



WORKING  
FOR THE  
VOLUNTARY  
SECTOR

# Healthy Hobbies Project

# Report

Results of a survey of families about out-of-school recreation for special educational needs and/or disabled children in Glasgow.

by

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Research & Consultancy Services

on behalf of

**The Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector**



# Acknowledgements

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## Abbreviations

C&LS	Cultural & Leisure Services
CILiG	Centre for Independent Living in Glasgow
COJAC	Caring Operations Joint Action Council
GCC	Glasgow City Council
GCVS	Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector
Govan PALS	Govan Play, Arts & Leisure Station
PAMIS	Profound & Multiple Impairment Service
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SHS	Scottish Human Services Trust
SIP	Social Inclusion Partnership

# Healthy Hobbies Project

## Report

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# Executive Summary

The Healthy Hobbies Project is funded by the Scottish Executive as part of the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Innovation Grants Programme. The overall aim of the Healthy Hobbies Project is to promote an inclusive, holistic, family-centred approach to recreation for children with special educational needs and/or impairments in Glasgow.

This report is the outcome of a consultation exercise undertaken by the Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector (GCVS) between March and July 2001. It contains recommendations to establish an information service for families and to develop accessible and appropriate out-of-school activities across the city. This report will be disseminated to Cultural and Leisure Services (C&LS), the Health Board, voluntary agencies and to the families who responded to the survey.

## Recommendations

The recommendations arising from this report have been grouped under several headings.

### 1. Training Issues

Various training issues have been highlighted by this research and these are itemised below.

- a) **Recommendation** That all C&LS employees working in recreational facilities receive disability equality or values training. This training would highlight:
  - the right of everyone, regardless of disability or special need, to have access to recreational opportunities.
  - the need to treat each person individually and not as part of a homogenous group.
  
- b) **Recommendation** That all C&LS employees working in recreational facilities receive disability awareness training that covers:
  - awareness of the likely needs of people with different impairments.
  - practical ways of enabling access into and within premises.
  
- c) **Recommendation** That all C&LS coaches working with children receive practical training in providing appropriate and inclusive activities catering for the needs of all children across all age ranges. This could include:

- formal & informal training courses, including Lifting & Handling and Health & Safety.
- work-shadowing other providers already working closely with SEN and disabled children. In particular developing work-shadowing opportunities for C&LS staff in SEN schools and special units.

d) **Recommendation** That as the need arises, employees receive training in providing for personal care needs and the administration of medication. This to be arranged in consultation with parents.

e) **Recommendation** That encouragement is given to providers from other sectors to take up training opportunities in all the above areas.

## 2. Geographical Location and Transport Issues

The geographical location of recreational facilities can be of particular importance to many families with SEN or disabled children.

a) **Recommendation** That where possible accessible local facilities are developed working in partnership with local groups.

b) **Recommendation** That the flagship play centres at Cranhill and Castlemilk be replicated across the city, with the proviso that staff undergo training as outlined above.

c) **Recommendation** That consideration is given to the development of a fully accessible play and sports venue in the city centre.

It is often impossible for a SEN or disabled child to attend a venue unless transport is provided.

d) **Recommendation** That all plans for developing inclusive and specialist activities include catering for the transport needs of families.

## 3. Support Issues

A common thread throughout this consultation exercise has been the need to provide appropriate support for individuals to allow them to take part in activities, whether these are inclusive or part of a special programme. All the examples of good practice and models of delivery are based on this support

being in place. It is key to the success of both inclusive and special programmes.

- a) **Recommendation** That examples of good practice and models of delivery are looked at with the view to adapting these to operate within a large urban setting.
- b) **Recommendation** That the existing practice in C&LS/GCVS of keeping a register of the needs of children is developed to include:
  - expansion of the register to cover a greater number of families and across the whole age range.
  - enabling parents to meet with providers and be more involved in planning the level of support. (At present parents fill in and return a form.)
  - introducing regular reviews of support for each child to ensure that they are still at the required level. This could mean both increasing or decreasing support.
  - that parents can quickly and easily contact providers to discuss any issues that may arise.
- c) **Recommendation** That in order to take this forward C&LS should consider entering into formal partnership with other agencies to develop this level of support.

Parents often need support for themselves to give them the confidence to leave their children.

- d) **Recommendation** That C&LS work with other agencies, such as the Healthy City Partnership, Planning Together and relevant voluntary organisations to help build up a level of trust and expectation among parents about what can be achieved.
- e) **Recommendation** That C&LS establish from ongoing feedback the need to provide activities for parents, to run at the same time as the children's activities.

#### 4. Information Dissemination

It is clear from the results of the survey that far too few parents are aware of recreational activities for their SEN and disabled children. It is vital that ways are found to improve the dissemination of information about activities. As parents with SEN children are often very isolated, it is clear from the research that a more formal method of communication is needed. Respondents cited a newsletter as the most popular means of obtaining information.

- a) **Recommendation** That C&LS publish three newsletters a year well in advance of holiday programmes:

- outline all holiday programmes, inclusive and special, and regular activities.
  - contain enough information about type of activity and means of delivery to allow families with SEN and disabled children to make an informed choice.
  - invite families of SEN and disabled children to register their interest, giving a cut off date to allow time for discussion about necessary support to take place.
- b) **Recommendation** That agencies across all sectors are encouraged to use the newsletter to advertise their services.
- c) **Recommendation** That this newsletter is disseminated as widely as possible:
- posted to families on C&LS/GCVS Database.
  - disseminated through all schools.
  - distributed to libraries, school buses, sports & leisure venues, health centres & doctor's surgeries, community centres, voluntary agencies.
  - posted on relevant websites, C&LS, GCVS.
- d) **Recommendation** That where a contact telephone number is given by providers, that this will be answered, as far as possible, by someone who has knowledge of the activities contained in the newsletter.

## 5. Consultation & Partnerships

This research has highlighted the need to work more closely with parents in the planning of activities for their children.

- a) **Recommendation** That providers such as C&LS and GCVS establish regular links with parents to consult with them as a body on the delivery and development of recreational activities. In the early stages this could be done through existing groups facilitated by other agencies such as The Healthy City Partnership or Planning Together.
- b) **Recommendation** That C&LS establish from ongoing feedback the need for Parents' and Children's Forums facilitated by C&LS.

It has also highlighted the need for C&LS to work more closely with other agencies that already have expertise in the field.

- c) **Recommendation:** That C&LS strengthen and formalise their existing links with GCVS Sports Unit to best utilise

their expertise and use this to spread good practice among C&LS staff.

- d) **Recommendation** That links are established with, and ways found to support, agencies that can offer expert advice on activities suitable for children with very complex needs, e.g. PAMIS, Strathclyde Autistic Society, SENSE, Sparky Project.

At a local level it is vital that the newly formed Disability Sports Team work closely with the Community Action Teams and local agencies to develop services relevant to the area.

- e) **Recommendation** That productive links are established with the Community Action Teams and other local agencies to ensure that inclusive services are developed in these areas.

## 6. Research & Development Work

This consultation exercise has highlighted the need for an audit of existing recreational opportunities for children in Glasgow covering all sectors. (18,48)

- a) **Recommendation** That an audit of recreational facilities for children within the Greater Glasgow area is undertaken.
- b) **Recommendation** That the information from this audit is used as a tool to establish partnerships among providers to improve the quality of provision.
- c) **Recommendation** That the information gathered becomes the basis for an updateable and publicly available database.

C&LS and GCVS have done a great deal of work over the last few years developing inclusive activities for SEN and disabled children. Their main constraints have been a lack of capacity, lack of trained staff and lack of resources. This year for the first time the summer programmes were viewed as being within the C&LS Mega Club Mainstream Programme.

- d) **Recommendation** That development of inclusive services is strengthened by increasing resources and prioritising this development work.

The special needs voluntary playschemes offer a social outlet for parents and their SEN children in various areas of Glasgow during holiday periods. These playschemes have great potential for development with the ultimate aim of providing inclusive holiday programmes.

- e) **Recommendation** That C&LS looks at ways of assisting and supporting the voluntary playschemes to develop and expand their services.

Most of the effort in providing inclusive activities for children has concentrated on the 5-12 age group. Although some work has been done on providing suitable activities for teenagers, there is a need to increase facilities for this age group.

- f) **Recommendation** That meaningful and appropriate activities for teenagers are developed across all areas of the city.

## **Resource Implications.**

The recommendations in this report carry significant implications, both in human resource and capital costs. Glasgow City Council is committed to developing an inclusive sports and recreational service for all children.

“In order to provide good sports and recreation service it is necessary to ensure that mainstream services are accessible for children and young people with disabilities”<sup>1</sup>

“ A number of additional factors are required, without which children and young people with disabilities will be unable to participate in organised recreational programmes

collaborative working

information systems

transportation

additional support from adults and agencies

specialist coaching resources”<sup>2</sup>

It is only by providing the necessary resources, either directly through staff recruitment or, indirectly, by supporting outside agencies already proficient in this field, that this aim will be achieved.

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<sup>1</sup> Glasgow Children’s Services Plan 1998-2001, p 83 (GCC)

<sup>2</sup> Glasgow Children’s Services Plan 1998-2001, p 83-84 (GCC)

# Introduction

The Healthy Hobbies is a project funded by the Scottish Executive as part of the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Innovation Grants Programme. The overall aim of the Healthy Hobbies Project is to promote an inclusive, holistic, family-centred approach to recreation for children with special educational needs and/or impairments. The three main strands of the project are:

- To carry out a consultation exercise via survey and focus groups of families with special educational needs and/or disabled children who are likely to use recreational facilities, outwith school, in Glasgow.

**Outcome** A survey report with recommendations. This report will be used as the basis for meetings with Cultural & Leisure Service (C&LS), the Health Board, Voluntary Sector agencies and the families who responded to the survey.

- To look at ways of improving the dissemination of information about out-of-school activities to families and to the professional services working with them.

**Outcome** Establishment of a high quality and meaningful information service for children, families and service providers

- To design and deliver pilot programmes in the light of the information gathered from the consultation exercise.

**Outcome** Development of out-of-school recreational opportunities across Glasgow that are accessible to and cater for the needs of all children, including those with special educational needs (SEN) and/or impairments.

This report is the outcome of the consultation exercise undertaken between March and July 2001 by GCVS. It contains recommendations to help develop the establishment of an information service for families and development of accessible out-of-school activities across the city.

# Research Methodology

## Quantitative Survey

The aim of the quantitative survey was to consult families with SEN children living in Glasgow and also to some extent those living outwith Glasgow but wishing to use Glasgow facilities.

A questionnaire was devised covering three topics:

### About Out-of-School Activities

- Types of activities
- Types of delivery
- Times of year and day

### Identifying Needs and Barriers

- Venues
- Transport
- Hidden Barriers

### Improving Links

- Awareness of existing provision
- Preferred methods of establishing and maintaining communication between provider and user.

The full Questionnaire is included as Appendix A.

## **Distribution**

In the absence of access to a database of target families the task of achieving comprehensive coverage was tackled by arranging distribution in the following ways.

### **SEN Schools and Units (School age).**

A letter and a copy of the questionnaire was sent to 39 SEN schools or special units in Glasgow through the Education Department's delivery system. Head teachers were asked to request the number of copies they would need to distribute to families. This exercise resulted in requests from 29 (67%) schools for a total of 1424 questionnaires. The returns from this distribution range from 60% to 0%. It was noticed once the majority of the returns had been processed that one school had not distributed the questionnaires. This school was contacted at the beginning of the new school session, resulting in a 22% return. Unfortunately, it was not noticed until October that this had also happened in another school by which time it was too late to react. From details of school attendance given on the questionnaire, returns were actually received from families whose children attend 36 SEN school or special units in Glasgow. It would appear, therefore, that the other methods of dissemination, outlined below, were worthwhile.

Requests were also received from two SEN schools in South Lanarkshire for 50 copies. Returns were received from families of 13 children attending these two schools from a total of 30 attending SEN school (state or private) outwith Glasgow.

### **Health Board & Pre-school Assessment Centres (Pre-5s)**

It was decided that families with pre-school children could best be reached via the health visitors employed by the Yorkhill and Primary Health Care Trusts.

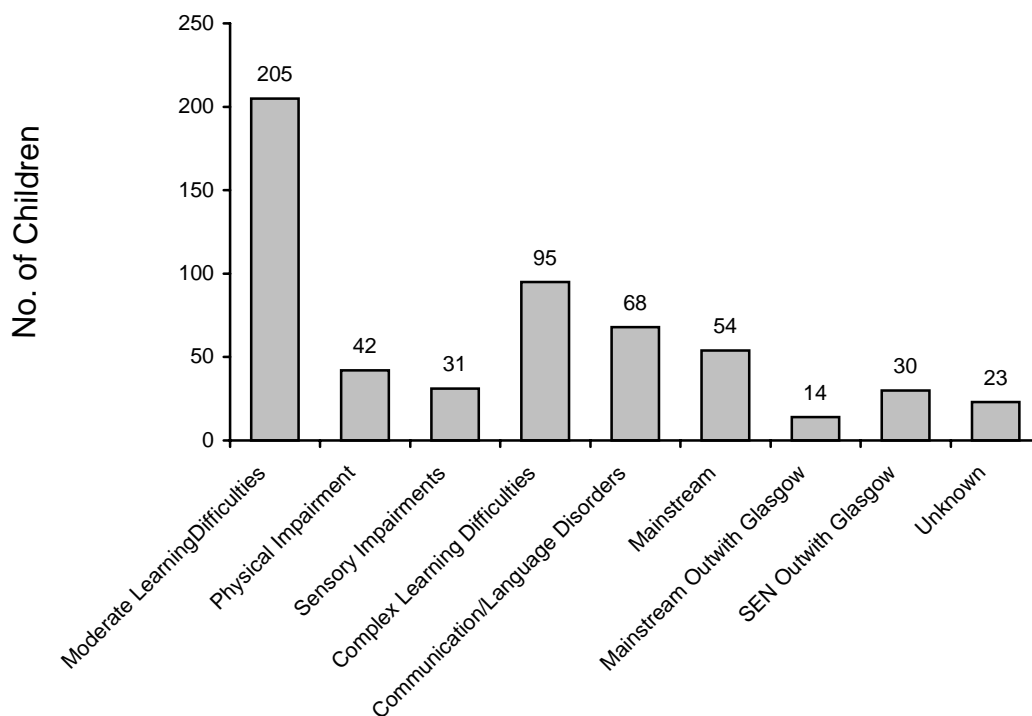
Each of the four Child Development Centres in the Yorkhill Hospital Trust was contacted by telephone to discuss the project. This was followed by a copy of the questionnaire with a covering letter being sent to a named contact asking them to request further copies. This exercise resulted in requests for 40 copies from 2 Centres.

A copy of the questionnaire and covering letter was also sent to the managers of the 14 Local Health Care Co-operatives (LHCC) within the Primary Health Care Trust. Despite follow-up phone calls and faxing a second copy of the materials, this exercise only resulted in requests for 50 copies from 3 LHCCs

There are two pre-school assessment centres run by the Education Department. They received a copy of the questionnaire as part of the SEN school distribution. This resulted in one request for 20 copies.

Respondents were not asked to say how they had obtained the questionnaire. Therefore, there is no mechanism for accurately gauging the returns from these 110 requests. However an analysis of the age range of SEN children from the returns shows that only 5% are aged 0-4.

### SEN Children by Type of School (Qu.5)



### Voluntary and Public Sector Agencies (All Ages)

A copy of the questionnaire with covering letter was sent to around 50 agencies, including the voluntary special needs playschemes that are members of the Glasgow Forum on Play & Development for Children with Disabilities facilitated by the C&LS Play Officer.

This exercise resulted in requests for 214 copies from 7 agencies. As indicated above this possibly resulted in achieving a wider coverage of SEN schools than otherwise. However again there is no mechanism to accurately gauge the returns from these sources.

## **Mainstream Schools (School age)**

In an attempt to reach families whose children attend mainstream school, a copy of the questionnaire and covering letter was distributed to the head teachers of all mainstream schools in Glasgow through the schools delivery system. This resulted in requests from 7 schools for 25 copies. However, as returns were received from the families of 54 SEN children attending mainstream schools in Glasgow, it seems likely that more than these 7 schools responded to the letter. Returns were also received from the families of 14 children attending mainstream schools outwith Glasgow.

## **Barriers to Distribution**

Although the researcher was satisfied that the distribution to families with school age children was wide enough to obtain a broad spectrum of opinion, she was concerned that several schools failed to respond to the initial letter and follow-up phone call with the result that target families who might have wanted to take part were not given that opportunity. Their concern was even more marked in respect of responses from pre-five services. It was felt that there had perhaps been assumptions made about the relevance of the survey to families with very young children. Although recreation may be less of a problem at this age, the purpose of the survey is to inform the long-term development of facilities and it was felt that more parents of young children should have been given the opportunity to respond. It will, after all, be these very young children who stand to benefit most from improvement to leisure opportunities across the city.

## **Reaching Black & Ethnic Minority Families**

Discussion took place with the following agencies to look at ways of reaching black and ethnic minority families.

- The San Jai Project, a voluntary agency that promotes the interests of Chinese children and families
- The Apna Barnardos Project working with SEN children in the South of Glasgow
- The Glasgow Anti-Racial Alliance East Pollokshields Project working with young people with special educational needs.

A sentence in English, Punjabi, Urdu and Cantonese was included in the materials inviting people to phone if they would like to complete the questionnaire over the phone. This offer was backed up by systems to deal with non-English speakers. In the event no-one responded to this offer.

A session was held at the San Jai project to help people complete the questionnaire. This resulted in four returns. Although these figures are disappointing, it is clear from information included in the returned questionnaires that around 7% of returns were received from black and ethnic minority families mainly through the general distribution.

Copies of the questionnaire were taken by the Apna Project Worker who assisted families in completing the questionnaire. This resulted in four returns.

The attempts to ensure that ethnic minority families were included in the survey were not supported by specific funding for this purpose. In the researcher's opinion project proposals should include planning and budgeting for this purpose.

### **Alternative Formats**

The questionnaire was offered in alternative formats of disk, large print, audiotape and Braille. This offer was on the front page of the questionnaire and the covering letter to Head Teachers and Agencies included a pro-forma encouraging requests for different formats. Requests were received for two questionnaires on audiotape and one on computer disk and these were supplied. The only positive feedback from this exercise was the return of one questionnaire in large print. The production of in-house materials in alternative formats is relatively simple and inexpensive. It is an exercise that need only be done in response to specific requests as long as the systems are already in place to produce them.

### **Requests and Returns**

A total of 1873 questionnaires were requested as a result of the distribution methods outlined above. 518 valid returns were received in time to be included in the research results. This represents a return rate of just under 28%. A further 14 returns were discounted either because there were no SEN children in the family or because parents completed a form for each of their SEN children. The occasional questionnaire is still being returned and while the information in them is being noted and contact details recorded these have not been included in the statistical analysis.

# Qualitative Research

## Focus Groups

Four focus group meetings were held comprising parents who had already completed the questionnaire and had indicated a wish to take part. Participants were contacted at random from the 328 respondents who had expressed a wish to take part. Around 80 people agreed to attend one of the groups. In order to give people as much choice as possible 2 groups were held in the evening while 1 each was arranged for a morning and early afternoon at times to fit in with other commitments, such as school pick-ups. Attendance at the groups varied from 12 (evening), 4 (evening), 5 (afternoon) and 11 (morning). Overall the larger groups were more successful but the researcher felt that some very good and useful material was gained from all sessions.

The sessions were designed to encourage parents to air their views about out-of-school recreation and to give them a chance to meet with other parents to discuss issues. They were semi-structured with the facilitator suggesting topics that she felt required more in-depth discussion than was allowed via the questionnaire. These topics were:

- Mainstream Provision - what would make it work for your child(ren)?
- Special Programmes – do you want them and what would make them work for your child(ren)?
- Leaving your child(ren) - what is necessary?
- Communication needs - how to improve links?

Other topics that were discussed at some length in one or more groups were: provision for parents, summer playschemes, attitudes, GCC Best Value Review of Play, hidden barriers, transport and funding.

The discussions were recorded with the participants' permission and subsequently analysed using Inspiration, a mind-mapping tool. The facilitator set up a template of headings and sub-headings and grouped relevant comments under each one. This allowed the often free-ranging discussion to be categorised into usable and useful material to enhance findings from the questionnaire.

In addition to the four focus groups the researcher also gave a talk at a parents' support meeting of the Strathclyde Autistic Society. Several useful points were made during the discussion session which was attended by 9 parents. Children

with autistic spectrum disorders frequently have very different needs from other SEN children. For example, some children cannot stand noise or large numbers of people around them. It was therefore particularly useful to have direct input from these parents.

Following this meeting requests for questionnaires were received from a Child Development Centre and a South Lanarkshire SEN school as a result of parents disseminating information about the survey.

## **Contact with children**

It was agreed that rather than attempting to conduct focus group meetings with SEN children, it would be more productive for the researcher to attend a variety of activities to observe and talk to the children in an informal way. Between April and July she attended 6 venues offering ex-curricular activities:

- Fun day at Tollcross Leisure Centre in April for primary school children. This was organised by C&LS and GCVS. It was attended by around 70 children, siblings and parents.
- Buddies After School Playscheme. This is a voluntary agency that runs after school activities during termtime and playschemes during holiday periods. It has sessions for different age groups, including teenagers. The session observed was for primary school children.
- Gorbals Sports Centre Summer programme for SEN children aged 5 to 12. It was organised by C&LS with support from GCVS Sports Team.
- Easterhouse Sports Centre Summer programme for SEN and non-SEN children aged 5 to 12. This particular venue was piloting inclusive activities.
- Linburn Secondary School Summer Playscheme for Pupils with Complex Learning Needs. This playscheme was organised by the Education Department for some of the school's pupils. It was staffed by teachers and auxiliary staff with the support of outreach workers and volunteers. This particular playscheme ran for the first two weeks of the summer holidays.
- Milton Secondary School Summer Playscheme for Pupils with Complex Learning Needs. This playscheme ran for three days throughout the holiday period.

The researcher's level of involvement in activities ranged from observation, to talking to parents, to helping out with activities. This allowed her to see at first hand some of the benefits and problems of different types of provision.

### **Meetings and interviews with relevant agencies**

Considerable time was spent from the beginning talking to and meeting with people from public and voluntary agencies who are involved in organising, co-ordinating or providing activities for SEN children. This resulted in much useful background information, highlighting many of the issues and problems and identifying examples of good practice. Appendix B has a list of agencies contacted during this research.

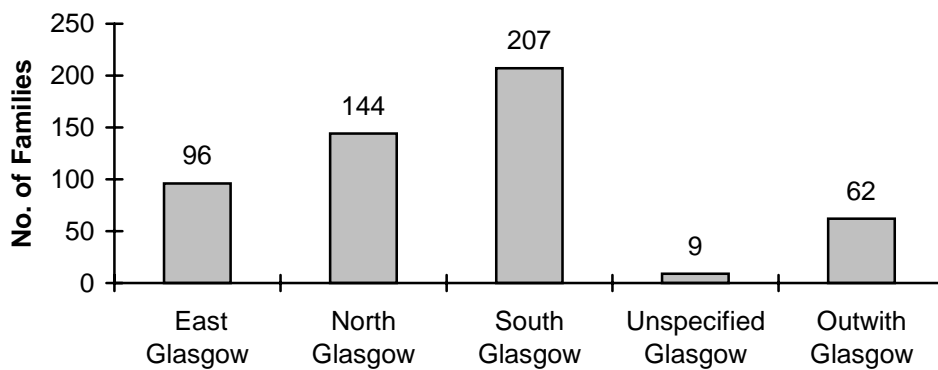
## Analysis of Findings

The following section gives a statistical analysis of the questionnaire returns. These are enhanced where relevant by comments from the focus groups, interviews and observations of existing activities. This is to avoid unnecessary repetition and duplication of points. Additional points raised in the focus groups, but not covered by the questionnaire, are dealt with at the end of this section.

### Geographical Coverage

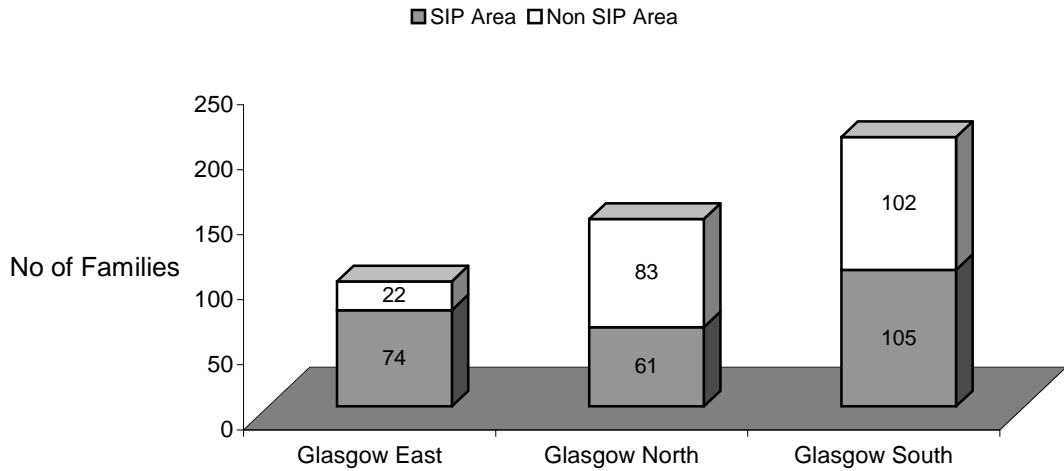
The aim of the survey was to reach families living across Glasgow and it is felt that the distribution methods outlined gave a good opportunity for this to happen. For overall coverage, the city was divided into three areas (Glasgow East, Glasgow North, Glasgow South) with the River Clyde and the High Street being used as boundaries. Analysis of the results shows that, for no obvious reason, a greater proportion of returns was received from the south side of the city than from the north or east.

**Where Families Live (Qu.1)**



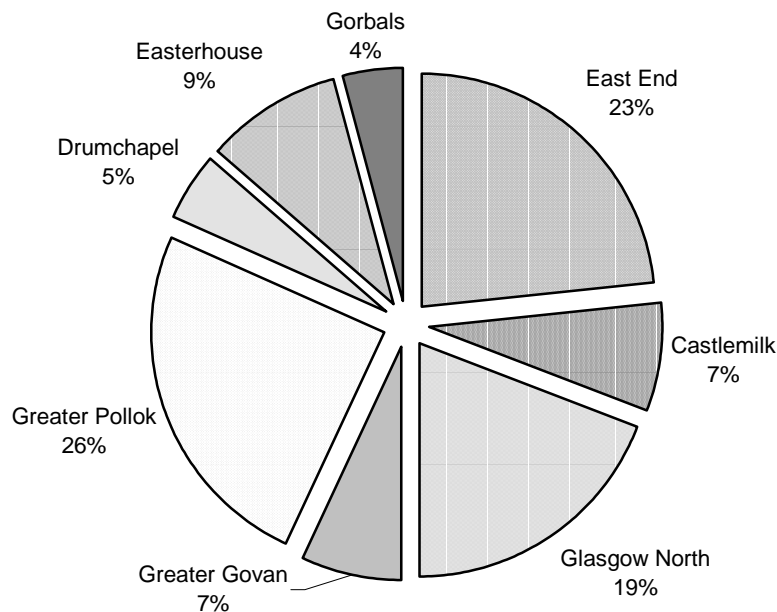
Within these main divisions a further distinction was made between Glasgow families living in Social Inclusion Partnership (SIP) (53.5%) and non-SIP (46.5%) areas.

## Glasgow Residents (Qu.1)



For the purposes of the geographical analysis, Castlemilk was counted as a SIP. On analysis of the results, it became clear that 78% of the returns from families living in SIPs were from people living in Greater Pollok, Glasgow North and East End. Again, there is no obvious explanation about why this should have happened.

## Responses from Glasgow SIPs (Qu.1)



In the absence of a database of target families it is impossible to know if these biases - towards the south of the city and towards three of the eight SIP areas - reflect the areas where more families live or whether there is some other explanation

for these results. Certainly there are fewer SEN schools in the east of the city but as SEN children are often bussed outwith their locale this is not an accurate indication of fewer families living in the area.

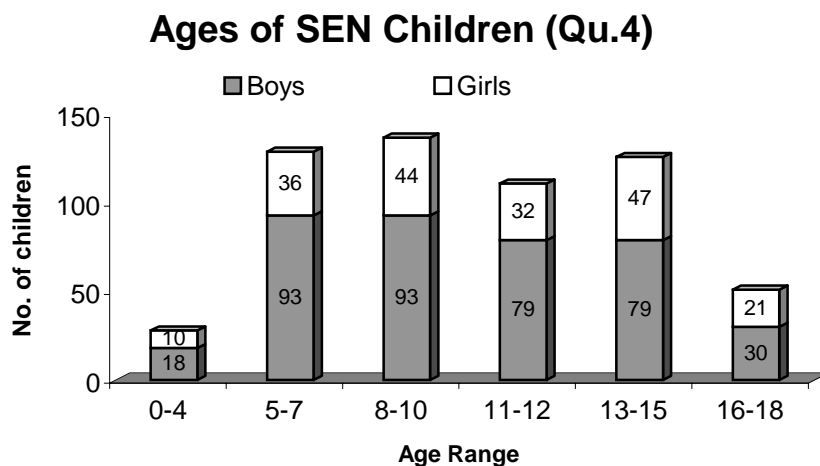
Overall, it was felt that the consultation exercise had achieved a broad enough spread represent the views of Glasgow families. It was thought unlikely that any particularly new opinions would be heard by trying to target those areas where there had been a poorer response.

## Family Profiles

Respondents were asked to indicate the number of children under 18 in their family (Qu.2). The 518 families had a total of 1080 children between the ages of 0 and 18. Of these 582 (54%) were identified as having SEN or impairment (Qu.3). Only 4% of respondents said that an adult member of the family had an impairment that would have an impact on the ability of their child(ren) to take part in out-of-school activities (Qu.8). This is a lower figure than was expected and could have been as a result of barriers caused by difficulties in completing the questionnaires and lack of motivation in taking advantage of the alternatives on offer.

## Age & Sex

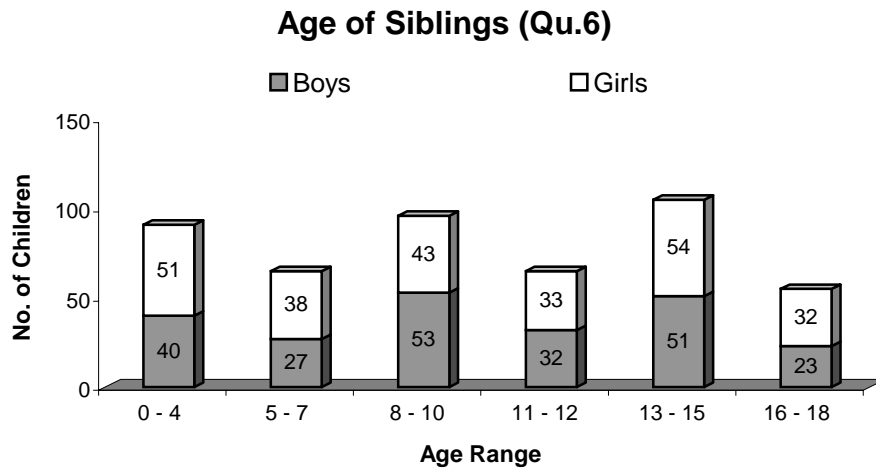
Although most of the mainstream and special needs recreational activities organised across the city are for children aged 5 –12 there was a 30% response from families with older children.



This need for activities for older children was reinforced by attendees at focus groups when many parents expressed concern that their teenage children were still having to be taken everywhere and were not being encouraged to move towards independence. Whilst children without special needs become independent as a natural progression this is not always possible for SEN children who continue to need appropriate support. This is an area that needs to be considered in future planning.

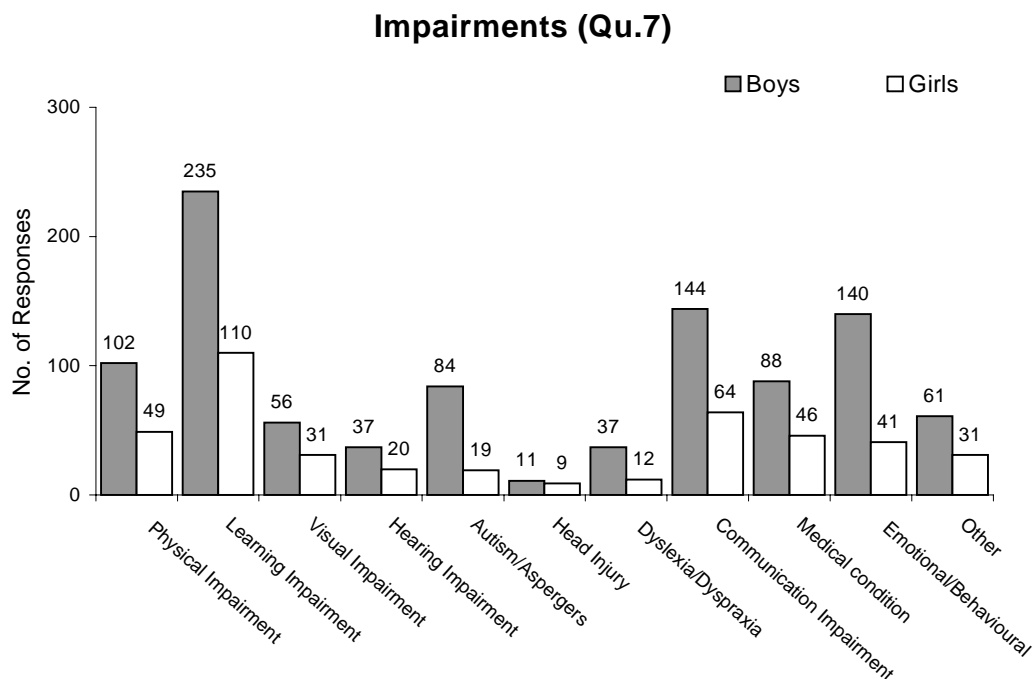
It is interesting to note that there was a far greater response from families with SEN boys than girls. This bias was also

seen in the children taking part in the C&LS/GCVS summer programme (See P 47) with over twice as many boys taking part than girls. It appears that in Glasgow there are more boys than girls with a record of needs. However, it has proved impossible to find figures to substantiate this statement in time for publication. The sex of siblings is more evenly distributed.



## Impairment

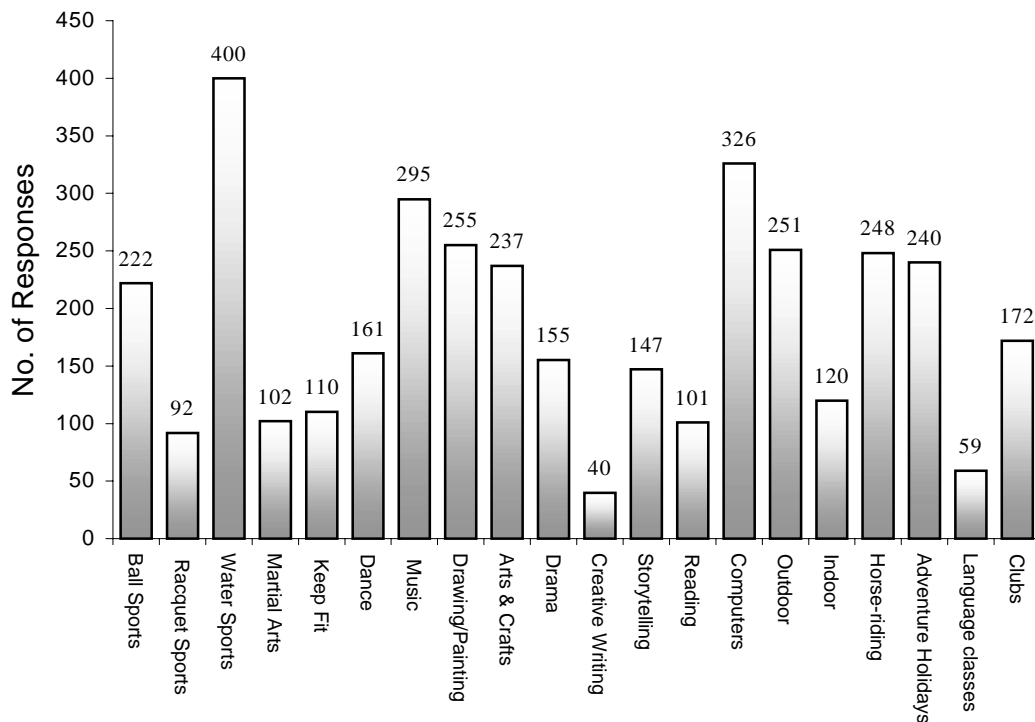
Respondents were asked to mark all the impairments that applied to each of their children. In a high proportion of returns more than one box was ticked with the most common combination being Learning, Communication and Emotional/Behaviour impairments. This is illustrated in the chart that shows a higher proportion of these impairments. It is also to be expected that within this age range there will be a much higher proportion of learning impairment than, for example acquired physical impairment due to illness or accident.



## Out of School Activities

Respondents were asked to tick, as many of the activity options as they thought would be of interest to their children. In some cases all the boxes were ticked, perhaps indicating a desperation that anything was better than nothing. In most returns though there was much greater discrimination and, as can be seen, some activities comes out the clear 'winners'.

**Activities (Qu.9)**



Respondents were given the opportunity to specify particular sports. The interest in Water Sports was confined almost exclusively to swimming. This may be because many people are largely unaware of other opportunities such as canoeing, sailing, narrowboats that are available with special support in the Greater Glasgow area. Swimming is one area where SEN programmes are well established through the C&LS and GCVS. As might be expected, football was by far the most popular ball sport though other options such as basketball, rounders, netball and golf were also mentioned.

Respondents were also asked to suggest other options and these included cooking, video production, photography, rock climbing, ice skating, fishing and gymnastics.

## Type of Provision

There appear to be three main reasons why all families want to make use of out-of-school recreational activities. Firstly, parents and children want to use facilities as a family, either on a regular basis or as a one-off event. Secondly, parents want their children to have access to unstructured play opportunities in a safe and secure environment. Thirdly, they want their children to take part in organised activities often but, not exclusively, to allow them to learn specific skills. This third type of provision would also cover taking part in competitive sport although this topic does not come within the remit of this research.

## Family Activities

If there is a child or children with special needs in the family, parents have to be confident that the facility or venue they are visiting will cater for the needs of all the family. Requirements such as physical accessibility, suitable activities, positive attitudes on the part of other people and safety are just some of the issues that need to be in place before the visit can be judged a success. Indeed if particular needs are not catered for, it is likely that the first visit will be the last. In the focus groups there was considerable dissatisfaction about what is on offer for family oriented activities.

**“[As a family] we don’t have access to a choice. Whatever avenue you go down it’s not suitable”**

Even a newly opened facility, Bellahouston Sports Centre, came in for criticism.

**“the swimming pool does not cater for the physical access needs of my daughter”**

Special activities for families affected by disability were not always favoured by focus group members.

**“these [activities] put too much emphasis on the disability aspect of family life instead of trying to make things as ‘normal’ as possible. [Our] non-disabled children don’t want to be treated as different”**

Sometimes it was not the venue facilities and available activities that were unsuitable but rather that the venues were post-coded or just too far afield to be used on a regular basis.

More intractable barriers are faced by parents whose children have profound and multiple impairments. These are often

children whose difficulties cover a whole range of physical, sensory communication and cognitive abilities. Providers and carers are frequently at a loss about the sort of activities that are suitable for a child who seemingly has no means of communication. PAMIS (Profound and Multiple Disability Information Service) has recently run a pilot project looking at sensory storytelling which has achieved some positive outcomes. This organisation also produces information lists about accessible play and holds an extensive library on this topic.

The belief that “the less problems a child has the more there is for them” is possibly well justified and, as might be expected, problems are compounded in families with two or more children with different impairments.

These issues all point to the need for all venues and facilities to be accessible and open to everyone. There is considerable commitment on the part of GCC to achieve this.

**“To provide a range of quality, open access play opportunities ...which is inclusive, imaginative and responsive to need”<sup>3</sup>**

**“In order to provide good sports and recreation service it is necessary to ensure that mainstream services are accessible for children and young people with disabilities”<sup>4</sup>**

One of the factors that needs to be considered in achieving this goal is the training of all staff, including, and perhaps especially, reception staff. Accessible venues, trained coaching staff, suitable activities, when and if this is fully achieved, will count as nothing if families are faced with poor attitudes or uninformed staff at the door or on the telephone.

## **Unstructured independent play**

For some children with special needs unstructured independent play is not an option because of their support needs. Indeed, some parents reported that their SEN children require “a very regimented lifestyle”, needing to know exactly what is going to happen.

However, for many SEN and disabled children this could and should be an important aspect of their development. In the questionnaire and focus groups, the main reason given for SEN children being prevented from spontaneously ‘going out to play’ is lack of acceptance by their peer group; an attitude that

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<sup>3</sup> C&LS Best Value Review of Play, p 5 Para 5.2 (GCC,2001)

<sup>4</sup> Glasgow Children’s Services Plan 1998 – 2001, p 83 (GCC)

can often end up in bullying. This is exacerbated if the child attends a SEN school, especially if it is outwith his or her locale as is often the case. Isolation from school friends because of attendance at a SEN school was frequently raised in comments from parents. This is also a cause of isolation for parents who miss out on the social interaction afforded to those whose children attend a local school. This absence of natural communication is a factor that needs to be considered when looking at improving the flow of information.

In staffed but open access play or sports venues the problems of non-acceptance can be, and sometimes are, successfully tackled by staff who have an awareness of such problems and a belief that every child has a right to enjoy themselves. At a focus group, one mother talked of the help her son had received from coaching staff in a Sports Centre. In other cases however, parents complained about the attitude of reception staff and other parents.

**“My son has been in these clubs for a few weeks and has been thrown out because they don’t have time for a kid with special needs”**

It was for this reason that many parents stated that they would accompany their child to an open access venue, at least until they were satisfied that the child was settled. It was also the main reason why parents thought there was a need for special programmes with trained staff.

During the researcher’s visits to venues staff tended to assume that SEN children would attend in special groups accompanied by school staff, parents or carers. This often happens already and staff are very positive about expanding this use of play centres. However, this attitude shows a ‘one size fits all’ mentality which can raise unnecessary barriers for those SEN or disabled children who would benefit from mixing independently with their peer group in a safe and secure environment. There are several training issues involved in this area.

## Organised Activities

Play providers, such as the GCC, acknowledge that making venues accessible is not the whole story.

**“ A number of additional factors are required, without which children and young people with disabilities will be unable to participate in organised recreational programmes: collaborative working; information systems; transportation; additional support from adults and agencies specialist; coaching resources”<sup>5</sup>**

In order to complete this list it would be necessary to add

**“consultation with parent/carers”.**

Considerable effort is being made to achieve inclusive provision both within the council and elsewhere, but the success of this will depend on the level of support necessary for each child being in place. This can only be achieved by talking to parents, carers and the children themselves and arriving at an agreed level of support that could range from well-trusted and competent staff to one-to-one support. In between these extremes, coaches and leaders need to be aware of the capabilities of each SEN child and how best they can involve and support them. With good training and the necessary resources, including working in partnership with other agencies, this can be achieved. However as this has not yet happened, it was the clear view of most respondents that while this may be the aspiration there is still a need to provide special programmes.

Of the 94% of respondents who said that they thought activities should be accessible to all children (Qu.10), the majority (90%) also thought that special programmes were necessary (Qu.11). One reason for this might be that people are unaware of what can be achieved within a properly delivered inclusive service.

One aspect that came to light in this question is that many parents have very low aspirations for their children.

**“[my son] cannot join local BB (aged 11 mentally 6) it is against [their] insurance policy as he must go with older boys or nothing”**

This sort of issue was raised more than once both in the questionnaire and in the focus groups. This result is one of great interest to agencies such as the Healthy City Partnership

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<sup>5</sup> Glasgow Children’s Services Plan 1998 – 2001, p 83-84 (GCC)

and Planning Together who are working with parents of SEN children in Glasgow. About 75% of respondents answering either yes or no to these questions gave their reasons. Some of these are given in Figs.1& 2 (pp 22-23).

Many of the reasons given are to do with concern of the mental well-being of the child and this view was enforced in the focus groups when many parents said that they would not like their child to attend a mainstream activity as the only SEN child. They felt that this would draw attention to his or her disability rather than away from it.

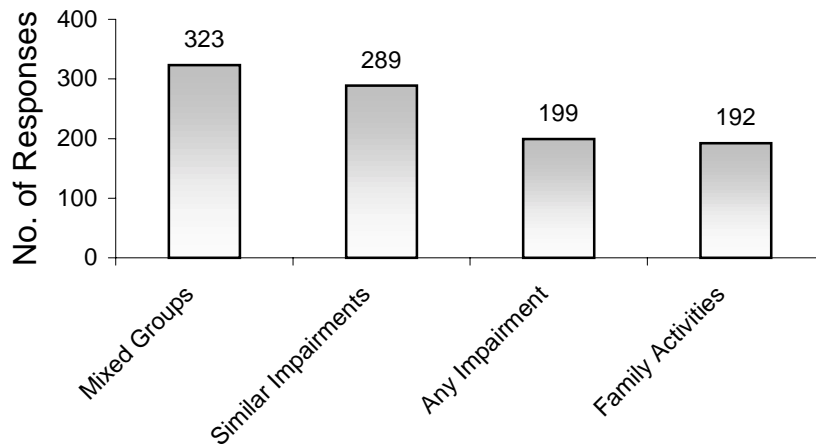
While it is clear some of the issues raised in these responses could be catered for within properly delivered inclusive provision, the response from parents to these questions 10 & 11 would point to the need to provide choice. There is a definite need to proceed with plans to increase accessibility within all facilities.

**“if get it right for disabled kids will be right for everyone”**  
**“all play parks should have equipment that can be used by all children”**

This would include staff training to create a culture that accepts the right for all children to have access to recreational activities. However, in order to achieve this there is also a need to support, at least in the short to medium term, the development of high quality special activities and facilities, to cater for the needs of those children who cannot fit into mainstream facilities. Inclusive provision is not just about integration. True inclusiveness is achieved by providing choice and ensuring that all choices are of equal quality.

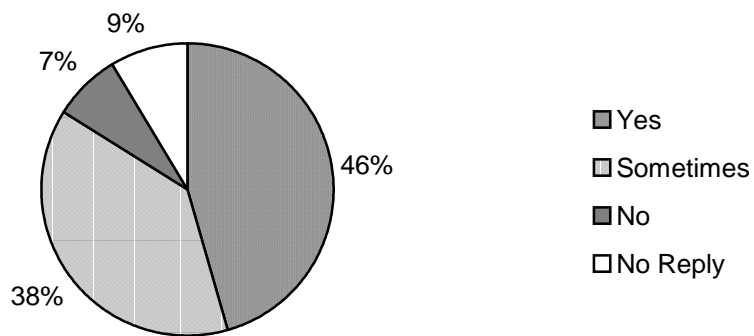
In addition to the “in principal” questions about provision, respondents were also asked to specify the type of groups that would best suit their own child(ren). Most people picked more than one group but it is clear that there is a preference for either mixed groups (mainstream and SEN) or for groups with children with similar impairments. There is less enthusiasm for groups involving different impairments perhaps because of the awareness that one size does not fit all; that provision suitable for a boisterous child with mild learning difficulties will not necessarily be suitable for an child with autistic spectrum disorder who cannot stand noise. This is an area that needs careful consideration for planners.

### Preferred Groups (Qu.12)



The researcher was keen to know if the siblings of SEN children wanted to take part in the same activities. As it was realised that this would be unlikely to be an all or nothing preference, a further option of ‘sometimes’ was introduced. The results show that most siblings wanted to take part always or sometimes. This chart does not include responses from families with only one child.

### Siblings wanting to take part (Qu.13)



The next question concerned the parents’ own preferences in the type of provision. As was expected many parents wanted to be able to leave their children. However, it was clear from the comments given and from the focus groups that this was not so much about respite as about a wish to allow children more independence.

**Figure 1 Accessible to All?**

**No**

**“Couldn’t cope”**

**“...children with educational needs need more time spent with each child..”**

**.**

**”...our children have enough to contend with without being amongst mainstream children who can be cruel”**

**“[My son] is in mainstream and unhappy. He needs a quiet group to mix with and a similar peer group to rebuild confidence”**

**“It’s hard to control children with behavioural problems”**

**Yes**

**“It would help children with no special needs understand and play with children that do”**

**“They enjoy activities as much as the other children and enjoy being included with their peers”**

**“My son is isolated because of his disability as many clubs do not cater for his needs”**

**“My son just wants to do what his sister can readily do”**

**“Social inclusion...take stigma out of children with SEN”**

**“To gain as much independence as possible and to be alongside own peer group”**

**“My son does not really know how to play with other children. I think it would eventually help him”**

**“ I believe that through this we might be able to discover special talents in children”**

**“As my son has got older he has got more isolated.”**

**“ SEN children learn from peers and peers learn from SEN children”**

**Figure 2 Special Programmes?**

**No**

**“Because every child is equal”**

**“I believe in inclusive activities”**

**“We think that children like ours should have the same as normal children”**

**“...they wish to be seen as not out of the ordinary”**

**“All should be treated equally instead of exclusively for certain people”**

**Yes**

**“Can’t always go into mainstream – not enough supervision”**

**“My son cannot play with other children in the street and finds it too noisy when he goes swimming. He can’t tolerate noise”**

**“They need more time and attention – a more personal service”**

**“Children with SEN feel they cannot do as good as other kids and often give up and feel they have failed.”**

**“Because some children have difficulty coping with normal children”**

**“Some people would do better in these groups, so I think there should be a choice”**

**“Children [without SEN] do not need structured play like SEN children”**

**“Sometimes active children [without SEN] can be intimidating”**

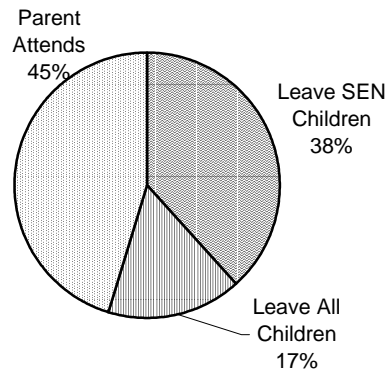
**“health issues”**

**“Either special programmes or equal access to all out-of-school activities but as I have my doubts that the latter can be achieved properly, I would opt for the former”**

**“My son finds it so hard mentally as well as physically always being with able-bodied kids”**

**“They would not feel inferior when they couldn’t keep up or match other’s skills”**

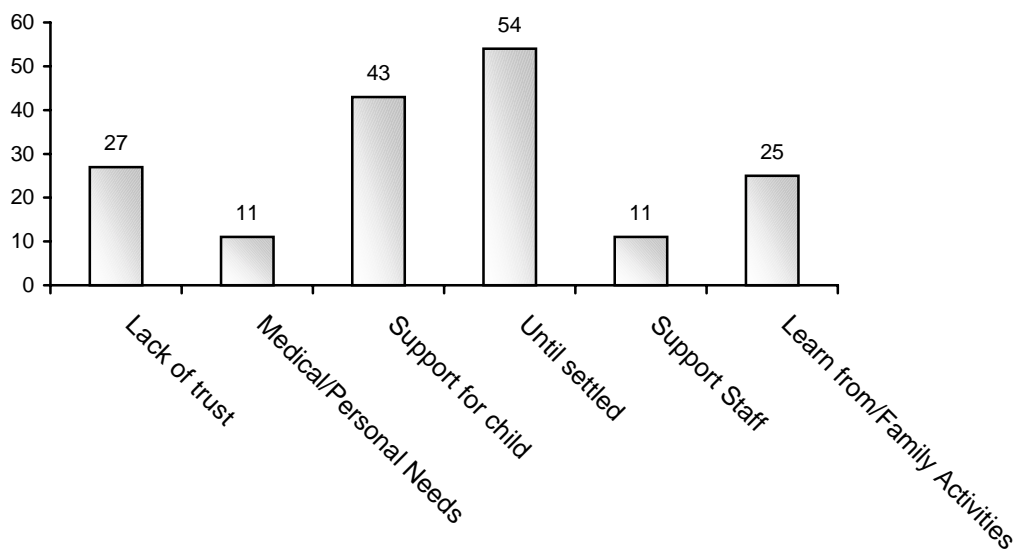
## Parents' Preferences (Qu.14)



Respondents were asked to give reasons for wishing to stay with their children. These varied from negative responses showing a lack of trust of activity organisers to positive ones of wanting to help out and learn from the activities. Most parents felt that remaining was necessary to support their child, at least until they had settled in.

The majority of parents (91%) said that they would be happier about leaving their children if they knew that leaders had had specialist disability training in the activity (Qu.15). 85% of respondents also said that they would be happier if personal care or assistance was available (Qu.16).

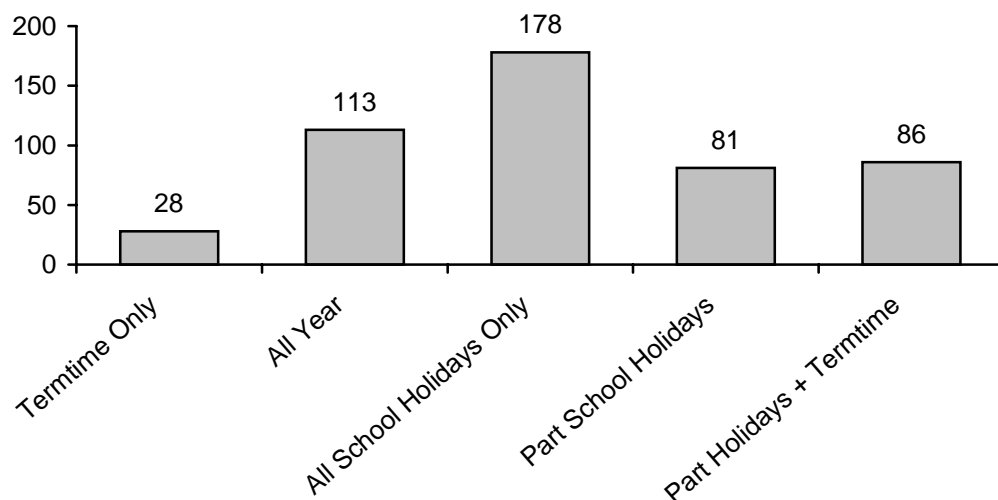
## Reasons for wanting to stay with children (Qu.14)



This need for parents to feel confident in leaving their children has important implications for planners and providers, especially with the emphasis being placed on inclusive provision. Examples of good practice from existing services are found later in this report (pp 45-54).

When respondents were asked their preferred time of year for activities to be available there was an understandable wish to have some organised activities for either the whole or part of the school holidays. This wish came over very strongly in the focus groups where parents said that their children had at least some activity through their schools during termtime but were left high and dry during the holidays. This gap is being met for some children now through the provision of holiday playschemes with paid employees for part or all of the summer holidays. However this provision is limited to some schools and some children within them (See p 48). There are also holiday playschemes run by various voluntary organisations coming under the umbrella of the Glasgow Forum on Play & Development for Children with Disabilities. These tend to take place over a week or two during the school holidays and can be very successful. However they are, with a few exceptions, run by parents and parental attendance is required. (See p49)

### Preferred Times of Year (Qu.17)



Respondents were also asked to state a preference for time of day for activities to take place. The timings were kept deliberately vague because while trialing the questionnaire respondents wanted to alter specific times (5 - 7 and 7 -9) to suit their particular needs, for example 5.30 -7.30. It was felt that such specifics would be unhelpful at this stage.

### Preferred Times of Day (Qu.18)

	After School	Early Evening	Later Evening
Termtime	43%	40%	17%
	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
Holidays	34%	47%	19%

During termtime there was a slight preference for activities to take place straight after school with later evening being very much the third choice. This perhaps reflects the convenience for parents if their children are transported from school to the activity, thus allowing them to work full time. Many children attending the Buddies Club (See p50), a voluntary agency offering after-school activities, are dropped off by their school bus. As will be seen later parents' work commitments are seen as the main hidden barrier to children being able to take part in activities.

At weekends and during school holidays there is a marked preference for afternoon activities. Later evenings were less popular than any of the alternatives across the whole age range. It is more popular option with the older age group, but not as popular as early evening. This could arise from a misunderstanding of the actual times envisaged as the need for evening activities for older children was one of the strong points that came out of the focus group meetings.

**“need regular evening activities for teenagers”**

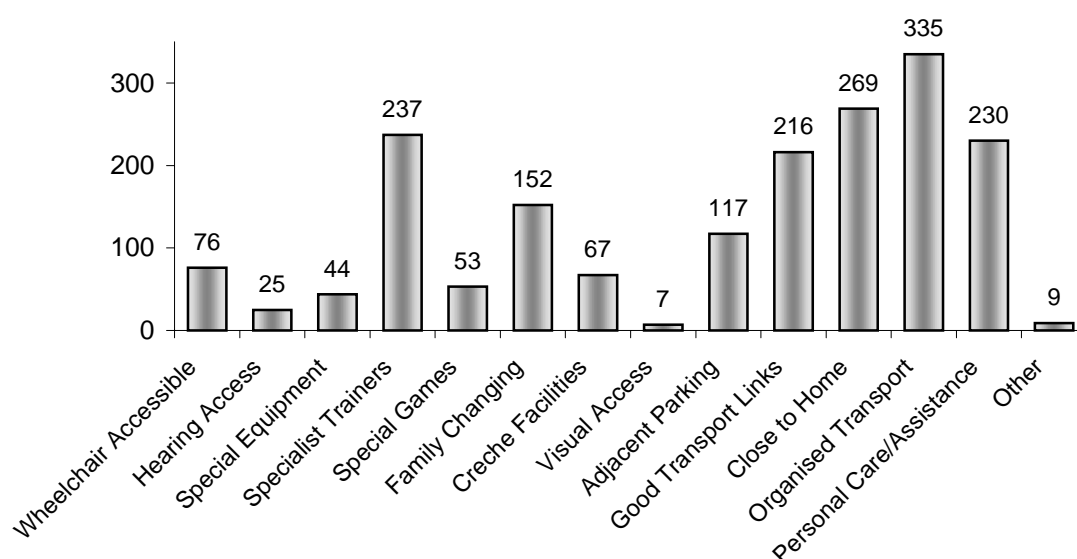
**“an opportunity to learn and do something different is very welcome. Evenings can be very long.”**

Some existing SEN facilities, such as Buddies, Linn Park and COJAC (See pp47,50)run weekend or evening clubs for teenagers.

## Identifying Needs and Barriers

In this section of the questionnaire the researchers were keen to identify the facilities that would be necessary to allow individual families to access venues. These range from adaptations to buildings and activities to general facilities such as good transport links. The needs will obviously vary according to impairment and other family circumstances, for example, crèche facilities will only be relevant to families with small children who cannot yet take part in a particular activity.

### Venue Requirements (Qu.19)



It is not surprising that 65% of respondents indicated the need to provide organised transport ((Qu.22). It is well known that transport is the biggest barrier to participation by disabled people of all ages and in all areas of activity. Only 50% of respondents had access to a car that they could use to take children to and from venues and in many cases this transport was not always available mainly because of parental work commitments (Qu.20). 33% of respondents were unable to take their child(ren) on public transport (Qu.21). Frequently the reason given for this was to do with the child's own behaviour or fears rather than about the physical accessibility of the vehicles.

Transport costs were highly significant for 17% of all respondents (38% of those who replied to this question) who indicated that they would require help towards the cost of organised transport (Qu.23). General cost implications of activities was also an important factor for respondents who answered the question about hidden barriers to participation.

For too long in service provision transport issues have been swept to one side in the planning process. Some parents pointed out that frequently provision was only open to those who could get to the venues under their own steam. In planning inclusive provision these issues should be seen as core elements.

Other important factors in venue requirements are:

### **Venues close to home and/or good public transport links.**

Over half of the respondents (52%) would like venues to be close to home while 42% would like, at the very least, to have good transport links. This was a need that was also strongly expressed in the focus groups. A venue in Castlemilk is of little interest to someone living in Pollok. If they do not have their own transport it is almost impossible to make this journey by bus within an acceptable timescale. It also prevents parents from encouraging independence by allowing their child(ren) to travel on their own if this is their wish. Linn Park Adventure Playground, a council-run facility for disabled and SEN children has several local children who travel independently and for many parents this is seen as an important element of their children's development. In the focus groups, parents were either keen to have facilities within their own locale or, as an alternative, have centrally based facilities.

### **Specialist trainers**

46% of respondents thought that specialist trainers were necessary to allow their children to take part in activities. This finding has important training issues for venue staff.

### **Personal Care/Assistance**

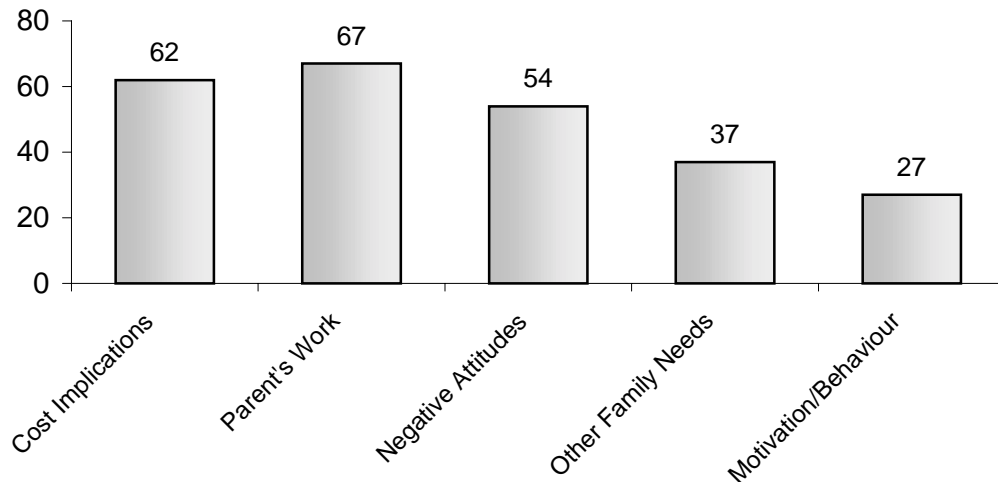
The need for personal care and assistance will very much depend on the individual. Such care can range from one-to-one attention, often needed for children with severe emotional needs, to the need for trainers and other staff to know the child and be aware of his or her needs. In the focus groups, many parents were keen to have a chance to talk to staff prior to their child attending an activity. This is an important issue with resource implications for planners.

### **Hidden Barriers**

Respondents were asked to indicate any other, often hidden, barriers that they felt impeded the uptake of activities by their children. Around 48% of respondents mentioned hidden

barriers and these have been grouped in to 5 broad categories.

### Hidden Barriers (Qu.24)



- Cost implications cover all possible costs, not just transport
- Negative Attitudes covers poor attitudes from other children, parents and staff.
- Other family Needs covers such as topics caring for an elderly parent
- Motivation/Behaviour. This is perhaps one area that is not often considered by planners. In the focus groups in particular many parents said that they had difficulty in motivating their child into taking part and stated that familiarity with what was going to happen, knowing what to expect was of prime importance.

**“...left to his own devices he would stay in his room all day. He needs encouragement to go to things. These need to be just right...if provided in a known environment such as own school [he] would be more likely to go”**

This is an issue that links in with the need for personal care or assistance and also in improving the dissemination of information about activities.

## Improving Links

One of the main aims of the survey was to find out how aware parents are about the activities that already take place in Glasgow and to find ways of improving communication between providers and users. At the focus groups one of the main complaints of parents was that

**"there is nothing for our children"**

There was a strong belief among many parents that there were many opportunities for non-disabled children but nothing either suitable for or arranged for children with special needs. Even when there was an awareness of special programmes some focus group members said that they did not cater for the needs of their own child. This was either because of their child's "unacceptable" behaviour

**"[my son] is barred from organised after-school activities. He is fine on a one-to-one but this personal assistance is not offered"**

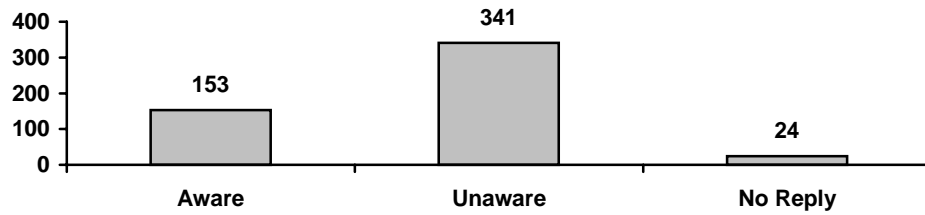
**"children are only accepted if they fit into accepted behaviour"**

or because of health or medical problems related to the child's disability. The most common of these was the administration of rectal drugs for seizures. Both these types of problem can be catered for with appropriate training and planning. For example, the Buddies Playscheme offers both one-to-one and personal medical care in consultation with parents.

In some cases there was also an opinion that there were opportunities in some areas of the city but not in their own locale. This appeared to have almost mythic qualities as it was an opinion expressed by several people about other areas. Hence a south side resident said it about the north of Glasgow while an east end resident said it about the south side. It was also an opinion voiced by those living outwith Glasgow about facilities in Glasgow.

When asked if they were aware of out-of-school activities specifically for SEN children, 65% of respondents said that they were unaware of any such activities.

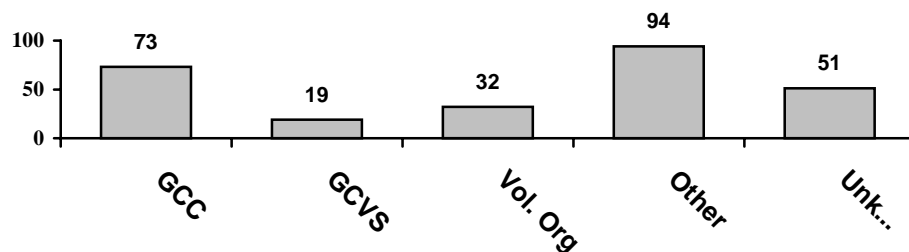
## Awareness of Out-of-School Activities (Qu.25)



The high figure for those who are unaware is not quite borne out by the number of children already taking part in any out of school activities. 232 people (44%) said that their children took part in out-of-school activities (Qu.27) of which 166 were special programmes for SEN children (Qu.29). Despite this slight discrepancy it is still clear that far too few families have access to information about activities for SEN children.

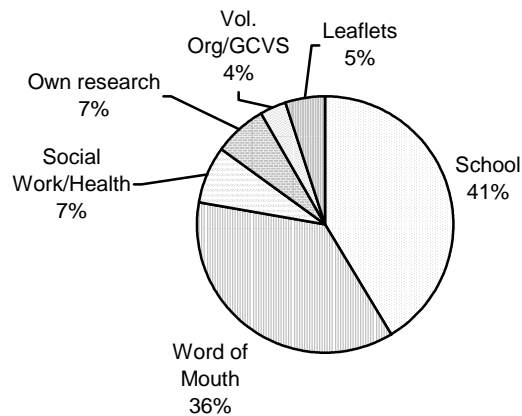
Among the families already using services there appeared to be uncertainty about who provided the activities. For example, sometimes it was clear to the researcher that the activity was part of the GCVS programme but respondents ticked the GCC, other or unknown box. Although it could be argued that taking part is more important than knowing the provider, this finding has obvious implications for marketing of future activities.

## Activity Providers (Qu.28)



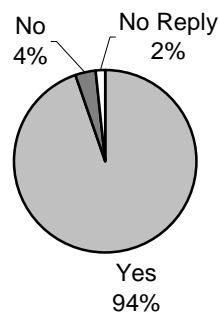
These figures include mainstream activities. There are further implications for future marketing plans in the response from parents about how they find out about activities. While it would make sense to build on the existing methods people use, it is also important to look at ways of improving the flow of information from other sources.

### Sources of Information (Qu.30)



468 (90%) respondents expressed a wish to find out more about activities for their SEN children (Qu.26) while 491(94%) said that they would want to receive information sent to them at home. The contact details of 448 respondents (86%) have now been included in the combined C&LS/GCVS database to receive information at home. The discrepancy in numbers arises either because respondents were already on the database or forgot to give their details. This is a useful boost to this database as a means of keeping people informed.

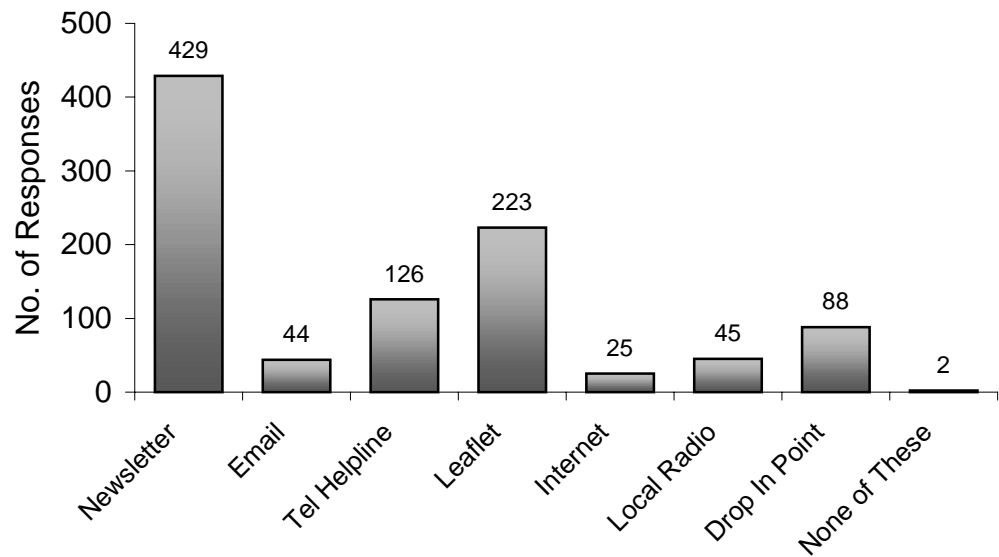
### Information Sent to Homes (Qu.32)



Respondents were given a choice of various methods of keeping them informed about activities. These figures reflect all the methods favoured by respondents, as many ticked more than the two options requested.

They were also asked to suggest other methods of communication. Of the 97 replies 81% suggested that information should be distributed via schools. It is certainly clear that a newsletter of some kind would be the most welcome means of being kept informed. If this was implemented it would make sense to distribute it as widely as possible using all possible outlets such as post, school, internet, email, venues.

## Preferred Methods Receiving Information (Qu.31)



### Type of Information

One of the things that has become apparent during this research is that parents with SEN children need more detailed information about facilities and activities than other parents. Whereas parents with non-disabled children will be content in knowing the venue, times, age range and likely activities, parents with SEN children often need to know:

- the numbers involved
- type of group – mixed abilities, similar impairments, any impairment
- the exact nature of the activities – noisy, physical, sedentary, team, non-team, competitive.
- the level of supervision and care – both during activities and in breaks
- transport arrangements if any
- experience of all staff in disability issues

Most parents were anxious to avoid situations that resulted in a negative experience for their children and themselves. At the Fun Day at Tollcross Sports Centre attended by the researcher, a few parents were voicing their disappointment that the day was not suitable for their child. In most cases this related to the fact that the children could not cope with noisy activities and other boisterous children. This situation could have been avoided if parents had been better informed about what was being offered on this occasion.

Whilst watching an inclusive programme at Easterhouse it was clear to the researcher that games and activities were not being suitably adapted for those children who could not participate in the 'normal' way. This is a training issue that is also highlighted in the C&LS report on these summer activities

**“The staff appointed to deliver the mainstream C&LS programmes had limited knowledge of disability and as a result were far from ideally placed to deliver an ‘inclusive’ programme”<sup>6</sup>**

The focus group meetings were held during the period of C&LS/GCVS advertising for their summer programmes and the publicity materials were discussed in some detail. There was general agreement on the following points:

- The flier did not contain enough information to allow parents to decide on the suitability of the activities.
- It is only useful to have a contact number for further information if this is a number that will be answered by someone who has the necessary information at his/her fingertips. It was the experience of those who had tried that frequently this was not the case.

It is unfortunate that parents had this reaction to the flier because if they had sent off the initial form, they would have been sent more detailed information and a form allowing them to detail their child(ren)'s needs, including necessary medical information and care requirements. While this is not the same as having a chance to actually meet with providers before the event and plan support, it is a first step in this process.

These issues should be considered when looking at how to improve the flow of information. It is important not to label activities as being suitable for certain types of disability but rather to give enough information to allow the parents to make an informed choice.

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<sup>6</sup> Summer Holiday Programme Report for Young Disabled People, p 1 (GCC/C&LS Disability Sports Team, 2001)

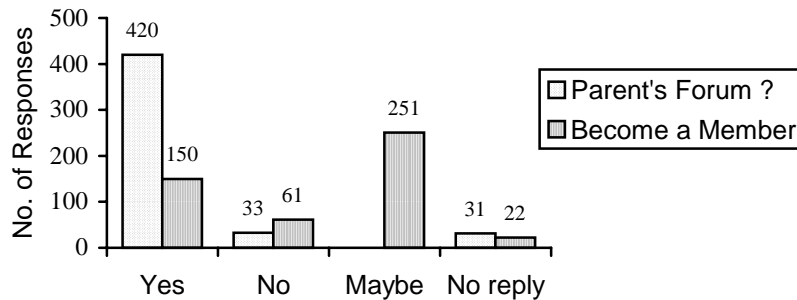
## Consultation

During the research it was clear that the idea of effectively consulting with disabled people and their families has been a priority for providers for many years.

**“that Councils will involve people with disabilities in its decision making processes in all its approaches to issues of disability and sport ..”<sup>7</sup>**  
**“there is a need to involve parents/carers centrally in the decision-making process”<sup>8</sup>**

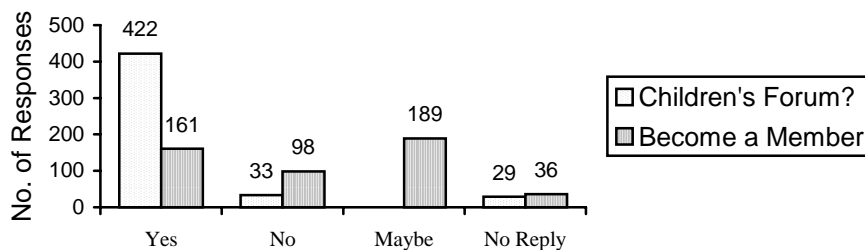
In the questionnaire, respondents were asked for their opinions on setting up parents’ and children’s forums to work more closely with providers.

### Parents/Providers Forum (Qu.33-34)



Some parents felt that their own children would not be able to take part in a forum because of their level of understanding or because they were too young. There was a feeling that it would be a good idea in principal but fewer parents wanted to commit themselves, or their children, until more was known.

### Children/Provider Forum (Qu.35-36)



<sup>7</sup> Strategy on Sports for People with Disabilities, p 21, 10.11, (Strathclyde Regional Council et al, 1996)

<sup>8</sup> Glasgow Children’s Services Plan 1998 -2001, p88 (Glasgow City Council)

This was a topic that was also discussed at some lengths in the focus groups.

**“parents should have a direct say”**

**“councils should take cognisance of parents’ wishes”**

**“need regular communication with parents to check that they [providers] are doing the right thing”**

**“parents know what their children need”**

However at the focus groups parents did not just want their own involvement, they also suggested that there should be more consultation between providers such as C&LS and the Education Department. Most parents attending the focus groups praised the staff in their child(ren)’s schools and suggested that providers of out-of-school recreation could learn from school staff as to what the children could do and how best to support them. Most people attending the groups were satisfied with the service they received from school. This may do more to illustrate the low expectation of parents than anything else as many people working in schools are dissatisfied with the level of service that they are able to provide because of financial constraints.

There was also discussion in the focus groups about what would make such a forum work because there was an understanding that such a groups would need top down commitment from management to allow staff to take part in a meaningful way and not to have just another task imposed on them. There was also a feeling that there would need to be some sort of focus or progression at the core of the forum.

## **Focus Groups Discussion**

Most the discussion in the focus groups has been included in the previous statistical analysis. However, there are some issues that were not covered by the questionnaire.

## **Parents’ Activities**

In line with the family-centred, holistic nature of the Healthy Hobbies Project, parents attending the focus group meetings were asked if they thought that programme planning should include provision for parents bringing their children to activities. There was mixed and polarised response to this suggestion. Three groups thought that it would be a good idea with suggestions from planned activities such as yoga to just

having a chance to 'natter' among themselves. "It would be a chance to switch off". One group, however, was adamantly opposed to the idea of parents' activities saying that stretched resources should be used for the children, not their parents.

### **C&LS Best Value Review of Play**

This report had been issued just prior to the focus groups meetings. None of the parents who attended had seen it, or indeed knew of its existence. There was some annoyance that there appeared to have been no effort to disseminate this consultation document to parents. The facilitator subsequently submitted a response to the document based on the focus group responses. A copy of the response is included in Appendix C

## **Existing Providers & Facilities**

### **C&LS Disabled Sports Officer GCVS Sports Team**

C&LS has a Disabled Sports Officer who co-ordinates activities for disabled people of all ages. These activities are arranged in GCC sports and leisure centres using mainstream coaches most of whom do not yet have disability specific experience or qualifications. C&LS relies heavily on the GCVS Sports Team because of their expertise in providing activity sessions for mixed groups of disabled children and inclusive groups of disabled and non-disabled children. Of the five GCVS coaches, three have advanced coaching qualifications in this field. These two agencies have worked closely together for many years and have formed a very good working relationship. They also have good working links with the Education Department's Schools Support Officer for Sport who organises activities within the school curriculum and for the last two years has run school-based summer playschemes in selected schools.

Building on these existing networks, a Disabled Sports Team comprising staff from C&LS, Education Department, GCVS and Social Work has been formed but this is not yet fully operational. It is intended that this team will work closely with the eight C&LS Community Action Teams set up across the city to look at facilities in their locale. A major consultation exercise is underway to take forward the development of an all-age Disability Sport Service in the city and this report will be disseminated to the consultants.

At present the provision offered outwith the school curriculum has three main strands:

- Regular weekly activities such as swimming and football, specifically for disabled children.
- Holiday Programmes for young disabled children, either in special or integrated sessions.
- Fun Days for families affected by disability.

It is the experience of C&LS/GCVS that many of the children who attend a holiday programme or fun day will move onto taking part in the regular weekly activities throughout the year.

**"70% of the young disabled people who participated in the Holiday Programme are now involved in weekly sessions"<sup>9</sup>**

Most of the parents responding to the questionnaire and few of those attending the focus groups were aware of these opportunities for their children. One parent whose child had attended the Fun Day in April said

**" it was the first thing he'd ever been to and he's eleven"**

Within its existing resources, the C&LS and GCVS teams are providing opportunities for a small proportion of the potential number of participants. They are keen to increase their numbers but are aware that there is need for capacity building if they are to keep offering a quality service.

**"If the expansion and development of provision for this area of work is to be a priority, new structure and additional resources need to be allocated to it"<sup>10</sup>**

It should be pointed out that the report from which this was taken was discussing 465 attendances over a seven week period by less than a 100 children. The potential number of SEN children interested in taking part of these opportunities is much higher. There were 583 children from the 518 families responding to the survey and this figure represents less than 28% of those who received the questionnaire. The equation reaches even crazier proportions if you consider that an estimated 30% of target families were not even made aware of the survey. It is clear therefore that capacity building will be central to providing an inclusive service for families with SEN and/or disabled children.

C&LS/ GCVS are developing a combined database of all their service users. This has now been augmented by 448 respondents to the questionnaire who gave their contact details.

## **C&LS Facilities**

In addition to the mainstream Sports and Leisure centres managed by C&LS they operate 3 venues specifically designed for children.

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<sup>9</sup> Summer Holiday Programme Report for Young Disabled People, p 3(GCC/C&LS Disability Sports Team, 2001)

<sup>10</sup> Summer Holiday Programme Report for Young Disabled People, p 2 (GCC/C&LS Disability Sports Team, 2001)

## **Linn Park Adventure Playground**

This is a custom built centre in the southside of the city for SEN and/or disabled children. It has a large activity hall, a large outdoor play area, a sensory room and soft play area. It is staffed by C&LS playworkers who have disability training and experience. Some adults who attended the centre as children now work at the centre as volunteers.

During the week the centre is used by SEN primary schools. On Saturdays the centre is open to families who can bring their disabled children and their siblings. During the holidays it is open to individuals, their siblings and SEN playschemes. Children over eight can attend on their own and bring their own lunch to eat indoors or outdoors in the picnic area. The centre has a bus which is used to offer a limited pick-up service. Staff will meet with parents to discuss particular needs and will provide personal care. However, they do not have the capacity to offer one-to-one support.

Linn Park is developing youth facilities for 12 –25 year olds by running an evening youth club, There are plans to expand this to another evening. Members spend some time improving the indoor and outdoor environment for younger users. Visits to the theatre and other venues are a regular feature of the club. Members can come and go at will.

At the focus groups several parents praised the facilities at Linn Park but at least one was under the impression that it was only SEN children who could attend.

<p><b>“Linn Park is brilliant but only for SEN children and other children in family are left out. [This gives] out wrong signals.”</b></p>
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## **The Beacon, Cranhill & Tower Centre, Castlemilk**

These two flagship play centres were opened in 1999 and 2000 respectively. They are open to all children up to the age of 12 regardless of where they live, on payment of a one-off registration fee of £1.00. They are staffed by qualified playworkers. Children under five must be accompanied by an adult. The Beacon Centre is also open to teenagers at different sessions during term-time and at all times during the holidays. Both centres have extensive indoor and outdoor facilities. The indoor facilities include a large games hall, a softplay area with height restriction, an activities room, a library as a satellite of the Glasgow Library service and a computer suite. Although supervised, children can come and go at will but are

discouraged from leaving programmed activities. The outdoor area is supervised but has open access. The Tower is in the centre of a public park used by people of all ages.

The facilities are also available for hire to groups offering specific activities such as drama and dance. Although there is no post-code restriction to membership, the centres are largely used by local children.

The centres are already used by groups of SEN children accompanied by their own carers and coaches and venue staff are keen to promote this use. There is less awareness of the possibility of including individual children. None of the staff has received more than very basic disability awareness training.

These centres are excellent facilities and it hoped that they can be replicated in other local areas across the city. With the addition of suitably qualified staff and a support system they have the potential to become an excellent resource for SEN children, their families and carers.

## **Education Department Playschemes**

For the last two years holiday playschemes, staffed by paid workers, have run in selected schools for their own pupils. In most cases the playschemes are for those with the most complex needs. Once again, most parents attending focus groups were aware of these activities and some were indignant that these schemes were not available more widely.

Although it could be argued that these playschemes are more about respite for parents during the holidays than about encouraging children to expand their horizons, there are undoubted benefits to running activities within a known environment with children and adults who are already known to each other. Many parents recognise that their own child needs this sort of secure environment.

**“..if provided in a known environment such as own school [he would] be more likely to go”**

**“some kids need to know exactly what to expect”**

The researcher attended two of these playschemes and saw for herself the relaxed attitude of the staff, volunteers and children. Even when an individual child was being ‘difficult’ it was clear that members of staff were used to and confident about dealing with the situation. The expertise and experience of school staff is an under-used resource when considering

ways of providing training to coaches and other staff within C&LS. One way in which this could be addressed would be to provide work shadowing opportunities for C&LS staff.

## **Voluntary Agencies**

The facilities reported on below are those that were visited by the researcher in the course of this project. It does not offer a comprehensive picture of facilities potentially open to target families. Indeed one of the outcomes of the present research is to highlight the need for a further piece of research to identify existing facilities within the Glasgow conurbation.

Some of the facilities are specifically for SEN and/or disabled children while others are mainstream facilities. All have the potential at least to move towards providing an inclusive service.

## **Voluntary Playschemes**

Most of the parents attending the focus groups were unaware of the playschemes for SEN children that have been operational for several years in Glasgow. On the other hand a few attendees either ran or had been involved in setting up their local playscheme. These voluntary schemes run during holiday periods and with a few exceptions, for example COJAC, Buddies and Reidvale which are run all year by professional staff, these are self-help groups with parents or carers remaining with their children. The playschemes are usually locally based and are open to children from that area. They are often held in schools although much of the activity takes place in the community. The Glasgow Forum for Play & Development for Children with Disabilities is a forum for the parents who run these schemes. It is facilitated by the C&LS Play Officer.

While for some parents these playschemes represent an unnecessary segregation of their SEN children from mainstream activities, for others they undoubtedly provide an acceptable social outlet. In some cases they may provide a necessary step in the children's experience of mixing with others and learning social skills. For many parents they provide a chance to talk to others without first having to explain their child(ren)'s needs.

These playschemes could offer planners a good opportunity to work more closely with the parents involved to explore the way forward for the schemes. Reidvale, COJAC and Buddies are good examples of ways in which parent-led groups can develop over time.

## **Reidvale Adventure Playground**

This play facility was started by parents ten years ago, specifically to meet the needs of local SEN children. Now, although it still has a SEN focus it gives open access to all children up to the age of 15 regardless of where they live. It is heavily used by local children. There is supervised indoor and outdoor play. The centre is managed by parents and staffed by trained playworkers and volunteers, some of whom are ex-members. Children over 8 can come on their own but they must obey club rules. The playground is open 4 evenings a week. Members can take out a 6-month subscription of between £13 and £16 depending on status or pay 70p for a single visit. The playground is used by SEN schools during term and playschemes in the holidays.

This centre is an excellent example of inclusive provision that has expanded from the principal of first getting it right for disabled children. This is a model that has been used to set up a facility by a group of parents in Coatbridge. Reidvale survives on a huge range of small grants and thus has to spend considerable time and effort in searching for new funding.

## **Caring Operations Joint Action Council (COJAC)**

COJAC is a long established organisation for disabled people in Castlemilk and the south east area of Glasgow. It receives Social Work Section 10 funding for its core activities. It has just moved to new custom-built premises funded entirely from its own fundraising. It runs regular clubs and holiday playschemes, including drama and music, for disabled children in two age groups 5-11 and 12-18. Personal and medical care needs are catered for by trained staff. Transport is provided for all members within the catchment area. Parents are able to leave their children knowing that they are in a safe environment supervised by trained staff.

COJAC is currently seeking funding from the Child Care Strategy budget and the Lottery to develop its service for children with complex learning needs and for siblings and friends. The ultimate aim is to achieve an inclusive service for all children built on a structure that works for disabled children.

Disability Groups from across the city can use the centre by arrangement as long as they can provide their own transport.

## **Buddies Club**

Buddies is an after school and weekend club started and managed by parents and run by trained staff and sessional workers. It is open to school age children living in the northwest of Glasgow. It has recently moved to permanent premises in the Temple area of Glasgow.

The needs of each child are considered and the appropriate level of support agreed with the parents. A child is only given a place once that support is in place. One-to-one support is available but care is taken to ensure that there are not too many children needing one-to-one in any one session. This is to avoid becoming a child minding service rather than one that aims to improve social interaction among the children. Staff are trained to provide personal and medical care.

Activities take place every afternoon, after school and on Sundays. The teenage group encourages children “to make their own plans to do their own things.<sup>11</sup>” Different age ranges are taken in different sessions. Holiday playschemes are organised at Easter, summer and during the October week.

Buddies is an excellent example of how to make a service work by taking a holistic approach to the needs of the child and the entire family. It shows that attention to detail is necessary to ensure that all possible needs have been thought of and catered for. It is undoubtedly a success story in allowing children to improve social skills needed before parents are confident in moving them into the wider arena. Some non-disabled children attend Buddies because of a parental impairment. This has been found to be beneficial to all the children within the group. It would be good therefore to think that this might be a way for the club to develop from a special to an inclusive facility.

Parents were very complementary about the service their children received from Buddies.

**“The shortage of such SEN after school activity is poor compared to the number of children who would benefit. Is Buddies the only after school care group?”**

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<sup>11</sup> Buddies Club Brochure

## **Govan PALS**

This play centre is open to all children under 12 living within the G51 postcode area. It was started by parents in the area after a successful lottery award. This funding is now coming to an end and negotiations are ongoing with Social Works Services, Education and C&LS for future funding.

The centre is 'owned' by the children but they need to behave responsibly. A red card system is in operation but children will not be sent home without first notifying a parent. Children sign in and out and those under 8 must be accompanied by an adult. The centre prides itself on offering an inclusive service. They would however expect the parent or carer of a child with very complex needs to be on hand, at least until they were settled. It is used by some local SEN schools. There is a café area for parents and children. Staff do not have training to cater for personal or medical needs but are willing to be trained. In addition to allowing local children to play in a safe environment, the centre also offers a guidance service to parents of young children and provides crèche facilities for this work.

This centre is a good example of a mainstream facility that wants to be inclusive. It already demonstrates a good attitude towards accommodating SEN children, both as individuals and in groups. Its main drawback is that it is only available to families living in the area. It is to be hoped that it will secure future funding.

## **Castlemilk Youth Centre**

This centre has been running since 1994, and now has 2400 members. It is open to people aged 12 –25 who live or work in the area. It receives Social Inclusion Partnership funding. It is run by a Management Committee of mainly young people. The core staff offer support and training to members in various arts related activities, such as music, drama, photography, recording and in personal and social development. Staff facilitate a Your Say group giving youngsters a chance to learn how to become their own advocates. It has a recording studio, dark room and café area which is used for discos often featuring local youth bands. It is open in the evenings and at weekends and is very well used by local youngsters as a social base.

The building which is owned by GCC has level access to the ground floor and an internal lift. Although not used in particular by SEN groups, the researcher was told that groups would be welcome to come along and use the facilities. This

centre has been included because it demonstrates good practice in catering for the needs of teenagers, an area that concerned many respondents to the questionnaire.

### **Glasgow Climbing Centre, Ibrox**

This centre is used by several SEN Schools. Many of the staff have specialist training in appropriate activities for SEN and disabled people. The minimum age is 8 and the centre caters for parties of up to 8 people. The standard cost is £50 for a group of 8 children but this might be more for a SEN group if more staff was needed. The building, an old church, is not accessible from the street and although the main hall is on the level, there is a spiral staircase to the gallery. Although the building has several drawbacks, staff demonstrated an unhesitatingly positive attitude towards users with SEN and/or impairment.

## **Models of Delivery**

The challenge of moving towards inclusive provision for all children, regardless of special educational need or impairment, is one that is facing providers in all parts of the country. There are some services that are already well established and two of these are outlined below. Although it is clear that many of the issues will be different, especially as regards potential numbers, these examples offer good models of delivery that could successfully be adapted to suit a large urban environment.

### **Playplus**

Playplus is a long established organisation based in Stirling that works to promote inclusive play, leisure and social opportunities for children and young disabled people. It works on the principle of enabling children age 5 –12 to use available facilities by providing appropriate support. The aim is to provide “weekly, year round play provision both after school and during holiday periods”.<sup>12</sup> Playplus also provides opportunities for 12-19 year olds that are appropriate to this age group. They find it difficult to obtain major funding for this age group.

Playplus provides internal and external training for their playworkers and also trains staff from other agencies, both within Stirling and across Scotland, on the provision of inclusive activities. Playplus receives core funding from Stirling Council Children’s Services. It also raises money from a variety of other sources. It works closely with the Council and other local agencies.

Playplus offers a good example of provision both in urban and rural environments. It tries as much as possible to offer support for children within their local area.

### **Achievement Bute**

Achievement Bute is a good example of a parent-led group set up to cater for the needs of disabled children that now provides inclusive activities for local children. The key reasons for their success are: a belief in the right of all children to be included; good planning; and good communication. They run a weekly club and holiday programmes. Sessional staff also offer ongoing support to enable individual children to take part in other

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<sup>12</sup> Playplus Annual Report 1999-2000

activities, such as the local Pony Club - rather than the alternative 'Riding for the Disabled'.

Organisation of the holiday programmes starts early with families being invited to an open evening to discuss the activities they would like. Once the programme has been decided, information goes to families with disabled children to allow them to register their interest. The necessary support for each child is then agreed and put in place. Once this is achieved, the programme is advertised in the public arena and applications taken on a first-come-first-served basis.

Achievement Bute has around 30 sessional staff. They offer ongoing support to 5 children at an agreed level, 24 members attend the weekly club and numbers at holiday programmes vary from 24 – 80, depending on the activity.

Sessional workers receive equality or values training emphasising the rights of all children to be included. They also have training in Lifting & Handling and First Aid. Achievement Bute has just received funding to develop and deliver a two day training course on including disabled children in play provision. They intend targeting parents with very young children, playgroups and nursery schools to try and encourage parents to expect an inclusive model of delivery right from the start.

## **Conclusion**

The aim of the Healthy Hobbies Project is to promote an inclusive, holistic and family-centred approach to recreation for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities in Glasgow. This report is the outcome of a consultation exercise carried out for the project to obtain the views of parents and carers of SEN children on the topic of out-of-school recreation.

The report contains a statistical analysis of the survey by questionnaire and focus group covering three main areas: type of activities and delivery; identifying needs and barriers; and looking at ways of improving communication between families and providers. It also details existing provision in Glasgow, highlighting examples of good practice; looks at models of delivery successfully operating in other parts of the country; and makes recommendations to improve and develop inclusive services.

The full report will be disseminated to statutory and voluntary agencies across the city. A summary of the findings and the recommendations will be sent to everyone who took part in the survey and gave their contact details.

The aim of this report is to influence the development of the other two strands of the project: the establishment of a high quality and meaningful information service for children, families and service providers; and the development of inclusive out-of-school activities for all children across the city.

# **Healthy Hobbies Project Survey Of Families with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabled Children about Out-Of- School Recreational Activities in Glasgow.**

This questionnaire is designed to be completed by a parent or guardian with the help of their children. Please answer all the questions that you think apply to you. The information you give will be treated as confidential and no personal details will be included in the survey report.

If you choose to give your name and address, GCVS Sports Unit and GCC Cultural & Leisure Services will keep your details on a joint database for the sole purpose of sending you information on the topic of out-of-school recreational activities in Glasgow. At no time will this database or details from it be given to other agencies or departments.

Thank you for taking the time to fill in this questionnaire.

Please return it to:

**Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector**

**Healthy Hobbies Project**

**FREEPOST SCO6434**

**Glasgow**

**G4 9BR**

## SECTION 1 : ABOUT YOUR FAMILY

1. Where do you live, e.g. Glasgow Easterhouse, Uddingston?

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2. How many children under 18 are in your family?

3. How many of these children have special educational needs and/or impairment(s)?

4. Please give their age(s), e.g. Boys 7,9.

Boys	<input type="text"/>	Girls	<input type="text"/>
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5. Please give the name(s) of their school or nursery

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6. Please give the age(s) of your other child(ren)

Boys	<input type="text"/>	Girls	<input type="text"/>
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7. Please tell us about your child(ren)'s impairments using a separate column for each child.

Sex of Child (B/G)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>					
Physical Impairment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Learning Impairment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Visual Impairment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hearing Impairment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Autism/Asperger's Syndrome	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Head Injury	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Dyslexia/Dyspraxia	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Communication Impairment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Medical Condition, e.g. epilepsy, asthma	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Emotional/Behavioural Difficulties	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other (please specify)

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8. Do any of the adult members of your family have an impairment that would affect your child(ren) taking part in out-of-school activities?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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**SECTION 2 : ABOUT OUT-OF-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES**

9. Which out-of-school activities would your child(ren) with special educational needs and/or impairment(s) be interested in? Please tick all that apply.

Ball Sports e.g. football		Racquet sports, e.g. tennis	
Water sports e.g. swimming		Martial Arts	
Keep Fit		Dance	
Music		Drawing & Painting	
Arts & Crafts		Drama	
Creative Writing		Storytelling	
Reading		Computers	
Outdoor/nature activities		Indoor board/sitting games	
Horse-riding		Adventure Holidays	
Language Classes		Clubs, e.g. BB, Brownies	

Other, please specify

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Please specify below, particular activities, e.g. Football, Chess

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10. In general, do you think that out-of-school recreational activities should be accessible to all children?

Yes		No	
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Please give your reasons

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11. In general, do you think that there is a need for out-of-school recreational activities specifically for children with special educational needs and/or impairment(s)?

Yes		No	
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Please give your reasons.

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**12. Thinking specifically about your own child(ren) with special educational needs and/or impairment(s), what type(s) of group would be suitable?**

Mixed groups of children, with and without impairments	
Activities involving family members	
Activities for children with any impairments	
Activities for children with similar impairment(s)	

13. Would your non-disabled child(ren) want to take part in these activities?

Yes		Sometimes		No	
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14. What type of provision would most suit YOU, as a parent?

Activities where you can leave your child(ren) with special educational needs and/or impairment(s)	
Activities where you can leave all your child(ren)	
Activities you can participate in	
Activities that you can attend as a spectator/carer	

If you wish to accompany your children, please give your reasons.

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15. Would you be more willing to leave your child(ren) if you knew that staff had specialist disability training in the particular activity?

Yes		No	
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16. Would you be more willing to leave your child(ren) if personal care/assistance were provided?

Yes		No	
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17. What time(s) of year would you and your child(ren) like activities to take place?

Term-time		All School Holidays		Part of School Holidays	
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18. Which days and times are suitable for you and your child(ren)?

Please tick as many as apply

	After School	Early Evening	Later Evening
Monday			
Tuesday			
Wednesday			
Thursday			
Friday			
	Morning	Afternoon	Evening
Saturday			
Sunday			
School Holiday			

### SECTION 3 : IDENTIFYING NEEDS AND BARRIERS

#### Venues

19. What facilities are needed to meet both your and your child(ren)'s needs? Please tick as many as apply

Wheelchair accessible	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hearing access, e.g. induction loop	<input type="checkbox"/>
Special Equipment, e.g. hoist	<input type="checkbox"/>	Specialist Trainers/Coaches	<input type="checkbox"/>
Special games, e.g. boccia	<input type="checkbox"/>	Family changing facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Crèche facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	Visual access, e.g. speaking lifts	<input type="checkbox"/>
Adjacent Parking	<input type="checkbox"/>	Good public transport links	<input type="checkbox"/>
Close to home	<input type="checkbox"/>	Organised transport, e.g. bus	<input type="checkbox"/>
Personal Care/Assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

Other, please specify

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#### Transport

20. Do you have your own car to take your child(ren) to and from venues?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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21. Can you use public transport (bus, train, underground) to take your child(ren) to and from venues?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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If you have answered No to questions 20 and 21

22. Would the provision of transport from home-to-venue be necessary to enable your child(ren) with special educational needs and/or impairments to take part in out-of-school activities?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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23. Would you need help towards the cost of home-to-venue transport?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Please give details of any other transport problems

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#### Other Barriers

24. Please state below any other barriers to enabling or encouraging your child(ren) to take part in out-of-school activities, e.g. parent's work, cost implications, negative attitudes on the part of others.

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## SECTION 4 : IMPROVING LINKS

One of the aims of this project is to find ways of keeping families with special educational needs and/or disabled children informed about out-of-school recreational activities in Glasgow.

25. Are you aware of any out-of-school activities for children with special educational needs and/or impairment(s) in Glasgow?

Yes		No	
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26. Would you like to find out more about such out-of-school activities?

Yes		No	
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27. Do your child(ren) with special educational needs and/or impairment(s) already take part in out-of-school recreational activities?

Yes		No	
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If you have answered yes to Question 27, please answer questions 28-30

28. Please tell us who provides these activities

Glasgow City Council (GCC)		Glasgow Council for Voluntary Sector (GCVS)	
Voluntary Organisation, e.g. Giant Productions		Other, please specify	
Don't know			

Please give details

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29. Are these activities specifically for children with special educational needs and/or impairment(s) ?

Yes		No	
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30. How did you find out about these activities, e.g. word of mouth, leaflet, poster?

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31. What follows are some ideas of keeping families informed about out-of-school activities. If these were made available which method would you be most likely to use? Please tick no more than TWO OPTIONS.

Newsletter	<input type="checkbox"/>	Leaflets	<input type="checkbox"/>
Email	<input type="checkbox"/>	Internet	<input type="checkbox"/>
Posters	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local Radio	<input type="checkbox"/>
Telephone Helpline	<input type="checkbox"/>	Drop In Point for Information	<input type="checkbox"/>
None of these methods	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>

Please specify any other ideas that you think would be useful.

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32. Would you like information about out-of-school activities sent to you at home?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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If you have answered yes, please enter your details on the next page

33. Do you think regular meetings between parents and providers would help to break down barriers and improve the flow of information?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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34. If such a group were set up would you be interested in becoming a member?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Maybe	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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If you have answered yes, please enter your details on the next page

35. Do you think it would be a good idea to set up a children's forum to enable them to voice their own opinions about out-of-school activities?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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36. Would you like your child(ren) to take part in such a group?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Maybe	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----	--------------------------	-------	--------------------------	----	--------------------------

If you have answered yes, please enter your details on the next page

## SECTION 5 : FOCUS GROUPS

This questionnaire is the first part of a survey that will let planners know the views and wishes of families with special educational needs and/or disabled children about out-of-school recreational activities. The second part of the survey will involve meeting with groups of parents and children to hear more about their views and ideas. If you are interested in taking part in one of these groups please give your contact details below and someone from GCVS will contact you with further details.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Best time to contact \_\_\_\_\_

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## SURVEY RESULTS

We would like to make the results of this survey and it's recommendations as widely known as possible to parents whose children have special educational needs and/or impairments

Please send a summary of survey results to my home address. Please enter your details below. Please also give your details if you answered yes to questions 32, 34 and/or 36 on the previous page.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Town \_\_\_\_\_

Post Code \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

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For Office Use:

Summary  Mailings(32)  Parent's Group(34)  Children's Group   
(36)

## **Best Value Review of Play 2001**

### **Consultation Report Executive Summary**

Comments from Jean Alcock, Survey Co-ordinator, Healthy Hobbies Project.

The Healthy Hobbies Project is currently consulting parents of special educational needs and/or disabled children (SEN children) about out-of-school activities in Glasgow. The comments below on the Best Value Review of Play are made in the light of this research. Healthy Hobbies is funded through the Scottish Executive SEN Innovation Grants Programme. It is managed by the Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector.

#### **General Points**

Parents attending Healthy Hobbies Focus Groups in June were disappointed that the Executive Summary had not been distributed through their children's schools before the end of term.

70% of parents responding to the Health Hobbies questionnaire were unaware of any facilities in Glasgow suitable for their SEN and/or disabled children. 95% of these respondents said that they would like to find out more about such facilities. There is a need to disseminate detailed information about play facilities more widely. Families with SEN children need to know that particular venues and activities are suitable for their children.

#### **Specific Points**

(5.1) Page 4

'Establish and facilitate a Glasgow Play Forum for play providers'

Many parents think that there should be parent representation on such a forum

(5.2) Page 4

'Review the most effective and efficient structure for staffing and delivering Children's Play Service'

There should be an acknowledgement that additional and specialist staff are required to cater for the needs of SEN children

(5.3) Page 5

'To provide training and qualifications to support the development of children's play in Glasgow'

There is a need to build disability awareness training into staff development at all levels from front-of-house staff to play leaders and assistants. However, it is not always formal training that is required but rather an opportunity for parents to talk to playleaders to highlight the particular needs of their child.

(5.4) Page 6

'To provide a range of information & support services enabling the development of voluntary sector playwork'

The Voluntary Sector need access to high quality disability awareness training  
It should be emphasised that all voluntary sector grant applications should be based on the principles of inclusion and accessibility.

(5.5) & (5.6) Pages 6 - 7

New Facilities

Emphasis should be placed on the need to ensure that all new and upgraded facilities should be planned and designed with the needs of SEN children in mind.

"if you get it right for our children, it will be right for everyone"

*parent at Healthy Hobbies Focus Group*

The following Agencies were contacted or visited in the course of research for the Healthy Hobbies Project

### **Public Sector**

Arts Officer C&LS  
Beacon Play Centre C&LS (Tel:0141 774 3736)  
Disability Sports Officer C&LS  
Linn Park Adventure Playground C&LS (Tel:0141 633 1493)  
Play Officer C&LS  
Tower Play Centre C&LS (Tel:0141 634 7110)  
Youth Libraries Officer C&LS  
Education Officer (SEN)  
Schools Sports Officer  
Healthy City Partnership  
Primary Care Trust  
Yorkhill Hospital Trust Child Development Centres

### **Voluntary & Private Sector**

Achievement Bute, Rothesay (Tel:01700 505558)  
Barnardos/Apna Project (Tel:0141 429 6303)  
Buddies Club (Tel:0141 434 0201)  
COJAC (Tel:0141 634 1002)  
Collusion Theatre Company (Tel:0141 644 0163)  
East Pollokshields Project (GARA) (Tel:0141 429 6303)  
Equal Trust (www.equaltrust.com)  
Fit for Life  
Giant Productions (Tel:0141 334 2000)  
Glasgow Climbing Centre (Tel:0141 427 9550)  
Govan PALS (Tel:0141 445 1691)  
Kids East End Project  
The Mallard (Tel:0141 558 7575)  
Mearns After-School Care (pennymac61@aol.com)  
PAMIS (Tel:0141 572 0782)  
Planning Together (Tel:0141 631 4441)  
Playplus, Stirling (Tel:01786 450086)  
Reidvale Adventure Centre (Tel:0141 550 2320)  
RNIB Transcription Service (Tel:0141 337 2955)  
San Jai Project (Tel:0141 332 3878)  
Scotland Yard Centre, Edinburgh (Tel:0131 557 8199)  
Sparky Project (Tel:0141 334 2001)  
Strathclyde Autistic Society (Tel:0141 331 0223)  
West of Scotland Carers Forum (Tel:0141 353 2726)