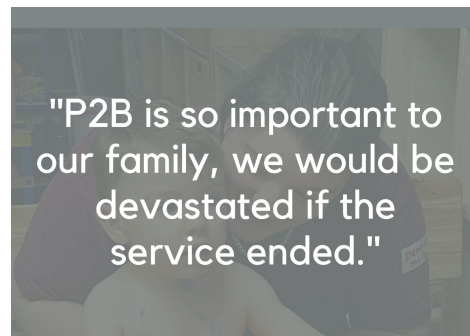


Impact Assessment Report Annual Consultation Findings 2023

Introduction

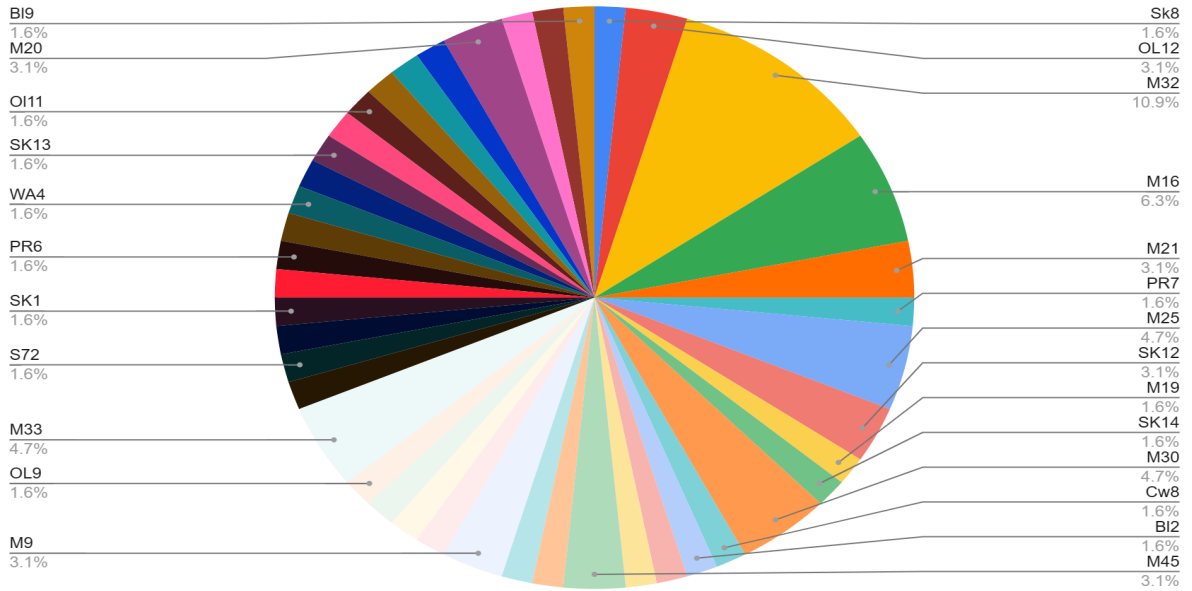
Proud 2 b Parents is an organisation that has had a profound impact on the lives of LGBT+ parents/carers and their families. As we assess the organisation's impact through the voices of its members, it becomes evident that Proud 2 b Parents is more than just an organisation; it's a lifeline, a support system, and a beacon of inclusivity.

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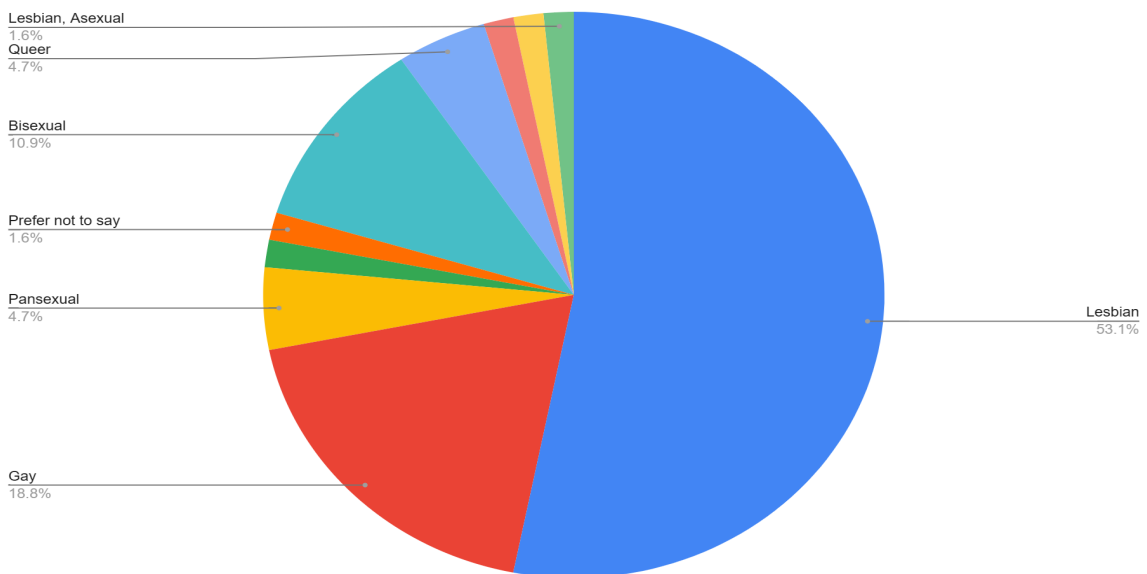


Data about our service users

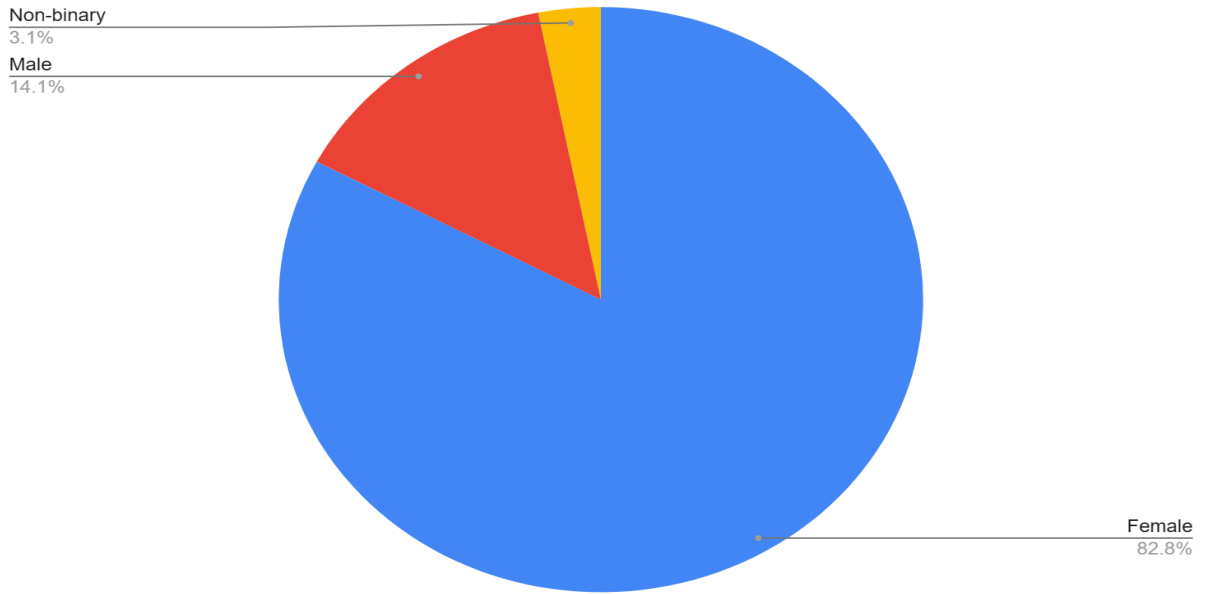
Location of families



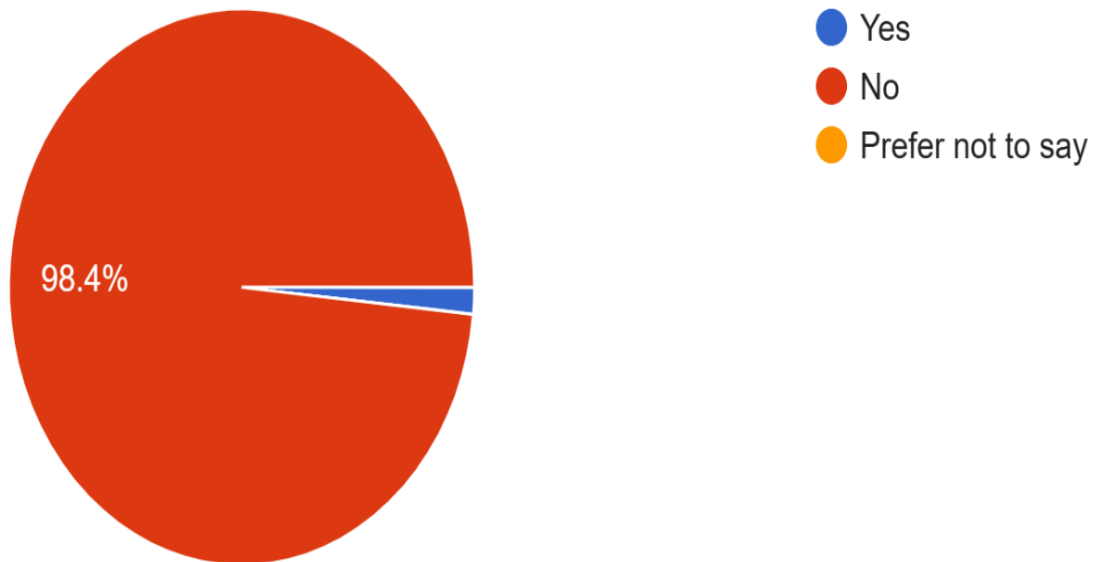
Sexual orientation of parents/carers



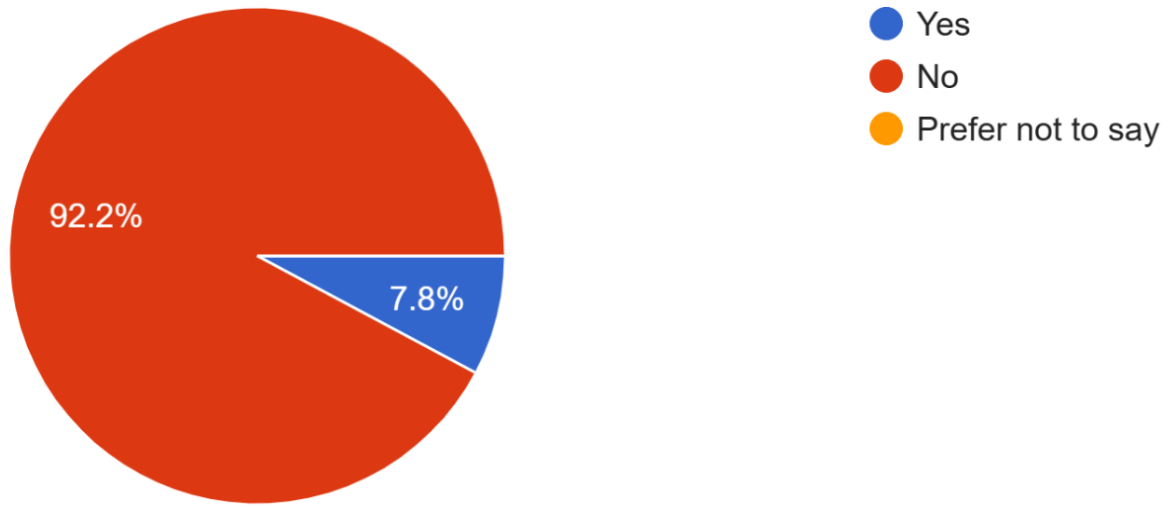
Gender of parents/carers



Percentage of parents/carers who are cis-gendered or trans

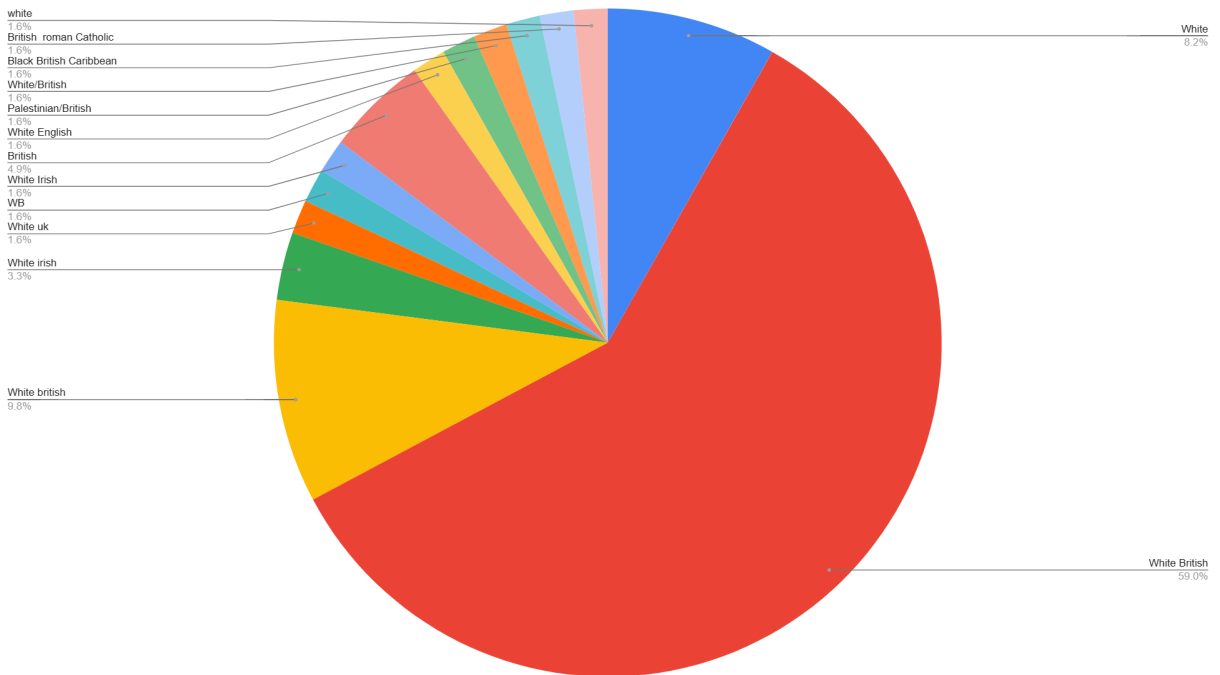


Disability status of parents/carers

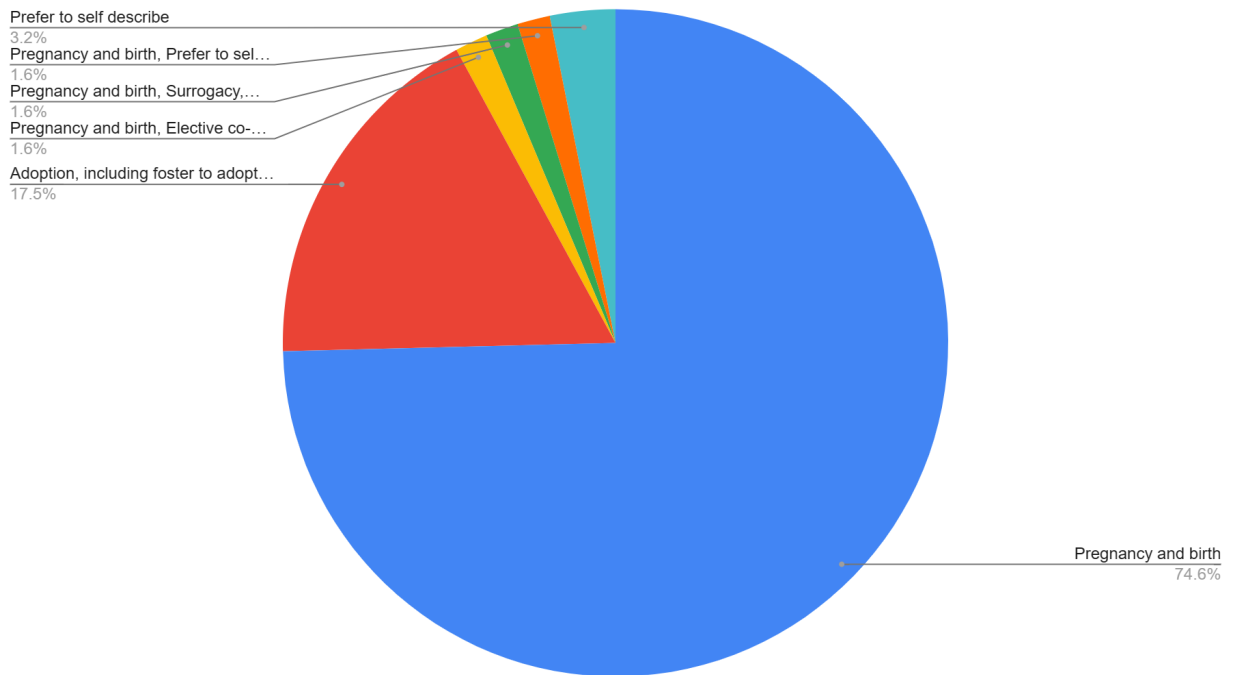


Ethnicity of Parents/ carers

Count of What is your ethnicity?



Routes to parenthood for the community

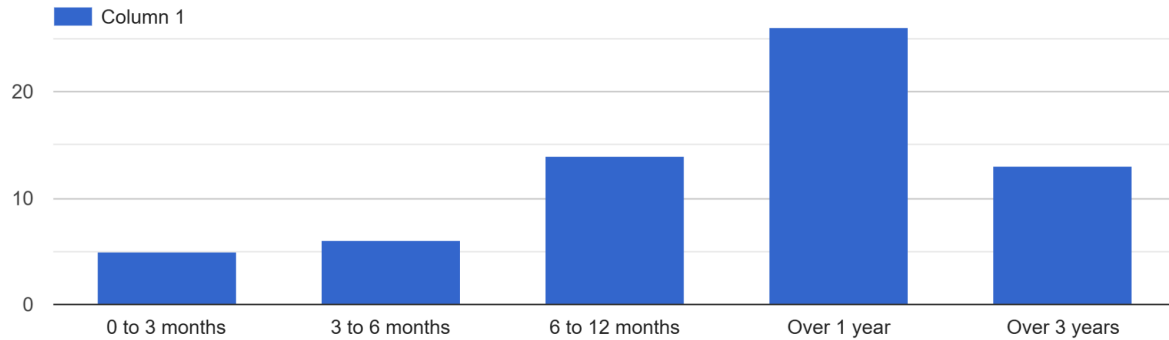


"Since becoming a parent I've felt more isolated, but Proud 26 Parents has helped me be part of a community. It helps with all of our confidence."

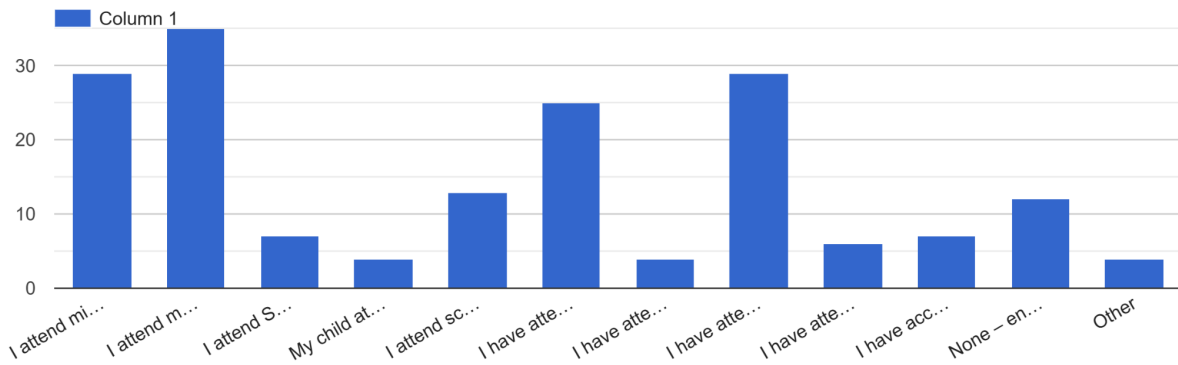
"The inclusivity is so important, and that you know that people there just 'get it' without further explanation about you being a parent and how you became a parent. Never felt like a non-birth mum in this group, like I have in more heteronormative groups."

Proud 2 b Parents services

Length of time families have been engaging with Proud 2 b Parents



Most popular sessions

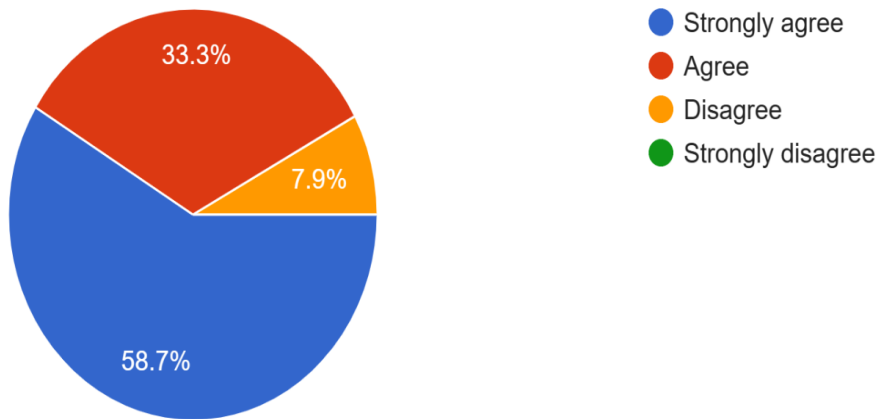


The four most attended sessions are

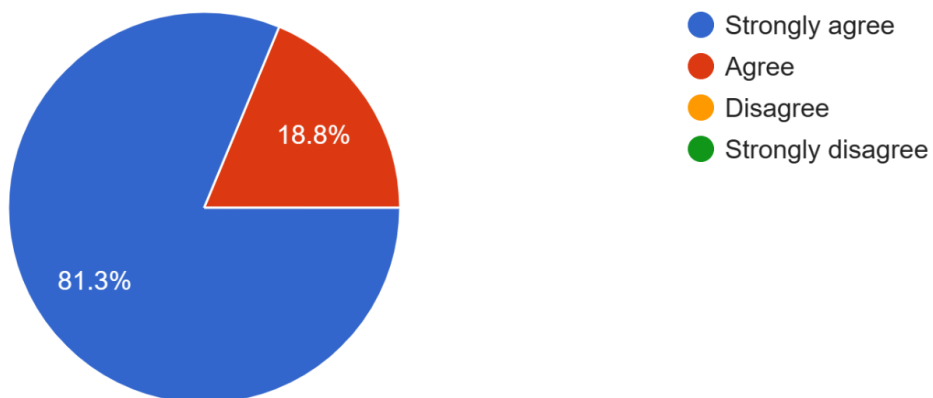
- Monthly get-togethers
- Midweek meet-ups
- Family spaces at regional pride events
- Proud 2 b parents parties such as Easter, Halloween, and Christmas

What is important to LGBT+ parents/carers

Does seeing people like them involved in Proud 2 b Parents influence LGBT+ parents/carers decision to get involved?



Is seeing other LGBT+ parents/carers important to them?





Run by and for LGBTQ+ parents/carers, their children and those considering parenthood living in Greater Manchester.

Families added that...

Normalising Family Diversity

Participants emphasise that seeing other families with similar dynamics helps normalise various family types for their children. It enables them to understand that all families are unique and valid.

Reducing Feelings of Isolation

Many LGBTQ+ parents feel isolated in their communities due to their unique family structures. Connecting with families like theirs through Proud 2 b Parents alleviates this sense of isolation.

Supporting Mental Health

Being part of the LGBTQ+ community provides a sense of belonging and reconnection to self, contributing positively to participants' mental health.

Sharing Experiences and Advice:

Participants value the opportunity to share experiences and advice with other LGBTQ+ parents, creating a supportive network.

Child's Perspective: Parents want their children to grow up seeing families like theirs, ensuring that their family dynamics are seen as normal.

Community and Safe Spaces:

Proud 2 b Parents offers a sense of community where LGBTQ+ families feel safe and welcome without the need for explanations about their family structures.

Normalising Same-Sex Parenting Roles:

For same-sex couples, attending Proud 2 b Parents events helps clarify parenting roles, particularly when one parent lacks a biological link to the child.

Queer Role Models:

Some parents highlight the importance of providing queer role models for their children, even if they themselves may not appear visibly queer.



Does your child see other families similar to themselves outside of Proud 2 b Parents?

Our families' responses emphasised the lack of alternative sources where their children can interact with families similar to theirs.

Families said that:

No Other Alternatives

Participants report that, outside of Proud 2 b Parents, there are limited to no alternatives for their children to interact with families similar to theirs.

Formation of Friendships

Proud 2 b Parents has enabled the formation of friendships among LGBTQ+ parents and their children, providing a supportive social network.

Lack of LGBT+ Community

Many participants do not have an LGBT+ community in their immediate surroundings, making Proud 2 b Parents the primary source of connection.

Importance of Location:

Some participants express that the location of their residence affects their ability to engage with Proud 2 b Parents activities, highlighting the need for accessibility.

Representation in Media:

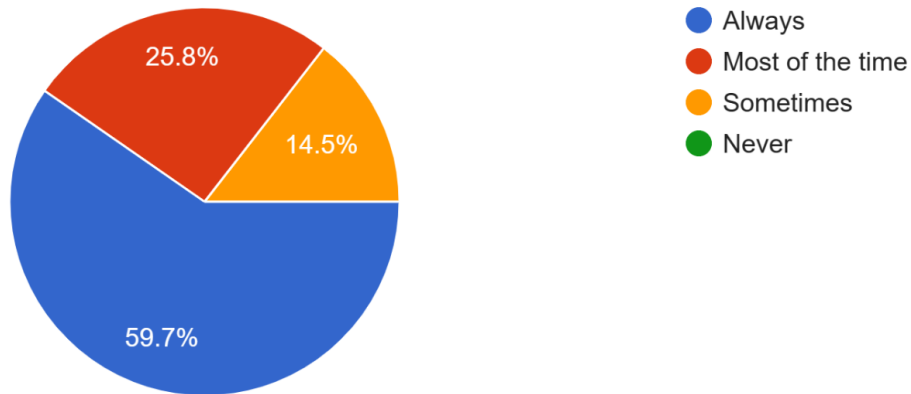
Participants mention that, aside from Proud 2 b Parents, their children may only see representation in books and occasionally on TV.

Growing Circle:

Some report that their friendship circles have grown to include other LGBTQ+ parents they've met through Proud 2 b Parents.

How LGBT+ parents/carers opinions feel when accessing our services

Parents/ carers commented on if they felt a sense of belonging when attending Proud 2 b Parent services:



Families added:

Positive Experiences:

- The majority of participants highlight that Proud 2 b Parents is welcoming and inclusive.
- Organisers, particularly Lizzie and Matt, are recognized for their friendliness and effectiveness in creating an inviting atmosphere.

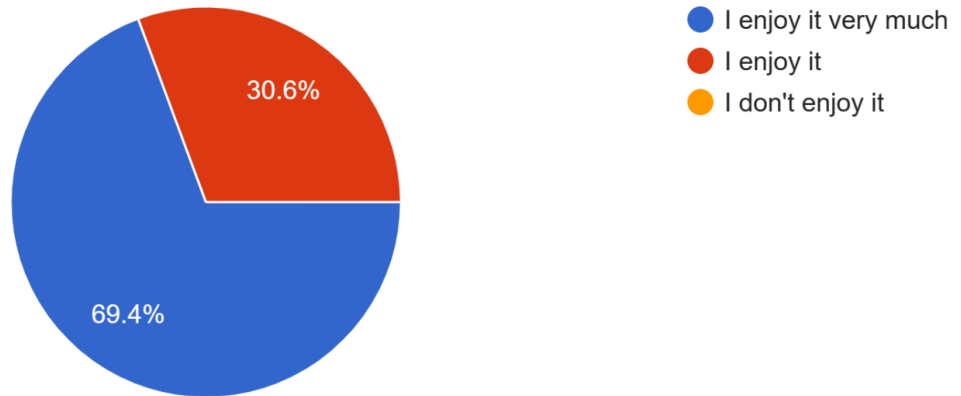
Challenges and Opportunities:

- Some participants mention feeling overwhelmed by established social groups within the LGBT+ community.
- The weekly sessions are difficult for working parents to attend regularly.
- There is a desire for more diversity in terms of cultural representation within the services.
- A few participants express hesitance about attending and difficulty in initiating conversations with new people.

Addressing Challenges:

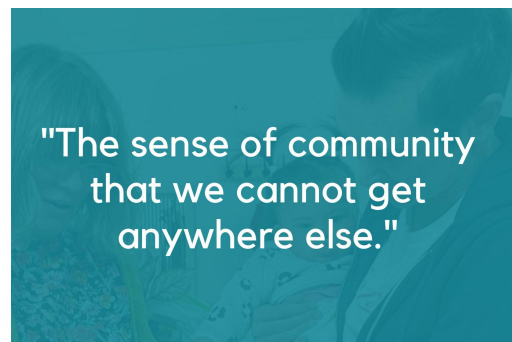
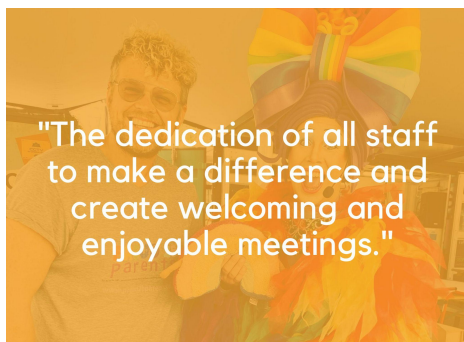
- Consider assigning welcoming volunteers or "welcomers" at events to help new attendees feel more comfortable.
- Offer ice-breaker activities or introductions to facilitate connections.
- Increase the frequency of sessions or create alternative meeting times to accommodate working parents.
- Promote diversity and inclusion actively by seeking ways to involve families of different backgrounds.

Parents/ carers commented on their enjoyment of being involved with Proud 2 b Parents

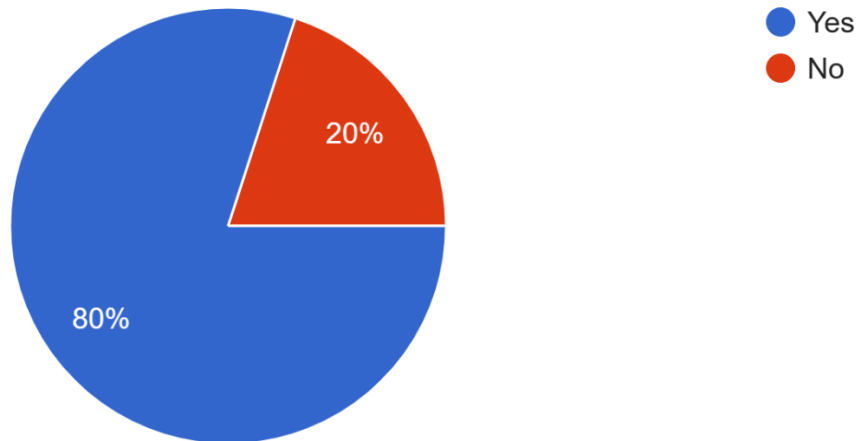


Families added that:

- "I always look forward to the different events and gatherings we go to."
- "P2BP is so important to our family, we would be devastated if the service ended."
- "It's so welcoming. It's relaxed. It's always nice to chat with other parents, I think I chat more at these events than at others"
- "I like the variety of sessions that are held and that my children get to try new things"



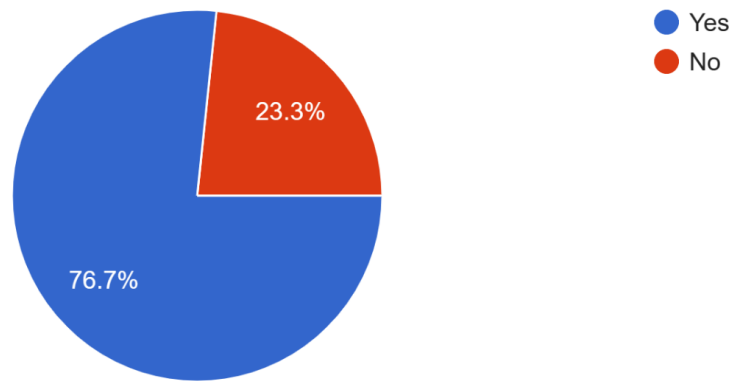
Parents/carers commented on whether their confidence had improved whilst accessing Proud 2 b Parents:



Families added:

- “I was really struggling and battling with both loneliness and PPD, when I found P2BP via social media, I made sure to leave the house with my daughter and attend a Tuesday meet. Those meets and the monthly meets that we could attend as a family really helped me battle through some of the most difficult times and the people I’ve met via this group have been incredible.”
- “I would definitely agree with this. My confidence as a mum has skyrocketed since joining but also my confidence in being proud to be a lesbian mum.”
- “Confidence in being a two mum family has increased and it’s nice not to have to make it known that we’re both mum as we would in other settings”
- “Just knowing there is a group & support available when I need it or we are available to attend gives me confidence we have a right to exist as a family & parents”

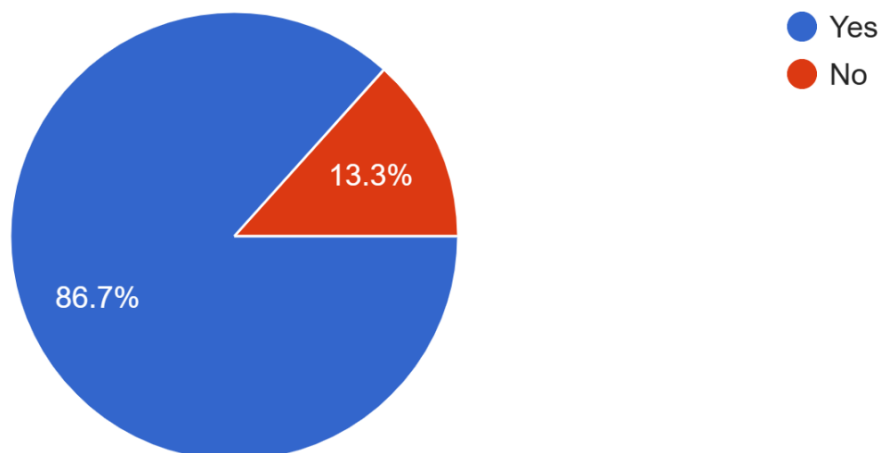
Parents/carers commented on their self-esteem and whether it has been improved by being involved with Proud 2 b Parents:



Families added:

- “Having the opportunity to attend social events which are friendly and well organised is really helpful, especially after the pandemic when it was harder to go to social events”
- “Yes it gives a good perspective that everyone is in a different boat maybe but what is common we all try our best to do well for our kids”
- “It’s helped our family to be more confidently visible”

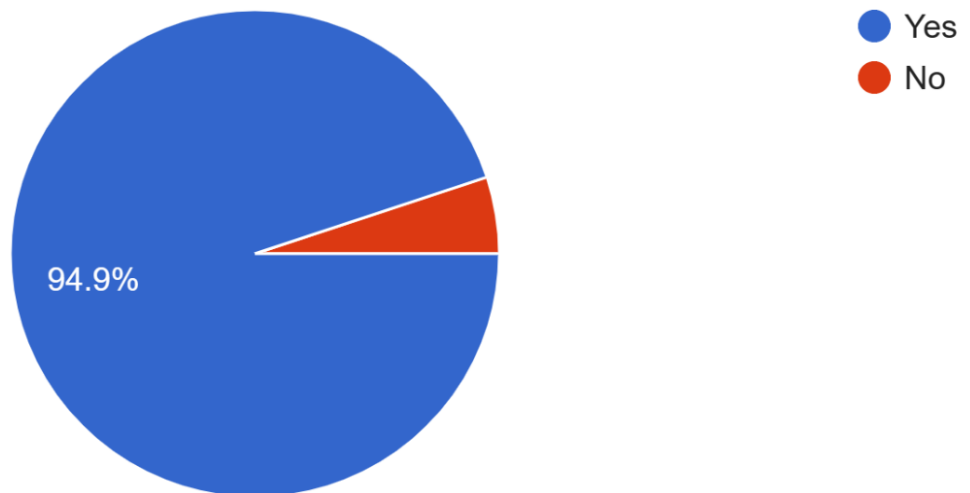
Parents/ carers commented on whether their wellbeing improved after being involved with Proud 2 b Parents:



Families added:

- "I/my family absolutely love all proud 2 b groups/events and really look forward to anytime there's a meet up."
- "Before we never attended events with other people. We very much went to places just the 3 of us. Now we go to most weekend events with so many other people so we no longer feel lonely. We have friends and a community that we are comfortably a part of"
- "I feel represented and feel I'm giving our little girl the best start by showing her other families of none hetero set up"
- "So good to get out the house and meet people with similar experiences".
- "Queer community brings strength and joy."

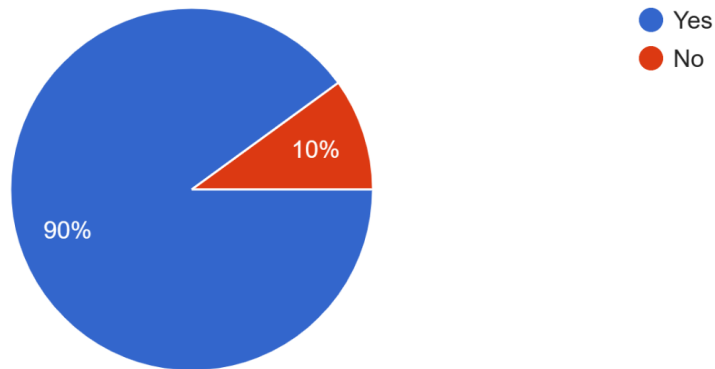
Do parents/carers feel less isolated because of their involvement with Proud 2 b Parents?



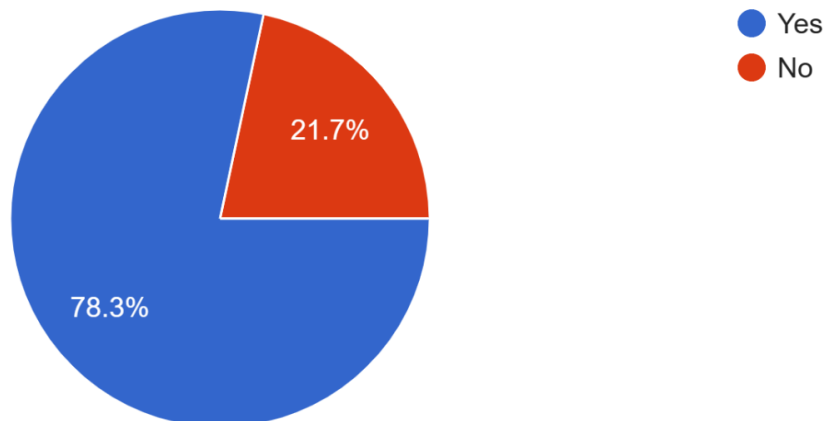
Families added:

- "Definitely, we have felt isolated as a family at times and P2B has really helped with that"
- "We are not the only gay dads we know now!"

Do parents/carers feel better about family life because of their involvement with Proud 2 b Parents:



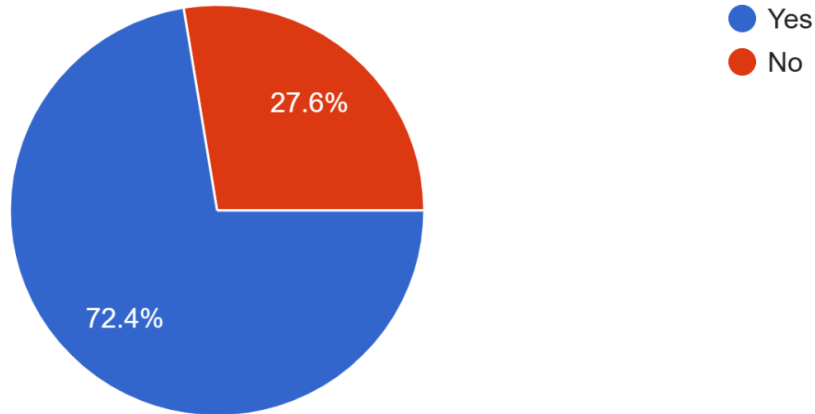
Do parents/carers feel more positive about their relationship with their child because of their involvement with Proud 2 b Parents:



Families added:

- “Just having the opportunity to have fun together in a safe environment has been positive for us”
- “I feel positive about having conversations with my child as she grows up knowing I will be supported by other families who have had similar conversations and also that my child will know other families that look like ours.”
- “When you receive affirmation from other people who you respect that you’re doing a good job.”

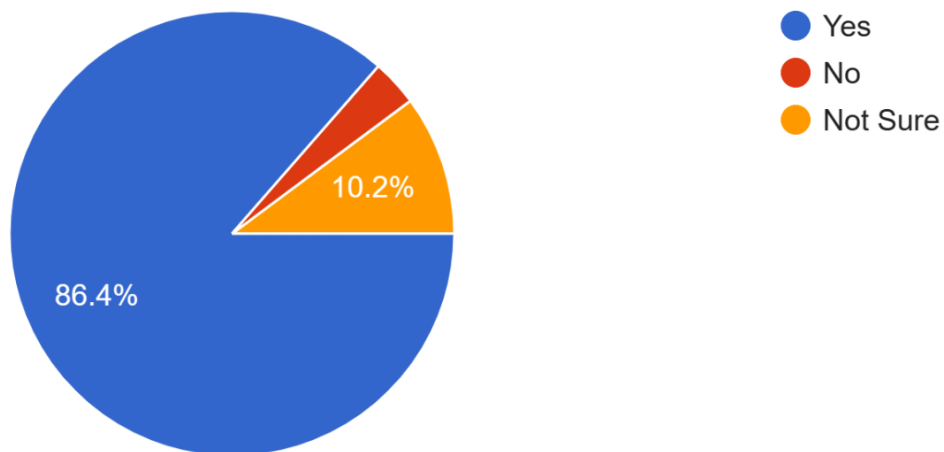
Did families feel they have gained new skills and/or knowledge through Proud 2 b Parents:



Families added:

- “Knowledge of safe places to go”
- “Knowledge of publications/ events/ opportunities etc”
- “Access to inclusive story books that we never knew even existed!”

Does their child/children like attending Proud 2 b Parents activities:





Run by and for LGBT+ parents/carers, their children and those considering parenthood living in Greater Manchester.

Families said:

Positive Experiences:

- The majority of children attending Proud 2 b Parents activities enjoy the sessions, finding them engaging and fun.
- Participants appreciate that activities are pitched at different age levels to cater to the diverse age groups within the community.

Challenges and Opportunities:

- Some children aged 6-8 years old struggle to form friendships within the group due to a perceived gap in provision for their age group.
- Older children may find it harder to engage in activities, potentially impacting their enjoyment of the sessions.

Addressing challenges:

- Explore ways to make activities engaging for older children to ensure their continued participation and enjoyment.
- Consider developing specific activities or sessions geared towards children aged 6-8 years to address the age gap in provision.

What families like or value most about Proud 2 b Parents

Safe Space and No Judgment: A recurring theme among participants is the importance of a safe space where they can be themselves without fear of judgment. This sense of acceptance and understanding is the bedrock of Proud 2 b Parents' impact.

Inclusivity and Community: Participants repeatedly mention the sense of community and inclusivity they find within the organization. It's a place where they don't have to explain their families and where they can connect with others who share similar experiences.

Representation and Normalisation: Proud 2 b Parents offers a platform where LGBTQ+ families are not the exception but the norm. This normalization is particularly crucial for both parents and children in the community.

Access to Events: The organization's diverse and well-organized events, often free or low-cost, allow families to participate regardless of their financial situation, ensuring that no child misses out on valuable experiences.



Run by and for LGBT+ parents/carers, their children and those considering parenthood living in Greater Manchester.

Support and Understanding: Members appreciate the understanding and support they receive from others who "get it" without further explanation. It's a place where concerns are acknowledged and addressed with compassion.

Impact on Children: Proud 2b Parents positively influences the children of LGBTQ+ families by providing them opportunities to interact with families like theirs, reducing feelings of isolation, and promoting a healthy sense of identity.

Visibility and Representation: Proud 2b Parents serves as a platform for LGBTQ+ parents and families to be seen and heard, fostering a sense of pride and a connection to a larger community.

Online Presence and Resources: The organization's online presence, newsletters, and resources offer valuable information and support to members, extending its reach beyond physical events.

Recommendations for Proud 2b Parents to consider:

- **Expansion:** Consider expanding the organisation's reach to support LGBTQ+ families in regions with limited resources.
- **Awareness Campaigns:** Develop awareness campaigns to highlight the importance of LGBTQ+ parenting and promote inclusivity.
- **Collaborations:** Seek partnerships with grant funders, corporate organisations, and like-minded NGOs to secure additional funding and resources for further expansion.
- **Diversity and Inclusion Training:** Conduct training for staff and volunteers to ensure that the organisation continues to provide an inclusive and safe environment.
- **Online Resources:** Continue to develop and improve online resources to provide support to members beyond physical events.

When asked how Proud 2 b Parents could improve their service, families recommended:

1. Seating Arrangements and Event Promotion:

- Address the need for more seating during events to ensure comfort, especially for breastfeeding parents. Additionally, consider arranging spaces to encourage discussion and interaction among attendees.
- Increase the promotion of events, possibly through platforms like Instagram, to ensure members are aware of and can participate in upcoming activities.

2. Financial Sustainability:

- Explore avenues to raise funds for the long-term sustainability of Proud 2 b Parents. Encourage members to contribute financially, even if on an optional basis, to support the organisation's future.

3. Communication and Transparency:

- Enhance communication with members about the organisation's future plans and developments. Maintain regular updates to alleviate any concerns about the organisation's stability.

4. Introduction of Session Fees:

- Evaluate the feasibility of introducing fees for sessions, with an option for members to pay for individual sessions or subscribe to a monthly payment plan. This approach can provide a more stable income stream. Consider a model where events are subsidised but still offer free spots for those who require financial assistance.

5. Online Networking and Services:

- Develop an online platform, such as a forum, where families can network and connect beyond in-person gatherings. This will enable members to interact and share experiences even when not attending physical events.

6. Expand Age-Specific Events:

- Organise more events tailored to specific age groups, such as activities for 6-8 year olds and baby/toddler events for children under 4. This will cater to a wider range of members.

7. Additional Event Variety and Accessibility:

- Introduce more evening or weekend meet-up options to accommodate members with work commitments.
- Explore opportunities to host events in areas outside of Manchester to reach families living in surrounding regions.

8. Diversity and Inclusion:

- Promote inclusivity within the LGBTQ+ community by ensuring that all events are open and welcoming to everyone. Designate volunteers as "welcomers" to support new attendees.

9. Improved Booking System:

- Upgrade the booking system to enable members to reserve spots via an online platform rather than relying on email, making the process more convenient.

10. Greater Funding Support:

- Advocate for funding from Greater Manchester authorities to secure the future of Proud 2 b Parents as a vital resource for the LGBTQ+ community.

11. Location Diversity:

- Consider expanding activities and events to be less Manchester-centric, providing more opportunities for members in different areas.

What are the main challenges LGBT+ parents/carers face, and what Proud 2 b Parents could do to help

Families stated that their Main Challenges were:

1. Assumptions and Misconceptions:

- Challenge: Many LGBTQ+ families face assumptions and misconceptions from society, including within the LGBTQ+ community itself.
- *Solution: Proud 2 b Parents can engage in awareness campaigns, both within and outside the LGBTQ+ community, to challenge stereotypes and foster understanding. This may include workshops, discussions, and visibility campaigns.*

2. Finding Other Families:

- Challenge: It can be difficult for LGBTQ+ families to find and connect with others who share similar experiences.
- *Solution: Proud 2 b Parents can expand its efforts to connect families, possibly by developing an online platform for networking, matching*

families with similar backgrounds, and organising more community-building events.

3. Navigating Official Channels:

- Challenge: LGBTQ+ families often find themselves having to explain their family dynamics to professionals who may lack understanding.
- *Solution: The organisation can advocate for better training and education for healthcare providers, teachers, and other professionals to create more inclusive and informed support systems.*

4. Representation and Acceptance:

- Challenge: Concerns about representation and acceptance of LGBTQ+ families, especially in schools, are prevalent.
- *Solution: Proud 2 b Parents can collaborate with schools and educational institutions to promote LGBTQ+ inclusion, offering educational resources and workshops to create a more accepting environment.*

5. Isolation and Feeling Different:

- Challenge: Some families struggle with feelings of isolation and difference, impacting their self-perception.
- *Solution: The organisation can continue to provide a safe space for LGBTQ+ families to connect, share experiences, and combat feelings of isolation.*

6. Fertility Treatments and Economic Challenges:

- Challenge: Access to fertility treatments can be financially challenging for LGBTQ+ families.
- *Solution: Proud 2 b Parents can raise awareness about the financial challenges faced by LGBTQ+ families seeking fertility treatments and advocate for more accessible options.*

7. Discrimination and Prejudice:

- Challenge: Discrimination and prejudice continue to be persistent issues faced by LGBTQ+ families, leading many to feel unable to openly express their sexual orientation or gender identity during family holidays or when their children engage in recreational activities.
- *Solution: The organisation can continue to raise awareness about discrimination issues and advocate for LGBTQ+ rights and acceptance in broader society. As well as developing relevant corporate sponsorships to support change.*

8. Education and Support for Children:

- Challenge: Parents may face questions from their children about family structure, and they need support in addressing these questions.
- *Solution: Proud 2 b Parents can offer educational resources and workshops for parents to navigate conversations with their children about their family structure.*

9. Lack of Local LGBTQ+ Community:

- Challenge: Some LGBTQ+ families live in areas with a limited LGBTQ+ community presence.
- *Solution: Proud 2 b Parents can explore partnerships with organizations in neighboring regions to extend support to families in less LGBTQ+-inclusive areas.*

What Proud 2 b Parents means to our families

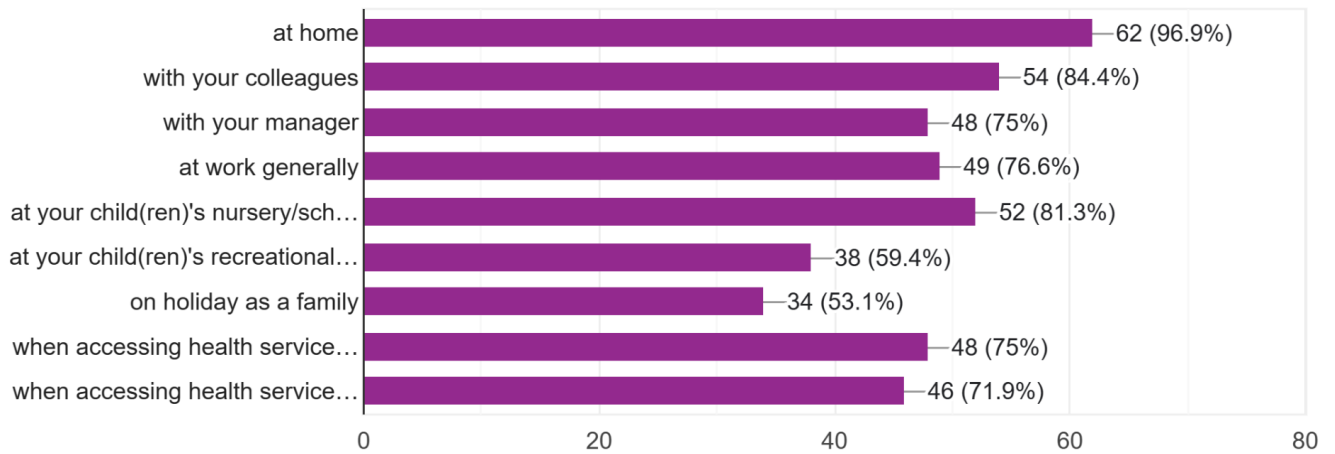
- **A Safe Space:** It provides a haven where families feel safe and comfortable, free from judgement and stares.
- **Community and Connection:** Families find a sense of belonging, connecting with others who share similar values, experiences, and backgrounds.
- **Support and Representation:** It offers support, representation, and a positive way to see other families like theirs.
- **Normalisation and Integration:** Proud 2 b Parents helps to normalise LGBTQ+ families and integrate them into society.
- **Resource and Information Hub:** Families view it as a practical, highly supportive resource that provides advice and connections.
- **A Place to Be Authentically Themselves:** LGBTQ+ parents/carers can introduce themselves without judgement, creating a space for authenticity.
- **Meeting Other LGBT+ Parents and Children:** Families value the opportunity to meet and connect with other LGBT+ parents and their children.
- **Extended Family:** It serves as an extended family, offering support and connections.



Run by and for LGBT+ parents/carers, their children and those considering parenthood living in Greater Manchester.

- **Positive Impact on Confidence:** Proud 2 b Parents boosts confidence and helps parents feel less isolated.
- **Highlight of the Month:** Families look forward to attending Proud 2 b Parents' events as a monthly highlight.
- **Identity and Inclusion:** It fosters a sense of identity and inclusion within the LGBTQ+ community.
- **Friendship and Belonging:** It fosters friendships and a deep sense of belonging.
- **Network and Advice:** Families view it as a network of similar families and a source of advice and guidance.
- **Community and Welcoming Space:** Proud 2 b Parents is seen as a welcoming space where everyone is accepted.
- **Comfort and Freedom to Love:** Families find comfort and freedom to express love for their children and partners.
- **A Place for Children to Make Friends:** It's a place where children can make friends and experience diversity.
- **Extended Family:** Proud 2 b Parents is described as an extended family for its members.
- **Identity and Inclusion:** It fosters a sense of identity and inclusion within the LGBTQ+ community.
- **Connection and Belonging:** It's a source of connection and a feeling of belonging to a larger community.
- **Friendship and Community:** Proud 2 b Parents means friendship and community to its members.

Where do parents/carers and their families feel safe to be open about their sexual orientation or gender identity



Our respondents have expressed concerns regarding feeling less safe to openly disclose their sexual orientation or gender identity in situations where their children are participating in recreational activities or during family holidays. This feedback highlights an important issue that LGBTQ+ families may face when navigating recreational and leisure spaces.

Proud 2 b Parents will take this feedback seriously and consider ways to address these concerns. It's crucial to create environments where LGBTQ+ families, as well as their children, can feel safe, respected, and fully included. This may involve working with recreational activity providers and holiday destinations to promote LGBTQ+ inclusivity, offering sensitivity training, or providing resources to ensure that these spaces are welcoming to all families, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

By proactively addressing these concerns and promoting LGBTQ+ inclusivity in recreational and holiday settings, Proud 2 b Parents can further enhance the sense of safety and acceptance experienced by its community members and their families.

Information sharing

When asked about how they would like to find out about up-and-coming activities, parents stated that current methods of engagement and communication employed by Proud 2 b Parents, including the monthly newsletter and Facebook events, have received high ratings from the community members. These methods are effective in keeping the community informed about upcoming events and activities.

The combination of a monthly newsletter and Facebook events seems to be preferred by the community, indicating that these channels are successful in reaching and engaging with the target audience.

These positive ratings suggest that Proud 2 b Parents should continue utilising these communication methods. However, it's essential to regularly assess the effectiveness of these channels and consider incorporating new communication tools or platforms if necessary to ensure that the community remains well-informed and engaged.

Overall, maintaining a strong online presence and utilising email newsletters can be valuable strategies for community organisations like Proud 2 b Parents to keep their members informed and connected.

What would parents/carers like from Proud 2 b Parents in 2024?

Families express a strong desire for Proud 2 b Parents to continue its vital work, underscoring the need for securing ample funding. They also seek an expanded array of events and activities, including meetups, trips, and a family festival. Financial support is actively encouraged, along with consistent donations to ensure the organisation's sustainability.

Families with older children (8-14 years old) call for tailored events, while some are open to small, optional event charges to support the organisation. Midweek meetups, the return of the summer festival, peer support groups, and more social occasions are sought after.

Continuation of existing groups and events, like the cheeky cherubs meetups, is essential. Families with younger children desire more child-friendly events, especially for toddlers, and emphasise the importance of public transport-accessible meetups for inclusivity.

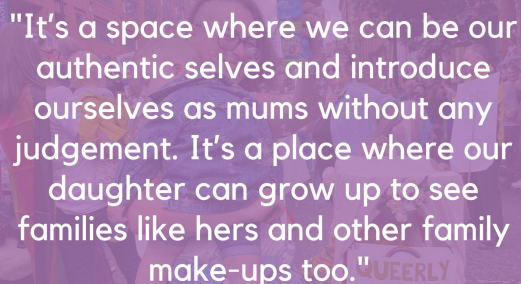
Additionally, they suggest a slightly wider range of monthly meetups. The expansion and improvement of Family Pride events are encouraged, as well as a diverse range of activities, including those with a creche for parents' convenience.

Lizzie's continued involvement is highly valued, and the provision of summer holiday activities for children aged 5 and older is desired. Lastly, there is interest in hosting another all-day festival, potentially at Stretford Public Hall.

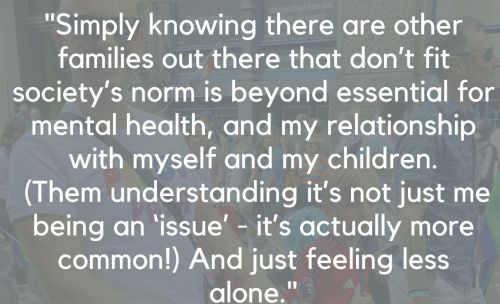
Was there anything else parents/carers wanted to tell us?

In response to this question, numerous families expressed their heartfelt gratitude and appreciation for the tireless efforts and dedication of the Proud 2 b Parents organisation and its team.

Their expressions of gratitude serve as a testament to the profound impact that Proud 2 b Parents has had on their lives, and they wish to extend their heartfelt thanks for the organisation's outstanding work and commitment to LGBTQ+ families.

A quote overlaid on a purple-tinted image of a group of people. The text reads: "It's a space where we can be our authentic selves and introduce ourselves as mums without any judgement. It's a place where our daughter can grow up to see families like hers and other family make-ups too." QUEERLY

"It's a space where we can be our authentic selves and introduce ourselves as mums without any judgement. It's a place where our daughter can grow up to see families like hers and other family make-ups too." QUEERLY

A quote overlaid on a grey-tinted image of a group of people. The text reads: "Simply knowing there are other families out there that don't fit society's norm is beyond essential for mental health, and my relationship with myself and my children. (Them understanding it's not just me being an 'issue' - it's actually more common!) And just feeling less alone."

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Conclusion

Proud 2 b Parents is an invaluable resource for LGBT+ parents/carers and their families, providing essential support, a sense of belonging, and representation.

Families highly value the organisation and anticipate its continued presence and growth in 2024. They express their willingness to contribute and support the organisation financially to ensure its sustainability. The report underscores the importance of meeting the diverse needs and interests of LGBT+ families while maintaining a strong sense of community and inclusivity.

Proud 2 b Parents play a critical role in addressing the challenges faced by LGBT+ parent/carer-led families. By continuing to provide a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment, advocating for greater awareness and understanding, and collaborating with educational institutions and professionals, the organisation can work toward a more inclusive and accepting society for all LGBT+ families.

The recommendations outlined in this report, based on valuable feedback from Proud 2 b Parents' members, aim to enhance the organisation's ability to serve its community effectively. Implementing these improvements will ensure that Proud 2 b Parents continues to provide essential support and a sense of belonging to LGBT+ parents/carers and their families.

Furthermore, Proud 2 b Parents serves as an irreplaceable source of support and connection for LGBT+ families, addressing the lack of alternative spaces where their children can interact with families similar to theirs. The report emphasises the potential for expanding its reach to serve even more LGBT+ families in need of representation and community.

Representation and visibility of LGBT+ families are crucial to breaking down stereotypes and fostering acceptance in society. This impact assessment highlights the importance of Proud 2 b Parents as a community that allows LGBT+ families to be themselves, connect with others, and ensure that their children grow up seeing diverse family structures.

While Proud 2 b Parents is highly praised for its welcoming environment, the assessment also acknowledges the importance of continuously enhancing inclusivity and addressing the challenges faced by some marginalised groups within the community. By actively addressing these challenges and seeking ways to make the organisation even more welcoming, Proud 2 b Parents can strengthen its sense of community and better serve its diverse group of LGBT+ families.

Thank you for reading