

# Talk, Learn, Do evaluation: a financial capability intervention for parents

Findings from 6- and  
12-month impact evaluation  
and process evaluation

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IFF Research and Belmana  
Consulting



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## Executive summary

- Talk, Learn, Do (TLD) is a parenting intervention that was co-designed with parenting practitioners and integrated into existing parenting programmes (Family Links Nurturing Programme and Incredible Years) with the objective of helping parents improve their children's financial capability.
- The Money Advice Service piloted this throughout Wales between January 2016 and May 2017, informed by evidence showing the importance of parents in children's development of financial capability, and seeking to build an increased evidence base for how to support parents in this role.
- The evaluation was co-funded by Big Lottery Wales. The evaluation of TLD comprised of a process and impact evaluation.
- The impact evaluation aimed to measure the impact of TLD on parents' attitudes and behaviours through surveys with parents at various stages. Further qualitative visits were also conducted to understand the longer-term impacts.
- Six months after delivery, the impact evaluation identified that TLD was likely to have had a positive impact on a number of outcomes.
- Many of these impacts remain even at the 12-month follow up. Outcomes where an impact is shown 12 months after delivery are;
  - **parents' knowledge on how to talk to their children about money**
  - **parents reporting their children's ability to handle and manage money**
    - parents giving their child pocket money,
    - children's ability to manage their own day-to-day money,
    - children's ability to recognise the difference between 'want' and 'need',
    - children's ability to save up for a short period of time for something they want,
    - children understanding why their parents are saying 'no' to buying something
  - **parents believing they should have conversations about money and give children experience of money at younger ages**
    - talk about the importance of saving,
    - involve them in family spending discussions and
    - manage their own day-to-day money
  - **parents' discussions with their children** regarding the fact that companies try to sell them things in adverts and some TV programmes
  - **parents' over-indebtedness**

- There were a few areas where TLD did not have a significant impact. These outcomes included;
  - parents' knowledge of what age to talk to their child about money
  - children's ability to explain choices they make when they spend money
  - the age at which to: talk about how money is used in the household, explain the difference between the price and value of things, give child own spending money or allowance, involve child in basic family spending decisions, give them responsibility to save up for something they want and encourage them to think about what to do with their money
  - the proportion of parents who have family agreements about money in place
  - parents' saving behaviour
- The extended qualitative visits with TLD families provide further evidence that families are experiencing long-term impact from TLD on a number of outcomes 12-18 months after attending the parenting programme.
- The process evaluation aimed to understand how TLD was being delivered and how it could be improved through a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods.
- The process evaluation showed that **TLD was extremely well received by both practitioners and parents**. Both groups highly recommend the session as it fits well with the current parenting programmes and is relevant to the audience. Practitioners praised the materials and felt it was straightforward to deliver. Though practitioners think all activities are worth doing, the main challenge that should be considered in any future delivery is the length of the TLD session itself and being able to fit this extra session into existing programmes.
- Overall, the findings from this evaluation are overwhelmingly positive and show that TLD has been effective in meeting its objectives. These positive findings will add substantially to the financial capability evidence base and help fill many of the current gaps, particularly for interventions targeting families.
- The Money Advice Service will use these findings to inform their future Children and Young People Financial Capability Commissioning Plan and policy influencing activity, including exploring opportunities to build 'Talk Learn Do' into wider support for parents and families across the UK.

## Background to Talk, Learn, Do (TLD)

The Money Advice Service was set up in 2010 to help improve people's money management and led to the development of the Financial Capability Strategy for the UK, which sets out how the Money Advice Service and a wide range of organisations aim to improve people's ability to manage their money. A key priority for the Strategy is ensuring that children and young people receive well-delivered financial education so that they are equipped with the skills to manage their money well and handle periods of financial difficulty in adulthood<sup>1</sup>.

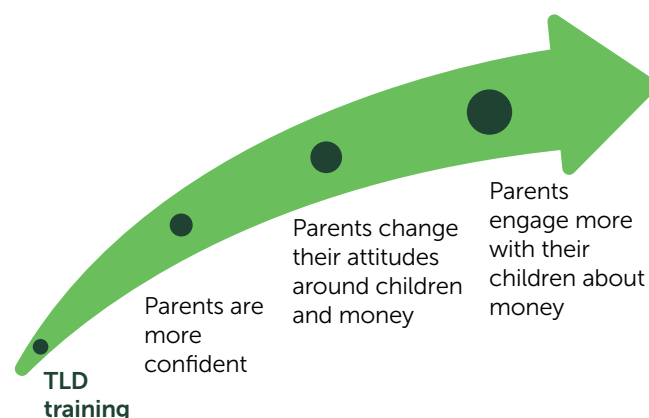
Research conducted by the Money Advice Service and others has highlighted the importance of parents in children's development of financial capability. Parents are listed by the majority of children and young people as their key source of learning about money, and the place they would go to for advice about money. What parents do matters – their own behaviour around money, and how they talk to and teach their children about money has an effect on what children learn and understand.

The Money Advice Service is currently developing a Children and Young People Commissioning Plan to help meet these objectives. This will set out how resources can be best targeted to meet the needs of children and young people, ultimately ensuring all children and young people receive a meaningful financial education. The learning from this evaluation will feed into an Evidence Analysis which will be one of the components informing the upcoming Commissioning Plan. The findings will inform recommendations around the potential further testing of parent and family-focused approaches, as well as policy influencing activity, encouraging consideration of findings from Talk Learn Do in wider family and parenting support across the UK.

Between January 2016 and May 2017, the Money Advice Service piloted Talk, Learn, Do (TLD) in Wales, a 2-hour parenting intervention intended to encourage parents of 3-11-year olds to talk to their children about money and create opportunities for their children to experience managing money. The overall aim of TLD was to help parents improve children's financial capability so that they are equipped to manage their money well in the future. It intended to fill a significant gap in evidence around what might work to support parents in helping children learn about money in the home.

Figure 0.1 below shows the chain of impacts which TLD aimed to achieve, setting out the Theory of Change following attending TLD. This demonstrates the three aspects of the parent-child interaction that TLD focuses on.

**Figure 0.1: Chain of impacts**



The evaluation of TLD was part funded by Big Lottery Wales and was delivered throughout Wales<sup>2</sup>, with 14 local authorities delivering a total of 154 TLD sessions during the pilot<sup>3</sup>. TLD was primarily delivered via two 10-week parenting programmes: Incredible Years (IY) and the Family Links Nurturing Programme (FLNP). These programmes were chosen as they have a similar ethos to TLD in that they aim to improve parent and child outcomes and relationships, focus on attitudinal development and target parents with children of the relevant age range.

This final evaluation report presents the findings of both the process and the impact evaluation which was conducted by IFF Research and Belmana Consulting, with the impact evaluation covering 6- and 12-month survey findings as well as the extended qualitative visits.

<sup>1</sup> Financial Capability Strategy for the UK

<sup>2</sup> 21 out of 22 local authorities in Wales took part in the evaluation, the one local authority (Gwynedd) that did not take part were originally meant to be part of the control group but were unable to conduct this in the evaluation timeframe.

<sup>3</sup> The remaining 7 local authorities did not deliver the TLD session and were included in the evaluation as part of the control group (see Section 1.1 for further information).

## Methodology

Firstly, the process evaluation aimed to understand how TLD is being delivered on the ground and understand how delivery could be improved in any future delivery. There were multiple aspects to this part of the evaluation throughout the early stages of the pilot:

- 10 in-depth interviews were conducted with stakeholders involved in the design and delivery of TLD;
- 15 in-depth interviews with practitioners that delivered TLD sessions;
- 20 in-depth interviews with parents that had attended a session in Autumn 2016;
- Eight observations of TLD being delivered;
- Training evaluation forms completed by practitioners that attended a TLD training session;
- Practitioner feedback survey;
- Collection of practitioner views at two celebration events.

These findings fed into key learnings from the pilot to help inform any future delivery.

The impact evaluation aimed to measure the impact of the TLD module on parents' attitudes and behaviours by comparing any differences in the levels of change in views of parents who attended a TLD module (henceforth referred to as the 'TLD group') with a similar group of parents who attended the parenting programme but did not attend a TLD module, as it was not incorporated into the course they attended (the 'control group'). They were surveyed at three key points of the evaluation:

- A paper survey at the start of their parenting programme (the 'pre-survey');
- A telephone survey six months after their parenting programme finished (the '6-month survey');
- A telephone survey 12 months after their parenting programme finished (the '12-month survey').

A total of 238 parents completed both the pre-survey and 12-month survey: 138 interviews were with the TLD group, and 130 with the control group. Comparing survey responses indicates whether there are any **differences in the levels of change** between the two groups (a difference-in-difference approach). For instance, if the views of the TLD group had changed considerably between the pre-survey and 6-month

or 12-month survey, and the views of the control group had not, this would indicate that the TLD course content had had a positive impact. This approach accounts for any changes in the responses of either the control or the TLD group over the research period which may have been for reasons other than attending TLD. For instance, parents may have started doing something differently after attending the wider parenting programme, in response to their child getting older, or as a result of other campaigns in Wales.

Parents were also sent an online, picture-based survey for 3-11-year olds to complete, though no significant differences between groups were found. This is possibly because there has not been enough time for any impact to be realised or because the sizes of the samples are relatively small. In addition, the questions used in the child survey had to be quite simple, therefore may have been potentially too blunt to pick up nuances of impact.

The final stage of the evaluation comprised of 10 extended qualitative visits with families 12 to 18 months after they had attended TLD. This was made up of:

- In-depth interviews with parents;
- Activities with their children to understand their relationship and understanding of money;
- Ethnographic observed activity such as a family shopping trip or the giving and receiving of pocket money.

The aim of this was to understand longer-term impacts and changes families have made since attending TLD. They also helped to shed light on the likely impact TLD had on the children in the family following limited evidence from the child survey.

There were a handful of methodological challenges that came with this evaluation. These include;

- Other factors separate to TLD may have led to some of the behavioural changes observed;
- Other family members or adults may also impact the financial socialisation of children, rather than just the parent who attended TLD;
- Sample attrition may have been a result of multiple surveys over a period of time.

In order to overcome these where possible, questions in the survey were added to understand if others were involved in the child's upbringing and response to multiple surveys was incentivised to reduce attrition. Further information on this is covered in chapter 1.

## Key findings

### Delivering Talk, Learn, Do: Findings from the process evaluation (Chapter 2)

The process evaluation aimed to understand how both practitioners and parents found the TLD content. Practitioners involved in the delivery of TLD were very positive; most felt that the content of the session is easily understood by parents they work with (98%) and that it is relevant to the parents they worked with (96%). A large majority of practitioners (92%) would recommend the module to other practitioners and 88% would recommend it to other parents that they work with.

Parent feedback mirrored these findings; 99% would recommend the course to other parents who want to talk to their children about money, 97% found the session useful and 93% stated that they learned something (combined 'a lot' or 'a little').

Both practitioners and parents said the session was a good fit with the rest of the parenting programme. Almost all practitioners (96%) felt it was a good fit with the rest of IY and FNLP and this aligned with feedback from the qualitative interviews.

*"I think it slotted in like it was designed to be there."*

**Parent, South Wales**

Feedback from practitioners highlighted that the TLD module was easy to deliver using the materials given and that it was straightforward to prepare.

*"The fact it was all there in the file scripted with the sheets and everything, that was brilliant."*

**Practitioner, South Wales**

Practitioners also felt that the delivery of TLD within a group that had already built relationships with each other and the practitioner in previous weeks was appropriate and worked well for the discussions around money.

The only negative feedback was that practitioners sometimes found it difficult to cover all the content in two hours. Despite this, practitioners were reluctant to cut anything out, instead they employed techniques such as reducing the number of statements discussed within an activity rather than removing any key activities or content.

### The parents taking part in the evaluation (Chapter 3)

There were very few differences between the control group and TLD groups of parents in terms of characteristics, indicating that the comparisons can be made with confidence.

However, there are indications that both of these groups are more deprived than the general population in Wales. This is unsurprising as practitioners highlighted they typically worked with parents who experienced greater level of disadvantage, such as survivors of domestic violence, those with special educational needs or disabilities, teenage parents and those with substance misuse problems. Often, parents are referred to the programme by social services or health visitors, which may also explain why they tended to be more disadvantaged than the general population.

*"It's quite challenging as we work with lots of vulnerable families."*

**Practitioner, North Wales**

Underlining this, parents attending parenting programmes in Wales were less likely to be in full time employment, have a lower income and be single parent families than those in the general population.

### Parents' awareness of their role in supporting their children's financial capability (Chapter 4)

The TLD pilot aims to help parents understand their own role in supporting their children's financial capability and encourage parents to have the confidence to actively teach their children about money.

The evaluation found **that parents' knowledge on how to talk to their children about money increased** after attending the TLD session. At the 12-month survey, there is an additional 14 percentage point change compared to the control group, likely as a result of TLD.

This finding was echoed in the qualitative visits. Parents reported that the main 'take out' from the TLD session was that it is 'never too early' to talk to your children about money. The session was described as a real eye-opener in terms of when you can talk to children about money. The Money Discussions activity was often recalled as the specific part of the session contributing to this change in attitude.

*"I was brought up with the attitude of 'you don't discuss money in front of kids', so that was very different for me."*

**Parent, South Wales**



At the six-month point a difference was also observed in parents agreeing that they know what age they should talk to their children about money and that they can affect how their children behave around money when they grow up, however, this change was no longer apparent at the 12-month point.

## Children's ability to handle and manage money (Chapter 5)

One of the key aims of the TLD session is to encourage parents to give their child opportunities to handle money, for example by giving them pocket money. It also aimed to help parents increase their child's understanding of money, specifically including wants and needs and why parents say 'no' to buying things.

The evaluation found that TLD has **increased the prevalence of parents giving their children pocket money**. Among TLD parents, there was an additional seven percentage point increase compared to the control group, likely to be as a result of TLD.

There was a positive reception to the idea of giving pocket money in the qualitative visits. All had either started giving their child pocket money or were considering doing so in the future. A variety of approaches were taken to giving pocket money depending on what suited the family best, with some directly referencing the ideas given in TLD, such as receiving pocket money in return for completion of chores and being given pocket money to a particular schedule.

*"It was a big lesson for both of us really and that's when we started introducing the pocket money, and things changed with our finances and it was because of that... if it wasn't for that (TLD) I don't think we would have introduced the pocket money."*

Parent, North Wales

The evaluation found a **positive impact of TLD on children's ability to manage their own day-to-day money or allowance and recognise the difference between wants and needs**. There was an additional 16 percentage point increase for TLD parents compared to the control group in the proportion who stated that their child could manage their own day to day money or allowance (definitely or sometimes). This is likely to be a result of TLD.

There was an additional 19 percentage point increase for TLD parents compared to the control group stating that their child was able to recognise the difference between something they want (e.g. sweets), and something they need (e.g. food), either sometimes or definitely. This is likely as a result of TLD.

In the children's activity in the qualitative visits, where they had to imagine sending someone to the moon, children of parents who had attended TLD courses demonstrated a good understanding of wants and needs. The majority of children could point out that key needs include food, water and shelter, whereas, you would not need an iPad or television.

*"If you were poor, you wouldn't need electricity as you could just have a shed, you wouldn't need a big house, just somewhere to shelter and store food and water."*

Child, North Wales

The evaluation also found a **positive impact of TLD on those who felt their child definitely understands why they were saying 'no' to buying something and is definitely able to save up for a short period of time to buy something they want**. This is an additional 14 percentage point change in TLD parents who felt their child definitely understand why they were saying 'no' to buying something compared with the control group, likely as a result of TLD.

The qualitative visits provided evidence for parents having increased confidence to say 'no' to buying things since the session. This included using techniques from the Pester Power activity to improve shopping trip experiences by getting their children more involved.

There was an additional 10 percentage point increase compared to the control group, in the proportion of TLD parents who stated their child could definitely save up for a short period of time to buy something they want.

The qualitative work also showed that children of the TLD parents were able to save up for a short time to buy something they want, either saving birthday money or pocket money.

*"I would save it to get something better and more expensive."*

Child, South Wales

However, there was no impact of TLD on children's ability to explain the choices they make when spending money.

## Having conversations about money at a younger age (Chapter 6)

Another key aim of TLD is to encourage parents to start talking frequently to their children about money and to encourage them to start these conversations while children are still young. At each survey, parents were asked at which age they felt it was appropriate to start talking to their children about certain topics. Analysis focuses on the proportion of parents that reduced the age at which they felt it is appropriate to talk about certain topics.

The evidence suggests that TLD had a **positive impact with regard to when parents think they can start teaching children about the importance of saving.**

Among TLD parents, this is an additional 14 percentage point increase in the proportion of parents reporting a younger age than in the control group, likely as a result of TLD.

Similarly, **perceptions of when children can start to manage their own day-to-day money without supervision is likely to be positively impacted by TLD.**

Among TLD parents, this is an additional 13 percentage point increase in TLD parents reporting a younger age than the control group, likely as a result of TLD.

The increase in the prevalence of pocket money helped to prompt discussions regarding managing money and the importance of saving, with the qualitative work showing evidence for increased discussions around all these various aspects as they link together.

TLD parents were also **more likely to reduce the age that they felt it was appropriate to include children in basic family spending discussions.** This is an additional 12 percentage point increase in TLD parents reporting a younger age than the control group, likely as a result of TLD. Parents interviewed in the qualitative stage also mentioned how they are now more open to involving their children in family spending discussions.

TLD did not have an impact on the age at which parents stated that they should start:

- Discussing how money is used in the household with their children;
- Explaining difference between price and value of things;
- Involve their child in basic family saving decisions;
- Give their child the responsibility to save up for something they want;
- Encourage their child to think about what they do with money.
- Give their child their own spending money or allowance;

## Frequency of money-related discussions (Chapter 7)

TLD aimed to increase the frequency of discussions regarding money topics within families in order to improve children's understanding.

The frequency of discussions around the **fact that companies try to sell them things through adverts has increased among TLD parents** more than control group parents. This is an additional 14 percentage point change compared to the control group, likely as a result of TLD.

Evidence from the qualitative interviews supports that TLD has led to more frequent discussions around money. Families gave examples of discussing where money in the household comes from and how decisions are made about spending.

A key finding from these interviews was also an increase in parents using cash, rather than cards, in order to make the use of money more tangible for their children. There is potentially more the course can do to help parents teach their children about other forms of spending money.

Between the pre and 12-month survey, no impact of TLD was observed with regards to the proportion of families who have agreements in place regarding money, the frequency of discussions around where money in the household comes from, choices they make when spending money and how to save up for something they want.

## Parents' attitudes towards money (Chapter 8)

TLD does not primarily focus on parents' own attitudes to money however, findings from the evaluation suggest that TLD has also had a positive impact here.

There was **an additional 15 percentage point change in the proportion of TLD parents who are overindebted** compared to the change in the control group, likely as a result of TLD.

*"I don't think we did have conversations about money about finances before the session. I think we just used to stick everything on the credit card. It's just too easy to stick a holiday on a credit card"*

Parent, North Wales

Examples from the qualitative work are given of TLD encouraging parents to face up to the debt they were in, make changes to their own spending behaviour and engage more in exactly what money is going in and out of the household account. Some parents also mentioned how they now proactively discuss money with other members of the household.

*"A few years ago, I would hide letter and bills and that doesn't help, now I share more with friends and family."*

**Parent, South Wales**

There was also no observed impact of TLD on parents' saving behaviours.

## Conclusions and delivery implications

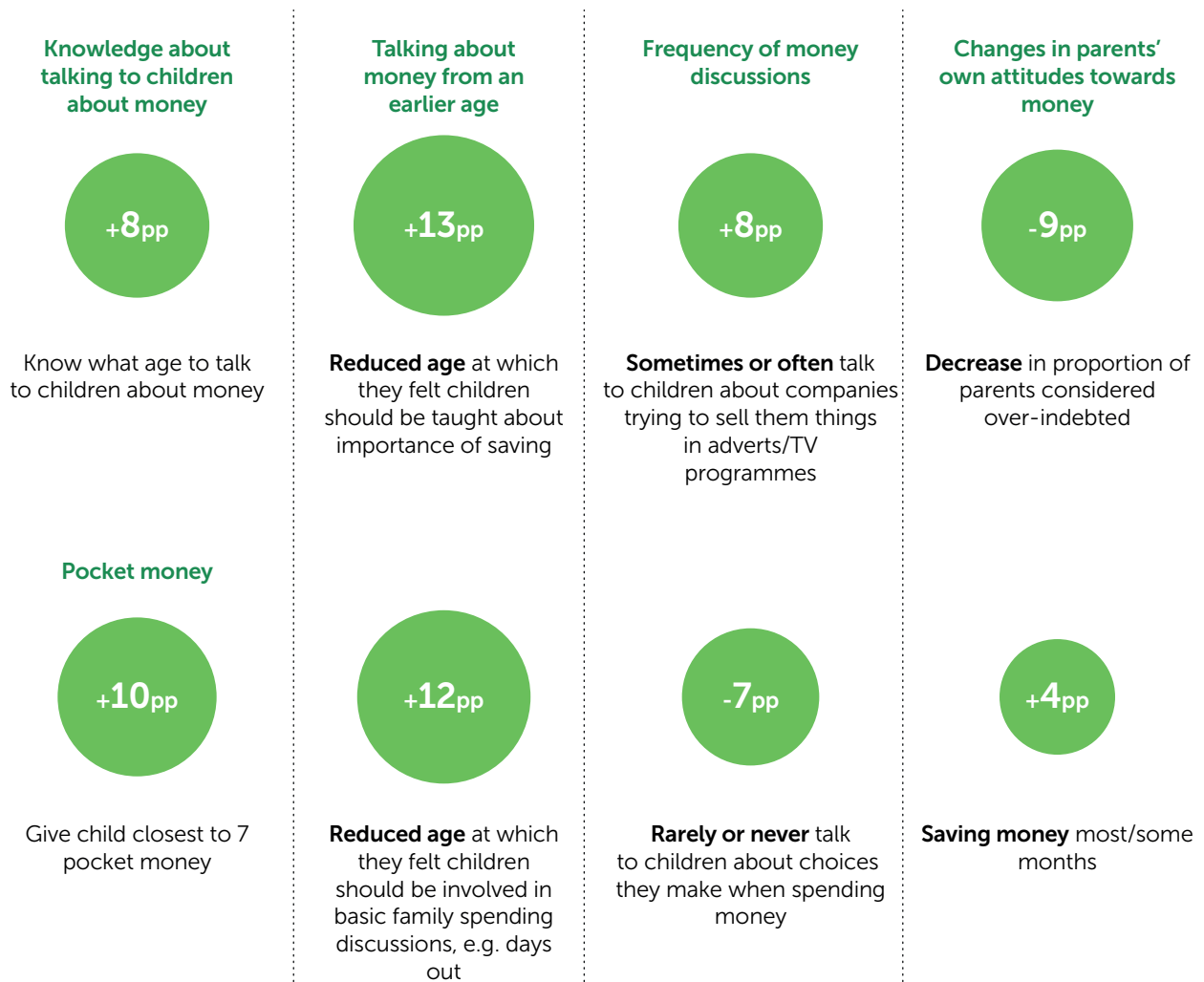
Overall, the evaluation provides evidence that TLD has been very positively received, and effective in its aims. The figures overleaf summarise the impacts it has had. For any future delivery, there are some key points to consider:

- TLD has been very well received by practitioners and getting them on board is key to its success;
- TLD has been shown as very effective embedded in specific parenting programmes across Wales, with both the trusted relationship with the practitioner and the group setting flagged as important in delivery. There is potential that the same results may not be present in other settings, and this warrants further testing;
- However, no differences in outcomes were observed between the two different parenting programmes, indicating there would be a similar positive reception if future delivery was aimed at a similar audience in a similar context of a formal programme;
- There may be some issues integrating TLD into some settings due to the length of the material, and that it required an extra week to be added to the formalised multi-week parenting programmes;
- TLD content could potentially be strengthened to address the few outcomes where impact has not been seen and to equip parents for cashless conversations with their children.

The Money Advice Service are considering policy and commissioning implications of this evaluation of TLD, and will be publishing a paper to accompany this report setting out their conclusions. Findings from this evaluation will inform the Money Advice Service's future CYP Financial Capability Commissioning Plan, which will include consideration of the possible future roll-out or further testing of approaches focused on parents, and influencing policy focused on wider support for parents and families.

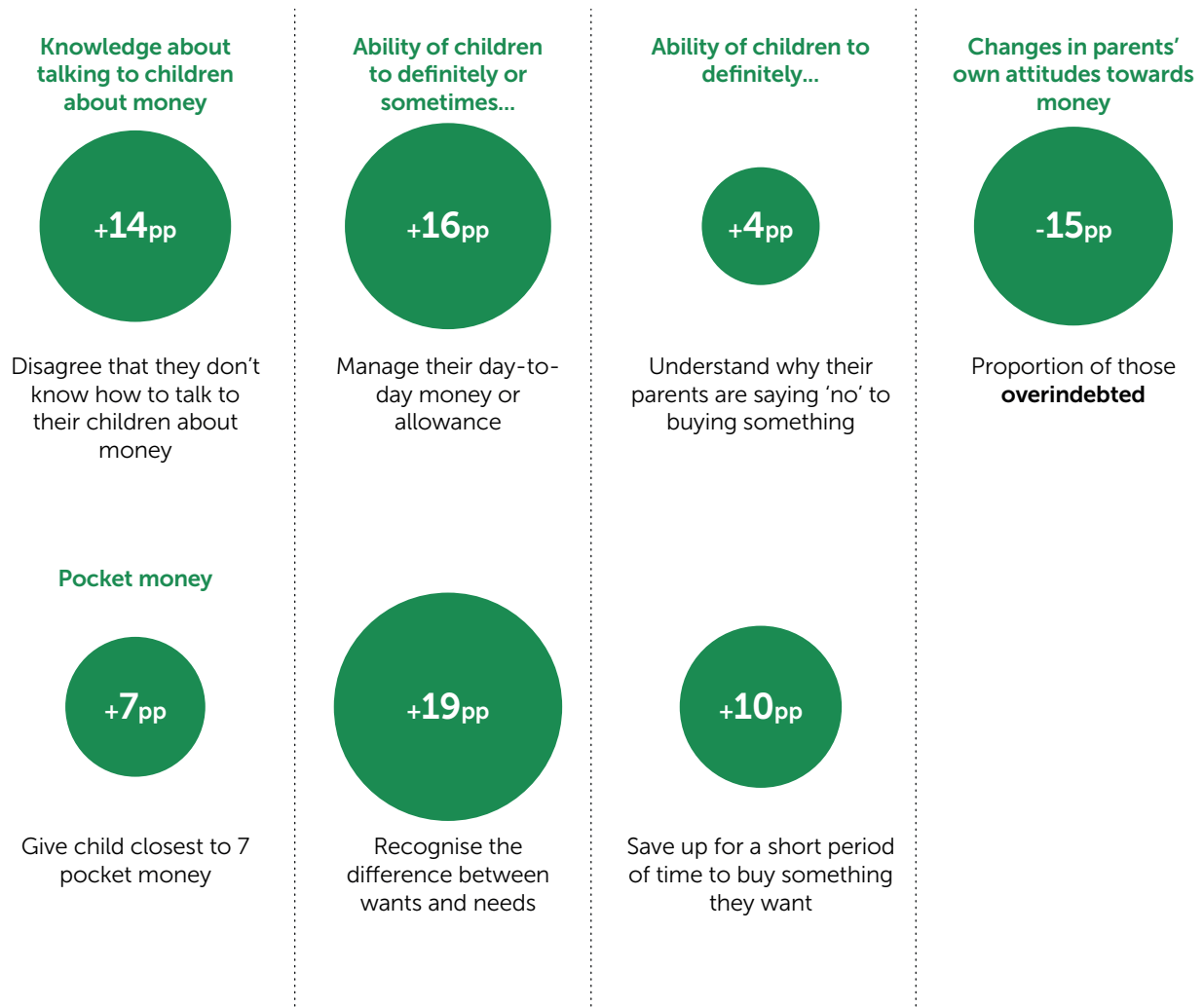
Figure 0.2 below summarises the impacts that were prevalent at the 6-month survey, amongst participants who took part in both the pre-survey and the 6-month survey. Figure 0.3 and 0.4 then summarise the impacts of TLD at the 12-month point.

Figure 0.2: Summary of changes observed among TLD parents after 6 months overall

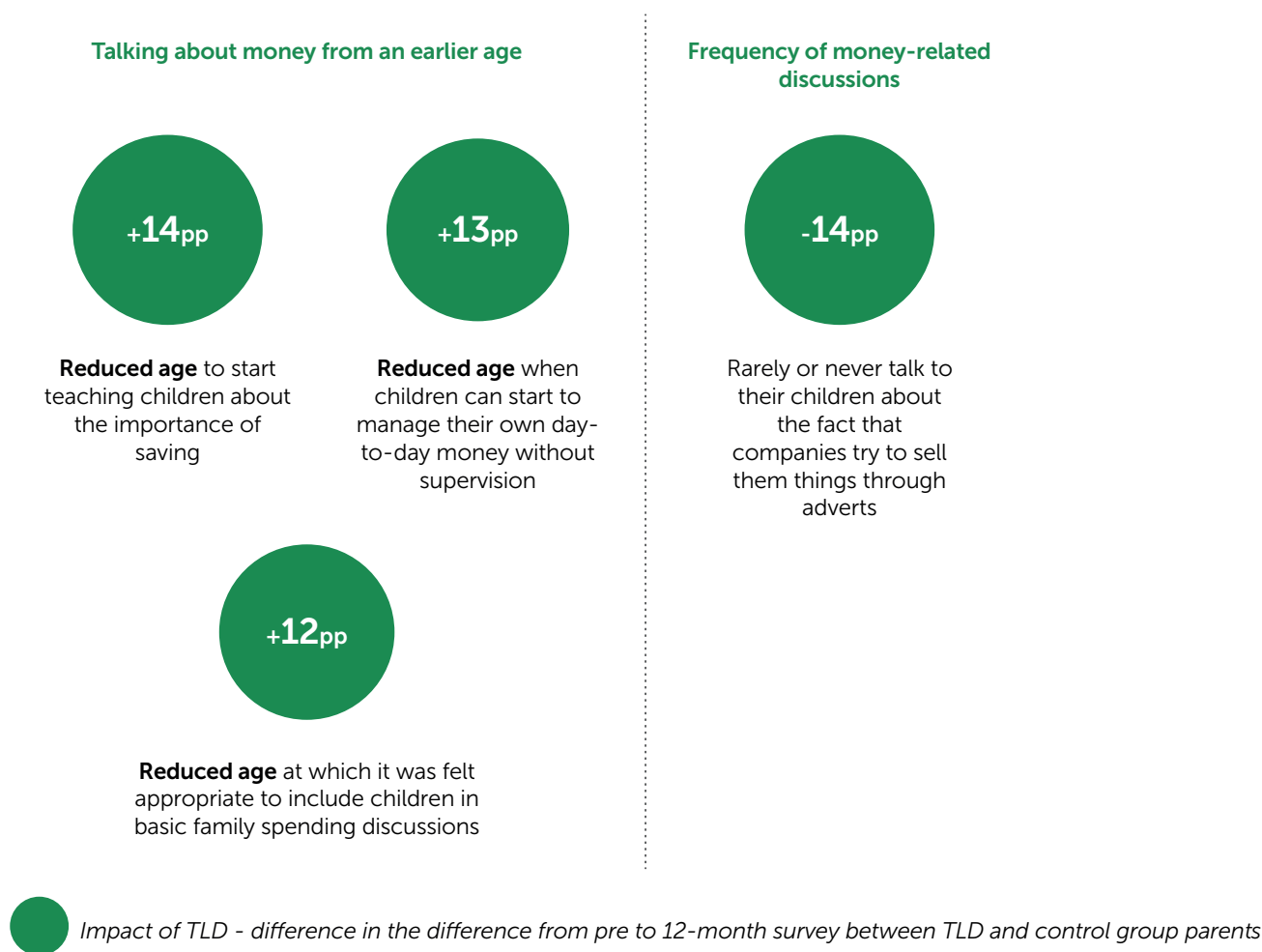


Impact of TLD - difference in the difference from pre to 6-month survey between TLD and control group parents

Figure 0.3: Summary of changes observed among TLD parents after 12 months overall part 1



Impact of TLD - difference in the difference from pre to 12-month survey between TLD and control group parents

**Figure 0.4: Summary of changes observed among TLD parents after 12 months overall part 2**

# Introduction

# 1. Introduction

The Money Advice Service was set up in 2010 to help improve people's money management and led to the development of the Financial Capability Strategy for the UK which sets out how the Money Advice Service and a wide range of organisations aim to improve people's ability to manage their money<sup>4</sup>. A key priority for the Strategy is ensuring that children and young people receive well-delivered financial education so that they are equipped with the skills to manage their money well and handle periods of financial difficulty in adulthood.

The Money Advice Service is currently developing a Children and Young People Commissioning Plan to help meet these objectives. This will set out how resources can be best targeted to meet the needs of children and young people, ultimately ensuring all children and young people receive a meaningful financial education. The learnings from this evaluation will feed into an Evidence Analysis which will be one of the components informing the upcoming Commissioning Plan.

Between January 2016 and May 2017, the Money Advice Service piloted Talk, Learn, Do (TLD) in Wales, a 2-hour parenting intervention intended to encourage parents of 3-11-year olds to talk to their children about money and create opportunities for them to experience managing money. The overall aim of TLD was to help parents teach good money management skills to improve children's financial capability in the future. The TLD module was designed in partnership with Quaker Social Action (QSA), and Children in Wales assisted with the delivery of TLD by identifying and recruiting suitable parenting programme partners to take part in the pilot.

The evaluation of TLD was part funded by Big Lottery Wales and was delivered throughout Wales<sup>5</sup>, with 14 local authorities delivering a total of 154 TLD sessions during the pilot<sup>6</sup>. TLD was primarily delivered via two 10-week parenting programmes: Incredible Years (IY) and the Family Links Nurturing Programme (FLNP).

These two parenting programmes were specifically chosen for a number of reasons:

- These programmes are widely delivered across Wales, and so not limited to particular areas;
- They have a similar ethos to TLD in that they aim to improve parent and child outcomes and relationships;

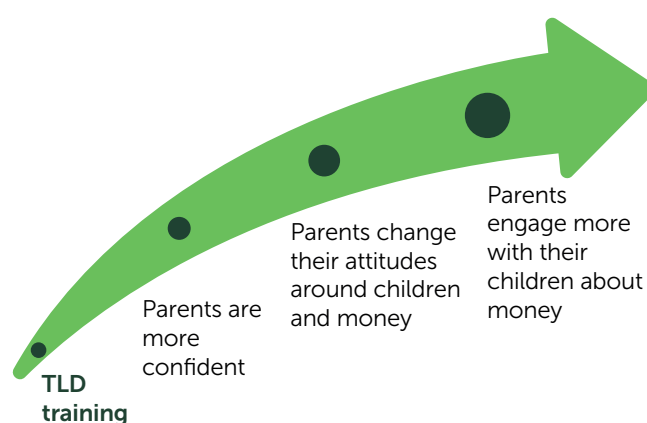
- They are, much like TLD aims to be, focused on attitudinal and non-cognitive skill development;
- They target parents with children aged 3-7 years old, which is the right age for TLD (aimed at 3-11 years old);

## 1.1 Background to Talk, Learn, Do (TLD)

TLD aims to increase financial capability in children by equipping parents with the skills needed to help them develop this. Figure 1.1 presents a summary of the Theory of Change and highlights the three aspects of the parent-child interaction which the intervention focuses on:

- To make parents more confident in their ability to talk to their children about money.
- To change attitudes, challenging any pre-conceptions about how to engage with children about money, or challenging the misconception that children are too young to understand financial topics.
- Motivate parents to change their behaviour, engaging more with their children about money and doing so at younger ages.

Figure 1.1: Chain of impacts



<sup>4</sup> Financial Capability Strategy for the UK

<sup>5</sup> 21 out of 22 local authorities in Wales took part in the evaluation, the one local authority (Gwynedd) that did not take part were originally meant to be part of the control group but were unable to conduct this in the evaluation timeframe.

<sup>6</sup> The remaining local authorities did not deliver the TLD session and were included in the evaluation as part of the control group (see Section 1.1 for further information).



TLD was designed in response to the increasing body of evidence highlighting that adult financial capability is affected by what has been seen, experienced and learnt through childhood:

- The development of financial attitudes and behaviour begins at a very young age<sup>7</sup>, supporting the findings of the Money Advice Service's *Habit formation study*;
- As shown in research by the Money Advice Service from 2013, *Habit formation and learning in young children*, parents and carers play a crucial role in the development<sup>8</sup> of a child's financial behaviour and can be shaped between the ages of three and seven years old;
- Analysis of the 2016 UK Children and Young People's Financial Capability Survey<sup>9</sup>, highlighted the importance of parents having money conversations with their children, giving their children pocket money, giving children responsibility for spending decisions and setting rules about money. These and other aspects of parents' attitudes and behaviour with their children were shown to be linked to the child's own financial capability<sup>10</sup>;
- The role of parents and carers in children developing financial capability - often called financial socialisation – is aimed at "acquiring and developing values, attitudes, standards, norms, knowledge and behaviours that contribute to the financial viability and well-being of an individual"<sup>11</sup>;
- A formal development approach has linked financial socialisation with the type of (cognitive) abilities that children display as they grow up<sup>12</sup>. Friedline<sup>13</sup> aligns the age when a child might be able to save using a savings account with their cognitive, social and linguistic development, concluding that children are developmentally capable of saving by the time they are five or six years old;
- Drever et al<sup>14</sup>, reviewing developmental psychology, consumer finance and education literature found that financial socialisation is key for elementary (ages 3-5) and middle (ages 6-12) school, specifically in the elementary phase there is a rapid development in children's ability to manage the flow of information in their day-to-day lives, keeping distractions at bay. This therefore has indirect impacts on financial capability;
- Socialisation factors are key influences on financial knowledge and skills<sup>15</sup>; receipt of pocket money is effective in socialisation, and the family context is important. Pliner et al (1996) and Lewis and Scott (2000) find the knowledge about the value of products was higher amongst those receiving pocket money<sup>16</sup>;
- Parents providing a model of sensible and sustainable financial behaviours provide both an immediate and longer-term impact of children's economic behaviours;
- There is a continuity in the behaviours of children over their lifespan with those able to control self-gratification as a five-year-old then having higher self-control as teenagers.

Since TLD began, the Money Advice Service has produced a summary 'Needs Analysis' document summarising these and wider findings about the importance of parents in children's financial capability, highlighting amongst other things the strong direct connection between children receiving money and their financial behaviour, and the importance of parental role-modelling, including talking to children about money<sup>17</sup>.

7 OECD (2014) *Financial Education for Youth: The Role of Schools*, OECD Publishing.

8 Money Advice Service; Whitebread, D. and Bingham, S. (2013). *Habit Formation and Learning in Young Children*. Available at: [www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/corporate/research](http://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/corporate/research)

9 Money Advice Service (2017) *Financial Capability of Children, Young People and their Parents in the UK 2016* Available at: [www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/corporate/research](http://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/corporate/research)

10 Money Advice Service; Griffiths, A. and Ghezelayagh, S. (2018) "*Children and Young People and Financial Capability: Needs Analysis*" Available at: [www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/corporate/research](http://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/corporate/research)

11 Danes, Sharon (1998) "Parental Perceptions of Children's Financial Socialization", *Financial Counselling and Planning*, 5: 127-149.

12 Friedline, Terri (2015) "A Development Perspective on Children's Economic Agency", *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 49(1): 39-68.

13 Friedline, Terri (2015) "A Development Perspective on Children's Economic Agency", *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 49(1): 39-68.

14 Drever, A., E. Odders-White, C. Kalish, N. Else-Quest, E. Hoagland and E. Nelms (2015) "Foundations of Financial Well-Being: Insights into the Role of Executive Function, Financial Socialization and Experience-Based Learning in Childhood and Youth", *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 49(1): 13-36.

15 Beutler, I., and Dickson, L. (2008). Consumer economic socialization. In J. J. Xiao (Ed.), *Handbook of consumer finance research* (pp. 83–102). New York: Springer; Lunt, P., and Furnham, A. (1996). *Economic socialization: The economic beliefs and behaviours of young people*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar.

16 Pliner, P., Freedman, J., Abramovitch, R., and Drake, P. (1996). Children as consumers: In the laboratory and beyond. In P. Lunt, & A. Furnham (Eds.), *Economic socialization* (pp. 35-46). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar; Lewis, A., and Scott, A. (2000). The economic awareness, knowledge and pocket money practices of a sample of UK adolescents: A study of economic socialization and economic psychology. *Children's Social and Economics Education*, vol. 4, pp. 34-46.

17 Money Advice Service; Griffiths, A. and Ghezelayagh, S. (2018) "*Children and Young People and Financial Capability: Needs Analysis*"

These findings together offer suggestions as to the most effective way an intervention can be designed to improve financial capability:

- Ensure that the intervention reaches children of an early age, perhaps as early as four years or younger<sup>18</sup>, although children's financial understanding is unsophisticated, they can understand various financial concepts at a very early age;
- Develop an intervention that involves parents as an intermediary in developing their children's financial capability;
- Focus aspects of the intervention on; having money conversations, the importance of pocket money, giving children responsibility handling money and getting children involved in spending decisions.

Talk, Learn, Do, sought to use this evidence to inform an intervention that would help parents and children and support development of an increasing evidence base, gathering new learning about what is effective in supporting parents in this area.

## 1.2 Content of TLD

TLD seeks to build financial capability in children via their parents. TLD is designed to build knowledge alongside opportunities to practice and develop good financial behaviours, targeting these on parents of young children.

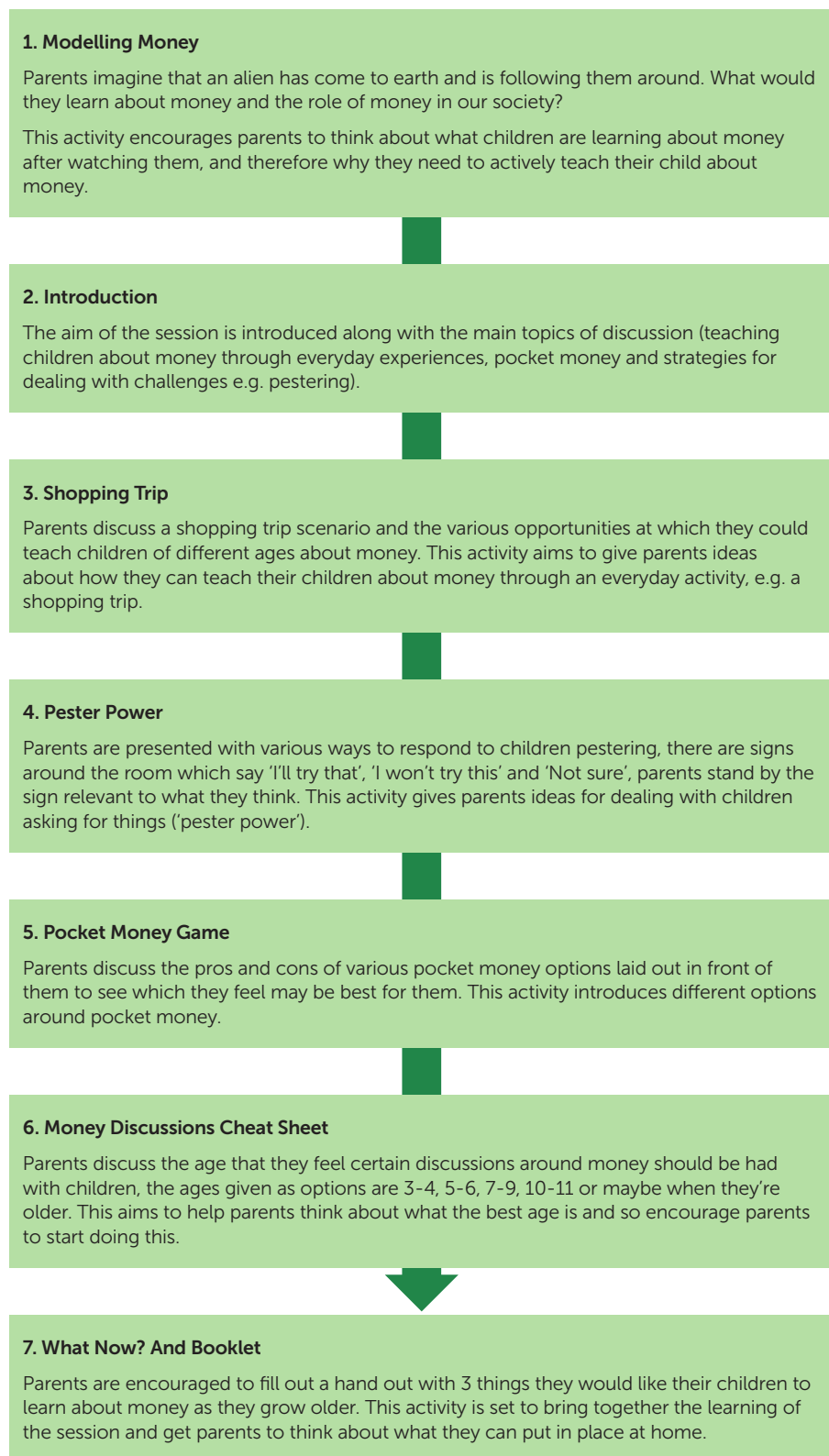
The course was made up of a number of different activities designed to meet the intervention objectives. The outline of the course content is set out overleaf, and throughout the report, activities are detailed further in relevant outcome chapters.



Available at: [www.moneyadvice.service.org.uk/en/corporate/research](http://www.moneyadvice.service.org.uk/en/corporate/research)

18 Harrah, J., and Friedmann, M. (1990). Economic socialization in children in a midwestern American community. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, vol. 11, no. 4, pp. 495-513; Holden, K., Kalish, C., Scheinholtz, L., Dietrich, D., and Novak, B. (2009). Financial literacy programs targeted on pre-school children: Development and evaluation. Published by Credit Union National Association; Lau, S. (1998). Money: What it means to children and adults. *Social Behaviour and Personality*, vol. 26, no. 3, pp. 297-306; Roos, V., Chiroro, P., van Coppenhagen, C., Smith, I., van Heerden, E., Abdoola, R. E., et al. (2005). Money adventures: Introducing economic concepts to preschool children in the South African context. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, vol. 5, pp. 243-254.

Figure 1.3: TLD course content





## 1.3 Evaluating TLD

This report presents the findings of the process and impact evaluations conducted by IFF Research and Belmana Consulting.

The process evaluation was carried out to explore how TLD was delivered on the ground, what worked well and what improvements could be made if TLD were to be rolled-out more widely in the future<sup>19</sup>.

This involved:

- 10 depth interviews with key stakeholders involved in the design and delivery of TLD
- 15 depth interviews with practitioners shortly after they delivered the session.
- Practitioners were also invited to feedback on the training through an evaluation form
- Further practitioner feedback was gained through an online survey.

To understand the views of parents or carers who had experienced TLD:

- 20 depth interviews were conducted with those who had attended a session in the first term of delivery (Autumn 2016).
- Eight observations of TLD being delivered were also conducted as part of the process evaluation.

The impact evaluation aims to measure the impact of the TLD module on parents' attitudes and behaviours by comparing any differences in the levels of change in the views of parents who attended a 10-week parenting programme in which the TLD module had been integrated as an extra week (henceforth referred to as the 'TLD group') with a similar group of parents who did not attend a TLD module (the 'control group'). A key feature of both groups is that they both attended the same types of parenting programmes.

The final stage of the evaluation was comprised of ten extended qualitative visits with families who had attended TLD 12 to 18 months previously. This aimed to assess the longer-term impact of TLD and any changes the families had made since they attended TLD.

These extended visits were made up of in-depth interviews with parents, activities with children to understand their relationship with money and an ethnographic observed activity such as a family shopping trip or giving and receiving of pocket money.

A cost benefit analysis has also been carried out to quantify the benefits of TLD and assess value for money. The findings from this are briefly explored in chapter 2.4

and will be considered in more depth in informing the Money Advice Service's future commissioning plan.

### 1.3.1 Estimating the impact of TLD

Both the TLD group (parents that attended the TLD module) and the control group were surveyed at three points in the evaluation. At the start of their parenting programme they were invited to complete a paper survey (the 'pre-survey') and then invited to take part in two similar surveys conducted by telephone. The first of these was conducted six months after their parenting programme finished (the '6-month survey') and the second took place 12 months after (the '12-month survey').

Comparing survey responses indicates whether parents' views and behaviours have changed over time and also allows us to explore whether there are any **differences in the levels of change** among both groups (a difference-in-difference approach). It is possible that changes could be observed in the survey responses from either the control or TLD group over time for reasons not linked to TLD. For instance, parents might change their behaviour as a result of attending the 10-week parenting programme being signposted to other parenting programmes or sources of support or because of other campaigns in Wales.

Similarly, parents may adapt their parenting and engage with their child more as a result of the child getting older, or there may be a seasonal variation in their attitudes regarding finances (e.g. around Christmas individuals may experience a heightened sensitivity to money issues). Consequently, the difference-in-difference approach tries to isolate the impact of TLD from all of these other possible influences by exploring whether there has been a greater level of change in views and behaviours of the TLD group when compared to the control group. Where the views of the TLD group have changed considerably between the pre and 6/12-month surveys, and the views of the control group have not, this indicates that the TLD course content has had a positive impact.

In order to understand whether there had been an impact on the children of the parents who attended the session, at the time of the 6-month and 12-month survey, participating parents were also asked for their permission to be sent a link to an online, picture-based survey designed for 3-11-year olds to complete. A total of 203 children completed this online survey at the 6-month point (116 from the control group and 87 from the TLD group), and 125 children took part at the 12-month point (52 from the control group and 73 from the TLD group). However, no significant differences between groups were found. Unlike the findings from the parent surveys, there is no baseline (or 'pre-survey'),

<sup>19</sup> These findings are not covered here but can be found in a separate process evaluation report.

therefore if there is a difference between intervention and control group at the same point, there would be a likely impact of TLD rather than the difference-in-difference approach used throughout the rest of the analysis. No significant differences were found at the 6-month point or the 12-month point.

This is possibly because there has not been enough time for any impact to be realised (like the telephone surveys, the online surveys were completed six and 12 months after the parenting programmes had ended), or because the size of the samples are relatively small. In addition, as a result of the age range targeted by the child survey the questions used had to be quite simple, therefore may have been potentially too blunt to pick up nuances of impact.

However, the extended qualitative visits 12 to 18 months after the TLD helped to shed light on the likely impact TLD had on the children in the family following limited evidence from the child survey.

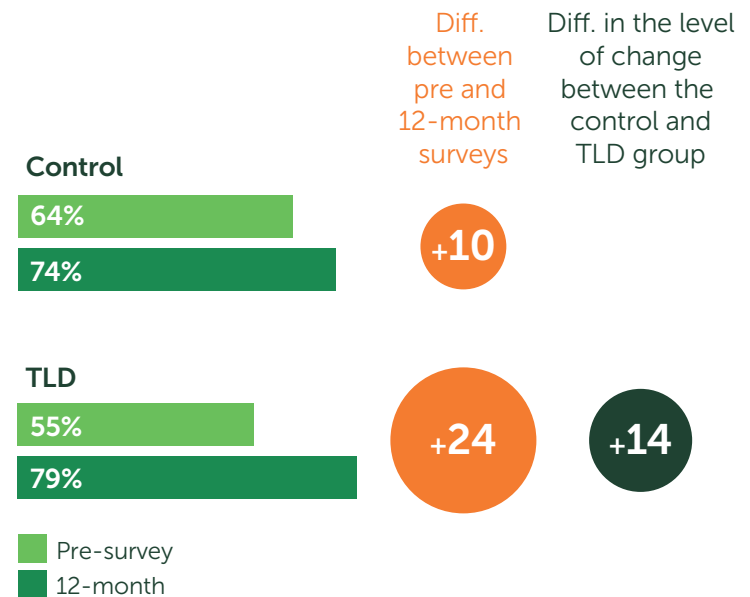
### 1.3.2 Interpreting the impact of TLD

This report details the survey responses for all parents that responded to both the pre-survey and the 12-month survey, including the findings from their 6-month surveys where relevant<sup>20</sup>. A total of 138 parents participated in the pre-survey and 12-month survey within the TLD group, and 130 with the control group.

Impact has been attributed to TLD where the changes in the TLD group data between both surveys is significantly different to the changes observed in the control group, thus measuring impacts over and above what would have happened anyway.

Throughout the report, these figures are reported in charts as in Figure 1.1 below. The light green bars show the pre-survey percentages for both control and TLD groups and the dark green bars show the percentages at the same question at 12 months. The orange circles highlight the difference (in percentage points) in responses between both surveys for both the control and TLD groups. The green circle then shows the difference in the rate of change between the TLD and control groups.

**Figure 1.1: Impact analysis – example chart**



Base: TLD parents (138), Control group (130)  
 Chart show proportion of parents disagreeing that they do not know how to talk to their child/children about money

Sample sizes at the 12-month survey do not support analysis of different subgroups of parents by age of their child. However, this analysis was possible with the 6-month survey data and where relevant, this report explores these differences.

### 1.3.3 Methodological challenges

The estimation approach is a statistical analysis of responses to survey questions and this necessarily has estimation issues, for instance it is unlikely that all behavioural changes by parents have been captured by the survey. However, two issues are specific to TLD.

First, the treatment effect on behaviours may be different for different groups of parents and children.

- Older children and their parents are more likely to already be exhibiting behaviours that the intervention seeks to encourage.
- Equally, the youngest children may be unready for some of the suggested activities, because of their age.

To some extent, TLD attempts to provide a training relevant to parents of young and older children. For analysis to extract this, the sample has been split for parents of children of different ages (7 and under and over eight years old).

Second, financial socialisation processes will centre on a parent, but other individuals involved in a child's upbringing will also feature. The survey captures some

<sup>20</sup> There is also a 6-month impact report available and a more detailed process evaluation report.

of this, such as whether a child receives gifts of money from grandparents or other adults. A complete picture – mapping attitudes, behaviours and outcomes – is more difficult when the financial socialisation process involves other adults (or other children). This will mean there is more confidence about results relating to parents talking to their children about money than where behaviours will be affected by the attitudes and actions of those outside the parent and children, such as gifts for birthdays from other family members.

Among the standard concerns with the analysis of survey data are selective attrition over the waves of the survey, and how those answering the survey express complex concepts in scale or categorical answers. To boost response rates, taking part in the first survey was incentivised by the opportunity to enter into a prize draw, followed by a £10 voucher payment upon completion of each telephone survey at six and 12 months after their parenting programme had ended.

In designing the questionnaire, tried and tested principles were followed to ensure the robustness of the data and ease of completion for respondents. These included:

- Making questions and answer codes short and easy to read,
- Using limited survey routing, and
- Reassuring respondents that their data will be reported anonymously.

There were also limitations to the sampling approach due to the nature of the intervention and evaluation. In terms of the intervention, TLD was rolled out across Wales where local authorities were on board to deliver this programme, and could incorporate this extra week into their delivery. In addition, cooperation of both practitioners and parents was needed for the evaluation to be completed.

Therefore:

- Some areas were unable to deliver TLD, and so were only control group;
- Not all parents who received TLD took part in the evaluation, though they received the content, and so are not included in the evaluation.

Both of these above points could lead to differing profiles amongst control and TLD parents. However, as explored later in chapter 3, the profiles of the two groups were broadly in line.

# Delivering Talk, Learn Do: Findings from the process evaluation

## 2. Delivering Talk, Learn Do: Findings from the process evaluation

### Summary

- Feedback on the TLD session from many practitioners and parents was that it fitted well with the earlier weeks of the parenting programme and that they enjoyed attending the session because of its interactive nature.
- All practitioners and 99% of parents stated that they would recommend TLD to other parents.
- Most practitioners reported that the content of the TLD session was relevant to the parents that they work with (96%) and 97% of parents that completed the self-completion survey said that they found it useful.
- Both practitioners and parents were supportive of the idea of TLD being rolled out more widely in the future.
- The main suggestion for improvement from practitioners was that some of them found it difficult to cover all of the TLD content within the two-hour session because of the level of discussion generated. However, they also felt that none of the activities should be removed.

This chapter summarises the key findings from the process evaluation. It starts with a discussion of how the TLD module was designed before detailing the feedback from practitioners involved in the delivery of TLD, and from parents that attended the session. The chapter finishes with a summary of the challenges encountered during delivery and key learnings from the pilot.

TLD was piloted in Wales because the Money Advice Service had established links with practitioners and children's centres in Wales from previous work, and because the intervention had similar aims to the Welsh Government's financial inclusion and positive parenting strategies<sup>21 22</sup>.

Both TLD and the positive parenting agenda aim to:

- Strengthen parents' understanding of child development,
- Increase parents' confidence in their parenting, and
- Increase their skills in providing a positive home learning environment.

Once plans to deliver the intervention in Wales were developed, Big Lottery Wales also expressed an interest in providing the funding, strengthening the case for location of delivery.

Two parenting programmes were selected to participate in the pilot: Incredible Years (IY) and the Family Links Nurturing Programme (FLNP). They are both 10-week programmes that are delivered widely across Wales and aimed at a similar profile of parents to TLD – the intervention was designed for parents of 3-11-year olds whilst the parenting programmes target 3-7-year olds.

Furthermore, both programmes had a similar ethos to TLD in that they are aimed at:

- Improving parent and child outcomes
- Focus on improving relationships between parent and child,
- And encouraging communication and non-cognitive skill development.

It was also necessary for the parenting programmes involved in the pilot to be as similar as possible to help measure any observed changes in the views, attitudes and behaviours of parents as impacts of TLD, rather than any differences resulting from how the programmes are delivered.

The two-hour TLD session was added as an additional week of the parenting programme, usually in the penultimate or final week, and designed to link to previous weeks. It was not possible to integrate TLD content throughout all 10 weeks of the programmes because of concerns from course owners that this would affect the fidelity of the courses. While it wasn't integrated throughout the course, TLD was designed in a way that would allow earlier sessions to refer to money so that it could be referenced in the build up to the delivery of TLD.

Quaker Social Action (QSA) were commissioned to design the TLD module having previously delivered their own financial education programme for parents and families. Both the Money Advice Service and QSA attended the FLNP and Incredible Years practitioner training so they could better understand how the programme works and to ensure TLD used similar language and was structured in a similar way. Practitioners were also invited to one of two co-design workshops ran by QSA so that they could feedback on the proposed content. This opportunity was highly valued by practitioners as it enabled them to shape the design of the module and share their experience of what works during delivery. Crucially, it also helped secure their buy-in at the very start of the pilot.

21 Financial Inclusion Strategy for Wales 2016

22 Positive parenting campaign announcement



*"It [the co-design workshop] was very useful, and they were very open to feedback. It was very interactive, we actually did some of the activities... we fed back what was good, what wasn't so good, what we reckoned would work and what wouldn't."*

**Practitioner, North Wales**

Practitioners remained involved throughout the pilot, even after they had finished delivering TLD. In March 2017, over 50 practitioners attended 'Next Steps' events in North or South Wales to celebrate their contribution to the pilot and reflect on their experiences of using TLD and their views for how it could be rolled out in future. These events were also an opportunity to share the emerging findings from the impact evaluation whilst fieldwork was still in progress.

## 2.1 Delivery and attendance of parenting programmes

Focusing on the parenting programmes as a whole and the setting of their delivery, some ran in family or children's centres and others in venues such as church halls or schools. Generally, where programmes are delivered in the former, families used the venues for other services. Whereas often with the latter, practitioners did not meet the parents outside of this.

There was a high number of referrals to parenting programmes that ran in children or family centres, these tended to be from social services or Flying Start professionals. Others did self-refer but these parents often had built up a relationship with the centre through using other services. This high volume of referrals means that practitioners work with families who have complex needs.

*"More often than not, say we've got seven or eight in the class, most of them would have been encouraged to come by the referrer which would be the health visitor, or it might be the school health nurse if there was a need with behavioural difficulties."*

**Practitioner, South Wales**

For others that did self refer; reasons given in conversations with both practitioners and parents themselves included that there was a specific aspect of parenting they wanted help with and that they enjoyed the social aspect of meeting other parents.

*"I was desperate to get some help for my children actually, having different age group children and not knowing where to go because there aren't any grandparents around here, so totally on my own."*

**Parent, South Wales**

The biggest challenge for practitioners with regards to attendance was getting parents along to the first session. Retention following attending one session was good for both the FLNP and IY programmes.

Therefore, this also meant that practitioner experience of attendance to the TLD session was positive, it was in line with the rest of the course.

To explore the impact of the mode of delivery further subgroup analysis was conducted to check whether there were any differences in the level of change observed depending on whether parents attended either the FLNP or IY parenting programmes. No differences were found suggesting that TLD sessions have generated the same level of impact regardless of the parenting programme it was integrated into. This suggests it may be possible to deliver the programme more widely in any future roll-out.

## 2.2 Delivering TLD

Feedback from many practitioners and parents was positive, and they particularly enjoyed the interactive nature of the TLD session.

- Nearly all TLD parents (99%) said they would recommend TLD to other parents who wanted to talk to their children about money
- Nearly all parents (97%) stated that it had been useful (78% felt it was very useful)
- Among the TLD parents, 93% said they had learnt something from the TLD session (with 57% reporting they had learnt a lot, see Figure 2.2).

Figure 2.1: Parents’ views of TLD

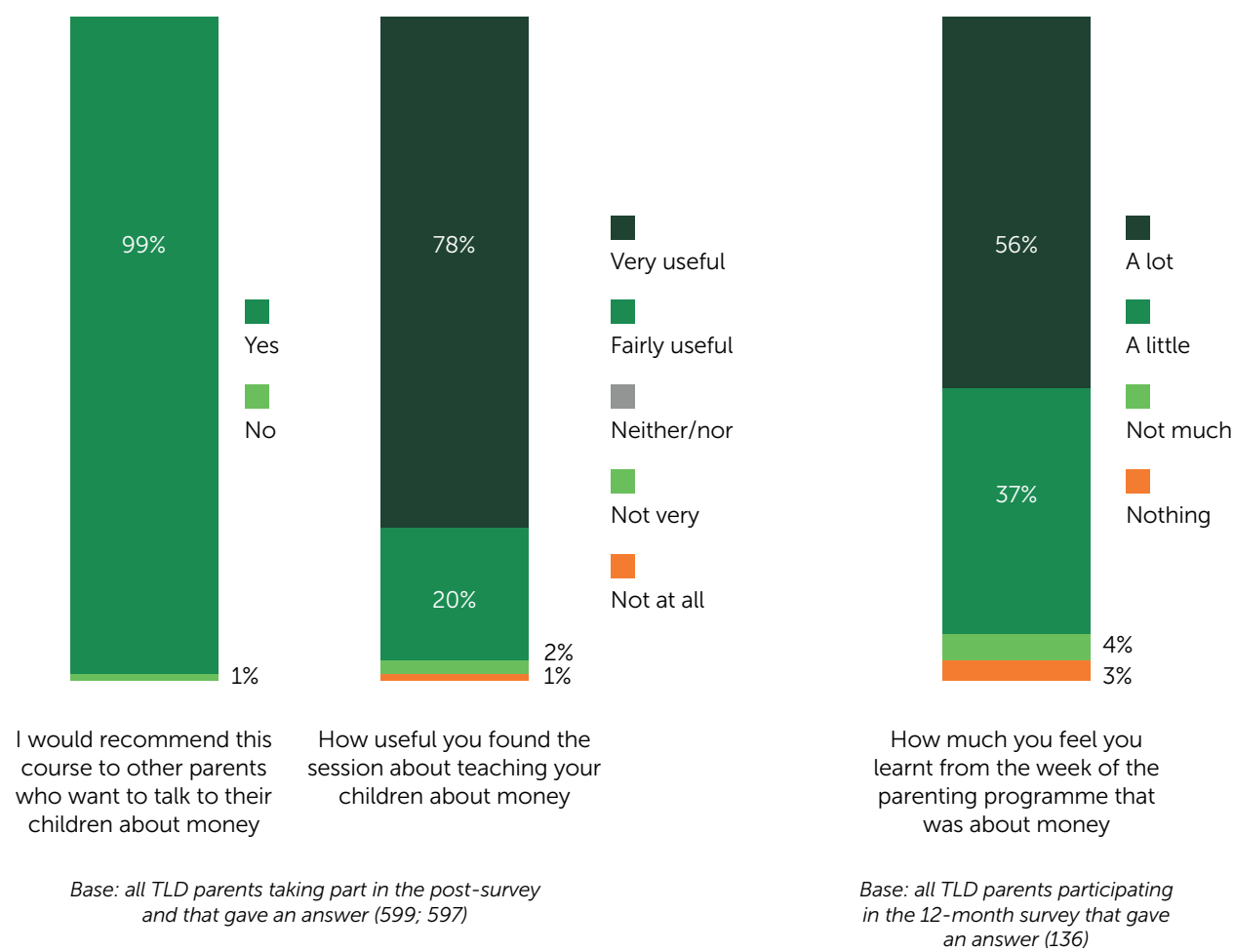
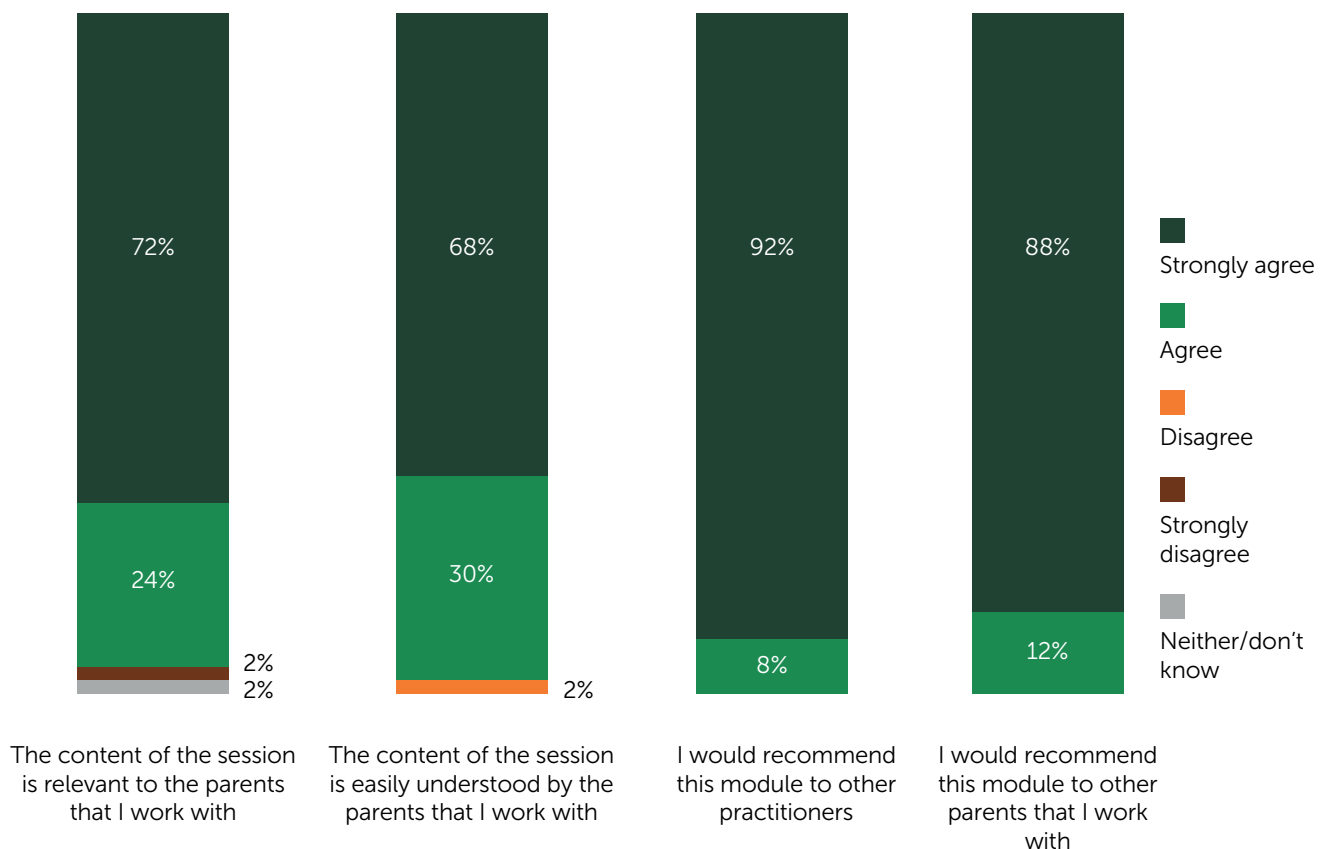


Figure 2.2: Practitioners' views of TLD



Base: all practitioners taking part in the feedback survey (50)

Most of the practitioners taking part in the feedback survey reported that:

- The content of the session was relevant to the parents that they work with (96%).
- It was easily understood by the parents that they work with (98%).
- They would recommend TLD both to other parents, and to other practitioners (both 100%, see Figure 2.1).

The vast majority of practitioners surveyed (96%) reported that TLD was a good fit with the rest of the IY and FLNP parenting programmes, as did the parents taking part in depth interviews. Both groups suggested that this was because TLD presented opportunities to link back to topics that had been discussed in previous weeks.

Parents reported that the Shopping Trip activity (which highlights different ways parents can teach their children about money) reminded them about techniques they had already discussed about how

to manage this situation, e.g. by outlining their expectations at the start and explaining how the child will be rewarded at the end. It was also frequently suggested that the TLD content also chimed with the sessions covering choices and consequences. The format of the TLD session was also considered to be similar to the earlier weeks of the parenting programme because of the emphasis on group discussion during each activity.

*"I think it slotted in like it was designed to be there."*  
Parent, South Wales

*"We try to link it as much as we can with the rest of the course... I think it was the Pester Power one, we were able to link that with a lot of the consequences, praise, rewards."*

Practitioner, North Wales

The Modelling Money<sup>23</sup> activity was a key 'moment of truth' for most parents because it highlighted, often for the first time, how their money management was perceived by their children.

<sup>23</sup> During this activity, parents choose a picture of an alien from a set of showcards and are asked to imagine that this alien is following them around for a few days, knows nothing about money and has a limited understanding of the world. The aim is to get parents to think about what their children learn about money and understand why they actively need to teach them about money.

Similarly, the Money Discussions<sup>24</sup> activity was often one they recalled unprompted because the overall message (that it is possible to start having conversations about money with children from a young age) was not something many parents had considered before.

Both activities prompted useful discussions between parents about how they could raise the subject of money with their children and hear what other parents had found successful.

*"I never really thought about money, about the way I spend money could affect my children, I never thought that would be possible. I never knew that they were watching when I spent my money or how I was spending it."*

#### Parent, South Wales

When discussing impacts with parents, the majority of parents felt that many of the lessons they had taken away from TLD and therefore the changes they had made were focused on using cash rather than card when discussing money with children. This was usually because the Modelling Money activity was one of the most memorable for parents and it encouraged them to increase the visibility of cash when trying to teach their children about the value of money.

However, as a result some parents felt they weren't equipped to discuss cashless interactions with their children and they felt this was an area that TLD could potentially develop further. This is discussed in more detail in Chapter 7.

The main feedback from practitioners about the TLD session was:

- Some practitioners found it difficult to cover all of the content within the two-hour session, usually because of the level of discussion that was generated.
- However, they felt all the activities were important and none of them should be removed.
- Some had made small adjustments to save time, e.g. skipping a small number of statements during the discussion activity.

A few parents suggested that:

- TLD should be split over two weeks of the parenting programme so that they had an opportunity in the second week to discuss anything they were struggling to put into practice and get some more advice.

- Some felt they should be given some more child-friendly materials to take away such as worksheets or a booklet that would help initiate conversations about money.

There was mixed feedback on the extent to which parents had been signposted to, or used, the booklet that was distributed at the end of these session.

*"I must admit I just gave them out at the end. They have looked at them, but I might try on the last session to refer to them again to see if they've had a look at them or any of it has helped."*

#### Practitioner, North Wales

In terms of any future delivery, both practitioners and parents were enthusiastic about TLD being rolled-out more widely in the future. Practitioners were keen to integrate TLD into a range of parenting programmes, or weave it into more informal parenting sessions such as Parent and Toddler or Stay and Play groups by covering a different activity each week. Many suggested that offering TLD as a standalone session would make it easier to deliver, however feedback from many practitioners and parents was that it was advantageous to place TLD at the end of a parenting course when a trusted relationship has already been formed between parents and the practitioner, making it easier to discuss the subject of money.

*"Personally, I think it should be delivered to as many parents as we can get it to."*

#### Practitioner, South Wales

The group setting is highly valued by the parents who took part in TLD. Both parents and practitioners recalled that it was very beneficial for them to hear other points of view from other parents on the programme. Though as briefly mentioned above, it helps that the group have already built up a rapport together so they are comfortable with the money topic, else it may not be as useful.

*"I sort of might have thought 'Ooh no, I think they're a bit young to be told that, at that age' and then somebody else will talk about their opinion. So, it was brilliant, it was really interesting."*

#### Participant, South Wales

*"I don't think I'd personally like to go in a room full of people and talk about my children and my income and stuff with people I don't know."*

#### Parent, South Wales

24 Practitioners lay out cards with different age brackets on them and then ask parents to read out a series of showcards that list different conversations they could have about money. Parents are then asked to place the cards under the youngest age they think they would have the discussion with their children.

All the practitioners commented that the pack they were given to deliver the TLD session, which detailed how to deliver each activity, made the session easy to prepare for and very straightforward to deliver. Interviews with practitioners and observations of TLD suggest that practitioners tended to have their folder with them during sessions and to refer the supplied 'cheat sheets'. This may well have contributed to the overall fidelity of delivery. Certainly, no major differences in how the module was delivered were observed between the FLNP and IY programmes.

*"The fact it was all there in the file scripted with the sheets and everything, that was brilliant."*

**Practitioner, South Wales**

*"The pack is so self-explanatory, it didn't take me long to prepare, just thought oh I remember that, it didn't take me long to pick up again."*

**Practitioner, Mid Wales**

## 2.3 Challenges encountered during delivery

The main difficulty encountered during the pilot was that some partners were not able to fit the extra week for the TLD session into the parenting programme. This was particularly problematic during Autumn and Spring term which were sometimes shorter.

- There were some slight inconsistencies in the delivery of TLD content due to practitioners adjusting activities if they were running out of time.
- Differences were also reported in the extent to which practitioners talked parents through the booklets they received at the end of the session.

However, after reviewing the feedback from practitioners, parents and the findings from the observations, it seems that TLD was largely delivered as planned.

Some stakeholders suggested that the pilot would have benefited from more lead-in time to identify suitable parenting programmes, as it was not possible to do a mapping exercise of all the parenting provision in Wales until the pilot had already started running. The number of delivery organisations in Wales means that parenting provision in the country is very complex, and knowing which areas and courses to target in advance would have helped get partners signed up to the pilot more quickly. This would need to be considered in future roll out, as mapping parenting provision elsewhere in the UK is also likely to be an issue so more lead-in

time would allow specific courses enough time to be targeted and signed up to deliver TLD.

It was particularly difficult to encourage parenting programmes to participate as control groups because of practitioners' enthusiasm for the TLD module and towards the end of the pilot the list of eligible parenting programmes to participate as control groups was expanded. Response rates to the initial self-completion survey and the proportion of these parents that agreed to be invited to take part in subsequent surveys was also lower than expected. This lower response rate is likely to be down to the logistics of the evaluation. Feedback from both practitioners and parents stated that there was very little time, if any, left at the end of the session to complete the survey, rather than a lack of enthusiasm regarding TLD itself.

## 2.4 Key learning

Two issues have been identified that may affect any future roll-out of TLD.

- Some delivery partners were not able to participate in the pilot because there was not the time available to add in TLD as an additional week (particularly during the Autumn and Spring terms).
- A few partners had to pull out of the pilot after experiencing funding cuts which meant they had to stop or reduce the number of parenting programmes they were delivering.

This is compounded by the fact that some practitioners struggled to fit all of the content within the two-hour session, but were reluctant to remove any aspects of the course.

Both practitioners and parents were positive about TLD being integrated into existing parenting programmes because it meant that a trusted relationship had already been formed within the group, however these issues may limit the number of parenting programmes that are able to integrate the TLD week in future.

The two co-design workshops were particularly successful in ensuring the TLD content was effective and helping to secure buy-in from practitioners early on. Practitioners were also invaluable in collecting the data needed for the impact evaluation, however the size of their caseloads meant it was not possible to collect expenses information from everyone involved in the pilot. To try and relieve some of the burden of taking part in any evaluations work in the future, it may be useful to employ staff to take some of the responsibility for data collection to allow practitioners to focus on delivery.



In addition, as part of the evaluation further analysis has been completed to seek to understand the costs and benefits of the intervention. This suggests that overall, TLD is relatively low cost, especially when the outcomes delivered and sustained, at least some of which may have long-lasting positive effects, are considered.<sup>25</sup>

In any future delivery, it should be considered that these key learnings stem from a very specific delivery context in parenting programmes across Wales. Therefore, if it were to be scaled up in other areas of the UK, though useful to consider these points, the different setting may mean that TLD delivery could work differently and a different approach may need to be taken to reach parents outside of Wales successfully.



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25 The Money Advice Service will consider the work on cost-benefits in more depth in informing their future commissioning plan.

# The parents taking part in the evaluation

### 3. The parents taking part in the evaluation

#### Summary

- The control and TLD groups of parents show few differences in characteristics of the parents, indicating that comparisons between the two groups can be made with confidence.
- However, there are indications that both groups of parents are more likely to have characteristics often associated with disadvantage than the general population of Wales.
- Parents in the TLD group were slightly less likely to be in full time employment than parents in the control group.
- Parents attending TLD sessions were slightly more likely to have answered the survey in relation to a younger child; 15% of control group parents answered the survey about a child aged 11 or older compared to 6% of TLD parents.

This chapter outlines the demographics of the parents that participated in the 12-month survey, and highlights any differences between the overall population in Wales. Overall there are few differences between the control group and TLD parents, indicating that comparisons can be made between the two groups with confidence.

In both TLD and control groups, there is evidence to suggest that these parents are more likely to exhibit characteristics associated with disadvantage than the general population of Wales. As discussed throughout chapter 2, there are generally high levels of referral from health visitors and social services which therefore increases the likelihood that they are from more disadvantaged backgrounds than the general population of Wales.

### 3.1 Parents' financial circumstances

Overall, parents attending TLD sessions were less likely to be in full time employment than parents in the control group. At the 12-month survey, 7% of TLD parents were in full-time employment compared to 15% of parents in the control group.

Parents attending the parenting programme (both TLD and control) were more likely than the general population in Wales to be unemployed. The Annual Population Survey<sup>26</sup> showed that 24% of 16-64 year olds in Wales were not in work, compared to 56% of TLD parents and 50% of the control group parents.

**Table 3.1: Parents' employment status at the 12-month survey**

	Control group (130) (%)	TLD group (138) (%)
Full-time employed	15	7
Part-time employed	25	33
Self-employed	9	5
Not in paid work	50	56

The income profile of the TLD group and control group were similar as shown in the table below.

**Table 3.2: Parents' average household income at the 12-month survey**

	Control group (112 exc. missing) (%)	TLD group (114 exc. missing) (%)
Less than £10,000	30	38
£10,000 a year up to £20,000	36	30
More than £20,000 up to £30,000	16	14
More than £30,000 up to £50,000	13	13
More than £50,000	5	4



## 3.2 Family details

As shown in Table 3.3, there were no significant differences between TLD parents and the control group in terms of whether parents share parenting duties.

**Table 3.3: Whether parents share parenting duties**

	Control group (130) (%)	TLD group (138) (%)
Single parents	25	30
Share duties with another adult living in their home	66	59
Share duties with another adult not living in their home	8	12

Although there were no distinct differences between the TLD group and the control group in terms of household composition, single parents were more prevalent in both groups than in the Welsh population as a whole. The 2014/15 National Survey for Wales<sup>27</sup> found that 19% of parents were single parents compared with 30% of TLD parents and 25% of control group parents.

Parents attending TLD were more likely to answer the survey about a younger child than the control group: 15% of parents in the control group answered about a child aged 11 or older, compared to 6% of TLD parents. Upon further analysis of the differences in age, this does not impact the overall findings reported throughout with regards to the impact of TLD.

**Table 3.4: Age of the child that parents chose to answer the survey about<sup>28</sup>**

	Control group (130) (%)	TLD group (138) (%)
3 and under	12	12
4-7 years old	47	51
8-10 years old	27	32
11+	15	6

## 3.3 Other demographic details

There were no significant differences when comparing parents self-reported reading and numeracy skills where the majority of parents reported both of these to be 'good'.

There were also no differences in the proportion of parents who answered the survey in relation to a child with a disability. A quarter of both control group (24%) and TLD (26%) parents had a child who has a disability, compared with 23% of the Wales population according to ONS 2011 Census data<sup>29</sup>.

Practitioners emphasised that the parents that they typically worked with faced a greater level of disadvantage than parents in general.

- Half of the practitioners reported that they had delivered the TLD module to parents with special educational needs and disabilities or survivors of domestic violence (52% and 50% respectively).
- More than a quarter had worked with teenage parents (28%).
- One in five had worked with parents with substance misuse problems (20%).

Practitioners generally only highlighted that this had a particular impact when trying to encourage parents to sign up to the parenting programme as a whole once they were referred.

*"It's quite challenging as we work with lots of vulnerable families, it can be quite a challenge getting families to sign up. Though once we've got them to the first session, it's usually fine... it's just getting them here."*

**Practitioner, North Wales**

<sup>27</sup> National Survey for Wales 2014-15 (ONS)

<sup>28</sup> Parents of more than one child were asked to answer some questions in relation to their child aged closest to seven years old.

<sup>29</sup> Census 2011 (ONS). This is the proportion of all age groups in the Wales population, rather than child only.

# Parents' awareness of their role in supporting their children's financial capability

## 4. Parents' awareness of their role in supporting their children's financial capability

### Summary

- There is evidence to suggest that TLD has been successful in giving parents greater knowledge in how to talk to their children about money. Between the pre-survey and 12-month survey, there was an additional 14 percentage point increase in the proportion of TLD group parents disagreeing that they do not know how to talk to their children about money when compared with the control group.
- Evidence from the qualitative visits shows that TLD parents have picked up the message about talking to their children earlier about money. Several mentioned that the key message they recalled from the TLD session was that it is 'never too early' to talk to children about money.

This chapter summarises the awareness that parents have of their own role in supporting their children's financial capability. In addition, this chapter explores the potential impact of TLD on parents' perceptions of when they felt it appropriate to start having various money-related discussions with their children and how comfortable they feel discussing aspects of money with their children.

A key aim of TLD is to help parents to understand why they need to actively teach their children about money and see this as part of their role as a parent. This is particularly emphasised during the Money Discussions activity.

### Money Discussions activity

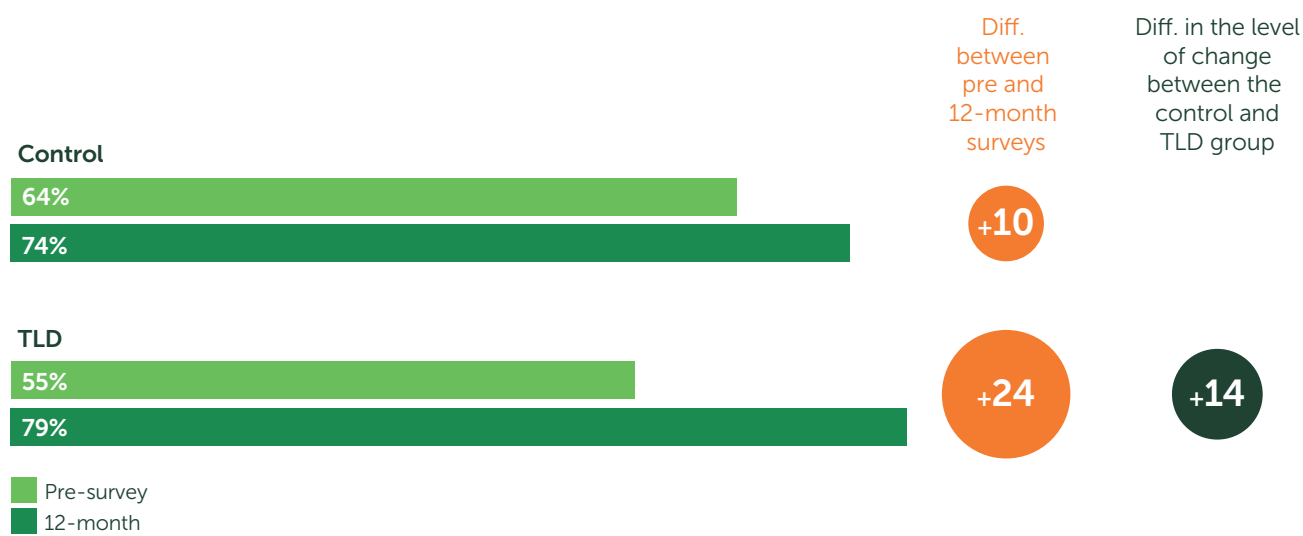
Practitioners lay out cards with different age brackets on them and ask participants to read out a series of showcards about different things they could have discussions with their children about (e.g. where money comes from or how to save money). Participants are then asked to place the cards under the youngest age they think they would have the discussion with their children.

## 4.1 Knowledge about talking to children about money

Parents were asked the extent to which they agreed that they knew how to talk to their children about money.

- There was a 10 percentage point increase in the proportion of control group parents disagreeing that they do not know how to talk to their children about money between the pre-survey and 12-month survey.
- However, the increase was significantly higher among TLD parents at 24 percentage points (from 55% before TLD to 79% 12 months after, see Figure 4.1).
- This suggests that TLD is likely to have led to an additional 14 percentage point change.

Figure 4.1: Change in the proportion disagreeing with statement “I don’t know how to talk to my child / children about money”



Base: TLD parents (138), Control group (130)  
Chart show proportion of parents disagreeing that they do not know how to talk to their child/children about money



## 4.2 When to start talking to children about money

It was evident in the qualitative visits that the biggest lesson parents learned from the TLD session was that it is 'never too early' to talk to their children about money. Several parents mentioned that previously they had deliberately sheltered their children from discussions about money in order to avoid spoiling their childhood. Parents felt that the TLD session was a real eye-opener in relation to the fact that they could be harming their children by failing to expose them to money decisions.

*"I was brought up with the attitude of 'you don't discuss money in front of kids', so that was very different for me."*

**Parent, South Wales**

*"A five-year-old can learn as much as a 13-year-old, by explaining it younger they do learn."*

**Parent, South Wales**

A number of parents had previously felt that money is not something to burden children with. However, TLD helped parents realise that you can have money discussions constructively. TLD appeared to alter parents' views on money discussions and help them understand that making children aware at a younger age is beneficial.

*"I've definitely spoken about it more, rather than thinking she's not really old enough or it's not relevant, the more and more you build on something, the more and more it sticks. There's no point telling her at 17 or 18 years old as she's moving out oh by the way you need to do this this this, you start with little and build on it until it becomes a behaviour."*

**Parent, North Wales**

Amongst parents, there was a high level of recall of the Money Discussions activity. When asked what they remember about the session, this particular activity was often the first mentioned. This activity was one of the key parts of the TLD session that opened parents' eyes as to the age at which you can talk to children regarding money.

*"We had a conversation about what age was most appropriate for talking about money, and they said to start talking about it with them as early as possible."*

**Parent, South Wales**

A difference was observed at the 6-month point at one of these measures; parents agreeing that they knew what age they should start talking to their children about money. There was a 23 percentage point increase in the proportion of the control group agreeing, whereas for the TLD group the proportion

agreeing increased by 31 percentage points (from 48% before attending TLD to 79% six months after TLD). This suggests that TLD is likely to have led to an additional eight percentage point increase at the 6-month point.

However, twelve months after attending TLD, this difference was not sustained. There were no differences in the proportion of control group and TLD group parents that agreed they knew what age they should start talking to their children about how money works.

In addition, there was no impact observed at the 12-month point with regards to parents stating that they can affect how their children behave around money when they grow up.

### CASE STUDY: IT IS BENEFICIAL TO DISCUSS MONEY WITH CHILDREN AT A YOUNG AGE

A single parent of four children, two of whom had left home, one teenager and the youngest aged 6, stated that the key thing she learned from attending TLD was how important it is to discuss money with children from a young age.

It was surprising to her that you can, or should, start introducing money concepts from an early age. Since attending the TLD session, she has discussed money a lot more with her six-year-old son. In particular, that money is short and that you can't get everything you want until money is available. Discussing things like this has made a big difference on her youngest son's understanding of money, especially the need to budget and save.

*"If Mum has money they have a big day out - if Mummy is struggling then he has toast instead of porridge..."*

**Parent**

As well as talking more to her son about money, she has discussed this with other adults in the family and how they can talk to him about money to encourage him to get more engaged in spending, the value of money and saving. Now, her son gets money of his own and has the opportunity to save or spend it.

*"I've been explaining that he can have something little or get something big if he saves his pennies, and this came from the money session."*

**Parent**

She would not have discussed these aspects at such a young age if it wasn't for TLD. She wished she had known this with her older children so could have taught them more regarding the value of money and saving earlier.



# Children's ability to handle and manage money

## 5. Children's ability to handle and manage money

### Summary

- There has been a significant increase in the proportion of TLD parents giving their children pocket money. Amongst TLD parents there was an additional increase of seven percentage points compared with the control group.
- The qualitative findings supported this, with several parents giving regular pocket money over a year after TLD and others at least considering starting to give pocket money in the near future. A wide variety of approaches had been taken by the parents showing that TLD opens their eyes to different techniques to suit different family situations.
- TLD appears to have had a positive impact on children's ability to manage money. Parents who attended the TLD session reported a larger increase in their child's ability to:
  - manage their own day-to-day allowance (particularly among parents of those aged eight or over)
  - recognise the difference between something they want and something they need
  - understand why they are saying 'no' to buying something
  - save up for a short period of time to buy something they want.

This chapter explores the extent to which children are given regular pocket money and how this has changed among TLD parents, as well as how children's understanding of certain money matters has changed.

During the TLD session, parents are encouraged to think about giving their child opportunities to handle money, particularly at the Pocket Money Discussion which aims to get parents to understand why it is useful to give pocket money and look at ways to give their children the experience of managing their own money.

### Pocket Money Discussions activity

Practitioners distribute four cards showing different approaches for giving pocket money to children and the group are asked to discuss the pros and cons of each.

The TLD session also aimed to encourage parents to help increase their children's understanding of wants and needs and why they are saying 'no' to buying something. The Pester Power activity aimed to give parents strategies to deal with shopping trips.

### Pester Power activity

Following the shopping trip scenario (where participants are asked to imagine they are on a shopping trip with three children of different ages), practitioners prompt participants to think about situations when children will ask for things and how to address this.

Practitioners will put signs up around the room which say "I'll try that" or "I won't try that" and ask parents to move to the statement they agree with while they discuss a few solutions to children asking for things.

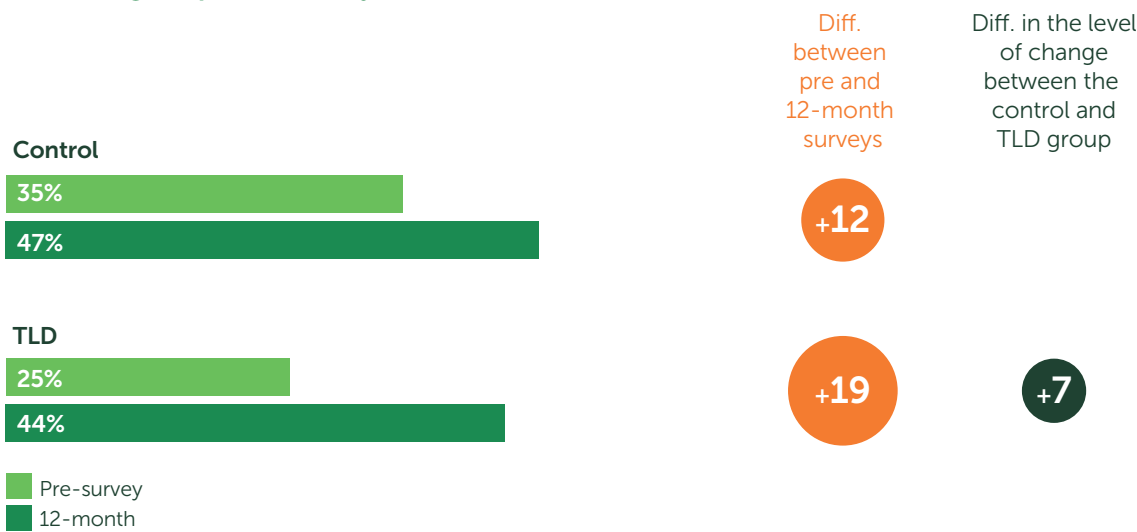
## 5.1 Pocket money

Evidence shows that there has been an impact of TLD on the prevalence of pocket money.

- There has been a 12-percentage point increase in the proportion of control group parents who give their child regular pocket money.
- However, the increase in the proportion of TLD parents giving their child regular pocket money was higher at 19 percentage points (from 25% before TLD to 44% 12 months after, see Figure 5.1).
- This suggests that TLD is likely to have led to an additional 7 percentage point increase.<sup>30</sup>

<sup>30</sup> This figure was 13 percentage points in the original version of this report. Further analysis by IFF Research following publication identified an error in the calculation of this figure and this has now been corrected.

**Figure 5.1: The proportion of parents giving their children regular pocket money<sup>31</sup>**



Base: TLD parents (138), Control group (130)  
 Chart show proportion of parents that give regular pocket money

This increase in the proportion of the parents giving pocket money was evident at the 6-month period and this has continued.

Throughout the qualitative visits, it was evident that parents had clearly understood the message about allowing children to handle money of their own and most were either giving pocket money or had at least considered it.

Parents had taken a wide variety of approaches to pocket money, depending on their financial situation and the age of their children. Some had attached conditions to the receipt of pocket money (e.g. the completion of chores) while others stipulated what the money could be spent on. However, in all cases parents had understood and were acting on the guidance around making sure that the amount of money given was a consistent amount provided regularly.

*"It was just random, here and there. Whereas from TLD we were able to devise a structure outlining what chores needed to be done and what pocket money they would get in return...They know that they have to do certain things throughout the week in order to get their pocket money on Saturday afternoon"*

**Parent, North Wales**

<sup>31</sup> As the chart shows, there are differences in the likelihood of the control and TLD groups to offer pocket money before attending the course. In part this may be accounted for by the slightly different profiles of the two groups in terms of the age of the child discussed. Further analysis has been run controlling for age of child and this still points towards a positive impact of TLD.

At this measure a large increase is also observed amongst control group parents as well as amongst TLD parents. This may be because pocket money is particularly correlated with child age. Despite this, there is still a clear impact of TLD on pocket money prevalence, as the increase is larger amongst TLD parents. The difference in difference approach used throughout this report helps to control for changes like this among the control group



## CASE STUDY: GIVING REGULAR POCKET MONEY

A family of five, a married couple with three children; ages five, eight and 11 had started giving their two eldest children regular pocket money since attending TLD.

Previously, they would very occasionally and randomly give their children money but now they have a system in place. The children receive 50p each week per year of their age, but they have to complete the tasks around the house in order to receive it, though to date, they have always completed their tasks.

***"It was a big lesson for both of us really and that's when we started introducing the pocket money, and things changed with our finances and it was because of that... if it wasn't for that (TLD) I don't think we would have introduced the pocket money."***

**Parent**

They want to ensure that their children are money conscious and giving them pocket money helps to teach them the value of money. Since starting to give pocket money, the parents believe that the children's understanding of money has improved.

***"If you do something good you get something good back. Sometimes Mum and Dad have to have a think about it."***

**Child**

The children were positive about the fact that they now get pocket money, they like that they have their own money that they can choose what to do with.

***"It makes me feel happy that I've got some money to myself that's mine."***

**Child**

Getting this money of their own has taught them that you have to earn money and the value of it and their parents hope that this will translate into later life.

Other parents were at the stage where they were only just beginning to give pocket money or start trialling ways to do this.

A couple of parents found that their children were a bit too young to have pocket money, but would implement this in the future.

***"He doesn't have pocket money as such... Maybe I will start giving him £2 a week or something, even if its just for picking toys up."***

**Parent, South Wales**

In the meantime, one other parent was giving their six-year-old son money to take to school to purchase fruit each week, rather than explicitly giving pocket money for him to do what he wants.

Financial circumstances meant that some families gave infrequent pocket money, but they still saw the value in giving their children money of their own.

***"Start to give them money from a young age, get them to do tasks and this teaches them that money doesn't come from nowhere, you have to earn it."***

**Parent, South Wales**

Throughout the discussions with parents regarding pocket money, there was a general consensus that it's important to give the money in cash to help them understand the value. In addition, those that could not afford to give regular pocket money or felt their child was slightly too young still shared that they had increased the opportunities for children to handle money.

***"I think the more involved with the physical cash, the better. Just to be aware of money."***

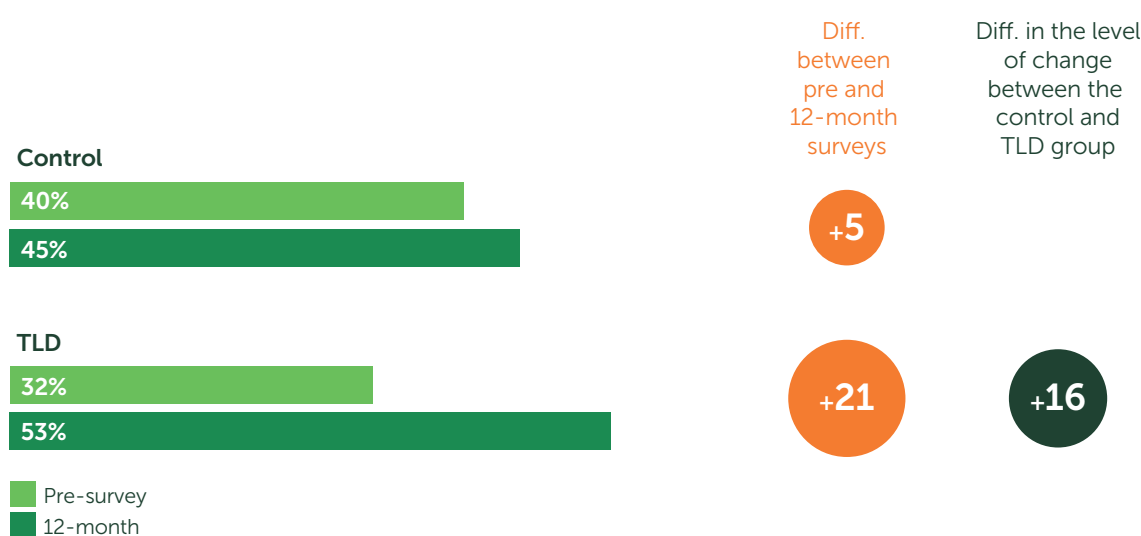
**Parent, North Wales**

## 5.2 Children's understanding of money

TLD appears to have had an impact on children's ability to handle and manage their own money, as well as in understanding the differences between wants and needs and why parents say 'no' to buying things (see Figures 5.2-5.4).

- There was a five percentage point increase in control group parents who stated that their child could manage their own day to day money or allowance.
- However, there was a much higher increase of 21 percentage points (from 32% before TLD to 47% 12 months later) among TLD parents.
- This suggests that TLD is likely to have led to an additional 16 percentage point increase.

**Figure 5.2: The proportion of parents who felt their child could definitely or sometimes manage their own day to day money or allowance**



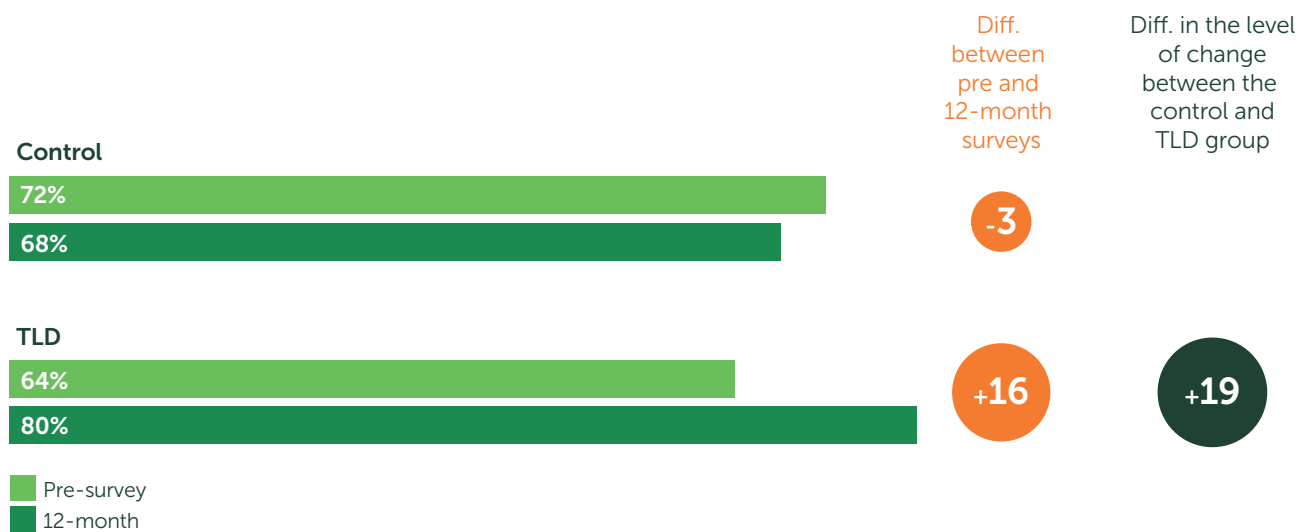
Base: TLD parents (138), Control group (130)  
 Chart show proportion of parents that stated their child could manage their day-to-day allowance ('yes definitely' or 'yes sometimes')

At the six-month survey, there was not yet an overall impact seen amongst the TLD group on this measure – it has only been detectable over the slightly longer-term. Perhaps therefore indicating that children's ability to manage their own money is embedding at the 12-month point, rather than being a behaviour adopted sooner.

There was also evidence of an impact of TLD on children's ability to recognize the difference between something they want and something they need.

- There was a three percentage point decrease in control group parents who stated that their child was able to recognise the difference between something they want (e.g. sweets), and something they need (e.g. food), either sometimes or definitely.
- However, among TLD parents, there was an increase of 16 percentage points.
- This suggests that TLD is likely to have led to an additional 19 percentage point increase.

**Figure 5.3: The proportion of parents who stated their child was able to recognise the difference between want and need**



Base: TLD parents (138), Control group (130)  
 Chart show proportion of parents that stated their child could recognise the difference between something they want and something they need ('yes definitely' or 'yes sometimes')

These findings were echoed in the qualitative visits. Children who completed the children's activity were generally able to identify what would be needed were they to go to the moon and what is more of a 'nice to have' or a want. In the majority of visits, food, shelter and electricity were chosen over a television and an iPad as something they would need to take with them.

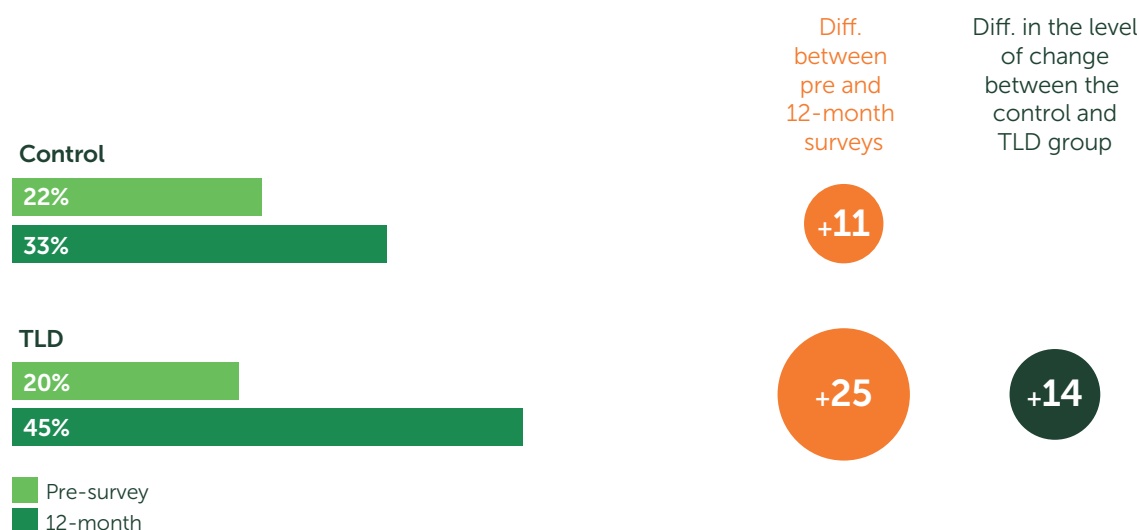
*"If you were poor, you wouldn't need electricity as you could just have a shed, you wouldn't need a big house, just somewhere to shelter and store food and water."*

**Child, North Wales**

Further questions were asked to establish children's understanding when it comes to spending money.

- There was an 11 percentage point increase in the proportion of control group parents who stated their child could definitely understand why they were saying 'no' to buying something.
- However, there was a larger increase among TLD parents of 25 percentage points.
- This suggests that TLD is likely to have led to an additional 14 percentage point increase.

**Figure 5.4: The proportion of parents who stated their child could definitely understand why they were saying 'no' to buying something**



Base: TLD parents (138), Control group (130)  
 Chart show proportion of parents that stated their child could definitely understand why they were saying 'no' to buying something

An increase in parents expressing that their children understand why they are saying 'no' to saying something was demonstrated in the qualitative visits. Parents often expressed that shopping trips have become more enjoyable and they feel more comfortable explaining why they are saying 'no' to buying things. Parents now feel that it is more acceptable to explain this to their children.

Parents mentioned different techniques they have started using to improve their shopping experiences with their children and help them to manage children's behaviour and reduce pestering. Managing expectations, writing lists and explaining and comparing the difference between different brands were examples of techniques that parents learned from the session and have gone on to use.

*"This involves laying out everything that we are not going to get and things we are going to get... He knows that if I say no I don't change my mind. I think it's a bit better now, not as many meltdowns."*

Parent, Mid Wales

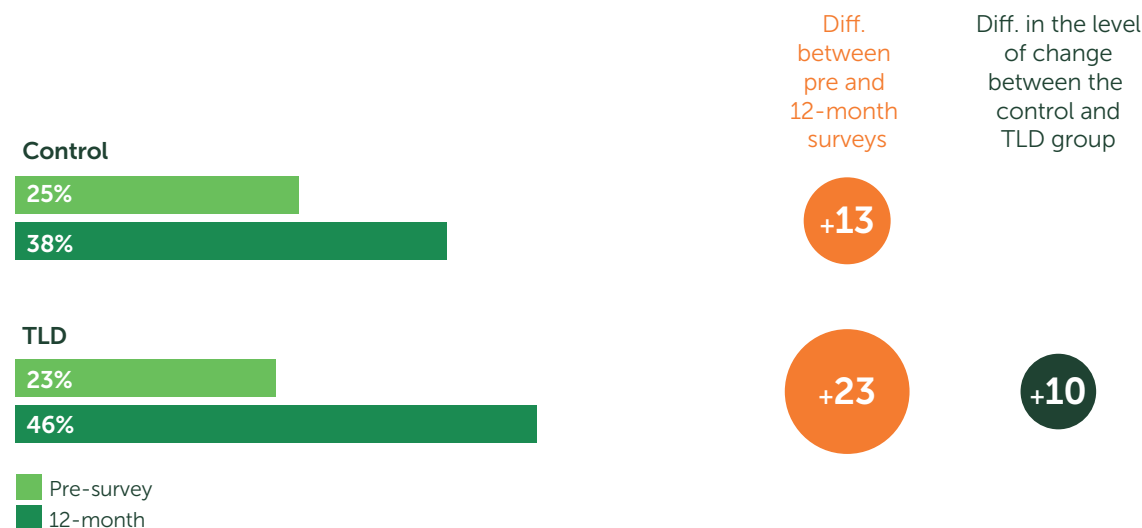
*"I do it now with food, I'm on less money, I'll say this packet of biscuits are cheaper let's go for that one."*

Parent, South Wales

There was also evidence of an impact of TLD on children's ability to save up for a short period of time to buy something they want.

- There was a 13 percentage point increase in the proportion of control group parents who stated their child could definitely save up for a short period of time to buy something they want.
- However, there was a larger increase among TLD parents of 23 percentage points (see Figure 5.5).
- This suggests that TLD is likely to have led to an additional 10 percentage point increase.

**Figure 5.5: The proportion of parents who stated their child could definitely save up for a short period of time to buy something they want**



Base: TLD parents (138), Control group (130)  
 Chart show proportion of parents that stated their child could definitely save up for a short period of time to buy something they wanted

### CASE STUDY: SAVING UP FOR SOMETHING THEY WANT TO BUY

A mother of two children, aged five and seven years old, expressed that she had learned a lot from the money session. She talks a lot more to the children about money matters and has taught them the value of saving money.

The children do not get regular pocket money but receive money of their own for Christmas and birthdays and from family members. As well as this, when possible, they will receive some irregular pocket money.

They have recently moved house and the children would like to buy toys and decorations for their new room, and so are saving up to buy these things that they want. During the qualitative visit, they received some pocket money that they put in their piggy banks to save.

During trips to the shops, the children have the opportunity to spend the money that they have saved on what they want. The children like to save and understand that once they have spent the money, it is gone, and they will have to save again.

***"It's good so you can get big things like Harry Potter toys. I bought something once and then there was something nicer in the other shop and I wish I had bought that instead. Felt a bit sad as this was really nice."***

**Child**

The child regretted this spending decision and stated that it taught them that when you've saved your money, you should think more carefully about what you spend it on. As a result, they will be more careful in the future.

Further evidence of the impact that TLD had on children's saving, particularly saving in the short term to save up for something they want, was provided in the qualitative visits. Whether it was saving up their own pocket money or birthday or Christmas money, there were several examples of children with parents who attended the TLD session saving up for something they want.

It was common for parents participating in the qualitative research to mention that they had now spoken to their children about saving. In this way, parents emphasised the fact that you can buy something better if you save, rather than spending it straight away.

***"I explain that he can have something little or get something big if he saves his pennies, and this came from the money session."***

**Parent, South Wales**

***"I would save it to get something better and more expensive."***

**Child, South Wales**

There was no difference between the control group and TLD parents with regards to whether their child was able to explain the choices they make when spending money before TLD and 12 months after. At the six-month survey, there was also no overall difference between control group and TLD parents with regards to this factor.

However, at the six-month point there was a difference when focusing only on parents of children under the age of five.

- The proportion of control group parents with children under five reporting that their child was able to explain the choices they make when they spend their money increased by one percentage point to 38%, from the pre-survey to six months later.
- However, the rate of change among TLD parents of under five-year-olds was significantly higher at 19 percentage points (from 28% before TLD to 47% six months after attending TLD).
- TLD is likely to have led to an additional 18 percentage point increase on parents of children under five years old 6 months after attending the course.

However, this difference was no longer detectable at 12 months. This may be because parents observe quite rapid change on this measure as children get older anyway and hence the short-term benefit observed among TLD parents is 'caught up' in the control group relatively quickly.

### CASE STUDY: SAVING UP FOR SOMETHING THEY WANT TO BUY (2)

A parent of a three-year-old explained that following TLD they give their child £1 each week to buy sweets, but on one occasion, they wanted a ball that cost £2. The parent then gave them the option to save the pound from that current week to then buy the ball the following week, or buy the usual sweets but not get the ball.

The three-year-old decided to save up and buy the ball the following week. This was because their parent spoke to them about how they can't buy something they don't have enough money for.

***"Before I would have been like 'oh that's only an extra pound' but I've learned that actually I want him to learn the value of money and understand if he wants something he has to save for it."***

***Parent***

This particular parent emphasised that TLD had taught them to be stricter with money to help them understand the value of it.



# Having conversations about money at a younger age

## 6. Having conversations about money at a younger age

### Summary

- Since attending TLD, the TLD group reduced the age at which they felt parents should start having money-related discussions with their children.
- Parents who attended TLD were more likely than control group parents to have reduced the age at which they felt:
  - parents should start teaching children about the importance of saving
  - children should start managing their own day-to-day money without supervision
  - parents should start involving children in basic family spending discussions, e.g. the cost of days out.

The TLD pilot aims to encourage parents to start frequently talking to their children about money and also help them understand that these discussions should take place at an early age. The activities in the session prompt parents to think about money from their child's perspective and possible scenarios that may present an opportunity for them to explain how money works, for example in the Money Discussions activity.

### Money Discussions activity

Practitioners lay out cards with different age brackets on them and ask participants to read out a series of showcards about different things they could have discussions with their children about (e.g. where money comes from or how to save money). Participants are then asked to place the cards under the youngest age they think they would have the discussion with their children.

This chapter details parents' views on what age it is appropriate to start having various money-related discussions and examples of where parents have been able to start doing this.

There is evidence to suggest TLD has prompted parents to start introducing conversations about money with their children. At each survey, parents were asked about when they felt it was appropriate for parents to start having several different money-related conversations with children and it is possible to compare their responses to explore how their responses changed.

### CASE STUDY: Managing money from an early age

One parent started creating more opportunities for her four-year-old to handle money after attending TLD. She had decided to give her daughter £3. Adapting to the relatively young age of the child, she took her to a pound shop to spend her money so that the child knew she could buy three things and hence could make the spending decisions on her own (without needing the help of an adult to add up prices).

*"She likes getting more for her money now, she understands the numbers and what things cost, I've made her more involved and aware."*

*Parent*

A significant proportion of TLD parents felt that three types of money-related conversations could take place with younger children 12 months after attending a TLD session:

- when children should be taught about the importance of saving
- when children should start managing their own day-to-day money without supervision
- when to involve children in basic family spending discussions (e.g. the costs of days out) (see Figure 6.1).

In both the control and the TLD group some parents reduced the age at which they felt that **parents should start teaching children about the importance of saving** between the two surveys.

- Among the control group, 28% of parents reported a younger age at the 12-month survey than they had at the pre-survey
- Whilst at 42%, a significantly higher proportion of the TLD group did so
- This suggests that TLD is likely to have led to an additional 14 percentage point increase.

Similarly:

- 25% of the control group reported that **children should start managing their own day-to-day money without supervision** at a younger age at the 12-month survey than they had at the pre-survey.
- At 38%, a significantly higher proportion of TLD parents reduced the age at which they thought parents should start doing this
- This suggests that TLD is likely to have led to an additional 13 percentage point increase.

The increase in the proportion of children receiving pocket money has also created opportunities for discussing saving and the day-to-day management of money. Some children had piggy banks or savings jars in which they were encouraged to save some or all of their pocket money. Examples of this were mostly in relation to short-term saving (e.g. for a toy or item of clothing that they wanted), though one eight-year-old was planning to save a proportion of their pocket money that they were going to receive over the year in order to buy a new television in the January sales.

This also prompted discussions between families about the value of money and what it should be used for. Some parents had started setting clear boundaries with children to make clear that if they wanted something, e.g. new trainers, they were expected to use their pocket money to buy them.

#### CASE STUDY: Talking about the value of money

TLD had prompted one family to introduce pocket money and start discussing the value of money with their eight-year-old son. His favourite hobby was playing video games and his parents were aware that he was keen to spend any money he had on paid for add-ons within these games.

They used the discussion to raise their concerns about whether these were value for money and encourage their son to understand that the add-ons were not necessary for him to enjoy the game. The family then also came to an agreement that he could not use any of his pocket money for this purpose, and that he would need their permission to use some of his Birthday money.

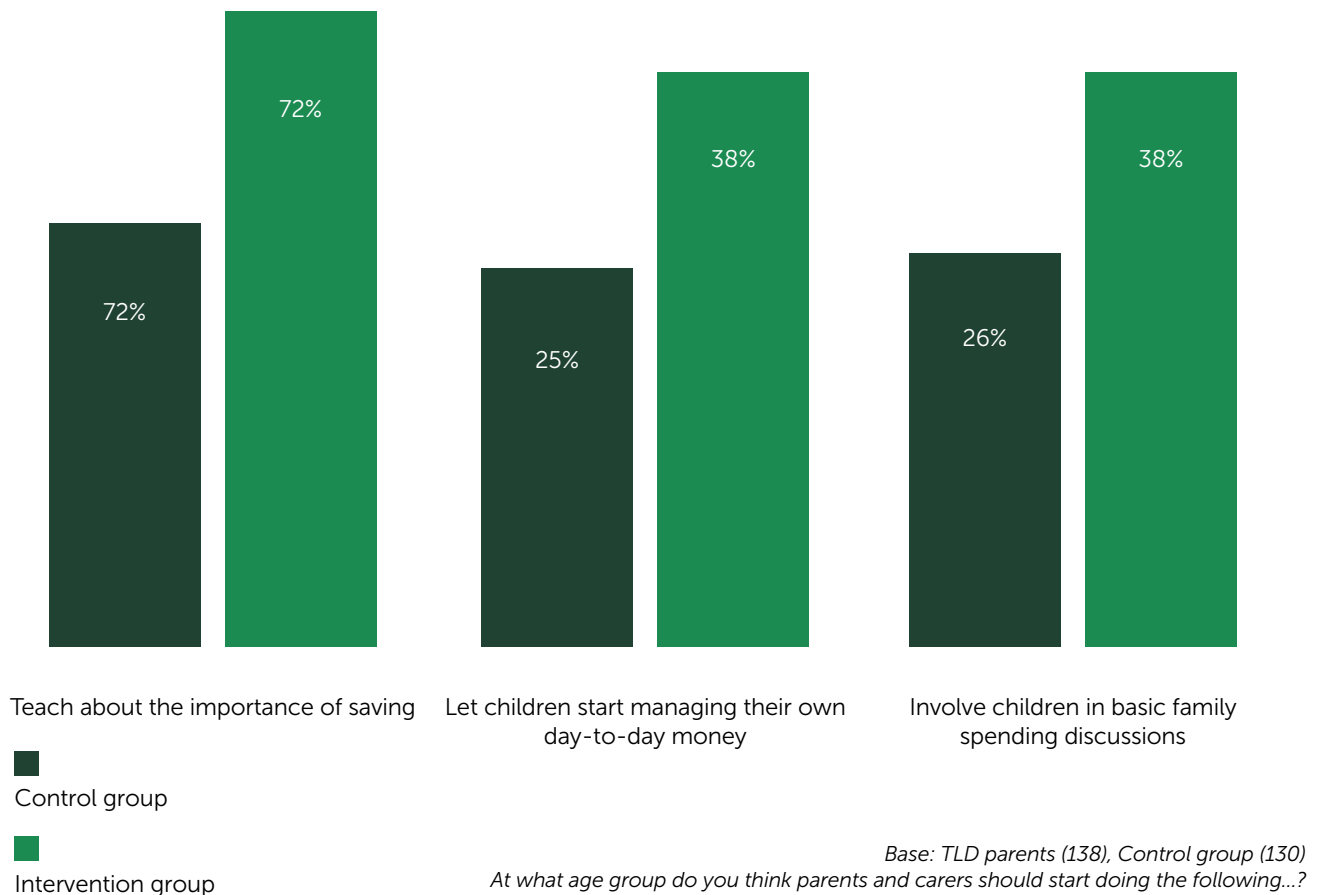
Following TLD, parents have consciously tried to give their children more experience of handling money to facilitate understanding of the value.

***“At the end of the day we want them to be money conscious and to be good with money and not just waste it and be able to manage their money and other stuff.”***

***Parent***

Before attending TLD, the parents did not frequently have discussions about money with their children.

**Figure 6.1: Proportion of parents reporting a younger age at the 12-month survey compared to the pre-survey**



- Around a quarter (26%) of the control group reduced the age at which they thought **children should be involved in basic family spending discussions**, e.g. the cost of days out at a younger age, at the 12-month survey compared to the pre-survey.
- Whilst at 38%, a significantly higher proportion of the TLD group did so.
- This suggests that TLD is likely to have led to an additional 12 percentage point increase.

In the qualitative visits, parents mentioned that they were more open to involving children in spending discussions.

For instance, TLD had prompted one family to let their eleven and eight-year-olds decide how to spend a family day out. They were given the option of visiting an ice cream parlour or using the same amount of money to buy an annual membership to a variety of attractions, and the children chose the second option, recognising that it was better value for money.

There were no differences in the proportion of control group and TLD group parents who, between surveys, reduced the age at which they thought parents should start having other types of conversations.

This included:

- Talking about how money is used in the family (e.g. paying for heating);
- Explaining the difference between price and the value of things;
- And giving children their own spending money/ allowance.

This also included:

- Involving children in basic family spending decisions (e.g. food shopping);
- Give children responsibility for saving up for something they want and encourage children to think about what to do with their money.

No evidence of impact on these areas was found at the 6-month survey either.

However, there were a number of examples from the qualitative research of parents regularly getting children involved in family spending decisions during the weekly shop and teaching them that prices are not necessarily consistent between shops. In some instances, TLD had prompted parents to encourage their children about how to check for value for money by comparing the cost per unit, or by identifying two for one deals.

*"I think she's quite aware when we go shopping and they'll have offers. She can work out which one was the cheapest one to buy so rather than picking up the individual cans she'll go well actually it's cheaper because she knows to look for the price per unit on the shelves, and if I give her some money she will automatically go for the cheapest one."*

**Parent, North Wales**



# Frequency of money-related discussions



## 7. Frequency of money-related discussions

### Summary

- Overall, TLD is reported to have had a positive impact on how often parents are discussing money with their children.
- There was a larger decrease in the proportion of TLD parents who rarely or never talk to their children about selling through advertising compared to the control group, indicating that TLD is likely to have led to an additional 14 percentage point change.
- Where the frequency of discussions that parents are having with their children about money has increased, these conversations nearly always focus on cash or tangible spending as opposed to conversations about credit cards or digital forms of spending and handling money.

This chapter discusses the impact of TLD on the frequency with which parents discuss money with their children. One of the objectives of TLD was to enable parents to deliver financial capability education to their children, in order to bridge the knowledge gap which existed for younger children due to the timing of existing interventions being delivered predominantly to secondary school aged children.

Overall, TLD is shown to have had a positive impact, particularly where focusing on using cash and showing an increased level of openness with which they both handle and discuss money and how it is used.

TLD encourages parents to talk to their children about money in order to increase their understanding, in turn, parents have begun to have a higher frequency of money-related discussions with their children, although the impact evaluation showed no differences between the control and TLD parents in whether families have agreements in place about money.

## 7.1 Discussions around advertising

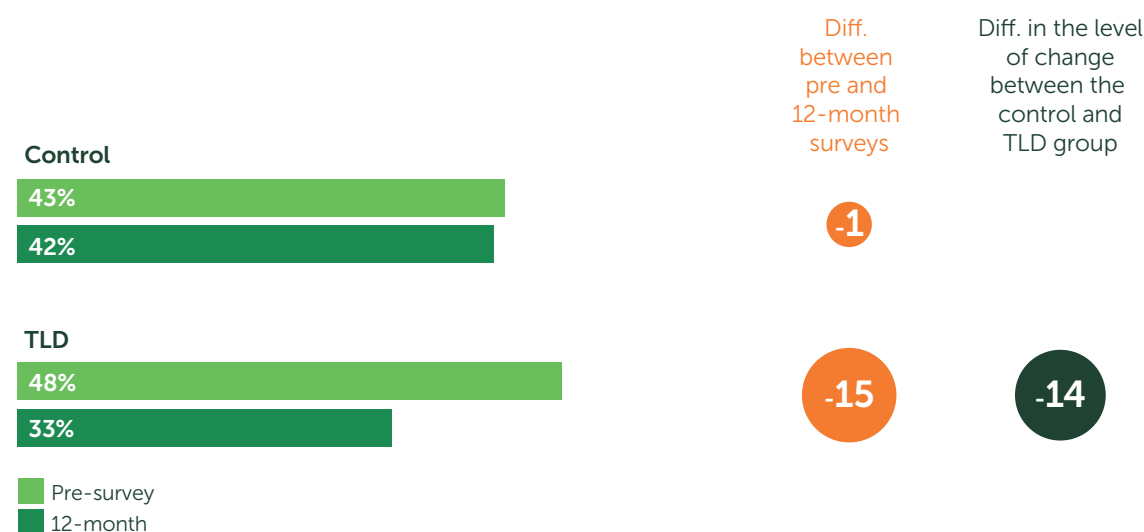
An area where TLD has had a significant impact is around parents talking to their children about the fact that companies try to sell them things through advertising and some TV programmes.

- Overall, there was a one percentage point decrease in the proportion of control group parents who rarely or never talk to their children about selling through advertising.
- However, the decrease was significantly larger among TLD parents at 15 percentage points (from 48% before TLD to 33% 12 months after).
- This indicates that TLD is likely to have led to an additional 14 percentage point change.

When interviewed, one respondent said that since TLD she is trying to instil in her children the idea of saving and that you can't have everything you want which is on the whole successful – however she does find the increase in TV advertising around Christmas to be a challenging time.

Separately to TV adverts, some parents reported that their children had developed an awareness and understanding of the value of money which was apparent when visiting shops with the families. On these visits they were able to ascertain special offers and value for money. For example, one child when visiting the shops looked specifically for a certain cereal bar which she only buys if it is on offer and therefore good value for money, if it is not then she won't buy them as they are 'too expensive'.

**Figure 7.1: Change in the proportion of parents agreeing that they 'rarely' / 'never' speak to their child regarding the fact that companies try to sell them things in adverts and some TV programmes**



Base: TLD parents (138), Control group (130)  
 How often do you talk to your child about the fact that companies try to sell them things in adverts and some tv programmes 'rarely'/'never'

## 7.2 Talking to children about spending decisions

The survey did not pick up any significant differences in the overall likelihood of TLD parents to discuss their spending decisions with their children compared to the control group.

In the qualitative research, one family felt that TLD had been a significant wake-up call and as such began to discuss money more with their children, to the extent that they not only introduced pocket money for their children but the parents also used it as a mechanism for themselves to control their spending, so all members of the family had 'pocket money' as limited, available spending money.

## 7.3 Frequency of discussions around saving

There were also no significant differences in the frequency with which parents discussed their spending choices or how to save up for something you want with their children in the TLD group compared to the control group.

In the qualitative research, one parent reported that conversations around saving are being reinforced by her child's school where they operate a 'savings club'. In this case, the child takes money into school each Wednesday which goes into a savings account. This holistic approach of money management being encouraged both at school and at home was reported as being successful as the messages are reinforced outside of the household.

## 7.4 Talking about where money comes from

Although in the quantitative surveys there were no impacts observed between the control and TLD groups with regards to how often they discuss where the money in their household comes from, there were some instances of this reported in the qualitative interviews with TLD parents.

For example, one parent, who was already talking to her child about money, now makes sure that she uses everyday simple activities such as using the shower to illustrate where money comes from and explain it is used to buy things that they want but also things which they need. She also uses this technique to link money and spending to the need to work to earn money to reinforce the concept that money doesn't 'grow on trees'.

*"I've always spoken to her about money anyway but actively now I make sure that she knows where money comes from and in this household now, if she's in the shower, she knows exactly what we're using when we're in the shower, we're paying for water, gas and electricity so she's got to be careful what she's doing with that because Mummy's got to go out all day long to earn that money, it doesn't just grow on trees or get handed to you, you have to work hard to earn that money."*

Parent, North Wales

## 7.5 Focus on discussions around using cash

The money-related discussions that parents are having with their children are nearly always based on the use of cash rather than cards.

When asked, parents often said that attending TLD has prompted them to use cash more in their everyday spending whereas previously they would use a debit or credit card for everything. The main reason for this is that parents often remember the 'Modelling Money' activity in the TLD session and are keen to improve the visibility and 'real' aspect of money for their children in encouraging them to associate money with value and using physical coins or notes has been an often effective way of doing this. A lot of parents took away the message from TLD of how important it is for children to associate buying things with 'real' money.

It would appear that parents feel more comfortable having money discussions with their children when it is cash rather than using a card or contactless method. This could be because they feel more confident in explaining money in this way. This demonstrates the potential for future interventions to include advice and recommendations for how to also talk to children about money when it is in a bank account and therefore accessed by a card or online method, rather than just using cash.

*"The key thing they explained in that class was the actual physical giving of money as opposed to just buying things on a card. Where the children have no appreciation of us paying for something on our card. They never touch or felt the money or gave it in or experienced losing money when you give it in."*

Parent, North Wales

A common theme coming through the qualitative visits was that one concept children struggled to grasp, and parents found difficult to explain, was credit and debit cards and understanding where this money comes from.

*"Cash machines and contactless is confusing for her, as it makes her think there is more money around than there is."*

Parent, South Wales

As shown throughout this report, there has been an increase in parents explaining how money works and giving children the experience of handling money themselves to increase understanding. However, parents highlighted that explaining debit and credit cards, along with other abstract things such as paying rent is still difficult.

*"Trying to explain a bank account isn't easy at all. They seem to think we live in a house and that we don't need money for that. Trying to explain how much rent actually is, is very hard."*

Parent, Mid Wales

This therefore could be an area for development within TLD, to give parents more advice on how to increase their children's understanding of this and encourage them to expose their children to other methods of paying as well as cash.

## 7.6 Family agreements regarding money

The survey did not pick up any significant differences between the control group and TLD parents in terms of whether they have family agreements in place regarding money. However, evidence from the qualitative interviews indicates that there have been some changes in this area.

One key example of agreements surrounding money is pocket money. As previously discussed, there was clear evidence of parents giving pocket money more regularly and this was often based on agreements parents had in place with their children. For example, one family had started a sticker chart system where good behaviour and doing chores earned them stickers. Once they then had a certain number of stickers, they would be entitled to their pocket money.

Further findings from the qualitative visits included some parents stating that, since attending TLD, they had agreements in place with other family members in relation to money and their child. For example, one parent asked their child's grandparents to change the approach they took to buying their child things to make it more consistent, such as on a weekly basis, rather than every time the child asked for something.

Another parent gave a similar example with regards to their ex-partner, where they encouraged them to have more of a regular pocket money system when giving the child money.

# Parents' attitudes towards money

## 8. Parents' attitudes towards money

### Summary

- Although not the primary focus of TLD, there is evidence TLD has had a positive impact on some parents' attitudes towards money.
- This is mainly in the form of parents who have struggled with debt in the past and were prompted by TLD to take steps to improve their own financial situation, having come away from the TLD session feeling that it had been a 'reality check'.
- Overall, TLD parents have seen an additional 15 percentage point decrease in their levels of overindebtedness when compared to control group 12 months after attending TLD.

Whilst the TLD session is not aimed directly at changing parents' financial capability, various attitudes towards money were measured to see if these changed over time.

The qualitative phase of the research has uncovered that nearly all parents feel that their own spending habits and attitudes towards money stem from their perception of their parents and their own upbringing. This is true both of those parents who feel that they were already confident in making financial decisions and those who were less so.

When parents were asked if there is anything they hope that their child will do differently in the future, this feedback tended to be centred around saving and being well prepared for the future and avoiding debt as an adult – long-term goals.

*"I don't think we did have conversations about money about finances before the session. I think we just used to stick everything on the credit card. It's just too easy to stick a holiday on a credit card"*

Parent, North Wales

### 8.1 Acknowledgement of financial issues

Some parents reported that until attending TLD, they felt that they had been 'burying their heads in the sand' when it came to household spending and debt. This came in the form of spending on credit cards and not acknowledging mounting debt and bills.

Such was the impact of TLD on some parents and their own financial situations that they have gone on to make significant improvements to their own spending behaviour and subsequently this has led to the family being either better off or with less credit card debt. One parent described TLD as a 'reality check' in terms of their household credit card spending with another calling it a 'wake-up call'.

*"You keep borrowing and never pay it back and then real debt problems start. It just gets worse and then you leave nothing for the children - I realised I can't have everything you want whenever you want it."*

Parent, North Wales

Since attending TLD, there is evidence of some parents being far more proactive and hands-on in the management of their household finances and are now much more engaged with exactly how much is coming in and going out of the house account, compared to before.

### 8.2 Changes in spending and saving habits

The qualitative visits evidenced a number of ways in which parents have adopted new behaviours in order to better manage their finances. These largely centre around reducing credit card spending and putting in place a budget, particularly when it comes to food shopping. Some parents had previously not planned their weekly food shop, instead spending unnecessarily which led to wasting both money and food. Since attending TLD, they plan meals and base their weekly shop around this in order to ensure they are not wasting money. Better budgeting habits are considered to be a good proxy for better savings behaviours in that both are key indicators of financially capable behaviours. In particular, building resilience has been shown to be the most important component to improving longer-term financial security and both budgeting and saving contribute to this.<sup>32</sup>



*"We have a weekly budget now for food and other things we need. Whereas before it was a case of going in the supermarket and putting whatever in the trolley. Buying random things for the sake of it."*

#### Parent, North Wales

One parent gave the example that since attending TLD, they have adapted the way in which they make larger purchases such as their sofa. This demonstrates how their approach has changed in that they are now reluctant to take on any debt and are proactively looking for solutions in order to minimise this and keep on top of their outgoing expenditure.

*"We worked out that we were paying £60 for a sofa a month. we gave it back and got a loan from mum for £200 for a new sofa and paid it back in four months."*

#### Parent, North Wales

Parents were asked the extent to which they feel that keeping up with bills and credit card statements was a burden and whether they have fallen behind on, or missed, any payments for credit commitments in the previous 6 months.

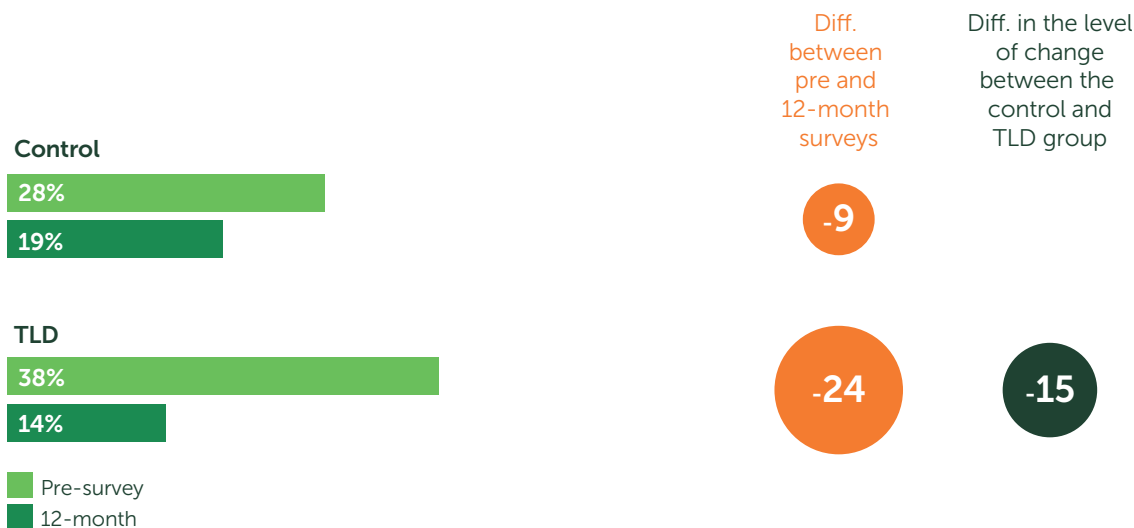
Taken separately, there were no differences between control group parents and TLD parents. However, these questions are used to generate the Money Advice Service measure of overindebtedness, with parents who stated that either they felt keeping up with bills/credit commitments was a heavy burden or that they had fallen behind on/missed any payments being classed as overindebted.

*"It made me do an income expenditure form and be more honest about my debt. I've contacted my debtors to arrange payments"*

#### Parent, South Wales

As shown in Figure 8.1, overall, there was a nine percentage point decrease in the proportion of control group parents who could be considered overindebted. However, the decrease was significantly larger among TLD parents at 24 percentage points (from 38% before TLD to 14% 12 months after). This indicates that TLD is likely to have led to an additional 15 percentage point change.

**Figure 8.1: Proportion of parents who could be considered overindebted**



Base: TLD parents (138), Control group (130)  
Chart show proportion of parents classified as overindebted

There was no significant impact of TLD on parents saving behaviours when asked at the pre-survey and 12-month survey how often they save money. Though evidence presented from the qualitative visits in this chapter, regarding budgeting indicates that some families may have improved saving habits.

### 8.3 Increased communication with friends and family

Prior to TLD, some parents reported that money was not something they found easy to discuss with their families and friends and that it was a difficult subject to broach and so they therefore skirted around the problem.

*"A few years ago, I would hide letter and bills and that doesn't help, now I share more with friends and family."*

Parent, South Wales

In certain cases, parents were not regularly talking about money or household finances as it was a source of disagreements or stress and easier to avoid completely.

There is also evidence that some parents had proactively discussed money and giving pocket money to their child with extended family members such as grandparents in order to try to introduce consistency into children's understanding of money and when they have it.

*"They [grandparents] are well off and they like spoiling, but I did ask them to change things round a bit as it was causing some problems around tantrums when I didn't buy her things she wants. Needed a more coherent approach from everyone."*

Parent, South Wales

### 8.4 Seeking further help

Although there were no differences between the control and TLD parents when they were asked if they had sought various forms of further help with money in the last 12 months, in some cases when we spoke to parents in qualitative interviews, attending TLD had prompted parents to seek further help in order to address concerns or stress which they felt about money. One parent went on to seek help from Citizens Advice after attending TLD with the intention of putting a plan in place to reduce their debt. This has been successful, and they have now significantly reduced the money owed to debtors and they have been able to stop borrowing.

This therefore highlights the importance of signposting to wider help and is something TLD could really

contribute to by offering this signposting to those attending the session and their wider family.

Along with the information given at TLD and the parenting programme, one parent felt that the support given was very important and since attending, she has gone on to raise awareness of parenting programmes and support networks for parents. This parent was already confident with money and making financial decisions, and so initially had reservations about the value of the session. However, after completing TLD, she felt it could benefit all parents.

*"I think there is an awful lot of parents who are sitting in my position who don't know where to go, that's what I'm realising now that yes I'm privileged because I've been on that parenting course but there's any awful lot of people out there that haven't and need support in some way"*

Parent, North Wales

#### CASE STUDY: TLD PROMPTING A CHANGE IN HOUSEHOLD FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

For one family, attending TLD prompted a couple to talk about their financial situation for the first time in a number of years. A few years of paying for holidays and days out on credit cards had left them in denial of the level of debt they were in and so they made a decision to review their finances and how much they had individually been spending.

Consequently, they decided to cut back on holidays and having takeaways, explained to their two oldest children (11 and 9) why this was, and introduced a pocket money system so that everyone in the house clearly understood both how much and when they would receive pocket money. Making these changes, and being clearer that children are expected to buy what they want with their pocket money, meant that a year after TLD, the parents had significantly reduced their credit card debt.

*"It was a big eye opener for us as to how we had money, treated money, looked after money. We were rubbish and we were quite shocked. That was a big lesson for both of us really. That's when we started introducing the pocket money and things changed a lot with our finances and it was because of [TLD]. Without that we wouldn't have introduced the pocket money and how we manage money now"*

Parent

# Conclusions and delivery implications

## 9. Conclusions and delivery implications

**A year after delivery, Talk, Learn, Do has shown an impact on several important outcomes.**

**From a single two-hour session, TLD has been successful in changing parents' attitudes.** Parents completed the course feeling that they should involve their children in money (talk about the importance of saving, involve them in family spending discussions and manage their own day-to-day money) at a younger age, compared to before TLD when many held the belief that good parenting means sheltering children from discussions about money. These changes have sustained long after the course.

**Attending a TLD course also equipped parents with ideas and tools to start these kinds of conversations.** TLD parents were more likely to report increased knowledge about talking to their children about money than those in the control group.

**There is also evidence that as a result of attendance parents were more likely to give their children opportunities to handle their own money.** Most notably, there was a larger increase in TLD parents providing their child with regular pocket money in comparison to the control group. The receipt of pocket money gave their children the opportunity to make decisions (and mistakes) in the use of money within a safe environment.

**Parents who attended TLD then reported that their children showed better capability in terms of understanding of handling their own money and being able to save** than those in the control group.

Although not a key aim of TLD, attending a session seems to have had a **positive impact on parents' attitudes and behaviour around their own money management.** The TLD group were more likely to show a reduction in the proportion of parents considered overindebted compared to the control group.

**In addition, the evaluation has shown the process used for the delivery of TLD to be extremely effective.** Attaching the TLD module to the end of an existing programme meant that the sensitive topic of money was only broached once participants had the opportunity to build a **trusting relationship with the practitioner** and with each other. Both participants and practitioners highlighted the importance of **being comfortable enough to discuss money topics and hearing others opinions, sharing views within a group** as invaluable components of the course.

It is worth bearing in mind that these have been observed within the context of specific parenting programmes that are used in Wales which have specific demographic profiles and referral pathways. This means that the same results would not necessarily be observed in other contexts throughout the UK. However, it seems likely that similar findings could be achieved if TLD were embedded in other similar programmes in similar locations.

No differences were observed between the different formats of parenting programme which TLD was delivered through. **TLD was just as effective in both settings** and may therefore be effective in other similar settings. The messages of the TLD module were felt to resonate well with those of the rest of the two parenting programmes.

Practitioners found the materials helpful, and gave **overwhelmingly positive feedback** regarding the session. Practitioners were involved in the design of the TLD sessions and this engagement contributed to the success of the initiative.

One of the challenges of TLD delivery was finding enough space within the term to extend the existing courses by an additional week and some practitioners struggled to fit all of the content within the two-hour session. **Ensuring that TLD fits with existing programme structures will be a key consideration moving forwards.**

Parents also fed back that the Modelling Money activity encouraged them to use cash to increase the visibility of 'physical money' in order to teach children about the value of things. There is potential **scope in the future to adapt TLD content to also equip parents with ideas of how to discuss other spending options with their children** such as paying via contactless methods or by card and online purchases as parents found it more difficult to introduce or explain money in intangible or digital forms.

There were also some areas where TLD did not seem to make an impact, including children's ability to explain choices they make when they spend money, parent attitudes towards ages at which certain money conversations and experiences take place and the proportion of parents who have family agreements about money in place. There is scope to potentially **strengthen messages in the course around these outcomes where impact hasn't been seen.**

Overall, TLD has been well received by both practitioners and parents and has seen positive impact in a number of key areas. **This has built a strong foundation for any future delivery and has flagged a small number of areas that could be considered to improve ease of delivery and expand the potential impact.**

The Money Advice Service are considering these delivery implications, and wider policy and commissioning implications of this evaluation of TLD. They will be publishing a paper to accompany this report setting out their conclusions. Findings from this evaluation will inform the Money Advice Service's future Children and Young People Financial Capability Commissioning Plan, which will include consideration of the possible future roll-out or further testing of approaches focused on parents, and influencing policy focused on wider support for parents and families.

# Methodological Appendix



## 10. Methodological Appendix

### 10.1 Background

Between January 2016 and May 2017, the Money Advice Service (MAS) piloted Talk, Learn, Do (TLD) in Wales, a 2-hour parenting intervention intended to encourage parents of 3-11-year olds to talk to their children about money and create opportunities for their children to experience managing money. The overall aim of TLD was to help parents improve children's financial capability so that they are equipped to manage their money well in the future.

The evaluation of TLD was part funded by Big Lottery Wales and was delivered throughout Wales<sup>33</sup>, with 14 local authorities delivering a total of 154 TLD sessions during the pilot<sup>34</sup>. TLD was primarily delivered via two 10-week parenting programmes: Incredible Years (IY) and the Family Links Nurturing Programme (FLNP).

### 10.2 Setting up the pilot

Wales was selected as MAS already had established links with practitioners and children's centres in Wales from previous work and there was also interest from Big Lottery Wales to provide funding. An additional factor was that financial inclusion is a key objective of the government in Wales and they already fund services offering parenting programmes.

Family Links and Incredible Years were selected as they are both 10-week, structured programmes delivered widely across Wales. They have a similar ethos to TLD in that they are aimed at improving parent and child relationships and are focused on attitudinal and non-cognitive skill development. Family Links and Incredible Years are also targeted at parents of 3-7-year olds which is the right age for TLD (which is aimed at parents of 3-11-year olds).

Children in Wales were commissioned to identify and recruit suitable parenting programmes because of their close working relationship with partner organisations and local authorities in Wales. TLD was delivered in 14 local authorities through a total of 154 sessions. All 22 were invited to take part in the evaluation, of which 21 did so. The list in table 10.1 breaks down the list of partners and local authorities that delivered TLD.

**Table 10.1 Intervention group delivery organisations by local authority**

Local authority	Delivery organisation
Anglesey	Flying Start
Caerphilly	Action for Children
Cardiff	Action for Children Barnardo's Flying Start Women Connect First SHINE project/TAFF housing
Carmarthenshire	Flying Start
Ceredigion	Jig-so Children's Centre Flying Start Penparcau Family Centre Llandysul Family Centre Lampeter Family Centre
Conwy and Denbighshire	Family Support Service
Conwy	Action for Children Betsi Cadwaladr Health Board Flying Start Llanrwst Family Centre
Denbighshire	Action for Children
Flintshire	Flying Start Ysgol Gwynedd
Monmouthshire	Flying Start
Newport	Barnardo's Family Support Team Flying Start
Powys	Action for Children Maesyrhandir School
Rhondda Cynon Taff	Flying Start
Vale of Glamorgan	Flying Start
Wrexham	Families First

<sup>33</sup> 21 out of 22 local authorities in Wales took part in the evaluation, the one local authority (Gwynedd) that did not take part were originally meant to be part of the control group but were unable to conduct this in the evaluation timeframe.

<sup>34</sup> The remaining 7 local authorities did not deliver the TLD session and were included in the evaluation as part of the control group (see Section 1.1 for further information).

**Table 10.2 Control group delivery organisations by local authority**

Local authority	Delivery organisation
Blaenau Gwent	Flying Start
Bridgend	Action for Children (Flying Start) Action for Children (Families First)
Cardiff	CF ACE CF STAR Danescourt Primary School
Flintshire	Ysgol Caer Nant
Merthyr Tydfil	Parenting Team Social Services
Neath Port Talbot	Flying Start SGO
Pembrokeshire	Pembroke Dock Community School
Rhondda Cynon Taf	Homestart
Swansea	
Torfaen	Flying Start Communities First
Vale of Glamorgan	
Wrexham	Flying Start

Areas were either control or intervention groups depending on multiple factors. Most courses were offered to be a control group before intervention however some local authorities were recruited as control only in order to ensure that there were enough local authorities taking part as a control group as some issues were encountered ensuring high enough numbers of control participants. Other factors influencing whether a group was control or intervention include whether or not practitioners attended or received the TLD training, though it was widely offered and whether the parenting programme that TLD was added to were able to accommodate an additional week either at the end or as the penultimate week of the course. The control and intervention groups also covered a range of demographics throughout Wales.

## 10.3 Designing TLD Content

The content of the TLD session was designed over several stages to ensure the best possible fit with the IY and FLNP parenting programmes.

Quaker Social Action (QSA) were commissioned to design TLD, as they had previously delivered their own financial education programme (Made of Money).

Representatives from MAS and QSA attended a FLNP training course to understand how it works and ensure that TLD was similar in its design. As a result of this, TLD uses similar language such as 'choices and consequences'. The activities in TLD were designed to meet outcomes sought in the logic model and in line with the current parenting programmes.

There were some challenges involved in the design process in that FLNP and IY owners did not give permission for content to be added to each week of the programme as this would affect the fidelity of the course. Therefore, it was added as an additional 2 hour session in the penultimate or final week of the course and designed to link back to previous weeks.

A further design challenge stemmed from a structured follow-up for participants not being possible for recontacting participants. Instead, an information booklet was handed out to parents at the end of the session in both English and Welsh to participants, outlining other ways in which they can teach their children about money.

## 10.4 Profile of parenting programme attendees

Where the programme is delivered tends to influence how participants start attending the programme and the demographics of the people that attend. Those in a family centre generally accept a higher number of referrals from social services, Flying Start professionals or other agencies (at one this accounted for 70% of attendees on the programme), though self-referrals from parents who were already attending the centre and had built up a relationship with the practitioners were also common. Where the parenting programme is held at an external venue, this was generally advertised more widely in the community via leaflets and posters at primary schools, doctors and health visitors and word of mouth was also an influential factor. Consequently, these were attended by a broader range of parents - one of the parenting programmes being delivered via a school accepted any parent with a child under 25.

## 10.5 The Process Evaluation

The Process Evaluation aims to understand how individuals join Incredible Years (IY) and Family Links Nurturing Programme (FLNP) and therefore how representative they might be of parents more generally. It also seeks to understand whether there are differences in how the TLD module is incorporated into IY and FLNP and therefore to what extent it is valid to treat the evaluation as an evaluation of a single programme. Finally, the process evaluation focuses on how comfortable practitioners felt delivering the TLD module and how parents participating in the sessions engaged with the content.

The process evaluation was made of up multiple qualitative and quantitative elements with stakeholders, practitioners and parents:

- 10 in depth interviews with key stakeholders involved in the design and delivery of TLD.
- 15 in depth interviews with practitioners
- 20 in depth interviews with parents (10 face to face and 10 by telephone)
- 8 observations of TLD being delivered
- 132 training evaluation forms from practitioners who attended a TLD training session
- 50 completed online interviews from the practitioner feedback survey
- The collated views of practitioners attending workshops at two celebration events in Wales once delivery had finished

A breakdown of interviews and observations conducted as part of the process evaluation is shown in table 10.2 below.

**Table 10.2 Interviews and observations conducted by area**

	Practitioner interviews	Parent interviews	Observations
North Wales	8	0	1
Mid Wales	1	6	3
South Wales	6	14	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>8</b>

## 10.6 The Impact Evaluation

The impact evaluation aimed to measure the impact of the TLD module on parents' attitudes and behaviours by comparing any differences in the levels of change in views of parents who attended a TLD module (henceforth referred to as the 'TLD group') with a similar group of parents who attended the parenting programme but did not attend a TLD module, as it was not incorporated into the course they attended (the 'control group'). They were surveyed at four key points of the evaluation:

- A paper survey at the start of their parenting programme (the 'pre-survey');
- A telephone survey six months after their parenting programme finished (the '6-month survey');
- A telephone survey 12 months after their parenting programme finished (the '12-month survey');
- Extended qualitative interviews with 10 families comprising interviews with both parents and their children and ethnographic observation.

### 10.6.1 Approach

Both the TLD group and the control group were surveyed at three points of the evaluation. At the start of their parenting programme they were invited to complete a paper survey (the 'pre-survey') and then invited to take part in a similar survey conducted by telephone six months after their parenting programme finished (the '6-month survey') and then 12 months after completing the parenting programme (the '12-month survey'). Comparing survey responses indicates whether there are any **differences in the levels of change** among both groups (a difference-in-difference approach). For instance, if the views of the TLD group have changed considerably between both surveys, and the views of the control group have not, this indicates that the TLD course content has had a positive impact.

This approach was taken to account for any changes in the responses of either the control or the TLD group over the research period which may have been for reasons other than attending TLD. For instance, parents may have started doing something differently after attending the wider parenting programme, in response to their child getting older, or as a result of other campaigns in Wales.

## 10.6.2 Response Rates

TLD was delivered to approximately 1,000 parents<sup>35</sup>.

The first survey was the pre-survey, parents were asked to complete a survey before the TLD session those that completed were:

- 760 parents who attended TLD (76% of attendees);
- 754 control group parents.

TLD parents were asked to fill in a paper survey following receiving TLD, the post-survey:

- 617 parents took part (62% of attendees; 81% of those who took part in the pre-survey).

At both the pre-survey and the post-survey, parents were asked to give follow up permission and provide valid contact details in order to be recontacted to take part in a follow up interview.

At the 6-month point:

- 411 TLD parents were in the starting sample, as they had agreed to be contacted for this stage of the research (41% of attendees; 54% of those who completed the pre-survey);
- 380 control group parents were in the starting sample, as they had agreed to be contacted for this stage of the research (50% of those who completed the pre-survey)<sup>36</sup>;
- A total of 228 TLD parents then completed the 6-month survey, and 201 control group parents.

This is shown in figure 10.3 below, along with the response rates.

**Table 10.3 6-month survey response rates**

	Number of interviews achieved at 6 months	Response rate at 6 months (%)
Control group (380)	201	53%
TLD group (411)	228	55%
Overall response rate (791)	429	54%

After taking part in the 6-month survey, parents had to again give permission to be recontacted to take part in the 12-month survey. As well as this, those agreeing to take part in follow up research at the pre or post survey who did not complete the 6-month survey were included in the starting sample for the 12-month survey.

- A total of 529 parents agreed to take part and had valid contact details at the 12-month survey (284 TLD parents and 245 control group parents);
- A total of 268 parents took part in the 12-month survey (138 TLD parents and 130 control group parents).

This is shown in figure 10.4 below, along with the response rates.

<sup>35</sup> This figure is approximate due to a number of intervention groups where attendance was estimated. This figure was calculated by using number of parents that attended each session provided by Children in Wales (in Spring 2016 and Summer 2016) and by practitioners who delivered the session (in Autumn 2016 and Spring 2017). Where there were gaps in actual attendance figures, the projected number of parents expected to attend these sessions were used. Using these figures suggests a total TLD attendance figure of 1,003 parents. As there was some missing data, calculations have been undertaken to produce a lower end and higher end number of parents who received TLD:

- Lowest number of parents – by populating these missing courses with the lowest number of attendees per course (three parents), and adding these to the known attendance figures, 793 parents are likely to have received TLD.
- Highest number of parents – using the number of parents predicted to have attended the TLD sessions gives 1,295 parents as an upper boundary for number of parents likely to have received TLD.

<sup>36</sup> The starting sample for the 6-month survey was lower than anticipated due to lower proportions of parents agreeing to be contacted for follow up research. Further encouragement from practitioners as parents completed the pre-survey could potentially have increased this. This was flagged during fieldwork and as a result practitioners were given further briefing and consent rates increased as fieldwork continued.

**Table 10.4 12-month survey response rates**

	Number of interviews achieved at 12 months	Response rate at 12 months (%)
Control group (245)	130	53%
TLD group (284)	138	49%
Overall response rate (529)	268	51%

Therefore, considering the final response rate amongst TLD parents, there was an overall estimated response rate of 23% for the 6-month impact evaluation, with 228 of the c.1,000 parents who received TLD completing the 6-month survey. The overall response rate for the 12-month survey was 14%, with 138 of the c.1,000 TLD parents who received the intervention completing the 12-month survey.

It is worth noting that parents were often reluctant to answer the phone to unknown numbers, which contributed to slightly lower response rates than anticipated at both the 6-month and 12-month survey.

### 10.6.3 Child surveys

Alongside the follow up interviews with parents, we also invited the child of participating parents (who was closest to the age of 7 if multiple children) to take part in a short survey at both 6 months and 12 months after parents had attended the TLD session.

The survey included questions to measure the child's awareness and behaviours around money such as whether they are able to differentiate between wants and needs, where they believe money comes from and whether they are involved in any spending decisions (either for their own money or for family decisions).

As this survey was only completed post-TLD, the results of have not been included in this report as there was no baseline from which to measure impacts and no difference was seen between the control and intervention findings.

Response rates are shown in the tables below, given as a proportion of the number of parent completes at each wave.

**Table 10.5 6-month child survey response rates**

	Number of surveys completed at 6 months	Response rate at 6 months (%)
Control group (201)	87	43%
Intervention group (228)	116	51%
Total (429)	203	47%

**Table 10.6 12-month child survey response rates**

	Number of surveys completed at 12 months	Response rate at 12 months (%)
Control group (130)	52	40%
Intervention group (138)	73	53%
Child surveys (268)	125	47%

### 10.6.4 Significance Testing

Since the data used in this report is derived from a sample survey, it is therefore subject to statistical error. Figures in the report therefore have an error margin.

To give a worked example, if the survey suggests that 50% (the value at which the margin of error is largest) of all parents hold a certain opinion, the standard error at the 95% confidence level is  $\pm 6.35\%$  per cent. We can therefore say we are 95% certain that the proportion of parents holding that opinion is between 43.65% and 56.35%.

All findings in this report are significant at a 95% confidence level with the exception of the pocket money figures which are significant at a 90% confidence level.<sup>37</sup>

Throughout the report, differences between sub-groups and between the pre and 12-month surveys have only been commented on if the differences are statistically significant.

<sup>37</sup> In the original version of this report the findings concerning pocket money were reported as significant at a 95% level. Further analysis by IFF Research following publication identified an error in the calculation of this figure and this has now been corrected.



## 10.7 Methodological Challenges

### Inconsistencies in delivery

The consistency in the delivery of TLD content was monitored as far as possible through the observation of some TLD sessions.

In a small number of cases, practitioners were not able to spend all the allocated time on the final activities (particularly Pocket Money Discussions and Money Discussions) to avoid the session over-running. Differences were also reported in the extent to which practitioners talked participants through the booklets they were given to take home, with some suggesting that this did not happen or was rushed.

Variations in the level of follow-up support provided by different parenting programmes may also mean that TLD has more of an impact on some participants than others. Some practitioners tried to maintain the relationship with participants after the course had finished by offering follow-up face-to-face meetings (44%) or follow-up phone calls (36%) with participants after the course had finished to check if they had any queries or needed further help. Whilst practitioners were not instructed to follow-up on the TLD week specifically, but these conversations do offer an additional opportunity to discuss this or potentially signpost to further information and advice if necessary.

After reviewing the feedback from practitioners, participants and the findings from the observations, it seems that TLD was largely delivered as planned, and therefore shortening the activities should not have a major impact on the data.

### Data Collection

In terms of the logistics of conducting the evaluation, one of the main concerns was ensuring that high quality data was collected, both in terms of survey data from participants and practitioners.

TLD was designed for a universal audience, however integrating it into IY and FLNP has resulted in surveying often much higher need participants (i.e. parent/carers and grandparents) than anticipated because of the nature of the parents that they work. This has had some implications in terms of data collection, firstly some parents did not have the necessary literacy skills (both in terms of reading age or because English was not a participant's first language) to complete the survey which meant that practitioners often had to spend a long time assisting with completion or offering one-to-one support. Secondly, this means that the evaluation findings need to be presented as impacts of TLD on the

specific population of parents that attended a parenting programme. Given that it is likely any future delivery of TLD is likely to be based within a parenting programme, this does not have a bearing on the evaluation findings but does make it more difficult to generalise the results to the parent/carer population as a whole.

Another issue faced throughout the pilot, was the importance of keeping the control and intervention groups separate, i.e. ensuring that none of the participants in the control sample later attended a TLD session. From depth interviews with participants, we know it is common for them to attend more than one parenting programme, but the risk of this has been minimised by thoroughly checking the sample to ensure that participants do not appear twice, and completely removing the data for any participants that appear in both the control and intervention groups. As an extra precaution, at the start of the 6- and 12-month surveys, all participants are asked about whether they have attended any other parenting programmes, and if so are asked follow-up questions to check whether it included anything about money to ascertain whether they should be removed from the data.

The only other risk to the impact evaluation data, is separating the impact of TLD from any other experiences that may affect a person's attitudes towards money or talking to their children about money. For instance, attending the TLD session, or even completing the self-completion questionnaire which asks questions about personal finances, may have prompted participants to seek money advice or guidance. This is measured at the 12-month survey for both the control and intervention group in order to monitor this.

It is also worth noting that not all parents who attended a TLD session took part in the evaluation. There were a number of factors influencing this including parents not attending each week of the course and therefore missing either the pre or post-session survey which was handed out. If parents did not accurately record their contact details or give follow-up permission, we were also unable to recontact them for either the 6-month survey or the 12-month survey.

Subgroup analysis was conducted to check whether there were any differences in the level of change observed depending on whether parents attended either the FLNP or IY parenting programmes. No differences were found meaning that TLD sessions have generated the same level of impact regardless of the parenting programme it was integrated into.



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