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REGENERATION WORKS

SURE START WEST CENTRAL HALIFAX

A study into the impact of training on Sure Start parent's confidence
JUNE 2005



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Training &
Study
Research
Resources

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In October 2004 Sure Start West Central Halifax appointed Inner City Solutions to design and implement an investigation into the impact on parental confidence of training programmes supported by Sure Start West Central Halifax.

The brief was to investigate:

“The impact of Sure Start West Central Halifax training sessions on parental confidence”

One of the key outcomes reported by participants in the Sure Start programme of activities was a growth in their levels of confidence since the programme's inception. In consequence, the Sure Start programme commissioned a piece of research to investigate this anecdotal evidence further within the field of training. The research team set out to systematically gather evidence to identify the effect Sure Start training has had on this reported increase in confidence.

The study objectives were to investigate:

- The nature of confidence
- Whether any changes in confidence could be evidenced during learning
- Whether particular courses delivered through Sure Start West Central Halifax have influenced learners' confidence more so than others

This report outlines the background, processes and findings of a small scale, qualitative research study and will be important to the developing Children's Centre agenda by providing an example of evidence-based practice.

This report also provides the strategic context for the study, outlining Government policy and wider research examining the links between training and confidence.

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2

BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

This Chapter provides background on the national programme, Sure Start West Central Halifax, and the geographical area within which the Sure Start programme operates.

2.2 The National Sure Start programme

Sure Start is a Government initiative which aims to achieve better outcomes for children, parents and communities by:

- Increasing the availability of childcare for all children
- Improving health and emotional development for young children
- Supporting parents as parents and in their aspirations towards employment.

Sure Start began in 1999 with a wave of trailblazer local Sure Start programmes implemented across a number of disadvantaged areas of the country. Some have therefore been operating for six years, while later waves are still in their infancy. The next phase in the Government's strategy to deliver better outcomes for children and families is the development of Children's Centres. The aim of Children's Centres is to enable the principles of Sure Start to be disseminated more widely, benefiting more affluent areas as well as those identified as being disadvantaged. The Centres will bring together locally available services providing complementary care and

provision to families in one setting, integrating management and staffing structures. In consequence, it is envisaged that many, although not all, Sure Start centres will become Children's Centres by 2010, when the Government aims to have a Centre in every community.

All Sure Start Local Programmes work towards national Performance Service Agreement (PSA) targets which are demonstrable milestones set by Government towards the programme's longer-term aims and objectives. There are three core Sure Start objectives, all of which have PSA targets. The objectives are as follows:

- Increasing the availability of childcare for all children
- Improving health and emotional development for young children
- Supporting parents as parents and in their aspirations towards employment.

The final objectives PSA target which is directly relevant to this study, as follows:

Employment:

“In fully operational programmes to achieve by 2005-06 12 percent reduction in the proportion of young children (aged 0-4) living in households where no-one is working”

Encouraging parents to enter into training and/or employment by equipping them with the necessary skills is an essential element of any Sure Start Local Programme, although in some programme areas this is more of a priority, due to lower skill and high unemployment levels.

2.3 Sure Start West Central Halifax

Sure Start West Central Halifax was approved in 2001 and its programme of activities and interventions is now fully established. It is

a round five programme and is one of three Sure Start programmes within the Calderdale area.

The Sure Start programme is based on a local partnership consisting of parents living within the Sure Start area with children under four years of age, the community and local agencies.

The overarching aim of Sure Start is to find and implement radical and innovative solutions to the deep-rooted problems faced in the local community, helping people to help themselves out of poverty and breaking the cycle of disadvantage:

'Helping to make Halifax a vibrant, multi-cultural and self-sustaining community' (Sure Start West Central Halifax Delivery Plan 2001).

Sure Start West Central Halifax is now part of the wider Children's Centres agenda, with the programme recently locating to the Children's Centre based at the Jubilee Playground within the Sure Start catchment area.

2.4 The local area

Sure Start West Central Halifax is based within the area of Calderdale, which was created in 1974 from nine separate local authorities and is home to some 193,000 people living in market towns such as Halifax, while others reside in more rural parts of Pennine Yorkshire including the Calder Valley.

The Sure Start area covers St Johns electoral ward along with lesser parts of Town, Warley and Mixenden wards.

2.5 Ethnicity

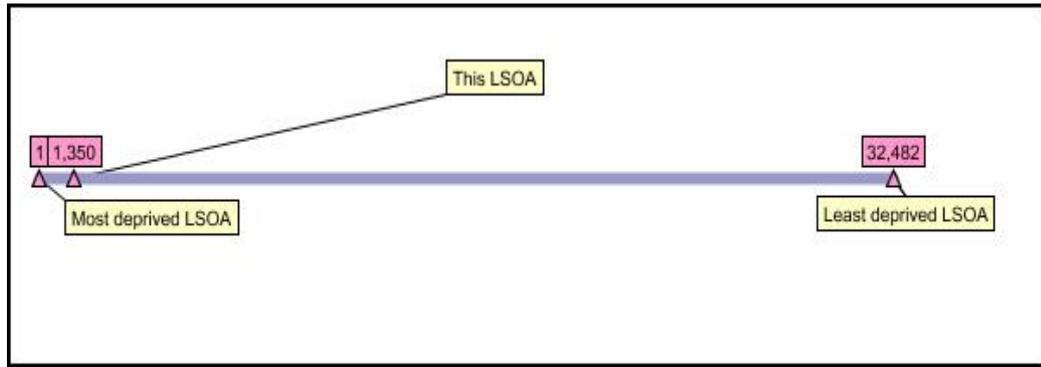
The area is relatively compact and is **densely populated**, consisting largely of people from **South Asia with a Pakistani/Mirupi heritage**. According to the 2001 census, **34.93% of the population residing within St Johns ward describe themselves as being Asian, with 31.74% stating they were Pakistani which** is significantly higher than the national average as illustrated by the table below.

	St. John's	Calderdale	England and Wales
Ethnic Group - Percentages; White	63.04	93.02	91.31
Ethnic Group - Percentages; Mixed	1.43	0.80	1.27
Ethnic Group - Percentages; Asian or Asian British	34.93	5.69	4.37
Ethnic Group - Percentages; Asian or Asian British; Indian	0.60	0.42	1.99
Ethnic Group - Percentages; Asian or Asian British; Pakistani	31.74	4.91	1.37
Ethnic Group - Percentages; Asian or Asian British; Bangladeshi	1.52	0.16	0.54
Ethnic Group - Percentages; Asian or Asian British; Other Asian	1.06	0.20	0.46
Ethnic Group - Percentages; Black or Black British	0.34	0.23	2.19

ONS Census data, April 2001

2.6 Demographics

The 2004 indices of deprivation rates the Lower Layer Super Output Area (LSOA) of Calderdale 012D (a smaller area within Halifax and where the Sure Start Centre is based) as being the 1,350th most deprived LSOA in the UK (based on 32,882 SOAs with 1 being the most deprived).



Neighbourhood Statistics Website, May 2005

The community residing within the Sure Start area consists of a **high number of young people**, with over 36% of the population aged between 20-44 years, which compares to approximately 32% nationally. Relatively few older people reside within the area, with just over 16% being between the ages of 45-64, compared to 24% nationally (ONS, April 2001).

2.7 Housing

According to the 2001 census, **a large proportion of St John's population rent their homes from a registered social landlord or housing association** (18.29% compared to 7.85% in Calderdale and 5.95% across England and Wales) with significantly less owning their homes outright (21.4% compared to 30.5% across Calderdale and 29.5% nationally) (ONS, April 2001).

2.8 Skills

Within Calderdale, there is a high proportion of Calderdale residents aged 16-74 **with no formal qualifications (44.09% compared to 29.08% nationally)**. The current Government target is to reduce by 40% the number of adults in the workforce who lack NVQ2 or equivalent qualification by 2010. Working towards this, the interim target is one million adults in the workforce to achieve level 2 between 2003 and 2006. The percentage of people of working age qualified to

level four has increased at a quicker rate in Halifax than the national average, bringing the area in line with the national figure and higher than the regional average, as highlighted by the table below. These figures show that Calderdale is in the unusual position of having a higher percentage of residents with no qualifications than the national average. However, paradoxically, the percentage of residents who are qualified is at the same level as the national average.

Percentage of people of working age qualified to Level 2

	2001/02	2002/03	% points difference
Calderdale	20.8	21.8	1.0
Yorkshire and the Humber	21.4	21.8	0.4
England	21.8	21.9	0.1

DfES statistics, May 2005

Percentage of people of working age qualified to Level 4

	2001/02	2002/03	% points difference
Calderdale	20.8	21.8	1.0
Yorkshire and the Humber	21.4	21.8	0.4
England	21.8	21.9	0.1

DfES statistics, May 2005

2.9 Employment

The table overleaf shows the employment status of people residing within the ward of St Johns in comparison to both the local authority area of Calderdale and England. Notably, **8.5% of people aged 16-74 within St Johns ward are unemployed**, which is 5.15% higher than the national average.

	St. John's	Calderdale	England and Wales
People aged 16-74: Economically active: Employees Full-time	31.85	41.56	40.55
People aged 16-74: Economically active: Unemployed	8.50	3.77	3.35
People aged 16-74: Economically active: Full-time student	2.11	2.00	2.57
People aged 16-74: Economically inactive: Retired	10.70	13.56	13.61
People aged 16-74: Economically inactive: Student	6.13	3.48	4.70
People aged 16-74: Economically inactive: Looking after home / family	10.19	5.75	6.51
People aged 16-74: Economically inactive: Permanently sick / disabled	8.68	5.65	5.52

ONS Census data, April 2001

2.10 Conclusion

In conclusion, the statistics reported within this Chapter highlight the following characteristics of the Sure Start area:

- High number of South Asian/Asian British population and a need to develop English writing, speaking, listening and reading skills
- High number of young people
- Significant proportion of residents with no formal qualifications
- Pockets of deprivation exist at a ward, rather than district, level

3

STRATEGIC CONTEXT

3.1 Introduction

The following Chapter provides the strategic context for the study, outlining Government policy with regard to learning and skills. The acquisition of skills and embedding a culture of lifelong learning are important both at an individual level and to society as a whole and this Chapter reviews both the financial and social costs of low skills.

3.2 The financial cost of low basic skills

Skills are an essential contributor to a successful, wealth creating economy. Skills are also important to an individual's personal financial position - people with poor literacy and numeracy skills tend to be in a worse position financially than those with basic skills.

Research carried out for the National Skills Task Force shows that if numeracy skills amongst adults increased to the standard expected of 11 year olds, **Britain's gross domestic product would be increased by up to £40bn**. Currently, one **third of the five million people on working age benefits lack basic skills**. Some **40% on inactive benefits have no qualifications** at all. This puts them at a huge disadvantage in the labour market where they are less likely to find work, less likely to find jobs that pay well and less likely to be hired by employers that train. Their situation will continue to worsen as employers demand higher skills and greater productivity from their staff

and as **jobs requiring no qualifications decline - by an estimated 25% over the next ten years.**

Research undertaken in 2000 by City University highlights that people with poor basic skills are:

- Up to **five times more likely to be unemployed** or out of the labour market
- More **likely to live in a household where both partners are not in paid employment**
- Most likely to end up in **unskilled or semi-skilled low grade work**
- Twice as likely to have been **made redundant or sacked from their first job**
- **Four times** more likely to experience **long-term unemployment**

The importance of skills and qualifications **to employers** is also well evidenced:

- **One in six establishments** (17%) **reported job vacancies** at the time of the National Employers Skills Survey, 2003. The survey consisted of 72,100 interviews with a representative sample of employers in England
- Of 679,000 job vacancies, 271,000 are considered hard-to-fill and 135,000 are vacancies where there is a skill-shortage

As Mr David Blunkett MP stated at the Literacy Task Force conference in 1997:

*"Illiteracy carries economic costs as well as personal problems. The report 'Literacy, Education and Training and their Impact on the UK Economy', suggests that **illiteracy costs business and Government £10 billion a year**".*

3.3 The social cost of low basic skills

On a personal level, lack of skills and qualifications holds back many adults from realising their full potential. Individual learners have widely differing needs and expectations. Many simply want to be able to function more effectively in everyday life. Some may want to achieve the next step in the qualifications ladder, while others may wish to enter into further and higher education. Some may already be in employment, while others enter into training in order to secure a job. Evidence suggests that in most fields of employment the following basic and work related skills are required:

- Interpersonal skills (communication, team working)
- Basic skills (literacy and numeracy, basic ICT)
- Motivation and attitude (personal presentation)

Highlighted below are some startling facts taken from the Moser Report into basic skills, 2000:

- **One in ten adults can't read the instructions** on a soluble paracetamol bottle about what dose they should give to a sick child
- Some **seven million adults in Britain** – one in five adults – if given the alphabetical index to the Yellow Pages, **cannot locate the page reference for plumbers**
- One in three adults **cannot calculate the area of a room** that is 21 x 14 feet, even when using a calculator

Compared to those with adequate skills, adults with poor basic skills are:

- More likely to have children at an earlier age, and to have more children

- More likely to have children who also struggle with basic skills. Research by City University found that **60% of children in the lowest reading attainment group at age 10 had parents with low literacy scores**; only 2% had parents with high literacy scores
- Less likely to own their own home
- **Less likely** to be in good **health**
- **Less likely** to be involved in **public life**, a community organisation or to vote
- More likely to be **homeless**
- **Over-represented in prisons** and young offenders institutions.

Increasing parental basic skill and confidence levels can have a significant impact on a child's development by providing parents with:

- The confidence to form loving relationships with their children and to care for them, enjoy them and have fun with them
- The tools to develop their children's communication skills and support their early learning
- An awareness of and ability to assert their children's and their own rights
- An ability to recognise and address their children's health needs, seeking help as necessary
- Knowledge of how to improve their own health
- Knowledge and assertiveness which in turn will enable them to access high quality and affordable childcare
- Skills to enable them to communicate well within their families, with each other and with agencies that they come into contact with
- Reading skills to allow them to read with their children, again forming strong and loving relationships
- High aspirations for themselves and their children so that whole families achieve their full potential

3.4 Government Policy

In response to the wealth of evidence highlighting the scope and impact of the UK's skills deficit, the Government has produced a Skills Strategy which has the following key components:

- 21st Century Skills: Realising our Potential, the Skills Strategy White Paper (published July 2003)
- 14-19 White Paper: 14-19 Education and Skills (published February 2005)
- Skills White paper '*Skills: Getting on in business, getting on at work*' (published March 2005)

Although acquiring skills and the attendant economic benefits are clear, the recently published Skills White Paper makes clear references to the social benefits of individuals undertaking a commitment to Lifelong Learning. Significantly, the White Paper is clear in that while the economic and vocational purposes of possessing skills are vital, these do not tell the whole story:

“A cultured and civilised society must also sustain a wide range of opportunities to gain skills and acquire knowledge for their own intrinsic value”

Skills White paper '*Skills: Getting on in business, getting on at work*', March 2005

Therefore, although accredited training and skills which are purposeful in today's society are meaningful, the Government also recognises the need for a staged approach to acquiring these skills, with the initial stage being to increase individuals' confidence levels.

3.5 Adult and Community Learning Provision

The Adult Learning Inspectorate (ALI) recently undertook a detailed inspection of the adult and community learning sector in Britain

(‘Making an impact on individuals and communities: the effect of adult and community learning provision today, November 2004). Some of the main findings of the report are as follows:

- Many learners have excellent experiences of adult and community learning. **They gain significantly in confidence as they learn new skills.** The impact of this can be seen on the whole community as well as individuals
- A large proportion of the provision has no discernable qualification. Many providers find it difficult to measure learners’ progress on this type of non-accredited provision, but they should find ways of doing so – learners have to be able to understand and quantify their progress and the sector needs to measure how successful it is in moving people forward in their learning
- The nature of adult and community learning provision is rapidly evolving to meet changing needs as providers respond to central and local government initiatives and to new ways of thinking about economic and community development

3.6 Summary

In summary, Government policy and focus with regard to increasing the skills base of the UK population is centred on increasing economic prosperity both for the individual and society as a whole. In this regard, the first step must be to build self confidence and to develop social skills. The training courses supported by Sure Start West Central Halifax and investigated to inform this study are included within the definition of adult and community learning. The following Chapter provides background to the study and the training providers active in West Central Halifax.

4

METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This Chapter describes the research process of a study conducted to carry out qualitative research into learners' and practitioners' views on the development of confidence in relation to learning.

Three Sure Start West Central Halifax supported training providers participated in the study along with ten learners. The background on each training programme is provided within this Chapter, along with demographics of the learners. This study is based on the experiences of learners and tutors engaged in Sure Start supported training programmes.

4.2 The importance of confidence

Confidence is a key factor cited by many individuals as prohibiting them from fully engaging in society, with Sure Start West Central Halifax's vision being to:

“Build(ing) a confident and integrated community”

Sure Start West Central Halifax Delivery Plan, 2001

Development of confidence in an individual also seems to be key to the development of literacy, language and numeracy skills, as highlighted within the Skills for Life strategy (21st Century Skills: Realising our Potential).

4.3 Research Methodology

This in-depth study aimed to investigate the perceptions, opinions and experiences of tutors and learners in relation to confidence.

The importance of confidence, as highlighted within section 4.2, has been well documented. However, in order to begin this study, a definition of confidence was required. Although not the same as self-esteem, confidence is closely related to it and being able to participate and form relationships can increase a person's self worth. A study commissioned by the DfES and published in September 2004 'Catching Confidence' suggests the following to use as a working definition:

"talking in a group seemed to be a significant characteristic of confidence. Confidence is not something you have or have not; it is different for different people in different situations"

Using the above definition as a starting point for the study, the following key areas were explored:

- General motivation
- Ability to take on new challenges
- Interpersonal relationships
- Punctuality and reliability
- Speaking in a group

One to one interviews were held between Community Researchers and ten trainees who had been randomly selected from the Sure Start database of registered families. Once trainees had been selected, the course providers were automatically identified. A total of three training providers were involved in this study, with some reporting on more than

one learner. Further information on the providers and courses can be found in section 4.6 of this report.

4.4 Trainee Backgrounds

All of the learners were female, and the majority were under the age of thirty at the time the study was undertaken. All are from an Asian/Asian British ethnic group and none were in full-time employment prior to embarking on the training course.

In order to overcome any potential language barriers, the Community Researchers spoke in Punjabi or Urdu when they undertook the interviews, and as they are local to the area, were able to request interviewees expand on certain question responses.

4.4.1 Children and Crèche

This study's sister study analysed the relationship between the Sure Start crèche and children's confidence. In some instances parents and children from the same families were involved. A straight-forward comparison has been made between these participants.

4.5 Community Researchers

Four Community Researchers were employed by Sure Start West Central Halifax to undertake interviews with parents. Training sessions were organised to enable the researchers to participate and their insight into the local community and guidance helped to inform the development of the study design and implementation.

4.6 Training Providers

This section provides background on the training providers who participated in this study. Three training providers were selected

following the identification of a random sample of learners. The providers were as follows:

- Catch Photography
- The Craigie Lea Centre
- Halifax Opportunities Trust

The strategic objectives of the courses delivered by the above training providers do not include increasing confidence and/or self esteem. Rather, they aim to help participants to develop practical skills and knowledge for learners to implement during their everyday lives.

The following section provides a brief outline of each organisation and the training course investigated as part of this study.

4.6.1 [Catch Photography](#)

Catch photographic works with several Sure Start programmes in the Yorkshire area, providing an 'Empowering Photography' course. The components of the course are as follows:

Name of course:	Empowering Photography
Aim:	To increase parents confidence when using a camera
Expected outputs:	- To formally display their work
	- To be given a framed photograph of work
Course Length:	Six weeks
Structure:	Flexible, non-accredited

As a flexible programme, Empowering Photography has no formal methods of measuring learners' progress currently in place. However, the organisation is working towards accrediting the course through the Learning and Skills Council (LSC).

4.6.2 [The Craigie Lea Centre](#)

The Craigie Lea Centre is a specialist centre providing family support services across Halifax. Most families are referred to the Centre by Welfare agencies, although Sure Start parents attend via referral from the Sure Start programme. The components of the course are detailed within the table below:

Name of course:	Coping with Kids
Aim:	To increase parents ability to reduce and manage stressful situations
Expected outputs:	To provide learners with practical skills in dealing with stressful situations
Course Length:	Ten weeks
Structure:	Non-flexible, non-accredited

Personal Development plans are not produced, although evaluation forms are distributed following completion on the course in order to identify satisfaction levels with the course content and teaching styles.

4.6.3 [Halifax Opportunities Trust \(HOT\)](#)

HOT is a charitable organisation providing a wide range of community-based activities including basic skills and ICT training, employment support and enterprise advice.

Name of course:	Informal IT course (basic)
Aim:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- To engage women in IT- To raise computer literacy levels
Expected outputs:	To provide learners with basic, practical computer skills and knowledge
Course Length:	Ten weeks
Structure:	Flexible, non-accredited

HOT provides an informal, basic IT course for Sure Start parents which was investigated as part of this study. As with the other courses investigated, no assessments or Personal Development plans are produced for learners.

5

STUDY FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This Chapter details the findings of the research study aiming to investigate the impact of Sure Start supported training sessions on parental confidence. A detailed table of findings can be found at appendix 1 of this report, analysed alongside a brief comparison with the crèche and confidence findings.

These findings are based on interviews with trainers and trainees. As none of the training courses devised training plans, it was not possible to review any formal documentation. As noted within Chapter three of this report, this is characteristic of a number of adult and community learning training providers.

In some instances, as the aims of the courses were not specific and did not relate to increasing learners' confidence levels, tutors felt unable to answer certain questions which may be seen as being more personal to the learner, such as interpersonal relationships.

5.2 Confidence

The confidence levels of learners were measured prior to and after they attended Sure Start funded training courses. It should be noted that due to time constraints this was undertaken retrospectively.

A scale of confidence was used, rating levels between one and ten,

with one being low and ten being high. Most learners rated their own confidence prior to attending the course as seven. However, most tutors rated the trainees confidence levels as five, slightly less confident than learners rated themselves.



Confidence Scale, Sure Start West Central Halifax Training and Confidence study,
May 2005

There was an evidence of an increase in learners' confidence levels, as shown below:

- Two learners started to deliver sessions in Sure Start settings such as co-ordinating and leading coffee mornings since becoming involved in the course
- The parents who indicated they had low levels of confidence prior to attending courses stated they had interacted more with people and had increased their confidence levels

The key attributers to increasing confidence were identified as:

- Learning a new skill
- The social aspect of the courses, for example interacting with other learners

The key measures of an increase in confidence, as listed below, are investigated further within this section in relation to Sure Start funded training sessions:

- General motivation
- Ability to take on new challenges
- Interpersonal relationships
- Punctuality and reliability
- Speaking in a group

Further to this, comparisons have been made between the confidence of parents who attended Sure Start training sessions and their children who attended crèche.

5.3 General motivation

Of the ten parents involved in the study, half found it easy to motivate themselves prior to attending the training course. Some found it hard to motivate themselves due to family commitments although this could be seen as a time barrier rather than an indicator of de-motivation. The main obstacles were cited as low confidence, unawareness of the activities, and language problems.

Tutors felt unable to answer the question on motivation levels as this was not something discussed between trainees and tutors during the course.

5.4 Ability to take on new challenges

Most of the trainees expressed that they were able to take on new challenges prior to attending the training course. Three trainees, significantly those who had stated they had low levels of motivation, lacked the confidence to take on new challenges prior to starting the course. One trainee reported that it depended whether or not the tutor was known to her, linking with the definition of confidence, in that it is different for different people in different situations.

All of the trainees felt the course they attended had significantly improved their confidence levels and ability to talk to professionals enabling them to seek help when they needed to.

5.5 Interpersonal relationships

When asked about interpersonal relationships, learners reported that they are closer and able to express themselves better with their families since attending Sure Start supported training courses. The Coping with Kids course in particular improved the relationships between trainees and their children, with three of the four learners who participated in the Coping with Kids course disseminating what they had learnt to their families.

Relationships between learners and professionals, such as their children's teachers, also improved since trainees became involved more generally with Sure Start. In addition, three trainees stated that Sure Start had helped them to meet new friends and professionals.

5.6 Punctuality and reliability

All of the participants involved in the study stated that they were punctual and reliable prior to attending a Sure Start supported training course, although one stated she had not previously been able to manage her time effectively. All of the tutors expressed that learners regularly attended their sessions and all were punctual.

5.7 Speaking in a group

Several trainees were concerned about speaking up in a group prior to becoming involved in Sure Start and were worried about what other people might think of them in this situation.

The tutors felt that most of the trainees were able to express themselves clearly and participate in group work and discussions and that confidence levels had increased. One trainee was cited as being nervous when speaking up in a group prior to and throughout the course.

5.8 Parent and child involvement in Sure Start

Of the twenty individuals involved in this study and its sister study 'A study into the impact of crèche on children's confidence', 12 were related, in all cases child and mother. The evidence from both studies has allowed some comparisons to be made between the parent and child.

Although all the parents and children who are related have displayed increased confidence, different individuals have displayed varying levels. Overall, the children's confidence has increased greater than the parents due predominantly to the child's substantial development from when first attending the crèche.

However it should also be noted that this trend is apparent in the majority of participants, including those parents and children who are not related. Therefore there is no strong correlation which indicates that children's confidence levels from participating in crèche are affected by having a relation who has attended a training course.

5.9 Summary

In general, all of the courses have supported an increase in learners' confidence levels. All of the measures used to identify an increase in confidence were improved and enhanced as a result of parents participating in Sure Start funded training courses. Increasing confidence was not a stated aim of any of the courses, but gaining a



new skill was characteristic of all three programmes. The acquisition of skills therefore appears to be a key factor in increasing confidence. No single course was found to be more effective than another in increasing learners' confidence levels, although this maybe something a larger scale study would be able to assess.

6

CONCLUSION

This study sought to investigate further the impact of Sure Start supported training on learners' confidence levels. This Chapter details the conclusions of the study under each study objective, as outlined within Chapter four of this study.

The nature of confidence

Confidence was defined as being able to express oneself clearly and an ability to participate in group discussions. Most trainees referred to speaking up and expressing themselves when they were asked to give examples of how their confidence had increased.

Whether any changes in confidence could be evidenced during learning

All trainees involved in this study have expressed how their confidence has increased. Notably, much of this was attributed not solely to training courses, but to being involved in Sure Start West Central Halifax more generally, for example by being a parent representative on the Sure Start Management Board. All of the measures used to identify any increase in confidence showed significant levels of improvement after attendance at a Sure Start funded training session.

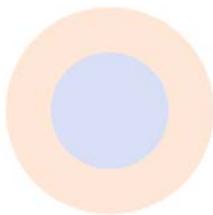
Involvement has increased the confidence of participants, enabling them to interact better with professionals such as school teachers and GPs.

Whether particular courses delivered through Sure Start West Central Halifax have influenced learners' confidence more than others

Successful learning and acquiring a new skill seemed in particular to increase confidence levels, which in turn further supported success in learning as parents then felt able to take on new challenges and undertake new courses.

Additional study outcomes

The nature of the courses selected in regard to this study, and also due to the fact that the courses are not accredited, means that no specific aims, objectives or measures were set and no record of learners' confidence levels documented. This is a characteristic of much adult and community learning provision in Britain (see Chapter three of this report, Strategic Context). Although the evidence used to inform this report is therefore anecdotal, the process was systematic and the evidence provided through trainees' accounts was used to complement and enforce the evidence of tutors.



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There are several next steps of which **Sure Start West Central Halifax can support the implementation:**

- **Development of specific aims and objectives** within Sure Start supported courses helping the Adult and Community learning sector to measure how successful it is in moving people forward in their learning (see Chapter three of this report). Sure Start West Central Halifax could request this whenever a training session is delivered, focusing on increasing confidence and using the specific criteria as used within this study:
 - Confidence
 - General motivation
 - Ability to take on new challenges
 - Interpersonal relationships
 - Punctuality and reliability
 - Speaking in a group.
- **Development of a skills matrix for** learners to update throughout the training course based on the above criteria, enabling confidence to be tracked.
- **Guidance on other learning goals for trainees.** Many learners were encouraged to undertake further training courses as a result of increasing their confidence through attending Sure Start supported courses. Once training providers are in a position to track confidence, guidance on other learning goals for trainees can be produced.



APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1

DETAILED ANALYSIS OF TRAINEES CONFIDENCE LEVELS

To measure the impact of training on the confidence of Sure Start parents the following methods were used:

- Interviews with the training providers who taught the Sure Start parents
- Interviews with the Sure Start parents to discover the impact of the training courses

Unfortunately as none of the training courses used written records to track their trainees' development, we have had to rely solely on interviews. In total ten Sure Start parents were interviewed by community researchers. The Sure Start parents that were interviewed attended one of four courses (see below) and the trainers of these were also interviewed as follows:

COURSE	ORGANISATION	TRAINER
Coping with Kids	Craigie Lea Family Support Services	Susan Gaukroger
Empowering Photography	Catch Photography	Ahid Miah
IT	Halifax Opportunities Trust	Julie Hickson

These interviews have been summarised into the tables overleaf which detail the comments made about each Sure Start parent by both the trainers and the learners.

Trainee	Course	Training Provider Interview	Trainee Interview	Parent and Child Comparison
A	Empowering Photography	'A' was fairly nervous and quiet when she started the course but still participated in group discussions. 'A's' overall confidence increased slightly during the course.	Sure Start has increased 'A's' confidence making it easier for her to speak to professional people and other parents. She feels it has also made her closer to her family and more confident with her own parenting powers. Before starting the course she was worried about what other people think of her, nervous about speaking in a group, unable to manage time effectively and not able to exercise judgement/common sense in taking decisions. She feels the course has improved all of these as her overall confidence has increased and she is able to express herself better.	Trainee A is the parent of Child One in the crèche study. Both child and parent were similar prior to becoming involved in Sure Start, with the child described as very quiet and shy when he first started crèche. Child One has since become far more confident and a skilful communicator, which compares to Trainee A feeling more able to express herself.
B	Empowering Photography	B was quite quiet when she first started the course although she still participated in group discussions. Her confidence increased slightly since she started as she has gained a new skill	B described herself as quite confident before starting the course but comments that this has increased a lot. She feels that this course (along with others) has helped her manage stress better and made her far calmer. This has had a positive impact on her relationship with her children. B has benefited from meeting new people and is able to work in a team better. She is also now more aware of services that can help her.	Trainee B's child was not involved in the crèche study.

Trainee	Course	Training Provider Interview	Trainee Interview	Parent and Child Comparison
C	HOT IT	C has increased her confidence a lot since completing the course. She was previously fairly quiet and appeared nervous about speaking up in a group. Through participating on the course she has become more assertive and is able to express herself more clearly. Gaining a skill has also contributed to this.	Although C felt assertive before starting the course she feels that the course has built up her confidence slowly. She feels this is predominately due to her meeting new people and making friends. C found the course quite difficult to understand.	Trainee C's child was not involved in the crèche study.
D	HOT IT	D was already quite confident and outgoing prior to starting the course. She was also assertive, able to express herself clearly and actively participated in group discussions. Since completing the course she has increased her ability to manage stress and her overall confidence has increased a lot.	D feels she has always been confident and motivated and this has stayed the same since completing the course. The course has not changed any relationships she has always enjoyed meeting new people and working in a team. D does feel that the course has made her more computer literate.	Trainee D's daughter, Child Seven, is described by the crèche manager as very shy and quiet which is quite contrasting to Trainee D. However both parent and child have had increased confidence levels since being involved in Sure Start activities.

Trainee	Course	Training Provider Interview	Trainee Interview	Parent and Child Comparison
E	HOT IT	Trainer does not remember student	E found that by participating in many courses at Sure Start, she has increased her confidence a lot, made new friends and is able to express herself better. This has been reflected on to her family life where she feels more confident with her children. Since completing these courses E has set up her own Mother and Toddler group.	Trainee E's child was not involved in the crèche study.
F	Coping with Kids	F is naturally open and assertive but her confidence has built up and she is now a very active parent in Sure Start. She is on the management board but was also involved in the making of the promotional video and recruiting new parents.	Coping with Kids has helped F on a practical level with her child but her confidence is the same as before. F had attended many Sure Start courses before this one and therefore was used to meeting people and working in group situations.	Both Trainee F and her daughter, Child Nine, have benefited from being involved in Sure Start. Their confidence has increased and both parent and child have also been described as 'very active'.
G	Coping with Kids	Since joining Sure Start, G has grown more confident especially when talking to professionals. She is on the management board and is involved in employment and recruitment training of Sure Start staff.	Although G described herself as active and motivated even before starting the course she feels that Coping with Kids has increased her confidence a lot. It has also made her calmer with her children and more confident when speaking up in a group.	Child Ten is the son of Trainee G. Child Ten's confidence has improved since coming to crèche and similarly trainee G feels the Coping with Kids course has made her more calm and confident.

Trainee	Course	Training Provider Interview	Trainee Interview	Parent and Child Comparison
H	Coping with Kids	Although H was already fairly confident and outgoing, Sure Start has developed this and she is now an active member of the management board. H is able to talk to new people and encourage others to join in.	Prior to starting Coping with Kids, H had difficulty in managing stress. The course has helped her with this, especially with handling her child's behaviour and her own reactions. She has also been able to pass on what she has learnt to her husband.	Trainee H's daughter is Child Four. All the evidence from the crèche study has shown a marked increase in Child Four's confidence and language skills. She is also better at sharing toys which corresponds with trainee H being more confident with, and having better, parenting skills.
I	Coping with Kids	I has improved her confidence skills since coming to Sure Start although she has always been quite self-assured. She and her husband have put into practice the parenting techniques she learnt at Coping with Kids. I is very involved in Sure Start and is also on the management board.	I believes the course has helped her handle her daughter more effectively, however she does not feel it has had an effect on her overall confidence. She does now feel more motivated to do more training courses but has always enjoyed meeting new people and working in a team. She is teaching her husband aspects from the course.	Child Six is, unlike her mother trainee I, fairly shy although this has improved since attending crèche. One factor that may have contributed to this is the Coping with Kids course as trainee I feels this has had a positive effect on her child's behaviour. Both parent and child have increased their confidence since attending Sure Start.