

An evaluation of the
21 Together
'Teach me too' project

By TONIC

Author – Justin Hill

Version – Final v1.1

Contents

1. Executive Summary	2
2. Introduction	3
3. Teach me too – a brief history to date	5
4. Findings	10
5. Theory of Change	14
6. Limitations to the Evaluation	16
7. Conclusions and Recommendations	19
Appendix A – Stakeholder Interview Schedule (Parents)	22
Appendix B – Stakeholder Survey Schedule (Parents & Professionals)	24



1. Executive Summary

This report provides an evaluation of the 21 Together 'Teach me too' project and its effectiveness in educating and empowering children with Down's syndrome and their parents. 10 parents were interviewed on a range of subjects related to the provision at 21 Together (see appendix A for question schedule), and 18 people¹ took part in an online survey. Additionally, a range of qualitative and quantitative data returns were requested from 21 together.

In the undertaking of this evaluation, it has been clearly demonstrated that the 'Teach me too' project is delivering important and well-received education, support and guidance to children and their families which clearly supports children in preparing for their early years and key stage one journeys. The service also plays a critical role in empowering and educating parents to develop their own differentiated learning and play within the home. Furthermore, parents clearly feel better equipped to advocate for their children with a range of services to ensure that their child receives the support that they need in order to succeed in educational settings.

Four core themes emerged from our interviews that underpinned the evaluation:

1. Engaging young people
2. Supporting parents and impacts on the family unit
3. Advocating for children & informing services
4. Suggestions to strengthen the service further

There seems to be several critical ingredients that enable the 'Teach me too' to work well and have an impact:

1. The videos are written by experienced, specialised professionals and are based on widely validated academic and educational standards
2. The production length and pace of the videos is well considered for the audience
3. The production quality is sufficiently high as to engage and hold the attention of children
4. The musical introduction acts as an appealing reference point for children
5. The presenters are engaging, and children connect well with them
6. Where it has been provided, the supplementary resource pack has proved valuable for parents to continue and personalise play and learning opportunities for their child
7. Where other similarly aged siblings were present in the home and watched the material there was a noticeable impact on play and communication styles between children in the family unit.

There were several challenges to the project's effectiveness that were identified. These were:

1. Engagement levels of the parents was the driving factor in how many carried on syndrome specific learning at home
2. Some parents expressed a frustration with the sequence of videos within the Vimeo library and also with the number of times a password was required
3. Some parents would like more regular communication as a reminder to use the project.
4. Parents would also like content that is directly aimed at improving their skills.

¹ This data has not been included in the main body of the report as there are insufficient responses for us to draw any conclusions yet. However, the responses to date are included in the appendix.



There are several recommendations on how the 'Teach me too' can build on the work that they have already delivered, and also plan for the continuing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the nation-wide roll out of the service:

1. Establish a communication strategy for subscribers
2. Regularly survey end-users
3. Create resource packs for all subscribers
4. Develop family, school, and professional specific content
5. Create an expansion strategy for future educational content.

2. Introduction

TONIC was commissioned by 21 Together to undertake an evaluation of their 'Teach me too' project as it transitions from a Kent based service to a national one.

Specifically, 21 Together wanted to know to what extent the 'Teach me too' project provides an online, accessible resource, to empower families, teachers and children to understand and adapt to the challenges that Downs Syndrome presents to learning, whilst also building confidence and independence in young people. Additionally, 21 Together wanted to know if educators, professionals and families were further empowered to develop strong connections within the Down's community and to engage and advocate more confidently in the future as a result of the project.

Initiated in the early days of the national COVID-19 lockdown of 2020, 21 Together reports positive anecdotal evidence and positive returns for the 'Teach me too' project but also noted it had not yet been formally or comprehensively evaluated.

This evaluation represented an opportunity to generate an evidence base to support and inform 21 Together's 'Teach me too' strategy going forward. It is also envisaged that the evaluation findings could be used to inform the work of other priority areas that are implementing similar projects and approaches.

The 'Teach me too' project was rolled out nationally on the 24th December 2020. However, this evaluation is focussed on the initial Kent based project with the review of the national rollout to follow in the summer of 2021.

2.1 Methodology

To undertake an evaluation of the 'Teach me too', we utilised a range of methods:

- Qualitative interviews with parents (n= 10)
- Online survey of parents and professionals (n= 18)²
- Thematic analysis of data supplied by 21 Together
- Theory of Change development with 21 Together input

By using multiple sources for the evaluation, we were able to triangulate our findings, and assess independently if there was evidence to support what was being put forward by 21 Together as a rationale for the project.

As ever, with evaluation work and qualitative data, the aim is to recruit until reaching data saturation. That is, the researchers are hearing the same messages across interviewees and sources.

² This data has not been included in the main body of the report as there are insufficient responses for us to draw any conclusions yet. However, the responses to date are included in the appendix.



3. Teach me too – a brief history to date

In March 2020, the UK entered its first Covid-19 lockdown, with severe restrictions placed on the public and services in relation to social interaction and face to face contact. These conditions had, and continue to have, a serious impact on the ability and capacity of support services to deliver effective provision to their clients.

As a response to these conditions, 21 Together and two specialist providers – Key Communication and Inclusively Down collaborated to provide a series of video training resources to replace the face-to-face teaching programmes that had previously been delivered to pre-school children with Down's Syndrome, and their parents/carers. This project, named 'Teach me too' has been running since June 2020 across the county of Kent. Initially this was provided as a paid service for those parents who had already paid for the face-to-face lessons but quickly expanded to become a free service for any family in Kent who wanted to access the resource. The project has been well received and since the 24th December 2020, has been rolled out across the UK. This evaluation deals with the Kent based element of the project, with the national evaluation to following the summer of 2021.

The key takeaways of the 'Teach me too' initiative are:

- Video library of short videos delivered directly to the children
- Each stage has 20 videos between 10-15 minutes
- 10 Videos are produced and led by Inclusively Down (specialist teachers)
- 10 Videos are produced and led by Key Communication (specialist speech therapist)
- All videos are designed to use the strengths of learning for children with Down's syndrome and to target key areas of the curriculum
- The videos can be watched independently by children but work best when an adult supports them. They can then use the techniques to continue learning at home or in school
- Two stages have been produced so far.

The background and philosophy to the 'Teach me too' project is described by 21 Together in the following statements:

"To provide a highly specialised education and therapy video library, for children with Down's syndrome, their families and the professionals who support them. This project was produced as a reaction to supporting families during the first lockdown that was enforced due to Covid-19, the feedback and reaction has been so overwhelmingly positive that we have continued to build the programme. It has become very clear that these videos are not only vital to support families during this time of reduced access to education and therapies, but they also can play an important role in furthering the education and knowledge of families and staff for generations of children with Down's syndrome. The videos provide a robust approach to improving outcomes for a whole generation of children with Down's syndrome in Kent and beyond."

"The programme was initially designed as a response to the Covid-19 pandemic to replace the face-face sessions for pre-school aged children. It is now very clear that this resource benefits many children at a variety of ages. Children with Down's syndrome are not all the same, the progress at different rates and have a varied level of need. Each stage of the library will remain based on skill stages and not age, all our children work at different paces and using a stage approach means we can benefit a much wider group of children / young people and ensure that

no child is left behind. Sometimes it can be easier to build services that cater for the more able in our community! So often parents of older children who are working on skills considered “Early Years,” feel left behind. This resource is about helping to build those skills no matter what your age and coming together to build a future where we respect and nurture children at all levels of education.”

“By empowering families and professionals to support the children and young people to achieve their potential and enable them to access the specialist services they desperately need we can make real impact on the future lives of these children. By raising expectations and standards we can improve communication, school readiness, cognitive learning outcomes and social inclusion. These are all vital building blocks to living a full and vibrant life in which your community values your contribution.”

“Those children that have access to specialist intervention can often reach school age with age-appropriate reading levels or at least significantly higher levels of school readiness. We know that children with Down’s syndrome do better in nearly all areas when they receive an appropriately differentiated mainstream education. One of the key barriers to this can be behaviour, readiness to learn and attendance to tasks. By having the appropriate support and level of understanding around them, we can enable children and young people the best possible starting point for mainstream education and therefore to access the best possible outcomes in the long term.”

The content, structure and delivery of the videos is grounded in academically and professionally validated methodology. Some of the core literature used includes:

- The Developmental Journal for Babies and Children with Down Syndrome (Down Syndrome Educational Trust & DfES, Crown publications 2006)
- Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) (British Association for Early Childhood Education, Crown publications 2012)
- PIVATS - Performance Indicators for Valued Assessment and Targeted Learning

The video suite has also benefitted from being shot, edited and produced professionally.

The videos are available as a suite on the Vimeo streaming platform. Users need to apply to 21 Together and once approved are issued with a username and password in order to gain access to the content.

21 Together have identified the following key impacts as integral to the project’s success, and we have used these as our benchmarking questions in the interviews and survey as well as in the theory of change model.

Impact One: Improved access to specialist teaching/therapy

In recent years’ children and young people with Down's syndrome have been accessing mainstream opportunities as well as specialist schools. Research has shown that children with Down’s syndrome exhibit a specific learning profile of strengths and weaknesses and that we can use these strengths to design and implement interventions appropriate to their needs. These strategies are not widely acknowledged and used in settings unless they have sought specific training from experts. Due to the population size this is often something that is not done by education setting or early year’s practitioners due to funding restrictions. This service will allow families and professionals to easily access practical

resources demonstrating these approaches and will link these families and professionals into services where we can provide more information and support.

Impact Two: Children will have improved verbal and/or non-verbal communication skills, emotional regulation and self-esteem

The videos will allow us to start building the essential building blocks of communication from an early age. Specialist syndrome specific therapy will help children and young people with their speech, their intelligibility, using communication aids and their signing skills. Communication is made up of a complex range of skills, including speech, signing, comprehension, situational understanding and so much more. Using total communication systems including signing and use of low tech AAC (Augmented and alternative communication) / visuals. This focus on making the children and young people understood has many impacts. It is known that a lot of challenging behaviour comes from not being understood so having a system to make yourself help will prevent some level of challenging behaviour.

Impact Three: Families, schools, and professionals will be more empowered to carry on syndrome specific learning at home or in another setting, which includes developing the confidence to advocate for their child with the relevant service/education providers

Families and professionals are also vital within this project. Families are often still coming to terms with their new path in life, they are navigating the often-challenging education SEND systems and adjusting to life with their new babies or school aged children. Empowering parents/carers to develop their knowledge that gives them the confidence to advocate effectively and persistently on behalf of their child is a valuable outcome for this service.

3.1 Usage summary and distribution

Since its launch in May of 2020, and up to the 23rd of December 2020 when the service went national, the 'Teach me too' video library received 424 unique viewers and a total of 4,520 views from families in Kent. Of those total views a total of 69% of videos were completed by the end user. These are shown in figures 1-3 on the following pages.

The majority of end users accessed the video library from a tablet, however it is important to note that there was some feedback during the interview process that end users were then casting the content to a Smart TV in the home.

Initial Device	Number of unique views
Tablet	2044 (45%)
Desktop/laptop	1352 (30%)
Phone	1009 (22%)
TV Apps	115 (3%)



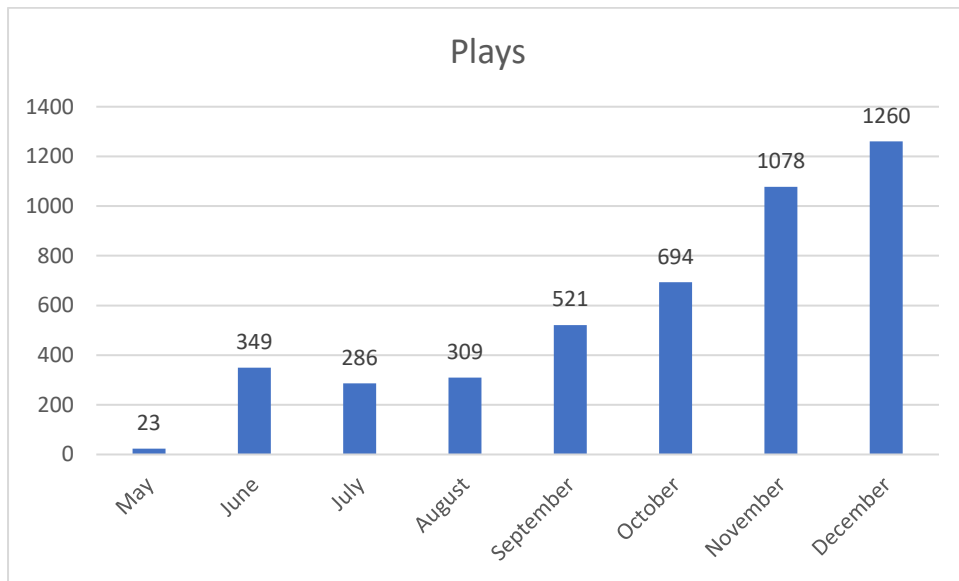


Figure 1 - Number of unique video plays

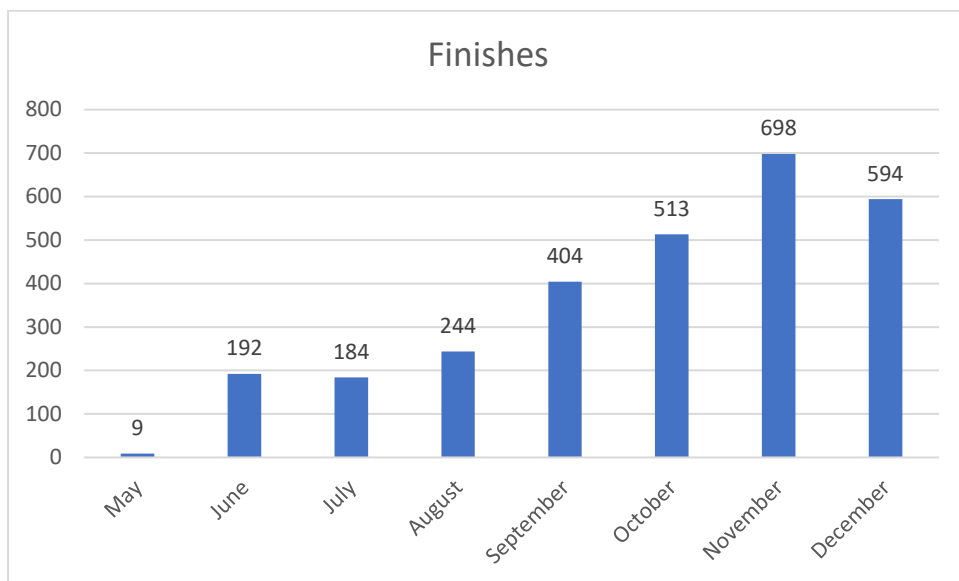


Figure 2 - number of unique videos completed



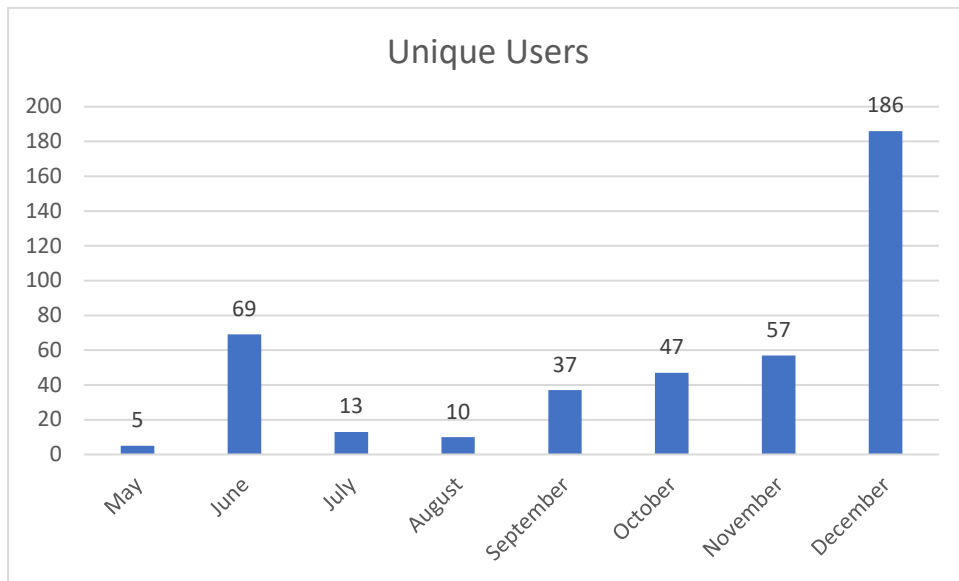


Figure 3 - number of unique end-users

4. Findings

The findings section has been organised thematically rather than separated into differential sources of feedback (e.g. parents, educators & professionals). This is because, across each method that was used for this evaluation (interviews, survey, report analysis, theory of change development), there were cross-cutting themes and important topics that permeated throughout:

- Engaging young people
- Supporting parents and impacts on the family unit
- Advocating for children & informing services
- Suggestions to strengthen the service further

These themes are explored in more detail below, using quotes to ground evidence wherever possible.

4.1 Engaging young people

All the parents that we interviewed reported that the videos had a positive impact on their child, particularly relating to communication skills. Many parents spoke movingly about the increased capacity and eagerness of their child to communicate, either verbally or, more frequently, by signing as a direct result of the content.

“I think she's been doing more signs (sign language). And she's definitely understood the signs. And that she has, yeah, got understanding of the concepts. Yeah, I think the concept that's that where we watch them, especially a number of times, I feel like she's getting it more and probably getting it quicker than she would be if you hadn't been watching the Teach me too videos. Also, things like big and little, like those concepts that I've definitely seen her understand that more, and be able to communicate that kind of like, I don't want the little chocolate, I want the big chocolate.”

[Parent via interview]

“He's signing, he's doing a lot more signing! I can't say he's not speaking, he, he does speak, but his words aren't clear. But he's doing it a lot more. When we're doing kind of games like, matching and things. He will (vocalise & sign) and I really noticed when he's watching it, he knows the signs now. He anticipates doing them before they're done. He's not necessarily spontaneously using them to communicate as much, but he's definitely building up a kind of his own little library in his head of the signs.”

[Parent via interview]

Parents that were interviewed were less clear about how much impact they had seen on the themes of emotional regulation and self-esteem. It was expressed by many that they had only recently come to use the videos and that it was difficult to assess the impact on behaviour at this early stage. It is worth noting however that most parents believed the impact on emotional regulation and self-esteem was likely to be positive, but over a lengthier period of time than had currently elapsed.

Many parents discussed how helpful the project had been in terms of providing them with access to specialist teaching for their child during the lockdown when all face-to-face services had been

suspended. This was described as a 'godsend' by some, whilst others said that they were unsure about how they would have coped without the project.

"It's that continual learning aspect that I've seen him grasp, and he's getting really into it"

[Parent via interview]

4.2 Supporting parents and impacts on family unit

There was clear and consistent consensus from parents that the 'Teach me too' project had supported them in understanding better the educational challenges faced by their child. They also spoke at length about how the project gave them tools and ideas that helped them develop family and child-specific learning opportunities. This, in turn, made parents feel empowered and less anxious about the future for their child.

"...And I think when you've got a child with Down syndrome, straightaway, you feel, you kind of feel like some of your control is taken away because it is an unknown. And this for me, it felt like I had to be much more productive than I was with my other two, I suppose you put more pressure on yourself to be more productive. So, it (teach me too) was really good in giving us tips and thinking about different, more specific ways to work with him. I felt like I needed to be more focused. And it really helped with that, with the kind of activities and things."

[Parent via interview]

"Because it can be hard as a parent, you know to understand that we are doing the best for him. I think that if we didn't have it, we will probably be more worried that we weren't, but with the teach me too videos and using them to direct our approach we feel much more reassured that we are really helping him."

[Parent via interview]

The perceived inadequacy of existing NHS services, and the lack of knowledge that they possess in relation to Down's syndrome, was a common theme amongst parents. The 'Teach me too' project was clearly a vital intervention for many, if not all parents, during the lockdown period, with many saying that they would continue to use it in conjunction with face-to-face support once social distancing rules are relaxed.

"I feel the services available to the NHS are not nearly adequate enough, they're not even close to be the support he needs. And then we had lockdown on top. And so that was like a quarter of his life. For six months, he didn't have any kind of input from any of the limited therapists, or therapy. So it really it felt like for us that we were still doing something for him so I really feel that just some ways it relieves some of our anxiety about what he was missing. Yeah, and I think it really did just give us the tools that we felt we could support him in that period as well."

[Parent via interview]

One element of the 'Teach me too' project that was of particular benefit to families was the impact that the videos had on siblings of a similar age, who also watched the sessions. Where this was the case, parents identified the positive impact that this had on both the children as a whole, with siblings frequently using language and techniques learned in the videos as part of their play.

"And I think, especially when we got the resource pack through they (siblings) were really excited to do it with him. And they're really excited to get him to like to get out some of the bits and do the activities that they learn from the program. So they do do that a lot more. They'll play with them, and interact with him more in rather than just rough and tumble way where they're, they're actually trying to support him and teach him as well. So that's really nice."

[Parent via interview]

"And I think with her sisters, having that knowing what she's watching and, you know, watching it with her and then being able to relate to them, knowing what she's learning in a sense. Her sisters realising that 'Okay, this is the things that she's working on right now big and little, she's working on heavy and light.' They realize this and it slips into everyday play, you know, kind of like 'Oh, look - this thing's really light.' And they talk about it, you hear it come into their play, hearing come into their interactions as they're playing. They can just absorb it without even realising that they're doing it. don't think they're intentionally doing it but because they've watched it and heard it before it seeps into them, and then they're helping reinforce that with my daughter. So, I see the benefit of that and I see that helping her, you know, absorb the material even more, because there's that kind of continuation of it beyond the videos."

[Parent via interview]

4.3 Advocating for children and informing services

Almost every parent we spoke with emphasised that the 'Teach me too' resource had given them the extra knowledge, capacity and confidence to assert themselves with support services. This ability to advocate successfully on behalf of their child was highlighted as a key driver in obtaining the correct, tailored support for their child along with empowering the parent and making them feel that they were doing a good job as a mother or father.

"I can go into school now properly aware you know - this is how he works, this what you need to do – they've never had a downs syndrome child before and they were clueless. They've really listened though and adjusted what they do for him, and it's worked really well."

[Parent via interview]

"It's a whole rollercoaster of a journey and there isn't much help out there, but this brings the parents up to a level of understanding and competency where they can go into the school and say, right, this is what he does, this is how he learns, this is what works for him. So it creates this kind of this really beautiful smooth pathway into education."

[Parent via interview]

"I'm a nurse and I still struggle at times when I'm in the kind of role as parent to my son when you're sometimes, not that you're dismissed, but you just don't always have the confidence to kind of request, or demand, what they need. Because as a nurse in the NHS, I know that you do have to demand things or you won't get it. And I think it does give you the confidence and skills like I've said, because we didn't have any input from speech and language (therapists) over the lockdown. So then I basically demanded an appointment. And it really did give me that confidence that he does need this input. He deserves his input, he should be getting it. Because we are his advocates you know, there's only me and his dad who are gonna kind of speak up for him. So yeah, I think definitely, it gives you much more understanding of people with Downs syndrome and how they learn."

[Parent via interview]

4.5 Suggestions to strengthen the project further

There were a range of suggestions to further improve the 'Teach me too' project. A significant proportion of parents felt that the content was already perfect and were keen to obtain the resource packs to support them in adapting more fully the theories and examples in the videos.

Another perspective was put forward that placed the parents at the centre of the project, rather than the child. This view suggested that the 'Teach me too' project development should focus heavily on engaging parents to fully utilise the content and methodology in the first instance, as the interviewees felt that without that full parental commitment the impact of the project would be significantly reduced. Supporting parents in how to attune to their individual child's needs and profile, rather than simply approaching them as 'a child with Down's syndrome' was suggested as a future video for the project.

A substantial proportion of parents also wanted to see the breadth of learning in the videos extended to include a range of subjects:

1. Increase scope into key stage 1 & 2 from early years
2. Teach me too for how to use apps/technology (tablets/laptops etc)
3. Teach me too for siblings to support them in play and communication
4. Healthy eating and where food comes from
5. World/globe/geography
6. Expand into FE (further education) Ready for work – employability skills
7. Safety online
8. What is school ready?
9. Stories that underpin vocabulary usage and understanding

5. Theory of Change

As part of the evaluation, a collaborative theory of change (TOC) was developed for the 'Teach me too'. Due to the limitations of the COVID-19 lockdown, the initial theory of change was developed by TONIC and 21 Together at the beginning of the evaluation in order to identify the key themes to be explored in the interviews and survey. The TOC was then reviewed based on the results and, where appropriate, then revised accordingly.

A Theory of Change should give a 'two minute' story of a service or provision and should be considered as a tool to help describe the need a service is trying to address, the changes it strives to make and how this is achieved. A Theory of Change is an opportunity for a service to take stock and consider how it achieves its aims and present it in a digestible format. It works by first identifying the overall aim of a service and then working backwards asking, at each level, how is this achieved? This creates a series of building blocks that maps the change that a service user will hopefully experience through engaging with the 'Teach me too'.

We first considered the overarching aim of 'Teach me too', asking the question, at the end of it all, what is 'Teach me too' *really* trying to achieve? 21 Together's ambition is to deliver an online and accessible service that supports families in delivering improved early skills learning, whilst creating opportunities for families to continue this work in the home, whilst also empowering parents to engage and advocate with services more confidently in the future.

This led to the next phase of the Theory of Change, which considered how the overall goal was achieved through long term outcomes (e.g. Learners are more likely to reach school age with age-appropriate reading levels or at least significantly higher levels of school readiness and parents/carers have established robust support networks and feel competent to support others).

Theory of Change also permits consideration of the more tangible activities that a service offers that supports the development of these goals. For 'Teach me too' these include viewing the video content and making use of the resource packs where appropriate. The qualitative interviews allowed for the components of the Theory of Change to be triangulated and evidenced.

Theory of Change encourages services to think about the assumptions we make and the enablers (both internal, which can be managed by the service, and external, which are less within the parameters of control) and how this influences the ability to ensure that the overarching aim is achieved.

The progression route for children with Down's syndrome through the model is relatively straightforward in terms of their learning outcomes, although it cannot and should never be related to age as *'progress in all areas of development is affected in some way, with some aspects of development progressing faster than others – for example, children's social and emotional understanding and their ability to communicate non-verbally is often more advanced than their motor development or progress with talking'*.³ The content is based on, amongst other sources, 'The Developmental Journal for Babies and Children with Down Syndrome'. 21 Together characterise this approach as 'Stage, not age', which is entirely audience appropriate for this project.

³ The Developmental Journal for Babies and Children with Down Syndrome (Down Syndrome Educational Trust & DfES, Crown publications 2006)



The progression route for parents, educators and other professionals through the theory of change model has many parallels with the Conscious Competence Ladder, a framework for defining the stages that people progress through when learning new skills. Identified in the 1960s and then developed in the 1970s by Gordon Training International and others, the model offers a useful perspective on learning new skills that can be applied to parents engaged with 'Teach me too'.

The Conscious Competence model highlights two factors that affect our thinking as we learn a new skill: consciousness (awareness) and skill level (competence). When we learn new skills, we experience different emotions at different stages of the learning process. At the beginning, we may not realize how much we need to learn. Then, when we discover what we don't know about a subject, we may get disheartened, and we might even give up. Recognizing how we feel at each stage of the learning process can help us to "stick with it" and manage these emotional ups and downs.⁴

Unconscious incompetence

The individual does not understand or know how to do something and does not necessarily recognize the deficit. They may deny the usefulness of the skill. The individual must recognize their own incompetence, and the value of the new skill, before moving on to the next stage. The length of time an individual spends in this stage depends on the strength of the stimulus to learn.

Conscious incompetence

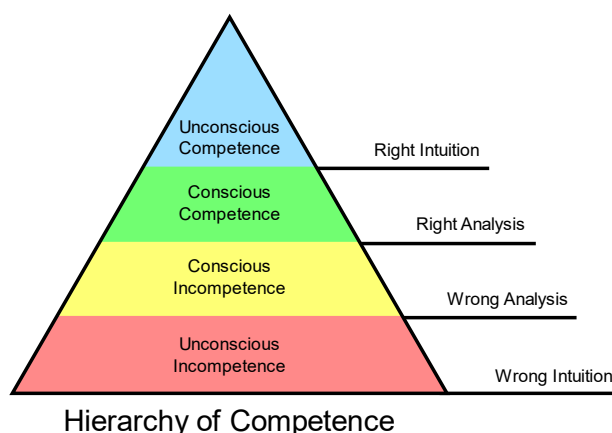
Though the individual does not understand or know how to do something, they recognize the deficit, as well as the value of a new skill in addressing the deficit. The making of mistakes can be integral to the learning process at this stage.

Conscious competence

The individual understands or knows how to do something. However, demonstrating the skill or knowledge requires concentration. It may be broken down into steps, and there is heavy conscious involvement in executing the new skill.

Unconscious competence

The individual has had so much practice with a skill that it has become "second nature" and can be performed easily. As a result, the skill can be performed while executing another task. The individual may be able to teach it to others, depending upon how and when it was learned.⁵



⁴ https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newISS_96.htm

⁵ Flower, Joe (January 1999). "In the mush". *Physician Executive*. 25 (1): 64–66



5.1 The 'Teach me too' Theory of Change: Intended Impact

The Teach me too project provides an online, accessible resource, created by sector specialists and speech therapists to deliver improved outcomes for a whole generation of children with Down's Syndrome in Kent and beyond. The project provides a sequence of early skills learning opportunities that improve communication, school readiness, cognitive learning outcomes and social inclusion. Teach Me Too empowers families, teachers and children to understand and adapt to the challenges that Downs Syndrome presents to learning, whilst also building confidence and independence in young people. Educators and families are further empowered to develop strong connections within the Down's community and to engage and advocate more confidently in the future.

Learner outcomes timescale based on individual assessment

Family outcomes timescale (6 months/12 months/2 years+)

Educator outcomes time based (3 months/9 months/1 year+)

Long term outcomes

- Learners are more likely to reach school age with age-appropriate reading levels or at least significantly higher levels of school readiness
- Learners show improved behaviour, readiness to learn and attendance to tasks
- Learners develop significant social attachments
- Parents/Carers have established robust support networks and feel competent to support others
- Educators have become advocates for effective & differentiated learning strategies that are normalised in their mainstream setting
- Educators (leadership & management) more receptive to effective & differentiated learning strategies to support attendance in mainstream settings

Intermediate outcomes

- Learners have improved verbal and/or non-verbal communication skills, including signing
- Learners have improved emotional regulation and self-esteem
- Learners have reduced incidents of challenging behaviour that is linked to not being understood
- Learners start to develop improved attention and focus, including eye contact
- Learners memory skills improve
- Parents/Carers are growing in confidence to advocate with therapists and educational settings for their child
- Parents/Carers becoming more adept at supplementing education in the home

- Educators are more likely to develop own teaching materials/find training courses/engage with local management to promote differentiated learning in mainstream classrooms

Short term outcomes

- Learners find activities fun and engaging
- Learners engage with repetition and over learning
- Parents are exposed to new strategies to learning – e.g. whole word reading programme
- Parents get access to immediate support & initial signposting from 21 Together website
- Educators are exposed to new strategies to learning for children with Down's syndrome, including the differences in effective engagement
- Educators are inspired to adapt strategies and revise lesson planning from Teach Me Too for their individuals and setting

Activities

- Stage one has two learning streams - Cognition and learning & Speech and language – both have 10 videos each
- It is recommended that parents watch these with their children and repeat several times

Enablers

- 21 Together website provides managed Portal to project resources
- Beneficiaries must have internet access
- Project promoted by 21 Together and other Downs syndrome charities, by NHS based speech therapists etc – marketing plan/strategy developed by 21 Together
- Free access for all – no-one is excluded on financial grounds
- Content is regularly reviewed and updated to reflect new methodologies and research outcomes – learners, families/support groups regularly surveyed and consulted.
- Project receives adequate funding for delivery

6. Limitations to the Evaluation

Although the COVID-19 pandemic and associated lockdown were the genesis of this project, they have also made evaluating it particularly challenging. It has been difficult to obtain sufficient numbers of respondents to our survey, particularly educators and professionals, which has a direct impact on the conclusions we can draw from the results to date. As such, we are going to include them, and make any associated recommendations at a later date in 2021 when an appropriate number of responses have been submitted.

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1 Conclusions

The questions that have been considered for this evaluation were as follows:

- Does the 'Teach me too' meet the stated objectives by 21 Together?
- If not, in what way could they moving forwards?
- What else could be added to the project to strengthen it further?

In the undertaking of this evaluation, it has been clearly demonstrated that the 'Teach me too' project is delivering important and well-received education, support and guidance to children and their families which clearly supports children in preparing for their early years and key stage one journeys. The service also plays a critical role in empowering and educating parents to develop their own differentiated learning and play within the home. Furthermore, parents clearly feel better equipped to advocate for their children with a range of services to ensure that their child receives the support that they need in order to succeed in educational settings. There seems to be several critical ingredients that enable the 'Teach me too' to work well and have an impact:

1. The videos are written by experienced, specialised professionals and are based on widely validated academic and educational standards
2. The production length and pace of the videos is well considered for the audience
3. The production quality is sufficiently high as to engage and hold the attention of children
4. The musical introduction acts as an appealing reference point for children
5. The presenters are engaging, and children connect well with them
6. Where it has been provided, the supplementary resource pack has proved valuable for parents to continue and personalise play and learning opportunities for their child
7. Where other similarly aged siblings were present in the home and watched the material there was a noticeable impact on play and communication styles between children in the family unit.

There were several challenges to the project's effectiveness that were identified. These were:

1. Engagement levels of the parents was the driving factor in how many carried on syndrome specific learning at home. These levels of engagement varied, even in the same household.
2. Some parents expressed a frustration with the sequence of videos within the Vimeo library and also with the number of times a password was required.
3. Some parents would like more regular communication as a reminder to use the project.
4. Parents would also like some content that is directly aimed at improving their skills.

When we consider the 3 desired impacts identified by 21 Together, the following conclusions have been reached:

Impact One: Improved access to specialist teaching/therapy

This impact has clearly been met. All parents that were interviewed expressed strong satisfaction that their children were able to access teaching and learning that was tailored to the needs of their child.

This impact was further demonstrated by the feedback from some parents regarding the further customisation of the materials and theories that they themselves undertook with their child.

Impact Two: Children will have improved verbal and/or non-verbal communication skills, emotional regulation and self-esteem

Overall, this impact is partially met. Almost all parents reported that their child demonstrated improved verbal and/or non-verbal communication skills as a result of the videos. The impact on emotional regulation and self-esteem was less pronounced because of the relatively recent nature of the project, and the age of many of the children.

Impact Three: Families, schools, and professionals will be more empowered to carry on syndrome specific learning at home or in another setting, which includes developing the confidence to advocate for their child with the relevant service/education providers

This impact has been met to a large extent. Many parents, but not all, were confident to adapt and continue with syndrome specific learning and play at home. This seemed to hinge on how engaged the parent was with syndrome specific outcomes, and also how much time the parent was able to dedicate to the child. However, all parents said that they felt much more confident to advocate for their child with the relevant service/education providers.

Data analysis

To this point it has been difficult to reach a purely data informed conclusion on whether the 'Teach me too' meets the stated objectives. This is due to the low take up, to date, of the end user survey and the limited amount of impact data that is currently available from 21 Together. This element will need to be revisited later in 2021 when more information is available.

7.2 Recommendations

There are several recommendations on how the 'Teach me too' can build on the work that they have already delivered, and also plan for the continuing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the nationwide roll out of the service. These can be broadly categorised into the following 5 themes:

1. Establish a communication strategy for subscribers

21 Together should create a series of communications to be sent out to subscribers to the 'Teach me too' service. The aim with this strategy is to proactively engage all parents to do more than simply place their child in front of the videos, although many already do far more without need for encouragement. This should, as a minimum, cover a road map of the content, a regular email to remind users to access the service frequently, signposting for additional resources and perhaps a brief series of quotes/interviews with subscribers who have previously used the service to demonstrate its value to their family.

2. Regularly survey end-users

21 Together should create and regularly distribute an impact survey for parents, professionals and schools. This could begin with a benchmarking survey when subscribers sign up for the service which is then repeated at agreed intervals to measure progress and impact. This would provide 21 Together with some rich data that profiles the entry points for end users and the likely timescale for parents, professionals and schools to progress on to feeling capable and empowered, along with the impact of the supporting materials and information recommended in **point 4** below.

3. Create resource packs for all subscribers

21 Together should consider providing resource packs for all new subscribers. The feedback of those that received them has been universally positive and they have clearly supported parents in continuing syndrome specific learning at home. The effectiveness and impact of these packs, along with suggestions on how to continuously improve the content, can be judged through the survey process in **point 2** above.

4. Develop family, school, and professional specific content

21 Together, along with their content providers, should seek to create some parent, teacher and professional specific video content to support the project. It is clear that this is likely to improve the impact of syndrome specific learning at home or in another setting as well as educating and empowering adults to support others with this project. End users should be surveyed or engaged in a focus group to determine precisely what content would be preferred. The structure of this content can be linked to the Conscious Competence framework as discussed elsewhere in this evaluation.

5. Create an expansion strategy for future educational content

21 Together, along with their partner providers, should seek to respond to the clear appetite for additional material for the 'Teach me too' project. There has been a wide range of opinions on what ought to be created next, and 21 Together are advised to develop an expansion strategy to ensure that new content is not made 'piecemeal' or in response to individual requests. The national rollout of the 'Teach me too' project may also uncover additional topic requirements above and beyond the naturally expansion into the early years and Key Stage 1 & 2, and 21 Together should consider carefully how to address this.

Appendix A – Stakeholder Interview Schedule (Parents)

21 Together have commissioned TONIC Consultants to undertake an evaluation to assess the impact of the Teach me too project. As part of this we want to speak to stakeholders. The information you provide us will contribute to a report, and although we may use quotes from you, your name will not be used anywhere unless you give explicit permission for this.

Introduction and overview

1. How did you find out about the 'Teach me too' project and what has your level of involvement been, how long have you been using the service?
2. Why do you feel it specifically important to target, empower and educate parents in this agenda?

The project

3. In what way do you think the 'Teach me' too project is an important service in supporting parents and learners?
4. In what way do you think the 'Teach me too' project tackles some of the common issues that children with Down's syndrome present with?
5. One of the main objectives of the 'Teach me too' project is *'to empower families, teachers and children to understand and adapt to the challenges that Downs Syndrome presents to learning, whilst also building confidence and independence in young people.'* To what extent do you think this is achieved and how is this done?

What do you think are the key components/critical success factors in the 'Teach me too' project that make it effective?

The process

6. How easy did you find it to register and then use the video library?
7. Some early users of the service received a pack of support materials. Did you received these and if so, how did you find them? If not, would they be helpful in the future?

Outcomes

8. What changes, if any, have you noticed in your child after using the 'Teach me too' resources?

9. Do you feel that the 'Teach me too' project has made a difference to you as a parent? If so, how? If your child didn't engage in the video themselves did you find them useful to gain ideas and insights into how to adapt your interaction or play with them?
10. Has the 'Teach me too' project helped you in advocating for, or advising, other services in what works best for your child?
11. What has been the biggest benefit of the 'Teach me too' project for you? Have there been any drawbacks?
12. A key outcome of the 'Teach me too' project to make children with Down's syndrome 'school ready'. Is this something that you think has been achieved?

The future

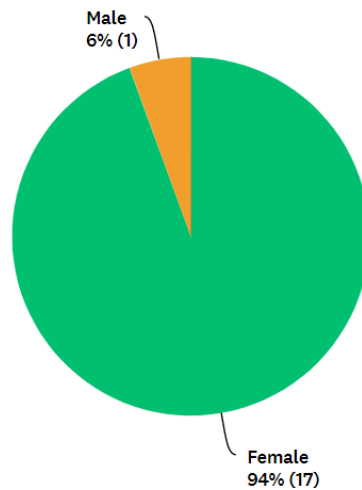
13. What do you think could be added to the Teach me too program to strengthen it further?

Appendix B – Stakeholder Survey Schedule (Parents & Professionals)

1. What is your gender?

What is your gender?

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



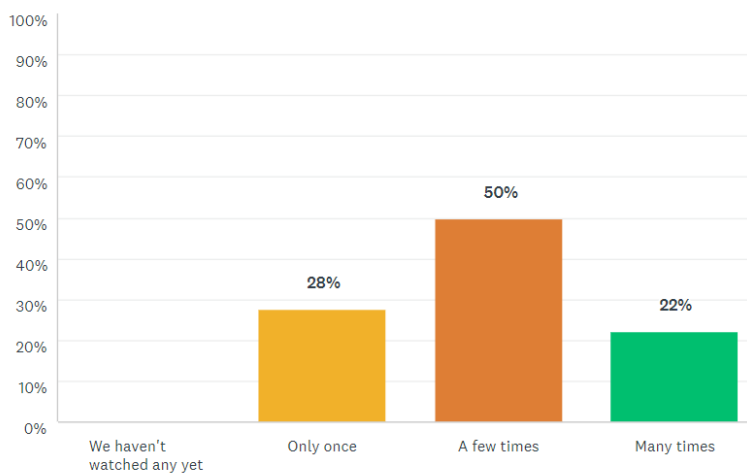
21 Together - Teach me too

🔍 (0)

2. About how many times did your child(ren) watch each video?

About how many times did your child(ren) watch each video?

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



21 Together - Teach me too

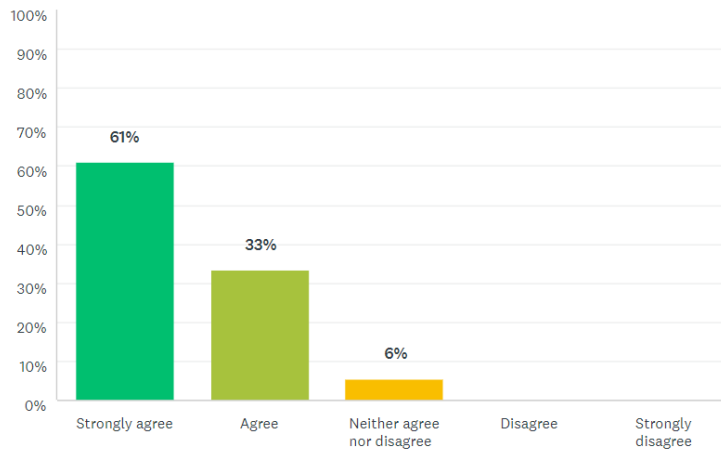
🔍 (0)



3. Did your child(ren) find the videos fun and engaging?

Did your child(ren) find the videos fun and engaging?

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



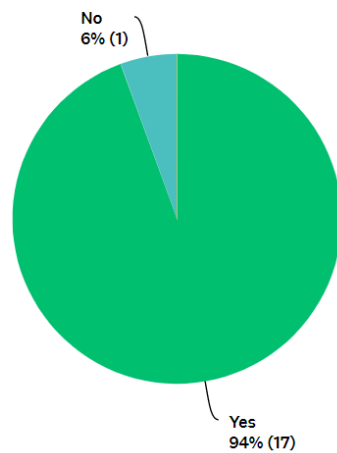
21 Together - Teach me too

🔍 (0)

4. Did you discover some new ways of learning for your child(ren)?

Did you discover some new ways of learning for your child(ren)?

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



21 Together - Teach me too

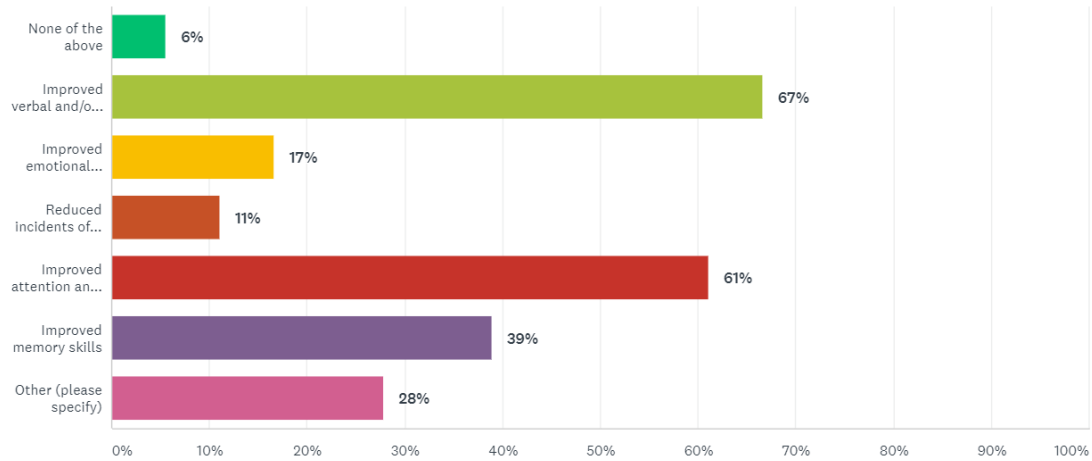
🔍 (0)



5. What changes have you noticed in your child(ren) since you started using the videos? (Tick as many as apply)

What changes have you noticed in your child(ren) since you started using the videos? (Tick as many as ap...

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



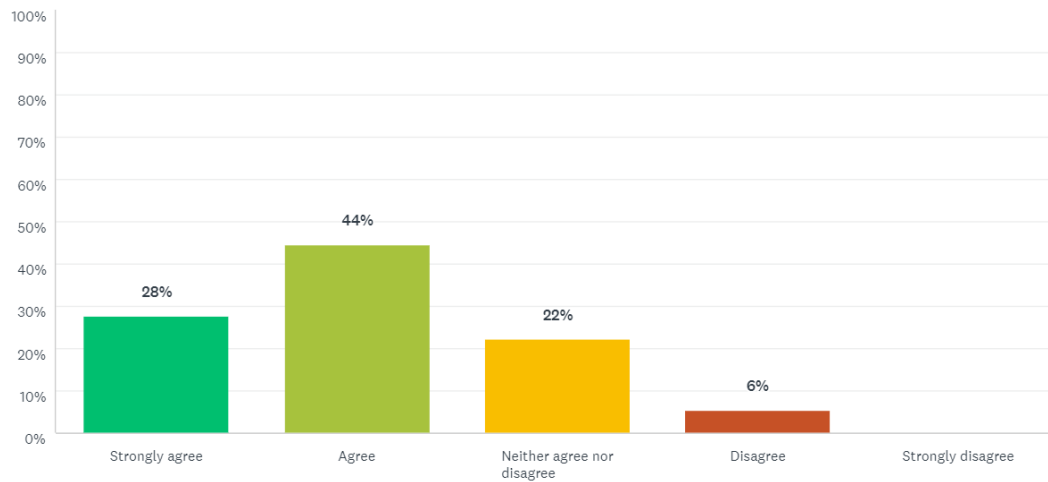
21 Together - Teach me too

🔍 (0)

6. Since using the videos I have grown in confidence to advocate with therapists and educational settings for my child(ren)

Since using the videos I have grown in confidence to advocate with therapists and educational settings for...

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



21 Together - Teach me too

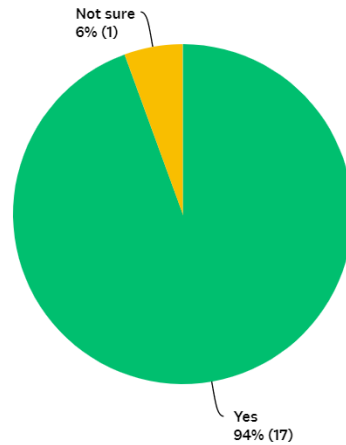
🔍 (0)



7. Since using the videos I am becoming more adept at supplementing my child(ren's) education in the home

Since using the videos I am becoming more adept at supplementing my child(ren's) education in the home

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



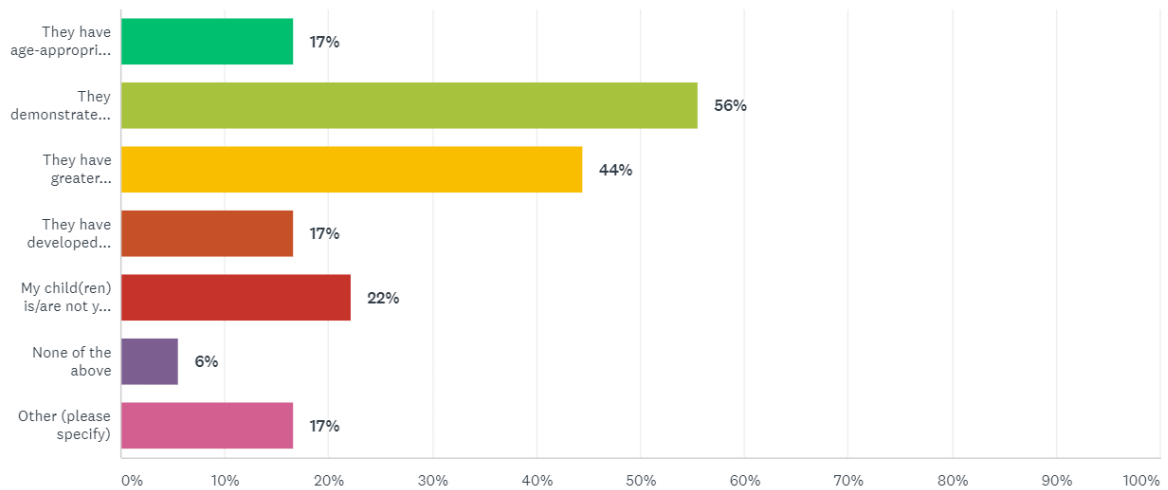
21 Together - Teach me too

🔍 (0)

8. Now that my child(ren) attend school, I believe that the 'Teach me too' project has contributed to the following behaviours that I see:

Now that my child(ren) attend school, I believe that the 'Teach me too' project has contributed to the foll...

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



21 Together - Teach me too

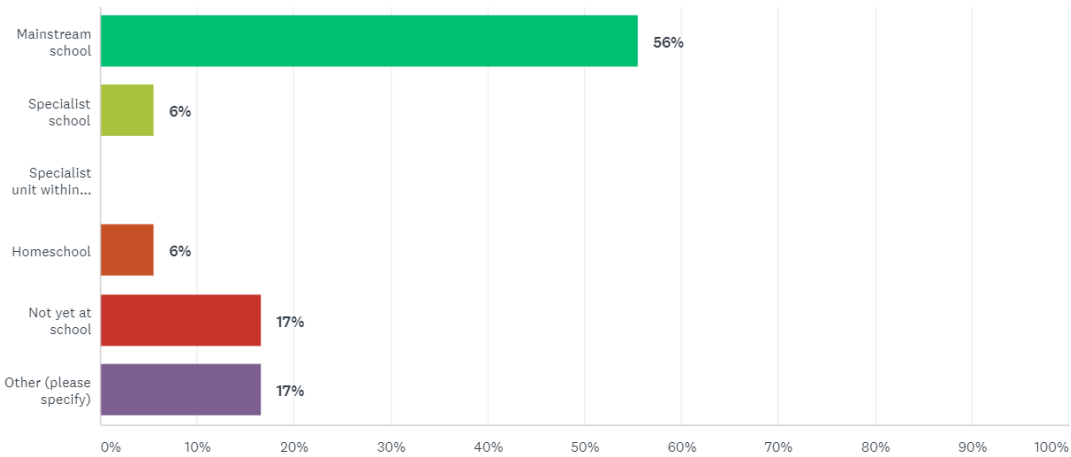
🔍 (0)



9. If your child(ren) is at school, what type of provision is it?

If your child(ren) is at school, what type of provision is it?

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



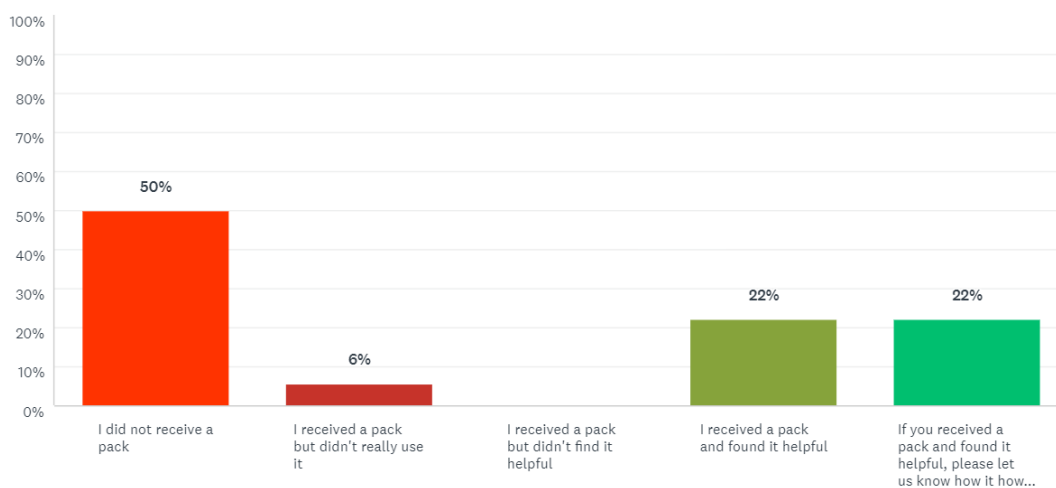
21 Together - Teach me too

🔍 (0)

10. Some families were provided with resource packs to compliment the video content when the project started. If you received one of these packs, please tick all of the boxes that apply:

Some families were provided with resource packs to compliment the video content when the project start...

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



21 Together - Teach me too

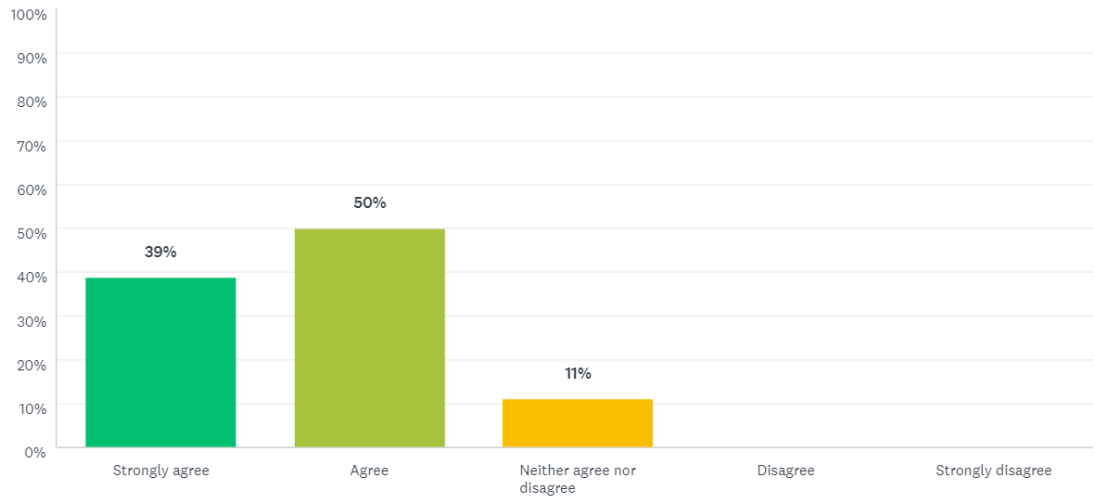
🔍 (0)



11. 'Teach me too' has helped me feel more confident as a parent.

'Teach me too' has helped me feel more confident as a parent.

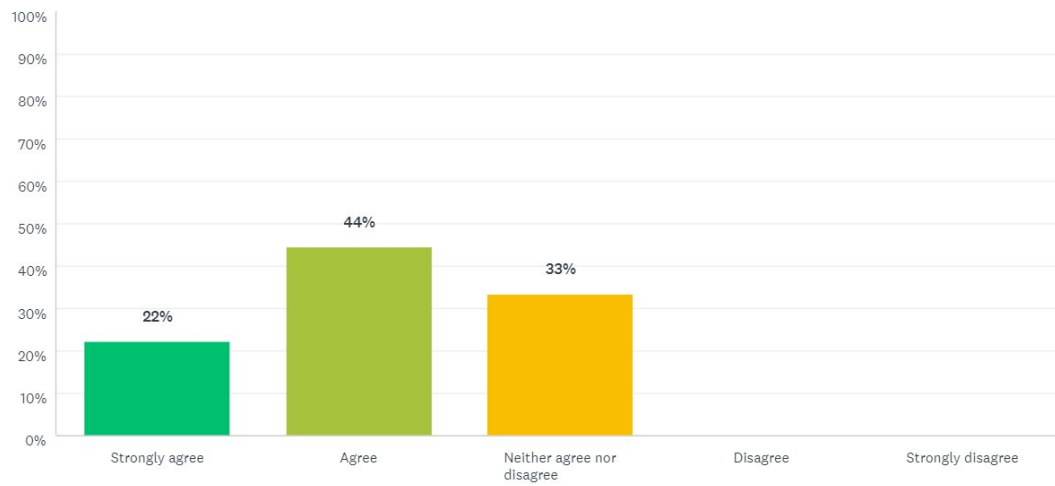
Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



12. 'Teach me too' has helped our family communicate with each other.

'Teach me too' has helped our family communicate with each other.

Answered: 18 Skipped: 0



13. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about 'Teach me too'? Do you have any suggestions about how the project could be strengthened further?

- We are new to the resources and expect things to only improve with them to refer to.
- Thank you very much for your project, it supported me in resources how to teach my child in homeschooling! I very appreciate your project and resources, just need to find more time to watch this videos with the child and be prepared!
- I loved the fact I could leave my son and go and make a tea or go to toilet and come back and he was still engaged. Normally he'd call out for me or come looking for me or have switched off once I'd left.
- Reminders to use the service maybe weekly would really help to keep the momentum going.
- When children leave school/college, getting prepared for the outside world/work. Healthy eating, etc.
- Great concept, it definitely needs to get to a wider audience so that we can help our children develop in the way that is best for them to learn so that they can all reach their max potential
- I will need to do some more session with little one before I can make more suggest. But I can tell we both really enjoy the resources you have provided to us, it makes learning fun for both of us. Thank you very much teach me too.
- I can't thank you enough for your hard and wonderful work. You are giving so much support and hope for our children.
- The project has provided our child better attention, and has focused for several videos while using the resources; something that they have never done before.
- It is incredibly engaging and well paced.
- The videos are great and just the right length in time.
- We have only used the videos once so far and immediately after watching my daughter was doing role play games inspired by the videos, so she had clearly paid attention and learnt from the content.

14. I have noticed a positive change in the learners I work with after using the 'Teach me too' videos

N/A

15. When i first used the 'Teach me too' videos, they gave me some new learning strategies for children with Down's syndrome.

N/A

16. I have been inspired to adapt the strategies and revise lesson planning from 'Teach Me Too' for my pupils.

N/A

17. 'Teach me too' has helped me become an advocate for effective & differentiated learning strategies that are normalised in my mainstream setting.

N/A



18. Are there any areas where 'Teach me too' was particularly effective? Are there any areas where the project could improve or be strengthened?

N/A

19. Have you, or would you, recommend 'Teach me too' to colleagues in other schools based on your experience of using it?

N/A