allow more time
14. I wish that the course could go on and it was great to have the children looked after while we do the course and feel good that they are next door. It is great to have the course nearby and don't have to travel
15. I wish we had more as I find it helpful and I want to keep going. The Being a Parent course is short and when you're a parent it is ongoing
16. If the group is agreeable maybe still meet at times for catchups after course is finished
17. I'm really sad the course is ending. Have really enjoyed it.
18. Length of course. only because of my personal routines. It needed to be longer to enable more talk about things
19. Longer sessions and no break. Share a meal at end of course
20. Make it 3 hours instead of 2.5
21. maybe length of time per session as we did seem to run out of time quite often
22. More fathers may attend if there were evening sessions
23. more hands on stuff
24. More time, more classes
25. more weeks please
26. Needs to be 8 consecutive weeks, no school holidays etc
27. No break
28. No, facilitators are wonderful
29. No, I felt course was run over the right time frame
30. no. Trainers were excellent, location great
31. Not a big break
32. Only that November is very busy
33. Perhaps two blocks of four instead of a solid 8 week block
34. sometimes people got off track
35. Sometimes we had as a group a lot to say during a session on different topics and we had to cut short due to time restrictions. Maybe have a reflection time at the end of each session
36. Thank you for the great insight on things that you don't realise until you have done a course like this
37. The session on being a perfect parent should be covered later in the course. My head was not in the right place at that time to take it in and what it really meant. It could go half hour longer some days
38. trainers done a wonderful job. Advertise it as a male/female course

39. Trainers were awesome, easy to understand

40. Upfront access to last week's materials/records before each lesson to help revise/review that learning?