

Annual Report

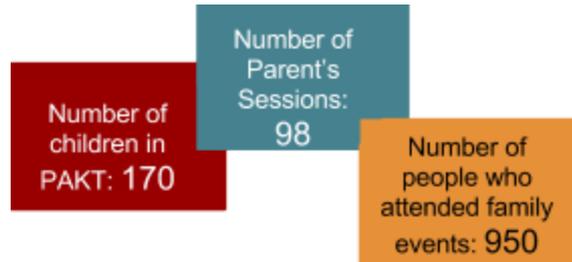
Parents And Kids Together

September 2015 - June 2016



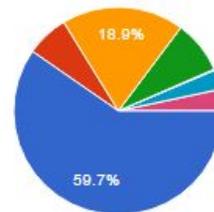
Introduction:

Parents And Kids Together is a YMCA Ireland programme that offers a fun, family-centred approach to youth development. Through PAKT we build the assets that lead to resilience, including social competence, participation, spirituality, physical well-being and parental support.



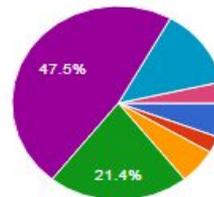
Family fun day with West Dublin, Crumlin, and Dublin PAKT projects, in Sandymount, Dublin

Types of Activities:



Children's activity	391	59.7%
Family event	43	6.6%
Parent's activity	124	18.9%
PAKT+ activity	54	8.2%
Leadership development	1	0.2%
One-One child	20	3.1%
One-one parent	22	3.4%

Participation:



Level 1: Contact	29	5.5%
Level 2: Meet again	14	2.7%
Level 3: Socialize	30	5.7%
Level 4: Take part	117	22.4%
Level 5: Be involved	246	47%
Level 6: Organize	69	13.2%
Level 7: Lead	18	3.4%

Highlights of the PAKT year:

- A successful PAKT pilot project in Crumlin.
- A Christmas family event in Cobh that attracted over 200 people.
- One-to-one sessions for PAKT children in collaboration with a local school in Bantry.



- Integration of the "Parents plus" model into our work with parents.
- A summer residential for families from the Dublin PAKT project including fun outdoor activities.
- Establishment of a new PAKT advisory group to oversee the strategic development of the programme.



How much sugar is in that?

"PAKT has taught my daughter to be part of more activities and she has really started to get involved in the preparation and cooking of food."

PAKT Parent

Parents And Kids Together works with the whole family to support young people to gain the assets they need to be resilient in the face of life's challenges.

External Evaluation:

In 2011 PAKT was evaluated externally by Exodea Consulting Limited. We have been steadily working towards the attainment of these goals since then.

Programme Development Goals	Actions taken	Further actions
1) Develop a more consistent and robust mechanism to assess the level and nature of local needs for the PAKT programme	Local needs assessments taken place in Ballincollig and Bantry, and Cork City, and Dublin	Local needs assessments to be completed in Cobh.
2) Develop more efficient & effective management structures and better cooperation and communication between individual PAKT centres	Regular team meetings Group supervision Sharing information online A new PAKT management committee	Ongoing monitoring
3) A need to develop more robust Indicators to track the progression of the individual, the family.	In 2013 and 2014 we introduced new assessment tools. Use of the Perceived social competence scale	Assessment model expanded to include staff and parent's perspectives.
4) The project needs to raise its national level profile and collaborative efforts with external partners	At a national level, the YMCA has developed a new publicity strategy including a website, social media strategy, and published articles.	All projects to be part of local family network teams and to participate in Meitheal as needed.
5) There is a need to articulate a theory of change to underpin the PAKT model	Impact Maps and a PAKT manual have been developed	The PAKT manual will integrate aims from the Better Outcomes Brighter Futures policy & National Youth Strategy
6) YMCA needs to develop a plan for the expansion of PAKT in other communities	A new PAKT project has been developed in Crumlin.	Needs assessments into new communities
7) Need to diversify our funding and develop a funding strategy	A new staff "fundraiser" position. Opening of a shop in Dublin, fundraisers, and application for corporate sponsorship.	Continue with these efforts.

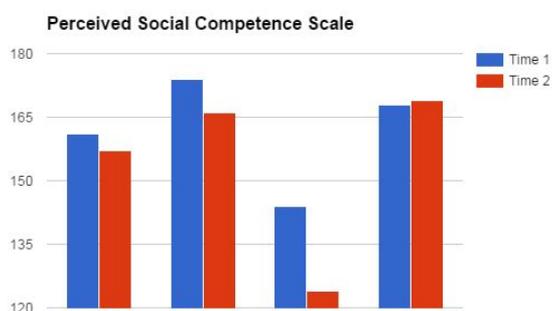
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PAKT assessment findings:

Since 2013 we have been measuring the development of resilience assets in children who participate in PAKT.

In previous years, the highest change was found in the areas of social competence, particularly regarding listening skills. In consultation with NUI Galway, we decided to measure this resilience trait further using a standardized measure developed by the Ohio State University called the Perceived Social Competence Scale (PSCS)

Differences in Perceived Social Competence, from September to June



Explanation of the chart: The questions are in the following order from left to right: 1) I am good at making friends, 2) I help other people, 3) I ask others if I can be of help, and 4) I get along well with others. We used a 5 point likert-type scale (Not at all (1), A little (2), Some (3), A lot (4), and very much (5). the scores were added up for all participants in September (Time 1) and again in June (Time 2).

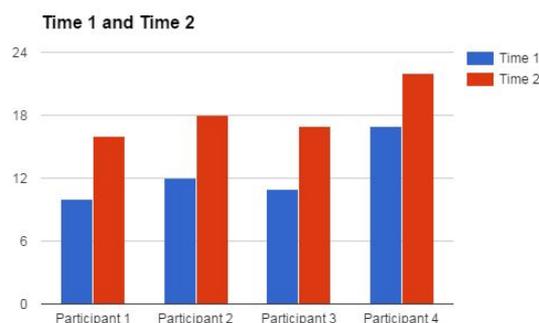
The data was unable to show a positive difference in perceived social competence from September to June. However, this finding is consistent with further research on the scale conducted by the Ohio State University and published in 2016. “Recent research has demonstrated that the original version of the PSCA has not necessarily functioned as expected. For instance, research has detected little growth over time in social competence among an economically disadvantaged youth sample which may be due to favorable perceptions of social competence among youth at baseline” (Anderson-Butcher et al, 420).

Despite the flaws in this standardised scale, the assessment has revealed information to us about the young people who we are working with. The main Problem of the scale is that at baseline, young people



from economically disadvantaged areas tend to see themselves as having a high level of social competence. Indeed, in our study we found that at baseline children gave themselves an average score of 19 out of a possible 25. However, what is interesting to us is that a small handful of children actually scored themselves significantly lower than their peers at baseline.

In further analysis of these particular participants, we found that they show common traits, for example being part of a marginalized community. Their low baseline scores could be seen as a general reflection of low self-regard.



What is remarkable, is that these individuals showed the greatest growth in their self perception of social competence skills over the course of the PAKT year. This growth represents a change in not only their attainment of social competence skills, but also an increase in positive self-perception. What this demonstrates to us in PAKT is that the programme may be particularly beneficial to young people from marginalized communities. This information can play a role in the families we target in the future.

Parent's Evaluation

We've asked for parent's feedback on how they experience the PAKT programme. 50 parents completed our survey and this is what they said:

- 100% "Feel that through PAKT our family is part of a supportive community"
- 86% agree that "If our children were having a problem, I would talk to PAKT staff about it"
- 89% agree that "through involvement in PAKT, our family has a stronger relationship with each other".
- 91% agreed that "My child has made healthier choices since being involved in PAKT (ie. food, hygiene, active lifestyle)".
- 98% said that "My child has developed social skills through PAKT, such as accepting someone who is different, resolving a conflict, or becoming more confident in groups"



Parent's session on online safety, Cobh

Quotes from Parents:

PAKT staff treat us parents with such respect and care, they involve us in lots of different ways.

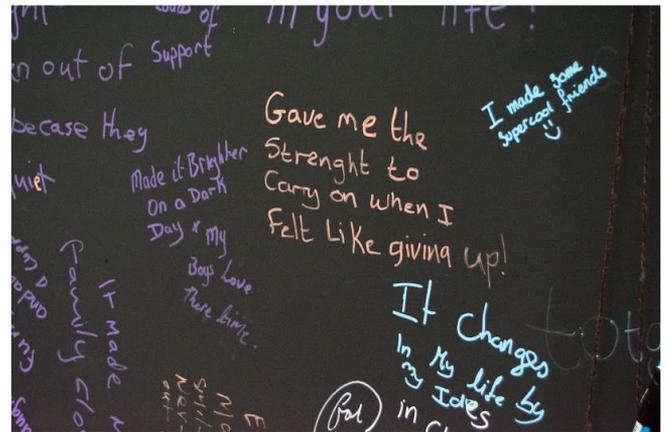
My son absolutely loves PAKT, the team members, his peers and all the activities. We know how safe and happy he is there and this has made a difference through times of stress knowing he is so happy

PAKT has helped me in dealing with my daughter who has just been diagnosed as autistic

My child is very happy to come to the group and is usually more relaxed and happy afterwards.

As I am not from Cobh, PAKT has introduced me to other parents in the community

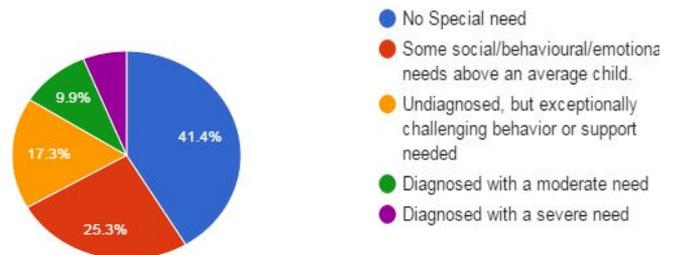
Coffee meeting mornings have definitely helped me make better decisions with helping my children cope with growing up (great tips and advice)



Comments from parents at a family event

Level of need:

Over the past few years we have seen an increase in the number of children we work with who have additional needs. From 2015-2016, almost 6 out of 10 participants had some form of exceptional need, including Autism, ADHD, Dyspraxia, Sensory Processing Disorder, Speech and Language difficulties, Conduct difficulties, etc. In the coming year, staff will receive training to better understand how to support these children.



PAKT has made us more open and bonded as a family unit!

PAKT Parent

Funded by:

TÚSLA

An Ghníomhaireacht um Leanaí agus an Teaghlach
Child and Family Agency