



VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF
WELLINGTON
TE HERENGA WAKA

**Understanding the positive
discipline practices of parents
of children aged
one-five years old in
Aotearoa New Zealand**



Save the Children

An exploration into the discipline practices parents choose to use and how they are informed in their choice of strategies

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“TAKE CARE OF OUR CHILDREN.
TAKE CARE OF WHAT THEY HEAR,
TAKE CARE OF WHAT THEY SEE,
TAKE CARE OF WHAT THEY FEEL.
FOR HOW THE CHILDREN GROW,
SO WILL BE THE SHAPE OF
AOTEAROA.”

DAME WHINA COOPER

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This research is dedicated to parents and their young children who are the very heart of our society.



INTRODUCTION

How parents discipline their children has been subject to intense academic scrutiny for more than a century. Despite this attention, the practices parents choose to use generally in their parenting is not well understood. Nor is it well understood how parents are informed and influenced in their choice of practices.

The present study used Explanatory Sequential Design (Creswell, 2012) to examine the prosocial parenting strategies that parents choose to use as part of their discipline practices, and the sources of information that influence and support their choices. **In this study the term ‘discipline’ is reframed to move away from meaning obedience, control and punishment back toward the origins of the concept where discipline is more akin to learning, understanding, gaining knowledge** (Sege & Siegel, 2018). The essence of this study is to understand the prosocial practices parents use to guide, nurture and shape their children’s social emotional and behavioural development.

The study is situated within the specific social milieu of New Zealand and is based on a sample of 84 parents across New Zealand with at least one child aged between 12 months and 5 years

of age. Parents’ experiences are explored via an online survey (n=84) capturing both quantitative and qualitative data, and a smaller group of parents (n=3) participated in semi-structured interviews.

The data was analysed and discussed in relation to Child Rights and Adlerian theories, and comparisons made with prior research. Based on the analysis, findings reveal that parents generally report choosing to use prosocial strategies over coercive strategies, and it appears the information they receive impacts upon their practices. Insights into the information sources that inform and influence parents, reveal the possible existence of a knowledge gap where not all parents are equally accessing the quality information they need. The implications for those seeking to promote a culture of positive parenting in New Zealand include considerations on how to reach and engage parents more equitably with information that supports their use of positive discipline practices. Greater success in reaching parents at a population level is essential if a thriving culture of positive discipline practices is to be fully established in New Zealand and thereby reduce the potential for harm to children in their homes.



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CHAPTER ONE

FRAMING THE RESEARCH

1.1 DEFINING POSITIVE PARENTING

The Council of Europe defines positive parenting as, “Parental behaviour based on the best interests of the child. It provides nurturing, empowering, recognition and guidance, which involves setting of boundaries to enable the full development of the child. Positive parenting supposes respect for children’s rights and a non-violent environment, where parents do not use corporal or psychologically demeaning punishment to resolve conflict or teach discipline and respect.” (ISPCAN, 2016, p 22).

A similar view is defined in the policy advice developed by Sege and Siegel (2018) and challenges discipline as a notion of control and command, but is more accurately defined as guidance, support and teaching. “The word “discipline” is derived from the Latin word “disciplinare” meaning to teach or train, as in disciple (a follower or student of a teacher, leader, or philosopher). Effective disciplinary strategies, appropriate to a child’s age and development, teach the child to regulate his or her own behaviour; keep him or her from harm; enhance his or her cognitive, socioemotional, and executive functioning skills; and reinforce the behavioural patterns taught by the child’s parents and caregivers.” (Sege & Siegel, 2018, p1).

The philosophies of Adler (1930), Jebb (1923) and Korczac (1942) can be recognised within these definitions. These definitions of positive parenting and discipline practices, inform and underpin this research as they speak to the holistic development of the child and do not focus on punishments intended to control or subdue children.

1.2 AIMS OF THE RESEARCH

The aim of this research is to gain insights into the prosocial parenting strategies that parents choose to use as part of their discipline practices, and to gain understanding of the sources of information that influence and support their decision making. The term parent is used throughout this study and refers to any individual who has the primary role to care for a child. This may include, biological parent,

stepparent, foster parent, or grandparent, in the role of primary care provider. It is anticipated that this study will contribute to research that is aimed at having greater understanding of parents’ prosocial discipline practices in order to inform social change away from the use of physical punishment.

1.3 DEFICIT LENS OF PRIOR RESEARCH RELATED TO CHILD PUNISHMENT PRACTICES

Much of the existing research tends to focus on a deficit model aimed at proving the harmful outcomes of physical punishment (for example see, Gershoff, et al., 2018), that physical punishment is ineffective in encouraging prosocial behaviours in children (for example, Afifi, et al., 2017; Grogan-Kaylor, et al., 2018), and looking at the success of, and types of, targeted interventions with parents who choose to use physical punishment practices (for example, Holden, et al., 1995; Chavis, et al., 2013). Of this large body of research, it appears there is limited focus on the specific discipline strategies and methods of parents who choose never to use physical punishment as part of their parenting practices. Prior research informs the need for greater promotion of positive, and violence free, parenting practices (Afifi, et al., 2017; Chavis, et al., 2013; Gershoff, et al., 2018; Grogan-Kaylor, et al., 2018). This can be achieved by promoting evidence-based parenting programs and policies designed to prevent early adversities, and associated risk factors (Afifi, et al., 2017). Whilst these studies are consistent in recommending greater promotion of positive, violence free parenting practices as a practical solution to eliminate physical punishment, they do not go as far to explain or quantify what these positive prosocial parenting practices consist of.

1.4 THE NEW ZEALAND CONTEXT

In 2007, Section 59 of the Crimes Act¹ was amended to prohibit the use of physical punishment to discipline or correct children’s behaviour in New Zealand. Physical punishment is typically defined as the, “Use of physical force with the intention of causing a child to experience pain, but not injury, for the purpose of correcting or controlling the child’s behaviour,” (Afifi, et al., 2017, p 29). Yet despite the law change prohibiting physical punishment, a large number of New Zealand parents are confused about, or support, the physical punishment of children (Save the Children, 2018).

The research by Save the Children (2018) repeated prior research undertaken in 2008 (Office of the Children’s Commissioner) and 2013 (EPOCH). These studies provide valuable insights into attitudes of parents toward physical punishment of children and how those attitudes have changed over time. Currently, 50% of parents choose never to use physical punishment, 30% of parents are unsure, and 19% of parents continue to support the use of physical punishment. This compares to just 20% of parents believing that it is never acceptable to physically punish children in 2008, showing a significant shift in attitude over the past 10 years (Save the Children, 2018). These findings are similar to the findings of research undertaken by the Ministry of Health (2018) where 41% of parents (or primary caregivers) surveyed agreed that there are certain circumstances where it is acceptable to physically punish children (Ministry of Health, 2018, Public Health Survey). Whilst this research is useful in understanding current attitudes toward to the physical punishment of children, it provides no insight into the specific prosocial non-physical practices that parents are choosing to use, nor what factors inform their decision making.

¹ Retrieved from <http://www.legislation.govt.nz/act/public/1961/0043/latest/DLM328291.html>

1.5 PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT AN INEFFECTIVE BUT ENDURING DISCIPLINE PRACTICE

The need for understanding positive non-violent parenting strategies is further enforced given that physical discipline appears to be ineffective in changing children’s behaviour. Thus, families might find themselves stuck in loops of repeated antisocial behaviours. Historically, physical punishment has been promoted as a discipline strategy to modify or control children’s undesirable behaviours. Yet a number of studies have found that physical punishment is completely ineffective. For example, Afifi, et al., (2017) state, “Importantly, there are no studies showing that spanking enhances children’s development or physical or mental health,” (Afifi, et al., 2017, p 25). It is concerning that according to this research that smacking has no proven benefits and yet remains a reasonably widespread practice with only 50% of New Zealand parents (Save the Children, 2018), believing that there is never a reason to physically punish children.

Along with being an ineffective discipline practice, research has found that physical punishment sits along the same continuum of harm as physical abuse (Afifi, et al., 2017). This is a significant finding and is directly related to issues of violence faced by children in New Zealand. Every Four Minutes, a report by the Office of the Prime Minister’s Chief Science Advisor (Lambie, 2018), found on average, every four minutes there is a call to police or emergency services related to family or sexual violence. **If we are to significantly reduce the numbers of children experiencing violence in their home, it is essential that we increase parents’ skills in responding to their children’s behaviour in positive and non-violent ways.** To effect change, it is important that we gain understanding of the alternative prosocial methods parents choose to use instead of physical punishment, and to understand the factors that inform or influence those methods. This information will potentially support policy and practices necessary to foster a nationwide culture of non-violent discipline of children.

1.6 THE ROLE OF POSITIVE PARENTING IN PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM HARM

The understanding and use of positive parenting practices is of interest to academics, policy makers, child focused Non-Governmental Organisations, health practitioners and parents (Sturrock, Gray, Fergusson, Horwood, & Smits, 2014; Save the Children, 2018; Sege & Siegel, 2018). A growing body of evidence has found positive parenting practices are key in supporting the social and emotional development of young children, with positive effects sustained into the child's future (for example, Thomas & Christensen, 1980; Carroll & Hamilton, 2016; Taylor & Workman, 2018). Furthermore, positive parenting is correlated with the prevention of violent treatment of children particularly within the home (Save the Children, 2018; The International Society for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect (ISPCAN), 2016; UNICEF, 2017; Suthanthiraraj, 2019). For example, "The role of the family in protecting children is critical and is the first child protection system for the child," UN General Comment 13 on Article 19 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Committee on the Rights of the Child, 2011).

1.7 FOCUS OF THE LITERATURE REVIEW AND RESEARCH QUESTION

In essence this study aims to take a credit-based approach to explore and reinforce positive parenting practices within the specific social milieu of Aotearoa New Zealand. It is hoped that the findings of this study could potentially be used in the greater understanding and promotion of positive parenting practices. Furthermore, it is intended this study will contribute to the global conversation on positive

parenting practices with the intention to eradicate harmful and ineffective physical punishment practices. Further examination of positive non-violent parenting practices will help to inform efforts to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically Goal 16 to end all forms of violence against children and to promote well-being for all across the lifespan (United Nations, 2016). If we are to achieve goals to end all forms of violence against children, it is imperative that physical punishment is no longer part of parents' discipline practices, thereby significantly reducing harm that children will experience in their childhood. Parents of children between 12 months and up to five years of age will be the targeted participants in this study. This is based on the evidence that parents develop their attitudes about discipline early in the lives of their children (Vittrup, et al., 2006).

1.8 THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The research questions that will guide and inform this study are as follows:

1. What are the specific positive non-physical discipline methods that parents choose to use to discipline their children under 5 years of age?
2. What sources of information inform or influence these decisions?



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CHAPTER TWO

POSITIVE PARENTING PRACTICES LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The literature review explores the available information related to how positive parenting is conceptualised and the impact of positive parenting in supporting child development whilst mitigating the violent discipline of children. The review begins with a background to the development of positive parenting, seeks to discover what is known about how positive parenting is applied in practice by parents of young children, and explores the evidence that exists to understand the sources of information that inform and influence parents in their parenting practices.

2.1.2 BACKGROUND LITERATURE

The extant literature has predominantly focused on the physical punishment of children, for example see (Afifi, et al., 2018), and more specifically whether or not physical punishment is harmful to children, for example see (Gershoff, et al., 2018).

Afifi, et al., (2018) undertook a large-scale study of 8316 participants in California, USA, to determine whether spanking (physical punishment) should be considered an Adverse Childhood Event (ACE). Prior to Afifi's study (2018), Chavis, et al., (2013) conducted a study with 258 parents of children 6-24 months old in Tennessee, USA, to test whether a brief intervention would affect parents' attitudes toward using less physical punishment. Parents of young children were targeted as participants as there is evidence that parents develop their attitudes about discipline early in the lives of their children (Chavis, et al., 2013). Gershoff, et al., (2018) conducted a meta-analysis of existing empirical research to determine whether the research meets accepted criteria for causal inference. The authors reviewed research demonstrating links between physical punishment and the same harms caused by physical abuse. The research by Grogan-Kaylor, et al., (2018) has similarities to the research by Gershoff, et al. (2018). Grogan-Kaylor, et al., (2018) and reviewed the literature on parental physical punishment of children and presented a case against physical punishment as a form of discipline. Much of this research was based on large broadly representative samples with longitudinal research designs, and comprehensive assessments of the literature found in large meta-analytic reviews

(Grogan-Kaylor, et al., 2018). The studies discussed in this background research indicate that smacking or spanking children has been linked to poor health and development outcomes similar to the effects of abuse and neglect. Smacking is correlated with poor adult mental health outcomes including; suicidal ideation and self-harm, alcohol and drug abuse, depression and anxiety (Afifi, et al., 2017; Chavis, et al., 2013; Gershoff, et al., 2018; Grogan-Kaylor, et al., 2018). Whilst these studies are comprehensive, they are large scale quantitative studies or meta-analysis reviews mostly based in the United States. Therefore, the lived experience of the participants is not able to be understood, nor is it known whether the studies have relevance to a New Zealand context.

2.1.3 POSITIVE PARENTING AS A STRATEGY TO MITIGATE THE PREVALENCE OF VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN

Despite decades of research on the harmful impacts of harsh and violent punishment (for example, Gershoff and Grogan-Kaylor, 2016; Afifi, et al., 2017; Gershoff, et al., 2018) and a movement to accord children the same rights and protections as adults in a modern and democratic society (Christensen & Thomas, 1980; Durrant, et al., 2019), societies throughout the world, including New Zealand, continue to expose children to high rates of violence and much of this violence occurs within the home (Lambie, 2018; UNICEF, 2017). The physical punishment of children was legally prohibited in New Zealand in 2007, yet physical punishment of children continues (Save the Children, 2018).

Violence against children has been found to occur in every society and has a profound effect on the health, wellbeing and development of children (Suthanthiraraj, 2019). Young children are particularly vulnerable to violence within their homes. Global research has found that 75% of children between two and four years of age experience violent discipline in the home (UNICEF, 2017). In contrast, there is a growing body of evidence that positive parenting is highly effective in protecting children from violence within families (ISPCAN, 2016). Further to this, compelling evidence is emerging that positive parenting is effectively contributing to breaking the cycle of intergenerational violence (ISPCAN, 2016;

Suthanthiraraj, 2019). Therefore, it is important that we develop knowledge on the use of positive parenting strategies used by parents as part of their everyday parenting behaviours. Little is known about the strategies parents are choosing to use and what informs them outside of evaluations of formal parenting programmes such as, the Incredible Years (Reedtz, et al., 2010; Sturrock, et al., 2014). A limitation of this evaluation is that very little of this research is longitudinal limiting what is known about the sustainability of this impact over time (ISPCAN, 2016). Information in this literature review will be used to inform the development of the research component of this study. The study aims to gain insights into the parenting practices of parents of children aged 1-4 years old in New Zealand, and how parents are informed and influenced in their child rearing choices.

2.2 METHODOLOGY

2.2.1 SEARCH AND SCREENING PROCEDURES

Several education and health focused databases were used to search the following keywords related to the study; parents, positive discipline, positive parenting, non-violent, prevention, children, ECE, under 5 years old, *not abuse, *not intervention. The keyword search produced a total of 2,159 results across the following databases; A+ Education, EBSCOhost, Proquest Eric, Proquest Pysch Info, PubMed, Scopus, Sage Research Methods, ProQuest Education. After applying filters 'article' and 'parents and parenting' using the advance search tool in each database to refine the search, the results reduced to 268. To further refine the results, the abstracts of the 268 articles were read to assess whether or not they related to the research topic and were included or discarded accordingly.

2.2.2 INCLUSION OF LITERATURE

Of the 268 articles, few met the inclusion criteria (see Table 1.1). Three further articles (Russell & Wood, 2002; Sturrock, Gray, Fergusson, Horwood & Smits, 2014; Sege & Siegel, 2018) were included due to relevance to the topic though not found through the initial database search.

2.2.3 SETTINGS

Much of the research on the topic of positive parenting appears to be undertaken in the United States of America (US). Of those identified for this study, six of the studies are from the US (Holden, Coleman & Schmidt, 1995; Reitman, Rhode, Hupp, & Altobello, 2002; Holden, Brown, Baldwin & Caderao, 2013; Carroll & Hamilton, 2016; Holden, Hawk, Smith, Singh & Ashraf, 2017; Sege & Siegel, 2018). One study each from Australia (Baker, Sanders, & Morawska, 2016) and Norway (Reedtz, Handegard, & Morch, 2010). Two studies from New Zealand are included (Russell & Wood, 2002; Sturrock, et al., 2014) along with one global study (ISPCAN, 2016) of which New Zealand was a participant.

2.2.4 DATE RANGE

The original date range was intended to be post 2008, however due to the limited availability of literature specific to this topic the date range was extended to include literature from 1995 – 2019.

2.2.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Seven of the studies used quantitative research design and reported having internal validity (Holden, et al., 1995; Reitman, et al., 2002; Reedtz, et al., 2010; Holden, et al., 2013; Baker, et al., 2016; Carroll & Hamilton, 2016; Holden, et al., 2017) and one study of mixed methods design (ISPCAN, 2016). The study by Russell and Wood (2002) was a qualitative study. The policy advice developed by Sege and Siegel (2019) is based on survey results.

2.2.6 PARTICIPANTS

The majority of the study participant samples consisted of parents or primary caregivers of children. Quantitative US based studies included 787 paediatricians (Sege & Siegel, 2018), 118 non-parents and 520 parents (Holden, et al., 2013), 230 parents (Carroll & Hamilton, 2016), 189 mothers of children 3-8 years old, and 171 children aged 3-5 years old along with their primary caregiver (Reitman, et al., 2002), and 39 parents of children aged 3 years old (Holden, et al., 1995). An Australian quantitative study involved 459 parents of 2-12-year-olds (Baker, Sanders & Morawska, 2016), and a non-clinical population sample of 189 families with children aged 2 – 8 years old participated in the Norwegian study (Reedtz, et al., 2010).

Russell and Wood (2002) included 39 parents from New Zealand in their qualitative study. The mixed methods global study comprised of 35 practitioners working on supporting positive parenting practices; African region (4), Arab region (1), USA (9), Latin America (3), Asia (3), Europe (12), Australia (4), New Zealand (1), (ISPCAN, 2016).

Although parents were required to be participants in the studies, exceptions were made to include the global study (ISPCAN, 2016). The participants were practitioners that were experienced in supporting parents in their parenting practices at a global level. Similarly, Sege and Siegel (2018) base their policy advice on a survey of paediatricians based in the US. This study was included as it shares current knowledge on positive discipline practices and a definition of positive discipline which has been used to determine the focus on positive parenting practices in this study.

2.3 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF POSITIVE PARENTING

The concept of positive discipline sits within the broader concept of positive parenting and is underpinned by a child rights theoretical approach (Holden, G., cited in ISPCAN, 2016; Durrant & Stewart-Tufescu, 2017) and Adlerian theory (Adler, 1930; Thomas & Christensen, 1980; Carroll & Hamilton, 2016) on the ways children should be treated for their positive social emotional and behavioural development. The origins of positive parenting can be found in Alfred Adler’s (1930) theory on belonging as a basic need for children, and that child misbehaviour was a manifestation of the unmet need to belong (Carroll & Hamilton, 2016). According to Adler (1930) parents that understood this need and then used strategies to respond appropriately, found the task of managing their child’s behaviour less challenging (Carroll & Hamilton, 2016). Adler (1930) believed that children

should be treated with a mix of dignity, respect, firmness and kindness. Adler’s (1930) work was seminal in influencing what is now known as positive parenting (Carroll & Hamilton, 2016).

The concept of positive parenting was extensively developed by Baumrind (1971) in the 1960s (Baumrind, 1971, cited in Reitman, et al., 2002). Baumrind (1971) identified three key parenting styles that continue to be referenced today, Authoritarian, Authoritative and Permissive (Reitman, et al., 2002). The Authoritarian Parent is high in control and maturity demands and low in responsiveness and communication. The Authoritative Parent is high in control, responsiveness, communication, and maturity demands. The Permissive Parent is low in control and maturity demands, and high in communication and responsiveness (Reitman, et al., 2002). Parent behaviours identified in the authoritative parenting style have been credited as most effective in eliciting positive social and emotional, and in the longer term, academic outcomes for children (Reitman, et al., 2002). Authoritative parenting is defined as being warm and encouraging, whilst also setting clear boundaries and expectations (Carroll & Hamilton, 2016). The mix of warmth and boundary setting aligns with the positive parenting values of combining firmness and kindness (Adler, 1930). Baumrind (1971) is credited with influencing and underpinning the development of programmes specifically designed to support positive parenting for example, Triple P, the Incredible Years, and Positive Discipline (Carroll & Hamilton, 2016).

The way children are considered is a key element of child rights theory, this includes inter alia; children are citizens in their own right, children are treated with dignity and respect, children have the same rights to protection from violence as adults (Durrant & Stewart-Tufescu, 2017). This protection includes protection from all forms of physical or corporal punishment, or punishment that is cruel or degrading.

The general principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child provide a framework for rights-based child discipline that is positive and excludes the use of all forms of harsh punishment. These principles include; (1) non-violence; (2) respect for children’s evolving capacities; (3) respect for children’s individuality; (4) engagement of children’s participation; and (5) respect for children’s dignity (Durrant & Stewart-Tufescu, 2017).

Child rights theory has a history spanning 100 years. In 1919 Eglantyne Jebb, a social reformer and former teacher, founded Save the Children in order to respond to the suffering of children in Europe in the aftermath of World War 1. Jebb (1923) had strong convictions on the way children should be treated and the responsibilities of adults in caring for all children regardless of their race, gender, religion or class. Jebb (1923) penned the founding document of known as the Geneva Declaration on the Rights of the Child (League of Nations, 1924, cited in Save the Children, 2019). The Declaration on the Rights of the Child (Jebb, 1923) became what is now known as the Convention on the Rights of the Child (the Convention) in 1989. The Convention provides a framework on which Child Rights theory is based (Durrant & Stewart-Tufescu, 2017).

There are many similarities between both Adlerian and Child Rights theory. Adlerian theory too can be traced back to the early years of the 20th century. Alfred Adler (1930) believed the way children were treated impacted their mental health and wellbeing and was directly related to mental disorders they may go on to develop as a child and later in life. Adler (1930) determined that all of society has a role to play in treating children as citizens with dignity and respect, this role was not limited to parents. Elements of Adlerian theory (1930) can be seen in the work of Maslow’s (1954) Hierarchy of Needs (Lewowicki, 1994) and Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological System (Taylor & Workman, 2018).

Child Rights and Adlerian theories have influenced this study in shaping the survey content and questions. This includes, using a rights-based approach to inform the definition of positive discipline practices used in the study and how these practices are consistent with meeting children’s needs and rights to support their positive social, emotional and behavioural development. These theories provide a lens through which the data in this study has been considered, analysed and reported.

Yet despite this rich history and supportive body of research, shared consensus in understanding or defining positive parenting should be treated with caution. Although broad agreement on the term positive parenting exists, there is no definitive agreement on this concept, “The term positive parenting is poorly defined and used in multiple ways,” (Holden, cited in ISPCAN, 2016, p 25).

DATABASES	KEYWORDS	INCLUSION CRITERIA	EXCLUSION CRITERIA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A+ Education EBSCOhost Proquest Eric Proquest Pysch Info PubMed Scopus Sage Research Methods ProQuest Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> parents discipline positive children ECE “positive discipline” prevention non-violent not abuse not intervention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on positive or prosocial discipline parenting practices of parents under 5 years old. Non-violent or positive discipline Peer reviewed Journal article Publications by leading child rights organisations; Save the Children, UNICEF, Innocenti Research Centre, ISPCAN and the Global Initiative to End Violence Against Children Published after 2008 English Language Preference given to empirical research with parents on their positive discipline practices. Articles/studies focusing on information sources that support or inform parenting practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents of children over 5 years of age Intervention focused research Focus on attitudes of parents that are using physical punishment practices Research doesn’t include parents Religious based texts Research over 10 years
Total	2,159 results refined to 268	10 included	258 excluded

2.4 PARENTING PRACTICES

A large body of research is dedicated to identifying the parenting style of parents, and the effects this has on their children (Reitman, et al., 2002). Yet little appears to be known about the practices parents choose to use to in their everyday parenting. What is known appears to be limited to studies that focus on; 1, interventions to stop harmful parenting practices such as physical punishment (Holden, et al., 1995; Holden, et al., 2013), 2, evaluation studies focused on the impact of specific parenting programmes, for example, Triple P, the Incredible Years or Positive Discipline (Reitman, et al., 2002; Reedtz, et al., 2010; Carroll & Hamilton, 2014; Sturrock, et al., 2014), and 3, research into how parenting practices can be accurately measured (for example, Holden, et al., 1995; Reitman, et al., 2002; Carroll & Hamilton, 2016; Holden, et al., 2017). Programme evaluation studies have limitations as it is difficult to generalise these findings to the practices of parents who have not participated in the same programme.

In the search for literature specific to the focus of this study, the study by Russell and Wood (2002) was the only identified article that looked at parenting practices of parents not specific to a programme. This study took place some time ago and is limited to a very small sample of parents or carers that volunteered to participate. It is a valuable source of information that provides a snapshot of parenting practices that exclude physical punishment, and factors that support and inform those practices. This study can be compared to the current study to gain some insights into possible changes in practices and information supports over time. Furthermore, it is situated within New Zealand so can provide direct comparison of trends over time in this country.

Russell and Wood (2002) focused on the experiences of parents who had deliberately chosen not to use smacking to punish their children and what influences parents to make this decision. Earlier research undertaken by Russell (1995, cited in Russell & Wood, 2002) had found parents who chose not to smack their children had a positive view of their children and preferred to use a range of alternate strategies with an emphasis on talking with their child. Thirty parents who chose to raise their children without the use of smacking participated this study. Qualitative research methods were

used to conduct the study in the form of interviews conducted by telephone. Interviews lasted between 10-15 minutes. The focus of these interviews was to gain an understanding of why parents have chosen not to smack their children, how this decision came about and what other strategies they used to support their child's prosocial behaviour. Parents in the study used a range of approaches and techniques that did not include physical punishment. These alternative strategies included; communicating with the child – explaining, discussing and reasoning (22), giving praise and acknowledgement for positive behaviours (10), time out (10), withdrawal of privileges (7), modelling positive behaviours (7), encouraging children to take responsibility for their actions (4) other – not specified (6).

According to Russell and Wood (2002) the way a child is regarded and or treated has the most significant role to play positively shaping a child's behaviour. Discipline techniques have a role, but it is the holistic way in which a child is treated that is most critical. Therefore, (similar to Adler, 1930) **seeing the child as an individual, treating them with dignity and respect, and understanding fundamentals of positive parenting and child development, are essential elements in supporting children's positive behavioural development.**

The remaining studies included in this literature review were selected to contribute to defining and understanding the concept of positive parenting (Adler, 1930; Christensen & Thomas, 1980; Reitman, et al., 2002; ISPCAN, 2016; Sege & Siegel, 2018), measuring parenting practices through established research instruments (Holden, et al., 1995; Reitman, et al., 2002; Carroll and Hamilton, 2016; Holden, et al., 2017), and research insights into information sources and the factors that influence parenting practices (Baker, et al., 2016; Holden, et al., 2013; Sege & Siegel, 2018).

2.5 INFORMING AND SUPPORTING PARENTING PRACTICES

For parents to be well equipped in parenting their children, they need to have a good understanding of their child's physical, emotional and cognitive capacities and needs (Russell & Wood, 2002; Sege & Siegel, 2018) and the realisation of the powerful impact of their behaviour on their child (Christenson & Thomas, 1980; Reedtz, et al., 2010; Sturrock, et al., 2014; ISPCAN, 2016; Sege & Siegel, 2018). According to Sege and Siegel (2018) this knowledge needs to be the starting point for all parents in their role of raising their children.

Research shows that parents are open and responsive to receiving information about parenting practices (Holden, et al., 2013; Baker, et al., 2016; Sege and Siegel, 2018). Studies in the US (for example, Holden, et al., 2014; Sege & Siegel, 2018) show that parents commonly receive advice and support from health professionals, and paediatricians play a key role in providing that advice. According to Holden, et al., (2013), "After one's own parents and spouse, paediatricians are the most trusted professionals followed by mental health workers, teachers, parent educators, and religious leaders." (Holden, et al., 2013). In New Zealand few infants or children routinely see a paediatrician, thus it is unlikely these professionals play the same role in New Zealand.

The New Zealand study by Russell and Wood (2002) found that parents were predominantly influenced by their family – partner or close family members (15) and based on their own experiences of physical punishment in childhood they had made a conscious decision to bring their children up differently (11). Close to a third of the participants felt it was morally wrong to smack or hit their child. Seven participants felt that smacking was ineffective and did not work to improve children's behaviour – their own or that of other children. Almost one quarter of parents felt that children needed love, respect and care rather than physical punishment. Sixteen percent felt that alternative discipline practices are 'nicer', 'fairer', 'more effective'. Six parents stated that alternative non-violent discipline worked well. A

small number were influenced by reading books or articles (3). Similarly, three parents stated they had learned alternative practices as part of their teacher training. Other reasons given included, children with different needs (2), they didn't want their child to be afraid of them (2), spiritual or religious beliefs (2), a fear of loss of own self-control (3), felt children do not 'need' smacking (2), influence by another parent (2), due to counselling or conscious self-improvement (2). No participants reported attending a parenting course.

When asked what made it difficult not to smack their children, parents gave the following reasons; general or particular stresses of parenting (11), characteristics of a particular child (7), pressure from peer parents (5), and knowledge of useful alternatives (4). However, ten parents stated very clearly that it was not hard not to smack their child.

Most parents in the study (80%) reported making their decision not use physical punishment before their child was born or in the first year of their life. Russell and Wood (2002) recommend equipping parents prior to becoming parents, or early in parenthood, with information about positive discipline methods. These findings are consistent with research undertaken by Chavis, et al. (2013).

Due to the age of the study, it is limited in sharing information about the role of digital tools in informing parents as the study took place before widespread use of the internet throughout New Zealand and the advent of social media. The study cites a gap in knowledge on how parents best receive information to influence and support their parenting strategies (Russell & Wood, 2002).

In the Australian study (Baker, et al., 2016), based on a sample of 459 parents, participants reported using the following information and support sources; friends and other parents (77.1%), parenting websites (64.5%), spouse or partner (49.5%), childcare providers/ECE teachers (48.4%), and family doctor (37.3%). Close to half of the participants reported using social media – Facebook and Twitter (45.1%). It is interesting to note the differences between the findings of Russell and Wood (2002) and a study by Holden, et al., (2013), where one's own parent/s and spouse were foremost in providing advice, compared to the Australian study where it is friends and other parents (Baker, et al., 2016). Another interesting comparison is the reasonably high use of

digital sources in Australia, whereas the studies by Russell and Wood (2002) and Holden, et al., (2013) make no reference to digital sources. Knowledge is limited in relation to the role of digital channels in this area (ISPCAN, 2016) and would benefit from further research as fewer parents are reporting engagement in parenting classes or courses (Baker, et al., 2016). Several studies reported parents being open to receiving, or seeking, advice from health and or education professionals (Russell & Wood, 2002; Holden, et al., 2013; Baker, et al., 2016; Sege & Siegel, 2018). However, Baker, et al., (2016) findings suggest that a knowledge gap may exist with not all parents accessing the same quality of information.

2.6 DISCUSSION

A large body of literature exists around the broad subject of positive parenting. Much of this endorses positive parenting as a critical tool in enhancing the social, emotional and academic development of children. **The research provides robust evidence that positive parenting within a nurturing and enabling environment is most effective in the prevention of child mental health and behavioural development problems and protection from violent discipline** (Adler, 1930; Christensen & Thomas, 1980; Reedt, et al., 2011; Sege and Siegel, 2018). These findings are highly relevant to New Zealand given our enduring rates of violence against children (Lambie, 2018) and a rise in mental health issues amongst children (Government Inquiry into Mental Health and Addiction, 2018).

Research specific to the general application of positive parenting practices is limited. As is information on the factors, such as information sources, that support parents in their positive practices. In the review of the literature only two studies, Russell and Wood (2002) and Baker, et al., (2016), closely aligned with this research focus. Although Russell and Wood (2002) is a valuable study on New Zealand parenting practices and related information supports, the study is almost 20 years old. In that time the law has changed to prohibit the use of physical punishment, and how people source and share information has significantly changed with widespread use of the internet and social media.

The Australian based study (Baker, et al., 2016) is more recent and incorporates the use of the internet to receive and share information on parenting. However, it does not encompass the quality of the information parents are receiving nor whether the impact is harmful or positive. The study does not include the practices parents are using and whether or not these relate to positive parenting practices. The study is situated in Australia thus findings are not directly transferable to the New Zealand context given our different legal and cultural environments.

2.7 LIMITATIONS

A number of limitations exist amongst the studies undertaken in this area. Few fathers are included in the studies, most explicitly focused on mothers or seemed to reach and include mothers more easily (Reedt, et al., 2010; ISPCAN, 2016). Studies in this broad area are predominantly from Australia, Canada, the European Union and the United States (ISPCAN, 2016). Few studies exist at a population level, this may be due to few programmes being delivered universally (Reedt, et al., 2010). Many studies are limited to Caucasian middle-class participants, particularly those reliant on self-selected participant samples (Reedt, et al., 2010). Self-selected participant samples have come under criticism due to the potential bias of these samples (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Chavis, et al., 2017). However, much research is reliant on voluntary participation due to available resources and ethical issues related to forcing or compelling people to participate (Chavis, et al., 2017).

Whilst the studies selected for analysis in this literature review were internally valid and most rigorously followed quantitative research design procedures (Holden, et al., 1995; Reitman, et al., 2002; Reedt, et al., 2010; Holden, et al., 2013; Baker, et al., 2016; Carroll & Hamilton, 2016; Holden, et al., 2017), none had randomly selected samples representative of the population. Therefore, the findings from the studies are limited in their ability to be generalised across populations (Creswell, & Miller, 2000).

The age of some of the studies being over or close to 20 years old, such as Holden, et al., (1995) and Russel and Wood (2002), mean they are limited in relevance to today's context. The broad date range

includes some significant developments on this topic over the time period. For example, attitudes and understanding relative to positive parenting have developed to exclude the use of all physical punishment for the purposes of correcting a child's behaviour, and the impact of the digital age has given rise to the access of vast amounts of information via digital sources. Despite the array of information available to parents via the Internet, gaps exist in relation to the inclusion of the digital world as a channel to inform and support parents (Baker, et al., 2016).

Whilst positive parenting appears to be an area that is growing in recognition and popularity (Sege & Siegel, 2018), there are few studies that explore that practices parents use generally in their parenting. Existing studies tend to focus on exploring interventions related to parents and or children that have been identified as having pre-existing behavioural issues (Reedt, et al., 2010; ISPCAN, 2016; Yaffe, 2017). Taken together, these limitations create a significant gap in the literature on positive parenting practices parents use, and how parents are informed and influenced in these practices.

2.8 CONCLUSION

Despite this interest and the purported benefits of positive parenting practices, research in this area appears to be limited particularly in relation to understanding the strategies parents choose to use across the general population. Although a long history of theory is related to positive parenting and the powerful impacts (negative as well as positive) that result directly from the ways children are treated (Jebb, 1924; Adler, 1930; Korzack, 1942), there appears to be a varied and disparate understanding of the issue largely due to a significant gap in research on this issue (ISPCAN, 2016). According to the literature, understanding and resourcing of positive parenting is patchy (Holden, 2016), and understanding the practices of parents generally appears to be particularly limited. This research intends to address this knowledge gap. The study will engage with parents and primary carers to ascertain the positive parenting practices they are choosing to use in their daily parenting. It will explore how parents are informed and influenced in their parenting practices.

It is acknowledged that this study is likely to be affected by limitations experienced by similar studies such as the inclusion of fathers, or not having a randomly selected population sample. However, it is intended this information will be used to recommend larger scale and more fully resourced studies that would specifically inform this area. Findings from this study will have value in informing policies, practice and strategies in reaching parents at a population level, and as a way to grow the numbers of parents using these practices. This is particularly important given the acknowledgement that positive parenting is a powerful tool in preventing and eliminating violent discipline of children in their homes. It is highly relevant in the New Zealand context given our enduring rates of family violence of which children are too often victims (Lambie, 2018).



Photo credit: Mi Pham

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 THE RESEARCH QUESTION

Research (Save the Children, 2018) has found 50% of New Zealand parents choose never to use physical punishment to discipline their children. However, little is known about the discipline practices parents choose to use. The research questions that will guide and inform this study are as follows:

1. What are the specific positive non-physical discipline methods that parents choose to use to discipline their children under 5 years of age?
2. What sources of information inform or influence these decisions?

3.2 INTRODUCTION

This study is specifically aimed at exploring the positive discipline practices parents choose to use when guiding their child's behaviour. These practices do not include physical punishment.

The term 'discipline' is being reconceptualised to move away from meaning 'obedience, control and punishment' back toward the origins of the concept where discipline is more akin to 'learning, understanding, gaining knowledge' (Sege & Siegel, 2018)

Developments in neuroscience and a rights-based approach to supporting children's behavioural development, is reframing discipline away from harsh punishment. Discipline is reframed as guiding children's behaviour based on their evolving capabilities to promote their own understanding of prosocial ways to behave (Durrant & Stewart-Tufescu, 2017; Sege & Siegel, 2018). Due to varied understanding of the term positive parenting (Holden, 2015, cited in ISPCAN, 2105) the term is defined in the survey (see Part Four of the survey, Appendix One, p 129) to help ensure participants have a shared understanding of this term.

In this study 'discipline' is taken to mean guiding children in learning, developing and displaying positive behaviours appropriate to their age. This approach also recognises that young children require active support from their parents or carers to learn and develop positive behaviours. Parents of children 1 – 4 years of age voluntarily contributed to

this study through sharing their discipline practices via an online survey. From the survey participants, a small number of parents were selected to participate in semi-structured interviews. The interview participants were selected using maximum variation sampling (Creswell, 2002).

3.3 STUDY DESIGN

The design and content of this study was informed by information and data sourced through the literature review. This study aims to fill the research gap about the positive discipline practices parents use in their everyday parenting practices to guide their child's social, emotional and behavioural development. The study explored how parents are informed and influenced in these practices.

The methodology of this study is based on Explanatory Sequential Design (Creswell, 2012) where quantitative data has been collected first via the Online Positive Parenting Survey, followed up by qualitative data collected via semi-structured interviews. Initial data was collected via a survey instrument administered using Qualtrics and disseminated via digital channels including email, e-newsletters and Facebook, to gain a sense of practices parents are using from a larger sample of participants. Data from the survey and semi-structured interviews was analysed using interpretative analysis (Creswell, 2012).

3.4 PARTICIPANTS

The participants in the survey make up a convenience sample as they have self-selected to participate in the study. The participant sample is not randomly assigned, nor is it a representative population sample.

Information about the research project and a link to the survey were shared via digital channels. These channels included sharing via Facebook – author's personal page, Save the Children New Zealand page, and the following group pages - the NZ ECE Teachers Discussion Group, The Mum Hub, The Mum Hub Wairarapa, and Infants & Toddlers in ECE. The online survey was shared via email to the child wellbeing network mailing list that reaches practitioners and professionals interested in child wellbeing across New Zealand and was included

in the Social Services Providers Association (SSPA) e-newsletter.

A total of 96 participants took part in the research project. All participants were required to be parents of a child or children 1-4 years of age and be living in New Zealand. 96 parents took part in the online survey, of the 96 responses 84 were fully complete. The partially completed responses were not included in the results. From the online survey participants, five parents were selected to take part in one on one semi-structured interviews and of these three parents agreed to be interviewed.

3.5 CONSENT

Participants were provided with information about the research prior to participating in the study. Information about the study was included at the beginning of the online survey, participants provided consent to participate in order to complete the survey.

Parents that took part in the semi-structured interviews were provided with information about the study, their options to withdraw, and signed a consent form before beginning the interviews. Transcripts from the interviews were shared with the interviewees to check for accuracy before the data was included in the study. All participants in both the online survey and the semi-structured interviews participated voluntarily.

3.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethics approval for this study was granted by the Human Ethics Committee of Victoria University of Wellington, (ethics approval reference 0000028119). Due to the potential sensitivity of investigating the practices parents use when disciplining or guiding the behaviour of young children, a number of ethical issues were considered.

Asking parents about their parenting practices in relation to discipline has some sensitivities as some parents may find this confronting. To mitigate this, the intention of the research to explore positive practices and use the information to reaffirm and promote positive parenting was explained in an

introduction letter. As some participants may feel vulnerable sharing such personal details, participants had the option to complete the survey anonymously if they wished to do so. To protect the identity of the participants, all information has been anonymised, and participant data has been securely stored. This data will be destroyed five years after the close of the project.

Although Māori parents are not the primary target of the survey it was intended Māori would participate as tangata whenua. All Māori participants were treated with respect and in accordance of the principles of Te Tiriti o Waitangi, protection, partnership and participation. The identity and all personal details of Māori participants is confidential. Data shared from the research does not include personal or identifying details. The research would lack value and credibility if Māori, as tangata whenua, were not included in the research. Whilst Māori parents have participated in this research, information provided in this research is not be considered representative of all Māori.

The ethics of conducting interviews in the homes of participants has been considered. Ensuring the safety of both researcher and participants was paramount. Safety procedures determined prior to the start of the research included; consent to record the interview, sharing the researcher whereabouts with the supervisor and a contact plan related to beginning and ending the interview.

During research such as this where participants are sharing very personal information, there is always a risk that a disclosure of harm past or present may be made. Participants were informed that if such a disclosure was to be made, the researcher is ethically required to report the incident to the appropriate authorities. This information was included in the parent information letter before participants complete the survey, as part of the online survey form, and in the consent form signed by interview participants. Participants may experience feelings of strong emotions taking part in the survey or interview. To support those who may be feeling emotional discomfort, the contact details of well-known and trusted support lines have been included in the information to interview participants and as part of the online survey.

A key ethical consideration was whether or not to include physical punishment as an option in

the discipline response scale in the Online Positive Parenting Practices survey. The decision was made not to include physical punishment as an option for the following reasons. Recent research undertaken in New Zealand (Save the Children, 2018) includes data on attitudes of parents toward the physical punishment of children and 50% of parents surveyed believed it to be unacceptable. The intention of this research is to find out more about the discipline practices of parents that do not include physical punishment, therefore the use of physical punishment is outside of the scope of this research. Another reason physical punishment was not included is that physically punishing children is illegal in New Zealand. If participants report using physical punishment, it creates an ethical dilemma for the researcher on whether to report this information to authorities given the information is being shared with the researcher in confidence, yet this practice is known to be harmful to children (for example, Russell & Wood, 2002; Afifi, et al., 2017; Gershoff & Grogan-Kaylor, date; Sege & Siegel, 2018). Another complication of including physical punishment as a discipline option is that it may imply tacit approval or acceptance of treating children in this way. Experienced researchers in this field (Durrant, Stewart-Tufescu & Affifi, 2019) have reported the continued inclusion of physical punishment as a means of discipline in research surveys as problematic as inclusion implies a certain level of support or acceptance of this practice. The social acceptance of physical punishment is known to be a contributory factor in the physical abuse of children (Durrant, et al., 2019). Based on these considerations and supporting research, the researcher made the decision to exclude any reference to physical punishment as a form of discipline in the online survey.

To ensure accurate representation of personal information and views shared in this research, interview transcripts were shared with interviewees to provide an opportunity to check for accuracy. Participants who wish to receive a final copy of the research were able to share their contact details for follow-up at the completion of the project.

All aspects of the research rely on voluntary participation. Whilst this may create unintended bias in the sample (Chavis, et al., 2017), there was no way to compel or force parents to participate in this research.

3.7 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Two methods of data collection were used to gather data for this study; an online survey consisting of a mix of quantitative and qualitative questions from a larger sample (n=84), and semi-structured interviews from a small sample (n=3).

3.7.1 ONLINE POSITIVE PARENTING PRACTICES SURVEY

The design of the of the survey questions including content and format of the questions was based on the review of the relevant literature. Before dissemination, the survey was reviewed by three critical peers from my networks who were parents of children under five years of age. The full survey is included in Appendix 1, p 75.

The online Positive Parenting Practices survey used mostly quantitative methodology to capture data from a larger sample of participants. Along with the quantitative data collection, several open-ended questions were included to provide qualitative data to support the quantitative data. The survey consisted of four parts.

3.7.2 PART ONE, INTRODUCTION AND CONSENT

Part One introduced participants to the research project and the online survey. Information was provided about the study, the intention of the research, what participants should expect and consent to take part in the study. An open-ended question at the end of this section asked participants to share a short description of their family.

3.7.3 PART TWO, PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

Part two consisted of a series of questions designed to collect demographic data from the participants. Demographic data included; location, gender, ethnicity, age, parenting role, number of children, family type, living situation, work status, education qualification, and household income.

3.7.4 PART THREE, SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND INFLUENCE

Part three examined how parents were informed and influenced in their parenting practices. Sources of information and influence were arranged into four categories. Digital sources consisted of eight items across social media, blogs and website. Media sources, five items focused on traditional media channels, television, radio, books and magazines. Personal information sources included 10 items related to family, friends and informal groups. Professional information sources, six items covered health and education professionals and formal parenting classes or groups. The frequency of how often participants made use of each digital and media item was measured using a 5-point Likert-type scale; never, annually, monthly, weekly or daily. For both personal and professional information sources an extra frequency measure 'not applicable' was added. This measure was included so participants could more accurately differentiate between whether they chose to never use an item, or if this item was not applicable to them.

The structure and content of the questions in part three of the survey was based on previous research undertaken by Russell and Wood (2002) and Baker et al., (2016). Both studies explore how sources of information inform and influence parents in their parenting practices. The sources of information included in the Baker, et al. (2016) study is very similar to this section of the survey. Some key differences include differences in the way the items were categorised. For example, the Internet is included as a single item and groups social media forums together. Whereas this study separated out social media, forums, websites, blogs, and influencers as individual items. This is similar in the way personal information sources were defined. Baker, et al., (2016) groups family together in one item, in this survey family is spread across eight items in order to gain a deeper understanding of the nuances of how families support and influence parents in their parenting practices.

Russell and Wood (2002) were focused on understanding how parents were informed and influenced in their decision not to use physical punishment to discipline their children. Their study questioned parents on, "Their reasons for not hitting". This meant that parents verbally

volunteered this information in a semi-structured interview but did not complete a survey where they selected items from a preconstructed scale as they have done in this study. Russell and Wood (2002) were limited in their reference to the use of digital sources to inform parents. This is likely due to limited availability of access to digital sources of information at the time of study.

3.7.5 PART FOUR, DISCIPLINE PRACTICES PARENTS USE

Part four focuses on the discipline practices parents use to shape and modify their child's behaviour. The Parental Response to Child Misbehaviours (PRCM) (Holden, et al., 1995) forms the basis of the positive discipline practices measurement scale developed for this study (see the scale in the survey, Appendix One, pp, 130-132). The PRCM (Holden, et al., 1995) scale was identified in the literature review (Holden, et al., 1995, Holden et al., 2017) and was selected as being most appropriate for the intended purpose of this study. Furthermore, it has been used in previous studies with children in the same age range (e.g., Huang, Caughy, Lee, Miller, & Genevro, 2009 cited in Holden et al., 2017) and has been proven to have strong psychometric properties including concurrent and predictive validity, and proven internal consistency (Holden et al., 1995; Vittrup et al., 2006; Holden et al., 2017).

The PRCM (Holden, et al., 1995) consists of nine response items; reason, negotiate, diversion, ignore, time out, withdrawal of privileges, yelling, threatening and spanking (Holden, et al., 2017). Of these nine items, yelling, threatening and spanking are deemed to be coercive practices (Holden, et al., 1995). Whilst reason, negotiate, diversion, ignore, time out, and withdrawal of privileges are non-coercive. Spanking was specifically excluded from the positive parenting measurement scale in this study due to ethical concerns.

The positive discipline practices measurement scale in this study extends on the items included in the PRCM (Holden, et al., 1995), as the researcher felt this scale was limited and did not include other positive discipline responses that can be found amongst parenting practices. These practices were included based on the literature reviewed for this study, a New Zealand based resource developed to support violence free parenting Choose to Hug

(Office of the Children's Commissioner, 2008), and in discussion with critical peers. Responses that were added to create this scale include; communicating parent expectations, allowing child time to comply, anticipating child's needs, acknowledging child's feelings, praise for positive behaviours, rewarding specific behaviours, commanding the child and ignoring the child due to being distracted. The second item related to 'ignoring' was included in the negative context, where the parent is distracted and ignoring the needs of their child. This is conceptually different to 'ignoring' in the non-coercive sense where the intent is to ignore or not react to negative child behaviours. The inclusion of ignoring in the negative context was raised by the critical peers when critiquing the initial survey. Two were unsure what was meant by 'ignoring' is this a positive response to ignore undesirable behaviours, or is this the negative response of a distracted parent? The scale was adapted based on this critique. In total the discipline practices measurement scale developed for this study consisted of 17 response items graded in frequency across a five-point Likert-type scale; never, annually, monthly, weekly, daily.

The following responses were positively loaded; reasoning, negotiating, diverting attention, ignoring negative behaviours, time out, withdrawal of privileges, anticipating child's needs, communicating parent expectations, compliance time, rewards for specific behaviours, acknowledging child's emotions, and praise for positive behaviour. Negatively loaded responses included; threatening, yelling, commanding, and ignoring child due to parent distraction. Some ambiguity exists around time out and rewards on whether these are in fact positive discipline practices. Questions exist on the overuse of timeout where a child is isolated or excluded as it can have negative consequences more akin to punishment and control than guidance and teaching (Office of the Children's Commissioner, 2008; Carroll & Hamilton, 2016). The overuse of, or reliance on, rewards is another practice that is contentious in whether it is effective in achieving long-term prosocial behaviours. Like physical punishment, rewards are reliant on external rather than internal motivations required for positive behavioural development (Carroll & Hamilton, 2016).

Two open ended questions were included to give participants the opportunity to provide greater information on why they chose to use specific discipline responses.

3.8 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with three parents. The semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to explore the views of participants in greater depth (Alshenqeeti, 2014). A full copy of the semi-structured interview questions has been provided in Appendix Two, p 85 of this study.

Demographic information collected in the survey was used to inform the process of maximum variation sampling (Creswell, 2002) to select five parents to participate in the interviews. Of the parents identified, three parents agreed to be interviewed. The interviews took place at a location of the interviewee's choosing, and interviews lasted between 20 – 30 minutes. Time was spent on whakawhanaungatanga to allow time for the researcher and interviewee to get to know each other and feel comfortable participating in the interview. At the start of each interview the researcher discussed the purpose of the interview to find out more about discipline practices parents choose to use to guide their child's behaviour. The researcher shared the definition of positive discipline used throughout the study to help set the scene and ensure consistency of understanding of this term across all interview participants.

The interview consisted of 16 open ended questions, with the flexibility to ask further questions if required. The questions were informed by the study conducted by Russell and Wood (2002) as it has similarities to this study in seeking to understand how parents are informed and influenced in their parenting practices, and what non-violent practices they use to discipline their children.

Some of the questions were deliberately similar in nature in order to provide an opportunity to make data comparisons over time. These questions included; how have parents been informed or influenced in choosing not to use physical punishment, what strategies do parents use to change, modify or guide their child's behaviour, what makes it easy or hard to use these strategies? Smacking is not referred to in this study which differs from the Russell and Wood study (2002) where smacking is a term used throughout the study. Again, this is reflective of the time and context

within which the Russell and Wood (2002) study was undertaken.

The interviews were recorded using the app Otter with the permission of the participants. After each interview, the transcripts were checked for accuracy and shared with the interviewee for confirmation of accuracy (Creswell, 2012). The transcripts were then coded into themes related to positive discipline practices and how participant's practices were informed or influenced. To protect the privacy of the interviewees' transcripts have not been published as part of the study.



Photo credit: Ben White

CHAPTER FOUR

ONLINE POSITIVE PARENTING SURVEY
DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

Descriptive statistics were used to analyse and report on participant responses in the survey and semi-structured interviews. Qualtrics was used to run data analysis reports. These reports included total count, mean, standard deviation, variance calculations, and graphs. These reports have informed overall trends discussed in the data analysis. Using the Crosstabs function in Qualtrics the effects of key predictor variables including age, gender, education attainment, ethnicity and income, were tested against dependant variables - participants use of information sources and discipline responses. Fixed variable data tables were developed in Qualtrics using Crosstabs, percentages were calculated from these tables and then explored in the analysis.

4.1.2 ONLINE SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

96 participants began the survey; however, 12 participants had exited the survey after completing the demographic questions leaving a final sample of 84. There was further attrition where 11 participants failed to answer the final question on discipline practices.

To be eligible to participate in the study, participants needed to have a child older than 12 months and up to five years of age and live in New Zealand. Participants were asked to share the numbers of children in their family and their ages, approximately 78% of the children were 5 years or under. The ages of 15% of children were unknown, therefore it was not possible to accurately calculate the mean age of the children. However, based on the information provided the mode age of children in the study is two-years-old.

Digital channels including Facebook groups, researcher's personal page, email lists related to the children's sector and e-newsletters were used to disseminate the survey in an attempt to reach participants across New Zealand and source a demographically diverse participant sample. The gender makeup of the sample is predominantly female (90%), and respondents reported their parent role as mother (90%), father (8%) and carer (2%). Eighty-five percent of the participants identified

as New Zealand European/Pakeha, the remaining participants identified as Māori (18%), Pasifika (1%), Asian (2%), Middle Eastern/Latin American/African (1%) and other (8%). Participants could select multiple ethnicities that applied to them therefore ethnicity percentages do not calculate to 100%. The majority of participants (75%) had some form of tertiary education. Participants fell into three age categories; 20-29 years (31%), 30-39 years (55%), 40-49 years (14%). Participants came from regions across New Zealand, 82% in urban settings and 18% in rural; Northland (11%), Auckland (10%), Waikato (10%), Bay of Plenty (5%), Gisborne (1%), Hawkes Bay (1%), Taranaki (5%), Whanganui-Manawatu (2%), Wairarapa (21%), Wellington (21%), Canterbury (11%), Otago (2%).

The family and household composition were explored. Fifty-eight percent of participants reported owning their own home, 40% renting and 1% boarding. The household income of participants was under \$50,000 for 29%, \$50,000 - \$100,000 for 42%, and over \$100,000 for 30%. The work status of participants was split between fulltime work (26%), part-time (29%), fulltime parent at home (29%), studying (10%), and other (7%). Family types reported include; sole parent family (13%), nuclear family (77%), blended family (8%), extended family (1%).

4.1.3 INFORMATION SOURCES DATA ANALYSIS

Information sources explored in this study have been categorised as digital, media, personal and professional information sources. Overall parents rely on their friends (96%) and partner (95%) as the most used source of information, followed by their parents (89%), early childhood education (ECE) teachers (87%), Facebook (83%) and parent websites (80%). Traditional media sources of information report low rates of engagement particularly for younger parents in the 20-29-year-old demographic. Engagement with formal parenting classes or programmes is also very low with 71% of parents in the survey reporting no engagement with this information source. This is even lower for fathers at 87%.

4.1.4 DIGITAL INFORMATION SOURCES

Of the digital channels explored in this study (see Fig1), Facebook was the most used digital channel overall, and most frequently used on a regular basis. 83% of participants reported using Facebook as a supportive information source. Frequency of used range from 10% - annually, 22% - monthly, 31% - weekly and 20% on a daily basis.

Overall Instagram was seldom used as an information source. Based on age, 20-29 year-olds (36%) were more than twice as likely as 40-49-year-olds (17%) to use this channel.

All age groups reported using New Zealand (see Figure 5) and overseas websites (Figure 6) regularly

on a monthly basis. There was little difference between 30-39-year-olds on whether they used New Zealand or overseas websites, while 20-29-year-olds were more likely to use New Zealand websites. 40-49-year-olds used both types of websites most at 83% (monthly), compared to just 43% for 30-39 and 36% for 20-29-year-olds.

Amongst all age groups Facebook (83%) (see Figure 2) followed by New Zealand (80%) and overseas websites (71%), and blogs (53%) (see Figure 7) were most popular. Whilst Instagram (27%) (see Figure 3), Influencers (38%) (see Figure 8) and YouTube (38%) (see Figure 4) were used least. 40-49 years used fewer digital channels than both other age groups; reporting never using influencers (92%), Instagram (83%), YouTube (75%) or blogs (58%).

FIGURE 1: DIGITAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION

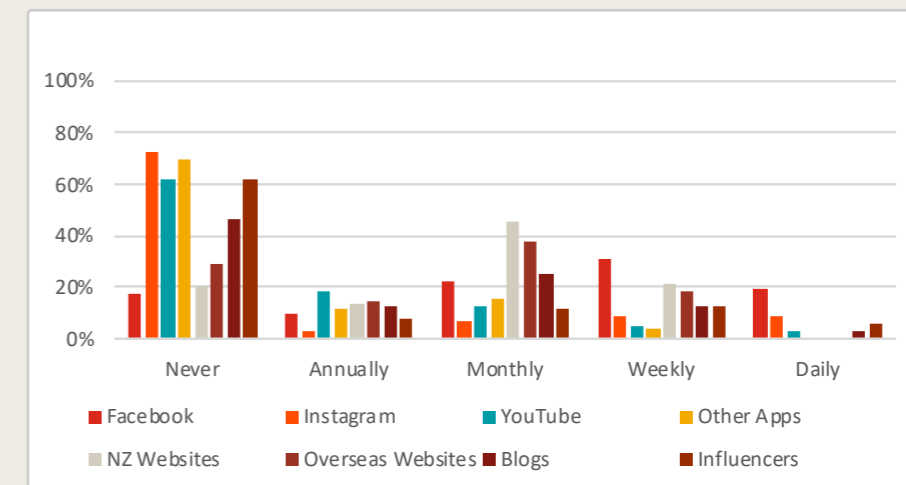


FIGURE 2: FACEBOOK USE ACCORDING TO AGE

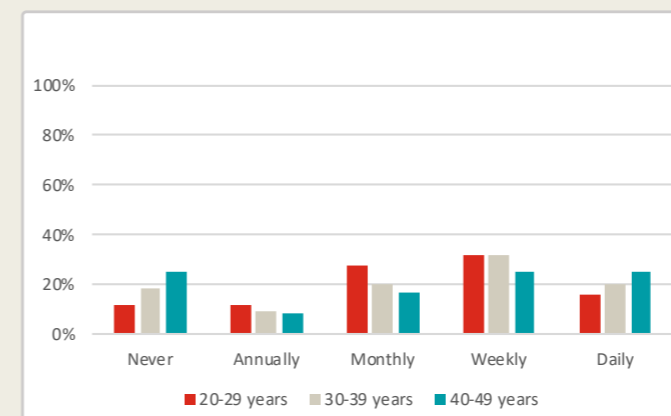


FIGURE 3: INSTAGRAM USE ACCORDING TO AGE

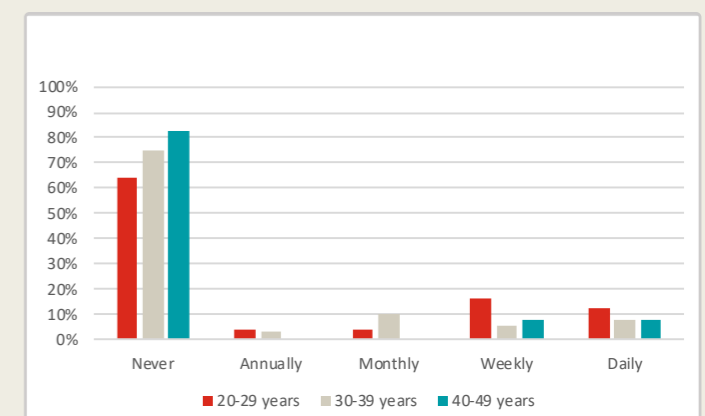


FIGURE 4: YOUTUBE USE ACCORDING TO AGE

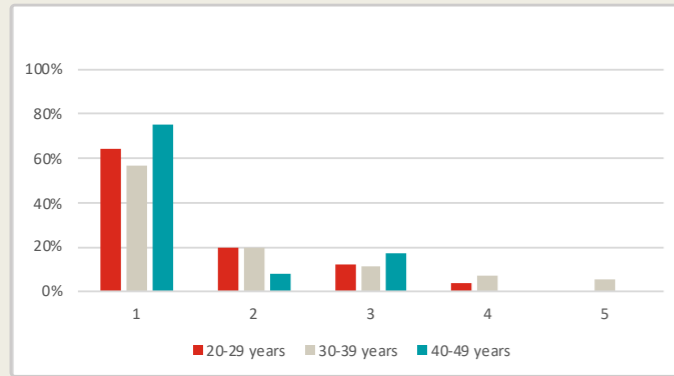


FIGURE 5: NZ WEBSITE USE ACCORDING TO AGE

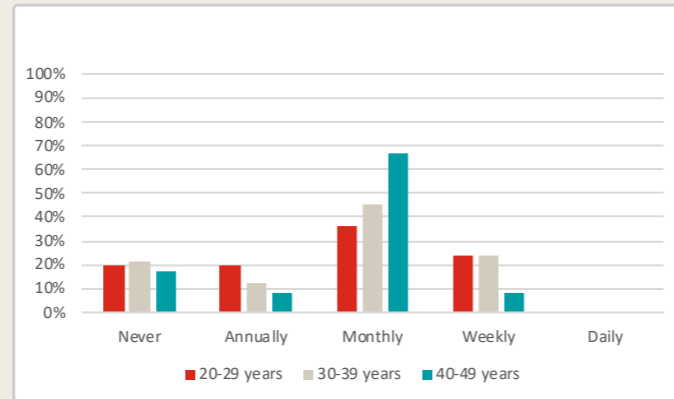


FIGURE 6: OVERSEAS WEBSITE USE ACCORDING TO AGE

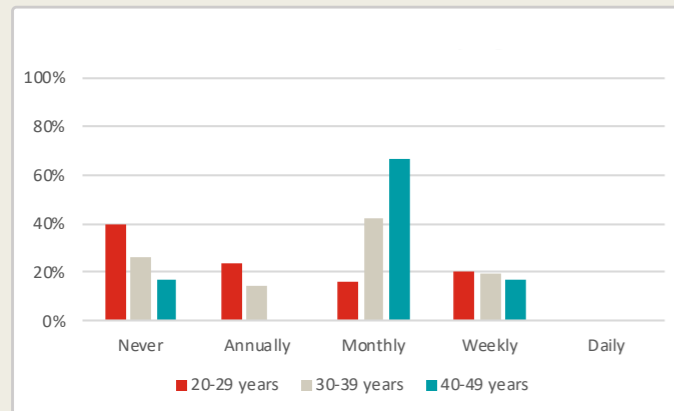


FIGURE 7: BLOG USE ACCORDING TO AGE

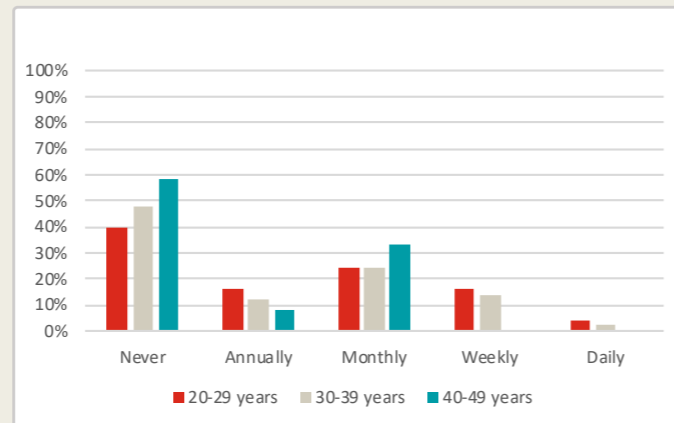


FIGURE 8: INFLUENCER USE ACCORDING TO AGE

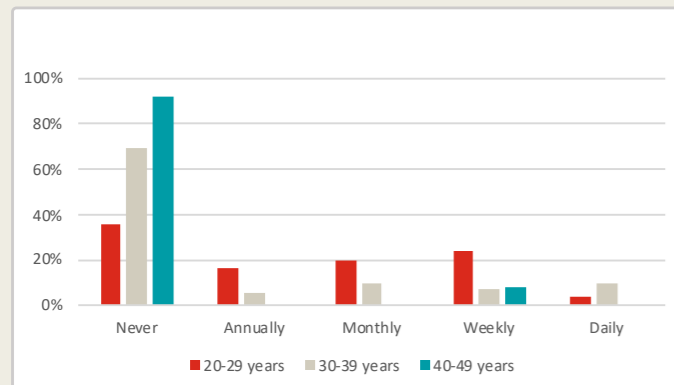


FIGURE 9: FACEBOOK USE ACCORDING TO GENDER

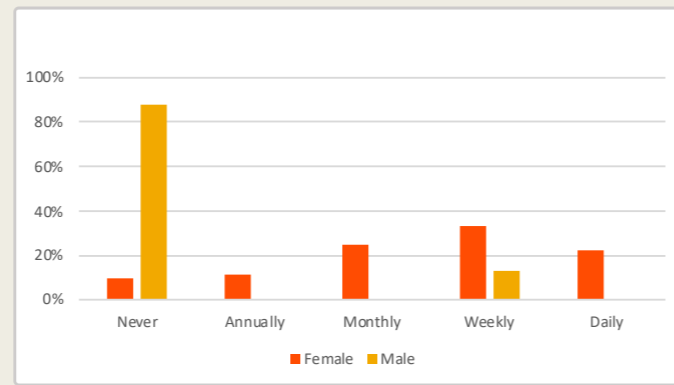


FIGURE 10: FACEBOOK USE ACCORDING TO EDUCATION

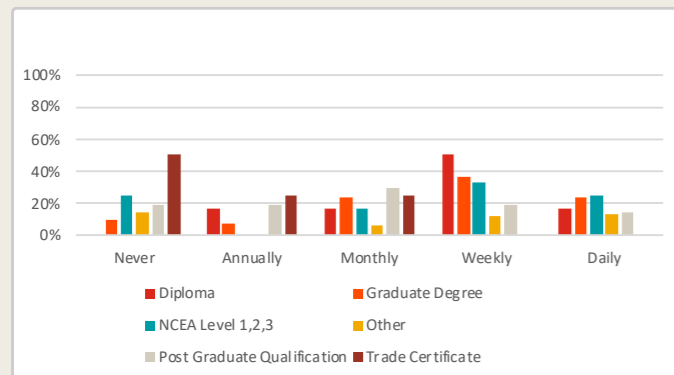
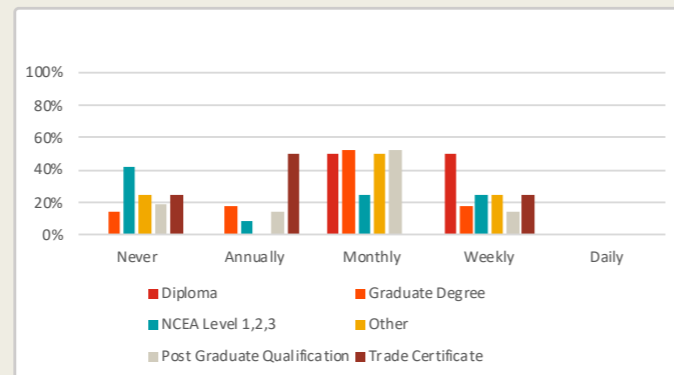


FIGURE 11: NZ WEBSITES USE ACCORDING TO EDUCATION



Based on gender, males seldom used digital channels as sources of information. Just 10% of males reported engaging with Facebook, compared to 88% of females (see Figure, 9). Males recorded low rates of engagement across all digital channels, and when they did engage it was more likely to be monthly or annually, rather than daily or weekly which was more common for females.

Education qualifications did not appear to have a significant impact on patterns of use. Facebook (see Figure 10) remains the most regularly used channel on a weekly or daily basis, and website (see Figure 11 & 12) use is most likely to occur on a monthly basis across all groups.

4.1.5 MEDIA SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Media sources (see Figure 13) used most to least frequently include; books (75%), specific television

programmes (56%), magazines (52%), television (46%), radio (39%). Most channels are reported being used predominantly on an annual basis. Very low rates of usage are recorded across all channels on a daily basis.

Older participants are more likely to make use of books than the youngest age group (see Figure 14). 40-49-year-olds (100%), 30-39-year-olds (55%) and 45% of 20-29-year-olds report using books as an information source. More than half of 20-29-year-olds report never engaging with books. Significantly higher rates of 30-39-year-olds (83%) engage with television (general) on a weekly basis, compared to 17% of 40-49-year-olds and 0% of 20-29-year-olds (see Figure16). Radio remains the least engaged with media source across all ages (see Figure 18).

FIGURE 12: OVERSEAS WEBSITES USE ACCORDING TO EDUCATION

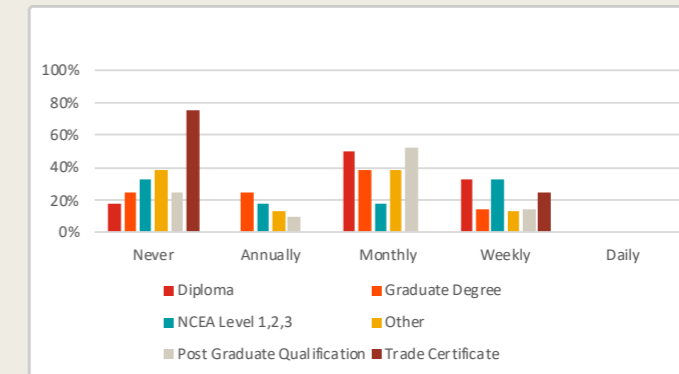


FIGURE 13: MEDIA SOURCES OF INFORMATION

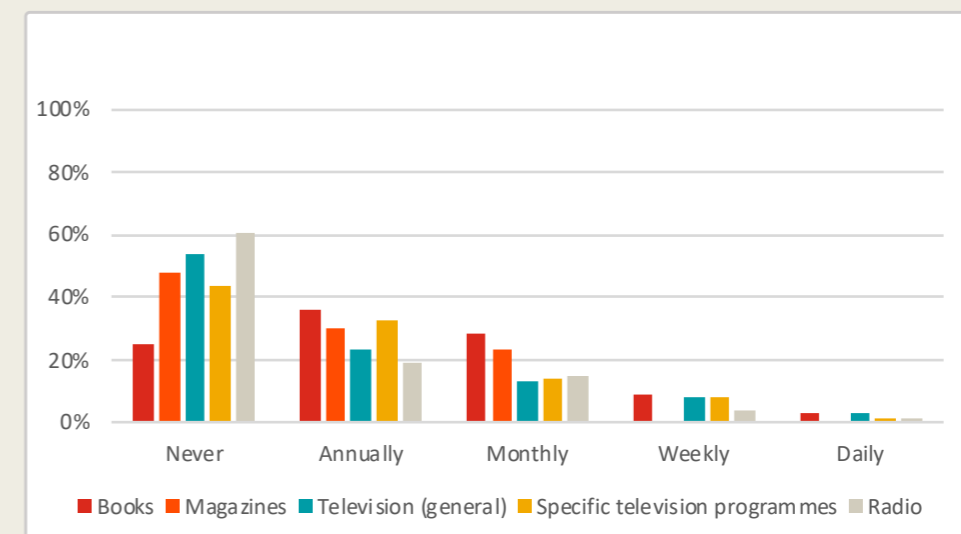


FIGURE 14: BOOKS ACCORDING TO AGE

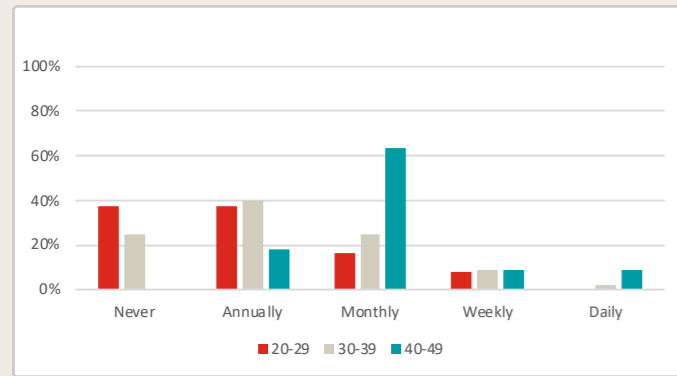


FIGURE 15: MAGAZINES ACCORDING TO AGE

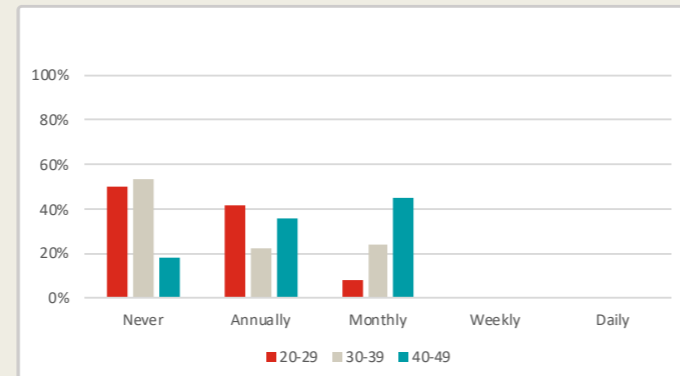


FIGURE 16: TELEVISION (GENERAL) ACCORDING TO AGE

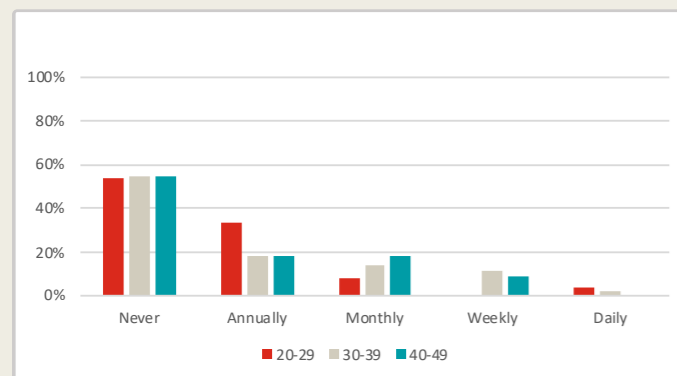


FIGURE 17: SPECIFIC TELEVISION PROGRAMMES ACCORDING TO AGE

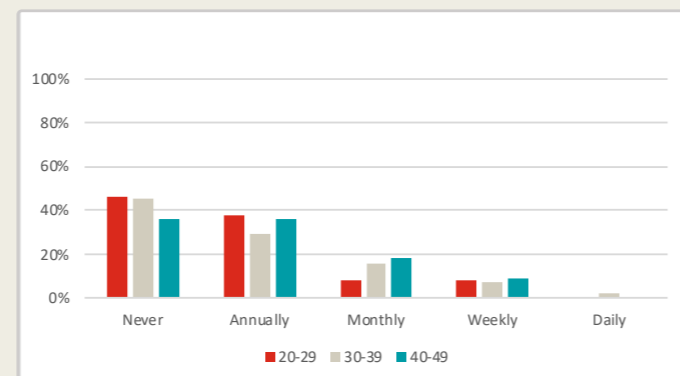


FIGURE 18: RADIO ACCORDING TO AGE

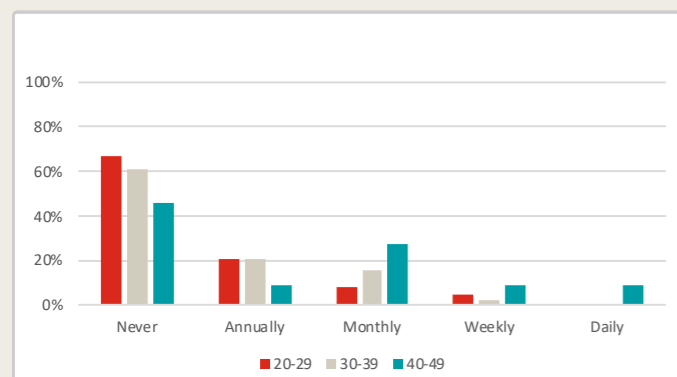


FIGURE 19: BOOKS ACCORDING TO GENDER

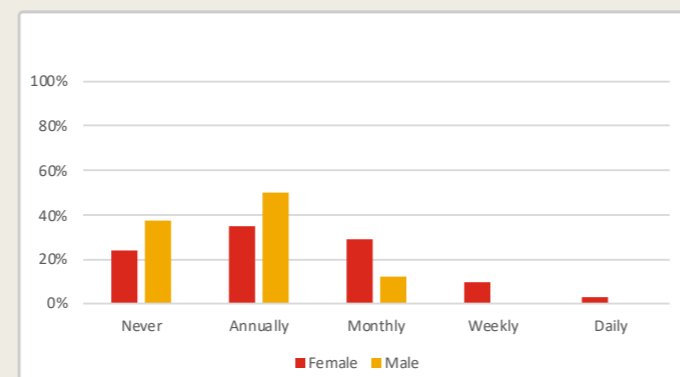


FIGURE 20: MAGAZINES ACCORDING TO GENDER

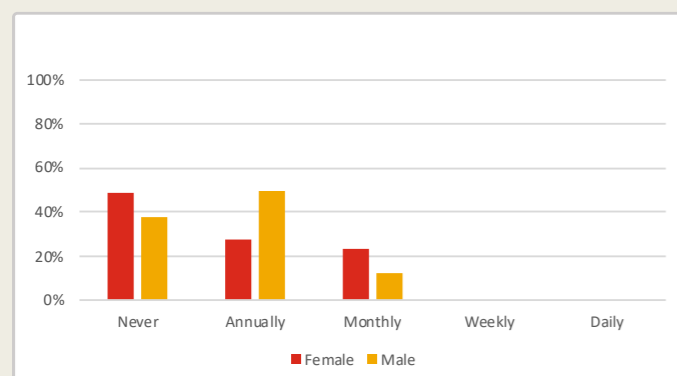
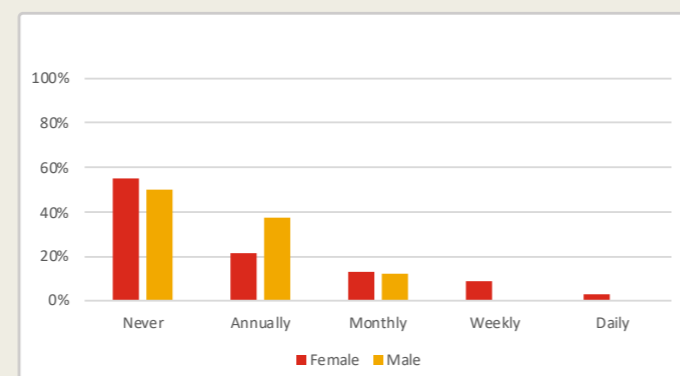


FIGURE 21: TELEVISION (GENERAL) ACCORDING TO GENDER



Males reported very low engagement across all media channels. Males recorded no media engagements at a weekly level and just (13%) on a daily basis. Females used books at the double the rate of males, 76% compared to 38% respectively. For both genders rates of media engagement are much lower than digital channels, especially for weekly or daily occurrences.

When taking education into consideration, those with a graduate degree (45%) or post-graduate (21%) qualification are most likely to engage with books (see Figure 24). Whereas participants with a highest education qualification of NCEA (45%) or Trade Certificate (50%) report never engaging with books. Across all education groups, radio and magazines are used least on a weekly or daily basis.

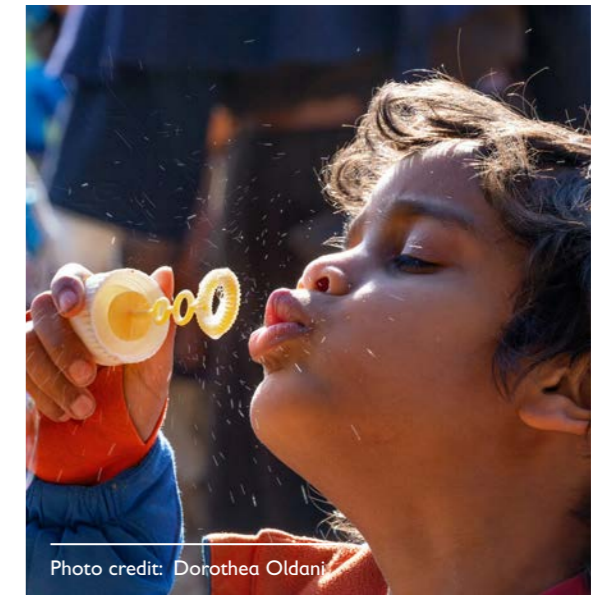


FIGURE 22: SPECIFIC TELEVISION PROGRAMMES ACCORDING TO GENDER

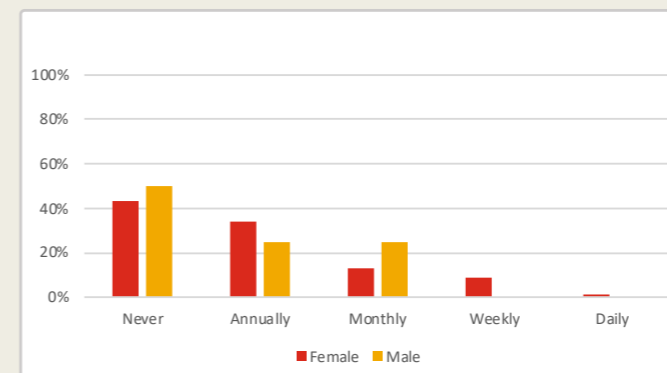


FIGURE 23: RADIO ACCORDING TO GENDER

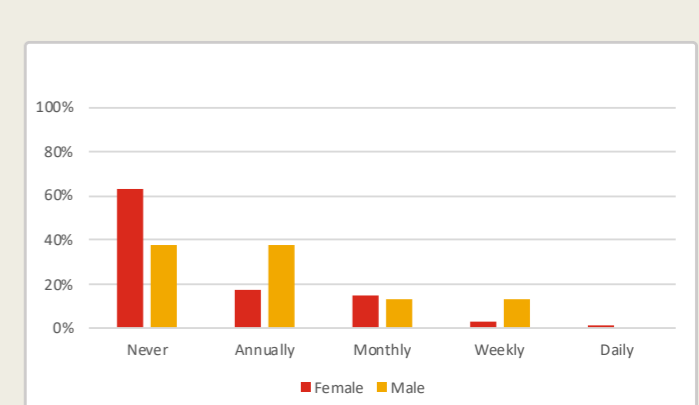
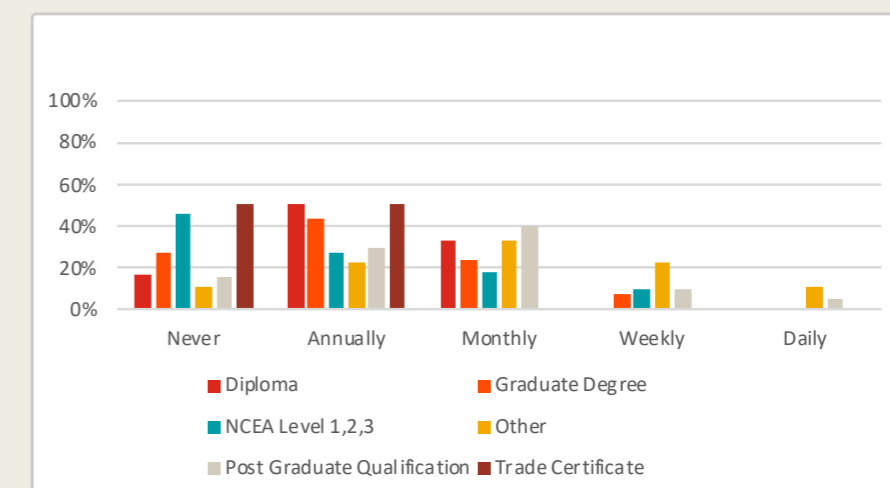


FIGURE 24: BOOKS ACCORDING TO EDUCATION



4.1.6 PERSONAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Parents are most likely to engage with their partner (54%) as a parenting information source on a daily basis (see Figure 25). On a weekly basis, participants reported engaging most often with friends (37%), own parents (33%) and informal parent groups (30%). Least engagement was reported amongst extended family sources, uncles (65%), aunts (57%), cousins (54%), and grandparents (47%). Siblings (28%) and partner's parents (26%) were engaged on a monthly basis. Twenty-six percent of parents in this survey reported no engagement with informal parent groups.

Gender had a significant impact on personal sources of information. Both males and females (see Figure 26) report the most frequent engagement with their partner as a source of information. Rates of engagement were much higher for males at

88% than females at 49%. For males their partner was the most used source of information across all sources. All males reported engaging with their partner, whilst 7% of females reported no engagement. Males (50%) were more likely to engage with their parents on a monthly basis (see Figure 27), whereas females were split between weekly (34%) and monthly (36%). Males (88%) were more likely to engage with their partner's parents (see Figure 28) than females (59%). Half of males reported engaging with friends (see Figure 34) on a monthly basis, 38% on a weekly basis, and 13% never engaged friends as an information source. Females reported much higher engagement with their friends. Females were evenly split between engaging weekly (36%) or monthly (36%), 16% on a daily basis, and just 4% reported no engagement. Both males and females reported low rates of engagement with extended family members (see Figures 29-33).

FIGURE 25: PERSONAL INFORMATION SOURCES

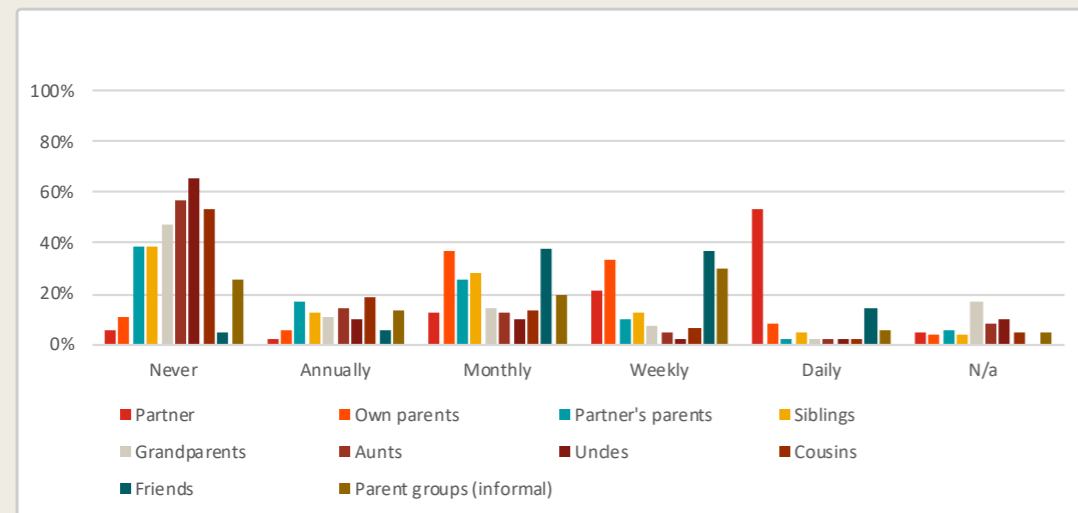


FIGURE 26: PARTNER ACCORDING TO GENDER

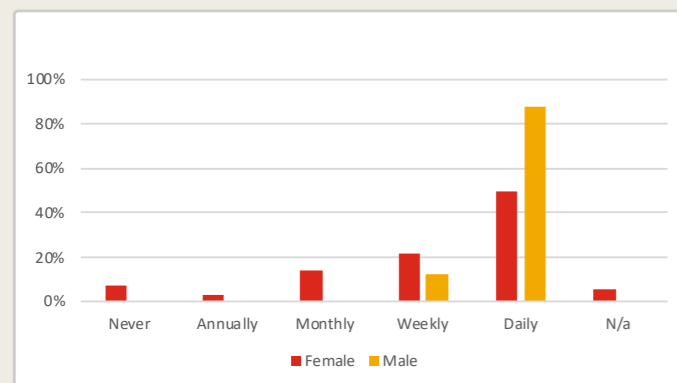


FIGURE 27: OWN PARENTS ACCORDING TO GENDER

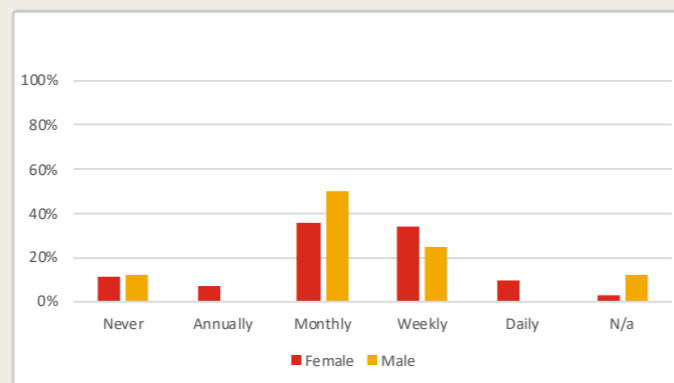


FIGURE 28: PARTNER'S PARENTS ACCORDING TO GENDER

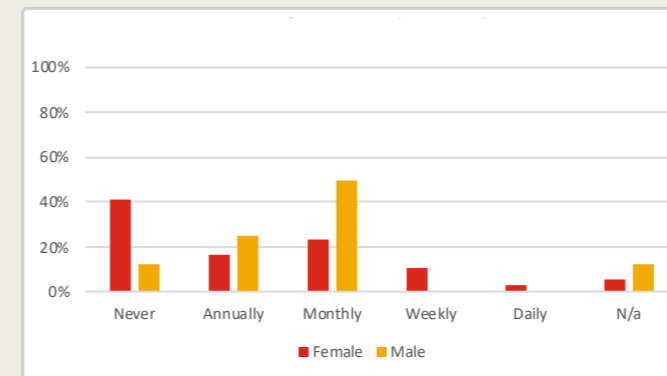


FIGURE 29: SIBLINGS ACCORDING TO GENDER

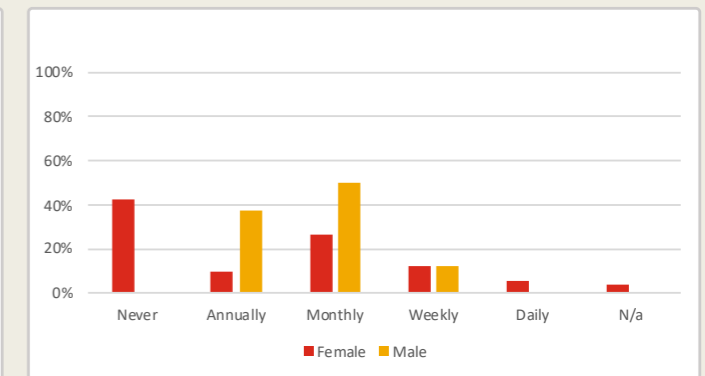


FIGURE 30: GRANDPARENTS ACCORDING TO GENDER

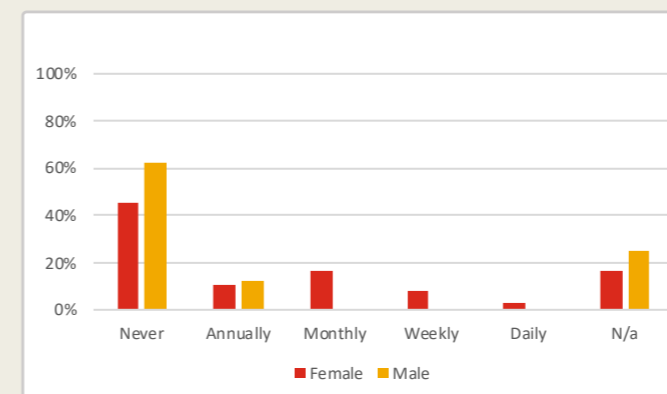


FIGURE 31: AUNTS ACCORDING TO GENDER

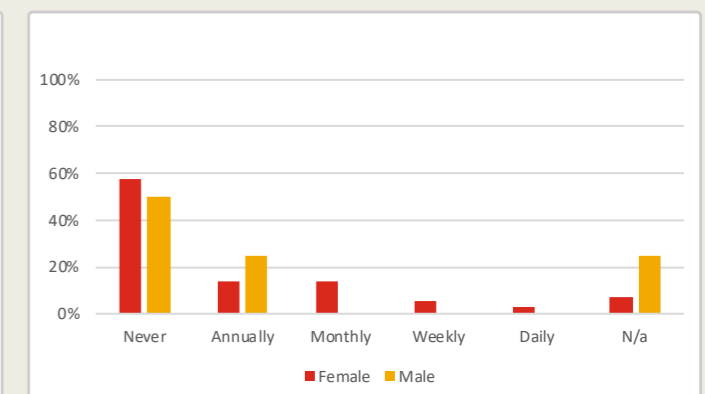


FIGURE 32: UNCLAS ACCORDING TO GENDER

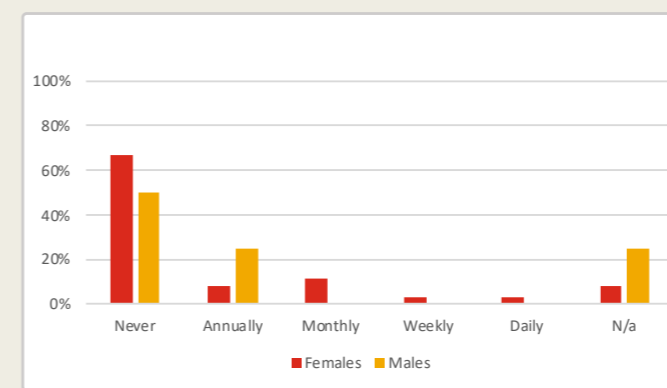


FIGURE 33: COUSINS ACCORDING TO GENDER

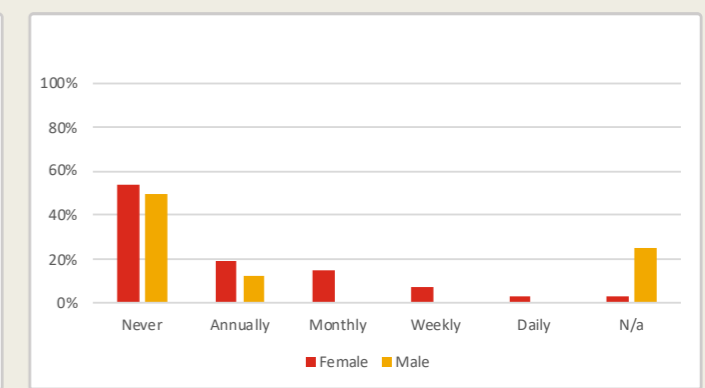


FIGURE 34: FRIENDS ACCORDING TO GENDER

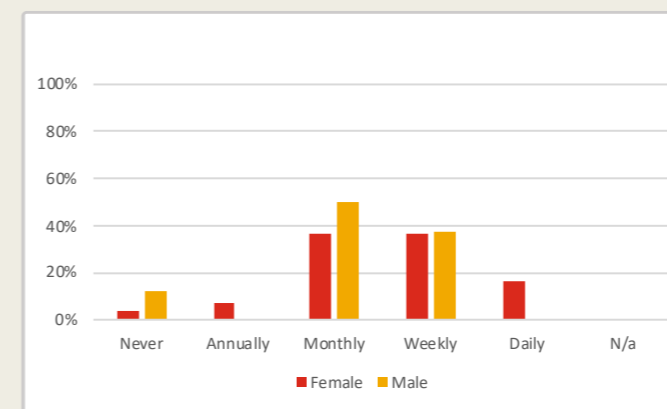
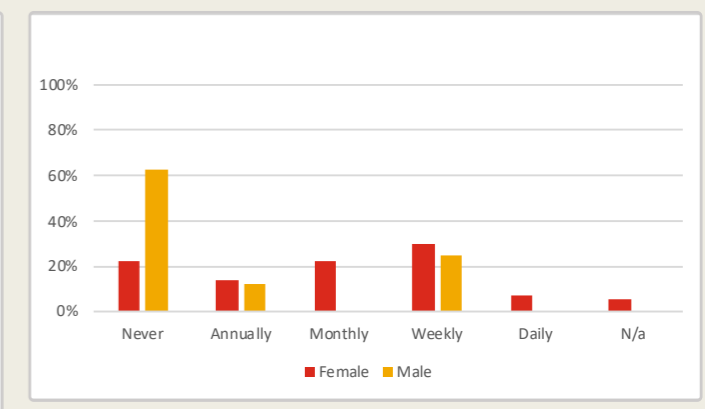


FIGURE 35: PARENT GROUPS (INFORMAL) ACCORDING TO GENDER



Māori engaged with their partner (see Figure 36) at higher rates than Pakeha/NZ European on a daily basis, 75% and 49% respectively. Low rates of ethnicities including Asian, Pasifika and Middle Eastern/Latin American/African engaged in this study, however participants identifying as these ethnicities reported high rates of engagement with their partner on a daily basis; Asian (50%), Pasifika (100%) and Middle Eastern/Latin American/African (100%).

Māori were similar to Pakeha/New Zealand European, in that they were likely to engage with their parents (see Figure 37) on a weekly or monthly basis. Māori were more likely to engage with extended family as a parenting information source than non-Māori. Māori (33%) reported engaging with aunts (see Figure 38) on a monthly basis compared to just 12% of all other ethnicities collectively in the study. This pattern of monthly engagement remained similar for Māori across other extended family members, uncles (33%), cousins (33%), and grandparents (27%). Pakeha/New Zealand European were more likely to report engagement with extended family on an annual basis. Asian parents reported high levels of engagement with friends (see Figure 39) with 100% of the sample reporting weekly engagement, compared to Māori (20%) and Pakeha/New Zealand European (27%).

Overall age did not seem to significantly impact engagement trends, with partner (see Figure 40) being most frequently engaged source over all age groups, followed by friends (see Figure 41) and then own parents. Lowest engagement is recorded amongst extended family sources. However, for grandparents (see Figure 42), 20-29 (28%) engaged more frequently than 30-39 (9%), and 40-49 (8%).

Family type has an impact on how parents engage with personal sources of information. Parents in blended family (100%) settings were most likely to engage with their partner (see Figure 43) on a daily basis followed by those in a nuclear family (57%). Parents in sole parent family and extended family settings reported no engagement with a partner on a daily basis. Sole parent engagement with the partner of their child was lower than other family setting groups; daily (0%), weekly (20%), monthly (10%), annually (10%), never (20%), not applicable (40%). Sole parents (40%) and those in a nuclear setting (37%) were more likely to engage with their own parents (see Figure 44) on a weekly basis; those in blended and extended families reported no weekly engagement. Sole parents (50%) and parents in blended families (57%) reported higher engagements with friends (see Figure 45) on a weekly basis compared to nuclear (33%) and extended (0%). Sole parents were least likely to engage with the parents of the partner (see Figure 46) of their child, 70% reported no engagement.

FIGURE 36: PARTNER ACCORDING TO ETHNICITY

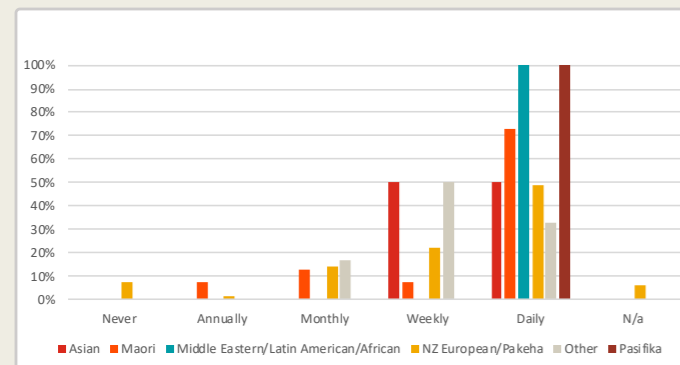


FIGURE 37: OWN PARENTS BY ETHNICITY

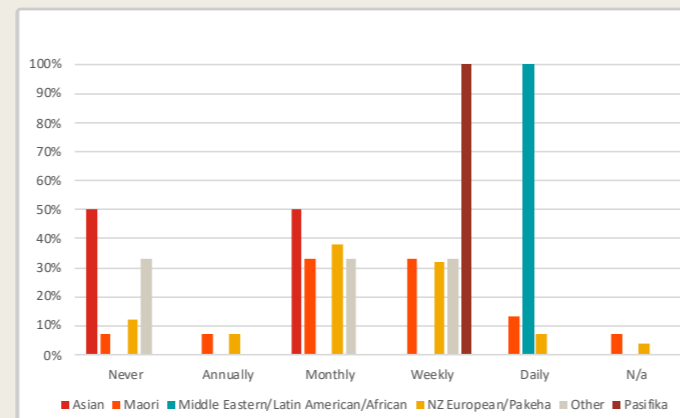


FIGURE 38: AUNTS BY ETHNICITY

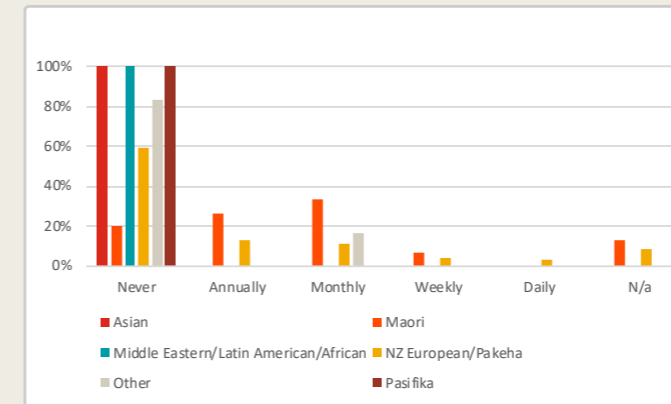


FIGURE 39: FRIENDS BY ETHNICITY

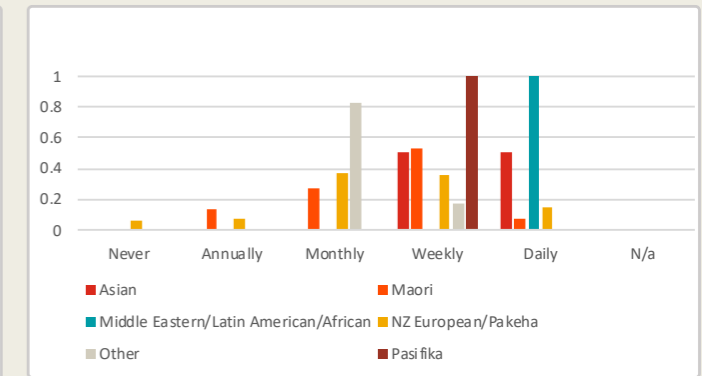


FIGURE 40: PARTNER ACCORDING TO AGE

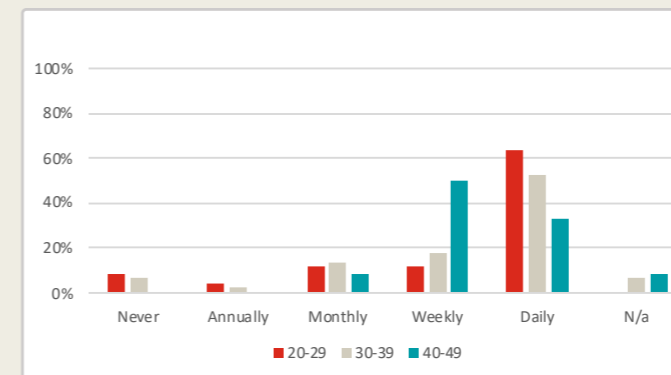


FIGURE 41: FRIENDS ACCORDING TO AGE

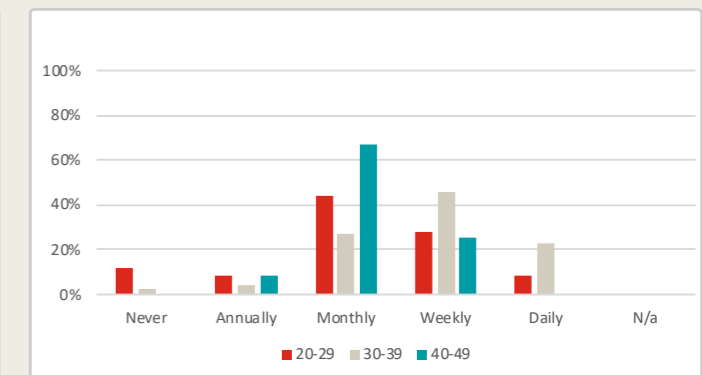


FIGURE 42: GRANDPARENTS ACCORDING TO AGE

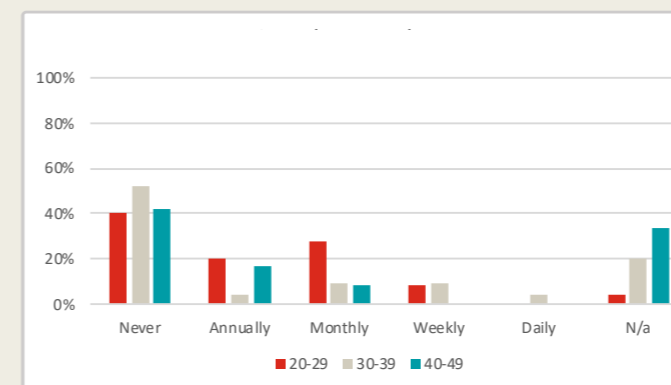


FIGURE 43: PARTNER ACCORDING TO FAMILY TYPE

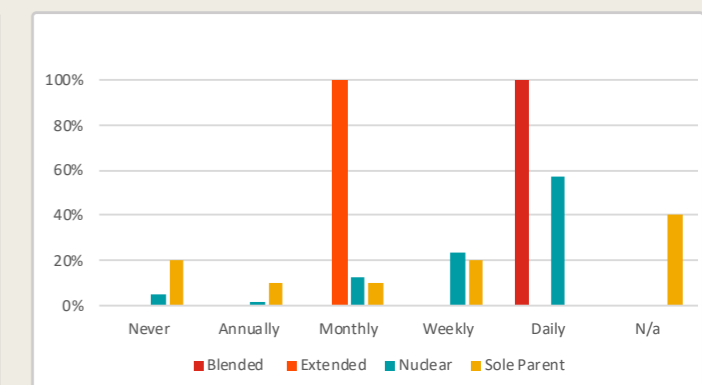


FIGURE 44: OWN PARENTS ACCORDING TO FAMILY TYPE

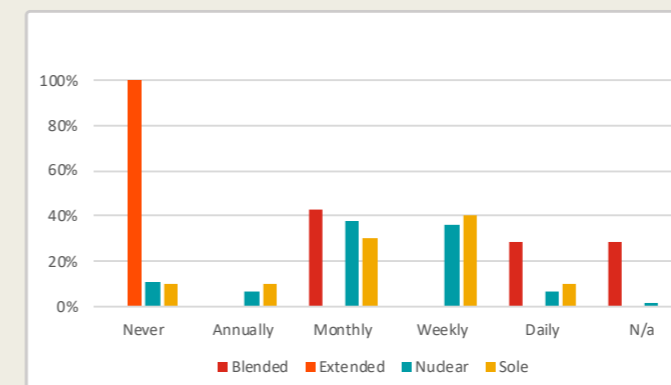


FIGURE 45: FRIENDS ACCORDING TO FAMILY TYPE

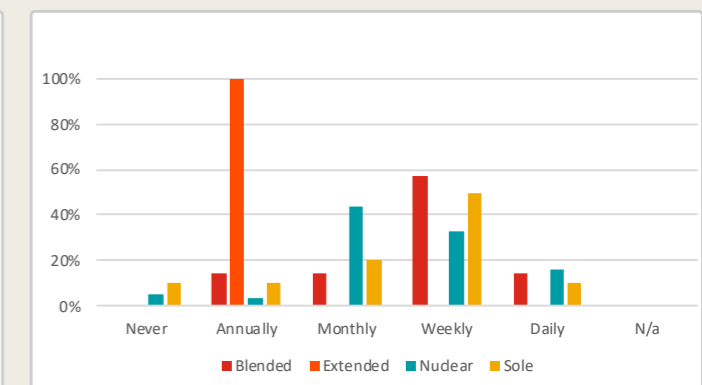


FIGURE 46: PARTNER'S PARENTS ACCORDING TO FAMILY TYPE

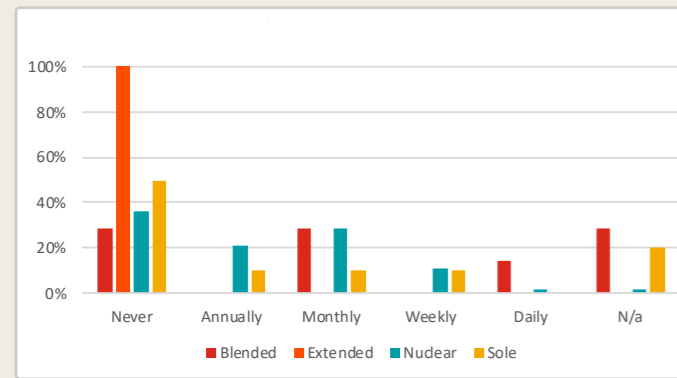
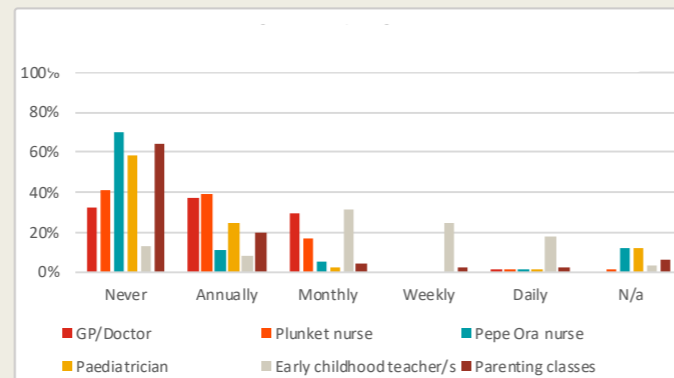


FIGURE 47: PROFESSIONAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION



4.1.7 PROFESSIONAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Parents reported engagement (see Figure 47) across all professional information sources, in order of frequency; early childhood teachers (87%), General Practitioner (68%), Plunket nurse (59%), paediatrician (41%), parenting classes (35%) and Pēpe ora nurse (30%).

The majority of parents (87%) reported engaging with ECE teachers as an information source; 18% on daily basis, 24% on a weekly basis and 32% on a monthly basis. General Practitioners were more likely to be engaged with on a monthly (30%) or annual basis (37%). Low rates of engagement with paediatricians (72%) and parenting classes (71%) were reported (these figures include combined scores of never engaged and not applicable).

Both males and females reported engaging with ECE teachers (see Figure 48) on a regular basis. All fathers in the study reported engaging with ECE teachers as an information source either monthly (75%) or weekly (25%). Mothers also engaged regularly with 20% engaging daily, 24% - weekly, and 27% - monthly. A small percentage of mothers (9%) reported never engaging with their child's early childhood teacher. Engagement with the family doctor (GP) (see Figure 49) was similar between both males (62%) and females (68%). Males reported least engagement with parenting classes – just 13% (1 participant) reporting engagement (see Figure 50).

Ethnicity did not appear to affect overall patterns of engagement. Some patterns include; Māori (20%) and Pakeha/NZ European (29%) reporting some engagement with parenting classes (see Figure 51), compared to no engagement by Asian or Pasifika parents. Similar to Pakeha/NZ European, Māori were most likely to engage with ECE teachers on weekly or monthly basis, whereas Pasifika reported no engagement with ECE teachers. Māori (33%) were most likely to engage with a paediatrician (see Figure 53) on an annual basis compared to all other ethnicities (23% collectively). One third of Māori engaged with a Pēpe Ora nurse (see Figure 54) compared to a Plunket nurse (40%) (see Figure 55). Fourteen percent of Pakeha/NZ European reporting engaging with a Pēpe ora nurse, with the majority of non-Māori engaging with Plunket (61%).

Income was most likely to impact on whether parents engaged health professionals for information than other channels. Those in the under 50k income bracket reported the lowest engagement with their GP (48%), compared to 50-100k (77%) and over 100k (74%) (see Figure 56). Seventy-two percent of parents in the under 50k bracket reported never engaging with a paediatrician (see Figure 57). Participants in the under 50k and 50-100k income brackets were most likely to report engaging with their child's ECE teacher (see Figure 58) on a daily or monthly basis. Compared to those earning over 100k who engaged most frequently on a monthly basis. Income did not appear to significantly effect whether parents engaged in parenting classes (see Figure 59), all brackets reported some engagement within 10% of each other; under 50k (30%), 50-100k (40%), and over 100k (33%).

FIGURE 48: ECE TEACHERS ACCORDING TO GENDER

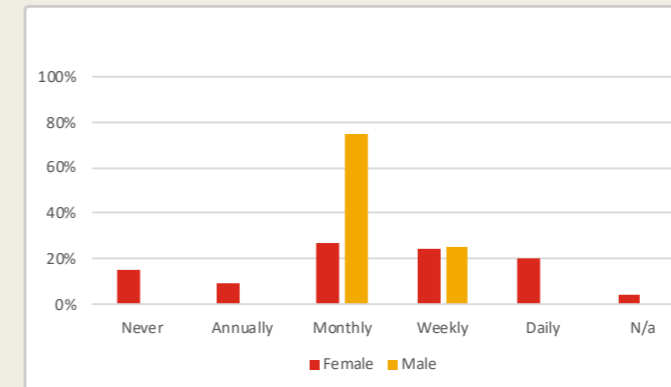


FIGURE 49: GP/DOCTOR ACCORDING TO GENDER

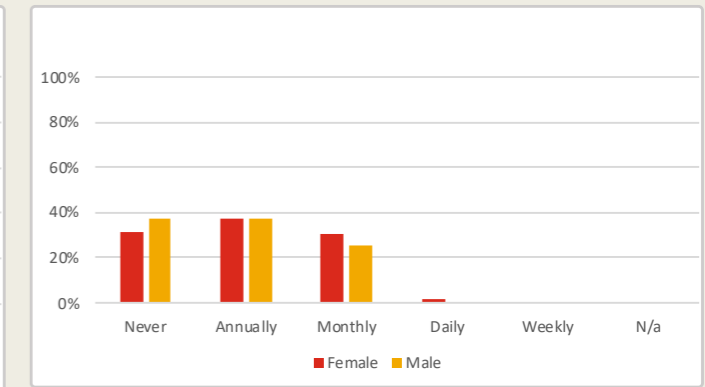


FIGURE 50: PARENTING CLASSES ACCORDING TO GENDER

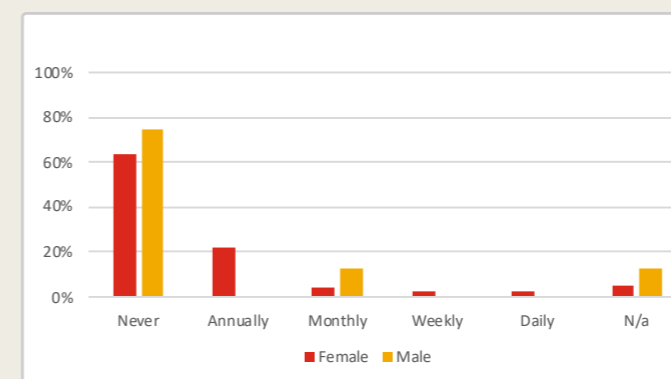


FIGURE 51: PARENTING CLASSES ACCORDING TO ETHNICITY

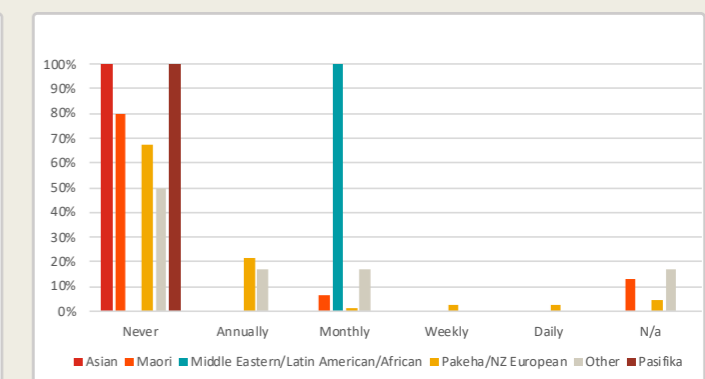


FIGURE 52: ECE TEACHERS ACCORDING TO ETHNICITY

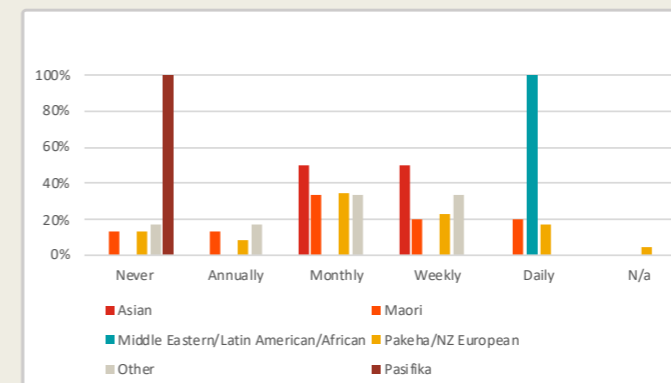


FIGURE 53: PAEDIATRICIAN ACCORDING TO ETHNICITY

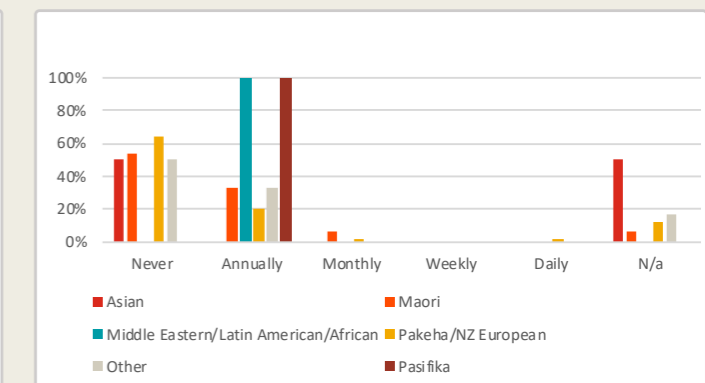


FIGURE 54: PĒPE ORA NURSE ACCORDING TO ETHNICITY

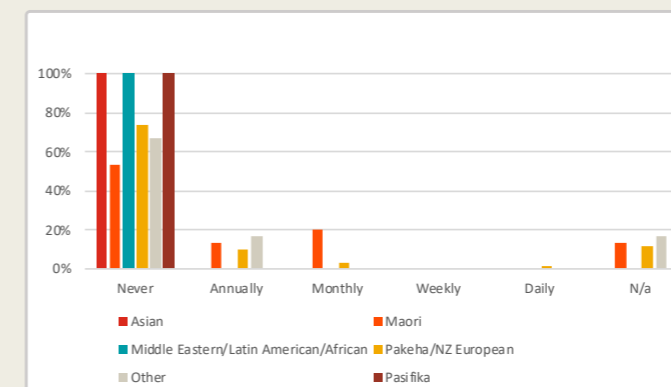


FIGURE 55: PLUNKET NURSE ACCORDING TO ETHNICITY

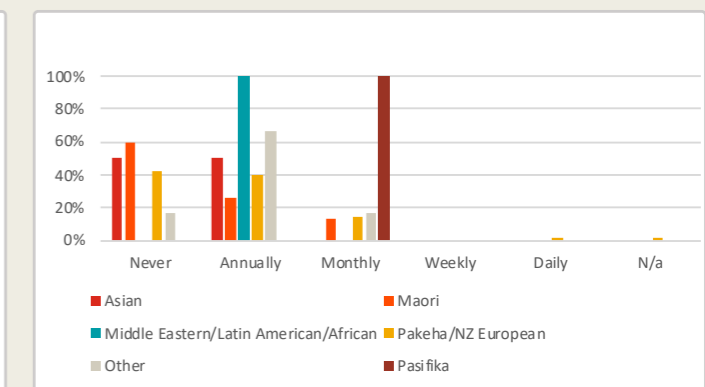


FIGURE 56: GP/DOCTOR ACCORDING TO INCOME

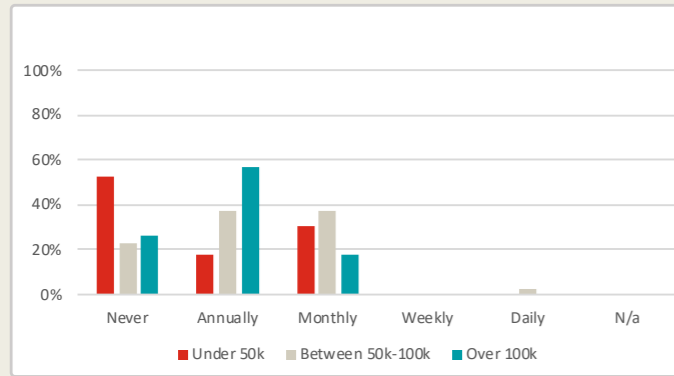


FIGURE 57: PAEDIATRICIAN ACCORDING TO ETHNICITY

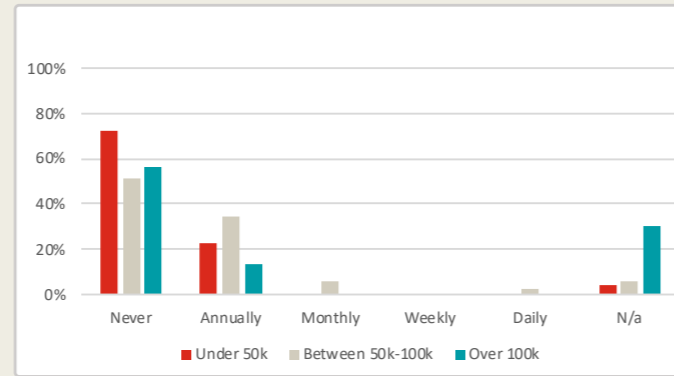


FIGURE 58: ECE TEACHERS ACCORDING TO INCOME

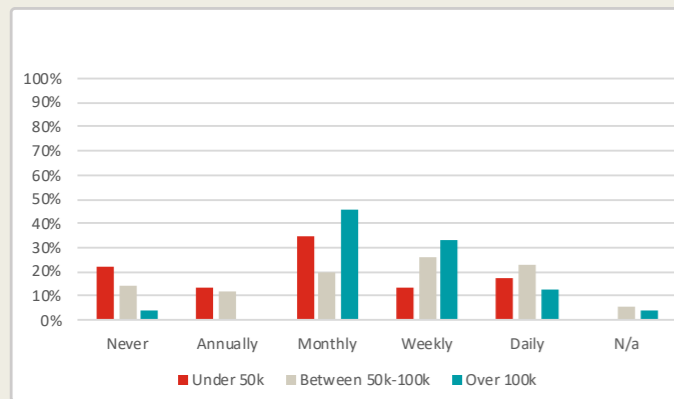


FIGURE 59: PARENTING CLASSES ACCORDING TO INCOME

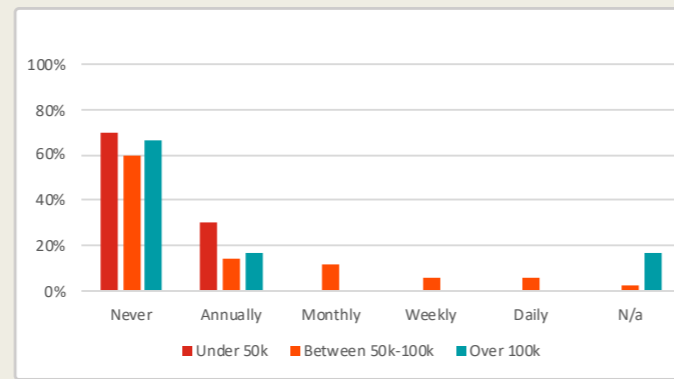
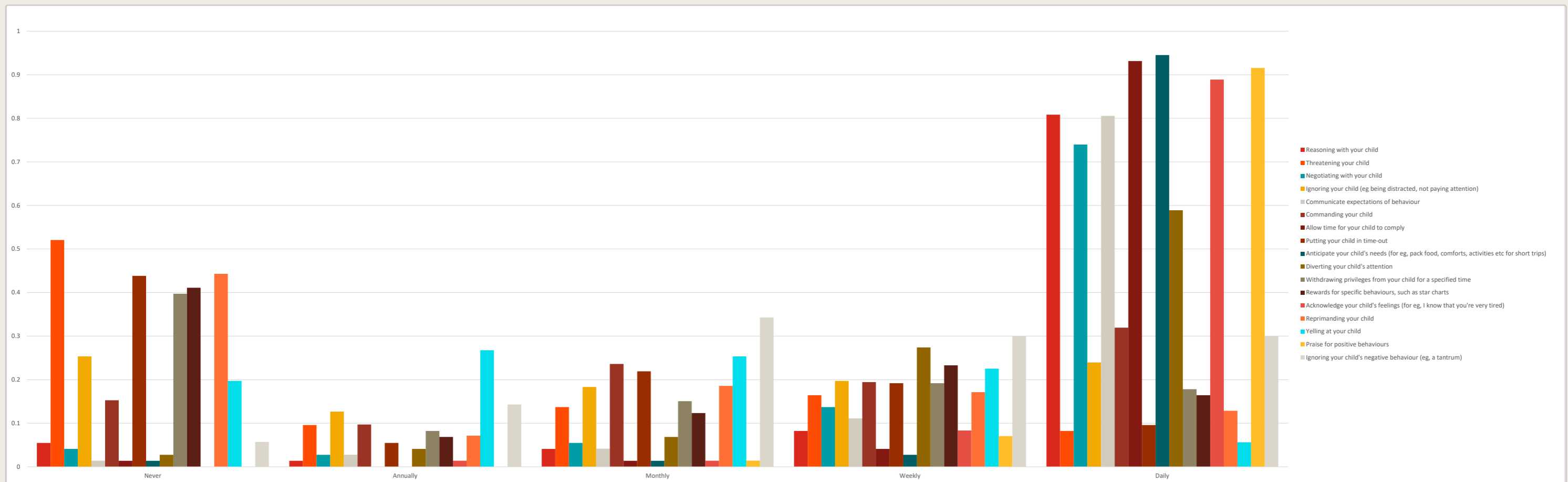


FIGURE 60: DISCIPLINE PRACTICES



4.1.8 DISCIPLINE PRACTICES

The following data analysis explores participant's responses to discipline practices parents choose to use when seeking to guide, stop or change their child's behaviour. Fewer numbers of participants responded to this question, therefore the analysis is based on a sample of 73 participants compared to 84 participants in the information and demographic analysis sections. The number of males (8) remained consistent through to completion of the survey.

Most participants report using a variety of discipline practices on a daily basis. The Discipline Practices Graph (see Figure 60) shows changes in frequency of practices. Whilst all practices included in the survey were used at some point across parents responding to the survey, some clear patterns exist. Overall, practices that are coercive or behaviourist (Carroll & Hamilton, 2016; Holden, et al., 2017) in nature were more likely to be listed as never used. These include; threatening (53%), time out (44%),

reprimanding (44%), rewards for specific behaviours (41%), and withdrawing privileges (40%). On a daily basis, parents were most likely to use non-coercive and positive behaviours (Russell & Wood, 2002; Holden, et al., 2017); anticipating child's needs (95%), allowing time for child to comply (93%), praise for positive behaviours (92%), acknowledging child's feelings (89%), communicating expectations to child (81%), reasoning with child and negotiating with child (81%). Whilst the positive behaviours were more prevalent, all discipline responses were recorded as occurring on a daily basis. Seventy-eight percent of parents reported yelling at their child, however the frequency of this was lower, most likely to occur annually (27%) monthly (25%), or weekly (23%) compared to just 6% on a daily basis. Ignoring a child's negative behaviour, such as tantrums, was most likely to occur weekly (34%) or daily (30%). Ignoring child's needs due to distraction was more likely to occur on a daily basis (24%), than weekly (20%), monthly (18%) or annually (13%).

The following patterns were found based on gender. Males (100%) are most likely to reason with their child on a daily basis (see Figure 61). Communicating their expectations also rated highly at 88% on a daily basis (see Figure 62). Half of the males in this study reported commanding their child on a daily basis (see Figure 63). Both males (100%) and females (88%) reported high rates of anticipating their child's needs (see Figure 64). Similarly, reasonably even rates of both males (88%) and females (89%) reported acknowledging their child's feelings on a daily basis (see Figure 65). Males (75%) were more likely to offer rewards (see Figure 66) for specific behaviours than females (43%), whereas females (60%) were more likely to divert their child's attention (see Figure 67) than males (50%). Yelling (see Figure 68) was reported by both males (75%) and females (81%), however frequency of this behaviour was less often and most likely to occur monthly (50%) for males and split between monthly (25%) or annually (30%) for females. Males (63%) and females (55%) report reprimanding (see

Figure 69) their child, females are most likely to do this on a daily basis, whereas for males it is weekly. Both males (63%) and females (65%) report usage of time out (see Figure 70) as a strategy, and both are most likely to use this strategy on a monthly basis.

Taking ethnicity into account does not seem to alter overall patterns already identified. All ethnicities report being attuned to their child's feelings and needs. On a daily basis most parents reported acknowledging their child's feelings (see Figure 71); Asian (100%), Māori (100%), Middle Eastern/Latin American/African (100%), Pasifika (100%), Other (100%), Pakeha/NZ European (87%). Anticipating their child's (see Figure 72) needs was used at high rates by all ethnicities on a daily basis; Asian (100%), Māori (100%), Middle Eastern/Latin American/African (100%), Pasifika (100%), Other (100%), Pakeha/NZ European (93%). Similar rates of daily use apply to praise (see Figure 73) for their child's positive behaviours; Asian (100%), Māori (100%), Middle Eastern/Latin American/African (100%), Pasifika (100%), Other (83%), Pakeha/NZ European (90%).

FIGURE 65: ACKNOWLEDGE CHILD'S FEELINGS ACCORDING TO GENDER

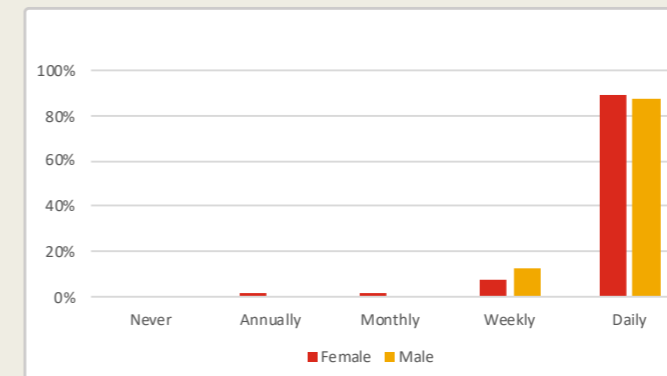


FIGURE 66: REWARDS FOR SPECIFIC BEHAVIOURS ACCORDING TO GENDER

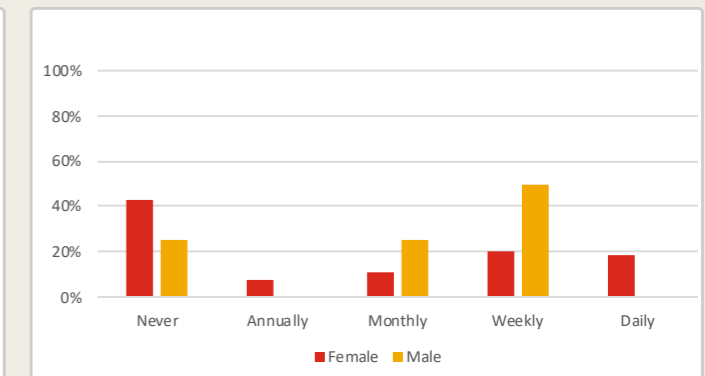


FIGURE 67: DIVERTING CHILD'S ATTENTION ACCORDING TO GENDER

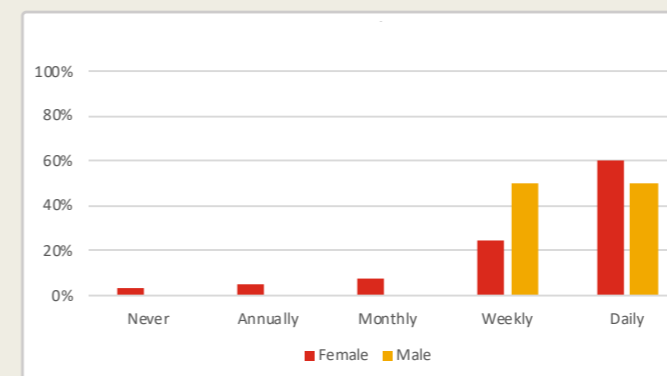


FIGURE 68: YELLING AT CHILD ACCORDING TO GENDER

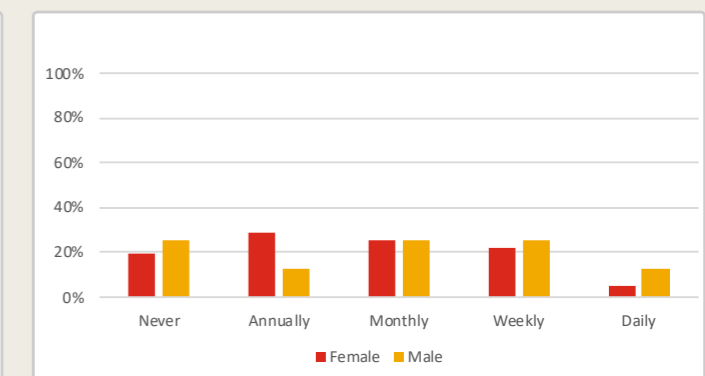


FIGURE 61: REASONING WITH CHILD ACCORDING TO GENDER

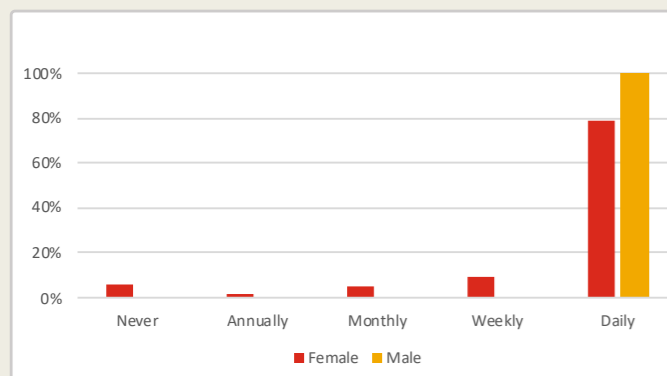


FIGURE 62: COMMUNICATE EXPECTATIONS ACCORDING TO GENDER

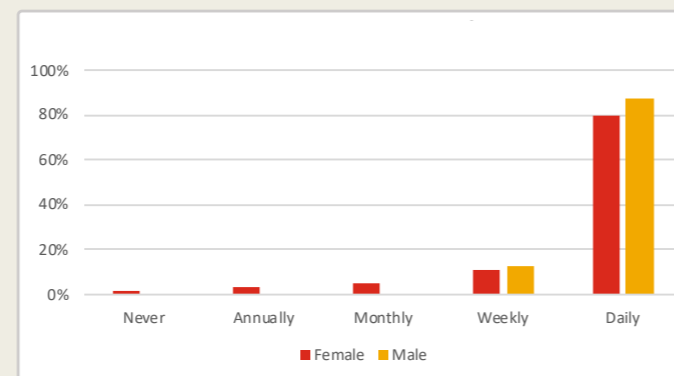


FIGURE 69: REPRIMANDING CHILD ACCORDING TO GENDER

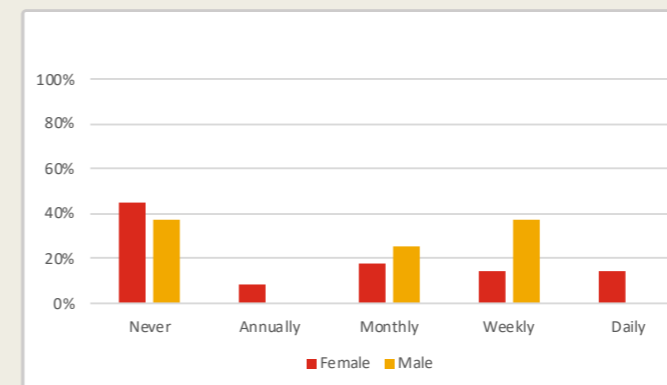


FIGURE 70: PUTTING CHILD IN TIME-OUT ACCORDING TO GENDER

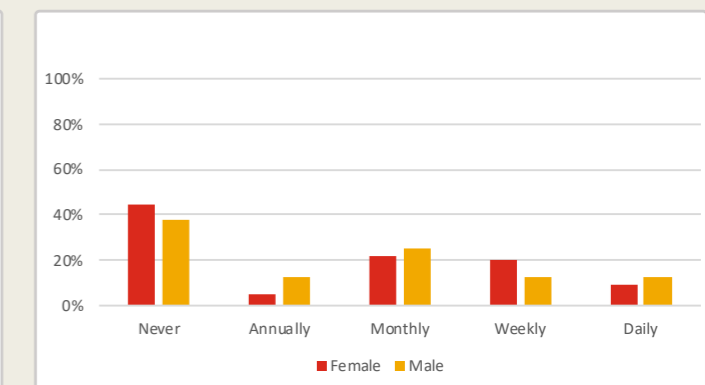


FIGURE 63: COMMANDING CHILD ACCORDING TO GENDER

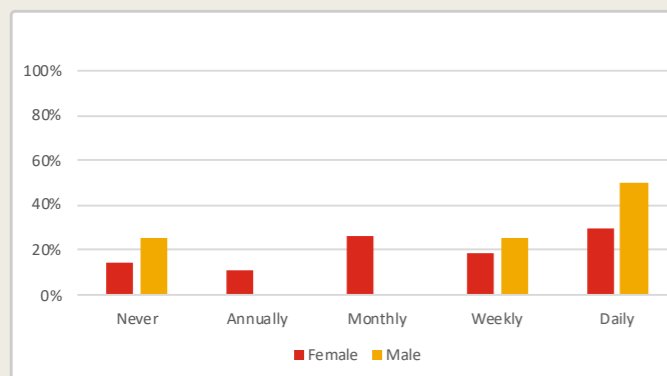


FIGURE 64: ANTICIPATE CHILD'S NEEDS ACCORDING TO GENDER

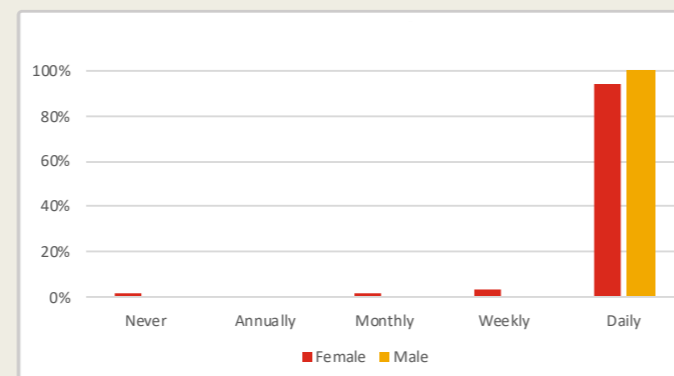


FIGURE 71: ACKNOWLEDGE CHILD'S FEELINGS ACCORDING TO ETHNICITY

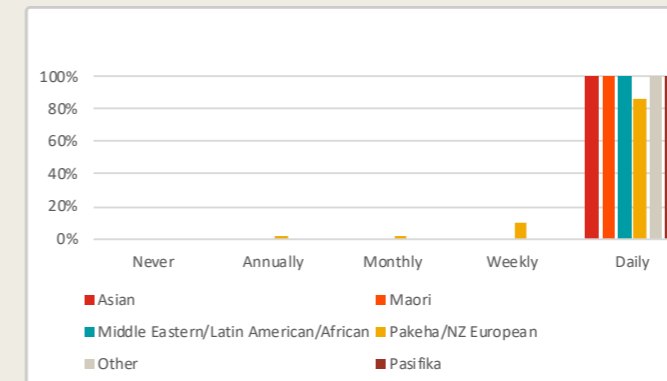
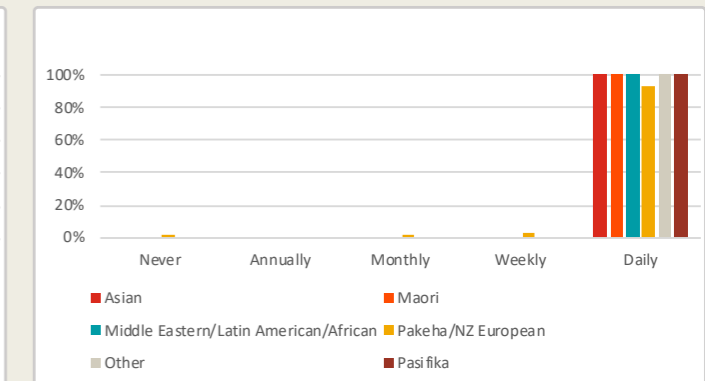


FIGURE 72: ANTICIPATE CHILD'S NEEDS ACCORDING TO ETHNICITY



Reasoning with child (see Figure 74) and allowing child time to comply were behaviours that were frequently used across most ethnicities on a daily basis except for Pasifika where these strategies were used on a monthly basis. Reasoning; Asian (100%), Middle Eastern/Latin American/African (100%), Pakeha/NZ European (84%), Māori (75%), Other (67%), Pasifika – monthly (100%). Time to comply (see Figure 75); Asian (100%), Middle Eastern/Latin American/African (100%), Other (100%), Pakeha/NZ European (93%), Māori (92%), Pasifika – monthly (100%).

Ignoring negative behaviours such as tantrums (see Figure 76) was a strategy that appeared to have less agreement across ethnicities. Māori are more likely to ignore negative behaviours and divert child's attention (see Figure 77) than Pakeha/NZ European. Forty-two percent of Māori use this strategy daily compared to 38% of Pakeha/NZ European who use it weekly. Asian parents were split between 50% monthly and 50% annually. 100% of Pasifika and Middle Eastern/Latin American/African report

using this strategy on a daily basis. Diverting child's attention; on a daily basis - Pasifika (100%), Māori (67%), and Pakeha/NZ European (56%). Asian split between daily (50%) and weekly (50%). Rewards (see Figure 78), such as star charts, report higher use by Māori (75%), Pasifika (100%), Asian (100%), and Middle Eastern/Latin American/African (100%) ethnicities.

Pakeha/NZ European (52%) reported lower rates of using time out as a strategy (see Figure 79), compared to Māori at 83%. When Māori or Pakeha/NZ European do use this strategy, it is most likely to be on a monthly basis. All ethnicities report commanding their child (see Figure 80) at some point. For Māori (50%) and Pakeha/NZ European (32%) they are most likely to use it on a daily basis.

Two coercive strategies, threatening (see Figure 81) and yelling were used to a lesser extent by all ethnicities. Threatening; for Pakeha this was most likely to occur on a monthly (25%) basis, Māori reasonably evenly split across annually (25%), weekly

(25%) and daily (25%), Asian (50%) weekly, Middle Eastern/Latin American/African (100%) monthly, Pasifika (100%) never. Yelling is reasonably evenly split across all frequencies. It is as likely to occur annually as it is monthly or weekly.

Based on education similar patterns of discipline response continue. Positive or non-coercive discipline strategies are reported to be frequently used at high rates across all education groups.

Whilst consistent patterns exist on the use of non-coercive and positive discipline responses, there is less agreement or consistency on the use of the remaining responses. Ignoring child's negative behaviours (see Figure 82) record lower rates of use. For those that do use this response it is more likely to occur on a weekly basis; diploma (60%) and NCEA (30%). Those with a graduate degree or a post graduate qualification are evenly split between daily and weekly frequencies. Whereas Trade certificate holders reported using the strategy either weekly or monthly.

FIGURE 73: PRAISE FOR POSITIVE BEHAVIOURS ACCORDING TO ETHNICITY

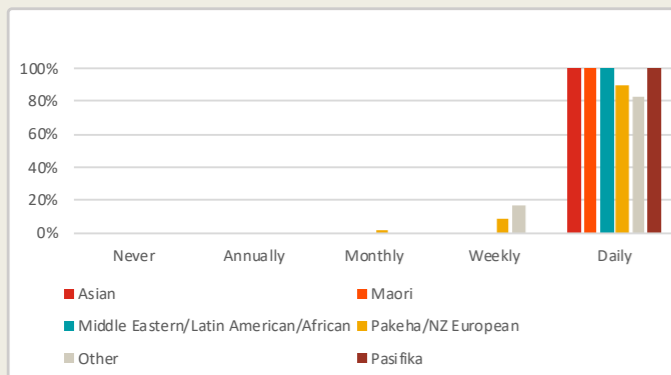


FIGURE 74: REASONING WITH CHILD ACCORDING TO ETHNICITY

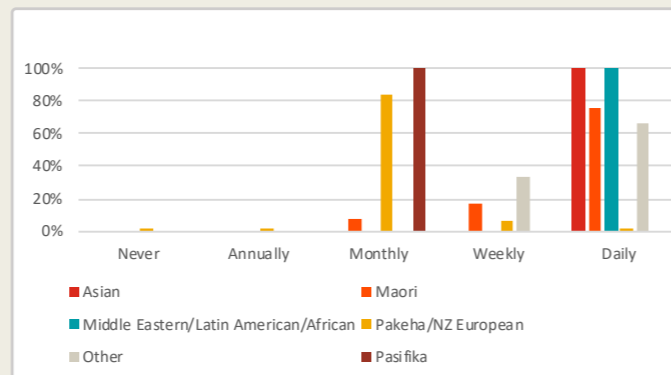


FIGURE 75: ALLOW TIME FOR CHILD TO COMPLY ACCORDING TO ETHNICITY

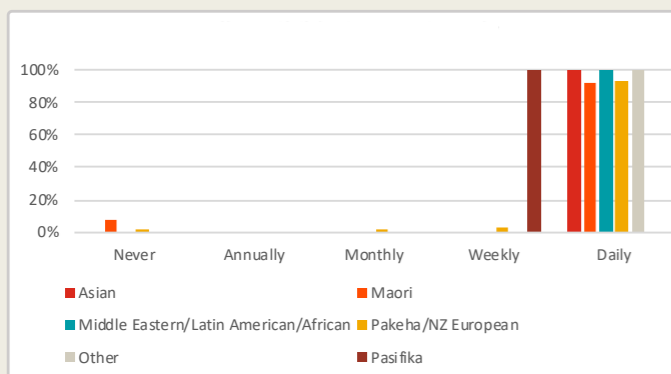


FIGURE 76: IGNORING CHILD'S NEGATIVE BEHAVIOURS ACCORDING TO ETHNICITY

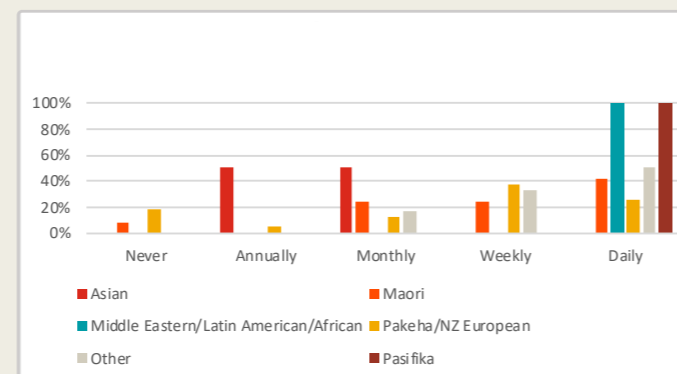


FIGURE 77: DIVERTING CHILD'S ATTENTION ACCORDING TO ETHNICITY

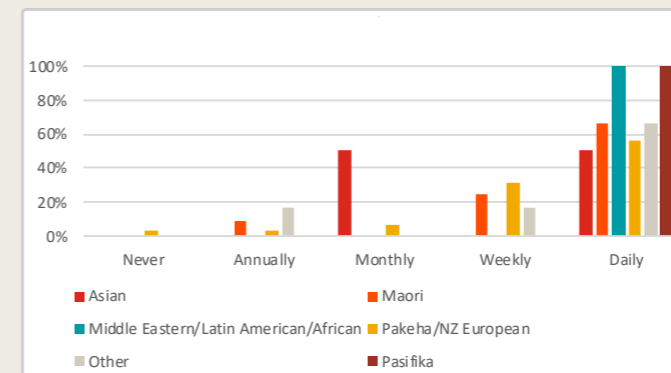


FIGURE 78: REWARDS FOR SPECIFIC BEHAVIOURS

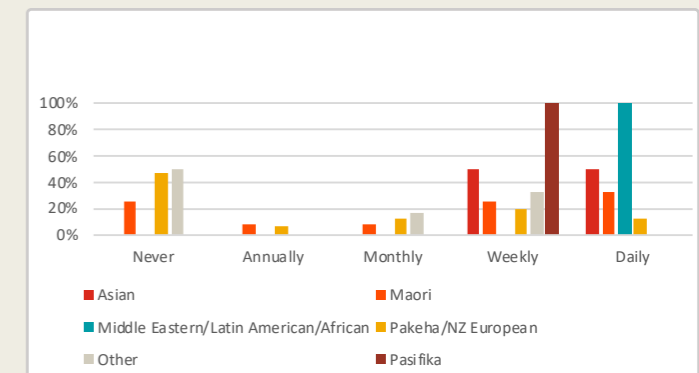


FIGURE 79: PUTTING CHILD IN TIME-OUT ACCORDING TO ETHNICITY

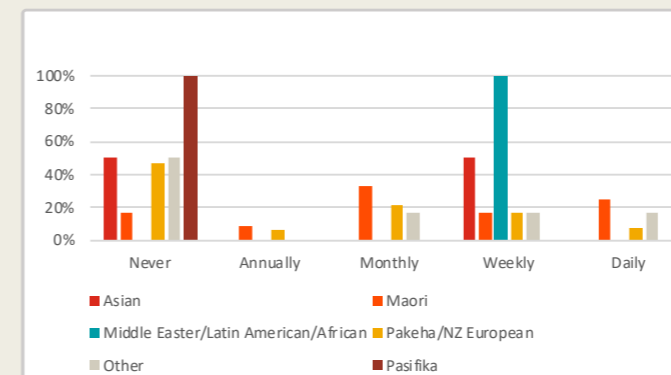


FIGURE 80: COMMANDING CHILD ACCORDING TO ETHNICITY

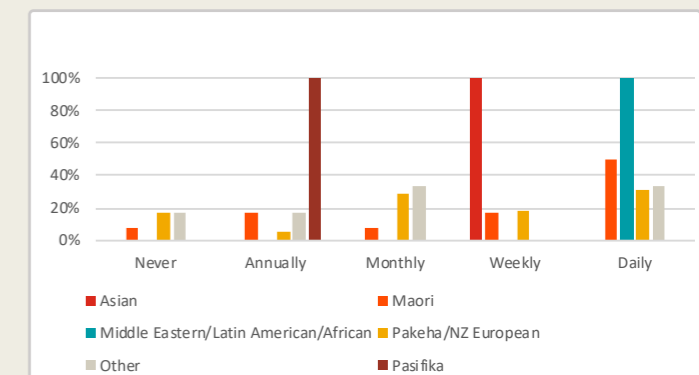


FIGURE 81: THREATENING CHILD ACCORDING TO ETHNICITY

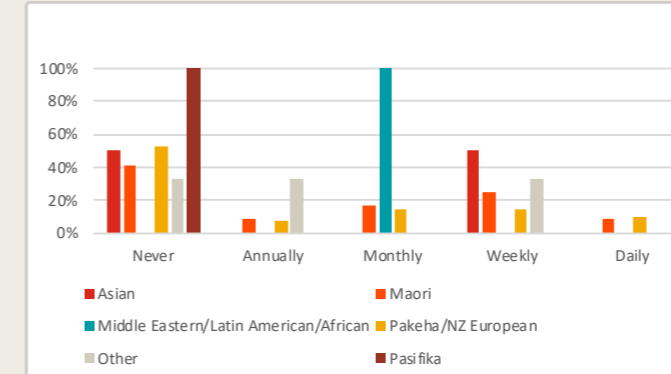


FIGURE 82: IGNORING CHILD'S NEGATIVE BEHAVIOUR ACCORDING TO EDUCATION

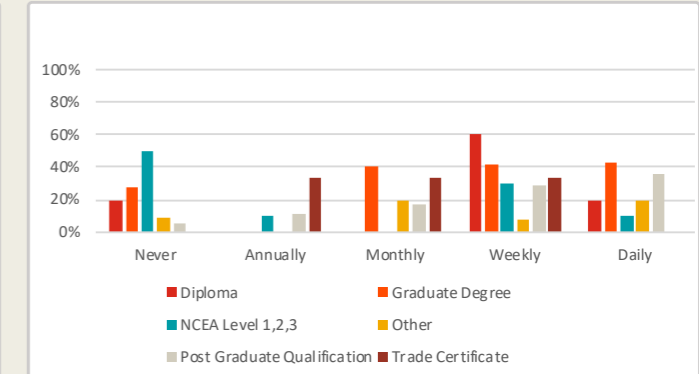


FIGURE 83: DIVERT CHILD'S ATTENTION ACCORDING TO EDUCATION

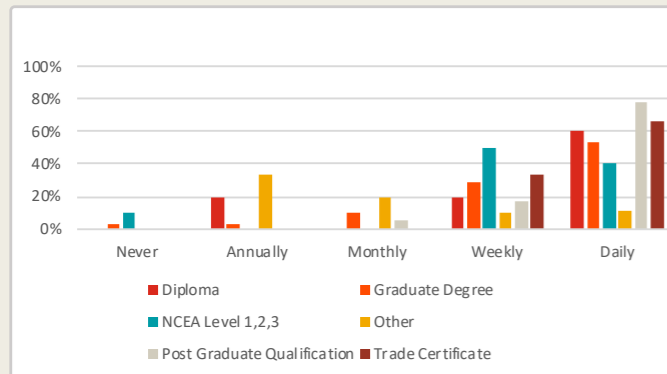


FIGURE 84: WITHDRAWING PRIVILEGES ACCORDING TO EDUCATION

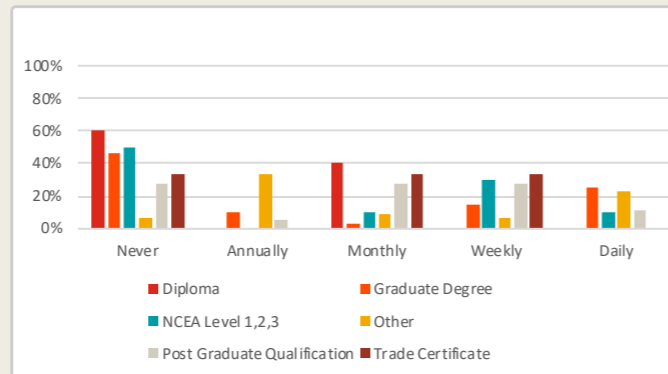


FIGURE 85: REWARDS FOR SPECIFIC BEHAVIOURS ACCORDING TO EDUCATION

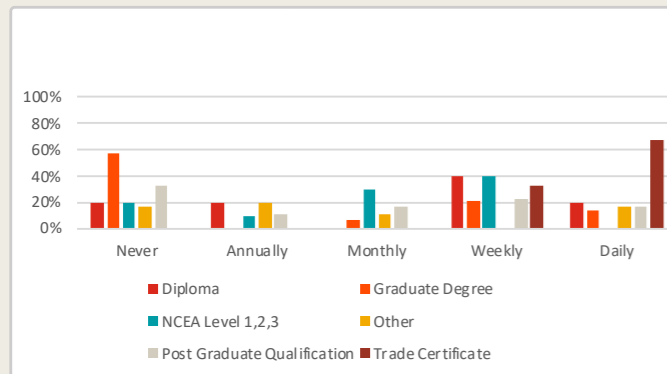


FIGURE 86: PUTTING CHILD IN TIME-OUT ACCORDING TO EDUCATION

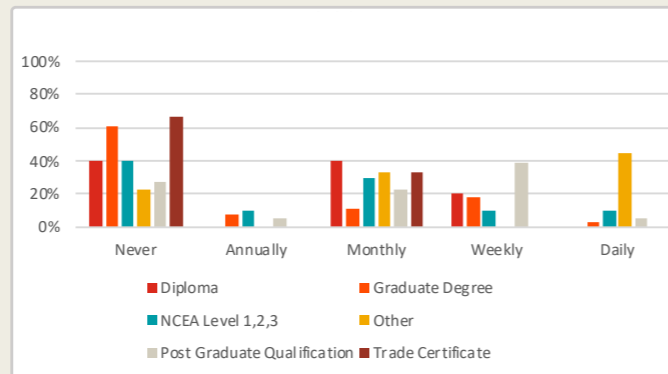


FIGURE 87: REPRIMANDING CHILD ACCORDING TO EDUCATION

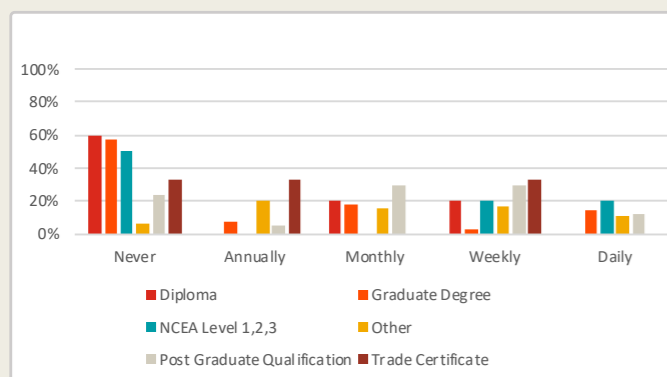
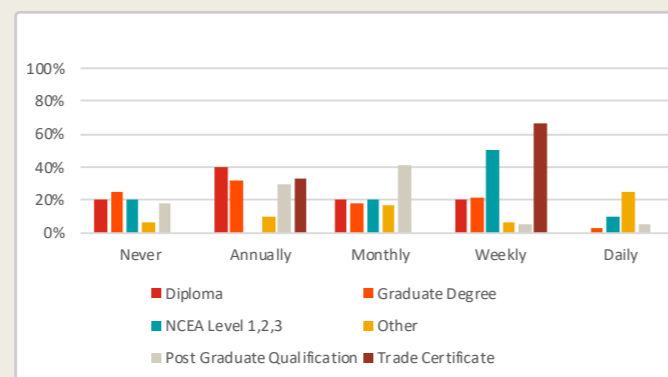


FIGURE 88: YELLING AT CHILD ACCORDING TO EDUCATION



Diverting the child's attention (see Figure 83) is used most frequently on a daily basis by those that hold a post graduate qualification (77%). All other groups reported being most likely to use it to some extent on a weekly basis. Withdrawing privileges (see Figure 84) also recorded lower rates of use. For those that reported using this strategy, it was more likely to occur on a weekly basis. Those with NCEA or a diploma qualification report higher rates of never using this strategy, 50% and 60% respectively.

Similar to diverting attention (see Figure 83) and withdrawing privileges (see Figure 84), rewarding specific behaviours was reported to be used less frequently and sporadically across all groups. Collectively, 41% report never using this strategy. Those with a trade certificate recorded most frequent use of rewarding specific behaviours (see Figure 85) on a daily basis (66%), compared to NCEA (40%) or those with graduate degrees (21%) both on a weekly basis.

Time out is a strategy (see Figure 86) that is less popular but still in use across all groups. Of the discipline response options offered in this study, those with a graduate degree were least likely to use time out with 61% reporting never using this response. Compared to those with a post-graduate qualification (39%) who report using it on a weekly basis. Reprimanding (see Figure 87) is also used less frequently by fewer parents across all groups. When reprimanding was used it was most likely to be used on a monthly basis; post graduate qualification (29%), other (21%), diploma (20%), and graduate degree (18%).

Yelling (see Figure 88) was reported to be used by most parents at some point across all education groups. The frequency of yelling was sporadic and is split across all possible frequencies, annually, monthly, weekly, daily, never; although when used most likely to occur monthly (25%) or annually (27%).

4.2 QUALITATIVE SURVEY RESPONSE ANALYSIS

As part of the Online Positive Parenting Survey, participants were given opportunities to share qualitative comments aimed at providing further context for the quantitative data. Some interesting themes and insights arose as a result of these qualitative comments. Comments have been collated and summarised under the following sub-headings.

4.2.1 HOW PARENTS DESCRIBE THEIR CHILDREN

Participants were given the opportunity to share a comment that describes their family (see Question 5, Appendix One, p. 75). In their description, 25% of parents shared descriptive comments about their child or children. These comments could include personality types, age and stage, strengths or challenges. The following comments share some examples; "Two year old boy, very boisterous, but still a mumma's boy," "An incredible boy, kind and loving, quick learner and full of life, he is quick to anger and has selective hearing!!!", "Beautiful vibrant fire cracker two year old. She has a wild and free personality that I'm trying to nurture and not squash."

Parents appeared to be attuned to their child's emotional temperaments and reflected their perceptions in their comments. In their descriptions several parents referenced their child having big emotions, for example; "My two year old is very intelligent for his age, ... he feels his emotions quite strongly, tantrumer, lover, happy, boundary pusher!", "She has big emotions and sometimes does things like drawing on the wall, or other not ideal outlets, ... she is friendly and very affectionate."

For other parents their descriptions were brief sharing more functional information such as, 'two-year-old boy' or 'Mum to three boys, a 20-month-old son, a five-year-old, and an eight-year-old son.'

4.2.3 LINKS TO EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION (ECE)

As part of their family descriptions, 17% of participants volunteered information about their links to the ECE sector either as teachers or training to be a teacher.

4.2.4 HELPFUL SOURCES OF DIGITAL INFORMATION

In addition to the list of digital sources provided in the survey, participants were given an option to share a comment on how useful they perceived particular sources to be. In line with patterns reflected in the quantitative data, Facebook was cited as being the most popular source, followed by specific recommendations of experts such as Nathan Wallis, Janet Lansbury or Pennie Brownlee. Websites were shared as helpful information sources and all other digital channels were referenced to a lesser degree. For example, three participants referred to following influencers, another three shared positive comments about YouTube. Three parents specifically referenced feeling connected to peers via their Facebook connections. Examples of comments include; "Facebook, as there is a broad range of people," "I follow the Mum Hub on Facebook, I find it helpful," "Learnt from an influencer about 1000 hours outdoor project" "Facebook and Instagram because people share likeminded parenting stuff with you. You know you're not alone in the struggles that sometimes arise."

Whilst parents have been able to share their views and experiences on their positive discipline practices, and sources of information that have supported their practices, child rights were not specifically referenced in relation to positive parenting by any parents in this study. This finding replicates earlier findings by Russell and Wood (2002) where parents did not refer to child rights as driving factor for choosing not to use physical punishment when disciplining their child.

4.2.5 UNHELPFUL SOURCES OF DIGITAL INFORMATION

To ensure a balanced perspective was captured, participants were given the opportunity to provide comments on sources of digital information they found to be unhelpful. Participants reported finding all digital sources helpful to some extent, and conversely all digital sources were also referenced as being unhelpful.

Quantitative data collected shows Facebook to be a popular information source, but not all parents are in agreement. Facebook was specifically referenced as being unhelpful by 7% of participants. Some examples of reasons given include; "Facebook, as false news is often shared," "FB (Facebook) can be very unhelpful as it gathers a lot of negative/ignorant commenting very easily."

Other comments on unhelpful sources include; "Influencers ... seems irrelevant to parenting and toxic to individuality," "Mum YouTubers ... look at my perfect life and I can afford everything. These ones can be a bit depressing," "Websites – hoha to use," "Instagram portrays false perfection which parenting certainly isn't!" "Reading too many blogs can make you over critical of yourself!"

A small number of parents (4%) stated they did not go online for advice, "I do not believe in using the internet to parent my children." Some parents (7%) were ambivalent about unhelpful or negative sources as they felt they could easily ignore them if they had to. For example; "Nothing particularly as I just ignore anything that didn't work for me."

The findings based on the qualitative comments are consistent with trends identified in the quantitative data analysis.



Photo credit: Thiago Cerqueira

CHAPTER FIVE

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW
QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

Several key themes arose from the semi-structured interviews. The purpose of these interviews was to gain deeper insights into the thinking that sits behind parents' decisions to use positive discipline practices and how they are informed and influenced in their choices.

5.1 SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

Maximum variation sampling (Creswell, 2002) was used to identify the three parents to participate in the semi-structured interview based on demographic data shared in the Online Positive Parenting Practices survey. All interview participants were based in the Wairarapa region due to the available resources of the researcher. The interview participants have been given pseudonyms to protect their identities. The demographic make-up of each interviewee is as follows.

Interviewee One (Celine); gender is female, her parenting role is reported as mother, she is aged 30-39, and identifies her ethnicity as Pakeha/NZ European. The family income is less than 50k, her highest education qualification is a diploma and she is currently studying. Celine owns her own home and lives in an urban area. Her family type is blended and she has three children; girl (11 years), girl (9 years), boy (20 months). Answers given in the interview questions were based on her youngest child.

Interviewee Two (Chelsea); gender is female, her parenting role is reported as mother, she is aged 20-29, and identifies her ethnicity as Pakeha/NZ European, NCEA is her highest education qualification. The family income is between 50-100k, Chelsea's family type is blended, and she lives in a rental home in an urban area. Chelsea is a fulltime parent at home, with two children; boy (2 years, 6 months) and boy (10 months). Answers given in the interview questions were based on her oldest child.

Interviewee Three (Dayna); gender is female, parenting role is reported as mother, she is aged 20-29, and identifies her ethnicity as Māori and has a post-graduate qualification. The family income is over 100k, and Dayna works fulltime. She is renting her home and lives in a rural area. Her family type is reported as nuclear and she has two children;

girl (4 years, 5 months), boy (2 years, 9 months). Answers to the interview questions were largely based on the youngest child, however the oldest child was also referenced at times.

5.2 REASONS FOR NOT USING PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT TO DISCIPLINE THEIR CHILD

Based on her experiences with her older children, Celine found physical punishment to be unnecessary. Celine believes smacking is not acceptable socially or legally and chooses to use more effective practices that don't involve smacking or harsh punishment. She reflected on her upbringing as a child and had decided to bring her children up differently without physical punishment. She felt that smacking your child is not okay as it is physical abuse. She also stated that choosing not to smack is stopping the cycle. However, using other practices still meant setting boundaries for your child.

Chelsea also reflected on her own upbringing as a determinant for not using physical punishment, "It is different now to how we were brought up." She did not see the point of physical punishment and did not want her child to fear her, "I don't want my child to be scared of me, and not to think as soon as they do something wrong, I am going to hurt them."

Similar to the other interview participants, Dayna reflected on own upbringing and felt that physical punishment was not, "... emotionally nice, that it didn't really work, it didn't have positive results and was not beneficial". These feelings led to not wanting to use it with her own children. Similar to Celine, prior parenting experience was another reason given by Dayna. Her oldest child had a temperament that was easy to interact and communicate with, so that was the strategy that the parent began with. She continued using it with her second child despite his temperament differing from his older sister's.

5.3 DISCIPLINE PRACTICES PARENTS CHOOSE TO USE

Celine typically uses three key strategies, (1) communicating expectations to child, if the behaviour persists (2) attempting to divert the child's attention away from the current behaviour, if this doesn't work (3) put the child into 'time out'. The parent's philosophy of time out is that it is only used as a last resort when other strategies are not successful in changing the child's behaviour. The child is put in safe space, in this example their cot is the safe space. The time they spend there is one minute as this directly relates to the child's age of one year old. According to Celine, the child doesn't like time out so is responsive to this behaviour. A Plunket nurse had shared this strategy with the parent in relation to her first child and the parent had used it from this time (around ten years).

Strategies used by Chelsea included; communicating with her child to stop specific behaviours, diverting attention, removing him from the situation or taking away from him something he is not allowed. For example, removing pens to stop him from drawing on the wall. When this continued, the parent withdrew the privilege of being allowed to draw with pens for a certain time. Negotiating with the child was reported as another common strategy. The parent reflected that her child was quite aware when they were doing something 'wrong' and they would run away. This was a game to him, and he would often hide as he knew it caused a strong reaction.

For Dayna, communication with her child was typically the initial strategy, followed by allowing time to comply, and negotiation was regularly used when seeking to stop or modify her child's behaviour. Sometimes if the child was upset, she allowed 'calm down' time and when the child was less emotional, she would again communicate with him. She feels her little boy is more emotionally sensitive, so he quickly becomes upset if voices are raised to toward him, "He (child) takes everything to heart, he's a lot more emotional so if you raise your voice it doesn't work." Whereas for her older child (girl, four and half years old) communicating and reasoning works well. Dayna sees her as quite a mature child and has a real conscience, and she is aware when she has 'been naughty'.

Further to these frequently used strategies, parents shared insights into other strategies they had tried or used at different times. Celine had tried counting to give their child time to comply. This had not worked yet as her child sees this as a game and tries to count whilst continuing his behaviour. Dayna commented that consistency was really important along with having a safe environment where children feel safe to be themselves and learn new things. Kindness is much more important than aggression or 'meanness'. Understanding and empathising with the child's feelings and modelling her own feelings was also very important for Dayna. She would explain how she was feeling, and her children would respond to this, "... it is less about reprimanding and more about explaining." These strategies show consistency with how survey participants reported their discipline responses in the online survey; acknowledging child's feelings and communicating expectations with child being used more frequently than reprimanding child.

5.4 INFORMATION AND INFLUENCE THAT SUPPORTS POSITIVE DISCIPLINE PRACTICES

Interviewees shared their views on what made it easy to use positive discipline strategies with their children. For Celine, positive discipline practices were normalised, 'It is easy, it is normal for me, I know that it works.' Other supportive factors included; confidence due to prior experience parenting older children, a social acceptance that smacking is not okay, it is illegal, and learning strategies modelled by others in the community. An example given was of teachers using strategies to positively discipline children that do not include harsh or physical punishment.

Plunket was a positive influence and provided supportive information to Chelsea. Strategies recommended by Plunket included, diverting attention or removing the child from the situation. Chelsea had requested help from Plunket due to her child's behaviour before he was aged one-year-old. The parent could still discuss behavioural issues with Plunket, such as sleeping patterns, as they were

engaged with her younger child (10 months old). This was very helpful as technically her older child no longer had Plunket visits due to his age (30 months).

For Dayna it was how she regarded her children that most influenced her choice of practices. She was focussed on treating them as their own person and didn't want to 'belittle' them. This parenting philosophy along with using kindness when disciplining her children, is consistent with Child Rights and Adlerian theoretical frameworks on how children should be treated by their parents and other adults.

5.5 INFORMATION AND INFLUENCES THAT CHALLENGE THE USE OF POSITIVE DISCIPLINE PRACTICES

Celine explained that some people (not many) still think that it is acceptable to smack children as it didn't hurt them so it's okay. Despite this difference in beliefs, Celine didn't feel challenged in her practice, but felt the challenge to encourage others to see that smacking is harmful and that it is not okay. "These people, they think it is still okay to smack, but they don't see the bigger picture. It is not just a harmless smack for everybody," Celine. The parent felt that some children were being severely harmed from hitting and that it must not be okay to use smacking for everybody.

Chelsea reported judgement from others as being a challenge. Sometimes she is aware her child is going to have a 'meltdown' so it can be easier to give in to prevent it from happening. This is more prevalent in public spaces where she feels the judgement of other adults. Another pressure is having a baby that needs attention, so at times Chelsea needs to ignore her child's negative behaviours for a short time so she can give the baby the attention he needs. Chelsea also felt her child's personality was at times a challenge, "He's a real boy! He has a full-on personality and he's really clever. He knows how to open baby gates and to get things he wants from the fridge."

Dayna felt the biggest challenges when it comes to using positive discipline were, stress, being overtired, and pressures of working fulltime along with caring for two young children. External pressures such as mum shaming, and older generations having outdated expectations that children should be punished for the behaviour they don't like, were also reported.

5.6 SUPPORTIVE SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Celine stated her partner was her primary support, "My partner, we are on common ground. We both decided we weren't going to parent the way we were parented; we are a team about this." Other helpful sources included, "My immediate family – my sister is my go to person if I have challenges, my friends, we talk regularly and share our experiences and ideas, and we learn from each other." Professional sources of information referenced included; Plunket nurses being helpful with nutrition and how children should develop, and ECE teachers being helpful on a regular basis. This regular support included, teachers speaking with the parent about their child, and sharing ideas and strategies that they were using when caring for her child. Digital sources were not seen to be as helpful. Celine felt it took quite some time to go looking for information on websites, "This is a challenge if you don't know or are unsure of what you're looking for or where to look." Her experiences with Facebook had been more about the platform trying to 'sell' things, rather than providing useful or practical information. She reported being aware of other media sources and would use them if she needed to.

Chelsea reported parents, both her own mother and her partner's mother, as the most supportive information source as they provided emotional and practical support. A professional source of support in addition to Plunket, was her local GP. Her GP had provided reassurance and printed information to support her with her child's behaviour. Social media was also a source of support, this appeared to be mostly in the form of peer support. "I'm not the only one going through this, I'm more like one in seven, and I can get advice when things are going pear shaped," Chelsea.

5.8 RESOURCES THAT WERE FOUND TO BE UNHELPFUL

Celine was not worried about unhelpful information as she felt she could easily avoid information that she did not agree with or did not want to receive. Dayna also felt that negative online information could easily be avoided, and that younger generations of parents were increasingly aware of the effects of discipline on children long-term. Chelsea stated that friends and siblings who did not have children can be very judgemental. She also cited media as being very unhelpful, "There is a lot of mum shaming in the media." Chelsea shared an example of feeling judged by others, "... being judged for ignoring bad behaviour, sometimes that's just what we need to do, be allowed to do it our way." As a young parent, Dayna had at times felt judgement from health professionals. A similar comment was made in by a parent in the survey.

5.9 BARRIERS TO ACCESSING INFORMATION

Interview participants felt time coupled with uncertainty of knowing where or how to access information as being the biggest barriers. Comments included; not readily knowing what information is available or where to find it, being a busy mum means being time poor; having limited time to go searching for information.

All interviewees expressed a preference or need to receive information that is easy to access, '... pops up on my feed, it's right there I don't need to go and find it,' Celine. Similar to Celine, Chelsea would like to receive information that helps parents to know what to do when it's tough, and to help parents be prepared for two-year-olds having 'big emotions'. She also felt a lot of the time she just had to 'wing it'. Whilst Chelsea felt she needed more accessible information she was not sure exactly what format that information should take.

Dayna appeared to be much more confident in her use of digital technology. She strongly recommended using social media channels, "It's easy, everyone is using it, I get a lot of good and useful

Dayna stated both her parents and her partner's parents, along with her siblings were really useful sources of support and good examples of positive parenting practices. "You think about what was positive for you, and you look around you and see good examples, it has definitely had an effect on me," Dayna. Friends and peer parents 'mum friends' were another helpful source, sharing ideas about good ways to discipline and sharing positive and negative experiences. Dayna's Plunket nurse was referenced as a positive professional source. She was very positive about her experiences of using social media and being part of mum groups on Facebook where parents were supportive and could choose to share their experiences with peers without judgement. Books had been a valuable information source and had helped her to understand the 'environment' was important in preventing behavioural issues.

5.7 SPECIFIC RESOURCES THAT PROVIDE POSITIVE INFORMATION OR SUPPORT

Celine specifically mentioned the Plunket Book as a very helpful resource. This book was given to her by Plunket soon after her child's birth. Celine stated she appreciated receiving this information at a time when she needed it. The resource was most useful in guiding nutrition and explaining the infant milestones.

Dayna reported that she had enjoyed reading baby or mum magazines when she was pregnant. She still had the magazines and would at times relook at them if she needed to. The magazines were easy to read and had useful information and she enjoyed the sensory effect of reading them.

information via social media. I also know how to find it if I need to go looking.” Dayna also referred to the value of being skilled at finding information, “When I was pregnant, I was studying, I read a lot of books about sleep practices and baby development.” These comments about inconsistencies in accessing information and levels of knowledge appear to be consistent with what Baker, et al., (2016) identifies as the ‘knowledge gap’.

Celine felt that educating parents about positive discipline practices was extremely important and it should start in antenatal classes. It should be included in the information that is shared with parents and should be normalised, so everyone understands and uses it. She made specific reference to ‘never shake a baby’, she felt that everyone knows this is harmful and never to do this. She felt government could take a stronger role in supporting the public to understand and being openly supportive of positive discipline practices, and that this is critical if we are to end physical punishment. These views resonate with recommendations shared by Russell and Wood (2002).



Photo credit: Myles Tan

CHAPTER SIX

THE SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Data in this study was collected from two sources, the Online Positive Parenting Survey and semi-structured interviews. The Online Positive Parenting Survey provided a mix of quantitative and qualitative data. The survey collected demographic information about the participants, information sources that inform parents in their parenting practices, and information about the discipline practices parents use in response to their child's behaviours. The semi-structured interviews collected in-depth qualitative data about how parents are informed and influenced in their parenting practices, along with the reasoning that sits behind parents' choices of discipline practices. This qualitative data was used to support data collected through the survey. Key to understanding the practices parents report using, includes exploring the participants that make up the parent sample of this study, and consideration of how participant practices and information sources have been measured and analysed.

6.1 PARTICIPANTS

Participants in the study were predominantly female (90%) and identified as mothers (90%) or carers (2%) in their parenting role. Digital channels including Facebook, email and e-newsletters, were used to disseminate and promote the online survey. These channels were not as successful in reaching male participants and this is reflected in the smaller sample of male parents (10%) that took part in the survey.

Participants in the study reported higher rates of education with 75% reporting having either a diploma, graduate degree or post-graduate qualification. This correlates with the finding that many parents voluntarily reported professional engagement with early childhood education, either as teachers or students. This finding may skew results (Chavis, et al., 2017) where parents can more readily report engagement with professional sources of information support such as leading children's or early childhood experts, Angela Lansbury, Nathan Wallis or Pennie Brownlee. These findings point to a potential relationship between engaging with expert information sources, professional experiences of ECE teachers, and high rates of positive parenting practices reported in the study. **An implication of these findings is the possibility of a 'knowledge gap' (Baker, et al., 2016), where parents who are**

not professionally engaged in ECE find it more challenging to engage with expert sources due to a lack of awareness of their existence.

6.2 DISCIPLINE RESPONSE STRATEGIES

6.2.1 POSITIVE DISCIPLINE RESPONSES

The analysis of findings from the Online Positive Parenting Practices survey clearly shows that the majority of parents in this study are using non-coercive positive discipline responses more frequently than coercive discipline responses. This finding applies across, age groups, gender, levels of education attainment, and ethnicities, included in this study. Whilst there are some differences recorded based on gender, ethnicity or education attainment, these differences do not impact the overall findings that parents in this study are predominantly using positive discipline practices to guide and shape their child's social emotional and behavioural development.

Anticipating child's needs (95%), allowing time for child to comply (93%), praise for positive behaviours (92%), acknowledging child's feelings (89%), communicating expectations to child (81%), reasoning with child and negotiating with child (both 81%) were reported as the most frequently used discipline responses in the survey. Fathers were just as likely to use these strategies as mothers.

Along with the 11 positive strategies identified in the survey, parents identified an additional positive discipline response of offering their child physical comfort. Thirty percent of parents reported using this strategy in their qualitative survey comments in response to their child's behaviour. One of the three parents interviewed, also referenced offering physical comfort as a discipline response. Offering physical comfort was not a strategy identified in the study by Russell and Wood (2002) nor was it included in the original PRCM scale developed by Holden, et al., (1995). If this response had been listed as an item in the survey, the numbers of parents offering physical comfort may be higher than the 30% anecdotally reported in this study.

Drivers for using positive discipline were reported as; respect for the child, prior experiences as a

child and a desire to do things differently, prior experiences as a parent and what worked for older children, recognition of the harmful impacts of negative practices, recognition of the child's stage of development – for example lacking the maturity to regulate their emotions, a belief in using gentle or positive parenting practices, a realisation that coercive strategies are ineffective and can exacerbate an already negative situation.

6.2.2 COERCIVE DISCIPLINE RESPONSES

Overall, coercive discipline responses were reported as being used less frequently than positive discipline responses. Both males and females reported using yelling (78%) as a response more frequently than the other coercive strategies. Few parents reported yelling on a daily basis. In the survey comments, 22% of parents reported that yelling was an ineffective strategy, and 7% felt remorse after the event. The key drivers of this behaviour identified by parents included; feeling stressed, tired, overwhelmed, frustrated, or being time poor. Child temperament was referred to by some parents as both a reason for not yelling, or yelling more frequently due to frustration with their child. Information shared by the interview participants support these findings.

6.2.3 REASONS FOR NOT USING PHYSICAL PUNISHMENT

In a bid to build on information gained in prior research by Save the Children (2018), reasons for not using physical punishment were discussed in the semi-structured interviews and compared to an earlier New Zealand study (Russell & Wood, 2002). Two of three interviewees reported they had made a conscious decision not to use physical punishment based on their own negative experiences as children and a belief that it was ineffective. All parents interviewed stated they believed that physical punishment, as well as being illegal, was no longer socially acceptable especially amongst younger more informed parents. Dayna felt the temperament of her children was not responsive to harsh punishment, so deliberately chose strategies that involved kindness and communication along with boundaries. Celine had experienced acceptance of smacking by some members in her community and felt these people were ill informed in their belief that smacking was harmless. Furthermore, she believed government has a role to play in informing

society on the harms of smacking and that it is never okay. These findings partly replicate findings from the earlier New Zealand study exploring reasons why parents choose not to smack their children (Russell & Wood, 2002). Similarly, Russell and Wood (2002) found the key reasons parents gave for not smacking their child included; the past experiences of their own childhood, a desire to do things differently, respect for their child, prior parenting experience, and their child's temperament. Some parents in the Russell and Wood (2002) study discussed a fear of losing control as reason for not using physical punishment. A fear of losing control was not reported by participants in this study.

6.3 SOURCES OF INFORMATION THAT INFORM AND INFLUENCE PARENTING

Overall parents rely on their friends (96%), partner (95%), their parents (89%), ECE teachers (87%) and Facebook (83%) as the top five most used sources of information. The important role of friends was also found by Baker, et al., (2016) where friends were reported as most the frequently used information source. However, Baker, et al., (2016) reported much lower engagement with one's partner as an information source with just half of participants citing their partner. Another difference is the higher rates of engagement with Facebook in this study, compared to websites as the second most used information source in the Australian study (Baker, et al., 2016). In other studies, Russell and Wood (2002) reported family – partner and own parents, and previous experience as being most influential in informing parenting practices.

6.3.1 PROFESSIONAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Parents report that ECE teachers are a trusted and valued source of information with 87% of parents reporting engagement with ECE teachers. They are more likely, and more frequently, to report engaging with ECE teachers than other professional source, such as GPs or paediatricians. ECE teachers are followed by General Practitioners (GPs) as the most frequently used source of information by parents. Some participants specifically commented

on the value of receiving information from their GP. This was reiterated by two of the three parents interviewed in the semi-structured interviews. Chelsea affirmed her GP as an incredibly valuable information source that had provided professional information that supported her to understand and respond to her child's behaviours at a time when she felt she needed support. Participants of the Australian study (Baker, et al., 2016) reported their GP as the fifth most used information source.

Plunket and Pēpe Ora Nurses provide support to parents early on in their child's life, home visits are usually completed by the time child the child is 12 months old. This meant that most parents in this study were not frequently engaged with Plunket or Pēpe Ora due to their child's age as the mode age of children in the study is two years old. However, many parents reported some engagement or reflected on their Plunket nurse as a valuable source of information. Parents who had infants under one year of age reported higher engagement with Plunket or Pēpe Ora nurses. This could be identified through qualitative information provided by parents cross matched with their survey data related to engaging with their Plunket or Pēpe Ora nurse.

Compared with other sources, few parents reported interactions with paediatricians. Fifty-nine percent of parents reported no engagement with a paediatrician. In New Zealand parents do not routinely see a paediatrician as part of their child's regular health care, so it is more difficult to access a paediatrician unless the child has a reasonably serious health condition. These findings significantly differ from the United States where paediatricians are the most trusted source after own parents and partner (Holden, et al., 2013). Neither Plunket nurses or paediatricians were identified as sources of information in the study by Russell and Wood (2002).

6.3.2 PERSONAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Family type appears to strongly influence the ways parents engage with personal information sources. Data analysis shows that parents in sole parent and blended families reported more frequent engagement with their parents as an information source compared to those in nuclear families. Similar to prior research by Baker, et al., (2016) sole parent families relied much less upon a partner as an information source, 60% reported no engagement with a partner. Sole parents are much less likely

to interact with the parents of the partner of their children than parents in a nuclear family setting who are most likely.

Gender appears to have a significant impact on engagement with information channels. Males report low engagement across most information sources with the exception of their partner, where 88% reported engagement on a daily basis. Males are more likely to engage with personal sources than digital, media or professional sources. Based on survey responses it appears females engage more readily with digital sources, particularly social media where just under 90% of females report engaging with Facebook.

6.3.3 SOURCES OF DIGITAL INFORMATION

In this study digital channels are favourably viewed by most female parents as sources of information to support parenting. Multiple participants referred to helpful sources of information that they follow in the digital space. These sources include; Janet Lansbury, Nathan Wallis, Kimberly Crisp, Pennie Brownlee, Emma Pollen and Magda Gerber, mum groups (for example, The Mum Hub), Emily Writes, Raising Ziggy, 1000 Hours Outdoor project, Beyond Sleep Training group, La Leche League, Natural Parenting Magazine/page. Helpful websites listed include, Plunket, KidsHealth, Skip, Brainwave Trust, The Parenting Place, and the Baby Centre. Parents who were professionally aligned with ECE as a teacher or student, were much more likely to recommend expert sources of digital information such as Janet Lansbury or Pennie Brownlee. Parents outside of this profession were more likely to reflect on peer groups or a specific website such as Plunket or KidsHealth as being most useful.

A number of parents referred to enjoying following other mums 'that keep it real' on Facebook and Instagram. Others referred to Facebook as being an easy place to source information, providing a wealth of information to choose from, enabling connection with peers and feeling less alone due to reading the experiences of others.

Despite high rates of parents (predominantly mothers) engaging with digital information sources, a number of parents expressed caution about the reliability and accuracy of some of some of these channels. Some negative criticism of Facebook included the platform's 'push' to 'sell things' to

parents and 'pushing' parenting practices such as weaning or sleep training. Other parents were concerned with the ease with which negative comments and judgements could be expressed. Several parents acknowledged online negativity but felt it could be easily ignored or avoided. Influencers were most likely to be negatively perceived as some parents felt they are promoting 'unreal' or 'fake' perceptions of motherhood. One participant felt influencers were toxic, and another felt they undermined self-confidence. These views provide insights on why fewer parents report engaging with influencers as an information source.

YouTube is not a channel frequently used by parents as an information source. However, there were mixed opinions expressed about the channel. Some parents reported it as seeming fake or overly edited. Whereas two parents expressed support for the channel, one enjoyed watching videos despite not following a particular influencer and the other found helpful tips to support her child with autism.

Around 10% of participants felt that Facebook or social media channels are not places where parents should be looking for advice for their parenting. Two of these participants stated they most preferred to receive advice and guidance from their families.

6.4 MEASURING DISCIPLINE RESPONSES AND SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Discipline responses were measured as part of the online survey via a 17 item five-point Likert-type measurement scale adapted from the Parental Response to Child Misbehaviour scale (PRCM) (Holden, et al., 1995). The adapted scale appeared to be very effective in measuring parental discipline responses reported in this study. Responses of various frequencies were recorded against all 17 items. However, based on the qualitative data collected via parents' comments, it is clear an additional item that records parents' use of offering physical comfort should be included.

In order to measure how parents are informed, prior studies by Russell and Wood (2002), Baker, et al., (2016) and Holden, et al., (2017), were used to inform the development of questions related to information

sources used in this study. These questions are not related to specific instruments, however there is scope to use this study along with previous studies (for example, Russell & Wood, 2002; Baker, et al., 2016, Holden, et al., 2017), as a basis to develop an instrument that can accurately measure parenting information sources.



Photo credit: Gabe Pierce

CHAPTER SEVEN

DISCUSSION

This study provides valuable insights into the discipline practices parents choose to use as part of their everyday parenting practices to shape, guide and nurture the behaviour of their children under five years of age. Along with the discipline strategies parents report using, important insights into how parents are informed and influenced in their practices are shared through this research. These insights can be used to drive further research and to inform policy and practice related to positive discipline and how parents can be effectively informed of these practices. The findings from this research project contribute to previous research findings (such as, Holden, et al., 1995; Russell & Wood, 2002; Holden, et al., 2013; Baker, et al., 2016; Carrol & Hamilton, 2016; ISPCAN, 2016; Holden, et al., 2017; and Sege & Siegel, 2018).

7.1 POSITIVE DISCIPLINE RESPONSES

The wider literature (for example, Carroll & Hamilton, 2016), recommends a move away from a behavioural lens that relies on external motivators including time out or behaviour rewards, toward supporting children to be active participants in shaping their own behaviour, such as understanding their feelings, responding to reasoning or making choices for themselves. Based on the results of this study it appears fewer parents report using coercive responses that rely on external motivation to change behaviours. **Parents report predominantly using positive discipline responses that anticipate and respond to their children's needs (Adler, 1930; Carroll & Hamilton, 2016) and are more aligned with guiding their child's behaviour.**

7.2 UNDERSTANDING CHILDREN'S NEEDS AND EMOTIONS

The findings suggest that parents are attuned to the needs and feelings of their children (Adler, 1930; Christensen & Thomas, 1980). As part of the anecdotal information shared by participants, a number of parents commented on the big emotions of their child, indicating they were empathetic to

how their child was feeling and their struggle to deal with their own emotions, rather than seeing it as misbehaviour. Being attuned to their child's needs prompted parents to plan ahead to prevent tantrums or other negative behaviours.

7.3 TIME OUT

Despite the loss of favour toward time out by academics (Carroll & Hamilton, 2016) and an apparent tendency for parents to use positive discipline responses, several parents spoke about their use of time out. Some parents used time out to provide time for the parent to calm down before continuing to deal with their child. Other parents referred to time out as a key discipline strategy and used it regularly when other strategies, such as diverting or reasoning, were not working. One of the parents interviewed stated time out had been recommended to them by their Plunket nurse and that it should be used in relation to the child's age. This means a one-year-old child would receive one minute in time out, two-year-olds – two minutes, and so on. Based on these insights it appears that the use of time out retains some popularity amongst parents and they view it as a positive discipline response.

7.4 OFFERING PHYSICAL COMFORT

Based on the findings, offering physical comfort was identified as an additional positive discipline response. **Offering physical comfort appears to be a valid response reported to be used frequently by parents when responding to, guiding or shaping their child's behaviour in both negative and positive situations.** Based on these results, it is recommended that offering physical comfort be included as a non-coercive response in scales that measure parental discipline response behaviours.

7.5 SUPPORTIVE ENVIRONMENTS

Several parents in either the interviews or survey comments, discussed the importance of the environment in supporting and shaping their child's behaviour. **The importance of the environment appears to be just as important for adults (Adler, 1930) in relation to encouraging and supporting the use of positive discipline practices.** The environment is a contributing factor toward the parent's state of mind which appears to be a significant factor in determining whether they respond with coercive discipline methods (Adler, 1930). Parents who reported being stressed, tired, overwhelmed, unsupported or frustrated, were more likely to resort to yelling at their child.

7.6 SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Insights gained in this study are important in understanding the relationships parents have with sources of information that inform and influence their parenting practices and how they relate to the Adlerian and Child Rights theoretical frameworks. Both theoretical frameworks see positive parenting practices as being a shared responsibility of adults broader than the parents of the child (Adler, 1930; Lewowicki, 1994; Durrant & Stewart-Tufescu, 2017). **Trusted information sources are a key form of support and can enable parents to engage with other supportive adults (ISPCAN, 2016).** Social media is an example of this. High rates of parents reported using Facebook as an information source and anecdotally referred to the support they received from friends and peers through this channel. Parents in the study reported using a broad range of digital, personal and professional information supports, some more frequently than others.

This study shows changes over time in the New Zealand context with friends, partner, ECE teachers, Facebook, and websites being most often used in that order. Understanding how parents engage with these channels can inform how resources are applied through such channels. This could help to ensure parents are able to access information that

will influence and inform their positive parenting practices and feel supported by a range of adults across their community (Baker, et al, 2016).

Based on analysis that takes ethnicity into account, Māori appear much more likely to rely on family as an important information source. This finding holds true across both close and extended family members. Māori reported higher rates of engagement with their partner on a daily basis, their parents on a weekly basis, and have higher rates of engagement with extended family members – aunts, uncles, cousins and grandparents, than non-Māori. These findings help to provide insights as to why the New Zealand context may differ from findings in other countries. Studies undertaken by Russell and Wood (2002) and Baker, et al., (2016) did not report on differences in engagement based on ethnicity making it difficult to compare these findings with similar studies.

7.6.1 THE IMPACT OF AGE AND GENDER ON THE USE OF DIGITAL INFORMATION SOURCES

Age and gender were found to play a role in patterns of digital use (Baker, et al., 2016). **Further research is needed to understand how fathers engage with information sources and which channels can be best utilised to reach them.** Based on the data analysis, fathers are most likely to look to the mother of their children for information. Whereas mothers report seeking out information via their partner, the digital channels of Facebook and websites, and to some extent books and magazines. Fathers do not appear to interact regularly with these channels. Therefore, if fathers are to be included as consumers of information that supports their parenting, special attention needs to be given to the ways they are most likely to engage. This study has identified differences in patterns of engagement between mothers and fathers but does not go so far as to provide definitive answers on how best to engage fathers.

7.6.2 NEGATIVE SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Parents reported awareness of negative sources of information, yet some seemed ambivalent toward unhelpful sources. The ability to easily ignore negative or unwanted information was reiterated in both survey and interview comments. Some parents identified the need for critical thinking when deciding whether information was valid.

7.6.3 A WILLINGNESS TO RECEIVE INFORMATION THAT SUPPORTS PARENTING

A theme that emerged in comments in the survey and information shared in the interviews, is that **parents are open to receiving information that is related to their child and will support them in their practices**. Some examples of this include, receiving the Plunket Book from their Plunket nurse, or being given information about their child's behavioural needs by their GP. Other parents felt that health professionals such as Plunket nurses and General Practitioners were underutilised resources when it comes to promoting positive discipline practices. Some participants felt these avenues do little to promote positive discipline as they were solely focused on health issues such as illness or nutrition. **Health professionals are trusted information sources and are well placed to share information about positive discipline and they are often the first professionals that engage with the family** (Sege & Siegel, 2018). These insights related to parents' willingness to receive information are consistent with findings in previous studies (Russell and Wood, 2002; Holden, et al., 2013; Sturrock, et al., 2014; Baker, et al., 2016; Sege & Siegel, 2018).

7.7 THE POSSIBILITY OF A KNOWLEDGE GAP

A wealth of information about parenting exists across a broad range of sources. Despite this availability, findings suggest the existence of a 'knowledge gap' (Baker, et al., 2016), particularly in the digital sphere. In this study a high percentage of parents reported engagement in the digital space via the internet or social media. Some parents were able to point to engaging with helpful digital sources such as child development experts Janet

Lansbury and Nathan Wallis, whilst others struggled to find good information and felt they were targets for pushing goods or specific ideology like sleep training programmes. It appears that parents that could identify expert sources of information were more likely to be professionally connected with ECE as a teacher or student. This points to the need to consider how all parents can be connected to quality information. **There is a vast array of parenting information available in the digital space** (Baker, et al., 2016), **yet this does not directly translate to parents knowing about it or using it.**

7.8 MEASURING POSITIVE PARENTING PRACTICES

The experience of this study suggests there is a case for revising the Parent Response to Child Misbehaviour (PCRM) scale (Holden, et al. 1995). The original scale is 25 years old and parent responses to child behaviour have changed in this time to include a wider range of practices (Russell & Wood, 2002). Based the data measurement needs of this study it is recommended the scale be revised to include a greater range of positive parenting strategies that are reflective of a more holistic approach to guiding children's behaviours. The scale used in this study is an example of how the PCRM (Holden, et al., 1995) scale can be adapted to capture the broader range of strategies that parents report using when disciplining their children.

It is further suggested the scale be revised to focus on children under five years of age. As reported by parents in this study, it is a time that parents can find challenging and report the use of a broad range of strategies in guiding their children's behaviours. It is also a crucial time in a child's development that has lifelong implications (Vittrup, et al., 2006; ISPCAN, 2016; Save the Children, 2018; Taylor & Workman, 2018). Being able to accurately measure how parents are responding to their child's behaviour at this time has real merit in understanding parent practices. This knowledge can be used to inform policies and programmes aimed at supporting the positive social emotional and behavioural development of children (Sege & Siegel, 2018).

7.9 LINKS TO ADLERIAN AND CHILD RIGHTS THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

Positive parenting has been informed and shaped by the child rights movement (Holden, cited in ISPCAN, 2016; Durrant & Stewart-Tufescu, 2017). Whilst parents articulated an awareness of positive parenting and spoke favourably of respecting their child as individuals (Durrant & Stewart-Tufescu, 2017), child rights were not explicitly referenced by any parents in the study. It appears that learning about children's rights has not filtered through to parents to the same degree that positive parenting has. Despite this apparent gap in knowledge, **the reported actions of many parents in this study are consistent with the guiding principles of the Convention that provide a framework for child rights theory; (1) non-violence; (2) respect for children's evolving capacities; (3) respect for children's individuality; (4) engagement of children's participation; and (5) respect for children's dignity** (Durrant & Stewart-Tufescu, 2017).

In the descriptions of their children, and in sharing their experiences of responding to their children's behaviour it appears that many parents respect and treat their children as individuals in their own right (Adler, 1930; Russell & Wood, 2002; Carroll & Thomas, 2016). Several specifically stated that children should be treated with kindness and respect and treated in the same manner adults expect to be treated (Adler, 1930). These views directly relate to both child rights (Durrant & Stewart-Tufescu, 2017) and Adlerian (Adler, 1930) theories of treating children with the same respect and dignity that is accorded to adults.

7.10 STRENGTHS OF THE STUDY

A reasonable sample of participants took part in the study. The initial sample consisted of 96 respondents, however based on completed survey questions, 84 completed through to the end of the Sources of Information section, and 73 completed through to the end of the Discipline Responses section. Eight fathers participated and were consistent in completing the study.

The Explanatory Sequential Design (Creswell, 2012) allowed the collection of qualitative data to support the previously collected quantitative data. The inclusion of qualitative comments and semi-structured interviews gave voice to parents' experiences (Alshenqeeti, 2014). This resulted in the collection of rich insights into parents' discipline practices and how those practices are informed.

The content of the study was well received by the participants. All items in the discipline scale were selected to some degree by participants, and just one other item was identified for inclusion. This was similar to the responses based on information sources, few other resources were listed outside of those already listed in the survey. These findings, along with parents' favourable comments of participating in the study indicate the validity of the content of the study (Creswell, 2012).

7.11 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Findings point to a relationship between positive parenting practices and positive parenting information sources referred to in the study. However, these findings are implied via anecdotal comments that have then been related to quantitative findings, rather than through statistically correlated analysis (Creswell, 2012).

This study has been able to explore the channels, and frequency of use, parents use to gain information to support parenting practices. However, it does not go so far as to evaluate the quality of the information parents are receiving through these sources (Baker, et al., 2016).

Reliance on participant self-selection has led to the study being based upon a convenience sample. Convenience samples are not representative, therefore findings from this study are not generalisable across the population (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

The quantitative and qualitative data in this study was self-reported by participants (Chavis, et al., 2017). This study was not able to cross-validate all self-reports provided by participants. However, qualitative comments provided via the survey and interviews were useful in providing greater insights into the collected quantitative data, and in providing context and a more detailed account of the reported parent behaviour (Alshenqeeti, 2014). Reliance on self-reported data is a known limitation yet also acknowledged as a necessary and valid data collection method (Holden, et al., 1995).

There were limitations in collecting accurate values for Question 12 - asking for number of children and their ages in each family. A text response was used to collect this data, as a result it was completed differently or not completed fully by all participants.

Ethnicities of the participants showed some diversity, with 18% identifying as Māori. Yet engagement with other ethnicities was quite low Asian (2%), Middle Eastern/Latin American/African and Pasifika both 1%, and Other (8%).

There appears to be issues with the accurate self-reporting of family type. In the survey, participants were able to select one option from the multiple family type options given. However, when cross matching family type stated, with qualitative comments describing their family or comments shared via the semi-structured interviews, it became apparent a number of participants incorrectly recorded their family type. Examples of this include; selecting sole parent but describing living with partner and 2 children, or selecting nuclear family but comments reveal an extended family member also lives in the home. Most common, was selecting nuclear family, but then describing a shared custody arrangement with another child or children coming to live in the home on a specified basis. These findings raise questions around how participants self-describe their family situations compared to family types that are externally imposed upon them. These findings are a limitation on the accuracy of the data analysis related to family type in this study. Furthermore, it suggests accurately reporting family type may also be a challenge for other studies that collect this information via participant self-reports.



Photo credit: Vishnu Nishad

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION

The aim of this study was to explore how sources of information inform and influence parents, and which practices they choose to use when disciplining their child. Based on the review of the extant literature, few prior studies have looked into the strategies parents generally use to discipline their children with the exception of the New Zealand study by Russell and Wood (2002). Along with previous studies including; the Australian study (Baker, et al., 2016) that explored how parents were informed in their practices, research used to inform policy advice (USA) on improving the overall health of children (Sege & Siegel, 2018), and discipline insights by Russell and Wood (2002), this study contributes up to date findings situated within the specific social milieu of New Zealand to the body of literature on informing and practicing the positive discipline of young children. Based on the findings of this study, it appears there is a relationship between access to supportive information sources, elevated use of positive discipline practices and decreased use of coercive practices. Analysis of the data showed not only were there fewer reports of using coercive practices, these practices were used less frequently.

8.1 IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED TO INFORM PARENTS

There is an agreement across researchers, academics and parenting experts (for example, Holden, et al., 2013; ISPCAN, 2016; Afifi, et al., 2017; Sege & Siegel, 2018) that educating and informing parents is a crucial element of positive parenting that supports the social emotional and behavioural development of children. Parents in this study strongly relied on partners, friends, their parents, ECE teachers and digital channels notably Facebook and to a lesser extent, websites as most frequently used information sources. However, there appears to be gaps in positive parenting education. Parents in this survey connected with ECE training or employment were more likely to provide examples of child development experts as sources of information and support than those who were not. A lack of effective parent education in New Zealand was discussed by midwife Jean Te Huia (Radio New Zealand, 2020) in a Radio New Zealand interview speaking about the need to change the systems that support parents to successfully raise

their children. This research shows that changes to this system to educate and inform parents would need to intentionally include fathers as channels to reach fathers appear to differ from those that reach mothers.

8.2 ACCURATELY MEASURING PARENTING PRACTICES

Being able to accurately measure parenting practices and how parents source their information is essential if professionals (for example, academics, policy makers, practitioners) are to have a robust understanding of these practices. This research has shown there are challenges in sourcing appropriate measurement instruments with proven validity. The PRCM (Holden, et al., 1995) scale was the most appropriate scale for this study, but due to limitations in being able to capture the broad scope of positive parenting practices, needed to be adapted to suit this purpose. The revised version of the PCRPM (Holden, et al., 1995) used in this study requires to further testing to prove the validity and reliability of this instrument.

8.3 FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The strengths of this study include the sample size of 84 participants and the rich, detailed insights gained through a mix of quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. The insights relate to the discipline practices parents choose to use and the information and attitudes, knowledge and beliefs that sit behind their choices of discipline strategies (Alshenqeeti, 2014). The limitations of this study include a sample that is non-representative with limited diversity (Creswell & Miller, 2000). The measurement scale adapted for this study is yet to be rigorously tested to establish reliability, and internal and external validity.

To further advance positive discipline practices in New Zealand, final recommendations from this study include; (1) explore ways parents can be reached at a population level with the professional information required to greater support positive discipline practices, (2) pay specific attention to how fathers

can be reached and participate as a consumer of this information, (3) develop or revise an effective measurement scale that includes a broader range of discipline response strategies to reflect the holistic nature of positive parenting, (4) conduct further research with a population representative sample to ensure findings can be generalised at a population level, and (5) use this research to develop comprehensive policy and practice to greater support positive parenting at the population level.

Supporting positive discipline within the social milieu of New Zealand is of benefit to children, parents and wider society as children are more likely to develop prosocial behaviours that will support them and those around them during childhood and into the future. It is intended that this research contributes to supporting the continuing development of widespread use of positive discipline practices to guide and shape children's social emotional and behavioural development. In essence contributing to a culture of positive parenting that embraces discipline as a means to guide, teach and nurture children in Aotearoa New Zealand.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX ONE

POSITIVE PARENTING PRACTICES ONLINE SURVEY

PART ONE: WELCOME TO THE POSITIVE PARENTING PRACTICES ONLINE SURVEY

Q1

Greetings, Kia ora, Talofa lava, Bula Vinaka, Konnichiwa, Kia orana, Ni Hao, Mālō e lelei, Namaste, Fakatalofa ata, Anyong haseyo, Fakaalofa lahi atu, Mālō nī,

You are invited to take part in this research exploring the positive parenting practices of parents of children aged 1-4 years in Aotearoa New Zealand.

My name is Jacqui and I am a Masters student at Victoria University of Wellington. I am also the Child Rights Advocacy and Research specialist at Save the Children. Are you interested in supporting my research by sharing your experiences and completing this survey?

Q2

The data collected in this survey will be used to inform the study about positive parenting practices used by New Zealand parents and the factors that influence parents in the practices they choose. The findings from this study will be published in a research report and may be shared in academic articles and in conference presentations.

Your personal information will be treated with confidentiality and your identity will not be disclosed publicly, your details or identity will not be shared with a third party or used for commercial uses.

You can choose to share your contact details and receive a copy of the final research report at the end of the survey. You could even win one of 4 prizes of a \$50 Warehouse gift card as a thank you for completing the survey!

- I would like to proceed with the survey (1)
- I would not like to proceed with the survey (2)

Q3

This research is focused on understanding positive parenting practices and is aimed at parents who use discipline practices that do not include the use of physical punishment.

If information is disclosed in this survey that causes me to have serious concern for the safety of others, I am bound ethically and legally to report my concerns.

If completing this survey causes you to feel upset it is recommended you contact one of the following trusted helplines for support;

Parent Helpline 0800 568 856

Healthline 0800 611 116

Are You OK 0800 456 450

Family Services 211 Helpline 0800 211 211

- Continue with survey (1)
- End survey (2)

Q4

This study is aimed at understanding more about the parenting practices that parents in Aotearoa New Zealand use and factors that influence and support those decisions. The study is aimed at understanding the positive parenting practices of parents with children aged between 12 months old and up to 5 years of age. Do you have a child aged between 12 months or up to 5 years of age (1-4yrs)?

- Yes (1)
 No (2)

Q5

Family Description Thank you for participating in this survey. To help provide some context to the answers provided in the survey, please tell me a little about yourself and your family. Please also tell me a little about your child or children that you are basing your answers on.

START OF BLOCK: PART TWO: DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

Q6

Location Which location best describes the region you live in New Zealand?

- Northland (1)
 Auckland (2)
 Waikato (3)
 Bay of Plenty (4)
 Gisborne (5)
 Hawkes Bay (6)
 Taranaki (7)
 Whanganui – Manawatu (8)
 Wairarapa (9)
 Wellington (10)
 Marlborough (11)
 Nelson – Tasman (12)
 West Coast (13)
 Canterbury (14)
 Otago (15)
 Southland (16)

Q7

Which best describes the type of area where you live?

- Urban (1)
 Rural (2)

Q8

Gender Please select your gender from the following options:

- Male (16)
 Female (17)
 Gender diverse (18)

Q9

Ethnicity Please select all of those that apply to you.

- NZ European/Pakeha (6)
 Māori (7)
 Pasifika (8)
 Asian (9)
 Middle Eastern/Latin American/African (11)
 Other (10)

Q10

Age Please select your age from the following options:

- Under 20 years (1)
 20 – 29 years (2)
 30 – 39 years (3)
 40 – 49 years (4)
 50 – 59 years (5)
 60 – 65 years (6)
 Over 65 years (7)

Q11

Parenting Role Please select the option that best describes your parenting role:

- Mother (25)
 Father (26)
 Stepmother (27)
 Stepfather (28)
 Grandmother – looking after grandchild or grandchildren full time (29)
 Grandfather – looking after grandchild or grandchildren full time (30)
 Caregiver (31)
 Other (32)

Q12

How many dependent children do you have? Please state number of children in your family and their ages, you do not need to put their names. Eg, 2 children aged 2 and 4 years.

Q13

Family type Which family type best describes you?

- Sole parent (1)
- Nuclear family (parents and child/children living a home together as a family unit) (2)
- Blended family, for example evenly shared custody arrangements, split custody arrangements (3)
- Extended family, where other close family members live with you (4)

Q14

Living Situation Which option best describes your living situation?

- Own your own home (1)
- Rent a home (2)
- Board (3)
- Other (4)

Q15

Work status Which best describes your work status?

- Full time (1)
- Part-time (2)
- Studying (3)
- Full time at home parent (4)
- Other (5)

Q16

Education Qualifications What is your highest education qualification?

- NCEA Level 1,2 or 3 (1)
- Diploma (2)
- Trade Certificate (3)
- Graduate Degree (4)
- Post Graduate Qualification (5)
- Other (6)

Q17

Household Income In which of the following income brackets does your household income per annum fit?

- Under \$50,000 (1)
- Between \$50,000 and \$100,000 (2)
- Over \$100,000 (3)

START OF BLOCK: PART THREE: FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE AND SUPPORT YOUR PARENTING PRACTICES

Q18

There are many factors that inform and or support our parenting practices. In some cases, some factors may hinder or challenge our parenting practices. In this section I am interested in finding out more about what these factors are and what sort of impact you believe they have on your positive parenting practices.

Q19

Digital sources of information The internet provides a vast amount of information about parenting. Which of the following options do you use to gain positive parenting information and how often do you use these sources? 0 Never, 1 Seldom - annually, 2 Quite often - monthly, 3 Regularly - Weekly, 4 Very regularly - Daily

Click to write Column 1

	Never (1)	Annually (2)	Monthly (3)	Weekly (4)	Daily (5)
Facebook (1)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Instagram (2)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
YouTube (3)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other Apps (4)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
NZ websites (5)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overseas websites (6)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Blogs (7)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Influencers (8)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q20

Of these digital sources, are there any you find particularly helpful and why?

Q21

The media provides a vast amount of information on parenting. Which of the following options do you use to gain positive parenting information and how often do you use these sources? 0 Never, 1 Seldom - annually, 2 Quite often - monthly, 3 Regularly - Weekly, 4 Very regularly - Daily

Click to write Column 1

	Never (1)	Annually (2)	Monthly (3)	Weekly (4)	Daily (5)
Books (1)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Magazines (2)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Television (general) (3)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specific television programmes (4)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Radio (5)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q22

Personal Information Sources Many parents gain information and support from their close personal networks. Which of the following options do you use to gain positive parenting information and how often do you use these sources? 0 Never, 1 Seldom - annually, 2 Quite often - monthly, 3 Regularly - Weekly, 4 Very regularly - Daily, or N/a

Click to write Column 1

	Never (1)	Annually (2)	Monthly (3)	Weekly (4)	Daily (5)	N/a (6)
Partner (1)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Own parents (2)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Partner's parents (3)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Siblings (4)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Grandparents (5)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Aunts (6)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Uncles (7)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cousins (8)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Friends (9)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parent groups (informal) (10)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q23

Professional Information Sources Many parents gain information and support from professional networks, such as health – nurses or doctors, or education - parenting classes or early childhood teachers. Which of the following options do you use to gain positive parenting information and how often do you use these sources? 0 Never, 1 Seldom - annually, 2 Quite often - monthly, 3 Regularly - Weekly, 4 Very regularly - Daily, or N/a

Click to write Column 1

	Never (1)	Annually (2)	Monthly (3)	Weekly (4)	Daily (5)	N/a (6)
General Practitioner (GP/Doctor) (1)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plunket nurse (2)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Whānau/pēpe ora nurse (3)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Paediatrician (4)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Early childhood teacher/s (5)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Parenting classes (6)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q24

Of the options that you have selected, are any of these particularly useful in supporting your positive parenting practices? If yes please describe in the text box below or enter no.

Q25

Are there any other factors that influence and support your parenting not covered in the survey that you would like to share, this may also include not being able to find enough information? If yes please describe in the text box below or enter no.

**START OF BLOCK: PART FOUR:
PARENTING STRATEGIES**

Q26

Positive parenting can be defined as nurturing, guiding, and empowering children to learn and develop positive behaviours. This includes the use of positive discipline strategies that are used to teach children appropriate behaviours that will benefit them and those around them in the short and long term. The word “discipline” is derived from the Latin word “disciplinare” meaning to teach or train, as in disciple (a follower or student of a teacher, leader, or philosopher).

In this study ‘discipline’ is taken to mean guiding children in learning, developing and displaying positive behaviours appropriate to their age. This approach also recognises that young children require active support from their parents or carers to learn and develop positive behaviours.

Q27

Which of the following discipline responses do you use in response to your child when they display behaviour that you wish to change, modify or stop, and may wish to prevent from happening in the future? How often do you use these strategies? 0 Never, 1 Seldom - annually, 2 Quite often - monthly, 3 Regularly - Weekly, 4 Very regularly - Daily

Click to write Column 1

	Never (1)	Annually (2)	Monthly (3)	Weekly (4)	Daily (5)
Reasoning with your child (1)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Threatening your child (2)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Negotiating with your child (3)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ignoring your child (eg being distracted, not paying attention) (4)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communicate expectations of behaviour (5)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Commanding your child (6)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Allow time for your child to comply (7)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Putting your child in time-out (8)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Anticipate your child’s needs (for eg, pack food, comforts, activities etc for short trips) (9)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Never (1)	Annually (2)	Monthly (3)	Weekly (4)	Daily (5)
Diverting your child’s attention (10)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Withdrawing privileges from your child for a specified time (11)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rewards for specific behaviours, such as star charts (12)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Acknowledge your child’s feelings (for eg, I know that you’re very tired) (13)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Reprimanding your child (14)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Yelling at your child (15)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Praise for positive behaviours (16)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ignoring your child’s negative behaviour (eg, a tantrum) (17)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q28

Please share an example of a time when you may have used one or more of the following discipline responses; reasoning with your child, negotiating with your child, putting your child in time-out, diverting your child’s attention, withdrawing privileges from your child for a specified time, praise for positive behaviours, acknowledging your child’s feelings, anticipating your child’s needs, rewards for specific behaviours, communicate expectations of behaviour, allow wait time for your child to comply.

What lead to you choosing to use these strategies, and what was the outcome of using these strategies?

Q29

Please share an example of a time when you may have used one or more of the following discipline responses; threatening your child, ignoring your child, commanding your child, reprimanding your child, yelling at your child. What lead to you choosing to use these strategies, and what was the outcome of using these strategies?

Q30

Is there any information that you would like to share that hasn't been covered in this survey? Please comment in the text below or enter no.

START OF BLOCK: THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING

Q31

Thank you for completing this survey.

Please share your contact details if you wish to receive a copy of the research report, have the opportunity to win a \$50 koha for participating, or if you would like the opportunity participate in a one on one interview to discuss positive parenting practices in greater detail.

Parents selected to participate in a one on one interview will be provided with a koha to the value of \$50 to thank and acknowledge them for their time.

Please enter your contact details, name and email address in the text below, or enter no.

Q32

Are interested in participating in a one on one interview with me to discuss positive parenting practices in greater detail? The interview is likely to take around one hour, and I am happy to work with you to arrange a suitable time. All interview participants will receive a \$50 koha.

Yes I would like to participate in an interview (26)

No, I do not want to participate in an interview (27)

Q33

Thank you for completing this survey and sharing your experiences and expertise,

Jacqui

APPENDICES

APPENDIX TWO

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING

Whakawhanaungatanga – getting to know each other

It is important that you know that you can choose to stop the interview at any time.

Demographic data already collected via online survey

START

In the online survey you indicated that you use a range of discipline response practices. These practices do not include physical punishment and purpose of this study is to find out more about the positive practices you do use and the factors that support and influence your decision making.

A little bit about positive parenting and discipline practices before we start. Positive parenting can be defined as nurturing, guiding, and empowering children to learn and develop positive behaviours. This includes the use of positive discipline strategies that are used to teach children appropriate behaviours that will benefit them and those around them in the short and long term. The word “discipline” is derived from the Latin word “disciplinare” meaning to teach or train, as in disciple (a follower or student of a teacher, leader, or philosopher). Therefore, in this study ‘discipline’ is taken to mean guiding children in learning, developing and displaying positive behaviours appropriate to their age. This approach also recognises that young children require active support from their parents or carers to learn and develop positive behaviours.

1. Can you tell me more about your decision not to use physical punishment when disciplining your child?

2. When your child is behaving in a way that you would like to change, stop or prevent from happening in the future, tell more about the discipline strategies that you choose to use.

3. How do these strategies work in relation to supporting your child to change or stop their behaviour?

4. Why do you choose to use these strategies?

5. How effective do believe these strategies to be?

6. Is there anything that makes it hard to use these strategies?

7. Is there anything that makes it easy to use these strategies?

8. What factors inform, influence and support you in your choice of positive discipline strategies?

9. Is there a person (or people) that is strongly influential in supporting your discipline practices? How do they influence you?

10. Is there a person (or people) that are not supportive or challenge your discipline practice decisions? How does this affect you? How do you respond to this challenge?

In the online survey there was a range of sources listed that provide parents with information.

Of these which do you find the most effective, and how do they inform, support or influence you? (Provide options on a separate handout so participant can review the options)

SOURCES OF INFORMATION TO INFORM PARENTING STRATEGIES

PERSONAL SOURCES

IMMEDIATE FAMILY

- parents
- siblings
- whānau, wider family
- grandparents
- aunts
- uncles
- cousins
- Close friends
- Community or parent groups

PROFESSIONAL SOURCES

- Paediatrician
- GP
- Plunket nurse
- Pēpe ora nurse
- Teacher (early childhood teacher)
- Parenting sources

DIGITAL

- Websites – are there particular websites and how often to do you use them?
- Have you signed up to any sources of information that provide regular information updates, for example a regular email?
- Social media
- Facebook
- Instragram
- Youtube
- Influencers

MEDIA

- Magazine
- Television
- Radio
- Books

Ask questions about specific examples of information and how they provide support.

11. Have any sources been unhelpful or provided poor or misinformation? How has that affected you?
12. Are you aware of any barriers to accessing supportive and informative information to support parenting practices?
13. Do you have any recommendations for how they may be overcome?

Reaching out to support other parents

14. Previous research shows that a number of parents are uncertain about discipline practices. How do you think that these parents could be supported to be more certain in their use of positive discipline practices?
15. What recommendations do you have in ways that work to reach parents with supportive information?
16. Finally, do you have any final comments that you would like make on anything in relation to this study?

Thank you for participating in this study and sharing your experiences and knowledge in this interview. I have given you an information sheet that has my contact details, if you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact me. If you would like to withdraw from the study, please let me know as soon as possible and no later than the 31st of December 2019.

