



Tàlaidhean Ùra

The Fèis Rois Lullaby Project



Final Evaluation Report

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Acknowledgements

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Introduction

About Fèis Rois

Fèis Rois is a Scottish charity, based in Dingwall, which enables people of all ages to access, participate in and enjoy the traditional arts and Gaelic language through a diverse programme of activities.

Fèis Rois is widely recognised as a national leader in the arts, particularly in music education. The organisation aims to give young people and lifelong learners the opportunity to experience and engage with traditional music and Gaelic culture in a way that supports them in developing their social skills and inspires them to reach their full potential.

The Lullaby Project

The Lullaby Project was developed by Carnegie Hall's Weill Music Institute and delivered across various settings in New York City, including homeless shelters and prisons. It has since been delivered across the US and in the UK, with evaluations showing groups have a positive impact on mother's wellbeing and connectedness. Fèis Rois were delighted to have the opportunity to deliver Lullaby Project groups across the Highlands, incorporating aspects of Gaelic traditional music.

Tàlaidhean Ùra: The Fèis Rois Lullaby Project was delivered as a twelve-week group for mothers of infants under the age of 3. Sessions took place weekly and lasted for 2 hours. The project was delivered to four cohorts of mothers and babies across different areas of the Highlands: Alness, Dingwall, Inverness and Gairloch/West Coast. Each group was delivered by three or four professional musicians, involving a total of twelve musicians across the project. Mothers were supported to develop their confidence and skills in singing, music making and song-writing through practical activities which they could then do at home with their infant. All mothers were supported to write a personal lullaby for their infant, with the opportunity to work with the musicians to record their lullabies at the end of the 12 weeks.

Mothers also had opportunities to socialise with each other over coffee and cake during the session break. During the session, babies were looked after in a creche so mothers were able to work on their lullabies, participate in craft activities, and enjoy a cup of tea and chat in peace!

Background Research

The therapeutic benefits of music are well documented, with participation in musical activities associated with improvements in wellbeing, reductions in symptoms of anxiety and depression, and increases in relational closeness (see Wang and Aguis, 2018, for review). There are specific benefits of music for mothers and babies, and community music interventions for postpartum mothers have been shown to increase self-esteem, improve maternal mental health (Fancourt and Perkins, 2018) and reduce social isolation (Savage et al., 2020).



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Between 10 and 20% of mothers suffer from perinatal mental health issues during pregnancy or the first year postpartum, with an annual societal cost of over 8 billion pounds (Bauer et al., 2014). A review by Gavin et al. (2015) estimates that only 40% of women with postnatal depression are clinically diagnosed, with just 10% receiving adequate treatment. Community interventions offering universal support can therefore play a vital role in reaching women who may not be identified by health professionals, as well as providing additional support for those with a perinatal mental health diagnosis.

Mother-baby singing has multiple benefits for both mother and baby. Research by Fancourt and Perkins (2017) found that mothers between four and forty weeks post-partum who sang to their baby daily reported higher levels of wellbeing and self-esteem, fewer symptoms of postnatal depression and a better self-reported bond with their infant than those who sang less frequently. Similarly, in a within-subjects study where mothers received both a session of group mother-infant singing, and a comparison session involving mother-infant play, the singing session demonstrated significant improvements in affect and perceived closeness between mother and baby compared to the mother-play condition (Fancourt and Perkins, 2018a). The impacts of mother-baby singing may be especially beneficial for mothers with poor mental health. In a study by Fancourt and Perkins (2018b) mothers with symptoms of postnatal depression were randomly assigned to either a 10-week community singing intervention, a 10-week creative play intervention, or a control comparison. Mothers participating in the singing intervention with higher levels of postnatal depression showed a significantly faster reduction in symptoms compared to the other two conditions.

Previous evaluations of the Lullaby Project in the USA have demonstrated positive impacts with vulnerable parents, including greater wellbeing and improved connectedness (WolfBrown, 2017). Similarly, a recent evaluation of Lullaby Project delivery in the UK found that parents reported a more positive emotional state, improved connectedness, increased proactivity and greater reflection on their lives and their relationship with their infant after participating in groups (Asensco, 2017). While the principles of the project remain the same, both the aforementioned versions of the Lullaby Project have been delivered on an individual basis, with parents working one-to-one with musicians. The Fèis Rois Lullaby Project was delivered in a group setting, over a longer period of time, and therefore it is anticipated that there will be additional benefits to mothers through enhancing their social support networks. This may be particularly important for mothers living in remote and rural areas of the Highlands, where levels of social isolation are high.

Theory of Change

We worked with The Behavioural Insights Team to generate a Theory of Change for the Lullaby Project (Figure 1, overleaf).



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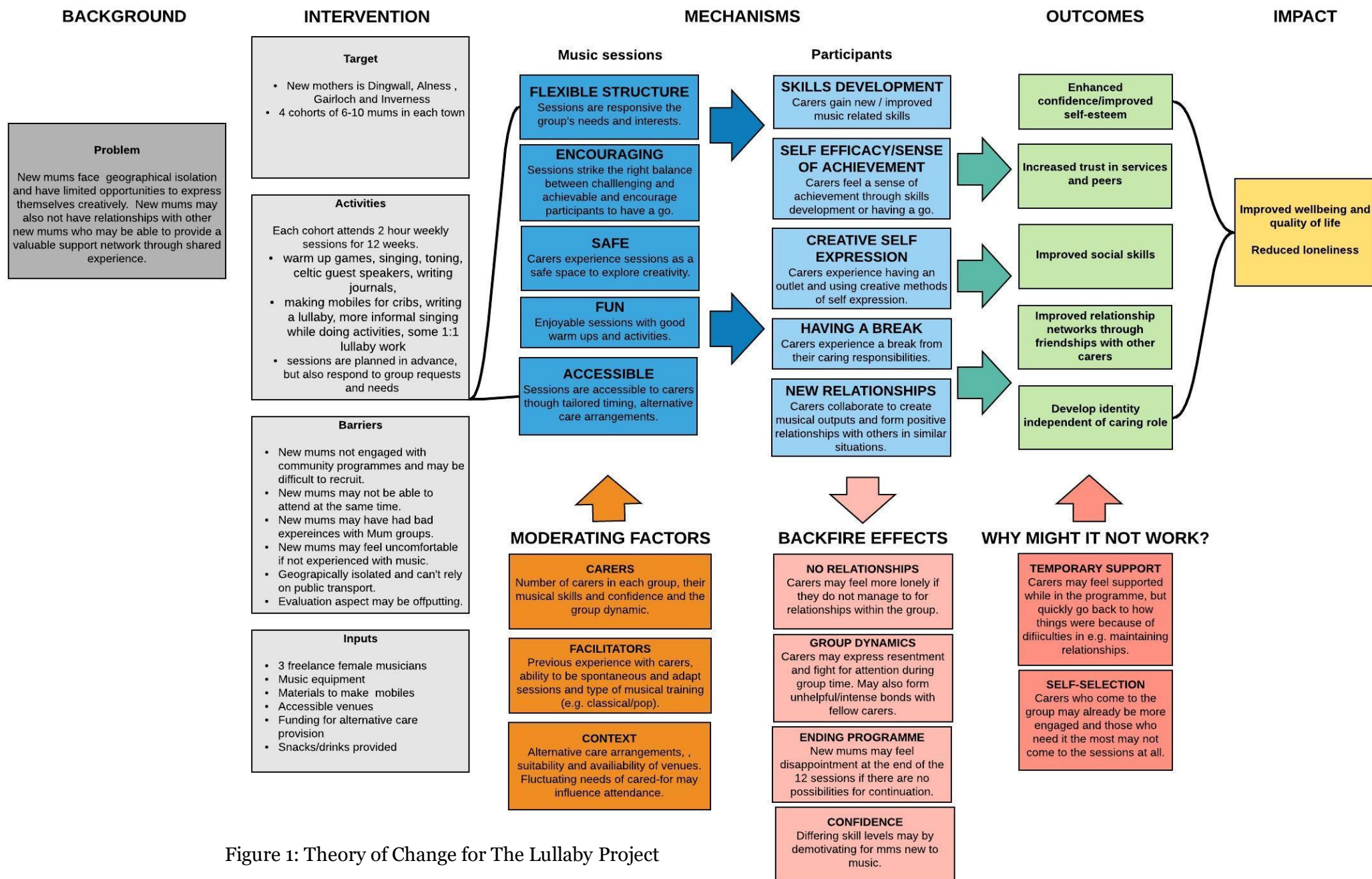


Figure 1: Theory of Change for The Lullaby Project

Project Aims

The project aimed to achieve the following outcomes:

1. Improvements in maternal mental wellbeing (*Apteligen questions*)
2. An increase in social connectedness (*Apteligen questions*)
3. An increase in parenting confidence (*Parenting Sense of Competence Scale*)
4. Improvements in parental reflective functioning (*Parental Reflective Functioning Questionnaire*)

Impact of COVID-19 on Project Delivery and Evaluation

Due to social distancing restrictions as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, face-to-face delivery of The Lullaby Project was suspended part way through the first two cohorts (Alness and Dingwall). After a period of uncertainty about whether or not face-to-face delivery would resume, Alness and Dingwall finished the group sessions online. The Inverness and West Coast groups were delivered online in their entirety.

| COHORT | NUMBER OF FACE TO FACE SESSIONS | NUMBER OF ONLINE SESSIONS |
|------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Alness | 10 | 2 |
| Dingwall | 4 | 8 |
| Inverness | 0 | 12 |
| West Coast | 0 | 12 |

Table 1: Method of delivery across each cohort

All the principles of the project remained the same during online delivery, with the sessions starting with group singing and music making, followed by mothers working in a 1:1 or small group setting with musicians to write their lullaby. However, there were a couple of aspects of the face-to-face group that were not able to be implemented within an online setting, namely the craft activities and childcare through the creche.

Method

Evaluation Design

This was a within-group pre/post study, with outcome measures collected at baseline (Week 1) and post-intervention (collected at the end of the final group session in Week 12). Interviews were also conducted with musicians and a sample of mothers following their final intervention session.

Ethical approval for this study was obtained from the University of Aberdeen School of Medicine, Medical Sciences and Nutrition Ethics Review Board (Application No. 1842).



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Sample

All mothers participating in The Lullaby Project intervention were given the opportunity to take part in the evaluation. Participants were free to withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice to their continuation in the group. 13 mothers, across four cohorts, completed both pre and post evaluation questionnaires. Details are shown in the Table 2 below.

| COHORT | NUMBER OF COMPLETED DATASETS | METHOD OF DELIVERY |
|------------|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Alness | 3 | Face to face and Online |
| Dingwall | 4 | Face to face and Online |
| Inverness | 3 | Online |
| West Coast | 3 | Online |

Table 2: Completed datasets across each cohort

We also conducted interviews with mothers from the Alness and Dingwall cohorts (interviews with Inverness and West Coast cohorts are still being undertaken) and with musicians who delivered Lullaby Project groups.

Measures

This evaluation collected baseline and post-intervention data using the following three measures:

- **Apteligen Questionnaires**, which collected information on:
 - Demographic data, including information about the caregiving context between mother and infant
 - Maternal self-reported wellbeing and loneliness
 - Maternal self-reported social networks
- **The Parenting Sense of Competence Scale** (PSOC; Johnston and Mash, 1989): The PSOC is a seventeen-item scale assessing parental self-efficacy. Parents rate the extent to which they agree with statements using a 6-point scale. Higher scores on the PSOC are indicative of higher levels of parenting competence.
- **The Parental Reflective Functioning Questionnaire** (PRFQ; Luyten et al. 2017): The PRFQ assesses parental reflective functioning, which denotes the caregiver's ability to both identify their own internal mental states and those of their infant. The PRFQ consists of eighteen statements, which parents rate on a 7-point scale, from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The PRFQ has three subscales: pre mentalising modes, interest and curiosity, and certainty about mental states.



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Originally, we also planned to measure changes in mother's relationship with their infant using the Child and Adult Relationship Observation (CARO; Thompson et al., 2019), which provides a measure of the quality of the parent-child relationship. However, this was an optional part of the study, and few mothers opted to participate in video observations.

Semi-structured individual interviews are also currently being conducted with a small sample of mothers (n≈12) and all group facilitators (n≈8) to explore their experiences of the Lullaby Project groups.

Data Analysis

Parametric paired t-tests were conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to examine differences between baseline and post-intervention scores.

Interview data (still being collected) will be analysed using thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006) and a coding framework will be developed to identify key themes and sub themes until saturation is reached.

Findings from Pre/Post Measures

Limitations of pre/post score changes:

The final sample of mothers includes 13 completed pre/post datasets. It is therefore not possible to draw conclusions about the impact of the group on outcomes for mothers, based on this small sample size. While pre/post score changes are presented, the main focus of the evaluation is a qualitative exploration of mothers' experiences of the Lullaby Project groups. Future research should use a larger sample of participants and consider use of control comparison in order to be able to make valid causal attributions about the impact of the group.

As well as affecting delivery, COVID-19 also impacted on the evaluation and interpretation of pre/post score changes. For the first two cohorts (Alness and Dingwall), baseline measures were completed in January and February 2019 respectively, prior to the COVID-19 lockdown. However, the post-group measures were completed during lockdown, when anxiety levels were high, and mothers were restricted in their social contact. Therefore, post scores are likely more of a reflection of the context around COVID-19 as opposed to an accurate reflection of changes attributed to participation in the project.

It is important to bear this in mind when interpreting the results. Rates of maternal anxiety and depression have been higher during the pandemic (Hessami et al., 2020) and access to formal and informal support has been limited due to COVID-19 restrictions (Institute of Health Visiting, 2020). It is therefore conceivable that without the additional support of The Lullaby Project, maternal wellbeing and social connectedness may have decreased further.

Participants' experiences of The Lullaby Project:



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- **100%** of participants reported **feeling better about their life and their future** after taking part in the Lullaby Project, with all 13 mothers choosing the 'Yes, a bit' response.
- Participants also reported that they were **likely to participate in music making activities in the future**. When asked to rate the likelihood of future participation on a scale of 0 (Not at all) to 10 (Very likely), scores ranged from 5 to 10, with an **average of 7**.
- Participants were asked to select up to three aspects of the project which they felt had had the biggest impact on them. The most common response was **being able to spend time with others who were experiencing something similar to them**, with 92% of mothers selecting this as a perceived impact (Figure 2).

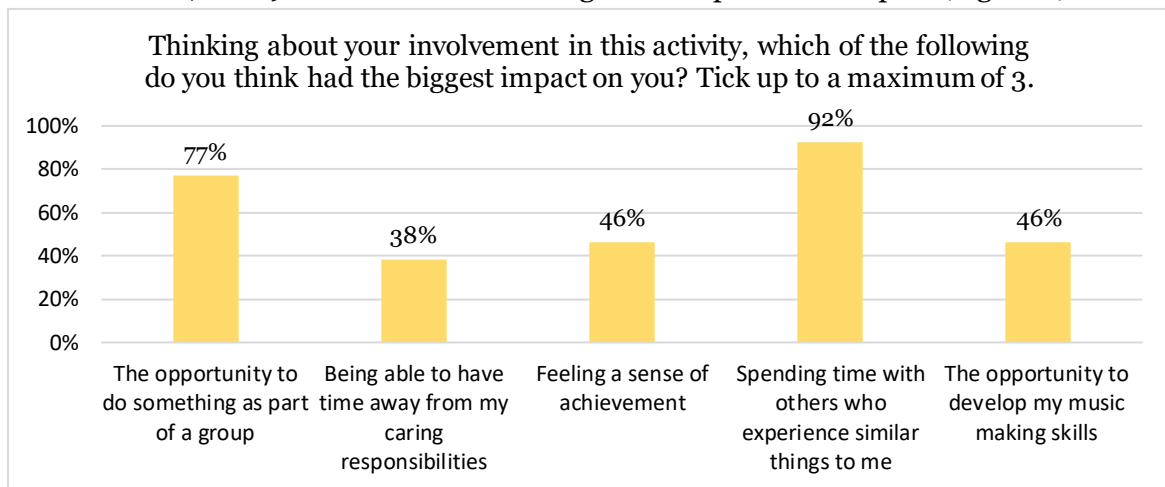


Figure 2: Perceptions of the biggest impact of The Lullaby Project

- Participants were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with various statements about the impact of the group. **85%** of mothers reported feeling that the group had **helped them make more friends**, **69%** felt **more confident about their caring role**, and **62%** felt they had **increased in confidence** since participating in the group. (Figure 3).

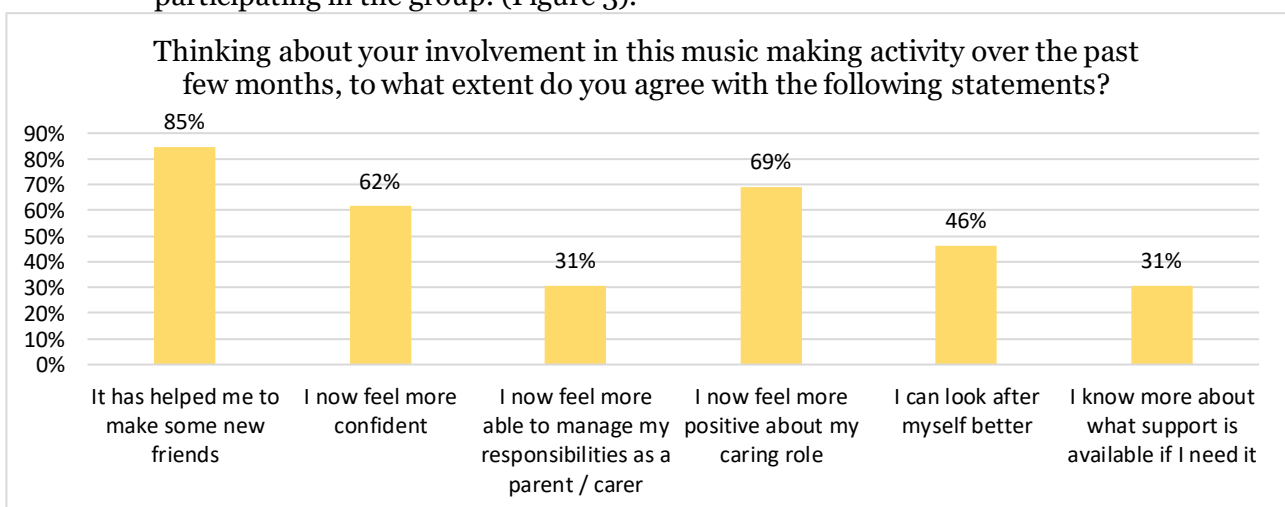


Figure 3: Percentage of participants agreeing with each statement

Outcome 1: Improvements in Maternal Mental Wellbeing

There are little changes in self-reported maternal mental wellbeing following the group (Figure 4). Although participants reported a slight increase in how satisfied they were feeling with their lives, and the extent that they felt the things they did in their life were worthwhile, neither of these differences were statistically significant ($t=-0.716, p>0.05$; $t=-1.46, p>0.05$).

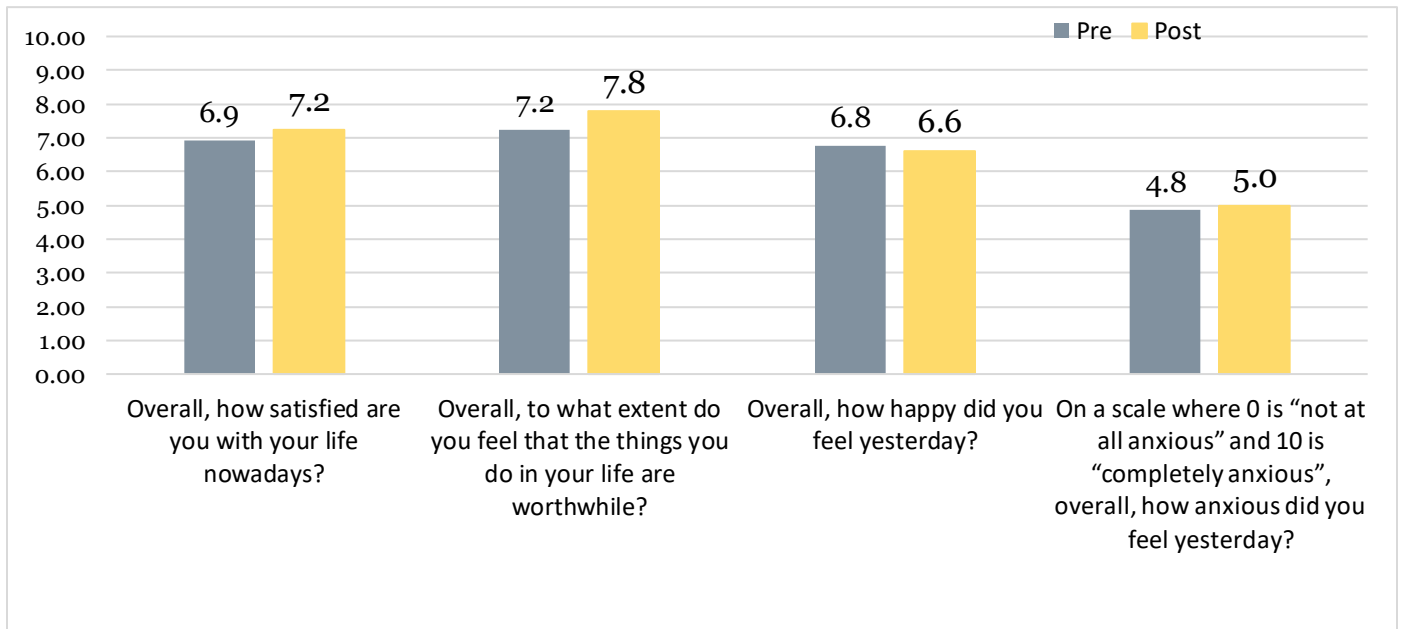
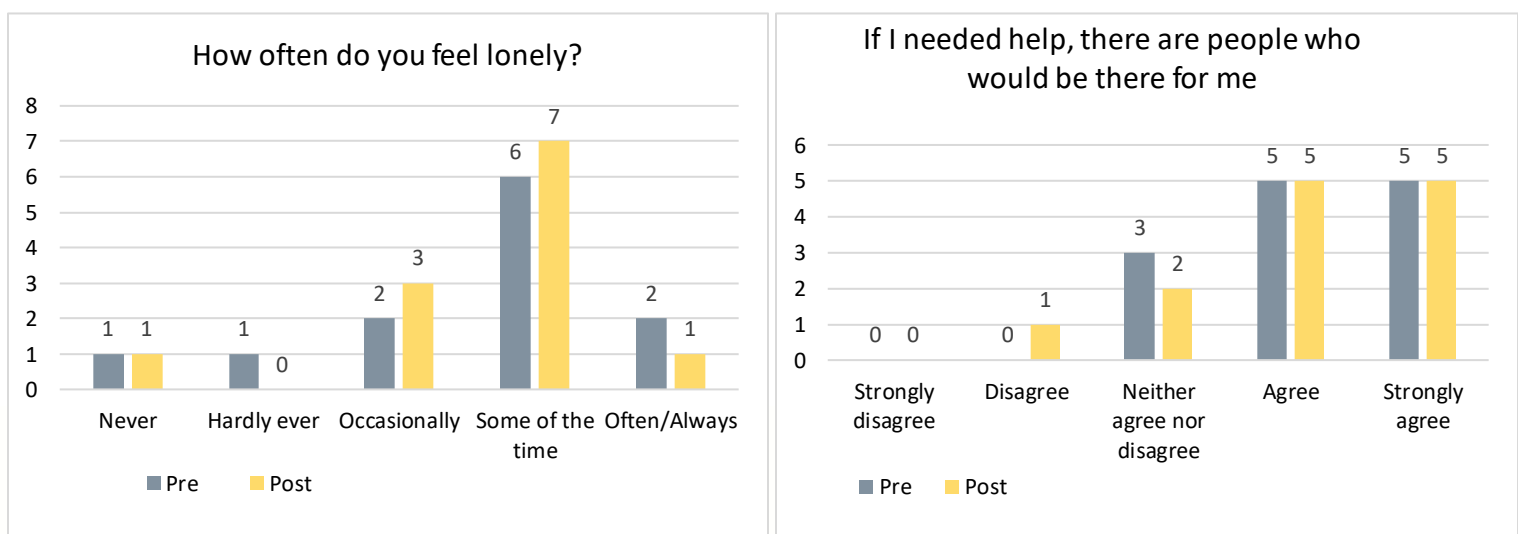


Figure 4: Pre and post measures on Maternal Mental Wellbeing

Outcome 2: An increase in social connectedness

There were no significant differences between any of the pre and post measures on social connectedness (Figure 5). Again, this is likely reflective of the fact that measures were completed during COVID-19 lockdown, when social distancing restrictions were in place.

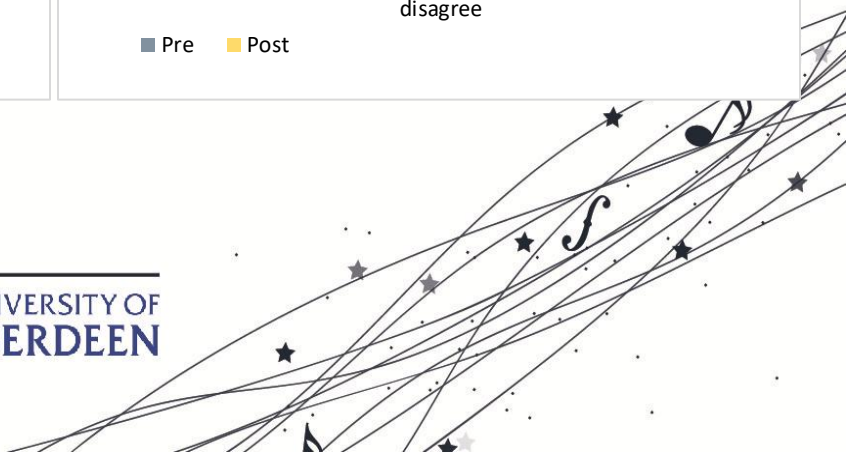


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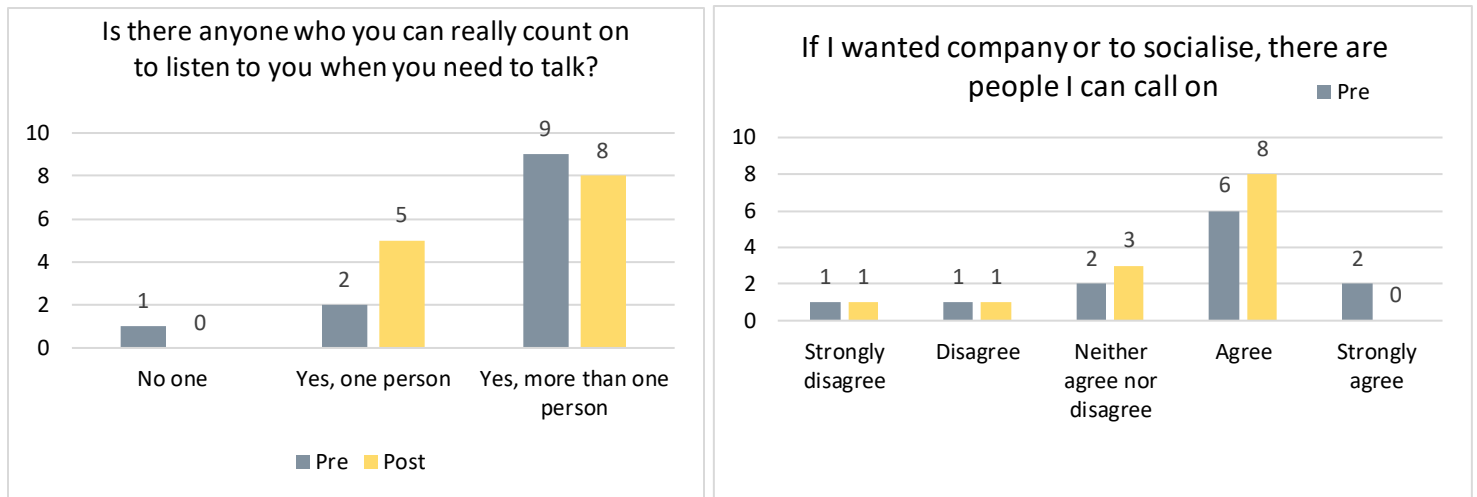


Figure 5: Pre and post measures on social connectedness

Outcome 3: An increase in parenting confidence

Parenting confidence, measured using the PSOC, showed an increase between pre and post assessment, indicating higher levels of parenting confidence after participation in The Lullaby Project (Figure 6). However, this did not reach statistical significance ($t=-1.265$, $p>0.05$).

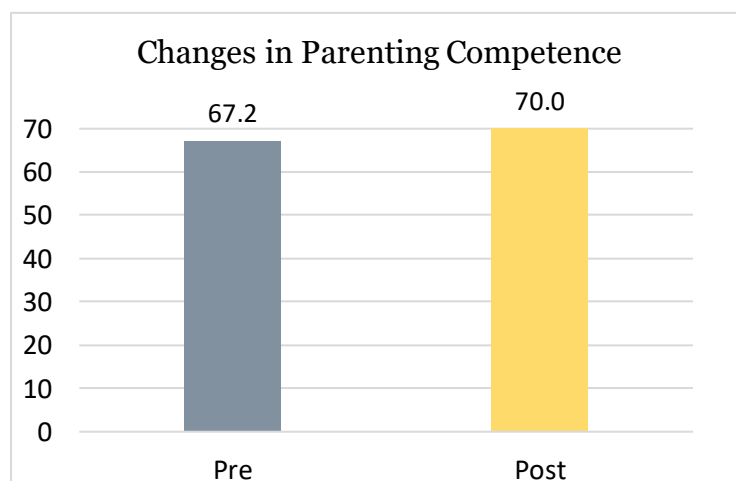


Figure 7: Pre and post measures on Parenting Competence

Outcome 4: An increase in parental reflective functioning

There were no significant changes in parental reflective functioning (Figure 7), measured using the PRFQ ($t=-1.36$, $p>0.05$). The only subscale which showed a slight decrease was the pre mentalising modes subscale. Lower scores on this subscale are associated with secure attachment and increased maternal emotional availability, indicating that mothers had experienced slight increases in emotional availability following the group (Luyten et al., 2017).



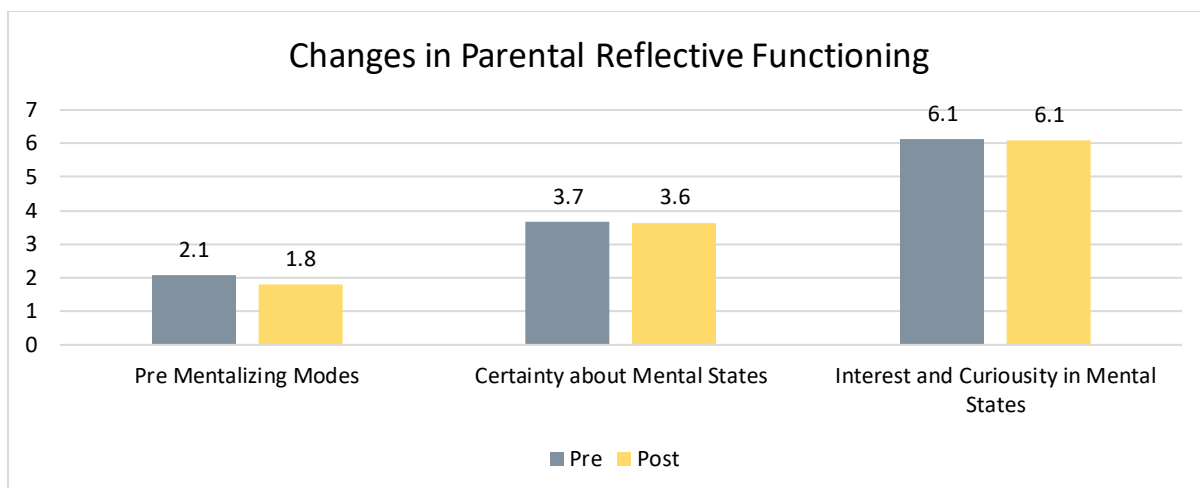


Figure 8: Pre and post measures on Parental Reflective Functioning

Findings from Interviews

Face-to-face Delivery:

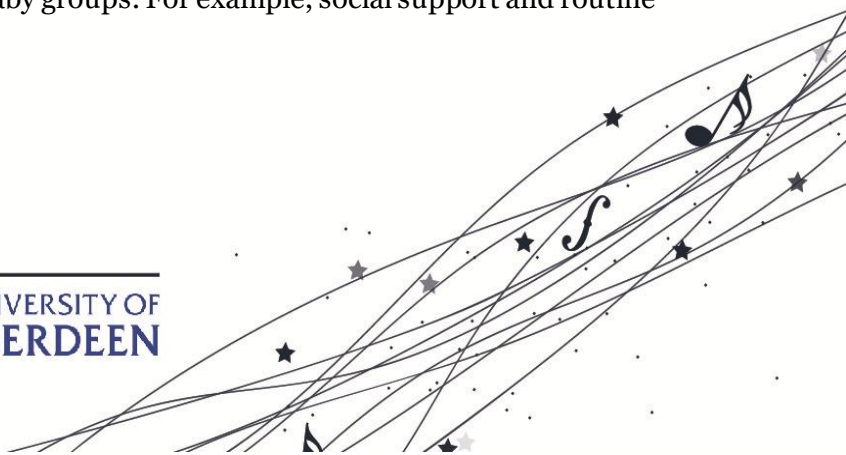
Interviews from the first Alness cohort (conducted with 3 mothers and 2 musicians) have been transcribed and analysed to explore mothers' and musicians' experiences of face-to-face delivery. The key themes are shown in Figure 9 below.



Figure 9: Key themes from face-to-face delivery

1. Benefits of the group for mothers:

The first over-arching theme was the benefits of the group for mothers. All mothers that were interviewed were accessing other mother-baby groups within the community, so mothers may have been focusing on the benefits that were specific to the Lullaby Project, and not the general benefits of mother-baby groups. For example, social support and routine



weren't mentioned, although we know these are often identified as benefits for mothers (Fancourt and Perkins, 2017).

- a. **Identity:** Women often experience a difficult transition, from their pre-motherhood identity to their identity as a mother. The group helped mothers connect with their identity, and this was done in a different way for each mother: one wrote her lullaby in Gaelic, another through music, and for another it was through being creative, and that was something she felt she'd lost since she had her baby.

'I wrote mine in Gaelic. That's my first language. Apparently, I didn't really speak English until I was five. So yeah, I was using nostalgia almost, in a way. So the phrases are often used in Gaelic, either to say night night to a wee baby, but yeah...so it was nice sort of carrying that tradition on as well.' (Alness Mother)

'So that's what really attracted me to this project. I suppose as one grows older, and I'm 37 now, at the older end of the spectrum of the mothers in the group, and as you get older, there's less and less time for creativity, as work and caring responsibilities take over. So this was an opportunity to get into a rhythm again, I suppose, of making space for creativity. I found that really helpful and really important. It's an important part of my identity to be creative.' (Alness Mother)

- b. **Sense of achievement:** Mothers felt a sense of achievement, both through developing their skills, and also by having a tangible product that they'd created, through the lullaby and the mobile.

'It's difficult getting time to do something that's creative and not just something dull like painting, like ordinary toddler groups, but actually something that involves your mind and actually involves thinking and producing something really special.' (Alness Mother)

'I always come away from the project feeling really good. I feel like I've had a really good day, even though it's only been a couple of hours, I come away with the feeling like I've achieved something, I've had a really good day. It kind of sets the tone for the rest of the day. And it can kind of last longer than that. It can set the tone for the rest of the week, knowing that you've done something that feels special.' (Alness Mother)

- c. **Having time and headspace for themselves:** Their babies were being looked after in the creche and mothers were able to have a cup of tea and a chat in peace. Mothers commented: *'It's the one break I get all week'* and how important it was to be *'Doing something for me'*. Like identity, it was experienced slightly differently for each mother. Some appreciated having the designated time and headspace to reflect: *'I've found that even though there's always the greatest intentions to put down how you're feeling about motherhood, and your baby, you just sort of get caught up in it all, and I haven't really had time to reflect, or to think about our relationship, or my*



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hopes and aspirations for her. It's been really nice to be able to have a think about that.' whereas for another it was about being able to do something for personal development and growth.

- d. **Distinct from other groups:** Mothers felt it offered something different and special to mother-baby groups they were accessing:
'The benefits, it just feels like an unusual thing to do. There are lots of baby groups, and they all have different functions. The book bug at the library has a different type of set up, and there's even more informal ones, like the toddler and baby groups at the village hall, whereas this is something else. It's structured, and your baby's doing their thing in an unstructured way, and it's space to think about something you might not usually get time to think about.' (Alness Mother)

2. Facilitator Experiences:

The second over-arching theme relates to the experiences of the group facilitators/musicians. These themes all related the first cohort, and a test-and-learn approach was adopted to implement key learning for future groups.

- a. **Challenges of recruitment:** The first sub-theme was about the challenges of recruitment, and the best way to present and describe groups to potential participants:

'Equally I think it's the project that's more creatively intimidating that could put people off. I don't think it's good to present it as too much of a charity work, I don't want anyone to think that we're targeting them because they're needy, or anything that's creatively intimidating. So it has to be presented as fun, and community building, and a bit of support for you, a bit of space for the mother, and a bit of, you know, time off from the kids [laughs].' (Alness Musician)

- b. **Balancing time while maintaining nurturing atmosphere:** Another challenge related to balancing a nurturing, containing atmosphere, with the pressures of needing to write and finish these lullabies by the end of the 12 weeks, while also allowing for the flexibility to accommodate mothers and babies:

'It's a funny thing because there's this aspect of nurturing in the whole experience and then there's kind of a product that we need to create by the end of the project, and then there's the reality of working with mothers of new babies who might be tired, and might show up twenty minutes late because, you know, their kid did a poo right at the door or whatever.' (Alness Musician)

- c. **Benefits for facilitators:** In addition to the many benefits for participating mother, the musicians all felt like they benefitted from being part of The Lullaby Project. These included improving their confidence, developing their skills and facilitating repertoire, and valuing the opportunity to give back.



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'I knew I would learn loads myself, and I have. I was really, really keen for that side of it too. But I felt it would be really nice, in some way, to help bolster the mothers' confidence in singing, using their own voices, in being inventive, maybe helping them with elements of song writing and form and things like that. Helping their confidence more than anything.' (Alness Musician)

'I benefitted, I suppose, to have a little bit more confidence in myself as well....You don't perhaps give enough credence to your own experience, but working with a group of adults like this has really boosted my own confidence and the realisation that I did and do have a lot to bring to groups like that from my own experience of working with other age groups.' (Alness Musician)

3. Group Processes/Key elements of the group

The final theme is the group processes, or the key elements of the group, that helped contribute to its success.

- a. **Relaxed yet structured:** The flexible, yet structured group, supported mothers' social confidence. Babies were looked after by the creche in the same room, but mothers were able to feed or comfort baby if needed. It was a closed, time-limited group, which motivated mothers to attend, and it helped build relationships as they knew it would be the same group of mothers each week. Again, this was something that was different to other mother-baby groups, which generally have a more transient group of mothers.

'The timings weren't stiff, it was alright if your wee one needed a feed, you could just do it.' (Alness Mother)

'Because one of the reasons I'm rubbish at going to mother and toddler groups is because you never know who's going to be there. You could meet someone one week, and, you know, you meet them and start talking to them and you might not see them again for 6 months. But with the Lullaby Project, you're with the same few ladies for the whole thing, so you get more of a chance to actually speak to people, and become close.' (Alness Mother)

- b. **A motherly and a sisterly environment:** Both mothers and facilitators enjoyed being part of an all female group. Mothers really appreciated that the group was very mothering and nurturing, everybody was looking after each other, but it was also sisterly, with a shared recognition of the vulnerability of motherhood, and the sense of all being in it together:

'I've noticed that being a mother, when you begin to be a mother, it's really nice when someone can mother you, and there's something very mothering about the people there. Everyone looks after each other. But not in an overbearing or stifling way. It's in a really supportive, loving and caring, and fun, positive, sisterly environment.' (Alness Mother)



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- c. **A self-directed space:** There were group singing activities at the start, but the second half of the session, everyone moved to sit round a table, and mothers could chat, make their mobiles, write in their reflective journal, and work with the musicians. Mothers could get what they needed out of this space, and didn't feel under pressure that writing the lullabies was the only thing they were allowed to do. If they wanted to chat and bond with other mothers, they could, or if they were too exhausted to chat, and wanted to use that time for quiet reflection, they could do that too. In particular, mothers reported that the craft activities really enhanced reflection and creativity, as they could be thinking while sewing, and it also helped bonding, as they felt conversations flowed better when they were busy with their hands.

'And I like the fact that you do a project, you know, like the mobiles. That's been quite a nice thing to focus on because you can do something with your hands, and still be thinking, or still be talking to people. It's quite a nice little, sort of, you know, sometimes I think if you're a bit distracted when you're talking to people, it actually makes the conversation a bit better.' (Alness Mother)

Online Delivery

Although interviews are still being conducted with cohorts 3 and 4, which were delivered solely online, feedback from the Dingwall cohort suggests that online delivery was received positively. While it may not have been the preferred method of delivery, it had some benefits for mums, particularly those who were living more rurally in the Highlands:

'I think that living in a rural setting, they should do more stuff like that [online]. For people that don't have transport, or are only a one car family, they can still have access to group activities. So I think the in-person one has it's place, but an online one is good for rural Highlands.' (Dingwall mother)

'With the online, I think maybe people who are working more, like trying to fit it in, people doing classes now in other places, it's like a half hour drive to get to Dingwall. So actually fitting in classes online is much easier than in-person now that I'm back at work, so that's definitely helped. And, I think, this is probably a knock-on effect of Covid as well, but the group was a lot smaller online, which felt quite nice.' (Dingwall mother)

Positive Feedback about the Lullaby Project

I've really enjoyed it and it's been a really lovely thing to go to each week. And everyone I've talked to about this has always been really jealous, and said what a nice thing it is to do.

It was better than anti-depressants!



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You have a couple of hours to remember who you are as a person, and not just being mother, boob, whatever. It's nice. It is nice. Yeah, so I would definitely advocate for more of these groups. I think they are necessary.

You have a couple of hours to remember who you are as a person, and not just being mother, boob, whatever. It's nice. It is nice. Yeah, so I would definitely advocate for more of these groups. I think they are necessary.

This has been a really hard year for us as a family, and having something that's positive, that's not connected to anything else, it was very therapeutic, and it was like weekly therapy sessions for me. Logging in, and having the Zoom sessions, and working on the lullaby helped keep me sane. I think so many families have had to go through difficult things in the past year, but I was lacking the sense that I had something to focus on that was purely for me. Even though it's producing something for my children, it was a process for me. It was a lifesaver at times, the Lullaby Project, because when we were having a really bad week, and because we live so rurally, I wouldn't see anyone, apart from my husband and children and the chickens, and there's only so much conversation you can have with a chicken! It really was just the highlight of my week.



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It was a journey of forgiveness, really, for me. And listening to other mothers as well, realising, 'I'm not on my own. I'm not the worst mother in the world.' Not that anyone else was worse, but you sit there and you're so hard on yourself at times. But then you think 'Oh I'm really not. I'm doing alright. We're all doing alright.' And then I found as well that little things that I'd been quite hung up on with the children, I found myself going 'Oh just relax about it!', and suddenly your relationship improves because you're not so hung up about silly things.

I think it's an absolutely brilliant idea, and I wish I'd had it for my eldest kids.

It was absolutely brilliant. My little boy who's two absolutely loved it. Honestly, he kept talking about it all week, he was always 'I want to go to Lullaby Group, can we go to Lullaby group?'

Discussion and Conclusions

No valid conclusions can be drawn about the impact that The Lullaby Project groups on the four pre/post evaluation outcomes: maternal mental wellbeing, social connectedness, parental competence and parental reflective functioning. This is partly due to the small sample size, and partly because the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated social distancing restrictions have had a profound impact on mental health, wellbeing and social isolation. Scores on questionnaires will be more of a reflection on the context for mothers at the time the measures were completed, rather than the impact of the group.

We do know that the need for access to parenting support has been greater than ever during the pandemic, particularly for parents with pre-existing mental health difficulties. A meta-analysis of studies investigating perinatal maternal mental health found that maternal anxiety scores were significantly higher during COVID-19 than in preceding years (Hessami et al.,



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2020). Additionally, parents have had limited access to formal and informal support due to COVID-19 restrictions, with the Institute of Health Visiting (2020) reporting that during lockdown, over 50% of health visitors were redeployed to support other health services in some areas of England. The NSPCC (2020) also reported a 28% increase in calls to their helpline regarding concerns over parental mental health. The Lullaby Project may have provided parents with invaluable access to a support network during COVID-19 restrictions, and the opportunity to have some time for themselves away from their caring responsibilities which they may not have had otherwise. Without having a control comparison, we cannot speculate as to what mothers' scores may have been had they not had access to the group.

Qualitative feedback from interviews shows mothers both enjoyed participating in the group and felt they had benefitted from it. These benefits included connecting with their identity, feeling a sense of accomplishment and having time and headspace for themselves. Musicians also felt they benefitted, through improved their confidence, the opportunity to develop their skills and facilitating repertoire, and by having the opportunity to give back.

While online delivery was a necessity due to COVID-19 restrictions, it was received positively by both mothers and musicians. Mothers reported some benefits for participating online, and in future online delivery may be beneficial for parents who may have limited access to in-person groups, for example, parents located in remote and rural areas, or those with work or caring responsibilities.

In conclusion, while qualitative findings clearly demonstrate that the Lullaby Project had a positive impact on both mothers and musicians, no conclusions can be drawn about the impact of the group on the quantitative outcomes assessed in this evaluation: maternal mental wellbeing, social connectedness, parental competence and parental reflective functioning. Future research should use a larger sample of participants and consider use of control comparison in order to be able to make valid causal attributions about the impact of the group.

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