



Family and
Disability Studies
Initiative

Supported Parenting

2009 - 2010

What are parents saying...

"It has helped me to become a more confident parent and to believe in myself"

"The ongoing support from the Parent Link Centre is wonderful"

"It is so comforting knowing that other moms have the same questions, concerns, troubles, doubts and wonderful times with their children"

"The Parent Link Centre and its programs are an excellent resource for new families"

Thank you for taking the time to complete the supported parenting survey!

The information you provided helps us to better understand parents' information and support needs. Policy makers and service providers can now put this information to use to improve services for families in the community.

Please take a moment to read what we have discovered thanks to your participation.



Study Highlights

- Parent Link Centres are making a positive difference in the lives of many parents and families in Alberta.
- Parent Link Centre's (PLCs) are making a difference by
 - creating opportunities for parents to connect and support one another, and to experience community belonging
 - supporting parents by equipping them with knowledge, skills and confidence for the challenging task of parenting
- Most parents feel their needs are being met by their PLC
- When needs are met, parents experience less parenting stress and engage in more positive parenting
- Parents who report that their needs are being met by their PLC tend to participate in group-based parent education and receive support with personal issues such as loneliness and depression
- Parents who use a PLC drop-in playgroup are more likely to use positive parenting practices at home



“I have a sense of belonging”

“The reason I have close friends and a good support group and people I can count on is because I met them at Parent Link”

“Being a stay at home mom can be isolating but knowing Parent Link staff and mom’s makes you feel part of a community”.



Who Participated?

Parents:

- The Supported Parenting Survey was sent out to 1296 parents from around Alberta
- A total of 923 parents responded to the survey
- Parents who responded were similar in most ways to the average parent living in Alberta

Parent Link Centres:

- 20 Alberta PLCs were involved
- One-to-one interviews were completed with 10 Parent Link Centre directors
- Group interviews were completed with another 62 practitioners working at Alberta Parent Link Centres

Social Support

Social support (feeling connected and having people you can turn to for support when you need it) promotes parent-child health and wellbeing.

Many parents told us that their PLC helped them connect with other parents and build lasting supportive social relationships.

Social support appears to help families function better by reducing the impact of child difficulties, financial problems, and parenting stress.

We found that parents who have many people around who support them also say that parenting is less stressful.

Parents who are less stressed use more positive parenting strategies.

In turn parenting in a more positive way may decrease child behaviour problems and help the family to function better.

What does this mean?

This means that working toward strengthening parent’s social relationships may be just as important as giving parents information about parenting or helping them learn new skills.

The **good news** is that your Parent Link Centre is already performing both of these valuable functions.

Triple P - Positive Parenting Program

Some PLCs have started to offer a parent support and training program called Triple P.

Triple P is designed to help parents who are concerned about their child’s development and behaviour.

Triple P adds to services provided by your PLC with more educational resources, including videos and handy Tip Sheets, and increasing the level of training of some PLC staff.

These tools may complement the information and help already available through your Parent Link Centre.

172 parents who completed the survey received Triple P from their local Parent Link Centre.

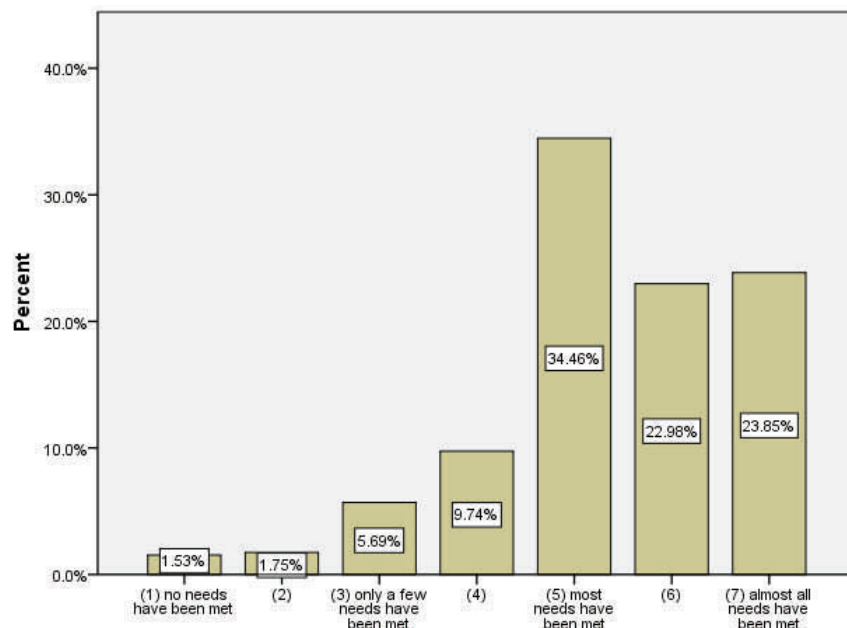
We found that Triple P is enhancing outcomes for parents who participate in group-based activities and programs.

Many parents surveyed told us that they found Triple P helpful, and that the training made the often challenging task of parenting less stressful and more enjoyable.



“The Triple P program has really changed our whole interaction for the better. I feel that we are now much better equipped to deal with our children”

To what extent are parent’s needs being met?



In the last three months, to what extent did the Parent Link Centre meet your needs as a parent?

How are PLCs supporting parents?



“they have already helped me with so many problems; problems in my personal life, problems with my spouse and problems with being a young mother of 3”

Parents are turning to Parent Link Centres for support in dealing with a broad range of issues.

About one in four parents surveyed say that they have received support to deal with personal and/or relationship issues.

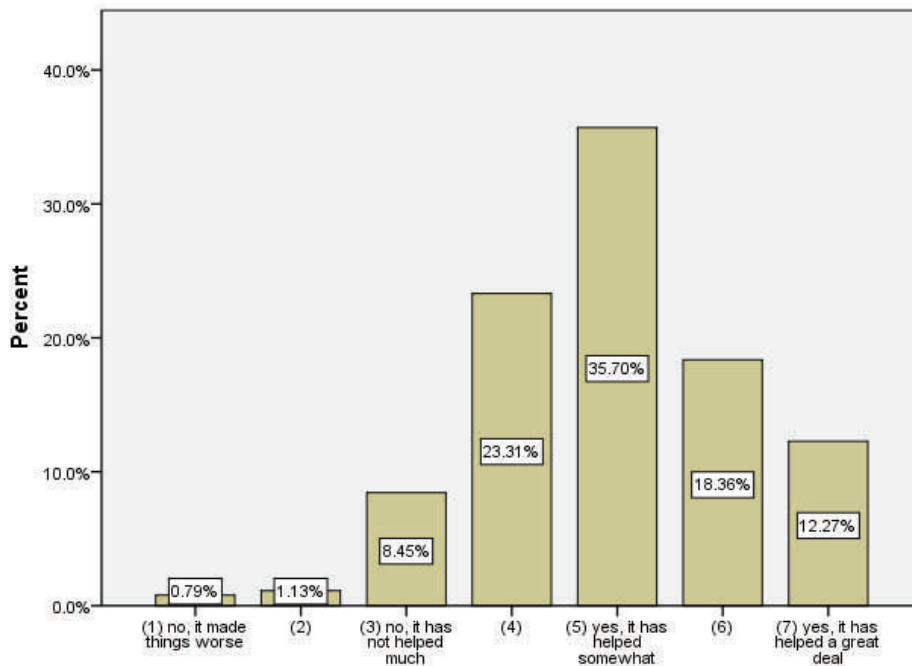
26% of parents received support with issues relating to their infant child, including for example their sleeping patterns.

36% of parents received support with issues to do with their toddler, such as toilet training and tantrums.

17% of parents surveyed received support with issues to do with their pre-school age child, including for example separation issues and meal time problems.

In addition, 8% of parents had received supported related to an elementary school age child.

Are PLCs helping parents to deal more effectively with their child’s behaviour?



In the last three months, did your Parent Link Centre help you to deal more effectively with your child’s behaviour?

“I really enjoy every minute with my children now and they listen so much better”



Striving to Improve

We found that some parents are not benefiting as much from PLC services:

- parents experiencing financial hardship
- parents who speak English is a second language
- parents with a disability or chronic health condition
- parents caring for a child with a disability or chronic health condition
- parents who have an older child with challenging behaviours

We also found that the main risk factors for low social support were low household income, parental disability/chronic health condition, and a language other than English primarily spoken at home.



“It is so nice to know I am not alone in some of my parenting struggles and to listen to different ideas and points of view”

Where do we go from here?

The information provided by you, and parents like you, has supplied us with a better understanding of parents’ information and support needs.

With this understanding we are making recommendations to improve services for families in the community and to inform future research.

Policy makers and service providers can put this information to use when planning new programs and updating existing services.

Some recommendations might include making changes to programming that will better accommodate parents with English as a second language and parents



with more complex needs; Supporting opportunities for parents to create strong, long lasting social relationships with other parents in the community; And looking at ways to make programs like Triple P more useful for all Alberta parents.

Thank you for participating. Your time and input will help to improve services for your family and other Albertan families.



FAMILY AND DISABILITY STUDIES INITIATIVE
UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

The purpose of the FDSI is to promote the participation, health, and wellbeing of people with disabilities and their families across all areas of life. We aim to forge new research collaborations, fuel innovation, and build systems capacity to support persons with disabilities and their families, by bringing people together from different disciplines and sectors (university, government, community) and in partnership with individuals with disabilities and their families. The Family and Disability Studies Initiative is dedicated to promoting dissemination of new knowledge into policy and practice. We are committed to promoting the rights of persons with a disability and their families to engage in decision making processes that affect their lives, and to equal opportunities for health and well-being across the lifespan.



Thank you for
participating