**Big Parenting Debate on line survey briefing**

The Big Parenting Debate took place in Brighton and Hove in October 2013. The debate was part of the Public Health approach to parenting which is being developed in the city.

Essentially, the purpose of the Big Parenting Debate was to capture the voice of parents, carers and grandparents to:

* find out about the parenting issues of importance to them;
* how they would like to access support, guidance and training;
* normalise parenting issues so that people feel more comfortable about accessing support and advice at an early stage;
* raise awareness of the type of support available in the city.

The main parenting support is the Triple P Positive Parenting Programme which, as part of the Public Health approach, is being expanded to offer wider access to a wider range of people at less targeted levels than currently.  It is a preventative approach.

The Big Parenting Debate included:

* Social media campaign: Twitter and Facebook; a Big Parenting Debate web page in the Council's website which will link to the existing Parenting Team web page;
* On-line survey questionnaire on the Council's consultation portal;
* Printed survey questionnaires distributed in various locations in the city including all children centres; libraries; GP surgeries etc
* Focus groups arranged by colleagues in the community development sector, with participants from across the equalities strands.

**Respondents**

There were 358 responses to the debate. Tables within the briefing indicate how many people responded to the particular question. Percentages in tables may not sum to 100 due to rounding, or, as is the case for many questions, parents could tick more than one option.

**Age:**

Over half of respondents were aged 35-49 years (60%), with 18% aged 50 years or over and 20% aged 25-34 years. There were lower numbers of respondents aged 16-24 years (3%).

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| **Age of respondents to the Big Parenting debate 2013 compared with the 2011 Census** |
|  | **Big parenting debate (N=330)** |
|  | **%** | **Count** |
| 16-24 | 3% | 11 |
| 25-34 | 18% | 60 |
| 35-49 | 61% | 200 |
| 50+ | 18% | 59 |
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**Gender:** Most respondents were female (81%, or 287 respondents), and only 17% (59 respondents) were male with the remaining not wishing to give this information.

**Trans:** Trans respondents (individuals who did not identify as the sex they were assigned at birth made up 1.8% of the sample – due to the small number of trans respondents (six) results cannot be presented for this group of parents.

**Sexual orientation:** Of the 317 respondents who gave information on their sexual orientation, 17 (5%) identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual or other (LGB or other) and 300 respondents (95%) identified as heterosexual. We cannot directly compare this is the sexual orientation of all parents in the city, as sexual orientation was not asked within the Census.

**Marital status:**

Over half of respondents were married (54%)

A lower percentage of respondents to the Big Parenting Debate were single parents (14%) than the percentage of families with dependent children who are headed by a lone parent according to the 2011 Census (20%). Other comparisons are not available for parents from the 2011 Census.

Fewer than five respondents were widowed so are excluded from the table.

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| **Marital status of respondents to the Big Parenting debate 2013 compared with the 2011 Census** |
|  | **Big parenting debate (N=351)** | **Census** |
|  | **%** | **Count** | **%** | **Count** |
| Single parent | 14% | 49 | 20% | 9,714 |
| Married | 54% | 189 |  |  |
| Civil partnership | 3% | 11 |  |  |
| Living together | 22% | 78 |  |  |
| Separated or divorced | 7% | 24 |  |  |
| Widowed / surviving partner from a same-sexcivil partnership | - | - |  |  |
| **Total** |  | **351** |  | **49,504** |
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2011 Census data taken from ONS table KS103EW

**Children:**

Over half of respondents had children aged 5-15 years (53%), with 45% with children aged 0-4 years. There were fewer respondents with children aged 16-17 years (9%) or aged 18 years or over (12%). Figures sum to more than 100 as parents could have children in more than one age group.

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| **Age of children of respondents to the Big Parenting debate 2013 compared with the 2011 Census** |
|  | **Big parenting debate (N=358)** |
|  | **%** | **Count** |
| 0-4 years | 45% | 160 |
| 5-15 years | 53% | 188 |
| 16-17 years | 9% | 32 |
| 18+ years | 12% | 42 |
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**Religion or belief:** The religion/belief of respondents to the debate was similar to the results from the 2011 Census: 45% of debate respondents had no religion, the same as in the Census. 28% of respondents were Christian.

**Ethnicity / race:** The majority of respondents were White British (77%), with 3% White Irish and 9% Other White Background. Asian / Asian British respondents made up 2.7% of respondents, 1.5% were Black or Black British, % Mixed and 0.6% from another ethnic group. CHRIS CAN YOU DO COMPARISON

**Health problem / disability:** 45 respondents (13%) said that their day-to-day activities were limited, either a little or a lot, by a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months.

**Carers:** Of the 329 respondents giving this information, 60 (18%) provided unpaid support to family or friends who are ill, frail, disabled or have mental health or substance misuse problems, with most (35) caring for a child with special needs.

**Armed forces:** No respondents are currently serving in the armed forces, 3% have ever served, and 2% had a member of their immediate family/household who were a current/former member of the armed forces. However, only 178 respondents completed this question.

**Where do you get advice and information to help you as a parent?**

Parents most commonly got advice and information to help them as a parent from friends and other parents (82%), from the internet/books/television (66%), followed by from a family member (60%). Fewer parents got advice and information from a parenting course, though one in five did (20%), 16% used other sources.

**Impact of parenting skills on children**

Parents were asked which of the areas below they felt that their parenting skills and an impact upon for their children, with parents able to select more than one option.

The majority of parents felt that their parenting skills impacted on all of the issues below, with the exception of safety but still here 49% thought it impacted. The most commonly cited areas were their child’s emotional wellbeing (94%), confidence (79%), ability to communicate (67%) and development (66%).

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| Do you think your parenting skills have an impact on your child’s: |
|  | **Big parenting debate (N=353)** |
|  | **%** | **Count** |
| Emotional wellbeing | 94% | 332 |
| Confidence | 79% | 279 |
| Ability to communicate | 67% | 235 |
| Development | 66% | 233 |
| Education | 54% | 192 |
| Potential | 50% | 176 |
| Safety | 49% | 174 |
| Other | 11% | 40 |
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**The most difficult issues to deal with in caring for children**

Respondents were asked which three of the following issues were most difficult to deal with in caring for children. Over a third or respondents said that juggling home and work (42%) and behaviour problems (37%) were the most difficult issues. For around one in four respondents, or more, the impact of media, television, films and adverts on children and teenagers (31%), sleep (28%), food issues (25%) or their child being distressed or upset (24%) were among the three most difficult issues for them.

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| Most difficult issues dealt with in caring for children (respondents could select three options) |
|  | **Big parenting debate (N=351)** |
|  | **%** | **Count** |
| Juggling home and work | 42% | 149 |
| Behaviour problems | 37% | 131 |
| Impact of media, television, films and adverts on children and teenagers | 31% | 108 |
| Sleep | 28% | 100 |
| Food issues | 25% | 86 |
| Child being distressed or upset | 24% | 84 |
| Sibling conflict | 19% | 66 |
| Lack of support available from family and friends | 19% | 65 |
| Conflict with partner or other parent | 18% | 64 |
| Children’s problems with friendship | 18% | 64 |
| Social networking and computer safety | 17% | 59 |
| School problems | 14% | 50 |
| Other | 13% | 47 |
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**Who would you turn to if you felt overwhelmed by your role as a parent**

The majority of respondents (79%) said they would turn to friends, 65% to their own parents/family and 20% to their GP / family doctor. Fewer would turn to schools (14%), health visitor (13%) and just 6% would turn to a helpline. For those with children aged 0-4 years 26% would turn to their Health Visitor.

**What do you perceive to be the most challenging age group for a parent**

Almost half of respondents thought that teenagers were the most challenging age group for a parent (49%) and almost a third thought it was babies and toddlers (31%). Only 7% of respondents thought that pre-teens were the most challenging age group.

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| What do you perceive to be the most challenging age group for a parent? |
|  | **Big parenting debate (N=353)** |
|  | **%** | **Count** |
| Babies and under 18 months | 13% | 45 |
| Toddler 18 months to three years | 18% | 63 |
| Young children 3-9 years | 13% | 43 |
| Pre-teens 9-12 | 7% | 24 |
| Teenagers 13+ | 49% | 169 |
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**Parent courses / advice**

The majority of parents were a bit or very interested in all the listed options for parenting courses / advice (from 56% for a parenting course to 68% for individual advice). There were many parents a bit interested or not sure, indicating some uncertainty on interest.

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| **Would you be interested in…..** |
|  | **Not at all interested** | **A bit interested** | **Very interested** | **Not sure** |
| Attending a parenting course that addressed common parenting issues, where you could meet other parents (N=353) | 34% | 29% | 27% | 10% |
| A parenting talk or discussion group on a particular topic that addresses common parenting issues, where you could meet other parents (N=355) | 30% | 34% | 30% | 6% |
| An online course that addresses common parenting issues (N=351) | 30% | 30% | 32% | 8% |
| Getting individual advice on a specific issue that addresses common parenting issues (N=348) | 24% | 37% | 31% | 8% |
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**Parent courses – when, where and receiving information**

Almost half of parents (49%) said that evenings would generally be when they would be available to attend a parenting course or talk, with 26% saying weekends. Other options were less popular, with during schools holidays the least favoured option (4%).

The most favoured location for a parenting course were a local community centre or schools (both 59%). For respondents with children aged under 5 years, 60% favoured a children’s centre.

When asked about how they received information about new services available in the community, the most common means were from the internet (53%) and hearing about them from friends / relatives (51%). These were followed by from school (41%), flyers (38%) or newspapers (30%). For respondents with children aged under 5 years, 37% received information from a children’s centre or Health Visitor.

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| Generally when would you be available to attend a parenting course or talk? |
|  | **Big parenting debate (N=313)** |
|  | **%** | **Count** |
| Mornings | 22% | 69 |
| Afternoons | 12% | 37 |
| Evenings | 49% | 154 |
| Weekends | 26% | 80 |
| Term time | 18% | 55 |
| School holidays | 4% | 12 |
| No preference | 17% | 53 |
| Other | 7% | 22 |
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| Where would you be most likely to attend a parenting course? |
|  | **Big parenting debate (N=313)** |
|  | **%** | **Count** |
| Local community centre | 59% | 186 |
| Schools | 59% | 185 |
| Children’s centres | 47% | 147 |
| Central location | 34% | 107 |
| Adult Education Centres / Colleges | 29% | 90 |
| School holidays | 4% | 12 |
| No preference | 17% | 53 |
| Other | 7% | 22 |
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| How do you receive information about new services available in the community? |
|  | **Big parenting debate (N=350)** |
|  | **%** | **Count** |
| Internet | 53% | 185 |
| Hear about from friends / relatives | 51% | 180 |
| School | 41% | 144 |
| Flyers | 38% | 134 |
| Newspapers | 30% | 105 |
| Children’s centre / Health visitor | 20% | 70 |
| Facebook | 19% | 67 |
| Radio / TV | 8% | 28 |
| Other | 12% | 42 |
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