



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



UNESCO Chair in
Children, Youth and Civic Engagement
Ireland

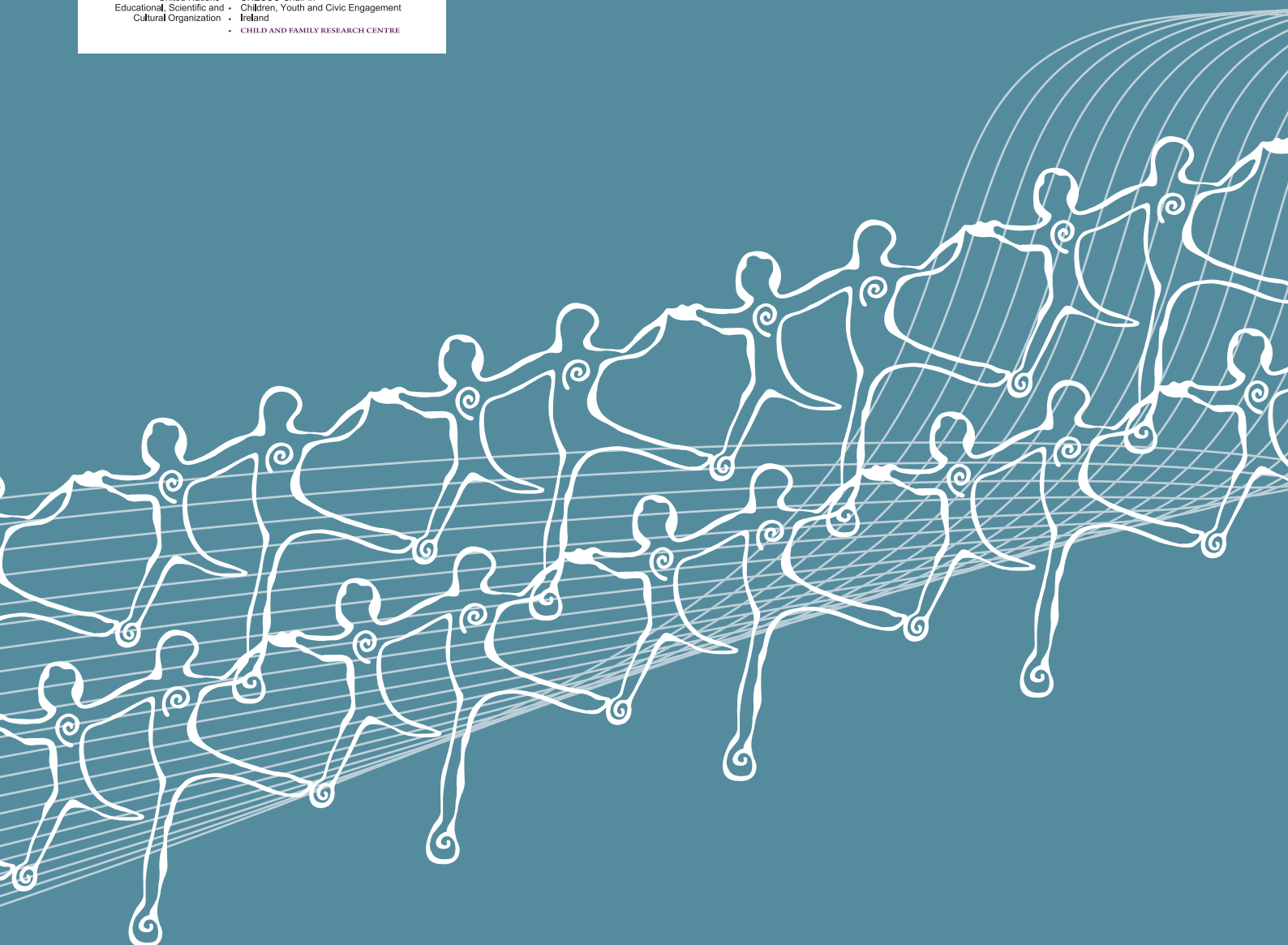


NUI Galway
OÉ Gaillimh

CHILD AND FAMILY RESEARCH CENTRE



Institute for
Lifecourse and Society



Parenting Support & Parental Participation

Tusla's Parenting Support Champions Project: Process, Implementation and Outcomes

By Dr Rosemary Crosse and Dr Carmel Devaney
UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre, NUI Galway

SEPTEMBER 2018



The authors of this report are:

Dr Rosemary Crosse and Dr Carmel Devaney

Any citation of this report should use the following reference:

Crosse, R. and Devaney, C. (2018) *Tusla's Parenting Support Champions Project: Process, Implementation and Outcomes*. Galway: UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre, National University of Ireland Galway.

ISBN: 978-1-905861-53-8

Copyright © UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre (UCFRC), 2018.

For further information, please contact:
UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre
Institute for Lifecourse and Society
National University of Ireland Galway
Galway, Ireland
T: +353 91 495 398
E: cfrc@nuigalway.ie
W: www.nuigalway.ie/childandfamilyresearch

The authors are responsible for the choice and presentation of views expressed in this report and for opinions expressed herein, which are not necessarily those of UNESCO and do not commit the Organisation.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission in writing of the copyright holder.

For rights of translation or reproduction, applications should be made to the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre, Institute for Lifecourse and Society, Upper Newcastle Road, National University of Ireland Galway.

DISCLAIMER

Although the Authors and publisher have made every effort to ensure that the information in this book was correct at press time, the authors or publisher do not assume and hereby disclaim any liability to any party for any loss, damage or disruption caused by errors or omissions, whether such errors or omissions result from negligence, accident or any other cause.

About the Development and Mainstreaming Programme for Prevention, Partnership and Family Support



The research and evaluation team at the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre (UCFRC), NUI Galway provides research, evaluation and technical support to Tusla's Development and Mainstreaming Programme for Prevention, Partnership and Family Support (PPFS). This is a new programme of action being undertaken by Tusla - Child and Family Agency as part of its National Service Delivery Framework. The programme seeks to transform child and family services in Ireland by embedding prevention and early intervention into the culture and operations of Tusla. The research and evaluation carried out by the UCFRC focuses on the implementation and the outcomes of the PPFS Programme and is underpinned by the overarching research question:

Is the organisational culture and practice at Tusla and its partners changing such that services are more integrated, preventative, evidence informed and inclusive of children and parents and if so, is this contributing to improved outcomes for children and their families?

The research and evaluation study adopts a Work Package approach. This has been adopted to deliver a comprehensive suite of research and evaluation activities involving sub-studies of the main areas within the Tusla's PPFS Programme. The Work Packages are: Meitheal and Child and Family Support Networks; Children's Participation; Parenting Support and Parental Participation; Public Awareness; and Commissioning.

This publication is part of the Parenting Support and Parental Participation Work Package.

About the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre

The UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre (UCFRC) is part of the Institute for Lifecourse and Society at the National University of Ireland Galway. It was founded in 2007, through support from The Atlantic Philanthropies, Ireland and the Health Services Executive (HSE), with a base in the School of Political Science and Sociology, the mission of the Centre is to help create the conditions for excellent policies, services and practices that improve the lives of children, youth and families through research, education and service development. The UCFRC has an extensive network of relationships and research collaborations internationally and is widely recognised for its core expertise in the areas of Family Support and Youth Development.

Contact Details:

UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre, Institute for Lifecourse and Society, Upper Newcastle Road, National University of Ireland Galway, Ireland.

T: +353 91 495398

E: cfrc@nuigalway.ie

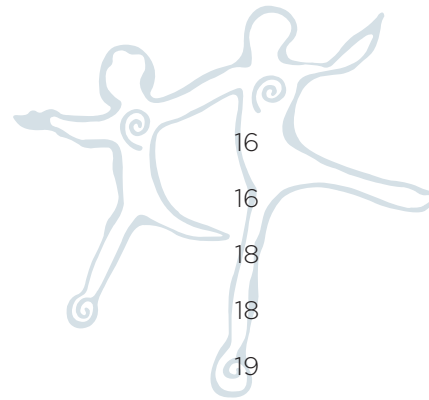
W: www.nuigalway.ie/childandfamilyresearch

Twitter: [@UNESCO_CFRC](https://twitter.com/UNESCO_CFRC)

Facebook: [ucfrc.nuig](https://www.facebook.com/ucfrc.nuig)

Table of Contents

About the Development and Mainstreaming Programme for Prevention, Partnership and Family Support	i
About the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre	i
List of Tables	iv
1. Introduction	1
1.1 Background to the Study	1
1.2 Aims and Objectives	2
1.3 Structure of the Report	2
2. Methodology	2
2.1 Introduction	2
2.2 Data Collection	3
2.3 Analysis	3
2.4 Ethics	4
2.5 Limitations	4
3. Findings	4
3.1 Introduction	4
3.2 Role of the PSC	4
3.3 Experiences of the PSC Project	6
3.4 Personnel Support for the Role of PSC	6
3.5 Resourcing and Supports	8
3.5.1 Resources and Supports Received	8
3.5.2 Resources and Supports Required	9
3.6 Implementation	12
3.6.1 Implementation Enablers	13
3.6.2 Implementation Challenges	14



3.7 Impact of the PSC Project	16
3.7.1 Impact on Own Practice	16
3.7.2 Impact on the Practice of Colleagues	18
3.7.3 Impact on Parents	18
3.7.4 Impact on Service-Level Agreements	19
3.8 Sustainability	20
3.8.1 Barriers to Sustainability	20
3.8.2 Sustainability Enablers	23
4. Conclusion	25
4.1 Key Messages	25

List of Tables

Table 1: Respondent Groups	2
Table 2: Regional Profile of PSC Respondents	3
Table 3: Organisational Profile of PSC Respondents	3
Table 4: Responsibilities of a PSC	5
Table 5: PSCs Supported by	6
Table 6: PSCs Unsupported by	7
Table 7: Resources Available to PSCs	8
Table 8: Useful Additional Resources	11
Table 9: PSC Comments on Resources and Supports	11
Table 10: Implementation Enablers	13
Table 11: Implementation Challenges	15
Table 12: Impact of Project on Practice	17
Table 13: Impact on Own Practice	18
Table 14: Impact on Colleagues' Practice	18
Table 15: Impact on Parents	19
Table 16: Sustainability of the PSC Project	20
Table 17: Barriers to Sustainability	21
Table 18: Sustainability Enablers	24

List of Figures

Figure 1: Enabled the Implementation of the PSC Project

Figure 2: Implementation Challenges

Figure 3: Barriers to Sustainability

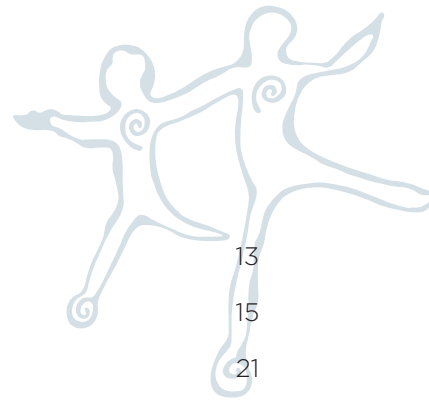
Figure 4: Enablers to Sustainability

13

15

21

24



1

Introduction

1.1 Background to the Study

The Prevention, Partnership and Family Support (PPFS) Programme is a comprehensive programme of early intervention and preventative work which is being undertaken by Tusla – Child and Family Agency in Ireland with the support of the UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre (UCFRC), National University of Ireland Galway (NUI Galway). This Programme is being implemented collaboratively by Tusla and its partner organisations by way of five main work streams (Tusla, 2017), one of which is the Parenting Support and Parental Participation work stream.

The Department of Children and Youth Affairs' 'High-Level Policy Statement on Supporting Parents and Families' (2015) gives a policy platform for Tusla to strengthen and grow Parenting and Family Support as an effective prevention and early intervention measure to promote best possible outcomes for children. To that end, Tusla produced the Parenting Support Strategy, which 'sets out the strategic direction of the Child and Family Agency in its role in supporting parents so as to improve outcomes for children and young people' (Gillen et al., 2013). As part of the implementation of the strategy, Tusla has developed the Parenting Support Champions (PSC) Project.

PSCs are existing practitioners working with children and families who are employed by Tusla and its partner organisations. At the time of writing there were 107 PSCs across Tusla's 17 areas whose role is to:

- Promote the objectives of the Parenting Support Strategy within their area. Part of this work is to support parental participation initiatives.
- Facilitate parents getting involved in the planning, delivery, and evaluation of services in partnership with related initiatives and networks.
- Promote the 50 key evidence-based parenting support messages, including Parenting24seven to parents.¹
- Participate in relevant planning and networking events within their area that are related to the implementation of supports for parenting, where possible.

The UCFRC at NUI Galway is responsible for the research and evaluation of the PPFS Programme, and its work focuses on the process and implementation and outcomes of the programme over its lifetime. This report details the findings of the research undertaken on the PSC Project. Preceding reports on the PSC Project include: *The Parenting Support Champions Questionnaire Report*, *The Report of the Parenting Support Champions Regional Learning Group*, and *the Second Report of the Parenting Support Champions Regional Learning Group*.²

¹ Parenting24seven is a website developed by Tusla which offers evidence-based key messages on what works best for children and families at different stages of childhood and in different situations.

² www.childandfamilyresearch.ie/media/unescochildandfamilyresearchcentre/dmpfilesmaster/Parenting-Support-Champions-Questionnaire-Report.pdf.
www.childandfamilyresearch.ie/media/unescochildandfamilyresearchcentre/dmpfilesmaster/Report-of-the-Parenting-Support-Champions-Regional-Learning-Group.pdf.

Crosse, R. and Devaney, C. (in press) *Second Report of the Parenting Support Champions Regional Learning Group*. Galway: UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre, National University of Ireland Galway.



1.2 Aims and Objectives

The main aims and objectives of this study are to gather and compile data on:

- the process of the Parenting Support Champions Project
- the implementation of the Parenting Support Champions Project
- the outcomes of the Parenting Support Champions Project (to date).

1.3 Structure of the Report

This report is structured in four separate sections. Section 2 begins with an outline of the key methodological approaches used in the study, specifically, how the data was collected and analysed, the limitations of the methodological approach, and ethical considerations. Section 3 presents a collated account of the findings from the empirical data. The responses from the qualitative data, interviews with PSCs and Tusla PPFS Managers, form the foundation of the findings, with survey responses from all other PSCs feeding in where applicable. The report concludes, in section 4, with a summary of key findings from all of the research pertaining to the project.

2

Methodology

2.1 Introduction

The methodological approach to this research is based on a multi-method strategy of data collection which targeted stakeholders involved in the PSC Project, such as Tusla PPFS Managers and PSCs, over a 14-month period. The data in this study is based on qualitative semi-structured interviews, which were carried out with Tusla PPFS Managers and a random geographical sample of PSCs; these are the main data sources utilised for this study and form the base of the findings presented. Additional views, obtained via a questionnaire for PSCs, provide further depth to the findings.

Table 1: Respondent Groups

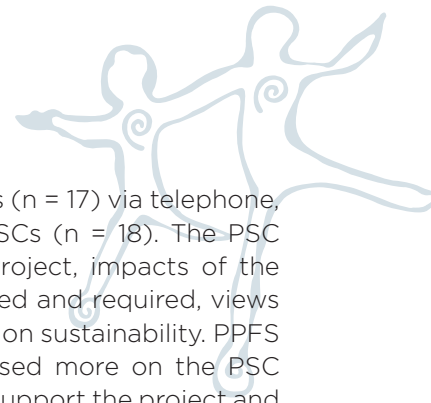
Respondent Group	Data Type	Number of Respondents
PSCs	Interviews	18
PPFS Managers	Interviews	17
PSCs	Questionnaire	57

Table 2: Regional Profile of PSC Respondents

Region	Questionnaire Respondents	Interview Respondents
West	19	7
Dublin South	14	4
Dublin North East	11	4
Dublin Mid Leinster	13	3
Total	57	18

Table 3: Organisational Profile of PSC Respondents

Respondent Type	Tusla	Family Resource Centres	Community/Voluntary	Statutory	Other
Interview	8	1	5	2	2
Questionnaire	23	10	18	4	2
Total	31	11	23	6	4



2.2 Data Collection

Qualitative semi-structured interviews were carried out with Tusla PPFs Managers (n = 17) via telephone, and face-to-face. Face-to-face interviews were carried out with a sample of PSCs (n = 18). The PSC interviews centred primarily on the following areas: experiences of the PSC Project, impacts of the project on own practice, the practice of colleagues and parents, supports received and required, views on implementation at both individual level and overall system level, and questions on sustainability. PPFs Managers were also asked about sustainability. Their questions, however, focused more on the PSC Project from a management perspective in terms of resourcing and structures to support the project and its impact on service-level agreements.

All respondents were contacted via an email which contained information about the study. Informed consent was sought from each interviewee. The interviews were recorded and transcribed, and the participants' names were changed to protect anonymity.

An online questionnaire was used to seek the views of all of the PSCs and focused on questions similar to those asked of the PSCs who participated in interviews. The questionnaire was distributed electronically via SurveyMonkey.

2.3 Analysis

NVivo software was utilised to code all interview responses into thematic areas aligned with the interview questions, and this data was used to generate an analysis of the themes that evolved, which is presented in section three of this report. As with the analysis of the qualitative interviews, the data produced by the questionnaire was analysed using a thematic approach.

2.4 Ethics

The research was guided by key ethical requirements of doing no harm and gaining informed, voluntary consent for participation in the research. Participants indicated their willingness to participate when they filled in the questionnaire and provided their consent for an interview. All those who took part in individual interviews were asked for and gave their consent. Anonymity was guaranteed for all participants, and therefore names and identifiable personal details throughout the report have been changed. Ethical approval for this research was granted by both the NUI Galway Research Ethics Committee and the Tusla Research Ethics Review Group.

2.5 Limitations

While this research has been thorough in its aims and its achievements, there were certain methodological limitations to the study. Of the 107 PSCs nationwide, 57 responded to the questionnaire, and while this represents a good response rate of 53.2%, the sample size means that almost half of PSCs' views and opinions are not included in the findings of this particular element of the research.³

³ A point to note is that the majority of PSCs have participated in the research generally, evidenced in the other reports produced for this project.

3

Findings

3.1 Introduction

This section presents the findings of the data collected for this study. This contains all PSCs' views on the process, implementation, and outcomes of the PSC Project to date – specifically in terms of: their understanding of their role in the PSC process, their experiences of the project to date, and their views on challenges to implementation, supports received, and supports required to carry out their role effectively. This section also presents PSC respondents' views on the impact of the project on the practice of practitioners (both their own and that of their colleagues) and on parents, as well as views on the sustainability of the project into the future. Views of PPF Managers are also presented in terms of the PSC Project and their remit, available structures to support the project, resources allocated, and the impact of the project on Service-Level Agreements (SLAs).

3.2 Role of the PSC

The role of the PSC and what it entails is conceived in a number of ways by all of the PSC respondents. For those who participated in interviews, the role is about improving the parenting experiences of children, developing new initiatives, and being an advocate and a support for parents. For others, the role is about being a link to other agencies to emphasise parenting throughout local services. Connected to this is the prominent view that a fundamental part of the PSC role is to disseminate Tusla's Parenting Support Strategy's 50 key messages, both internally in respondents' own organisations, and externally to parents, support services, and networks locally:

I'd see my role as to get the 50 key messages out there. To inform as many people through my own organisation, to promote them with parents, to encourage other services in the area. I sit on a lot of groups within the county, so groups of CYPSCs and other the CFSNs. So it's trying to bring everyone on board that they're disseminating the information, and it's cascading downwards. (PSC4)

Similar thoughts were expressed by PSCs who responded to the online questionnaire: 42% of responses to the question on the responsibilities of the PSC indicated that part of the role of the PSC is to disseminate information. Supporting parents and advocacy was the second most common response by PSCs (14.8%).



Table 4: Responsibilities of a PSC

Responsibilities of a PSC	Number of Responses	% of Responses
Dissemination/Sharing information.	71	42%
Promotion work in areas of: Positive parenting, supports, and benefits of supporting parents.	10	5.9%
Work on participation in terms of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Taking account of the voice of the parent • The needs of the parent • Parents' views on planning, evaluation, delivery of services. 	17	10%
Enhancing knowledge through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer learning • Being informed and using evidence base • Improving practice as a result of learning. 	21	12.4%
Support and advocacy work - for parents	25	14.8%
Linking with parents/other agencies/groups - networking and collaboration to ensure best supports for parents.	08	4.7%
Other responsibilities include but are not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Normalising parenting supports and parenting issues • Developing local initiatives in line with the principles of the PSC Project • Rolling out parenting courses, overcoming obstacles to primary care access • Coordinating evaluation of local parenting programmes. 	17	10%
Total	169	100%

3.3 Experiences of the PSC Project

PSC views on experiences of the project are mixed. For some, the project was ambiguous at the start, leading to PSCs being unclear on what their role was:

I suppose at the start I feel we were kind of wandering a bit in the dark because we weren't too sure what our role was. (PSC3)

For others, their experiences have been positive, particularly in terms of networking, receiving materials and training, and becoming more involved in local projects. Moreover, enhancing knowledge, learning, and having new things to include in practice were cited by many as being part of the PSC experience:

It's lovely to meet up with other people that feel equally as passionate about parenting, and just the whole skill mix, and maybe learning how things are done in different areas that I can bring back to my own practice, because I feel that there are always better ways of doing something or I like to just be as innovative as possible, be creative in my work, and I just love bringing back new ideas after meeting and training days. (PSC13)

3.4 Personnel Support for the Role of PSC

This section outlines respondents' views on support for their role as PSCs. Of the 56 questionnaire respondents who answered the question, 36 indicated that they did feel supported and 17 indicated that they did not. Table 5 below outlines participants' views on who supports them in their role as a PSC. The most common source of support cited was other PSCs, with 27% of responses indicating this.

Table 5: PSCs Supported by

Supported by	Number of Responses	% of Responses
Tusla National Office	22	18.03%
Area Manager	15	12.2%
Line Manager	27	22.1%
Colleagues	18	14.7%
Other PSCs	33	27%
Other	7	5.7%
Total	122	100%

Comments on questions of supportive personnel indicated that a number of the respondents drew on support from different networks (33.3%), such as Children and Young People's Services Committees (CYPSCs) and Child and Family Support Networks (CFSNs), partnership working with other services, and networks from the local areas. In addition, comments indicated that those responsible for PPFS in the area were of fundamental support to PSCs, with 22.22% of comments indicating this.

Some PPFS Manager interviewees also highlighted structures being utilised to support the project. In such cases, existing structures such as PPFS, CFSNs, and CYPSCs are being utilised in a number of areas:

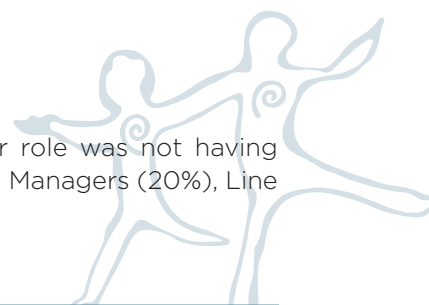
They sit on the subgroup of CYPSC, the PPFS subgroup; they would be members of that. They would also be members of our networks; we have made a decision in [...] that we have attempted that one of the parent champions at least sits on each of the other subgroup of CYPSC. (P39)

Other PPFS Managers are in the process of planning PSC connections to such structures:

The Parent Support Champion [project] is directly through me at the moment, but I will be building it into our networks through the network coordinators next year. (P33)

Peer groups and the PPFS Managers themselves are other types of support structures available to the PSCs, according to some manager respondents:

They attend regional meetings as a Parent Support Champion grouping, and they attend national meetings and get training and support through that. Then I meet with them here just to pull it together locally and to exchange notes, so that everybody is on the same page and sort of try and support them in developing an approach to the work that they are going to be doing. So they get it locally here, and they get it regionally, and they get it nationally. And they do their own peer support meetings as well. (P44)



For PSCs, the most commonly cited response for feeling unsupported in their role was not having enough time to carry out the role (46.6%). Others cited lack of support from Area Managers (20%), Line Managers (6.6%), and colleagues (6.6%).

Table 6: PSCs Unsupported by

Unsupported By	Number of Responses	% of Responses
Tusla National Office	1	2.22%
Area Manager	9	20%
Line Manager	3	6.6%
Colleagues	3	6.6%
Other PSCs	2	4.4%
Not enough time	21	46.6%
Other	6	13.3%
Total	45	100%

When asked to comment further on feelings of being unsupported, PSCs indicated that a lack of clarity on their role has resulted in feeling unsupported. Comments indicate a perception that more clarity on the role of the PSC in terms of expectations and outputs would make it easier to garner support.

This lack of clarity was evident in responses given by PPFS Managers. Some identified a lack of knowledge of the project and how it fits in the overall programme:

But I personally have struggled to see how it fits with all the other stuff. So the Parents Support Champion idea is good. I don't know whether ... they're trying to do the Parent Participation and the Parent Support Champion at the same time. (P43)

3.5 Resourcing and Supports

This section outlines respondents' views on the resourcing of the PSC Project in terms of the resources and supports available to the PSCs and perceptions on supports and resources required to carry out their roles effectively.

3.5.1 Resources and Supports Received

PSC interview respondents outlined a number of resources and supports received to assist them in their role: materials, flexibility in the direction of the project, support from Tusla in terms of assistance with development of the project, training, peer support from other PSCs, and management support in terms of facilitation and planning. Support from management has been identified both internally in Tusla and in external organisations as an important support, particularly in terms of allowing time to carry out the role:

Support from within the organisation, my own organisation, you know, to allow me the time to actually do it and not be under pressure to be involved in the Parenting Support Champion Project. So there's a kind of commitment with the organisation that I'm working for, and that's good as well, do you know. (PSC8)

Similarly to PSC respondents, PPFS respondents also identified resources provided by Tusla's National Office as being available to the PSCs:

The resources have been ... the toolkit, the training, the national conference, and then us as workers on the ground trying to promote and support I suppose the champions. That's been the resources, really. (P49)

Time to attend events organised by the National Office was the most cited resource given to PSCs by PPFS Managers:

Well my own team, I suppose I would have released staff to attend the parenting champion meetings and the support, the regional support learning groups, and any additional training and the conferences. (P39)

85.96% of questionnaire respondents indicated that they did have adequate resources to assist them in their role. Resources available to the PSCs are outlined in Table 7 below.

Table 7: Resources Available to PSCs

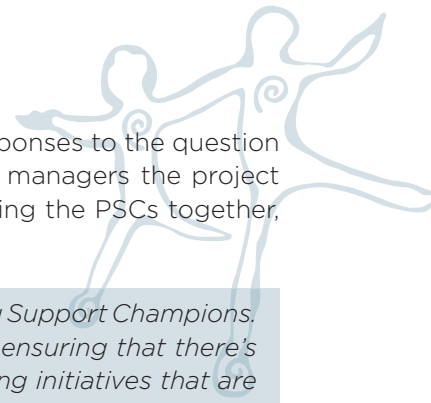
Resource	Number of Responses	% of Responses
Training	45	24.7%
Manuals	40	22%
Information leaflets	39	21.4%
Email list of relevant practitioners/organisations in your area	30	16.5%
Allocated time for the role	20	11%
Other	8	4.4%
Total	182	100%

3.5.2 Resources and Supports Required

There are a number of supports required to carry out the PSC role effectively, according to PSC interviewee respondents. Training on identified gaps, workshops for planning, funding, and resources in terms of materials were all identified by respondents.

In addition, time to carry out the role effectively, a national campaign to promote awareness of the work, and direction and leadership at national level are required, moving forward:

I think there needs to be a clear picture of what we are to do and how that supports and how it integrates with each other. I think that leadership has to come from higher up the scale. I think we're getting it at our local piece, but it needs to come higher up the scale - particularly when you're talking interagency, you're talking they're not Tusla, they may be Tusla-funded but even that piece, they're not Tusla, so that direction and leadership needs to come from quite a higher place. (PSC5)



Connected to the issue of direction and leadership at national level are mixed responses to the question of where the PSC Project fits within the remit of the PPFS Manager. For some managers the project is integral to the remit, where they see their role as being very involved in bringing the PSCs together, driving the project and strategic planning:

I've taken responsibility for doing some strategic planning with the Parenting Support Champions. So I would see that as my role, as having a strategic function in terms of ensuring that there's a plan of work that they're working to, and that it dovetails into the existing initiatives that are taking place within the county. (P41)

Other PPFS Managers, while aware of the project, are not as involved in its operation:

I would have only met them once. So in terms of their work, I wouldn't have a huge knowledge of sort of where ... I would have a limited knowledge of where they fit into the whole thing. And I mean I think again I know they're working away, but again they were kind of defined as people who were working for other agencies and other groups. So it was kind of, you know ... That's something I think that needs to be tied into the whole PPFS thing a little bit more tightly. (P35)

Moreover, there are some areas where the PSC Project is not seen as part of the remit of the PPFS Manager, due to resources:

I suppose I am the PPFS Manager in [...] so it fits within the work we would like to do, but unfortunately we just don't have the staffing resources to nominate anybody for that programme. I wouldn't feel I have had any real direct involvement in it, really. (P30)

Separate from the issue of leadership are the type of additional resources identified by PSC questionnaire respondents, which would assist them in carrying out their role more effectively. Allocated time to carry out the role of PSC was identified most often by respondents (34.6%).

Table 8: Useful Additional Resources

Resource	Number of Responses	% of Responses
Training	13	13.2%
Manuals	12	12.2%
Information leaflets	14	14.2%
Email list of relevant practitioners/organisations in your area	17	17.3%
Allocated time for the role	34	34.6%
Other	8	8.1%
Total	98	100%

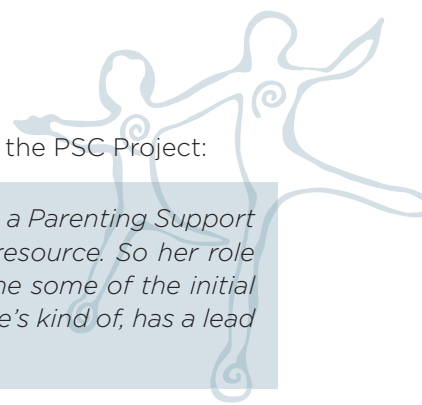
Comments on questions of resources and supports by PSCs responding to the online questionnaire pertain in general to three main areas: resources, time, and coordination. Table 9 below provides an overview of some of these comments.

Table 9: PSC Comments on Resources and Supports

Resources Needed	Time	Coordination
Updated information: Leaflets/pull-up stands/posters (matching each key message).	It is a constant balance between devoting enough time to the PSC role, and to the other aspects of my day-to-day role.	One person should be identified as lead within parenting who can coordinate and plan the activity.
Contact information: Lists of relevant organisations that work with parents (including supports they provide), both Tusla and non-Tusla. Up-to-date email list of all PSCs.	More time for this role would be beneficial. Time allocated – in order to attend training days; I would have to cancel groups with parents.	Requires a contact person who provides direction.
Training: Manuals from training should be made available to all practitioners who require them. Training given to PSCs should be available to all practitioners.	Time is a real challenge given that my post is part-time due to resources. Impossible to cover the expectations of the PSC Programme when you are carrying a diverse and full case load, plus without the backing of middle and senior management it's a wasted resource and opportunity.	Coordination at a local level with a lead person having responsibilities for same.
Funding required: To develop local groups. For workshops on planning for project. Training on identified gaps.	Having the time to actively promote PSC Project is not always a priority. Lack of time for role of PSC is the biggest problem, as my 'normal job' is very demanding.	The role needs more recognition and more organisation, with a lead organisation or person in each area in order for change to happen. Disorganised is my experience.
More PSCs needed.	Role is extremely busy, so although time is allocated, it is not sufficient to do the role justice.	We currently have a dedicated coordinator who has been key in supporting the work of the PSCs to promote positive, evidenced-based parenting messages.

On the question of supports allocated to the PSC Project, some PPFS Managers spoke about utilising seed funds as a resource for PSCs:

The two people who lead on the Parent Seed-Funding Project, we automatically applied for them to become Parenting Support Champions. So there's that crossover, and therefore they have resources available to them, but other than that, no. (P43)



One area is utilising an existing resource of a parent support manager to support the PSC Project:

We had an existing resource; as I said we're probably the one area that has a Parenting Support Manager within its area, and it's not just for [...], it's actually a [region] resource. So her role really has been to deliver on the parenting champions, and also she's done some of the initial training across the country with the parenting champions. So I suppose she's kind of, has a lead role within that. (P47)

For others, however, there is no scope in the budget to allocate resources, although there is an indication that some allocation would have been beneficial:

No, there haven't, and again primarily because there isn't a budget line for it. I mean certainly this would be the consistent response from the Area Manager in terms of resources; there is no scope within the budget. All of our funding is allocated to services through service-level agreements, and I think again if there was to be a national allocation in each area it would have been very beneficial. (P41)

3.6 Implementation

This section outlines all respondents' views on the overall implementation of the PSC Project. It explores perceptions on what has assisted in implementing the PSC Project as well as views on implementation challenges.

3.6.1 Implementation Enablers

PSC questionnaire respondents were asked to give their views on what they think has assisted the implementation of the PSC Project to date. A number of processes and structures were identified, which are grouped according to themes and are depicted in Figure 1 below.

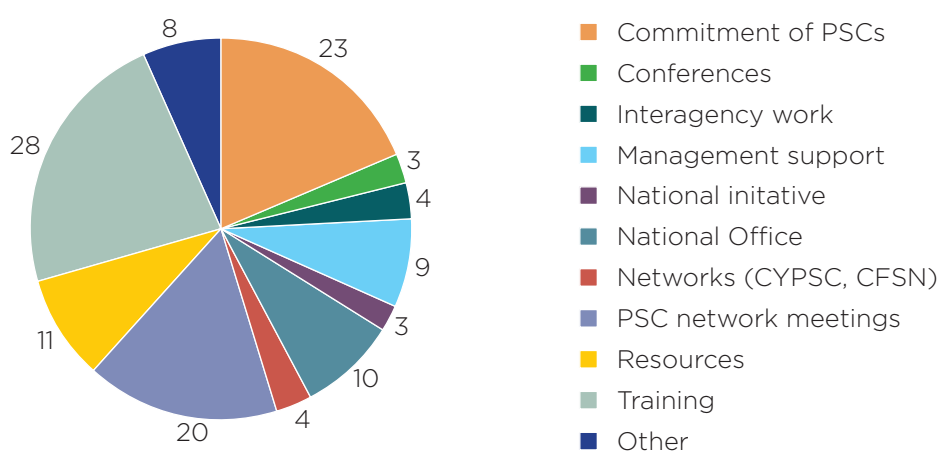
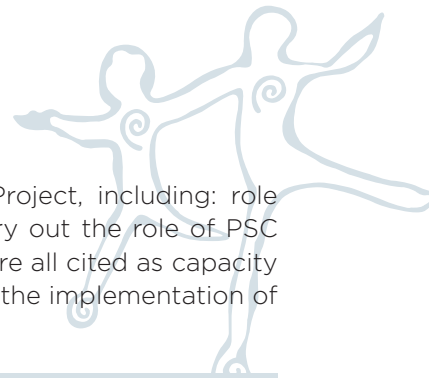


Figure 1: Enabled the Implementation of the PSC Project

Table 10 below outlines the respondents' comments in relation to the themes identified. Training provided, the commitment of the PSCs, and PSC network meetings were identified most often as assisting the implementation of the project.

Table 10: Implementation Enablers

Enablers	Responses	Details of Assists
Commitment of PSCs	23	Interest, enthusiasm, energy, motivation, and dedication of PSCs.
Conferences	3	The goals and principals of the project being highlighted and shared in a national forum.
Interagency work	4	Sharing information between organisations is assisting in reaching those in all services, not just Tusla.
Management support	9	Support from management, PPFS, Regional Area, local and organisation management are helping implementation.
National initiative	3	The project being attached to PPFS and a joined-up national initiative.
National Office	10	Coordination and good support from the project leaders in Tusla and WLD.
Networks (CYPSC, CFSN)	4	PSCs being involved with local networks and network coordinators.
PSC network meetings	20	Linking with other PSCs regionally and locally, shared knowledge and peer learning.
Resources	11	Resource packs, manuals, leaflets, information, website.
Training	28	Excellent training, relevant to work, very useful.
Other	8	Local relationships, knowing what works, seed funds, work that existed prior to PSC, interesting to parents and good practices.



3.6.2 Implementation Challenges

PSCs identified a number of challenges to the implementation of the PSC Project, including: role ambiguity, difficulties in engaging parents, and difficulties with capacity to carry out the role of PSC effectively. Resourcing, the need for more PSCs, funding, and in particular time are all cited as capacity issues. A lack of structures to support the project is also cited as a challenge for the implementation of the project:

A strategy, it would be useful to have like developed a parenting strategy in [...], some kind of direction or some plan in terms of where we're going. And we don't have that at the moment. Now hopefully over time, with posts being filled and stuff, that might take off, you know, and that we get some time to do that. So that will be the main challenge. (PSC1)

Similar challenges were identified by PSC questionnaire respondents. Common themes identified pertaining to challenges at both practice and organisational levels are shown in Figure 2 below.

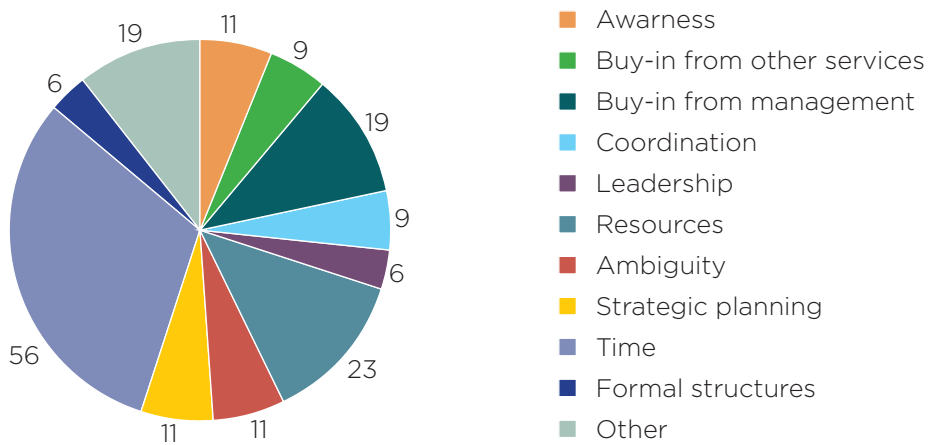
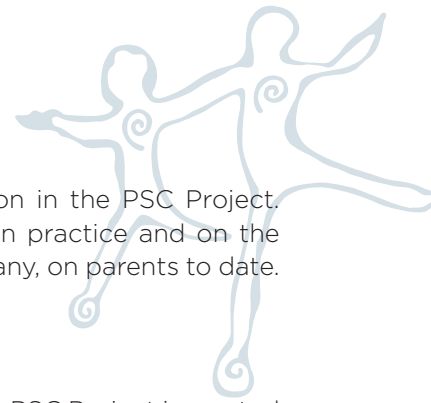


Figure 2: Implementation Challenges

Table 11 below outlines the PSC questionnaire respondents' comments in relation to the themes identified. Time to carry out the role, resources, buy-in from management, and awareness are cited most often as challenges to the implementation of the PSC Project. Other challenges to implementation pertaining to both practice and organisational levels are highlighted at the end of Table 11.

Table 11: Implementation Challenges

Challenges	Responses	Details of Challenges
Awareness	11	Poor awareness about the project outside of those involved.
Buy-in from other services	9	Lack of buy-in from other services, organisations, and statutory sector.
Buy-in from management	19	Lack of management recognition for the initiative; lack of management engagement with the initiative. Promotion of the project needed from top down. Not seen as a priority for PPFs.
Coordination	9	Dedicated coordinators required to drive the project both regionally and locally.
Leadership	6	Dedicated leader needed at national and local level.
Resources	23	General lack of resources. Funding required for programme activities, leaflets, manuals, childcare, travel expenses, outreach to rural areas. Costs borne by service budgets.
Ambiguity	11	Others are not clear on the role or the project. Lack of clarity on expectations for PSCs.
Strategic planning	11	Lack of national PSC plan, annual work plan and plans at local level. Lack of clarity on project direction.
Time	56	Time to carry out the role, meet expectations, capacity in terms of workload from paid employment.
Formal structures	6	Not a recognised post – no accountability, incorporate the role into existing structures, e.g. CYPSC/CFSN. Not enough structure on how to communicate the messages on the ground/incorporate into everyday work life.
Other challenges: Practice level	7	Implementation challenges at practice level: Areas working in different ways/different stages, Not enough PSCs, fitting information into crisis focus of social work, difficulty engaging/motivating parents, project has lost momentum.
Organisation level	12	Implementation challenges at organisation level: Buy-in from colleagues, future planning difficult, PSC model of best practice needed, model of parenting support needed, national campaign lacking, role should not be an 'add on', difficult to do well, workloads, not taken seriously enough. PSC Project needs to be prioritised, is not a priority in the organisation, other demands take precedence, not seeing focus on prevention.



3.7 Impact of the PSC Project

This section outlines the PSC respondents' views on the impact of participation in the PSC Project. Specific focus in this section is on perceptions of the impact on the PSCs' own practice and on the practice of their colleagues, as well as perceptions of the impact of the project, if any, on parents to date. PPFs Managers' views on the impact of the project on SLAs are also highlighted.

3.7.1 Impact on Own Practice

PSC interview respondents indicated a variety of ways in which participation in the PSC Project impacted on their practice. Increased energy, confidence, and focus on parenting work, being more aware of the parenting element of their work, and improved coordination and links with other agencies were all cited as impacts. Most responses to this question indicated that participation in the project complemented or enhanced practice. For some, it has validated and complemented work, and for others it has enhanced that work through the use of tools and materials, as well as through the availability of a support network around parenting:

What it has done is enhanced my practice, because the training materials are just fantastic, and also the fact that you know that there's a support group out there, so you're not isolated. So I suppose it's enhanced my practice as well; you know you can pick up the phone, you know you can have that conversation with people in the area that are focused on the same things and making things better. (PSC10)

Similar views are held by those who completed the online questionnaire: 26 of 56 respondents who answered this question indicated that participation in the PSC Project had a moderate impact on practice.

Table 12: Impact of Project on Practice

Resource	Number of Responses	% of Responses
No impact	3	(5.45%)
Minor impact	21	(38.18%)
Moderate impact	26	(46%)
Major impact	6	(10.91%)
Total	56	(100%)

The majority of those respondents indicated that practice had been enhanced as a result of participation in the PSC Project in a variety of ways, which are outlined in Table 13 below. It is worth noting that a few respondents indicated that the work they are doing now as a PSC is the same work they were doing prior to the project, while others indicated that the impact on practice would be 'major' if they had more time to carry out the role.

Table 13: Impact on Own Practice

Impact on Own Practice
Practice has been enhanced by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer learning • Training • Networking • Information received and being more informed • Increased confidence and validation • Involvement in research and multidisciplinary working • Coordination and sharing of policies and practice.

3.7.2 Impact on the Practice of Colleagues

There were indications from PSC interview respondents that the project has impacted positively on the practice of their colleagues, particularly in enhancing their confidence:

Yes, it certainly has, it certainly has given us oomph, and it's certainly for even the staff that I line manage, it has given them a greater confidence. (PSC13)

Table 14 below shows that 20 of the PSCs who responded to the online questionnaire felt that participation in the PSC Project had a minor impact on the practice of their colleagues, 20 indicated that it had a moderate impact, and 15 signified that it had no impact.

Table 14: Impact on Colleagues' Practice

Resource	Number of Responses	% of Responses
No impact	15	27.27%
Minor impact	20	36.36%
Moderate impact	20	36.36%
Major impact	0	0
Total	55	100%

The majority of PSC comments (50%) pertaining to this question indicated that in their view it is the sharing of information that has had the biggest impact on the practice of their colleagues. Making them aware of the importance of the 50 key messages, sharing information and training resources, regular updates of available parenting supports, and encouragement on the use of such information are all cited as having an impact on the practice of colleagues. It is worth noting that 29.17% of comments on this question indicated that the time required to impart information and coordinate with colleagues is a barrier to impact in this area.

3.7.3 Impact on Parents

While the project is still in its infancy, and there is a view that there is much more to do in the project, early indications from some of the PSC interviewees are that this work is having an impact on parents. Information gained as a result of participation in the project is perceived to be benefiting parents, as practitioners are sharing resources and able to provide parents with a range of information:

When more information is being provided. So what happens is, you inform staff, you raise awareness, and then that means that when you're working with parents, you're able to provide parents with a range, I suppose pieces of information, information on where you can go for further support. So it's all having that information that you can share resources, I think that that's made a big difference, really. (PSC10)

As well as benefiting parents, some respondents maintain that this work is sensible in that it is dispelling some of the myths around Tusla:

So we are able to say this is actually a national framework, so people buy into it a lot more when they know, and I think for the families I work with anyway [this] dispels a lot of myths around Tusla. So I do think it's a very sensible idea. (PSC11)

PSC questionnaire responses showed that 41.51% thought that participation in the project had a minor impact on parents, 43.40% thought that it had a moderate impact, and 11.32% thought it had a major impact on parents.



Table 15: Impact on Parents

Resource	Number of Responses	% of Responses
No Impact	2	3.77%
Minor Impact	22	41.51%
Moderate Impact	23	43.40%
Major Impact	6	11.32%
Total	53	100%

In expanding on these ratings, the highest number of responses (39.39%) indicated that the sharing of information received as part of the project has had an impact on parents.

3.7.4 Impact on Service-Level Agreements

In relation to Service-Level Agreements (SLAs), a couple of areas have seen an impact on such agreements, according to PPFS Manager respondents, although to date impact is seen as limited in these cases:

Limited, again, because you were talking about five Parent Support Champions over four CYPSCs, huge geographical area. So you just couldn't – like, if you had one county or whatever, you know, you could hit that much harder. Our area's too big for sort of five Parent Support Champions and what we were trying to achieve out of it. So I would say limited impact on service level agreements. (P42)

For others, the PSC Project has had no impact on the SLAs, though it is seen by some to be a good idea:

I actually think it's a good point. I think it would be no harm to; we haven't needed to include in service-level agreements because it was already embedded as part of standard work practice. But I think embedding it in SLAs would be a very important development. (P41)

3.8 Sustainability

This section outlines respondents' views on the sustainability of the PSC Project. 3 of the PSC questionnaire respondents indicated that the project is not sustainable, 10 indicated that it is sustainable, and 39 think that some parts of it are sustainable.

Table 16: Sustainability of the PSC Project

Response	Number of Respondents
It is sustainable in its current format	10
Some parts are sustainable	39
It is not sustainable	3

For some PPFS Managers, parenting and supporting parents are seen as the core business of PPFS, and therefore the project is viewed favourably in terms of keeping parenting at the centre of the PPFS agenda:

I suppose parenting is a key pillar within the PPFS Programme, so I think the parenting support champion's? idea is a very good one to try to keep parenting at front and centre in terms of the PPFS Programme. (P47)

3.8.1 Barriers to Sustainability

All respondents identified barriers to the sustainability of the project in the longer term. For PSC interviewee respondents, these are outdated information, unrealistic expectations, a lack of planning for the future of the project, and a lack of national cross-sector collaboration. A perceived lack of knowledge, interest, or support at management level is seen as an impediment to sustainability, with a lack of resources, particularly time to carry out the role effectively, being cited most often as a barrier to sustainability:

Money and time. If I was told in the morning, Here this is your post, nine to five, off with you, I'd be delighted. But, and I do think that at the end of the day, it's money and time, and again the people in power, people in suits in the offices, the usual need to see. (PSC7)

Similar barriers were identified by PSC questionnaire respondents. Common themes highlighted include: resources, time, management support, and coordination, and awareness, focus being on other areas as opposed to the parenting support project, and capacity in terms of workload, all of which are outlined in Figure 3 below.

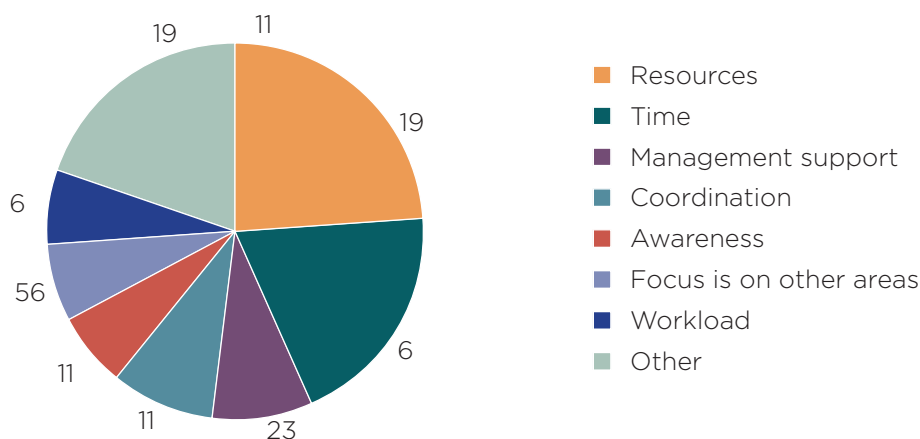


Figure 3: Barriers to Sustainability

Table 17 below outlines PSC questionnaire respondents' comments in relation to the themes identified. Other themes not presented in Figure 3 pertain mainly to issues of ambiguity, specifically around definite outcomes for the project, evidence of impact, and ambiguity in relation to the role of the PSC, with different areas at different stages of development and with different supports. There is a view that the future of the project is also ambiguous.



Table 17: Barriers to Sustainability

Barriers	Responses	Details of Barriers
Awareness	6	Poor awareness about the project outside of those involved. National information/awareness campaign needed.
Management	8	Lack of commitment regionally and support from senior management. Not enough support from managers (this could be due to lack of information filtering down). Recognition of value by senior managers.
Coordination	8	Lack of coordination on a regional level. Lack of coordination left to individual motivation. It is too ad hoc. It needs to be coordinated and managed by someone and will not survive if it is not.
Resources	22	Lack of resources, particularly in rural areas. Resources, i.e. leaflets, pull-up stands. Lack of funding for activities. Resources to employ lead person locally. Lack of commitment, as no funding to roll out services.
Time	18	No dedicated allocated time for PSCs, meet expectations, capacity in terms of workload from paid employment.
Other barriers	19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of defined outcomes and evidence of impact • Lack of role clarity, communication and momentum • Areas unequal – national structure and coordination needed to combat this • The future of the project is ambiguous.

As with the barriers to sustainability identified by PSCs, capacity and resources, particularly in terms of time, were also identified by a couple of the PPFS Managers, with the view that it is unrealistic to expect PSCs to carry out the role without being freed up to do so:

I do think though that people on that group need to be allowed, it is extra, I mean the whole thing was that it's not extra to your job. It is extra. There are extra duties that it brings with it, but people need to be freed up to be able to do that. And the understanding from their managers that this is a part of their work but it needs to be ... it's not something that they can do along with all of everything else they do. They need to be freed up to have the space to really be involved in that, to really take on projects to drive things forward. I think it's unrealistic to say that this is to be done ... what was that phrase that was bandied about at one stage, neutral, at no extra cost. That's not ... I mean it does take time for people to really give it as they need it. (P29)

The issue of capacity is also linked to the issue of resources. Capacity to drive the project forward requires extra staff, according to PPFs Manager respondents:

Again it's just about capacity to do these things. What our priority is on top of everything else, I mean we also fund all of ... We have got a budget that we fund the family resource work that is going on here, and that's also part of our job. So we have had to prioritise, you know? Training people up, briefing around four hundred people, and being involved in the rolling out of Meitheal. That's our priority. And everything else is an extra, you know? And we're trying to do the best we can really with that. But I mean if we had more resources, that would be great. If we had another worker to implement the parenting, fantastic, but at the minute we haven't. (P31)

Moreover, a number of the PPFs Managers were of the view that coordinators for parenting are required and that employment of such would assist with sustainability:

If I had one person whose job was parenting, I would get them to take on the parent support champions and, you know, work with them as a team to get more out of that, because it's down to me to do it right now ... I feel that sustaining it we need a parenting lead. (P48)

For others, a strategy is needed to assist with sustainability, central to which would be a collaborative effort:

I do think it's sustainable, but I think we'd have to sit down and really think about how you work towards making it sustainable. It won't happen by accident, you know, really, I suppose is what I'd be saying. It does need a strategy around it ... It's about maybe at looking as well a little bit outside the box. Looking at our colleagues in any community. Like our family resource centres, which are strategically based. I think they could have a critical role in supporting the work of parenting champions. (P49)

3.8.2 Sustainability Enablers

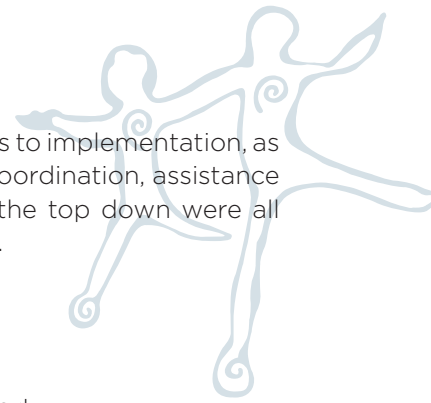
In contrast to the barriers to sustainability, there were a number of PSC views on particular things that would enable the sustainability of the project. These include but are not limited to: the determination and goodwill of all of those involved in the project, the experience of the PSCs, the learning gained thus far, and future plans for the project that are already in motion. In some cases, having support at management level and the positivity around the project are seen as enablers:

This is really positive work; it's looking at the side of making things better for people. So I think that is a positivity around that, as opposed to reactive when things go wrong. So it's really making sure that everything is proactive. So I think that all enables it. (PSC10)

For others, that fact that the project is seen as cost-effective in being able to accomplish a great deal with limited resources is an enabler to sustainability, linked to which is a perceived improvement in collaboration in this area, thus assisting with issues of cost:

People are coming together, whether it's in the subgroups or the CYPSCs. There are a lot of different organisations coming together. So I think the system is definitely better than what it was ... If there's a system there, try and use what's there already. That's kind of I suppose how I think it's, especially when resources are so tight as well, you know. (PSC4)

For PSC questionnaire respondents there are a number of things that could be done to assist with the



sustainability of the project. Reflecting the aforementioned challenges and enablers to implementation, as well as barriers to sustainability: an increase in awareness, better structures and coordination, assistance with funding, time to carry out the role, and support from management from the top down were all identified as possible ways to enable sustainability, as depicted in Figure 4 below.

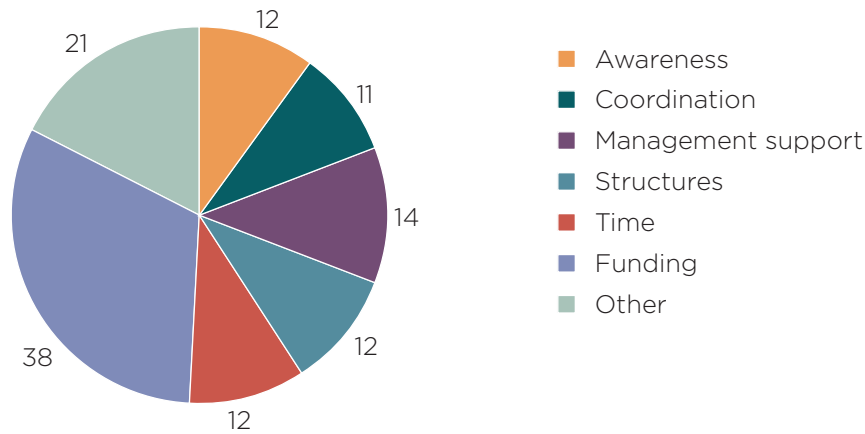


Figure 4: Enablers to Sustainability

Table 18 below outlines the respondents' comments in relation to the themes identified.

Table 18: Sustainability Enablers

Enablers	Responses	Details of Barriers
Awareness	12	National launch or information campaign. Marketing of normalised parenting supports. Wider knowledge about the project.
Management support (top down)	14	Supported at all levels from top down. Senior management backing. Role should be more valued.
Coordination	11	At the very least, regional parent support, but this would be more sustainable if there was someone responsible in each area for promotion of parenting support. A local coordinator in each area to lead out the programme. More coordination and guidance at a local level.
Structures	12	More structure. National lead and plan. Local strategy and action plan. Designated role in agencies, with a clear strategic plan overall nationally and in each area. Strategic plan of work.
Funding	38	Funding for participation of parents. Funding from Tusla to support parenting for all parent champions, with requirements to be met and feedback quarterly. Support for the parents who are willing to coordinate. Supports to deliver on evaluations of needs analysis of parents in the community. Funding a post in each area.
Time	11	Specific time dedicated to the role. Allocated time for PSCs.
Other assists examples	21	Evidence of outcomes, Awareness of commitment needed for future PSCs, Same emphasis as Child Protection, Written into Service-Level Agreements, Having defined future goals for the project, Having defined outcomes, Mainstream the project.

4

Conclusion

4.1 Key Messages

This section provides an overview of the key messages from the findings of the report. It also refers to the findings of all four reports pertaining to the PSC Project where applicable.

Role of the PSC

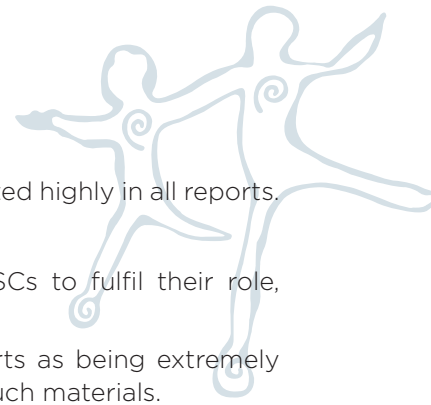
- The role of the PSC is conceived in a number of ways. The prominent view is that the role is to disseminate Tusla's Parenting Support Strategy's 50 key messages internally in PSCs' own organisations and externally to other organisations and parents.
- There is still ambiguity around the role of the PSC in terms of having clear objectives and action plans, evident in responses from both PSCs and PPFs Managers, as well as in all previous reports published on the project.
- A national strategy around the programme, dissemination of the role to others, definitive outcomes, and an awareness campaign are identified as possible ways to assist with the issue of ambiguity.

Experiences of the PSC Project

- There is a widespread view that support for parenting can be enhanced by the PSC Project, evidenced in all reports pertaining to the project. The project has enhanced practice through: the validation and complementary nature of the work, the use of tools and materials, and the availability of a support network around parenting.
- Aside from issues of ambiguity, PSC respondents identify their experiences as largely positive in all reports.
- Learning from peers, network meetings, and training are highlighted as positive; this is particularly evident in both reports of the RLGs as well as this report.

Personnel Support for the Role of PSC

- There were a number of sources of personnel support cited by PSCs: other PSCs, local networks, Tusla's National Office, and different levels of Tusla management.
- However, a lack of management support was cited by many, with the project not seen as a priority for PPFs. Lack of recognition of and engagement with the project by all levels of Tusla management was highlighted by PSC respondents.
- While some PPFs Managers see the project as integral to their remit, others have not engaged with the project.



Resourcing and Supports Received

- Experiences of RLGs as a source of learning and peer support were rated highly in all reports.
- Experiences of training were also rated highly in all reports.
- Both RLGs and training are cited as improving the capacity of PSCs to fulfil their role, particularly evident to both RLG reports and this report.
- Resources in terms of materials received were identified in all reports as being extremely useful. However, there is a perceived need to increase the supply of such materials.
- Facilitation by managers was identified as a positive source of support in terms of time allowed to attend networks and training, and in some cases flexibility and support to carry out the role.
- All such supports were also identified by PPFS Managers, with a couple of managers also citing seed funding as a source of resourcing for the PSC Project.

Resources and Supports Required

- PSCs identified a number of resources needed to carry out the role effectively.
- Increased supply of materials such as manuals, leaflets, and pop-ups.
- Lists of relevant organisations that work with parents, including supports available.
- Training should be available to all practitioners, as should training manuals if requested.
- Funding is also needed to help with the development of projects locally, for programme activities, leaflets, manuals, childcare, travel expenses, and outreach to rural areas.
- The role of the PSC has, for many, involved a significant amount of extra work that was not initially envisaged. The work of the PSC is now seen by some as an additional role rather than something that could be subsumed into daily work practices. As a consequence, the need for dedicated time for the role was the most cited support required in all reports pertaining to the project.
- The need for more time was acknowledged and seen as an imperative by some PPFS Managers.
- Coordination was also identified in all reports as requiring focus, with the need for a lead coordinator at national level feeding into dedicated parenting support coordinators at regional and local levels.
- The couple of areas that do have a dedicated parenting support coordinator have progressed well in the area of parenting support generally and the PSC Project in particular.

Implementation Enablers

- A number of processes and structures were identified as having assisted with the implementation of the project, such as: the commitment of the PSCs, support from Tusla's National Office, and support from networks and managers in some cases.
- Both the RLGs and training received were rated highly in all reports as being fundamental to the learning and development of the project.

Implementation Challenges

- Reflecting the supports required time, resources, and coordination were highlighted as challenges to the implementation of the project. All are identified in all reports pertaining to the project.
- There is a perceived lack of buy-in from management and other services, organisations, and the statutory sector. Linked to this is a perceived lack of leadership for the project. All of these are seen as impediments to the implementation of the project.
- Poor awareness is seen as contributing to the lack of buy-in in relation to the overall parenting support and parental participation programme of work.
- Linked to poor awareness is the issue of ambiguity, identified in all reports, specifically around definite outcomes for the project, evidence of impact, and ambiguity in relation to the role of the PSC, particularly in terms of expectations and level of prioritisation.
- Lack of consistency nationwide. Areas are working in different ways and are at different stages. This is thought to reflect the differing levels of support in each area.
- Reflecting issues of consistency, a lack of strategic planning in terms of a national plan, an annual work plan and plans at local level, and a lack of clarity on the direction of the project are all identified as problematic. Strategic planning was also identified as an issue in the PSC questionnaire report.

Impact of the Project

- While the project is still in its infancy, there is a perception that participation has had positive impacts on the practice of PSCs, resulting in: increased energy, confidence and focus on parenting work, increased awareness of the parenting element of their work, and improved coordination and links with other agencies. The project has generated ideas to improve practice in areas of collaboration, evaluation, planning, and dissemination, for example.
- Positive impacts on the practice of PSCs' colleagues were also identified, in terms of sharing and use of information, leading to increases in confidence. Such findings are highlighted in both RLG reports as well as this report.
- There were also identified impacts on parents in a number of cases. Information gained as a result of participation in the project is perceived to be benefiting parents, as practitioners are sharing resources and able to provide parents with a range of information. The findings from the RLGs and this report suggest that parents are more informed and have increased opportunities to participate, resulting in increased self-esteem.
- PPFS Manager views also indicate that the project has resulted in positive impacts, particularly in the practice of the PSCs, in terms of: knowledge gained being implemented in practice, parenting issues being highlighted more at local level, and the project having an impact on practitioners' approaches to supporting parents and parental participation practices, according to some PPFS Managers.



Sustainability

There are a number of barriers to the sustainability of the project, many of which reflect implementation challenges and resources and supports required. Such barriers include:

- A lack of knowledge, interest, and support at management level.
- A lack of resources, particularly time to carry out the role effectively.
- Linked to the issue of time is the view from both PSCs and PPFS Managers that extra dedicated parenting support staff is required to drive the project.
- The project is seen as ad hoc by many, reflecting previous points about a lack of coordination and the need for a national structure, according to both PSCs and PPFS Managers.
- Evidence of outcomes will be required to assist with sustainability in the longer term.

In contrast to barriers to sustainability, there are a number of enablers that will assist with sustainability, which include:

- The determination and goodwill of those involved, which will contribute to the sustainability of the project. There is a perceived view that the PSCs and those at an organisational level who are personally involved in the project will continue to drive the project forward due to their belief in the work being done and their commitment to the continuation of that work.
- The learning gained thus far and future plans for the project already in motion, such as parent learning communities, additional training, and further RLGs.
- The perceived cost-effectiveness of the project. There is a particular view that a lot can be done and is being done in the area of parenting support at very little cost. The use of existing networks is seen as an important resource in this regard.

Overall, the PSC Project is seen as a hugely positive element of the parenting work stream of the PPFS Programme. While there are evidently challenges and barriers to overcome, the findings from all four reports on the project suggest anecdotally that the project is having an impact even at this early stage in its development. However, future research will be required to assess both the impact and outcomes of the project when it is fully operational and embedded in Tusla's system of support.

UNESCO Child and Family Research Centre
Institute for Lifecourse and Society
Upper Newcastle Road
National University of Ireland Galway
Galway, Ireland

T: +353 91 495 398
E: cfrc@nuigalway.ie
W: www.nuigalway.ie/childandfamilyresearch
🐦 @UNESCO_CFRC
📘 ucfrc.nuig



TUSLA

An Ghníomhaireacht um
Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency

Tusla – Child and Family Agency

The Brunel Building
Heuston South Quarter
Saint John's Road West
Dublin 8
D08 X01F

T: +353 1 771 8500
E: info@tusla.ie
W: www.tusla.ie
🐦 @tusla