

start



A good start for a healthier life

*Evaluation Start4Life Training*

*Sessions:*

# *Pilot Project West Midlands*

*2010*

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## Background

This pilot project was carried out across the West Midlands for the West Midlands Public Health Observatory on behalf of the Department of Health. Twelve Start4Life training sessions were held over six days in 6 different locations, including Walsall, Nuneaton, Lichfield, Birmingham, Wolverhampton and Redditch. Most areas where the training sessions took place are currently working towards UNICEF Baby Friendly accreditation. See table 1 for specific locations of the training sessions.

| Date             | Location                          | Town/City     |
|------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| 12 February 2010 | Birchills Surestart Centre        | Walsall       |
| 19 March 2010    | Getec Centre                      | Nuneaton      |
| 25 March 2010    | Samuel Johnson Community Hospital | Lichfield     |
| 26 March 2010    | Summerfield Primary Care Centre   | Birmingham    |
| 21 April 2010    | Whitmore Reans Health Centre      | Wolverhampton |
| 5 May 2010       | Ecumenical Centre                 | Redditch      |

Table 1. Start4Life training sessions: pilot sites

## Structure

Each training session lasted approximately 3.5 hours which included a coffee break. A variety of teaching methods were employed such as group discussions, presentations using PowerPoint, and the use of self assessment by means of the WHO Code UK Law Quiz. A total of 235 participants took part over the 6 days. Participants were from a variety of backgrounds including health professionals such as health visitors and midwives, as well as Sure Start workers, nursery nurses and peer supporters.

Participants were provided with a number of hand outs during the training sessions containing:

1. Information regarding the introduction of solids and Start4Life

2. Information regarding the WHO code and UNICEF Baby Friendly Initiative

## **Aims**

The aims of the session were:

1. To examine the evidence base of recommendations for introducing solids, in line with the new Start4life initiative, and develop a shared understanding of what ‘appropriate complementary feeding’ means in practice in the West Midlands
2. To review existing ‘weaning guidelines’ for parents and carers including Baby-led Feeding and labels on ‘weaning foods’ and address common queries about starting solids.
3. To consider what NHS, Children’s Centre and other community workers can do locally to improve/update/support good practice around starting solids
4. The Explore Marketing of infant and young children’s food and drink to families
5. To understand initiatives to protect and support breastfeeding in the UK and the wider world globally such as; UNICEF UK Baby Friendly Initiative; The WHO Code of the Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes, Infant Formula Feeding Legislation in the UK, The Breastfeeding Manifesto and Baby Feeding Law Group
6. To enhance knowledge of your role as a worker in relation to the UK law and WHO Code
7. To provide a basic knowledge of UK infant Feeding Statistics
8. To develop an understanding of Research findings in relation to infant feeding

## **Tutors**

Carol Williams, Public Health Nutritionist & Infant Feeding Specialist, Infant Feeding Consortium cic,

UCL-Centre for International Health and Development, Institute of Child Health, London.

Lesley Backhouse, B.A Breastfeeding Network Tutor

Jenny Richardson, Breastfeeding Network Tutor

## **Evaluation**

The training sessions were evaluated by means of a questionnaire containing 10 items (see Appendix 1 for Evaluation form). The items included questions with Likert scales, open questions and Yes/No-type questions. The final item gave participants the opportunity to write any general comments regarding the content and the practical arrangements of the training session. 205 evaluation forms were received from participants (see appendix 2 for quantitative data). The first group of participants only completed part of the evaluation due to an error in photocopying the form at the venue. Some amendments were made to the delivery and content of the workshops during the course of the twelve training sessions. Following completion of the twelve training session, tutors also made some observations during the delivery of the sessions. Amendments to the training sessions and tutors' suggestions and observations have been inserted as foot notes where appropriate.

### Potential impact on participants' practice

The large majority of participants found the training session useful (n=196, 98.5%), with 71.4% (n=142) of participants finding the session 'very useful' (see Figure 1). None of the participants found the session useless, while 3 participants did not provide an answer to this question. The training session met the expectation for most participants (n=191, 93.2%) (See Figure 2). 135 participants (65.9%) reported that the session fully met their expectations, while 50 participants (24.4%) reported that the session mostly met their expectations.

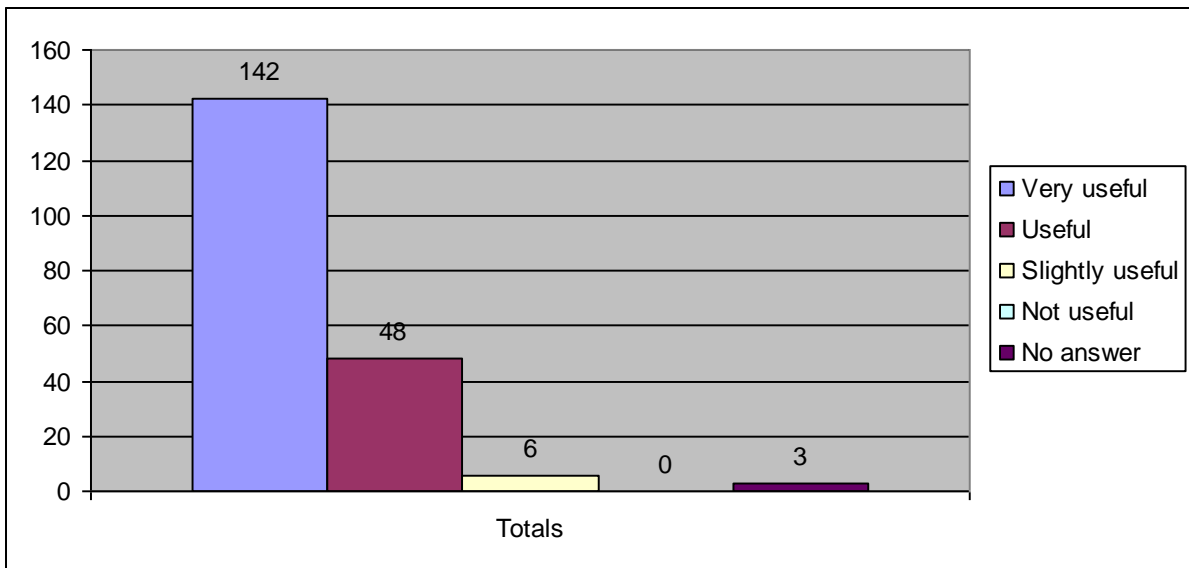


Figure 1. How useful has the session been to you?

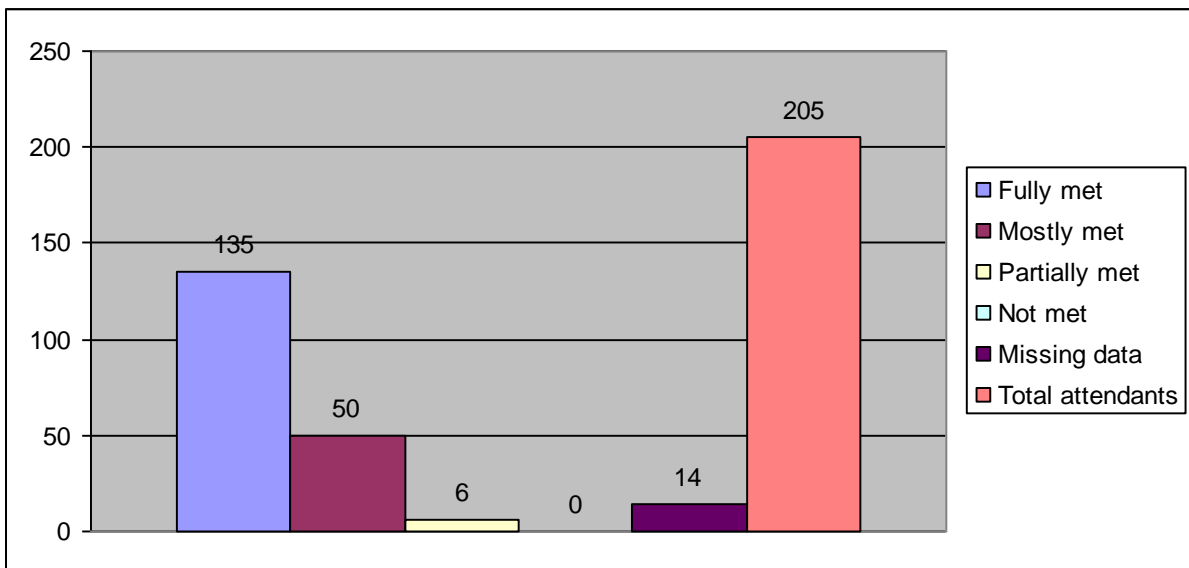


Figure 2. Did the workshop match up to your expectations?

Participants were asked to rate changes in their knowledge, confidence and understanding of various components of the training session. Most participants (n=185, 94.4%) reported that they had increased their understanding of an infant's developmental readiness for solids. Of these participants 129 (65.8%) believed their understanding had increased 'a lot', while 32 participants (16.3%) believed their understanding to have increased moderately. 11 participants (5.6%) reported that their understanding of this topic had not changed.

188 participants (96.4%) reported that their confidence in talking to mothers about the initiation period to start solids had increased. 123 participants (63.1%) fed back that their confidence had increased a lot, while 46 participants (23.6%) believed their confidence about talking about the introduction had increased moderately. No change in confidence in talking to mothers about the time to start solids was reported by 7 participants (3.6%). None of the participants had lost confidence.

Nearly all participants (n=190, 97.9%) reported that they had increased their knowledge regarding the evidence for the 'No rush to mush' slogan. A majority of participants (n=130, 67.0%) believed their knowledge had increased 'a lot', while 36 participants (18.6%) believed that their knowledge had increased moderately. Only 4 participants (2.1%) reported that their knowledge on this topic had not increased. All respondents (n=191, 100%) reported that their knowledge of the WHO code and the UK law regarding infant feeding had increased. A majority (n=110, 57.6%) believed their knowledge had increased 'a lot', while 59 participants (30.9%) believed their knowledge had increased moderately.

|                                                                                  | N   | %     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-------|
| Increased your confidence about talking with mothers about when to start solids? |     |       |
| A lot                                                                            | 123 | 63.1  |
| Moderately                                                                       | 46  | 23.6  |
| A little                                                                         | 19  | 9.7   |
| No change                                                                        | 7   | 3.6   |
| Less confident                                                                   | 0   | 0.0   |
| Total number of replies                                                          | 195 | 100.0 |
| Increased your knowledge about the evidence for the 'No rush to mush' advice?    |     |       |
| A lot                                                                            | 130 | 67.0  |
| Moderately                                                                       | 36  | 18.6  |
| A little                                                                         | 24  | 12.4  |
| No change                                                                        | 4   | 2.1   |
| Less confident                                                                   | 0   | 0.0   |
| Total number of replies                                                          | 194 | 100.0 |
| Increased your understanding about development readiness for solids?             |     |       |
| A lot                                                                            | 129 | 65.8  |
| Moderately                                                                       | 32  | 16.3  |
| A little                                                                         | 24  | 12.2  |
| No change                                                                        | 11  | 5.6   |
| Less confident                                                                   | 0   | 0.0   |
| Total number of replies                                                          | 196 | 100.0 |
| Increased your understanding about the code and UK law?                          |     |       |
| A lot                                                                            | 110 | 57.6  |
| Moderately                                                                       | 59  | 30.9  |
| A little                                                                         | 22  | 11.5  |
| No change                                                                        | 0   | 0.0   |
| Less confident                                                                   | 0   | 0.0   |
| Total number of replies                                                          | 191 | 100.0 |

Table 2. Impact of the workshop on knowledge, understanding and confidence.

A large majority of participants (n=140, 82.8%) thought their practice in relation to infant feeding would change as a result of attending the training session. Only 15 participants (8.9%) believed their practice would not change, while 14 participants did not complete this question (8.3%).

When asked how participants thought their practice had changed, many participants reported that they felt that they were more confident or empowered to talk to parents about the

introduction of complementary foods<sup>1</sup>. This included comments regarding advising parents to delay until six months and the advice to parents on the principles of baby led weaning and developmental signs of readiness of the baby.

“Confidence in discussing when babies are developmentally ready”

“Not to be afraid to say don’t rush weaning and ok to miss out puree stage”

“Be able to be more confident in advising parents and answer the questions when they ask”

Many participants commented on the evidence based information provided during the course enhancing their confidence in the information they could impart to parents. Although some participants reported that they already had sufficient knowledge regarding the introduction of complementary foods, knowing that health professionals were now equally well informed and aware of the evidence, reassured them in their practice affirming that they were providing correct information.

“Although I was already on board with new guidelines and blf/blw – I’ve the confidence that Health Practitioners are also on board – giving me confidence to promote it – I’m no longer thinking “just because I did it – doesn’t make it right” – now I KNOW it”

Not only did participants comment on the new or additional information they could share with parents, they also felt more skilled in the way they could discuss this information with parents.

“I will be able to ‘sensitively’ advise parents on when and how to introduce solids to their babies.”

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<sup>1</sup> It would be good to follow up with the participants by email to find out how they have managed to make use of the information received at the training, what obstacles they have met, what has facilitated their making use etc. This could be done using an internet based tool such as ‘survey monkey’.

This included how to word certain aspects of weaning. Some participants suggested that they would rethink how and what information they provided to parents and other family members involved. Several participants planned to undertake local training for other health professionals, nurseries and parents attending children's centres. Plans also included the revision of existing training for parents to include the change in weaning knowledge and practice. Other changes in practice planned by participants include the initiation of UNICEF's Baby Friendly Initiative and inclusion of the information when developing local policy.

When asked how participants would share the information obtained with their colleagues and staff from other organizations, most participants reported that they would share the information in an informal way with their colleagues. This was suggested to mostly take place during meetings with colleagues from within their locality, but also in larger area meetings and in meetings with children's centres. Other participants planned to disseminate information gained during informal discussions with individual colleagues. Many participants reported on the usefulness of seeing the YouTube video clips which demonstrate developmental readiness, and their intentions to share these web links with their colleagues. Some participants planned to include the information in existing training programmes, while many planned to recommend the Start4Life training sessions to their colleagues.

When specifically asked how participants would use Start4Life resources (see table 3), as a result of attending the session, 131 participants (36.8%) reported that they planned to encourage families they worked with to join Start4Life. Following attendance at the training session, 81 participants (22.8%) planned to subscribe to Start4Life as a supporter or support organization, while 129 (36.2%) participants planned to share the Start4Life resources with their colleagues. 12 participants (3.4%) reported already being subscribed to Start4Life. Only 3 participants (<1%) did not plan to use or subscribe to any of the Start4Life resources.

|                                                           | N   | %     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|-----|-------|
| Subscribe as a start4life supporter/support organisation. | 81  | 22.8  |
| Encourage families you work with to join start4life.      | 131 | 36.8  |
| Order/share the start4life resources with colleagues.     | 129 | 36.2  |
| Already subscribed                                        | 12  | 3.4   |
| None                                                      | 3   | 0.8   |
| Total number of replies                                   | 356 | 100.0 |

Table 3. Planned actions following the workshop in relation to Start4Life resources  
Participants ticked more than one action.

## Delivery and content of the course

Participants were generally very complementary about the training sessions.

“Thoroughly enjoyed the training. Never look forward to training but this was definitely worth attending on my day off! The training has inspired me to do further reading. Thank you.”

When asked to report on the good things about the session, the participants commented positively on various aspects of the training session. Most comments were regarding the new information that they obtained during the session<sup>2</sup>. Participants used terms such as ‘comprehensive’, ‘very interesting’, ‘solid’, ‘sensible’, ‘in depth’, ‘evidence based’ and ‘useful’.

“Good solid scientific, evidence based guidance”

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<sup>2</sup> In some sessions, very few participants knew of the BLW DVD or book.

Suggestion: individual trusts might want to consider bulk purchase of the BLW materials, or at least having copies available for loan to consolidate the learning that we have started on the training. A new BLW cookbook is due to be published later this year.

In particular, participants enjoyed receiving the information regarding baby led weaning and the evidence base for delaying the introduction of complementary foods. Some participants commented that they were already well informed, but they had “reinforced knowledge giving more examples to aid practice”. Some participants found the information provided regarding the WHO code and UK law useful as this had not been covered in other courses they had attended.

Other positive comments were regarding skills that participants felt they obtained.

“How to dispel myths, and answer “challenges” from parents and colleagues”

Many participants commented positively on the delivery methods of the training. Participants mostly commented on the group discussions<sup>3</sup> and the use of YouTube video clips to demonstrate signs of developmental readiness. Some participants enjoyed the use of examples to discuss, for example, violations of the WHO code<sup>4</sup>, or parents’ reasoning for introducing solids earlier than 6 months. The balance between didactic and interactive teaching methods was appreciated by many participants.

“Good pace, very interesting and informative good balance between given/participation”

Participants were specifically asked to rate and comment on the opportunities for discussion. 156 participants (91.2%) reported that they felt there was sufficient opportunity for them to ask questions and contribute their own expertise and experiences. Only 12 participants (7.0%) felt there was insufficient opportunity for this. In their comments these participants reported that they would have liked more time for questions and/or discussion. While some participants suggested that the training session could be longer to accommodate for this, others appreciated the session only took half a day. The opportunity for questions and

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<sup>3</sup> During the course of the training session group work was brought forward

<sup>4</sup> An interactive quiz to illustrate key differences between the Code and the UK law was introduced during the course of the training session to improve delivery of this aspect.

exchange of expertise and experiences was generally valued by participants. Some participants felt that the discussions and questions were important due to the nature of the topic, described by one participant as ‘contentious’, as the content of the training session was perceived as a “huge change of attitude”, requiring the need for everyone to be “singing from the same hymn book”.

Participants were very positive about the facilitators of the training sessions. Participants commented on the quality of presentations and the facilitation of discussions. They appreciated the “confidence and enthusiasm” of the trainers, while commenting that trainers were “knowledgeable, approachable” and “open and honest”.

“Didn’t feel talked ‘at’. Liked the way the information was shared with us and felt able to ask questions”

Participants were also asked to provide suggestions for improvement of the training session. Several participants felt the training session would have benefited from being longer. Some participants reported that they felt some parts were rushed, while other wanted more time for discussion and questions<sup>5</sup>. Participants would have liked to have received PowerPoint hand outs and the links to the YouTube clips, as some felt that they did not have enough time to take notes due to volume of information.

“Not so much improved but even longer time scale for information/training to introduction to solids as it is very interesting”

Other suggestions included less use of medical jargon<sup>6</sup>, identifying participants’ aims and objectives for attending the session, inclusion of information for introduction of

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<sup>5</sup> This was reflected in concerns raised by tutors delivering the training session who felt that starting solids AND the [WHO] Code has meant that participants were exposed to information and ideas, but are not yet fully equipped to put this into practice. This was felt to be a particular concern where staff are running ‘weaning workshops’ etc.

<sup>6</sup> Minor alterations were made according to the audience, for example, making it more technical when predominantly a health visiting/ midwifery audience, and more practical when addressing family support workers or peer supporters.

complementary foods for infants receiving artificial milk, and more suggestions regarding complementary foods at various ages after 6 months<sup>7</sup>.

“It would be nice to have talked about meals/foods to give to babies at each age/stage”

In relation to the practical arrangement, many participants felt that the venues were too small for the number of participants. This was accompanied by some comments about the temperature in the room. Some participants complimented the snacks provided, although others would have preferred more breaks and coffee on arrival for those travelling from further afield.

### **Summary**

Participants were generally very positive about the training session. Most participants felt their knowledge, understanding and confidence in relation to baby led weaning and the WHO code/UK law had improved as a result of attending the training. Participants particularly appeared to enjoy the knowledge gained regarding developmental readiness and baby led weaning. Most participants planned to use the Start4Life resources and informally share the information obtained during the training with their colleagues. Participants appeared confident that the training would impact on their future practice when advising parents on delaying and introducing complementary foods for their baby. Tutors suggested that it would be useful to follow participants up to establish the nature and extent of changes in practice.

Many participants suggested that more time should be allocated for the training session. Some suggestions for changes in the content and delivery of the session were made. This was reflected in the comments by the tutors who have suggested that additional training is indicated because of the novelty for many participants of the information provided.

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<sup>7</sup> Some follow up activity with public health nutrition staff about which foods are appropriate, and counselling and confidence skills around infant feeding through toddlerhood would be good. The Fab Tots project in Sandwell which is combining parenting skills with infant feeding might be worth following.

**Appendix 1**

**Feedback Sheet**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ (optional):

**1. How did the workshop match up to your expectations?** (Please circle)

|                      |                  |                   |                      |                |
|----------------------|------------------|-------------------|----------------------|----------------|
| <b>Expectations:</b> | <b>Fully met</b> | <b>Mostly met</b> | <b>Partially met</b> | <b>Not met</b> |
|----------------------|------------------|-------------------|----------------------|----------------|

If not well met, explain what was disappointing.

**2. How has attending the workshop....**

*Please circle*

|                                                                                            |                 |                      |                    |           |                |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|--------------------|-----------|----------------|
| <b>1. Increased your confidence about talking with mothers about when to start solids?</b> | Increased a lot | Increased moderately | Increased a little | No change | Less confident |
| <b>2. Increased your knowledge about the evidence for the 'No rush to mush' advice.</b>    | Increased a lot | Increased moderately | Increased a little | No change | Not helped     |
| <b>3. Increased your understanding about developmental readiness for solids?</b>           | Increased a lot | Increased moderately | Increased a little | No change | Less confident |
| <b>4. Increased your understanding about the Code and UK law?</b>                          | Increased a lot | Increased moderately | Increased a little | No change | Less confident |

**3. Overall, what were the good things about the session?**

**4. What could have been improved?**

**5. Was there sufficient opportunity for you to ask questions and contribute your own experience and expertise?**  Yes

No, **How do you think this could have be improved?**

6. Do you think that attending the session will change the way you work in relation to infant feeding ?

No

Yes . If YES, how will it change what you do?

7. Please tick any of the actions below that you may take following from this workshop.

Will you subscribe as a start4life supporter / support organisation?

Will you encourage the families that you work with to join Start4life?

Will you order/share the start4life resources with colleagues?

8. How will you share the information you have gained today with colleagues or staff from other organisations?

9. Overall how useful has the session been to you? (Please circle)

Very useful

Useful

Slightly useful

Not useful

**Any other comments:**

Content

Practical arrangements:

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Thank you for taking time to complete this evaluation. We take your feedback seriously and use it to continue to improve our training work. Carol, Lesley, Jenny and Caroline.

## Appendix 2

### Quantitative data from the evaluation forms

Question 1. How did the workshop match up to your expectations?

|                         | N   | %     |
|-------------------------|-----|-------|
| Fully met               | 135 | 65.9  |
| Mostly met              | 50  | 24.4  |
| Partially met           | 6   | 2.9   |
| Not met                 | 0   | 0.0   |
| Missing data            | 14  | 6.8   |
| Total number of replies | 205 | 100.0 |

Question 2. How has attending the workshop?

|                                                                                  | N   | %     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-------|
| Increased your confidence about talking with mothers about when to start solids? |     |       |
| A lot                                                                            | 123 | 63.1  |
| Moderately                                                                       | 46  | 23.6  |
| A little                                                                         | 19  | 9.7   |
| No change                                                                        | 7   | 3.6   |
| Less confident                                                                   | 0   | 0.0   |
| Total number of replies                                                          | 195 | 100.0 |
| Increased your knowledge about the evidence for the 'No rush to mush' advice?    |     |       |
| A lot                                                                            | 130 | 67.0  |
| Moderately                                                                       | 36  | 18.6  |
| A little                                                                         | 24  | 12.4  |
| No change                                                                        | 4   | 2.1   |
| Less confident                                                                   | 0   | 0.0   |
| Total number of replies                                                          | 194 | 100.0 |
| Increased your understanding about development readiness for solids?             |     |       |
| A lot                                                                            | 129 | 65.8  |
| Moderately                                                                       | 32  | 16.3  |
| A little                                                                         | 24  | 12.2  |
| No change                                                                        | 11  | 5.6   |
| Less confident                                                                   | 0   | 0.0   |
| Total number of replies                                                          | 196 | 100.0 |
| Increased your understanding about the code and UK law?                          |     |       |
| A lot                                                                            | 110 | 57.6  |
| Moderately                                                                       | 59  | 30.9  |
| A little                                                                         | 22  | 11.5  |
| No change                                                                        | 0   | 0.0   |
| Less confident                                                                   | 0   | 0.0   |
| Total number of replies                                                          | 191 | 100.0 |

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Question 5. Was there sufficient opportunity for you to ask questions and contribute your own experience and expertise?

|                         | N   | %    |
|-------------------------|-----|------|
| Yes                     | 156 | 91.2 |
| No                      | 12  | 7.0  |
| No answer               | 3   | 1.8  |
| Total number of replies | 171 | 100  |

Question 6. Do you think that attending the session will change the way you work in relation to infant feeding?

|                         | N   | %    |
|-------------------------|-----|------|
| Yes                     | 140 | 82.8 |
| No                      | 15  | 8.9  |
| No answer               | 14  | 8.3  |
| Total number of replies | 169 | 100  |

Question 7. Tick any of the actions below that you may take following from this workshop

|                                                           | N    | %     |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|------|-------|
| Subscribe as a start4life supporter/support organisation. | 81   | 22.8  |
| Encourage families you work with to join start4life.      | 131  | 36.8  |
| Order/share the start4life resources with colleagues.     | 129  | 36.2  |
| Already subscribed                                        | 12   | 3.4   |
| None                                                      | 3    | 0.8   |
| Total number of replies                                   | 356# | 100.0 |

# participants ticked more than one box.

Question 9. How useful has the session been to you?

|                         | N   | %     |
|-------------------------|-----|-------|
| Very useful             | 142 | 71.4  |
| Useful                  | 48  | 24.1  |
| Slightly useful         | 6   | 3.0   |
| Not useful              | 0   | 0.0   |
| No answer               | 3   | 1.5   |
| Total number of replies | 199 | 100.0 |