

HAVEN PROJECT

INTRODUCTION

Circle's Haven Project aims to support children and families in the North of Edinburgh to improve the general wellbeing of the whole family.

To achieve the project's aims, our Family Outreach Workers adopt a strengths-based and solution-focussed approach in all of the work that they undertake with the children and families they support. This approach allows family members to build on their existing strengths and for staff to offer practical, emotional, relational and connecting support with the whole family.



We have adapted to the pandemic by offering socially distanced walks and doorstep/garden visits, by ensuring families have enough food, fuel and clothing and by offering wellbeing packs, as well as bespoke Baby Massage videos and a 'padlet' to access resources.

There are three approaches that the project utilises: Whole Family Support (WFS), Outreach and Group Work. The two main thematic services are as follows:

Early Years - delivering a range of early years programmes alongside whole family support, giving children the best possible start in life

Fathers' Support - supporting fathers to have a positive involvement in their children's lives

Some examples of the wide variety of interventions that we carry out on a day-to-day basis are:

- Parenting support around routines and boundaries
- Supporting children to be involved in more school and community activities
- One-to-one support for children to build coping strategies and resilience
- Supporting parental engagement with schools and child planning
- Practical support to improve home conditions
- Singing, signing and play-based activities with babies and toddlers

BENEFICIARIES

The children and families who are supported by this project will be dealing with a variety of challenging circumstances such as poor mental health, social isolation, homelessness and low income. The project aimed to support 20 families through WFS, 40 families through Outreach and 105 families through Group Work in 2020/21 and over the year supported:

	WFS	Outreach	Groups	TOTAL
Families	30	38	84	152
Parents	32	51	85	168
Kinship carers	0	0	0	0
Children	61	59	117	237
TOTAL no. of family members	93	110	202	405

OUTCOMES

“I think there has always been an honesty and respectfulness to the way I have seen the workers from Circle engage with families, which has been truly helpful in improving family functioning and to improve outcomes for children.”

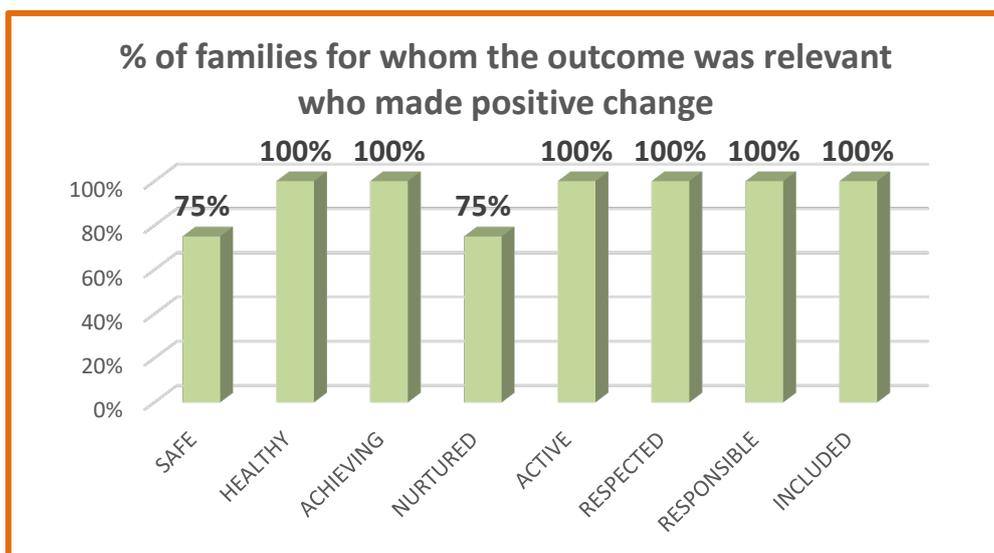
(Professional)

Circle works alongside family members to identify their specific support needs and concerns, enabling them to work towards improving their health, wellbeing and resilience.

We use the *Getting it right for every child* (GIRFEC) approach which supports children and young people to grow up feeling loved, safe and respected and to realise their full potential. At home, in school and in the wider community, every child and young person should be Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible and Included. These SHANARRI indicators are what we use to measure the progress made by the families we support.

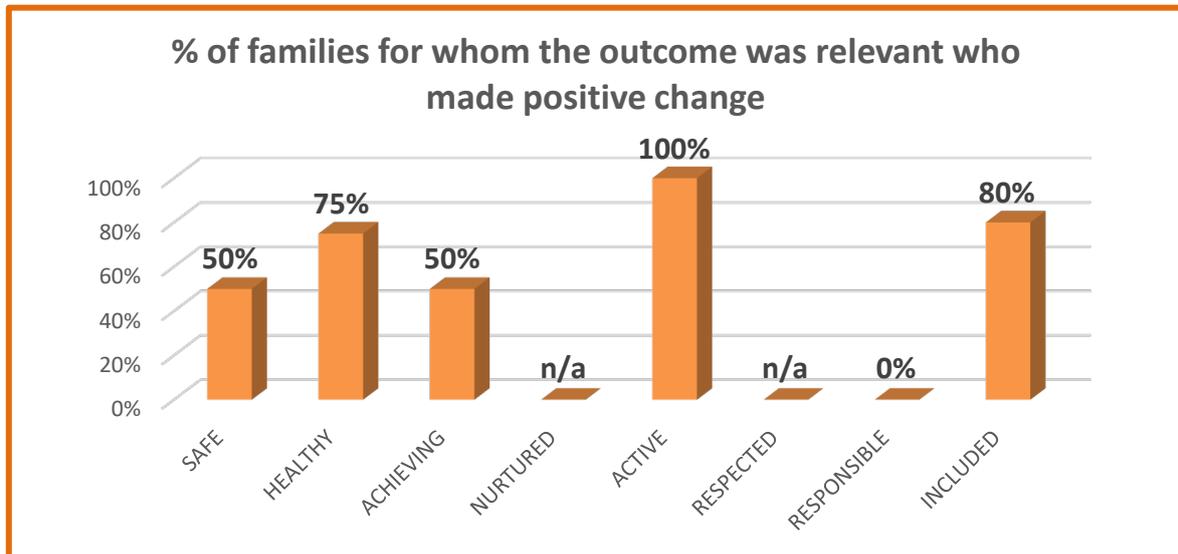
Whole Family Support

There were eight families for whom service ended in the year, four of whom had outcomes recorded. This is further detailed below:



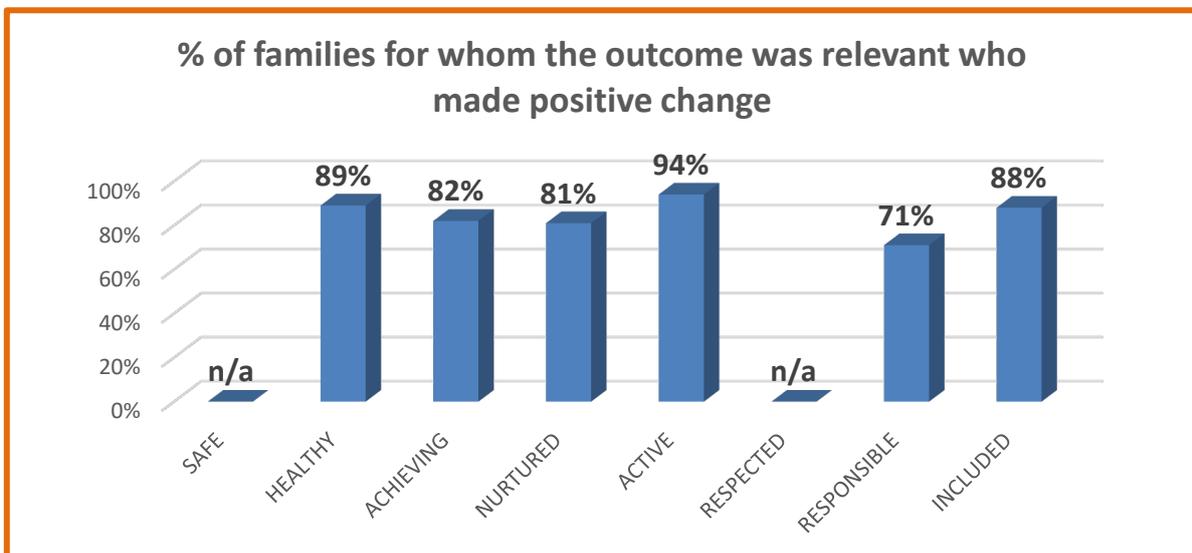
Outreach

This is a new area of work that started in September 2020, funded through Chance to Flourish and The Pilgrim Trust. There were four families for whom service ended in the year, three of whom had outcomes recorded. This is further detailed below:



Group Work

There were 84 families who completed at least one group in the year, all of whom had outcomes recorded. This is further detailed below:

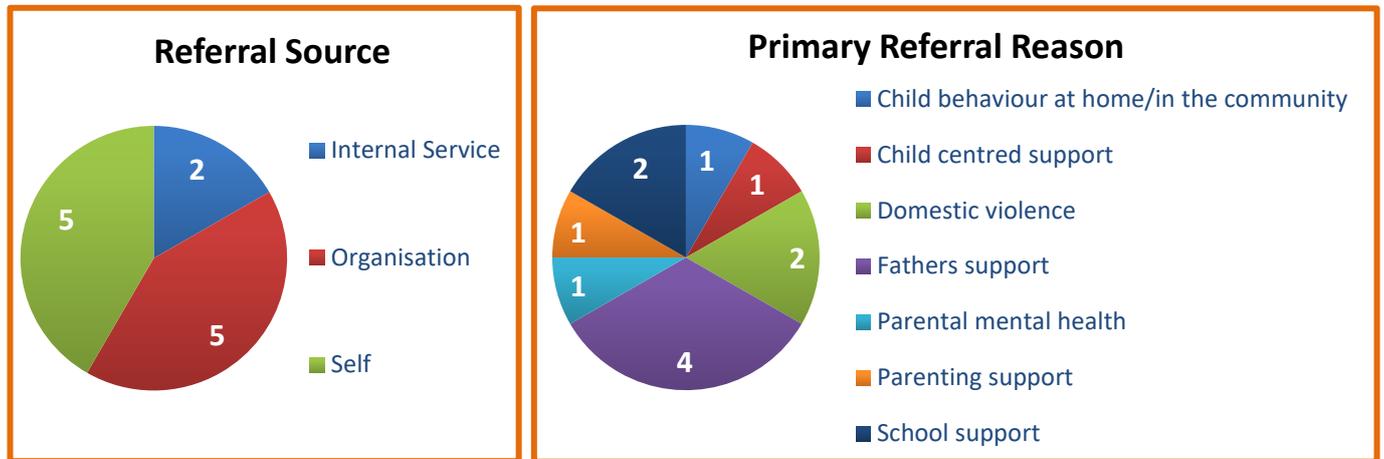


The positive outcomes experienced by families supported by the Haven Project include:

- Developing trusting and healthy relationships
- Improved coping strategies and resilience
- Improved living conditions
- Establishing children's boundaries and routines
- Improved parent/baby attachment and early development
- Increased engagement in community resources

REFERRAL TYPE AND REFERRAL REASON

Families were referred to Haven’s WFS Service in 2020-21 from a variety of sources and for a number of different reasons as outlined in the charts below:



All the referrals for the Outreach Service were received from the Pennywell Health Visiting Team.

Across WFS and Outreach, 13 cases were closed this year with length of involvement ranging from 3 to 102 weeks. The average length of involvement was 30 weeks.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Circle’s work is rarely done in isolation. The children and families we work with often experience a wide variety of challenges that require a number of organisations and individuals to work together to help them find their own specific solutions.



Circle’s Haven Project has in the last year worked with a wide range of partners including SHE Scotland, Edinburgh College, Free Cakes for Kids, Edinburgh School Uniform Bank, Kids Love Clothes, Changeworks, Granton Information Centre, Health Visitors at Pennywell All Care Centre, Stepping Stones North Edinburgh, local primary schools and The City of Edinburgh Council Lifelong Learning Team.

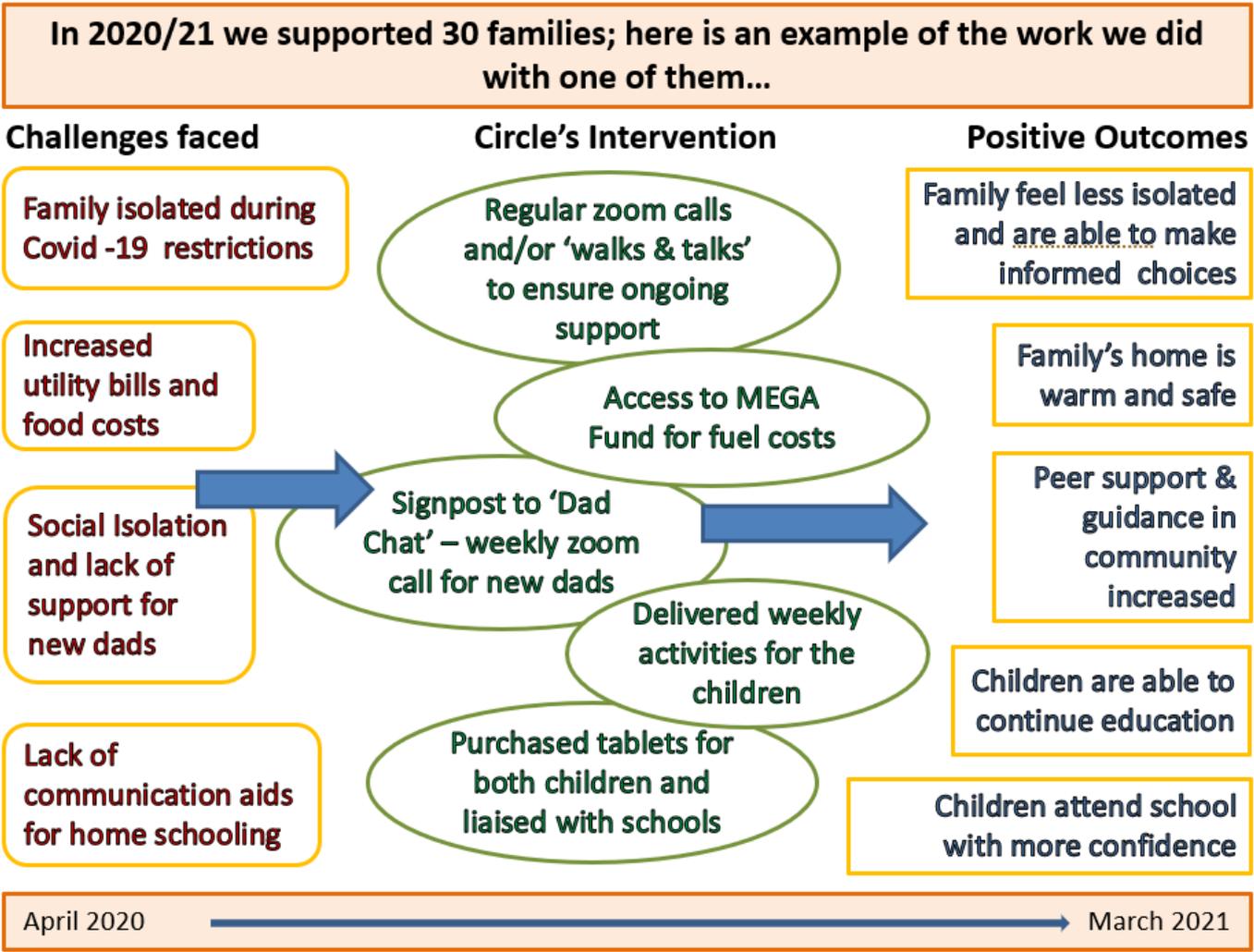
Furthermore, Circle actively shares experience and knowledge with charity partners, social work professionals, academics and politicians.

“For us, without Circle, we would be more isolated. We have no family here. The work you do is amazing, if there is something you can’t do you guide us to the person who can.”
 (Parent)

FUNDING

In 2020/21 the project received funding from The City of Edinburgh Council Communities and Families Grant, Scottish Children’s Lottery Chance to Flourish and The Pilgrim Trust which contributed to three full-time equivalent Family Outreach Workers and one part-time Project Manager. Additional funding for activities was secured through Muirhouse Housing Association.

CASE STUDY (WFS)



PROJECT DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR YEAR AHEAD

The project aims to build on the main thematic areas of Early Years and Fathers' support. The project will continue to develop the Outreach Service with the local Health Visiting Team. Additional funds will be sought through separate trusts and foundations to support activities in the project.



"I would have struggled a lot during the lockdown, but knowing that the Circle worker was still contactable and even just being able to have a chat or go get groceries, really meant a lot to me."
 (Parent)

Author: Alex Collop
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