

The impact of Care to Learn: tracking the destinations of young parents funded in 2008/09, 2007/08 and 2006/07

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This research was commissioned before the new UK Government took office on 11 May 2010. As a result the content may not reflect current Government policy and may make reference to the Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) which has now been replaced by the Department for Education (DfE). The views expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department for Education or the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA).

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2008/09 Care to Learn supported 8,000 young parents to continue their education by covering the costs of childcare while they undertook a programme of learning.¹ By doing this it improved the education levels and opportunities of young parents and therefore reduced the risk of their remaining entrapped in a cycle of poverty.

The main focus of this report is from a survey conducted in early 2010 of 1,728 young parents who had received Care to Learn funding in the 2008/09 academic year. These 1,728 young parents represent 22 per cent of all young parents who received Care to Learn funding in 2008/09, and responses have been weighted back to be representative of the overall population. All findings of sub-groups have been significance tested to ensure that only statistically significant differences are reported.²

In addition, this report presents longitudinal findings of the current activities of those who received Care to Learn funding in 2006/07 and 2007/08 academic years, and findings from qualitative interviews conducted with key stakeholders in three case study areas, some young fathers who received Care to Learn, and some young parents who applied for Care to Learn but did not take up the funding.

Key findings in this report include:

- Care to Learn was crucial in allowing young parents to continue their education;
- Those young parents who stay in education after the original course funded by Care to Learn often progress to higher level learning; and
- Care to Learn has an important role in reducing the proportion of young parents who are NEET. This is notable both in the short term (in the year after Care to Learn was originally received), but also in the medium term (the reduction in NEET was sustained 40 months after Care to Learn was originally received).

Background of Care to Learn and characteristics of young parents receiving Care to Learn in 2008/09

Care to Learn was rolled out nationally in 2004/05 with the aim of narrowing education inequalities and increasing the number of mothers aged 16-19 in education, employment and training (EET).

The proportion of young parents receiving Care to Learn has increased since 2006/07, when 14 per cent received it, to 16 per cent in 2007/08 and 2008/09.³

¹ The final number of people receiving Care to Learn in the 2008/09 academic year was over 8,000, although the end of year figure had not been finalised when the sample was drawn.

² Significance is measured at a cut-off of 95 per cent significance in a two-sided test. Pearson's Chi-Square has been used to test significance on cross-tabulations.

³ Numbers of young parents receiving Care to Learn are taken from the YPLA, and numbers of young mothers from DfE/DH estimates. However, the figures for the number of young mothers for 2008 onwards are estimates, and therefore take-up rates in these years are indicative only.

Fifty per cent of those who received Care to Learn funding in 2008/09 were aged 17 or 18 at the start of the 2008/09 academic year, and a further 22 per cent were 19 years old. Eighty per cent were lone parents, and 71 per cent were receiving Income Support. In terms of ethnicity, 78 per cent were white, seven per cent were black African, seven per cent of mixed ethnicity, and four per cent black Caribbean. A higher proportion of young parents living in London were from ethnic minority backgrounds when compared to young parents in other parts of England. Ninety per cent lived in urban areas with only nine per cent living in rural areas.⁴

The impact of Care to Learn for 2008/09 learners⁵

Care to Learn continues to have an important role in allowing young parents to continue their education. Seventy-seven per cent of young parents receiving Care to Learn funding in 2008/09 said that without Care to Learn they would not have been able to go on the course. This has increased since the 2007/08 cohort, when 73 per cent reported this. Only two per cent of those receiving funding in 2008/09 said that Care to Learn made no difference, and that they would have gone on the course even without Care to Learn; this is the same proportion who reported Care to Learn made no difference in previous evaluations of the 2007/08 and 2006/07 cohort.

In total, 64 per cent of young parents had completed the course they started in the 2008/09 academic year, only 17 per cent had dropped out, and the remainder (19 per cent) were still on their course.

Encouragingly, three quarters of young parents (75 per cent) had gained a qualification or a partial qualification from the course supported by Care to Learn in 2008/09. The national Further Education (FE) success rate⁶ in 2008/09 was 81 per cent, whilst 76 per cent of those funded by Care to Learn at a FE college had gained a qualification. Given that 19 per cent of young parents were still on their course, and therefore may yet gain qualifications, it seems clear that the success rate for those funded by Care to Learn is comparable to the national average for all learners. This represents a significant achievement given that young parents are combining learning with childcare responsibilities.

⁴ It was not possible to classify whether one per cent of young parents lived in rural or urban areas, due to invalid postcodes.

⁵ See chapter 6.

⁶ The success rate is calculated as the number of learners achieving the qualification divided by the number of those starting, excluding any learners who transferred onto another qualification. Post-16 Education & Skills: Learner Participation, Outcomes and Level of Highest Qualification Held, http://www.thedataservice.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/8D25DE64-8FA6-49B1-B482-14D10CDBB8B1/0/Post_16_Education_June_2010.pdf, last accessed 06/07/2010.

Destinations of young parents⁷

For young parents who received Care to Learn funding in 2008/09, the most common activity in early 2010 (circa 16 months after starting their Care to Learn funded course) was learning (63 per cent). In addition, 10 per cent were in work, four per cent were about to start a course, and seven per cent were looking for work. A further 14 per cent were at home and looking after their child.

Of those who were at home and looking after their child, nearly half (47 per cent) reported that they wanted to do so, which suggests that they were not doing so because they were unable to find work or a course of learning, or because they could not afford childcare.

For those who received Care to Learn funding in 2007/08, learning was also the most common activity in early 2010 (circa 28 months after starting their Care to Learn funded course), with 50 per cent in some form of learning. In addition, 17 per cent were working and another 17 per cent were at home, looking after their baby and not looking for work.

For those who received funding in the previous academic year, 2006/07, 44 per cent were in learning, and 22 per cent were working in early 2010 (circa 40 months after starting their Care to Learn funded course).

Care to Learn and NEET⁸

The proportion of all young mothers (not just those on Care to Learn) aged 16-19 that are in employment, education or training (EET) has risen, from 22.2 per cent for the period 1997-99, to 32.9 per cent for the period of 2007-09. Nevertheless, this suggests that 67.1 per cent of all young parents were NEET on average between 2007 and 2009.

Care to Learn has a large and sustained impact on the likelihood of young parents to be NEET. Before starting learning in the 2008/09 academic year, 69 per cent of all young parents receiving Care to Learn had been NEET, in line with national figures. However, by the time of the interview in early 2010, only 27 per cent were NEET, suggesting that Care to Learn is an effective way of reducing the proportion of young parents who are NEET.

The youngest parents were less likely to be NEET circa 16 months after starting their Care to Learn funded learning, with only 15 per cent of those young parents aged 15 or younger being NEET, compared to 29 per cent of those aged 19 years old. However, younger parents were also less likely to have been NEET before starting their course, in the summer of 2008. This is likely to be in part a reflection of the fact that the youngest parents were still in compulsory education.

⁷ See chapter 6 for more detailed findings about destinations for those young parents receiving Care to Learn funding in the 2008/09 academic year, and chapter 7 for findings about destinations for those receiving Care to Learn funding in both the 2007/08 and 2006/07 academic years.

⁸ See chapter 6 for more detailed findings about NEET rates for those receiving Care to Learn funding in the 2008/09 academic year, and chapter 7 for findings about NEET rates for those receiving Care to Learn funding in the 2007/08 and 2006/07 academic years.

Furthermore, young parents aged 16 to 18 who received the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) were less likely to be NEET circa 16 months after starting their Care to Learn funded learning. Only 24 per cent of those who were also receiving EMA were NEET in the summer of 2010, compared to 33 per cent of those who were not receiving EMA.

Longitudinal findings from previous cohorts of young parents who received Care to Learn funding in 2007/08 and 2006/07 suggest that this reduction in NEET is not just over the short term, but the medium term as well. The proportion of young parents funded in 2007/08 who were NEET increased slightly from 22 per cent circa 18 months after starting Care to Learn funded learning, to 33 per cent circa 28 months after starting Care to Learn funded learning. However, this is still half the proportion who were NEET before receiving Care to Learn funding (65 per cent).

Similarly, the proportion of young parents funded in 2006/07 who were NEET has remained stable at around three in ten around 18, 30 and 40 months after receiving Care to Learn funding. These results for the 2006/07 and 2007/08 cohorts demonstrate that Care to Learn helps maintain a sustained reduction in NEET over the medium term.

Learning progression⁹

Of those young parents receiving Care to Learn funding in 2008/09 who were in learning early in 2010, nearly half (48 per cent) were studying on a new course that was not the same as the course they were doing during the 2008/09 academic year. Taking all young parents into account, and not just those who continued in learning, this suggests that 32 per cent of all young parents receiving Care to Learn funding in 2008/09 used Care to Learn as a stepping stone to undertake further learning.

Of those who were in learning and studying a new course that leads to a qualification, three in five (60 per cent) were undertaking learning at a higher level than the course they originally received funding for in the 2008/09 academic year¹⁰, suggesting that Care to Learn helps learning progression of these young parents.

Five per cent of young parents who received Care to Learn funding in 2008/09 were at university in early 2010. The proportions of young parents from the earlier cohorts were higher; of those receiving funding in 2007/08 12 per cent were at university, and 20 per cent of those who received funding in 2006/07 were at university in 2010. Again, this demonstrates how Care to Learn helps these young parents to progress beyond the learning that Care to Learn itself had funded.

⁹ See chapter 6 for more detail of learning progression for those receiving Care to Learn funding in the 2008/09 academic year, and chapter 7 for those receiving Care to Learn funding in both the 2007/08 and 2006/07 academic years.

¹⁰ This is based only on those for whom it was possible to attribute a course level to both courses.

Take up of Care to Learn¹¹

The main barriers to take-up of Care to Learn that stakeholders reported were the result of local circumstances rather than any aspects of Care to Learn itself. In particular, stakeholders noted that there was a lack of suitable learning provision, particularly short courses with flexible hours. In addition, it was noted that there was often a lack of childcare provision, particularly for babies aged below two years old, and a general lack of childminders. The attitudes of young parents were also mentioned, specifically that they may not want to continue their education, or want to leave their child in childcare. The level of Care to Learn payments were not mentioned as a barrier to take-up, and the application process for Care to Learn was rarely mentioned.

For those young parents who did not want to continue their education, possibly because they had previously had bad experiences in school or did not have the confidence, it was found that short courses teaching Foundation level 'life skills' were a good way of building young parents' confidence, helping them back into mainstream education.

Take-up was highest in the case study area which had the best network of frontline staff. In this area there was a designated teenage parent Connexions adviser who was co-located and in constant contact with the teenage pregnancy midwife and health visitor, and this provided a clear and effective referral network. In the low and medium take-up areas, although there were designated teenage parent Connexions advisers, other links, particularly with midwives, were less strong. All three areas had strong networks of staff providing a strategic lead for Care to Learn in the locality, although this did not seem to have a strong positive effect on take-up.

The main reasons for young parents not to take up Care to Learn after having applied for it, were that their personal circumstances had changed or they had decided not to undertake the learning they had previously applied for, for example because they wanted to spend more time with their child.

Care to Learn: access, provision and funding¹²

More than nine out of ten (93 per cent) of all young parents found it easy to find out about Care to Learn and 90 per cent reported that it was easy to apply. The main channels through which young parents found out about Care to Learn were Connexions advisers and college student support staff.

Most young parents undertook training at an FE college (72 per cent), with nine per cent at a sixth form or sixth form college, and seven per cent at a school. The majority of courses lasted for a year or more, and the most common level of course was Level 2 (35 per cent), followed by Level 3 (26 per cent) and Level 1 (17 per cent).

¹¹ See chapter 2.

¹² See chapters 4 and 5.

The most common form of childcare supported by Care to Learn funding were day nurseries, that were not on the same site as the young parent's school or college, with the second most common being a registered childminder.

Almost all young parents (96 per cent) reported that Care to Learn covered childcare costs for all the time they were at their learning provider, 79 per cent said it covered all their time travelling between childcare and learning providers, and 71 per cent said it covered all their time undertaking private study.

Care to Learn also provides financial support to cover the additional costs of travelling between home and the childcare provider. In total, 22 per cent of young parents received some support towards travel costs and 17 per cent received all the travel costs they applied to Care to Learn for.

The proportion of young parents for whom Care to Learn has covered all of their childcare costs when at their learning provider has remained stable over the previous three cohorts. However, the proportion for whom Care to Learn has covered all of their time doing private study, and the additional costs of travelling between home and their childcare provider, has slightly declined. This is likely to be the result of the Care to Learn maximum rate of funding not having changed since the 2007/08 cohort, and a gradual shift away from using (normally cheaper) childminders to (normally more expensive) day nurseries. Nevertheless, the fact that only 15 per cent of young parents had reached their weekly maximum of Care to Learn funding (£175 in London, £160 elsewhere) suggests that the level of funding is about right.

Recommendations¹³

Based on the findings from this research, we propose the following recommendations (see Chapter 9 for further discussion):

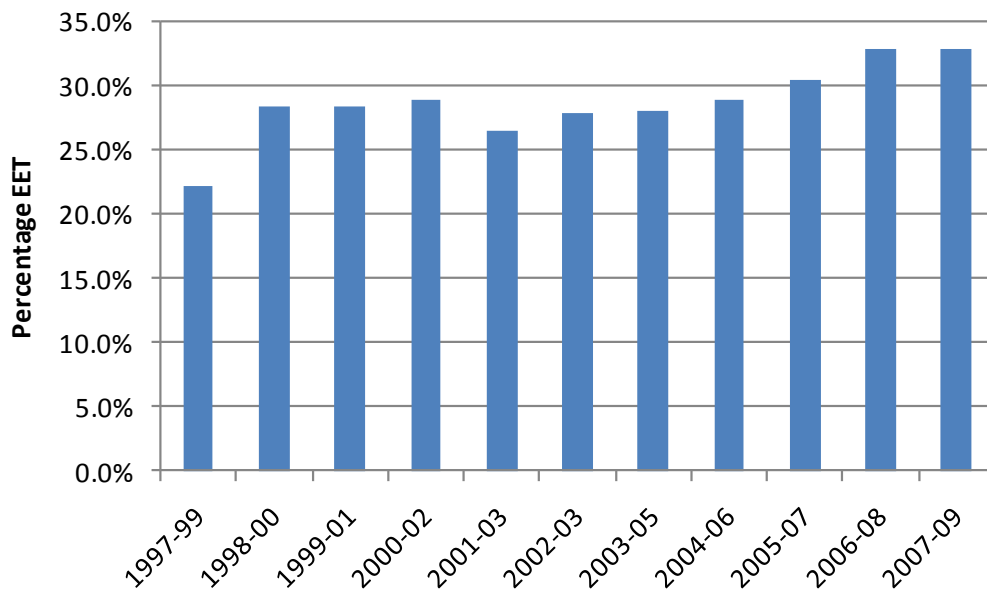
1. Continue Care to Learn funding
2. Maintain and monitor the amount of funding
3. Maintain the current (2008/09) eligibility criteria
4. Increase awareness and marketing for some groups of young parents
5. Continue to promote good practice among support workers and stakeholders

¹³ See chapter 9.

1 INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

- 1.1 The Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion (*Inclusion*) and Ipsos MORI were commissioned by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to track the destinations of young parents funded by Care to Learn in 2006/07, 2007/08 and 2008/09. Since commissioning, Care to Learn has fallen under the remit of the Young People's Learning Agency (YPLA). This report presents the results of the fieldwork conducted in early 2010.
- 1.2 Care to Learn aims to help young parents to continue with or return to learning by covering the costs of childcare and travel while they learn. Findings from this study show that this improves the education levels and opportunities of young parents and therefore reduces the risk of them becoming 'not in employment, education or training' (NEET). This should, in turn, improve the prospects of their children and breaks the cycle of poverty.
- 1.3 The proportion of young mothers aged 16-19 that were in education, training or employment has risen from 22.2 per cent over the period of 1997 to 1999 to 32.9 per cent over the period of 2007 to 2009. This means however that between 2007 and 2009 on average 67.1 per cent of young mothers were NEET – see Figure 1-1.

Figure 1-1 Percentage of mothers aged 16 to 19 in Education, Employment or Training in England, three year averages



Source: Labour Force Survey April-June Household dataset

Background

- 1.4 Care to Learn was launched in 2003 in response to the government's then Teenage Pregnancy Strategy which set out a national strategy for England to i) halve the rate of conceptions for under 18s, ii) set a firmly established downward trend in the under 16s conception rate by 2010 and iii) minimise the social exclusion experienced by young parents. The provisional 2008 under-18 conception rate for England is 40.4 per 1,000 girls aged 15 to 17. This is a decrease of 3.2 per cent from the 2007 rate, and also the lowest rate for 20 years.¹⁴
- 1.5 Any publicly funded learning can be undertaken with the support of Care to Learn; this includes school, Further Education (FE) and sixth forms or sixth form colleges, work-based learning and community, taster and short courses. In 2008/09 up to £160 per week per child¹⁵ was payable directly to the childcare provider on behalf of the learner (£175 in London). The childcare provider must be Ofsted registered.
- 1.6 To be eligible for Care to Learn funding in 2008/09 the parent must be aged under 20 when their learning starts, caring for their own children and living in England. In 2008/09, a total of 8,000 young parents received Care to Learn funding. While the vast majority of young parents who received Care to Learn were young mothers, young fathers are also eligible. Therefore we use the term 'young parents' throughout this report.
- 1.7 A relatively low proportion of young parents in England actually receive Care to Learn. However, it seems that the proportion has increased since 2006/07, when 14 per cent received it, to 16 per cent in 2007/08 and 2008/09.¹⁶
- 1.8 Whilst being a young parent often reflects a background of disadvantage and can disrupt learning and employment plans, Simon Duncan of the University of Bradford, has suggested that becoming a young parent may sometimes have positive effects on the social outcomes of young parents:

*"Many teenage mothers describe how motherhood makes them feel stronger, and marks a change for the better. Many fathers seek to remain connected with their children. For both, parenting seems to provide an impetus to take-up of education, training and employment."*¹⁷

¹⁴ <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/resources-and-practice/IG00200/>, last accessed 07/07/2010.

¹⁵ At the time of publication the current amount of funding for Care to Learn recipients in the academic year 2009/10 is still £160 per week per child and £175 in London.

¹⁶ Numbers of young parents receiving Care to Learn are taken from the YPLA, and numbers of young mothers from DfE/DH estimates. However, the figures for the number of young mothers for 2008 onwards are estimates, and therefore take-up rates in these years are indicative only.

¹⁷ Duncan, S. (2007) What's the problem with teenage parents? And what's the problem with policy? *Critical Social Policy*, Vol. 27(3): 307-334.

- 1.9 Care to Learn aims to overcome some of the barriers that young parents may face, and enables them to continue their education so they can better provide for their children in the future.

Research aims and objectives

1.10 The YPLA has three aims:

- To support local authorities to commission suitable education and training opportunities for all 16-19 year olds;
- To provide funding for academies for all their provision; and
- To provide financial support to young learners.

1.11 Care to Learn falls under the third of these aims.

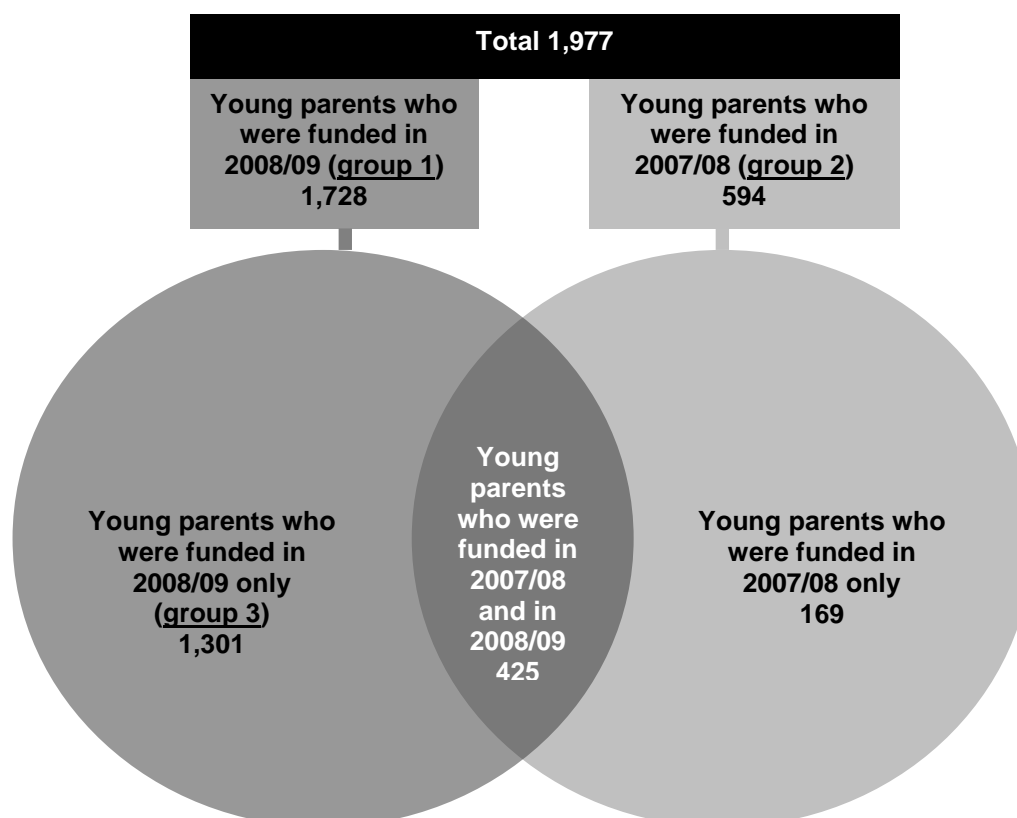
1.12 This research:

- Analyses the impact of Care to Learn on academic progression during 2008/09;
- Examines the effectiveness of Care to Learn funding in meeting childcare costs;
- Provides information on Care to Learn recipients;
- Tracks the destinations of young parents funded in 2006/07 and 2007/08; and
- Establishes an understanding of experiences of young fathers who took up Care to Learn in 2008/09, those who applied but did not take up Care to Learn and key stakeholders in local authorities involved in delivery of Care to Learn.

Methodology

1.13 Overall, 1,977 young parents were interviewed between 19 February and 20 March 2010. This included 594 young parents who originally received funding in 2007/08 (and took part in the 2009 survey) and had agreed to be re-contacted to participate in the 're-contact survey' (Group 2 in Figure 1-1). Furthermore, 238 young parents who received funding in 2006/07 were re-contacted (these are not shown in Figure 1-1).

Figure 1-1 Summary of recipients included in the evaluation, 2010



1.14 To evaluate both the detailed experiences of those who received Care to Learn funding in 2008/09, and the destinations of those who received funding in previous years, two questionnaires were developed. The main survey was asked of those who received funding in 2008/09 and who had not been interviewed in previous years, and the re-contact survey was asked of those who had received funding in either 2006/07 and/or 2007/08. If young parents had received funding in 2006/07 and/or 2007/08 and 2008/09 some key questions from the main survey were also asked (although not all so as not to overburden young parents).

1.15 This report will refer to three groups, which are detailed in Figure 1-1:

- Group 1. This includes all young parents who received Care to Learn funding in the 2008/09 survey, whether or not they had received Care to Learn funding and been interviewed in previous years as well as 2008/09. Some of these young parents, who had received funding in 2006/07 and/or 2007/08, were not asked all questions in the

main survey, as they were also asked the re-contact questions. In total 1,728 young parents fell into group 1.

- Group 2. This includes all young parents who received Care to Learn funding in 2006/07 and/or 2007/08, and who were re-contacted so that their current destinations could be measured. In total, 594 young parents fell into group 2.
- Group 3. This includes those young parents who received funding in 2008/09 and had not been interviewed in previous waves of research. This group received all questions in the main survey, and comprised 1,301 young parents.

1.16 Interviews were conducted using computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI). A separate technical report has been published in conjunction with this report with further details about the methodology and questionnaire used in this research.

Qualitative interviews

1.17 Qualitative telephone interviews were conducted with two groups of young parents. First, 323 young parents applied for Care to Learn funding but did not take it up. All 323 were contacted, and thirteen agreed to be interviewed in order to establish why they had not taken up Care to Learn. Second, four young fathers were interviewed, to explore their experiences of applying for and receiving Care to Learn.

1.18 This year the report also contains findings from 21 qualitative interviews with key stakeholders from three different local areas who support the delivery of Care to Learn. The interviews were conducted with Teenage Pregnancy Coordinators (TPCs), Connexions advisers, learning providers and childcare providers in three local authorities in England. Of these case study areas one had a high take-up rate of Care to Learn among young parents, one medium and one low.

1.19 The interviews achieved fell in the following categories:

Table 1-1 Stakeholder interviews completed by category

	TPC	Connexions	Learning Providers	Childcare providers	Total
High take-up	1	3	3	2	9
Medium take-up	1	2	1	1	5
Low take-up	1	2	2	2	7
Total	3	7	6	5	21

Presentation of the findings

1.20 For the purpose of this report, young parents who received Care to Learn funding are referred to as 'young parents' throughout. Young parents who were aged 19 on 31 August 2008, starting a new course and had not previously received Care to Learn funding are referred to as 'new 19 year old' parents.

Statistical significance

- 1.21 Relationships between variables are only reported in the text of the report if they are statistically significant, and if the relationship is thought to be relevant and interesting to the topic being discussed (not all relationships that are statistically significant will be discussed in the text because of the need for a readable and fairly concise report). Relationships that are not significant will not be discussed in the text.¹⁸ Significance is measured at a cut-off of 95 per cent significance in a two-sided test. Pearson's Chi-Square has been used to test significance on cross-tabulations.¹⁹

Treatment of small base sizes

- 1.22 Where unweighted bases are less than 100 young parents, the findings are flagged 'to be treated with caution because of low base size'. Where any of the weighted cells are less than one per cent, the cell is marked with an asterisk (*), where there are no learners in a cell, the cell is marked with a dash (-).

Treatment of 'don't knows' and 'other' responses

- 1.23 The 'don't know' and 'other' responses are included within the unweighted bases of tables and charts, and are included as bars in the charts, or as columns in the tables throughout the report, unless they were one per cent or less. Notes in the tables explain what is included in the bases. Responses such as 'recoded others' and 'don't knows' are included in the base.

Structure of the report

- 1.24 The order of chapters reflects as far as possible the 'customer journey' of young parents. The findings from the survey are presented in the following chapters:
- Chapter 2 examines take-up of Care to Learn;
 - Chapter 3 details the characteristics of Care to Learn recipients in 2008/09;
 - Chapter 4 provides information on Care to Learn regarding access, provision and funding in 2008/09;
 - Chapter 5 examines learning and childcare provision accessed by young parents receiving Care to Learn funding in 2008/09;
 - Chapter 6 presents the impact of Care to Learn for 08/09 learners;
 - Chapter 7 examines the longer term prospects of Care to Learn recipients funded in 2006/07 and 2007/08;
 - Chapter 8 presents information on young fathers in 2008/09; and
 - Chapter 9 provides policy recommendations for Care to Learn.

¹⁸ Except in the case of multiple response questions where significance has not been tested but some differences between groups are discussed.

¹⁹ This report contains analysis of some questions split by the ethnicity of respondents. Where enough respondents have answered questions black or black British young parents are split between black African and black Caribbean young parents and answers for these groups are reported separately. Where fewer young parents have answered a question all black British young parents are grouped and reported together.

1.25 All chapters, apart from chapters 3 (Characteristics of Care to Learn recipients) and 9 (Recommendations) have chapter summary boxes at their beginning, which provide a digest of the key findings in the chapter.

1.26 The technical report published in conjunction with this report contains:

- technical information, including the methodology, sampling, weighting and fieldwork outcomes; and
- the full questionnaires.

2 TAKE-UP OF CARE TO LEARN

Chapter Summary

- The main barriers to eligible young parents taking up Care to Learn were that there was a lack of suitable courses for young parents, a lack of childcare, particularly for children under two years old, low levels of awareness of the programme, and negative attitudes of some young parents both to learning and formal childcare. As none of these barriers are the result of deficiencies in Care to Learn itself, they need to be tackled at local level. The amount of funding provided by Care to Learn was rarely mentioned as a barrier, and the application form was rarely mentioned.
- For young parents not ready for mainstream education, short courses teaching parenting and life skills helped build confidence and acted as a gateway for learning with larger education providers.
- The main referral routes into Care to Learn are through learning providers and Connexions advisers. The high take-up case study area surveyed had a very strong referral network, with designated teenage parent midwives and health visitors being co-located with a specialist young parent Connexions adviser.
- All areas surveyed had strong strategic networks, with task groups who regularly met to discuss Care to Learn and related issues.
- Childcare providers seemed to be less integrated into the Care to Learn network, and more work needs to be done on a local level to increase childcare provider involvement with the programme.
- The bureaucracy involved with Care to Learn is in itself not considered overly burdensome for learning and childcare providers.
- Young parents who applied for Care to Learn but did not take it up were likely to have done so for personal reasons, although a small number did not take it up as a result of problems with the application process.
- Only one of the young parents interviewed who did not take-up Care to Learn actually undertook the course they had originally intended to do, and all the other young parents reported that Care to Learn was crucial in giving them the option of continuing their education.

- 2.1 This chapter looks at take-up of Care to Learn. Specifically it considers what barriers stakeholders felt there were for eligible young parents who did not take up Care to Learn, and the types of stakeholder networks that best allow frontline staff working on Care to Learn to engage as many young parents as possible. Finally, the chapter presents findings from a series of qualitative interviews.

Barriers to take-up of Care to Learn

- 2.2 Stakeholders were asked what barriers they perceived reduced take-up of Care to Learn for eligible young parents. The barriers mentioned fall into five categories:

- Availability of learning provision;
- Availability of childcare;
- Attitudes of young parents towards childcare and learning;
- Awareness of Care to Learn; and
- Application process.

Availability of learning provision

- 2.3 A key problem mentioned in the low and medium take-up case study areas was that there was not enough suitable learning provision for young parents. Particularly, it was felt that there were not enough short or part-time courses, and that there were not enough courses with flexible hours that would be suitable for young parents who had to juggle learning and childcare. Stakeholders were trying to create shorter evening courses in one case study area, which would teach 'life skills' and act as a gateway to more sustained learning for young parents who had been out of the education system. This approach had been very successful in the high take-up case study area, where a short course was taught by a variety of stakeholders, including tutors at the learning provider, Connexions advisers, health visitors, and staff from charities.

"We've tried to make it flexible, tried to cut down the hours. And we've worked with [Sure Start] Children's Centres so that it's in their timetable. The course covers areas like housing, hygiene, home safety and so forth. We've looked at different qualifications, and have different speakers coming in. So it's oriented around them and their lives." (Learning provider)

- 2.4 In addition, there were more local problems related to the availability of learning provision. For example, it was reported that the timetable for lessons in the main FE college in the medium take-up case study area were released very close to the beginning of the academic year, and this meant that young parents did not always have enough time to complete the application process before their course began. In addition, given the shortage of childcare provision in this area, young parents did not always have enough time to secure convenient childcare provision if there was a waiting list for their preferred choice.
- 2.5 In the low take-up case study area, it was reported that, until recently, there had not been any sixth forms in the schools in the area. This meant that young parents would

have to move learning provider when they entered year 12, either to a sixth form college or a FE college. Making this transition was seen as particularly difficult for young parents, who might have to shift their childcare or travel arrangements.

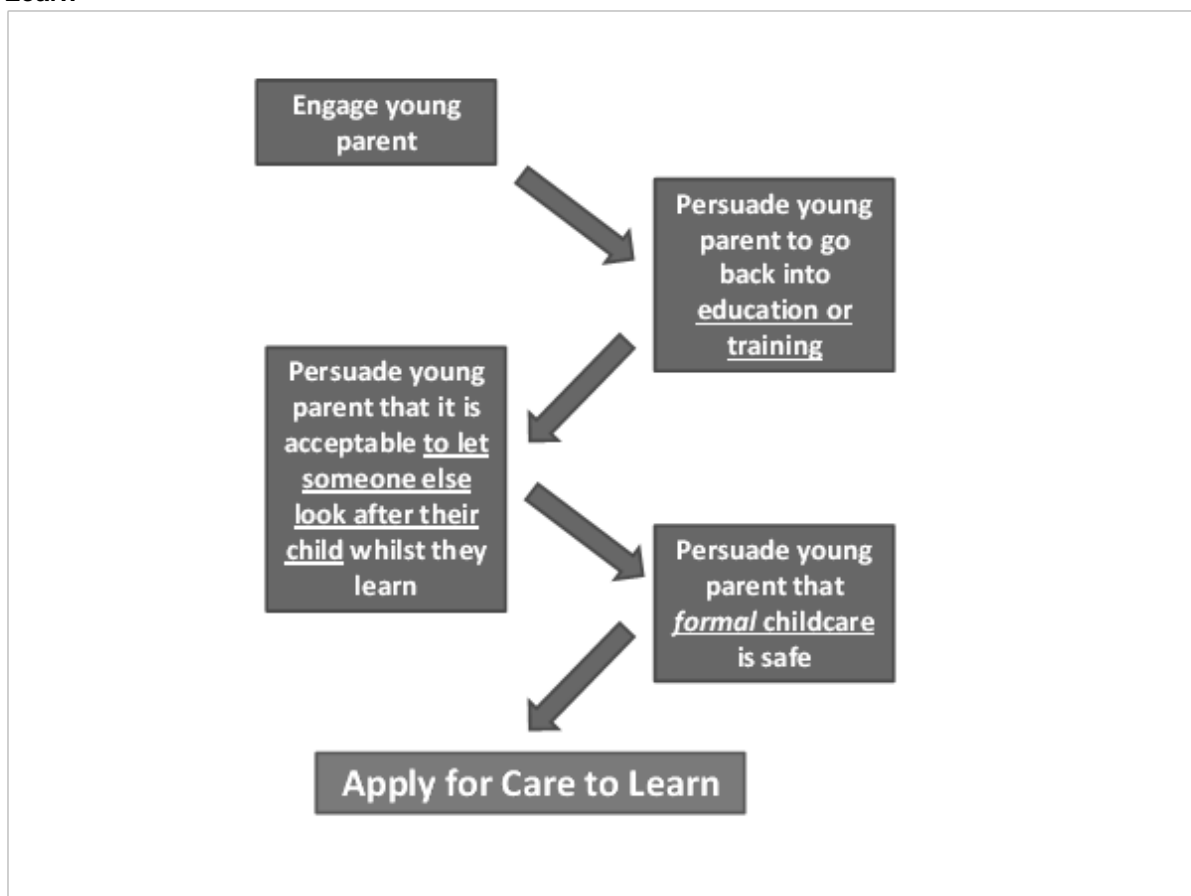
Availability of childcare provision

- 2.6 As well as the availability of suitable learning provision, it was noted that there was often insufficient childcare provision. More specifically, it was noted that there were often waiting lists for nurseries, and a lack of childminders. In order to get sufficient childcare it was reported that some young parents had to find two childcare providers and juggle the two, which could increase both logistical and transport expenses (although registration fees are not included as part of the weekly maximum funding allowance). Furthermore, it was occasionally noted that some childcare providers who did have spaces would not want to take on children using Care to Learn because the income would not be for the whole year, and they would therefore lose money.
- 2.7 More specifically, stakeholders in all three areas reported that there was not enough childcare provision for babies aged less than two years old, which was particularly important for young parents. Even the nursery in one of the FE colleges in the low take-up area would not take babies under two, meaning that young parents would have to find childcare away from their college.
- 2.8 Moreover, local geography and the quality of transport links could influence take-up of Care to Learn. It was noted in all the case study areas that childcare provision and learning provision were not always located close to each other. In the low take-up area this problem was compounded by the fact that public transport links in the area were bad, and that it was very difficult for young parents to get themselves and their baby ready to leave in the morning, drop their baby off, and then arrive in time for classes.

Attitudes of young parents towards childcare and learning

- 2.9 The attitudes of some young parents towards learning and childcare were also noted as barriers to increased take-up of Care to Learn. Figure 2-1 demonstrates a chain of barriers that advisors may need to overcome in order to encourage young parents to apply for Care to Learn.

Figure 2-1 What an adviser needs to do to encourage potential learners to apply for Care to Learn



2.10 First, it was reported by Connexions advisers and TPCs that attitudes towards learning were a barrier for many young parents. Young parents may well have had poor learning experiences before becoming pregnant, and therefore persuading them to go back into learning was often difficult. Young parents often had very low self-esteem, and feared the stigma of being a lone parent if they went back into education, in particular the misconception that they had only had a child because of the state benefits associated with being a parent.²⁰

2.11 This was compounded in some areas by the fact that learning was low down on the list of young parents' priorities. In particular, if a young parent did not have stable housing ('sofa surfers' as described by Connexions advisers in one area), securing stable housing was much more important than gaining qualifications. The chaotic lifestyle that not having a fixed home was associated with could make learning especially difficult to manage in conjunction with having a child.

2.12 One approach to overcoming this barrier was to encourage young parents to restart learning with short courses teaching life and parenting skills. These were less

²⁰ Learning providers and childcare providers were less likely to mention this as a barrier, probably because those young parents they work with have shown that they do not hold these views by the very fact that they are in education. See also, <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/everychildmatters/resources-and-practice/IG00250/>, last accessed 02/08/2010.

threatening for young parents, and were found to be an effective stepping stone into full-time mainstream education.

“Some of our young parents are not ready to go into a mainstream education environment, and really need something that is in between, that helps rebuild their confidence and make them feel less isolated.” (Learning provider)

- 2.13 In all three case study areas there was a consensus that many young parents found it very difficult to ‘give up’ their child whilst learning. Young parents often felt that they were neglecting their child by not looking after it themselves, particularly if the child was very young.
- 2.14 Even if young parents were happy not looking after the child themselves they often preferred informal childcare with someone they knew and trusted, for example the baby’s grandparents. It was often seen as a further challenge to persuade young parents that it was safe to leave their child with a formal childcare provider, in particular childminders.
- 2.15 It was felt that if the childcare and learning providers were co-located it would allay some fears of young parents, as they could quickly be with their child if there was any problem. It was also felt that more action could be taken by the Family Information Service or Sure Start to persuade young parents that using childcare was both safe and acceptable. Furthermore, stronger links between Connexions advisers and childcare providers was necessary to overcome this.
- 2.16 Stakeholders in the low take-up area considered these barriers to be particularly acute in their area. Young parents were often the children of young parents themselves, and it was therefore seen as normal to give up education when a child was born. In addition, it was reported that there was a culture of low educational attainment, in part due to the fact that there was, and had been historically, relatively high employment but in low skilled jobs. Connexions advisers saw it as important to persuade young parents of the benefits of learning, and that increased income associated with it would benefit them and their child.

Awareness of Care to Learn

- 2.17 In all three areas the main referral pathway into Care to Learn was through Connexions advisers and learning provider staff.²¹ Even though all young parents who saw Connexions advisers were informed about Care to Learn, it was felt in the lower take-up areas that those who were not seeing a Connexions adviser would find it hard to find out about the programme and that it was, at best, ad hoc. If a young parent did not ask the question about what support was available they might not find out.
- 2.18 This was compounded by a lack of advertising of Care to Learn. Care to Learn posters were not always on display in Family Information Service or Sure Start premises. Furthermore, the learning support team in the local FE college would not tell all

²¹ More detail of this referral pathway is found in the Stakeholder Networks section.

students about Care to Learn, as they did with EMA, but only mention Care to Learn if they knew that a (prospective) student was a parent, and, as mentioned above, it was considered that some young parents would not want to divulge this information for fear of being stigmatised. This sentiment was also noted in the medium and high take-up areas, although less strongly, and stakeholders in all areas suggested that a national advertising campaign would be welcome.

- 2.19 However, even in the low take-up area there were attempts to improve awareness of Care to Learn. For example, there was a 'road show' in the centre of town where Care to Learn was explained, a newsletter to over 500 front line staff dealing with vulnerable young people, and a link for the local authority's website providing information about health and the support available, was on the desktop of every computer in schools and FE colleges. In addition, the council 'Youth Cabinet' (a body made up of elected young people mirroring the main positions in the local authority's Cabinet) was increasingly being involved in publicising Care to Learn. In the medium take-up area a set of guidance for schools had been drawn up to encourage learning providers to appoint a nominated reintegration officer to provide all support needed for young parents of school age, and they were also working to involve midwives more in the process.

Application process

- 2.20 The application process, and the form in particular, were mentioned as a barrier in the high take-up area. It was noted that the form was harder than the EMA application form, and was very time consuming for Connexions advisers who were helping young people with it, particularly because signatures of learning and childcare providers were needed. It was suggested that if there were problems with an application learning providers should be notified as well as the young parent, as some young parents would ignore any mail that looked official.

"It's like filling in my own tax return." (Connexions)

- 2.21 Whilst stakeholders in the other areas thought that the form was daunting for young parents, they did not see it as a barrier, perhaps signifying that there were other, greater barriers in these areas.

"There's a lot of information that goes into the application forms, but it's quite straightforward. We've had no issues." (Learning provider)

Barriers to take-up of Care to Learn mainly due to circumstances in local areas

- 2.22 The amount of money Care to Learn provides for young parents was rarely seen as a barrier to young parents taking up support, although it was noted that some parents on full-time courses had to supplement Care to Learn funding with additional, often informal, childcare. As Chapter 5 shows, in regions where nurseries on average cost more than £160 (or £175 in London), young parents were more likely to use less expensive childminders.

2.23 The main barriers were not directly caused by Care to Learn policy itself, but were due to other local factors. The availability of learning and childcare provision, the attitudes of young parents, and ensuring sufficient awareness of Care to Learn among young parents are all issues that need to be addressed at a local level.

Stakeholder networks

2.24 Stakeholder networks can be important in ensuring eligible young parents are made aware of Care to Learn. Stakeholder networks can be divided into two categories:

- Operational networks; and
- Strategic networks.

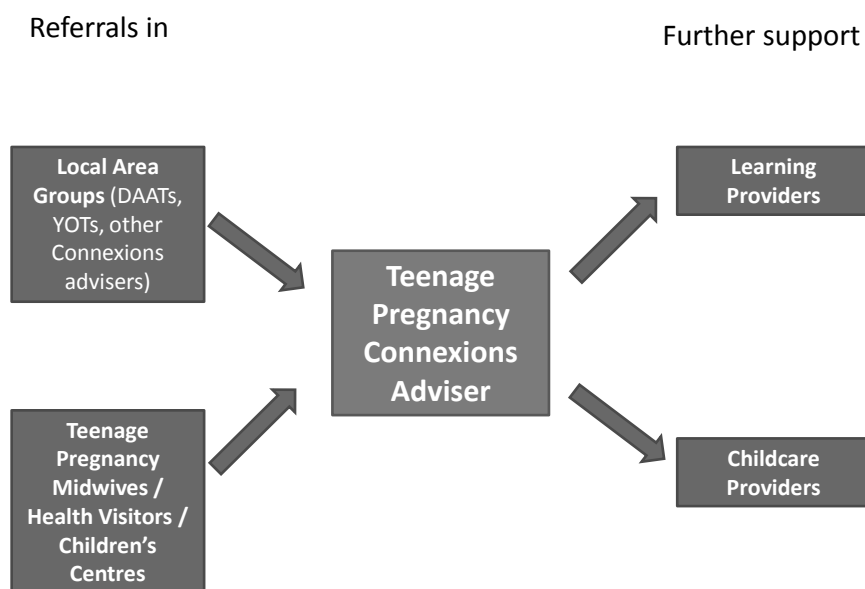
Operational networks

2.25 These networks are made up of operational staff that are in day to day contact with young parents. All three areas had one feature of their operational networks in common. In each area there was one Connexions adviser who had overall responsibility for young parents and acted as a hub for other operational stakeholders. In all case study areas, the importance of this designated Connexions adviser was emphasized. It should also be noted that learning providers also were very important in encouraging young parents to apply for Care to Learn, but although they did often work with Connexions advisers, they tended to cooperate less with other stakeholders.

2.26

Figure 2-2 represents those aspects of operational networks which seemed to work best, drawing on practice in all three case study areas, but matching none exactly. It demonstrates the structures that seemed to work well in terms of providing strong referral pathways into Care to Learn, and the cooperation needed to best support young parents once they have been engaged by a Connexions adviser.

Figure 2-2 Important components of operational networks



2.27 As noted above, a lack of awareness of Care to Learn was seen as a barrier to engaging young parents in the medium and low take-up areas, and whilst Connexions advisers made all those they spoke to aware of Care to Learn, some young parents who did not see a Connexions adviser were falling through the gaps. In the high take-up area, however, there was a much stronger stakeholder network, which was likely to provide greater support to young parents. In this area a specially designated teenage parent Connexions adviser, teenage parent midwife and teenage parent health visitor were based in the same building, and could easily share knowledge. Thus all young parents would be seen by this designated midwife and health visitor who would refer them to the Connexions adviser who would in turn make them aware of Care to Learn. Having designated people working with this vulnerable group, and having them co-located, was seen as a great success, and the key reason for the high take-up in the area. Working with Sure Start Children's Centres was also important in the high take-up case study area.

2.28 One weakness in this system was that young parents aged 18 and older were not seen by the specific teenage parent midwife / health visitor, and could therefore bypass this structure. Furthermore, this system was in the process of being replaced so that there would be dedicated Connexions advisers in different localities within the case study area working with all types of young person, rather than having a designated adviser for young parents throughout the case study area.

2.29 The low and medium take-up areas did have dedicated teenage parent Connexions advisers, but their links with other stakeholders, most notably midwives was not as

good. In these areas improving cooperation with midwives was seen as particularly important, potentially by having a dedicated teenage pregnancy midwife.

- 2.30 In the low take-up area Local Area Groups worked in individual Wards to share information of young people who were particularly at risk so that appropriate support could be provided. These Local Area Groups were made up of members of Youth Offending Teams (YOTs), Connexions advisers and Drug and Alcohol Action Teams (DAATs).
- 2.31 As well as ensuring strong referral pathways into Care to Learn, operational networks often provided links allowing the Connexions adviser to provide support with other organisations, particularly learning providers and childcare providers. Links with learning providers were good in all three areas, as Connexions advisers were active in schools and FE colleges. These links were particularly strong in the high take-up area, where Connexions advisers had designed short courses specifically for young parents with a learning provider.
- 2.32 Links with childcare providers, however, were not as strong. It has already been noted that young parents often feel uncomfortable leaving their child with a childcare provider, and stronger networks between Connexions advisers and childcare providers were seen as important in overcoming this problem. For example, in the high and medium take-up areas, Connexions advisers took young parents to visit nurseries so they could see they were safe. Similarly, in the low take-up area, there were plans to build stronger links between Connexions advisers and childcare providers, so that Connexions advisers could reassure young parents that they had a list of good childcare providers who they could trust with their child(ren). Furthermore, as has been noted, some childcare providers had been reluctant to accept young parents, as they did not provide a steady income all year

Strategic networks

- 2.33 This type of multi-agency network is still interested in operational matters, but is more focussed on providing a strategic lead in an area by coordinating the efforts of individual stakeholders and providing a workable framework for such cooperation. Whilst these groups did tend to include some frontline workers, they were led by those with a more strategic remit, including TPCs and managers of local Connexions services.
- 2.34 In all three areas there was a strategic task group to provide support for young parents. These groups might have a remit that specifically covers Care to Learn, or a broader responsibility for teenage pregnancy and young parents. Stakeholders involved included TPCs, Connexions advisers, local authority staff, NHS PCT staff, Family Information Service and (in some areas) learning providers. In some areas midwives were present, but childcare providers were not, although there were plans to include them in one area. Members of these groups welcomed the opportunity to discuss similar problems with those working in similar fields, and felt that it presented good opportunities to network with staff from other organisations.

- 2.35 These groups discussed all aspects of Care to Learn, including how to improve take-up by making clearer referral pathways and how to better facilitate cooperation between stakeholders, as well as improving communications with frontline workers, and even discussing some individual cases.
- 2.36 In the high and low take-up areas these groups worked in different ways with other action groups. In the low take-up area the 'Childcare for Learners Forum' which focussed on Care to Learn, fed into the 'High Risk Behaviour Group,' which also worked on teenage pregnancy, sexual health, and drug and alcohol abuse. In the high take-up area this group had been recently joined with the action group working on substance abuse. In both cases, the logic was that young people who fall into one of these categories are at a higher risk of becoming a parent, and therefore a coordinated approach was required to tackle these multiple behaviours.
- 2.37 All three areas seemed to have strong strategic networks, regardless of whether they had high or low take-up. More important for take-up, however, it seems were that operational networks of frontline workers were able to create strong referral pathways; the high take-up case study area was notable for having a much stronger link between dedicated teenage parent midwife/health visitor, Connexions adviser, and nurseries.

Learning providers and childcare providers

- 2.38 The active involvement of learning and childcare providers in Care to Learn is important in ensuring that strong local networks are built up. This section looks at their experiences of Care to Learn.
- 2.39 It was noted by some TPCs and Connexions advisers that learning providers historically did not want young parents to study with them because they felt that they were a bad example to other students, and were more likely to drop out of their course if they could not successfully juggle being a parent and a student. In particular, it was felt that institutions offering academic courses, rather than vocational ones, were more likely to hold these views. Furthermore, some others stated that they felt some childcare providers might also sometimes have similar reservations, as they may consider young parents who were studying to be less reliable and only require childcare at certain points of the year.
- 2.40 Whilst this may be an issue with institutions who do not have young parents using Care to Learn, and may be the case among teaching staff and management within learning providers, interviews with student support officers in learning providers, and managers of childcare providers provided only limited support for this finding. All but one interviewee suggested that these staff fully supported the programme and had a genuine desire to help young parents continue their learning. One learning provider had, however, stated that there had been problems persuading a childcare provider to take on a baby of a young parent.

- 2.41 Connexions advisers were more likely to point out the difficulties of working with young parents, but learning and childcare providers tended to find it much easier to work with them, presumably because they only worked with those more keen to learn. Most thought that the young parents who claimed Care to Learn were genuinely keen to continue their education, and in some cases had been devastated when they became pregnant because they would have had to stop, only to be pleasantly surprised that Care to Learn was available and they could continue their education.
- 2.42 Learning providers were on the whole more engaged with Care to Learn than childcare providers, simply because they were more used to working with young people, and links between Connexions advisers and learning providers were already stronger. Some were especially aware of the particular issues that may affect young parents, and provided more tailored support.

“We’ve got to be quite lenient with them, especially when they’re starting a programme at 9 o’clock in the morning. It’s quite difficult for them to... get the child ready, travel to the nursery and then travel to us. So it’s that extra bit they’re doing and it’s different from other young people. We had to tailor the programme to their needs.” (Learning provider)

- 2.43 Nevertheless, many childcare providers did show a willingness to be more engaged in the process, and in one case a childminder had approached Connexions advisers asking how she could support the programme better.
- 2.44 Some childcare providers stated that they had experienced problems receiving payments, but the majority thought that even if there were short delays they were comfortable that payment would come in time. One potential problem mentioned was that young parents often did not receive confirmation that they were receiving Care to Learn until after their course had begun. Where a young parent was not approved for Care to Learn funding this could prove problematic, as the young parent would not have the money to pay for childcare costs already incurred.
- 2.45 On the whole, both learning and childcare providers did not believe that the requirements of the Care to Learn scheme were too burdensome. The part of the application form they had to fill in was not thought difficult. Similarly there were no complaints from learning providers about the administration involved with paying travel expenses to young parents. It was noted that monthly attendance forms were simpler than those for EMA, and did not present a problem, although a small number of learning providers thought these could be further simplified.

Qualitative interviews with those who applied but decided not to take up Care to Learn

- 2.46 This section reports the findings from qualitative interviews conducted with young parents who applied for Care to Learn in the academic year 2008/09 but did not take up the funding. This element of the research was conducted in order to develop a

greater understanding of the reasons behind non take-up, to provide an insight into the experiences of these young parents when applying for Care to Learn, and to identify the impact of them not taking up support.

2.47 The findings below are based on 13 telephone interviews with young parents who applied for Care to Learn during the 2008/09 academic year. The young parents interviewed were between 18 and 21 years old and were all female.

2.48 The YPLA categorises Care to Learn applicants who do not take-up the funding into three groups:

- application withdrawn before assessment completed
- assessed as eligible but not taken up
- incomplete application (full information not submitted).

2.49 Young parents from each of these groups were interviewed. Those who were assessed as eligible but who did not take-up the funding were the most common category of young parents interviewed, and the least common was those for whom the application was withdrawn before the assessment was complete. Table 2-1 shows how many young parents were interviewed within each category.

Table 2-1 Non take-up interview respondents by destination based on interview

Non take-up category	Interviews achieved
Application withdrawn before assessment completed	1
Assessed as eligible but not taken up	9
Incomplete application	3
Total	13

Source: *Inclusion 2010*

Reasons for non take-up

2.50 There were a wide range of reasons young parents who were eligible for Care to Learn gave for non take-up. For the young parents who were deemed eligible but did not take-up the funding, personal or course related issues were mainly given. A number of young parents reported that they decided that they wanted to spend more time with their child rather than going to college. One young parent was able to arrange informal childcare for her child, which she felt more comfortable with. Another thought the course she had applied for was not the right one, so instead decided to take a year out of college to spend more time with her child, but is now receiving Care to Learn for the 2009/10 academic year. One young parent had an emergency caesarean six weeks before the course was due to start, and she was not well enough to start the course. She is hoping to complete a hairdressing course in 2010/11 for which she has applied for Care to Learn funding.

2.51 A small number of young parents decided that working would be preferable to learning, and therefore decided not to take up Care to Learn. For example one young parent

had a part-time job in the evenings and felt if she took on a course in the day she would not be able to spend any time with her child. Another young parent who was eligible for the funding decided not to take it up due to a volunteering position she held for a charity supporting young parents. The young parent felt she was gaining valuable experience from volunteering and decided this was more worthwhile than a college course. At the time of interview she was still volunteering and has become involved with the outreach work the charity provides.

- 2.52 Two out of the three young parents whose applications were incomplete stated that their non take-up was due to the Care to Learn application process. In one case, the application form was filled in incorrectly by the childcare provider. The nursery was unable to provide some documentation the young parent needed for her Care to Learn application, which led the application to lapse. The young parent had to take her child out of nursery and leave the Travel and Tourism course she had started. Another young parent said her application had not been processed by Care to Learn but that she had not queried the progress of her application, and therefore did not receive the funding. She was at home looking after her child at the time of interview, and was no longer eligible for Care to Learn funding as she was over 19 years old. The third young parent's citizenship status had been under review during the Care to Learn application process, and as a result her application was never completed.
- 2.53 One young parent withdrew her application due to a lack of support during the application process, as discussed below.

Experience of applying for Care to Learn

- 2.54 In general young parents who were eligible but did not take up Care to Learn funding did not feel the application experience was difficult. On the other hand young parents who had incomplete applications reported difficulties with the application process, and three of the 13 young parents interviewed did not take up Care to Learn because of problems with the application process.
- 2.55 Almost all young parents had received some sort of support when applying for Care to Learn. The most common source of support was Connexions advisers, who were reported as very useful. Other support mentioned included student support services in the colleges and childcare providers, and parents. One young parent in particular, however, had problems locating the support she needed with her application, to the extent that she decided to withdraw her application. She is now at home looking after her child. She commented:

“The first time I did it, it was a bit difficult, because I didn't know who to go to in my college so they can fill that in. And the nursery, they didn't know how to [fill in the form and] what information to send.” (Application withdrawn)

- 2.56 As discussed above, another young parent did not take up Care to Learn because the childcare provider was unable to fill in the form, and another never heard from Care to Learn after applying and did not query this despite wanting to go back into learning.

- 2.57 A minority of young parents did report more minor difficulties with their application, although these did not cause them not to take up Care to Learn funding. These problems often involved complications with locating suitable childcare and difficulties in understanding the language of the application form.

“Applying for Care to Learn was easy but it was trying to find a carer to look after my daughter that I found really hard.” (Eligible, non take-up)

“I didn’t understand some of the questions. I think it was something to do with my provider. Obviously, with me applying for the first time, I didn’t know what you meant by this, who the provider is.” (Eligible, non take-up)²²

Importance of Care to Learn

- 2.58 Young parents were asked how important Care to Learn was in allowing them to continue their education. Most young parents reported that Care to Learn was essential in this regard, and that without Care to Learn they would be unable to take up the course they had applied for.

“If I didn’t get the funding, I wouldn’t have been able to go to college, so it was really important.” (Eligible, non take-up)

“It was quite crucial to have the funding.” (Eligible, non take-up)

- 2.59 There was one exception for whom Care to Learn funding was not crucial. She decided not to take up the funding because her parents were able to provide childcare, which she felt more comfortable with, and she went on the course as planned. This young parent was the only young parent interviewed who actually undertook the learning they had originally planned to pursue in 2008/09. All others were not undertaking the courses they had applied to receive Care to Learn support for.

Current situation and future aspirations

- 2.60 Staying at home looking after their child(ren) was the most common current activity for the young parents interviewed. Most of these young parents did express some interest in going back into education or training, to study for example midwifery, teaching, health and social care and GCSEs. However at the time of the interview they had not made any concrete plans or applied for any courses. Not receiving Care to Learn funding in 2008/09, however, did not mean young parents were deterred from applying for the Care to Learn funding for the 2009/10 academic year. They all reported that they would make a claim for Care to Learn (if they met the eligibility criteria) if they re-entered education in the future. Other activities young parents were involved in included; working part-time, voluntary work and completing a new course of learning for which they were using Care to Learn in the 2009/10 academic year.

²² This respondent was subsequently supported by a Young Women’s Project, to help her successfully complete her application.

2.61 When thinking about future career paths many of the young parents spoke about wanting to enter into a caring profession, for example, midwifery, social care work and nursing. Other common paths included careers in hairdressing, beauty and the travel and tourism industry.

3 CHARACTERISTICS OF 2008/09 CARE TO LEARN RECIPIENTS

3.1 This chapter outlines the characteristics of young parents who received funding for their childcare while studying through Care to Learn. This includes their age, ethnicity, living arrangements, relationship status, and qualification level young parents had obtained before receiving Care to Learn.

Learner Characteristics²³

3.2 Half of all young parents were aged 17 to 18 years old on 31 August 2008. The next largest age group were 19 year olds who made up 22 per cent of young parents (see Table 3.1).

Table 3-1 Age of young parents on 31 August 2008

	%
15 years old or younger	8
16 years old	13
17-18 years old	50
19 years old	22
20 and over	9
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>1,728</i>

Source: *Inclusion 2010*

1. Total does not add to 100% due to rounding.

3.3 Ninety per cent of applicants who applied for Care to Learn funding in 2008/09 lived in urban areas, with only nine per cent in rural areas (see Table 3-2). Whether a young parent lived in an urban or rural area was classified based on their postcode.

Table 3-2 Young Parents living in rural and urban areas

	%
Rural	9
Urban	90
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>1,728</i>

Source: *Inclusion 2010*

1. It was not possible to classify whether 1% of young parents lived in urban or rural areas, due to invalid postcodes.

3.4 Table 3-3 indicates the proportion of young parents living in each of the regions of England. The North West, where 19 per cent of young parents lived, had the highest proportion of young parents receiving Care to Learn funding. The East of England and North East have the smallest proportion of young parents using Care to Learn with six per cent living in each. Furthermore, when compared to the spread of all young people

²³ This section is based on all those funded in 2008/09 (group 1), unless otherwise stated.

aged 15 to 19 living in England, the North West had a higher proportion of young parents receiving Care to Learn funding compared to the population of young people in that region as a whole (14 per cent of all young parents live in the North West compared to 19 per cent of young parents receiving Care to Learn). On the other hand the East of England and the South East had smaller proportions (six cent compared to 11 per cent, and 10 per cent compared to 16 per cent respectively).²⁴

Table 3-3 Care to Learn applicants by region

Region	%
East of England	6
East Midlands	8
Greater London	14
North East	6
North West	19
South East	10
South West	8
West Midlands	9
Yorkshire & Humber	12
Unknown	8
<i>Unweighted base</i>	1,728

Source: *Inclusion 2010*

3.5 Table 3-4 shows the ages of young parents in each of the English regions. In line with findings for young parents in the 2007/08 cohort, young parents in London tend to be slightly older compared to those in other regions. The proportion of young parents aged 19 or over in Greater London has increased by five percentage points when compared with the 2007/08 cohort; 43 per cent of young parents in Greater London were aged 19 year or over in 2008/09, compared with 38 per cent of young parents in Greater London in the 2007/08 cohort, and 31 per cent of all young parents in 2008/09. Conversely, young parents in the North East were younger; 30 per cent were 16 and under compared to 21 per cent of all young parents.

²⁴ Comparisons made against NOMIS 2008 data

Table 3-4 Age of applicants by region

	East of England %	East Midlands %	Greater London %	North East %	North West %	South East %	South West %	West Midlands %	Yorkshire & Humber %
15 years old or younger	10	7	4	9	9	8	8	7	8
16 years old	13	14	7	21	12	16	10	14	13
17 and 18 year olds	46	49	46	49	49	48	57	54	50
19 years old	23	20	27	16	19	22	21	20	23
20 and over	9	10	16	5	11	6	4	4	5
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>96</i>	<i>131</i>	<i>334</i>	<i>103</i>	<i>300</i>	<i>162</i>	<i>119</i>	<i>157</i>	<i>189</i>

Source: *Inclusion 2010*

3.6 Young parents are eligible for the London rate of funding if they live in a London borough (the childcare and/or learning do not have to take place in that borough).

3.7 Thirteen per cent of young parents were 'new 19 year old' applicants, compared with 12 per cent in the previous cohort (see Table 3-5. 'New 19 year olds' are young parents aged 19 at the start of the academic year who had never received Care to Learn before.

Table 3-5 Whether new 19 year old applicant in 2008/09

	%
Yes	13
No	86
Unknown	1
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>1,728</i>

Source: *Inclusion 2010*

3.8 Just over three-quarters of young parents identified themselves as white British. The next most common ethnicities for young parents were black African and mixed ethnicity, both representing seven per cent of young parents (see Table 3-6). Young parents receiving the London rate of funding were less likely to be white British, but more likely to be black African, black Caribbean, or of mixed ethnicity. When compared against the ethnic profile of young people in England,²⁵ there is a higher proportion of black British and mixed ethnicity young parents receiving Care to Learn than the national profile, and a small proportion of white and Asian young parents.

²⁵ Aged 15 to 19. Source: ONS.

Table 3-6 Ethnicity of young parents

	%
White – British	76
White – Irish	*
White – other	2
Black or black British – African	7
Black or black British – Caribbean	4
Black or black British – other	1
Asian or Asian British	1
Chinese	*
Mixed	7
Other groups	1
Refused	*
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>1,728</i>

Source: *Inclusion 2010*

3.9 In line with the 2007/08 cohort, 80 per cent of young parents were lone parents with the remaining 20 per cent living either with a partner or spouse (see Table 3-7). Lone parents here are defined as young parents who are not married or in a civil partnership and do not live with anyone in their household as a couple.

Table 3-7 Whether lone parent

	%
Yes	80
No	20
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>1,728</i>

Source: *Inclusion 2010*

3.10 Nearly two-thirds of lone parents were living in their own home with no other adult, while just under a third were living with their parents. Eighty per cent of couple parents were living in their own home with a partner (see Table 3-8).

Table 3-8 Living arrangements of lone and couple parents

	Lone parents %	Couple parents %
With their parents	30	13
In own home – with no one	64	-
In own home – with partner	-	80
In own home – with relatives	1	3
In a hostel	2	-
Other	3	5
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>1400</i>	<i>326</i>

Source: *Inclusion 2010*

3.11 Eighty-seven per cent of young parents who first received Care to Learn funding in 2008/09 had one child, whilst 12 per cent had two, and one per cent had three or four.²⁶

3.12 For 81 per cent of young parents, their oldest child was aged under two at the start of the academic year in 2008, whilst for 19 per cent the child was aged two or more.

Qualifications and activities prior to receiving Care to Learn funding²⁷

3.13 A quarter (26 per cent) of those receiving Care to Learn funding for the first time in 2008/09 had no qualifications in summer 2008 just before they received Care to Learn. A further quarter (24 per cent) had qualifications at Level 1, and 38 per cent had qualifications at Level 2 (see Table 3-9).

Table 3-9 Level of qualification young parents obtained before using Care to Learn funding in 2008/09

	%
No qualifications	26
Skills for life	1
Level 1	24
Level 2	38
Level 3	5
Other qualifications	3
Don't know	3
<i>Unweighted based</i>	<i>1, 301</i>

Source: *Inclusion 2010*

²⁶ Based on 1,301 Group 3 young parents.

²⁷ This section is based on only those funded in 2008/09 (group 3) and does not include young parents funded by Care to Learn in both 2007/08 and 2006/07, unless otherwise stated.

3.14 Over half (55 per cent) were looking after their child(ren) in the summer of 2008, just before taking up Care to Learn funding. A further fifth were studying, and six per cent were working (see Table 3-10).

Table 3-10 Activities young parents were doing before Care to Learn funding

	%
Not working - looking after child full-time	55
Not working - having a baby	11
Studying - still at school	6
Studying - on the same course as started in Sep 2008	11
Studying - on a different course as the one started in Sep 2008	4
Working part-time	5
Working full-time	1
Doing voluntary work	1
Other	3
Don't know	3
<i>Unweighted Base</i>	<i>1,301</i>

Source: *Inclusion 2010*

3.15 Seven in ten young parents were receiving Income Support whilst undertaking training in the 2008/09 academic year, and three per cent were receiving Jobseekers Allowance (JSA). Small proportions were receiving Incapacity Benefit or Employment and Support Allowance, and 27 per cent were receiving none of these benefits (see Table 3.11).²⁸

Table 3-11 Benefits received by young parents receiving Care to Learn funding

	%
Income Support	71
Jobseekers Allowance	3
Incapacity Benefit	*
Employment and Support Allowance	1
None of the above	27
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>1,728</i>

Source: *Inclusion 2010*

²⁸ This question is based on all those funded in 2008/09 (group 1).

4 EVALUATING CARE TO LEARN: ACCESS, PROVISION AND FUNDING IN 2008/09

Chapter Summary

- More than nine out of ten (93 per cent) of all young parents found it easy to find out about Care to Learn, including 47 per cent who found it very easy. Only seven per cent found it difficult.
- The two main channels through which young parents got most of their information about Care to Learn were through a Connexions adviser (35 per cent) or college student support staff (21 per cent).
- The two most common sources of advice about Care to Learn, Connexions advisers and college student support staff, have remained the same over the two waves.
- Even though the London rate of funding is higher than the national rate, the higher costs associated with living in London mean that those funded by Care to Learn are more likely to reach their maximum.
- Almost all young parents (96 per cent) received Care to Learn funding for the entire period they needed to be at their learning provider. In addition, Care to Learn funded childcare for the whole time young parents were travelling between childcare and learning providers for 79 per cent of young parents, and the whole time spent undertaking private study for 71 per cent.
- Young parents receiving the London rate of funding were more likely to have paid for additional childcare themselves; 21 per cent paid themselves compared to 12 per cent of those receiving the national rate.
- Care to Learn met the requests for support with transport costs for two thirds of young parents who applied (67 per cent of those who applied).
- Of those that were likely to be eligible for EMA,²⁹ 80 per cent applied, representing 64 per cent of all young parents receiving Care to Learn funding in 2008/09 aged 16 to 18. Of those that applied for EMA 87 per cent received it. This represents 69 per cent of those who were eligible according to our criteria.
- When these eligibility criteria are taken into account, only nine per cent of

²⁹ It was calculated that 81 per cent of young parents aged 16 to 18 receiving Care to Learn in 2008/09 were likely to have been eligible for EMA.

young parents who were aged 19 or over at the start of the course they studied for in 2008/09 were eligible for ALG. The primary reason for this low eligibility is that 78 per cent of young parents aged 19 or over at the start of their course were receiving Income Support, and those on Income Support cannot claim ALG.

- 4.1 This chapter looks at different aspects of Care to Learn, including how young parents first heard about it, an assessment of the application process (including the views of stakeholders), information on the childcare used during the course attended between September 2008 and July 2009, and the funding provided by Care to Learn.

Finding out about Care to Learn³⁰

- 4.2 Most young parents had heard about Care to Learn before applying for their course (59 per cent: the same as with the previous wave). A further quarter of young parents (26 per cent) heard about Care to Learn while applying for their course (24 per cent in the previous wave) and the remainder did not hear about Care to Learn until after applying for the course (14 per cent compared to 15 per cent in the previous cohort).
- 4.3 Those who left early or dropped out of their course were more likely to have heard of Care to Learn before applying for their course (68 per cent compared to 56 per cent of those who had completed their course).
- 4.4 Lone parents were also more likely to have heard of Care to Learn before applying for their course (61 per cent) compared to other young parents (53 per cent).
- 4.5 The two main channels through which young parents got most of their information about Care to Learn were through a Connexions adviser (35 per cent) or college student support staff³¹ (21 per cent). This has not changed significantly from the previous wave, when 36 per cent and 21 per cent respectively reported that these were their main sources of information about Care to Learn. No other channel of information was used by more than six per cent of respondents, but these answers included:
- Internet / websites (six per cent);
 - Teachers / tutors (six per cent);
 - Family or friends (six per cent);
 - Midwives / nurses / health visitors (five per cent);
 - School careers guidance staff (four per cent); and
 - Care to Learn posters and leaflets (three per cent).
- 4.6 Whilst only three per cent of young parents said that Care to Learn posters and leaflets were their main source of information, it is likely that more will have originally found out about Care to Learn through posters and leaflets.

³⁰ This section is based only on those funded in 2008/09 (group 3) only.

³¹ Connexions advisers often work within learning providers.

- 4.7 More than nine out of ten (93 per cent) of all young parents found it easy to find out about Care to Learn, including 47 per cent who found it very easy. Only seven per cent found it difficult. There were no significant differences in responses depending on the age of young parents, as there had been in the previous wave, but those young parents for whom Care to Learn funding covered all their needs³² were more likely to report that it was easy to find out about Care to Learn (95 per cent) than those for whom it did not (89 per cent).
- 4.8 Of those young parents who said it was difficult to find out about Care to Learn,³³ nearly half (48 per cent) explained it was difficult because they didn't know where to go or who to speak to. A further 27 per cent reported that there was a lack of information available, and 14 per cent reported that their learning provider did not know very much about Care to Learn.
- 4.9 Young parents who found out about Care to Learn before or while applying for their course found it easier to find out about Care to Learn than those who found out about Care to Learn after applying for their course; ninety four per cent of young parents found it easy to find out about Care to Learn before or while applying for their course compared to 87 per cent for those who heard about Care to Learn after applying for their course.

Applying for Care to Learn³⁴

- 4.10 Applying for Care to Learn was regarded by young parents as an easy process; nine out of ten (90 per cent) young parents said the application process was easy, including 46 per cent who found it very easy. Only nine per cent found the application process difficult. This did not differ significantly by the age of the young parent. This high level of satisfaction with the application process has been sustained from the previous cohort, when 91 per cent of young parents found it easy.
- 4.11 Black British young parents were more likely to find the application process difficult than white young parents; 14 per cent of black British young parents reported that it was difficult, compared to only nine per cent of white British young parents.³⁵
- 4.12 Furthermore, young parents using childcare at their school or college were more likely to report that the application process was very easy (56 per cent), compared to those using childminders or day nurseries not at their learning provider (both 44 per cent). This is presumably because young parents using childcare located at their learning provider did not have to go to multiple locations when completing the Care to learn application form.

³² That is, all time spent at the learning provider, doing private study, and travelling between childcare provider and learning provider.

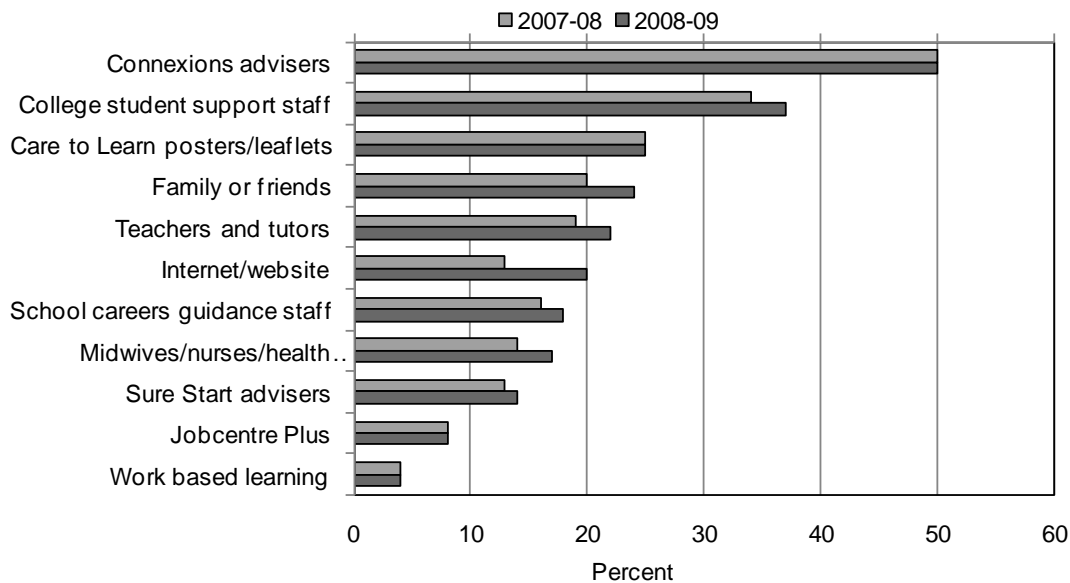
³³ This is based on only 87 young parents, so care should be taken when interpreting these answers.

³⁴ This section is based only on those funded in 2008/09 (group 3) only.

³⁵ There was no significant difference for whether young parents received the London or national rate of funding.

4.13 The most common sources of help and advice used by young parents who received funding in 2007/08 and 2008/09 whilst applying for Care to Learn are presented Figure 4-1. The two most common sources of advice, Connexions advisers and college student support staff, remained the same over the two waves. Over all, the proportions of young parents receiving help and advice from each source has remained reasonably stable although most sources were used by slightly fewer young parents receiving funding in 2007/08 than in 2008/09 with the largest difference being the use of the internet.

Figure 4-1 The sources of help and advice most quoted by young parents, 2007/08 and 2008/09



Source: *Inclusion 2010*

Unweighted base: 2007/08: 1,593; 2008/09: 1,301

1. This question was allowed young parents to give multiple responses and therefore the percentages do not add up to 100 per cent.

4.14 Young parents received advice from different sources depending on their age. If they were under the age of 19 they were more likely to use Connexions advisers for advice on applying compared with those aged less than 19. On the other hand, those aged 17 or more were more likely to have received help and advice from college student support staff. Younger parents, aged 16 or younger, were more likely to have received support from friends or family, possibly because more of these young parents lived with their own parents (see Table 4-1).

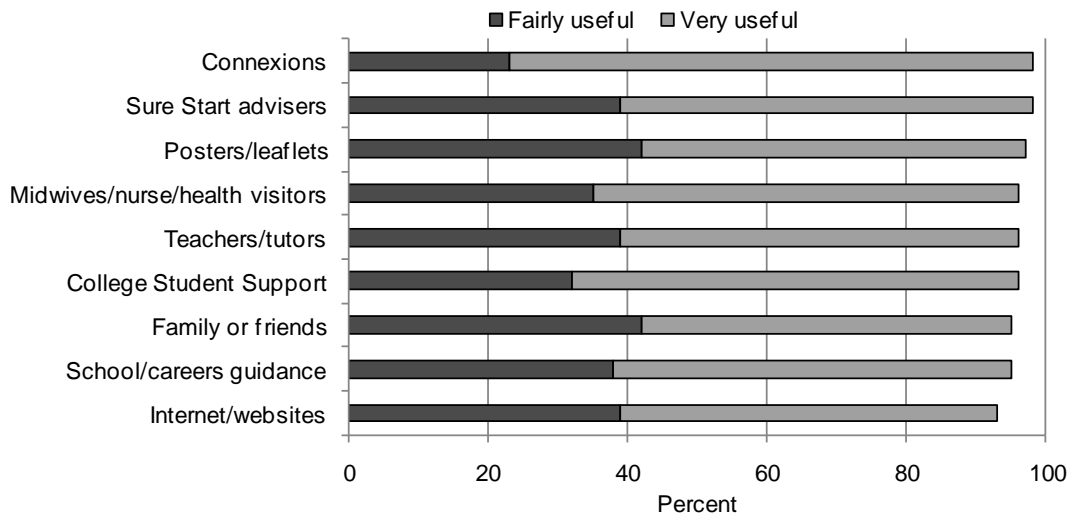
Table 4-1 Top five most common sources of help or advice about applying, by age

	15 or younger %	16 years old %	17-18 years old %	19 years old %	All young parents %
Connexions advisers	52	60	52	42	50
College Student Support Staff	23	27	39	39	37
Posters and leaflets ³⁶	24	20	28	25	25
Family or friends	30	31	23	20	24
Teachers or tutors	33	19	23	17	22
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>106</i>	<i>171</i>	<i>686</i>	<i>282</i>	<i>1,301</i>

Source: *Inclusion 2010*

4.15 Figure 4-2 shows the extent to which young parents felt the help and advice received by various sources was useful. Young parents found Connexions and Sure Start Children’s Centre advisers the most useful (98 per cent saying the help and advice was very or fairly useful for both). A higher proportion of young parents, however, found Connexions advisers *very* useful (75 per cent) compared to Sure Start advisers (59 per cent).

Figure 4-2 Proportion of young parents who felt the help and advice received was useful, 2008/09 (%)



Source: *Inclusion 2010*

Unweighted bases: Internet/websites (210), School/careers guidance (166), Family or friends (250), College Student Support (404), Teachers/tutors (219), Midwives/nurse/health visitors (152), Posters/leaflets (244), Sure Start advisers (139), Connexions (562)

³⁶ There were not significant differences by age for this code.

Application process and support for young parents – stakeholder perspectives

- 4.16 As is noted in Chapter 2, the application form was seen by some stakeholders as long and daunting for young parents, particularly for some of them with literacy problems. Nevertheless, it was only seen as a barrier to young people applying to Care to Learn in one of the three case study areas interviews were conducted in.
- 4.17 The form itself has sections that need to be completed by young parents themselves, but also has sections for the learning provider and childcare provider to verify the provision they are supplying.
- 4.18 In all three case study areas in the stakeholder research, it seemed that sufficient support was provided to young parents to make the application process as easy as possible. This support generally came from Connexions advisers and support staff working in learning providers. The level of support depended on what the young parent needed. For those who struggled with the application form the adviser / support worker would go through the whole form and ensure it was filled in correctly. Other advisers / support workers also went with young parents to learning and childcare providers to get them to fill in their parts of the application form. Some stakeholders took responsibility for actually sending the form, rather than relying on the young parents doing it themselves. For other young parents who were happy filling out the form themselves advisers / support workers tended to check over the form to make sure there were no mistakes before it was sent.
- 4.19 It was noted occasionally that there were delays in getting learning and childcare providers to fill in their parts of the form, although this was not seen as a major problem. In one case a Connexions adviser had trouble finding someone in the learning provider who was willing to take responsibility for receiving and managing travel payments.
- 4.20 There were some parts of the application process and form that stakeholders suggested could be improved. First, a number of stakeholders in different areas reported that it was hard to get hold of enough copies of the form, particularly when an adviser wanted a bulk order. It was also noted that it would be preferable that the form was available to fill in online, as this was a medium that young parents would feel more comfortable with, and would remove the need for the young parent and/or adviser to travel to the learning and childcare providers to get them to fill in their parts of the form.
- 4.21 Second, it was noted that the section of the form for claiming money for travelling between home and childcare providers was hard to fill out. In particular, if a young parent paid for a bus pass or rail card which would not only be used for travelling between childcare and learning providers, it was unclear how much of these they could claim from Care to Learn.

- 4.22 Third, it was suggested that the form should have space to include more than one childcare provider, as some young parents had to use more than one if their preferred option did not have capacity for all their needs.
- 4.23 Advisers also provided additional support after the application process, for example alerting the Care to Learn team about changes in a young parent's personal circumstances, although most stakeholders had not needed to do this. Support was ad hoc, such that a young parent was told they should come back to their support worker / adviser if they needed any help. Few stakeholders had needed to call the Care to Learn helpline to provide additional support, but those who had, with one exception, reported that their queries had been answered.

Funding for childcare³⁷

4.24 Table 4-2 shows the proportion of young parents who received the maximum amount of funding per week. The maximum allowance for Care to Learn in 2008/09 was £175 per child per week in London, and £160 per child per week elsewhere. Overall, only 15 per cent had reached the maximum rate of funding, but those in London were more likely to have reached the maximum, despite the higher allowance, than those receiving the national rate. This suggests that even though the London rate of funding is higher than the national rate, the higher costs associated with living in London mean that those funded by Care to Learn are more likely to reach their maximum. Nevertheless, that only 15 per cent of young parents had reached the maximum shows that the levels of funding were about right in 2008/09.

Table 4-2 Young Parents who received maximum Care to Learn funding by funding rate

	London rate of funding %	National rate of funding %	National and London rates of funding %
Reached maximum	36	12	15
Not reached maximum	63	88	85
Unknown	1	-	*
<i>Unweighted base</i>	325	1,303	1,628

Source: *Inclusion 2010*

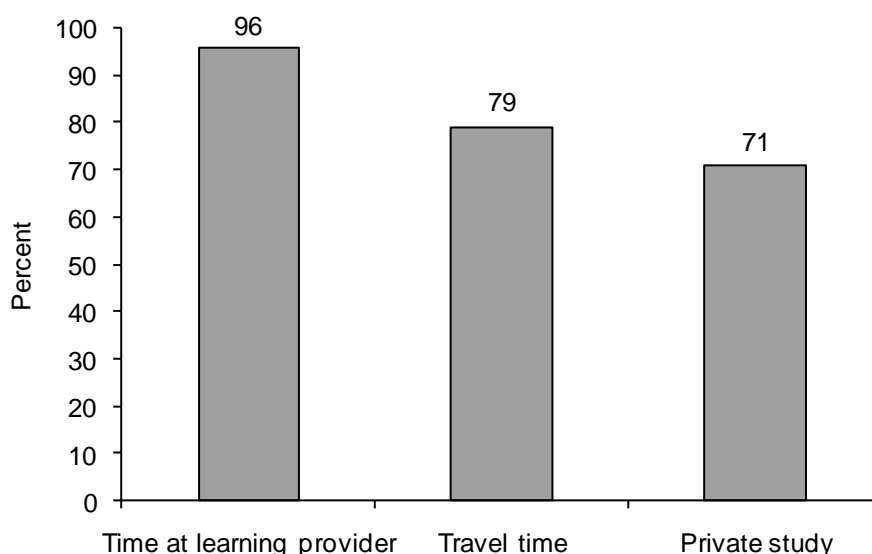
- 4.25 Given those in London were more likely to have reached the maximum level of funding, it is not surprising that black British young parents, who make up a high proportion of those receiving the London rate, are also more likely to have done so. Whilst 12 per cent of white young parents had reached the maximum, 34 per cent of black Caribbean and 28 per cent of black African young parents had done so.
- 4.26 In addition, lone parents were more likely to have reached their maximum, with 16 per cent having done so, compared to 11 per cent of those who were not lone parents.

³⁷ The remainder of this chapter is based on all young parents who received funding for 08/09 academic year and all who received funding in both 06/07 and 07/08 academic years.

4.27 All young parents were asked whether the funding they received through Care to Learn covered childcare costs for the *whole time* they were attending the course at their learning provider, the time spent travelling between childcare and learning providers,³⁸ and time spent doing private study.

4.28 Most importantly, almost all young parents (96 per cent) received Care to Learn funding for the entire period they were at their learning provider. In addition, Care to Learn funded childcare for all the time young parents were travelling between childcare and learning providers for 79 per cent of young parents, and the whole time spent undertaking private study for 71 per cent (see Figure 4-3).³⁹ That Care to Learn was less likely to fund childcare for all the time that young parents were travelling between learning and childcare providers and doing private study is not necessarily a problem. This is because it is more likely that young parents will be able to access informal childcare during these periods, which are likely to fall outside the normal working day.

Figure 4-3 Proportion of young parents who received Care to Learn funding for the entire period they were at their learning provider, doing private study and time spent travelling to their childcare provider



Source: *Inclusion 2010*

Unweighted base: 1,728 for time at learning provider and private study. 1520 for travel time.

4.29 There was no significant difference in the likelihood that Care to Learn had covered childcare costs for all their time spent at their learning provider or undertaking private study, between those receiving the national or London rates of funding. They were

³⁸ This was asked only of those who were not solely using childcare co-located with their learning provider.

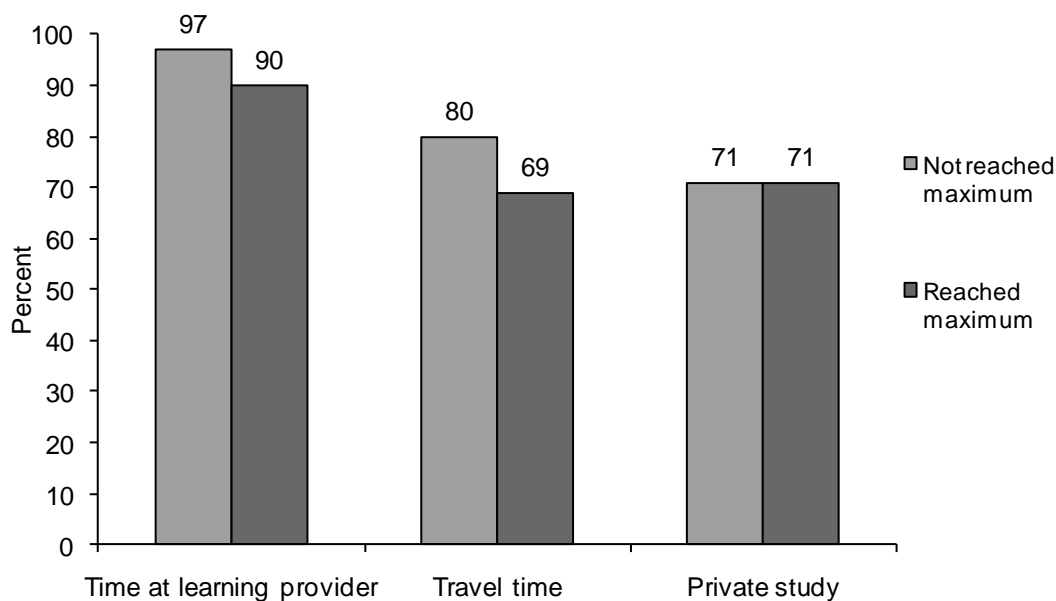
³⁹ For young parents attending full-time learning Care to Learn could fund up to an additional 10 hours of childcare per week to cover private study time and revision. This amount is proportional to the guided learning hours and is therefore pro rata for part-time courses.

more likely, however, to report that Care to Learn had covered childcare costs for all the time spent travelling between childcare and learning providers (80 per cent compared to 72 per cent receiving the London rate).

4.30 Whether or not young parents had reached the maximum level of funding strongly affected whether Care to Learn had paid for all their time at learning provider and their time travelling between childcare and learning providers (although not their time doing private study). Whilst 97 per cent of young parents who had not reached the maximum level of funding said that Care to Learn paid for all childcare costs whilst they were at their learning provider, only 90 per cent of those who had reached the maximum reported this.

4.31 Similarly, 80 per cent of young parents who had not reached the maximum level of funding said that Care to Learn paid for all childcare costs whilst they were travelling between learning and childcare providers, but only 69 per cent of those who had reached their maximum reported this (see Figure 4-4).

Figure 4-4 Proportion of young parents who had reached or not reached their maximum funding, 2008/09 (%)



Source: *Inclusion 2010*
 Unweighted base: 1,728 for time at learning provider and private study. 1520 for travel time.

4.32 There were significant differences in the other regions of England as well. Those young parents in the North West were more likely to say that Care to Learn funding had covered all their time in all three categories (98 per cent for time at learning provider, 80 per cent for private study and 83 per cent for travel time), whilst those in the South West were less likely to say that Care to Learn had covered all childcare costs for time at their learning provider and private study (92 per cent and 60 per cent respectively).⁴⁰

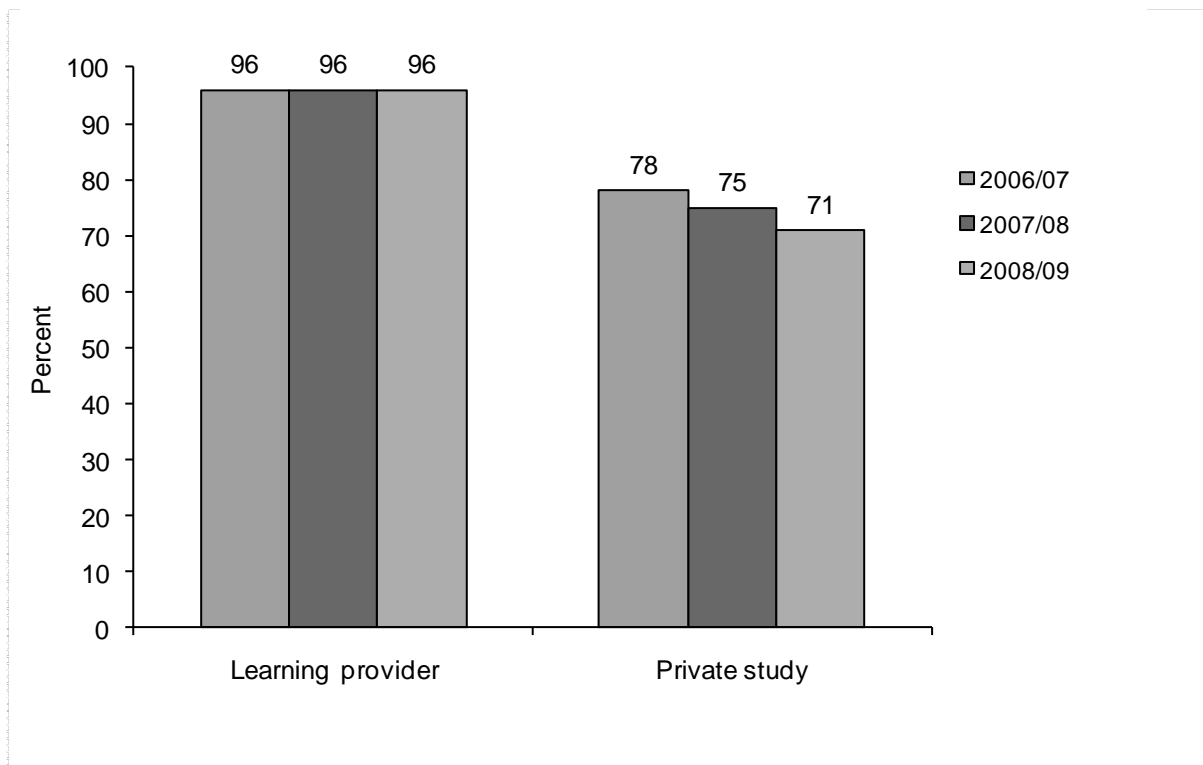
⁴⁰ The findings for the South West may be affected by the fact that the region is relatively rural.

Those in the East of England were the least likely to say that Care to Learn covered childcare costs for all time spent undertaking private study (54 per cent).⁴¹

- 4.33 There was a significant difference between rural and urban areas for the proportion of young parents for whom Care to Learn funding covered all the time spend doing private study. Whilst 73 per cent of urban young parents said that Care to Learn funded childcare for private study, only 58 per cent of young parents living in rural areas did so. There were not significant differences for the proportions who reported that Care to Learn covered all time at the learning provider, or travelling between learning and childcare providers. It is possible that as travel to learning providers may take longer for young parents living in rural areas or that the additional costs of travelling may be higher, rural young parents have less of their weekly allowance available for paying for childcare whilst they undertake private study.
- 4.34 The age of young parents did not affect whether they were likely to report that Care to Learn funding covered childcare costs for all their time at their learning provider or doing private study. However, younger parents were less likely to report that funding covered all time travelling between childcare and learning providers; 74 per cent of young parents aged 16 said it did, compared to 82 per cent of 19 year old young parents.
- 4.35 The type of childcare used and whether the young parent was a lone parent did not affect whether young parents reported that Care to Learn funding covered these costs.
- 4.36 Figure 4-5 shows the proportion of young parents for whom Care to Learn funding had covered all their time spent at their learning provider and time doing private study over the previous three cohorts. Whilst the proportion of young parents reporting that Care to Learn covered the whole time spent at their learning provider has remained constant, the proportion reporting that it covered the whole time undertaking private study has gradually declined from 78 per cent for the 2006/07 cohort to 71 per cent for the 2008/09 cohort. There are two likely reasons for this: first, that the level of Care to Learn payments has remained constant since 2007/08, although costs of childcare will have risen with inflation. Second, that, as shown in Chapter 5, a gradually increasing proportion of young parents have been using (normally more expensive) day nurseries, with fewer using (normally cheaper) childminders.

⁴¹ Based on 96 young parents. The East of England has the third most expensive average cost for full time nursery placements, after London and the South East – source: The Daycare Trust's 'Childcare costs survey 2009,' http://www.daycaretrust.org.uk/data/files/Policy/costs_survey_2009.pdf.

Figure 4-5 Proportion of young parents whose Care to Learn funding covered the entire period they were at their learning provider and doing private study, 2006/07 to 2008/09



Source: *Inclusion*

Unweighted base: 2006/07 = 1,350 2007/08 = 1,964 2008/09 = 1,728

4.37 Those young parents for whom Care to Learn did not fully cover either all their time at their learning provider, all their time doing private study, or all their time travelling between learning and childcare providers were asked how they paid for their childcare the rest of the time (see Figure 4-6).⁴² Young parents were most likely to report that they cared for their child during the time that Care to Learn was not able to pay for childcare (39 per cent), with a further fifth (19 per cent) reporting that family or friends looked after the child. Twelve per cent of young parents reported that they conducted private study while their child was asleep in the evening.

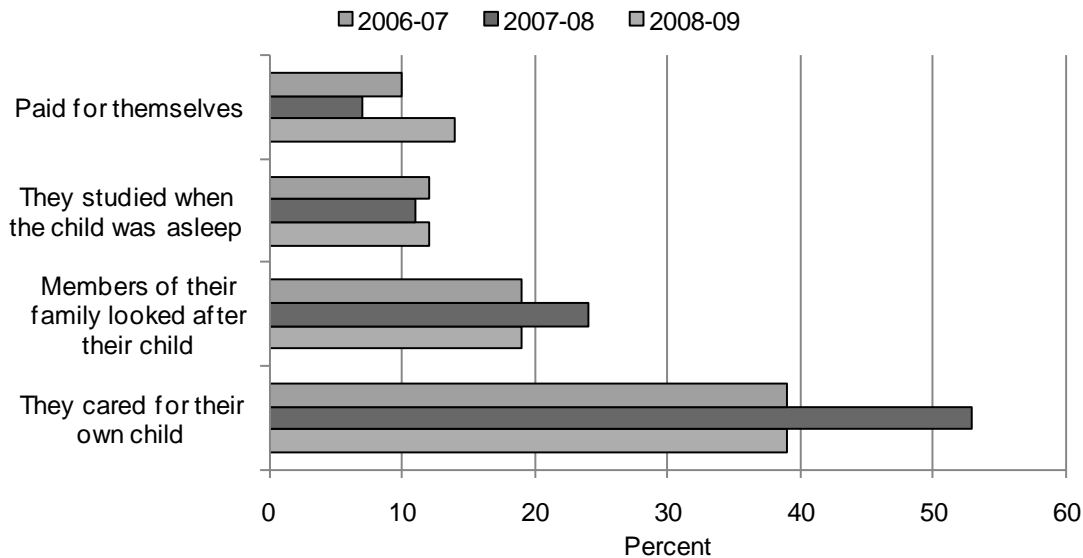
4.38 Even so, 14 per cent of young parents paid for additional childcare themselves, which seems to suggest a strong commitment to learning among these young parents. This figure has doubled since the last wave of research (seven per cent), but is closer to findings for the 2006/07 cohort (10 per cent). Those who had reached their maximum amount of funding were more likely to have paid for additional childcare themselves; 21 per cent of those who had reached their maximum amount of funding had to pay for additional childcare themselves, compared to only 12 per cent of those who had not.

4.39 In addition, four per cent of young parents reported that their family had paid for additional childcare, three per cent said that their learning provider had paid, and one per cent said that their childcare provider had looked after their child for longer than they were able to pay for.

⁴² This question was multiple response and therefore the percentages do not add up to 100.

4.40 The responses for the 2008/09 cohort are in line with those of the 2006/07 cohort, but different from the 2007/08 cohort, although it is unclear why this is the case.

Figure 4-6 How did young parents provide childcare when Care to Learn could not? 2006/07 to 2008/09



Source: *Inclusion*
 Base: 2006/07 = 1,350 2007/08 = 1,964 2008/09 = 1,728

4.41 Young parents receiving the London rate of funding were more likely to have paid for additional childcare themselves; 21 per cent paid themselves compared to 12 per cent of those receiving the national rate. Furthermore, black British young parents were more likely to have paid themselves. Whilst only 11 per cent of white young parents paid for additional childcare themselves, 20 per cent of black Caribbean young parents did so, as did 27 per cent of black African young parents. Both those receiving the London rate of funding and black British young parents were more likely to have reached the maximum level of funding.

4.42 Younger parents were more likely to have relied on friends or family, with 25 per cent of those aged 16 or younger doing so, compared to only 16 per cent of 19 year olds. Lone parents were no more or less likely to have looked after the child themselves, had friends or family look after their child, or paid for additional childcare themselves.

4.43 Only six per cent of young parents said the amount of funding available for Care to Learn affected their choice of course. Nevertheless, young parents receiving the London rate of funding in 2008/09 were twice as likely to have reported that level of funding had affected their choice of course than those receiving the national rate (10 per cent compared to five per cent).

4.44 Those few young parents who said the level of funding had affected their choice of course⁴³ were asked what they would have done if more childcare funding had been available through Care to Learn. A quarter (25 per cent⁴⁴) said they would have undertaken a course lasting longer than the one they actually took, 35 per cent said they would have taken up a full-time course rather than a part-time course and 35 per cent said they would have undertaken a higher level course. Thirty-one per cent said they did not know exactly what they would have done differently, or that it was none of the categories listed .

Travel expenses

4.45 Care to Learn also provides some funding to help cover the additional cost of travelling between home and childcare. Young parents can receive the additional cost of this journey if it is within the weekly maximum once childcare has been claimed.

4.46 Thirty-two per cent of young parents reported applying for help with these transport costs. Whilst results did not differ depending on whether young parents had received the London or national rates of funding, black British young parents were more likely to claim than white young parents. Only 29 per cent of white young parents had claimed for transport costs, but 54 per cent of black African and 41 per cent of black Caribbean young parents had.

4.47 The proportion of young parents who applied for transport payments increased with age (see Table 4-3). Whilst only 25 per cent of those aged 15 or under claimed, 30 per cent of 17 to 18 year olds had, and 47 per cent of those aged 20 or more had.

Table 4-3 The proportion of young parents who applied for transport payments by age 2008/09

	15 or younger	16 years old	17-18 years old	19 years old	20 or more years old	All young parents
Claimed transport costs	25	28	30	36	47	32
Did not claim transport costs	73	71	66	63	49	65
Don't know	2	1	3	1	4	2
<i>Unweighted base</i>	124	210	842	382	170	1,728

Source: *Inclusion 2010*

4.48 Unsurprisingly, those who had reached the maximum level of funding were less likely to have applied for help with transport costs (23 per cent), than those who had not reached their maximum allowance (34 per cent).

4.49 Care to Learn met the requests for support with transport costs for two thirds of young parents who applied (67 per cent of those who applied and 22 per cent of all young parents whether they applied or not). Only 50 per cent of those who applied who were

⁴³ 109 young parents. This question allowed young parents to give multiple responses, and therefore responses do not sum to 100 per cent.

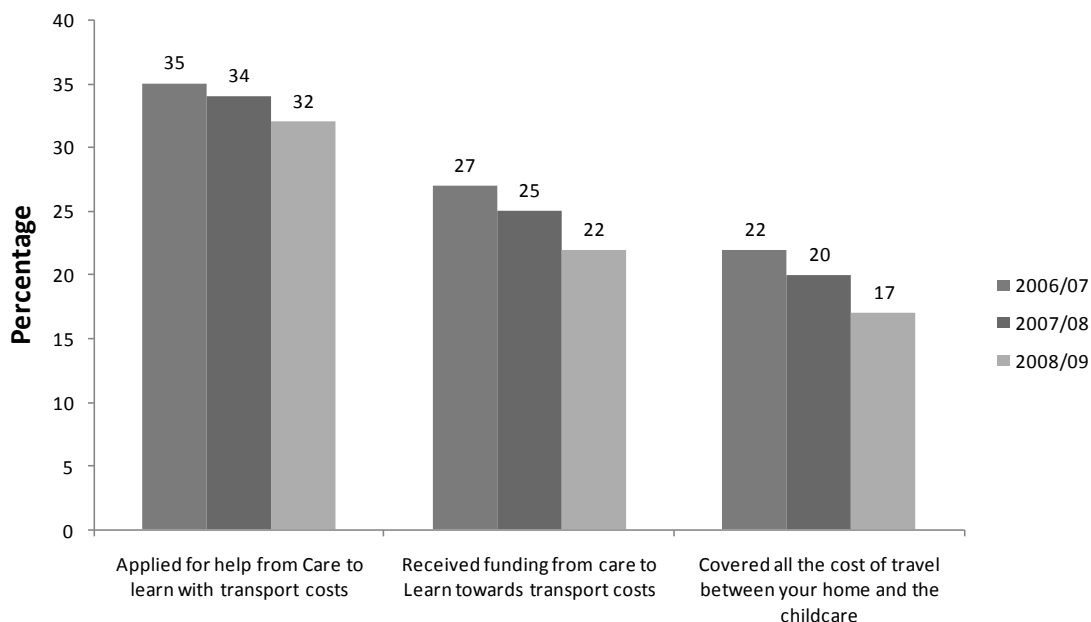
⁴⁴ This equates to one per cent of all young parents.

receiving the London rate of funding received contributions towards travel payments, compared to 70 per cent of those receiving the national rate – this is likely to be influenced by the fact that those receiving the London rate of funding were more likely to have reached the maximum amount of funding. There was also a strong pattern by ethnicity. Seventy-one per cent of white young parents who applied for help with transport costs received some funding, but only 54 per cent black or black British young parents did. This probably relates to the high proportion of young parents from black or black British ethnicity receiving the London rate of funding. It is also worth noting that a higher proportion of black British young parents had applied for help with transport costs.

4.50 Of the young parents who received some funding for transport costs, 79 per cent said it covered the whole cost of travel (representing 17 per cent of all young parents).

4.51 When results for the three cohorts are compared (see Figure 4-7) the proportion of young parents who received support for all their additional travel expenses has gradually fallen over time, 22 per cent of all young parents in the 2006/07 cohort, to 17 per cent of those receiving funding in 2008/09. This decrease is likely to be the result of the fact that the maximum Care to Learn allowance has not been adjusted to increase with inflation since 2007/08, and the fact that more young parents are choosing more (on average more expensive) day nurseries and fewer choosing (on average less expensive) childminders.

Figure 4-7 Summary of changes regarding childcare and transport funding, 2006/07 to 2008/09



Source: *Inclusion*
 Unweighted base: 2006/07 = 1,350 2007/08 = 1,964 2008/09 = 1,728

4.52 For those that didn't apply for help with transport costs, 59 per cent said it wasn't necessary and didn't need help with transport costs, and a further 10 per cent said

they had other free transport. Nevertheless, the second most common reason, given by 16 per cent of young parents, was that they didn't know funding for transport was available.

- 4.53 There were some differences depending on whether a young parent had hit the maximum amount of funding or not. The majority of young parents who had reached their maximum allowance, reported that the additional help with transport costs was not needed; 45 per cent said the funding was not necessary, compared to 62 per cent of those who had not reached the maximum, and a further 12 per cent said they received free transport (compared to 10 per cent of those who had not reached the maximum). However, 14 per cent said they had not applied because they knew they had reached the maximum, and a further 18 per cent said they did not know it was available (compared to 16 per cent of those who had not reached the maximum). Three per cent of those who had not reached the maximum thought that they had, and therefore had not applied for help with transport costs.
- 4.54 Just over two thirds (69 per cent) of young parents who applied but did not receive funding for transport costs or received some but not all of the additional cost of transport said that they paid for their travel/the rest of the cost of their travel themselves – down from 77 per cent last year. Another 13 per cent said the travel costs were paid by their family and 10 per cent said the learning provider paid for the rest of the travel costs.

Education Maintenance Allowance and Adult Learning Grant

- 4.55 Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) EMA is a weekly allowance of £10, £20 or £30 which is paid to learners from low income backgrounds if they wish to continue in education after they reach the statutory school leaving age.
- 4.56 EMA is designed to help young people from lower income families to overcome barriers to further study caused by the costs of supporting learners in the 16 to 18 year old age group. It is an important tool in helping to re-engage young people who are NEET or at risk of becoming NEET. EMA does not affect other family benefits and is paid in addition to other support provided by the Government, such as Income Support, Child Benefit, Working Tax Credit and Severe Disablement Allowance.
- 4.57 To be eligible for EMA, learners must be aged 16 to 18 at the start of the academic year, and be studying for 12 or more guided learning hours per week on courses lasting 10 weeks or more. Applicants must not be receiving Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA)⁴⁵ or the Adult Learning Grant (ALG), must meet residency criteria (those seeking asylum in the UK, for example, are not eligible), and must have a household income of less than £30,810.

⁴⁵ Learners classed as 'estranged,' this is, representing a household in their own right and in receipt either of Hardship JSA or Income-based JSA, may be eligible for EMA.

- 4.58 To calculate eligibility, we have excluded young parents who were not in the age range, those studying for courses that were ineligible, those who reported that their household income was too high or that they did not meet the residency criteria, and those who were receiving JSA or ALG. The eligibility criteria used have been refined from those used for the previous wave of research, when no account was taken of residency status, household income, or whether or not the young parent was receiving JSA. Based on these criteria, 81 per cent of young parents aged between 16 and 18 were eligible for EMA.
- 4.59 Of those that were eligible for EMA, 80 per cent applied, representing 64 per cent of all young parents receiving Care to Learn funding in 2008/09 aged 16 to 18.⁴⁶
- 4.60 Eligible black or black British young parents were less likely to have applied for EMA than white young parents, with only 64 per cent having done so compared to 81 per cent of white young parents. Similarly, and probably reflecting the fact that a large proportion of those receiving the London rate of funding are black or black British, those receiving the London rate of funding were less likely to have applied for EMA (60 per cent) compared to those receiving the national rate (82 per cent).
- 4.61 Furthermore, eligible young parents aged 16 were more likely to have applied (92 per cent) than those who were 17 (85 per cent) or those who were 18 (68 per cent).
- 4.62 Of those that applied for EMA 87 per cent received it. This represents 69 per cent of those who were eligible according to our criteria, and 56 per cent of all 16 to 18 year olds.
- 4.63 Of those in the eligible group who did not apply, the most common reasons for not applying were that young parents thought that they were not eligible. For example, 17 per cent thought they were too old, and 16 per cent said they were on benefits they thought made them ineligible, including Income Support and Care to Learn itself. Thirteen per cent had not heard of EMA. Other reasons included:
- That the application form was too complicated (five per cent);
 - That they did not know who to speak to about EMA (four per cent);
 - That they did not think they were eligible for another unspecified reason (four per cent); and
 - That they left it too late (three per cent).⁴⁷
- 4.64 Another source of funding young parents may have been eligible for is the Adult Learning Grant (ALG). The ALG is only available to young parents studying their first full Level 2 or 3 qualification and aged 19 or over at the start of the course. As with EMA, the course has to be full-time,⁴⁸ the young parent's own income is assessed (and

⁴⁶ This finding is not comparable to the 72 per cent reported in the previous evaluation of the Care to Learn, as the eligibility criteria used has been refined. The previous evaluation can be found at http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/Care_to_Learn_evaluation_report_December09.pdf.

⁴⁷ The remaining respondents fell into other codes made up of less than 3 per cent of respondents. Eight per cent of young parents did not know.

⁴⁸ 450+ guided learning hours a year or its equivalent

their partner's income if they live with someone), and they must meet residency criteria. Young parents in receipt of JSA, Income Support, Incapacity Benefit and EMA are not eligible for ALG.

- 4.65 When these eligibility criteria are taken into account, only nine per cent of young parents who were aged 19 or over at the start of the course they studied for in 2008/09 were eligible for ALG. The primary reason for this low eligibility is that 78 per cent of young parents aged 19 or over at the start of their course were receiving Income Support.⁴⁹

Suggested improvements to Care to Learn – young parents

- 4.66 Young parents were asked what changes they would like to see made to Care to Learn. In total, 64 per cent of young parents could not think of any improvements, but 36 per cent could.
- 4.67 Of those who did have suggestions, 20 per cent thought Care to Learn would be improved by increasing the age limit. Seventeen per cent thought there should be more advertising or publicity, a further 17 per cent wanted more or clearer communication about Care to Learn in order to improve awareness, and 12 per cent wanted increased levels of funding. All these suggestions imply that young parents value Care to Learn, and that the help should be broader and more widely available.
- 4.68 There were also suggestions relating to the application process. Fourteen per cent said that the application form should be clearer and eight per cent said the process should be quicker.

Suggested improvements to Care to Learn - stakeholders

- 4.69 Overall there was great support for Care to Learn among stakeholders, who thought that without such a programme many young parents would be forced to end their education and thereby seriously restrict their employment opportunities in the future. Where there were suggestions for improvement, they were made in the context of strong support for the aims of the programme.
- 4.70 There were two broad areas where improvements to Care to Learn were suggested: the application form (see above) and the eligibility criteria of the programme.
- 4.71 One stakeholder thought that Care to Learn would be improved if those who wanted to undertake Apprenticeships could claim it, as they are currently not eligible. Even though Apprenticeships do pay a wage, it was felt that having to pay for childcare out of this wage was a strong disincentive to young parents who wanted to undertake an Apprenticeship. However, this suggests that the stakeholder was not familiar with Working Tax Credit, which would be able to contribute to childcare costs under these circumstances.

⁴⁹ As only 60 young parents were deemed eligible for ALG, no further analysis is possible.

- 4.72 More importantly, many stakeholders felt that the age limit of 19 was too young. Many young parents wanted to take some years away from education when their baby was young. This meant that they might only finish Year 13 education in their early 20s, by which time they were ineligible for Care to Learn. This was particularly frustrating when a Level 2 qualification had been completed, but the young parent was denied Care to Learn for the Level 3 qualification that naturally followed it.
- 4.73 In this situation stakeholders reported that there was often not an obvious source of support. Free Childcare for Training and Learning for Work⁵⁰ is only eligible for those who have a partner who is working, and the Sixth Form College Childcare Scheme⁵¹ is available only to those in sixth forms or sixth form college, who are aged 20 or older, and not FE provision. The Discretionary Learner Support Fund⁵² could be used, but this was often more difficult to access, as funds are limited and distributed at the discretion of colleges.

⁵⁰ For details see http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/AdultLearning/FinancialHelpForAdultLearners/DG_172003.

⁵¹ For details see http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/AdultLearning/FinancialHelpForAdultLearners/DG_067471.

⁵² For details see http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/EducationAndLearning/AdultLearning/FinancialHelpForAdultLearners/DG_10033131.

5 CHILDCARE AND LEARNING PROVISION

Chapter Summary

- Young parents were most likely to have used Care to Learn funding to pay for a day nursery (not at the same site as their learning provider) or a childminder. These were also the most popular forms of childcare for those receiving funding in 2006/07 and 2007/08, although use of day nurseries has increased and use of childminders has decreased over the last three waves of research.
- In regions where the average cost of day nurseries was higher than the weekly limit of Care to Learn funding, use of childminders, who are often less expensive than day nurseries, was relatively high.
- A large majority of young parents said that it was easy to find childcare (94 per cent), and 88 per cent said they had had no problems in locating it. Those who had had problems were most likely to say that a lack of childcare places was the cause of the problem (36 per cent).
- Satisfaction with childcare remained high at 94 per cent. This is in line with satisfaction rates reported in other sources.⁵³
- As in previous years, FE colleges were the most commonly used learning providers, with 72 per cent of young parents attending learning at an FE college.
- Level 2 courses were the most common level of qualification studied for, with 35 per cent of young parents doing so. A quarter of young parents were studying to Level 3 (26 per cent), with a further 17 per cent studying to Level 1.
- Wanting to get a good or better job remained the most commonly cited reason for choosing a course, though this fell from 45 per cent in 2007/08 to 37 per cent in 2008/09. On the other hand, more young parents in 2008/09 said they undertook learning to improve their skill levels and gain qualifications (15 per cent in 2008/09 compared to eight per cent in 2007/08).

5.1 This chapter looks at the childcare usage and learning provision taken up by young parents funded by Care to Learn in 2008/09. It examines the most commonly used forms of childcare, how satisfied young parents were with childcare and how easy or difficult this was to find.

⁵³ See <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/DCSF-RR083.pdf>, last accessed 06/06/2010.

5.2 It also looks at why young parents chose to move into learning and at the characteristics of the courses attended by young parents while receiving Care to Learn funding.

Use of childcare⁵⁴

5.3 Young parents were asked what type of childcare they used with Care to Learn funding. Table 5-1 shows that the most common form of childcare funded by Care to Learn was day nurseries not at the young parent's college or school, which 56 per cent of all young parents used. This has also been the most common form of childcare in each of the previous two waves of research and has increased each year. Conversely, use of registered childminders has fallen year on year though they remained the second most popular form of childcare, with 18 per cent of young parents using them. Use of childcare provided at college/school is the third most popular choice.

5.4 The fall in usage of childminders is in line with a national decline in the number of registered childminders.⁵⁵ During the stakeholder interviews it was reported by childminders that the increased pressures of the Early Years Foundation Stage had had an impact on this decline.

Table 5-1 Use of Care to Learn funded childcare, 2006/07 to 2008/09

	2006/07 %	2007/08 %	2008/09 %
Day nursery (not at college/school)	49	54	56
Childminder	24	21	18
Childcare provided at college/school	15	9	13
Nursery school (not at college/school)	10	10	9
Crèche (not at college/school)	3	6	5
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>1,350</i>	<i>1,964</i>	<i>1,728</i>

Source: *Inclusion*

1. Only selected codes shown

5.5 While age does not have a significant impact on choice of most types childcare, it does for use of childminders. Twenty-six per cent of young parents aged 15 and under used childminders compared to 14 per cent of young parents aged 19 and over. There were

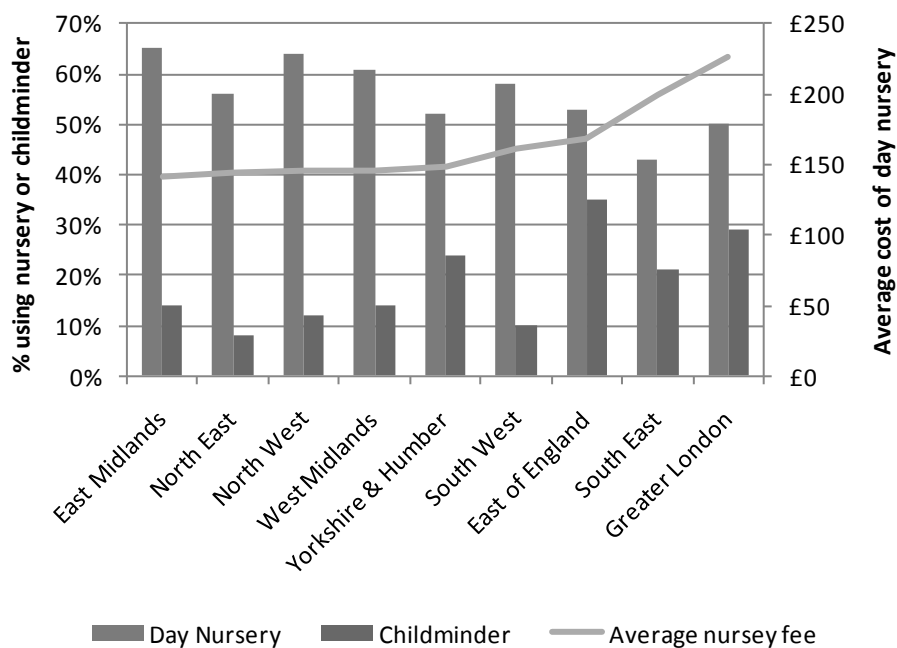
⁵⁴ This section is based on all young parents funded in 2008/09 (group 1) including those who also received funding in 2006/07 and/or 2007/08.

⁵⁵ See for example http://www.publications.parliament.uk/cgi-bin/newhtml/hi?DB=semukparl&STEMMER=en&WORDS=childmind&ALL=childminder&ANY=&PHRASE=&CATEGORIES=&SIMPLE=&SPEAKER=&COLOUR=red&STYLE=s&ANCHOR=90602w0033.htm_wqn6&URL=/pa/cm200809/cmhansrd/cm090602/text/90602w0033.htm#90602w0033.htm_wqn6, last accessed 14/06/2010.

no significant differences in responses depending on whether the young parent had one child or more than one child, or whether the child was aged 2 or less at the beginning of the academic year.

- 5.6 Figure 5-2 shows the proportion of young parents who used day nurseries not at their school or college and childminders in the different regions of England, along with the average cost of full-time day nurseries in that region. In the majority of regions nurseries are more expensive than childminders owing to their higher overheads.

Figure 5-2 Day Nursery and Childminder use and nursery fees



Unweighted base: 1,728

Source: *Inclusion 2010* and Daycare Trust, Childcare Costs Survey 2009

1. Average nursery fee based on 50 hours of nursery fees for a child aged under 2.

2. Inner London costs of average nursery fee are shown for Greater London.

- 5.7 It appears that in regions where average weekly day nursery fees were above the weekly limit of Care to Learn funding,⁵⁶ use of childminders was higher and day nurseries was lower. Young parents in London and the South East were the least likely to use day nurseries compared with those in the rest of the country; only 43 per cent of young parents in the South East and 50 per cent in London used day nurseries. Conversely, use of the cheaper option of childminders was relatively high at 21 per cent in the South East and 29 per cent in London compared to 18 per cent nationally. The East Midlands and the North West with their relatively low day nursery fees show the reverse. Sixty-five per cent of young parents in the East Midlands and 64 per cent in the North West use day nurseries, and just 14 per cent of young parents in the East Midlands and 12 per cent in the North West used childminders. It is worth noting,

⁵⁶ £175 in London, and £160 in all other regions.

however, that satisfaction with childcare did not vary significantly depending on the type of childcare used.

- 5.8 A large majority of young parents (96 per cent) reported that their main source of childcare was also their preferred form with only four per cent saying it was not.⁵⁷ For those whose main type of childcare was not their preferred type, this was most often because their preferred type was unavailable (62 per cent); only seven per cent said that their preferred type was too expensive.⁵⁸
- 5.9 Young parents were asked how easy or difficult it was to find the childcare funded by Care to Learn. As with young parents who received Care to Learn funding in 2007/08, 94 per cent of young parents reported that it was easy to find childcare, including 59 per cent said it was very easy. Only six per cent said it was difficult to find childcare. In line with findings for the 2007/08 cohort, young parents in London found it more difficult to find childcare than those elsewhere, with 14 per cent finding it difficult compared to four per cent receiving the national rate of funding.
- 5.10 Black British young parents also had relatively high levels of difficulty finding childcare; 10 per cent of black Caribbean and 15 per cent of black African young parents found it difficult compared to four per cent of white British young parents. As discussed in Chapter 3 this may be related to the high number of black British young parents living in London. The oldest young parents found it relatively difficult to find childcare with 11 per cent of young parents aged 20 or over reporting that it was difficult. No more than six per cent of any other age group found it difficult to find childcare. As discussed below, this could be due to the reduced likelihood of older young parents receiving support in finding childcare. There was no significant difference in ease of finding childcare depending on whether a young parent had one child or more than one child, or on whether the young parent's first child was aged less than two years old.
- 5.11 In line with the finding that 94 per cent of young parents reported that it was easy to find childcare, 88 per cent of young parents reported that they had had no problems finding childcare. For those who did have a problem, a lack of childcare places was the most commonly cited reason (36 per cent). Other reasons included that it was hard finding childcare for the hours required and that they had not received enough support or information, which were both reported by 11 per cent of young parents. Only nine per cent said that their preferred type was too expensive, and six per cent said transport was difficult or expensive.⁵⁹
- 5.12 Young parents were evenly split between those who received help or support in finding childcare (51 per cent) and those who didn't (49 per cent). Black African young parents were most likely to say that they had received help finding childcare (60 per cent), followed by white British with black Caribbean young parents least likely to have received help (42 per cent). Furthermore, those young parents living in rural areas (41

⁵⁷ Based on all young parents who knew what their main type of childcare was.

⁵⁸ This finding is only based on 69 young parents, so caution should be used when interpreting this figure.

⁵⁹ These findings based on 222 young parents.

per cent) were less likely to have received help than those living in urban areas (52 per cent). Those who were younger were more likely to have received help; 77 per cent of those aged 15 or younger had received help compared to 61 per cent of 16 year olds and 47 per cent of 17 to 19 year olds. It is possible that this is in part due to the support given to young parents of compulsory school age by their local authorities.

- 5.13 As younger parents were more likely to have been studying for lower level courses, those studying at Levels 1 and 2 were more likely to have received support (57 per cent and 54 per cent respectively), whilst those studying on Level 3 courses were less likely to have received help and support (43 per cent)
- 5.14 For those who received help in finding childcare, the most common source was a Connexions adviser (33 per cent), followed by a learning provider (27 per cent) and friends and family (13 per cent).
- 5.15 Young parents were also asked why they chose their main type of childcare. The responses to this question were in line with last year's results with the four most popular reasons remaining the same, as shown in Table 5-2.
- 5.16 Young parents were most likely to report that the convenient location of their childcare provider was the main reason it had been chosen. For example, 24 per cent of young parents reported that the fact that childcare was close to their home was the main reason they chose it, and another 14 per cent reported that it was because childcare was close to their learning provider. Quality of childcare was also important, with just over one in 10 reporting that the childcare looked to be the best of the options available, and reporting that they knew and trusted the childcare providers. Other reasons included that transport was convenient (five per cent), that it was the only option available (five per cent) and that the young parent wanted their child(ren) to be near to them (four per cent).

Table 5-2 Main reasons for choosing childcare, 2007/08 and 2008/09

	2007/08 %	2008/09 %
Close to home	24	24
Close to college	18	14
Looked at options and liked this best	12	12
Know and trust this person/people	10	11
Transport is convenient	4	5
No choice / only childcare available	4	5
Like to be near to child	3	4
<i>Unweighted base</i>	1,964	1,728

Source: *Inclusion 2010*

- 5.17 Answers differed significantly by the main type of childcare that young parents used. For example, those using childcare at their college or school were more likely to report that they chose childcare because it was close to college, and that they liked to be

near their child. Those using childminders were more likely to say that they knew and trusted the childcare provider, and those using day nurseries or nursery schools were more likely to report that the childcare was close to home.

Table 5-3 Main reasons for choosing childcare by type of childcare used

	Childcare at college/school %	Childminder %	Day nursery %	Nursery school %	All %
Close to home	4	14	30	29	24
Close to college	39	1	12	11	14
Looked at options and liked this best	6	14	12	16	12
Know and trust this person/people	3	27	9	10	11
Transport is convenient	5	3	5	3	5
No choice / only childcare available	6	5	4	3	5
Like to be near to child	18	1	2	5	4
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>210</i>	<i>304</i>	<i>950</i>	<i>148</i>	<i>1,728</i>

Source: *Inclusion 2010*

1. Other types of childcare were used by fewer than 100 young parents.

5.18 Overall, the level of satisfaction with childcare remained high, and 94 per cent of all young parents reported that they were satisfied with their childcare, the same proportion who were satisfied among the 2007/08 cohort. Seventy-seven per cent of young parents reported that they were very satisfied and 17 per cent were fairly satisfied. Only four per cent were not satisfied with the childcare they used. It is not surprising that rates of satisfaction are high given that parents could switch provision if they were dissatisfied and were unlikely to stay with a childcare provider they were not satisfied with.

5.19 Satisfaction did not vary by the type of childcare that was used. However, those young parents receiving the national rate of funding were more likely to be very satisfied with childcare than were those receiving the London rate (78 per cent compared to 71 per cent). Furthermore, white and black African young parents were more likely to be very satisfied (79 per cent and 75 per cent respectively) than black Caribbean young parents (62 per cent).

5.20 These high satisfaction rates are in line with other childcare satisfaction rates; the Sure Start Children's Centres Survey of Parents showed that 96 per cent of parents were satisfied with the childcare / day nursery services they used both at Sure Start Children's Centres and other providers. Similarly, 76 per cent were very satisfied with childcare / day nursery services provided by Children's Centres, and 79 per cent were very satisfied with that provided by other providers.⁶⁰

⁶⁰ See <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/DCSF-RR083.pdf>, last accessed 06/06/2010.

- 5.21 For those who were not satisfied with childcare, the most common reasons were that the childcare was not as good as had been expected (23 per cent), that staff had a poor attitude (22 per cent), or that young parents felt that their child had been ignored and not been given enough attention (13 per cent).
- 5.22 All young parents were asked whether they used any other types of childcare in addition to that funded by Care to Learn, and 18 per cent reported that they had. Use of additional childcare was less prevalent among black African and (to a lesser extent) black Caribbean young parents (nine per cent and 14 per cent respectively), compared to white young parents (20 per cent). Furthermore, younger parents were more likely to use additional childcare with 28 per cent of those aged 15 or younger doing so compared with just 12 per cent of those aged 20 and over.
- 5.23 For those using other types of childcare, informal methods dominated.⁶¹ The most common source for those using additional childcare was the child's grandparent(s) (55 per cent), followed by another relative (22 per cent) and a friend or neighbour (16 per cent). These compare to just nine per cent who used a day nursery and six per cent who used a childminder. Given the high use of the child's grandparents as additional childcare, it is likely that the high use of other childcare by the youngest parents is due to them being more likely to live with their own parents.

Learning undertaken

- 5.24 Young parents who first received Care to Learn funding in 2008/09 were asked their main reasons for choosing the course that was supported by Care to Learn. The main reasons remain the same as for the 2007/08 cohort. However, the emphasis has shifted slightly. As Table 5-4 shows young parents wanting to get a good or better job and the learning being something they had always wanted to do have decreased in importance, whilst furthering their education has increased. This change of emphasis away from work in the short term and enjoying the course itself towards gaining qualifications and improving skills may be an effect of the recession, as more young parents see the need for education to improve their labour market position.

⁶¹ This was a multiple choice question and young parents could select more than one additional type of childcare.

Table 5-4 Motivations for going into learning in 2007/08 and 2008/09

	2007/08 %	2008/09 %
Wanted to get a good/better job	45	37
Something I have always wanted to do	31	25
To further my education/gain/improve skills/qualifications	8	15
Wanted a better future for my child	9	7
Thought the course sounded interesting	6	7
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>1,593</i>	<i>1,301</i>

Source: *Inclusion*

1. A number of other reasons were given, but none by more than four per cent of young parents.

5.25 Those studying at FE Colleges were more likely to choose 'wanting to get a good or better job' as their main reason for choosing their course (40 per cent) than those at school (20 per cent), sixth form college (33 per cent) or work based learning providers (33 per cent).⁶²

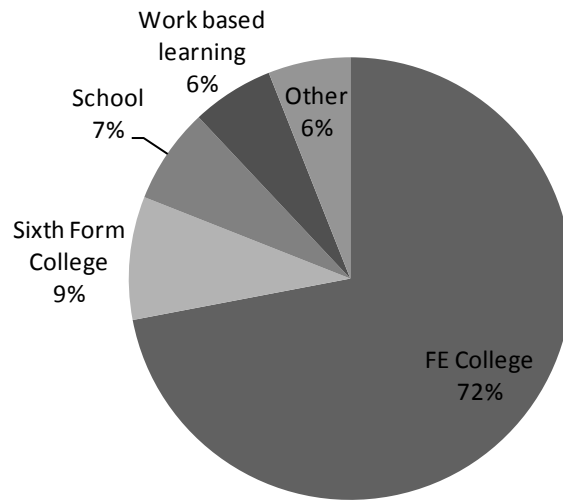
5.26 As with the 2007/08 cohort, the youngest parents were least likely to be employment focussed. Twenty-three per cent of young parents aged 15 or younger chose their course because they wanted a better/good job compared to 39 per cent of those aged 16 and over. On the other hand, 22 per cent of the youngest parents (aged 15 or below) said that they were still at school or had to go back to school and had no choice.

5.27 As shown in Figure 5-3, FE Colleges were the most commonly used learning providers,⁶³ followed by sixth form colleges, schools and work-based learning. Six per cent attended other types of providers, for example community centres and young parents' projects. These figures have remained constant over the last year, with use of all learning providers being within one percentage point of responses given by the 2007/08 cohort.

⁶² Unweighted base for those young parents at a school is 94, and at a work-based learning provider is 72, so care should be used when interpreting these results.

⁶³ Based on all those who received Care to Learn funding in 2008/09 – group 1.

Figure 5-3 Learning provider used by young parents



Source: *Inclusion 2010*
Unweighted base 1,728

5.28 As may be expected, younger parents were more likely to attend learning at a school; 62 per cent of young parents aged 15 or under attended learning at school compared with five per cent of 16 year olds, two per cent of 17 to 18 year olds and one per cent of 19 year old young parents. On the other hand, older young parents were more likely to attend FE colleges (82 per cent of 19 year olds compared with 26 per cent of those aged 15 or under. Black African and black Caribbean young parents were more likely to study at FE colleges (84 per cent and 76 per cent) compared to white British young parents (70 per cent).

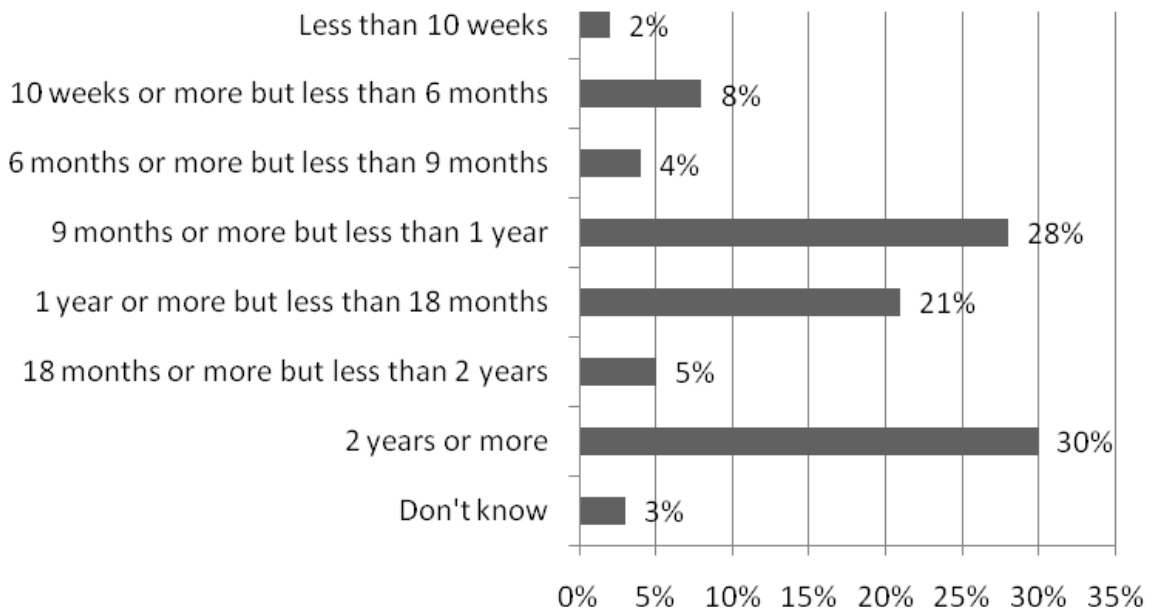
5.29 Two thirds of young parents (67 per cent) were studying for more than 16 hours per week, 20 per cent between 12 and 16 hours per week and nine per cent for less than 12 hours per week.⁶⁴ Those studying at sixth form colleges were particularly likely to be studying more than 16 hours per week (76 per cent) compared to those at FE colleges and schools (69 per cent and 73 per cent respectively) while those in work-based learning were more likely to be studying less than 12 hours per week (14 per cent).⁶⁵ Younger parents were more likely to be studying longer hours than older young parents – 81 per cent of 15 year old parents were studying 16 hours or more compared with 60 per cent of 19 year old parents.

⁶⁴ Four per cent did not know how many hours per week they studied for.

⁶⁵ This is based on only 95 young parents studying at work-based learning providers.

Figure 5-4 shows the length of course attended by all young parents who received Care to Learn funding in 2008/09. Thirty per cent were attending courses lasting two years or more, 26 per cent were attending courses lasting between one and two years and 42 per cent were attending courses lasting a year or less.

Figure 5-4 Length of the course attended by young parents 2008/09

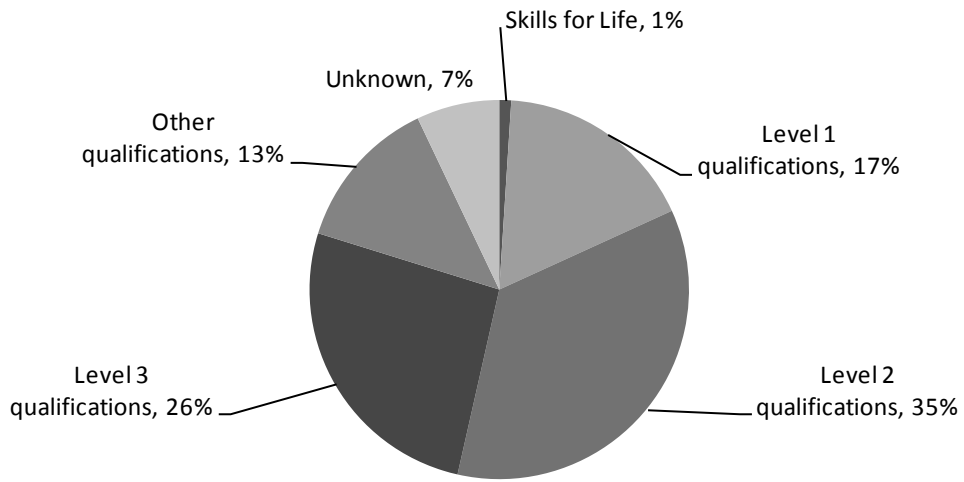


Source: *Inclusion 2010*
Unweighted base: 1,728

5.30 As expected, lower level courses were more likely to last less than a year than higher level courses (49 per cent for Level 1 compared with 26 per cent for Level 3).

5.31 Figure 5-5 shows the qualification level of the original course supported by Care to Learn for all young parents who received funding in 2008/09. As with the previous cohort, the most common level of qualification studied for was Level 2 followed by Level 3 and Level 1. Thirteen per cent of young parents were studying for 'other qualifications' which included unspecified 'diplomas,' and first aid and health and safety certificates. Younger parents were more likely to be studying lower level courses with 45 per cent of those aged 15 or under studying Level 1 courses compared to just 14 per cent of those aged 19.

Figure 5-5 Qualification level of the original course supported by Care to Learn in 2008/09



Source: *Inclusion 2010*
Unweighted base: 1,728

6 THE IMPACT OF CARE TO LEARN IN 2008/09

Chapter Summary

- Seventy-seven per cent of young parents funded in 2008/09 reported that they could not have gone on a course without support from Care to Learn, compared with 73 per cent of young parents funded in 2007/08. In total 97 per cent reported that Care to Learn made a positive difference in their ability to attend learning, and only two per cent said it made no difference and they would have gone on the course anyway.
- All stakeholders agreed that Care to Learn was critical in allowing young parents to continue their education, and that without it a large majority would have to stop learning. It was also noted that Care to Learn helped challenge the perception held by some that young parents *should* give up their education, by presenting education as a viable alternative option.
- Only 16 per cent of all young parents said that £15 less funding per child per week would have made no difference to their ability to attend learning. On the other hand, 38 per cent said such a cut would have meant they could not have gone on a course, suggesting that the level of funding is about right. Young parents receiving the London rate of funding, however, were more likely to say that £15 less per child per week would have meant they could not have gone on a course (46 per cent, compared to 36 per cent of those receiving the national rate).
- In total, 64 per cent of young parents had completed the original course they received Care to Learn funding for in 2008/09, and a further 19 per cent were still on the course. Only 17 per cent had dropped out of the course.
- Three-quarters of young parents (75 per cent) had gained a qualification or a partial qualification from the original course that was supported by Care to Learn in the 2008/09 academic year. Of these 20 per cent were at Level 1, 36 per cent at Level 2, and 21 per cent at Level 3. The 2008/09 national FE success rate, that is, the proportion of learners who gained the qualification they were studying for at an FE college, was 81 per cent, whilst 76 per cent of young parents receiving Care to Learn and learning at an FE college had gained a qualification.
- Before starting learning in 2008/09, 69 per cent of young parents were NEET.⁶⁶ However, by the time of the interview in spring 2010 only 27 per cent were NEET, representing a fall in the proportion who were NEET of 42 percentage points. This suggests that Care to Learn is an effective way of reducing the proportion of young parents who are NEET.
- The most common activity being undertaken at the time of interview by those who

⁶⁶ For the purposes of this analysis NEET is defined as all young parents, regardless of age, who were not studying, at school, college, on a training course, or working.

received Care to Learn funding in 2008/09 was education, with 63 per cent of young parents doing so in spring 2010. In addition, 10 per cent were working. These figures are consistent with the previous cohort of young parents, who received Care to Learn funding in 2007/08, although a higher proportion of young parents are in education, and a smaller proportion working when compared with the 2006/07 cohort. This is likely to be a result of the recession.

- Of those who were in education or training at the time of the interview, almost half (48 per cent) were attending a new course that was not the same as the one originally supported by Care to Learn in the 2008/09 academic year. Virtually all of these new courses were towards a qualification. Importantly, 60 per cent of those studying for a new qualification⁶⁷ were undertaking learning at a higher level than the original course they received Care to Learn funding for in 2008/09.

6.1 This chapter examines the immediate impact Care to Learn has had on young parents after receiving support in 2008/09. It first examines what learning outcomes were achieved on the course that Care to Learn facilitated, as well as other courses undertaken in 2008/09. It then looks at the destinations of young parents after completing their course, particularly looking at the proportion who were NEET. More detail is provided on current work and training activity, and some stakeholder perspectives are reported.

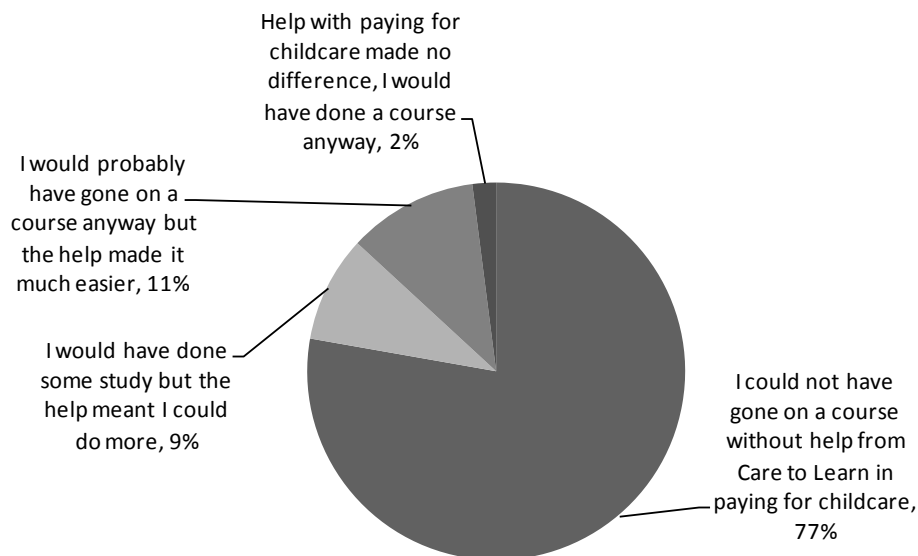
Impact of Care to Learn⁶⁸

6.2 The vast majority of young parents receiving Care to Learn funding in 2008/09 (98 per cent) reported that the funding had had a positive impact on their ability to undertake learning. In total 77 per cent said that they could not have gone on a course without the help of Care to Learn in paying for their childcare, nine per cent said would have done some study but the financial support of Care to Learn meant that they could do more, and 11 per cent said that they would probably have gone on a course anyway but the help provided by Care to Learn made it easier. Only two per cent said that Care to Learn funding made no difference and that they would have done the course anyway (see Figure 6-1).

⁶⁷ And for whom a level could be assigned to their courses.

⁶⁸ This section is based on all those funded in 2008/09 (group 1).

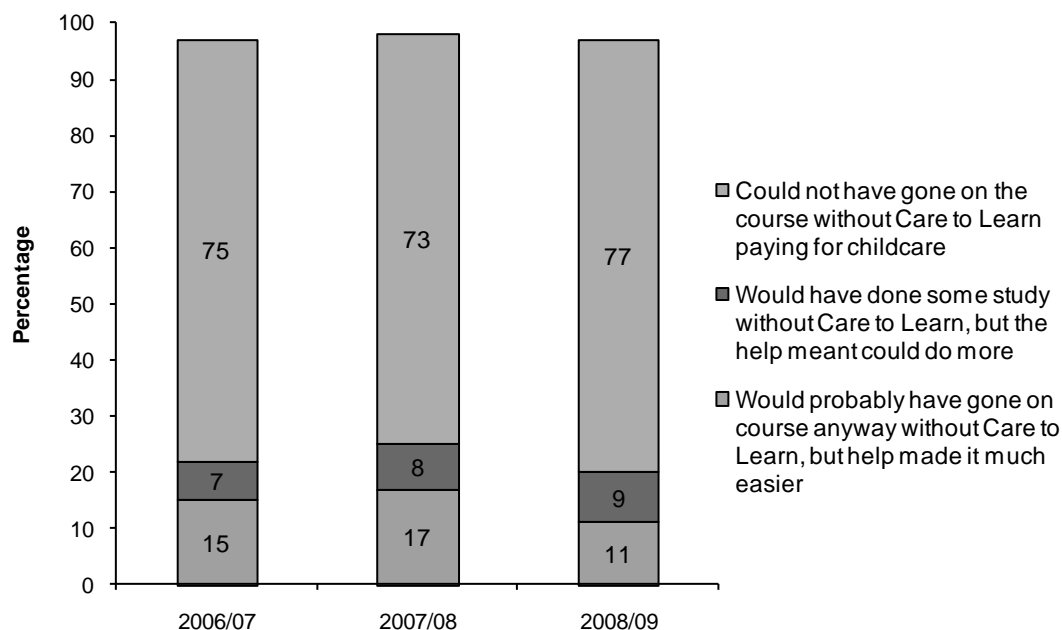
Figure 6-1 Impact of Care to Learn funding on young parents' ability to attend learning



Source: *Inclusion 2010*
Unweighted base: 1,728

- 6.3 The proportion of young parents reporting that Care to Learn funding made no difference and that they would have done the course anyway has remained stable at two per cent over the three waves of research.
- 6.4 Figure 6-2 shows how results have varied over the three waves of research. Whilst the proportion of young parents who reported that Care to Learn funding had a positive impact on their ability to undertake learning is stable (97 per cent of those receiving Care to Learn funding in 2006/07 and 2007/08 reported this when interviewed in 2008 and 2009), the proportion who said that they could not have gone on a course without Care to Learn has risen, 73 per cent for the 2007/08 cohort to 77 per cent for the 2008/09 cohort. The proportion who said that they would have done some study but Care to Learn meant that they did more was stable, but the proportion saying they probably would have gone on a course anyway, but the funding made it easier, has fallen from 17 per cent in the previous wave, to 11 per cent this wave.
- 6.5 The proportion of young parents reporting that Care to Learn funding made no difference and that they would have done the course anyway has remained stable at two per cent over the three waves of research.

Figure 6-2 Impact of Care to Learn funding on young parents' ability to attend learning over three waves of research

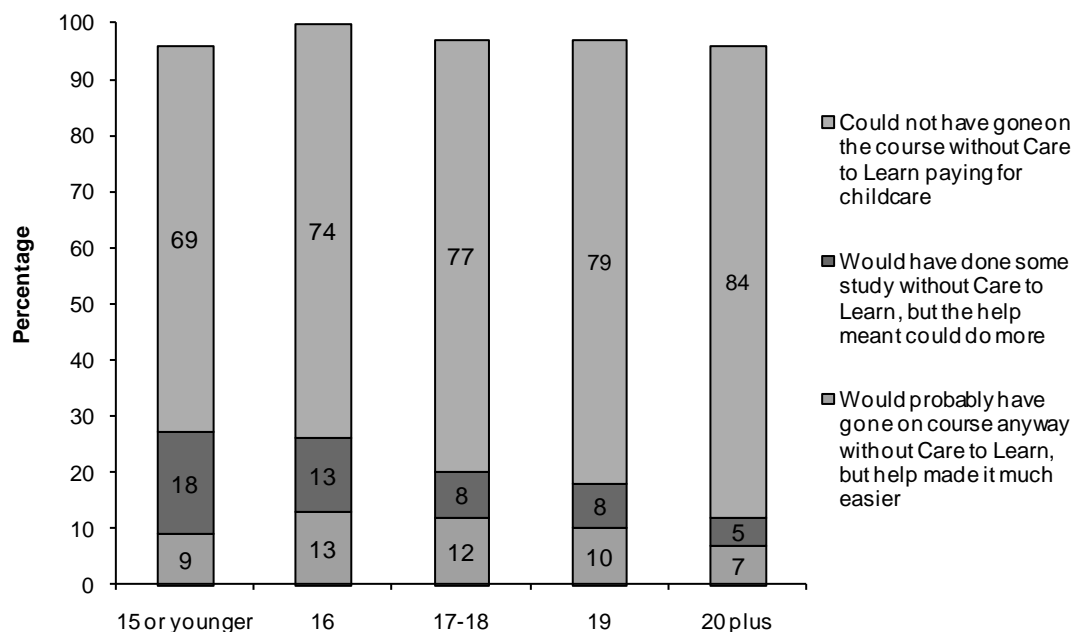


Source: *Inclusion*

Unweighted bases: For 2006/07 cohort: 1,350. For 2007/08 cohort: 1,964.
For 2008/09 cohort: 1,728.

- 6.6 There was a clear pattern by age (see Figure 6-3), with younger parents less likely to report than older parents that they could not have gone on the course without Care to Learn; only 69 per cent of those young parents aged 15 or younger reported this, compared to 84 per cent of those aged 20 or more. Nevertheless, a clear majority of those aged 15 or younger said that they could not have undertaken learning without Care to Learn. There are likely to be two reasons that younger parents were less likely to say that Care to Learn was essential. First, the youngest parents legally have to finish full-time education. Second, that young parents are significantly more likely to live with their parents (65 per cent of those aged 15 or below did so, compared to only five per cent of those aged 20 or above), and therefore may have had more parental support which meant they were less dependent on Care to Learn than older parents.
- 6.7 If only those aged 16 or more are taken into account, that is, removing most of those who were still in compulsory education, 78 per cent said they could not have gone on the course without Care to Learn, nine per cent said they would have done some learning but Care to Learn meant they could do more, and 11 per cent that they would probably have gone on a course anyway, but the help made it much easier.

Figure 6-3 Impact of Care to Learn funding on young parents' ability to attend learning by age of young parent



Source: *Inclusion 2010*
Unweighted base: 1,728

6.8 Those who were at school (who were also likely to be younger) were less likely to have said that they could not have gone on the course without Care to Learn (66 per cent), compared to those at FE colleges (78 per cent) or sixth form / sixth form colleges (76 per cent). This is likely to be a result of the fact that those young parents learning at school are likely to be younger than those learning at FE colleges and sixth forms / sixth form colleges.

6.9 Furthermore young parents living in rural areas were less likely to say they could not have gone on the course without Care to Learn (72 per cent) compared to young parents living in urban areas (78 per cent). There was no significant difference for this question for new 19 year olds, those receiving the London rate of funding, or lone parents.⁶⁹

6.10 Those who reported that they would have been able to undertake some learning without Care to Learn funding⁷⁰ were asked how they would have mainly paid for childcare had Care to Learn funding not been available. There was a balance between those saying they would have used informal and formal childcare. The most common answer given by these young parents was that they would have used informal childcare and that family or friends would have cared for their child (34 per

⁶⁹ There are roughly the same proportion of young parents studying for Level 2 courses and in the different age bands as for the 2007/08 cohort. This means that the increase in the proportion of young parents reporting that they could not have gone on their course without Care to Learn is not the result in changes in the characteristics of those who have received Care to Learn.

⁷⁰ All young parents except those who said they could not have gone on a course without help from Care to Learn – 383 young parents.

cent). On the other hand, 22 per cent reported that their family would have paid for formal childcare, 15 per cent said they would have paid themselves, and six per cent said their learning provider would have paid. One in eight of these young parents (12 per cent) did not know how they would have paid for childcare, although they felt it would have been possible had the situation arisen.

- 6.11 Of those few young parents who said they would have paid for childcare themselves⁷¹ had they not received Care to Learn funding, half (30 out of 59 young parents) said they would have earned the money from paid employment (although they were not necessarily employed at the time of interview) and a quarter (15 out of 59 young parents) said they would have relied on benefits and / or tax credits.
- 6.12 Table 6-1 shows young parents' expectations of the impact of reducing the maximum amount of funding available per child per week by £15. Currently, those in London are eligible for £175 per child per week, and those outside London are eligible for £160.
- 6.13 In total, nearly four in 10 young parents (38 per cent) reported that they would have been unable to go on a course had £15 less per child per week been available, and 44 per cent said they would probably have gone on a course but it would have been much harder. Only one in six young parents (16 per cent) said this would have made no difference. Results in the previous wave of research were similar, when 36 per cent said they could not have gone on the course with £15 less per child per week, 45 per cent said they would probably gone on the course but it would have been much harder, and 15 per cent said it would have made no difference

Table 6-1 Impact of £15 less Care to Learn funding per child per week

	Young parents receiving the London rate of funding %	Young parents receiving the National rate of funding %	All young parents %
I could not have gone on a course if the help from Care to Learn in paying for childcare had been £15 less per child per week	46	36	38
I would probably have gone on a course anyway but less funding from Care to Learn would have made it much harder	40	46	44
£15 less per child per week would have made no difference, I would have done the course anyway	12	16	16
<i>Unweighted base</i>	325	1,303	1,728

Source: *Inclusion 2010*

- 6.14 Even though the maximum amount of funding in London is higher than the rest of the country, a significantly higher proportion of young parents receiving the London rate of

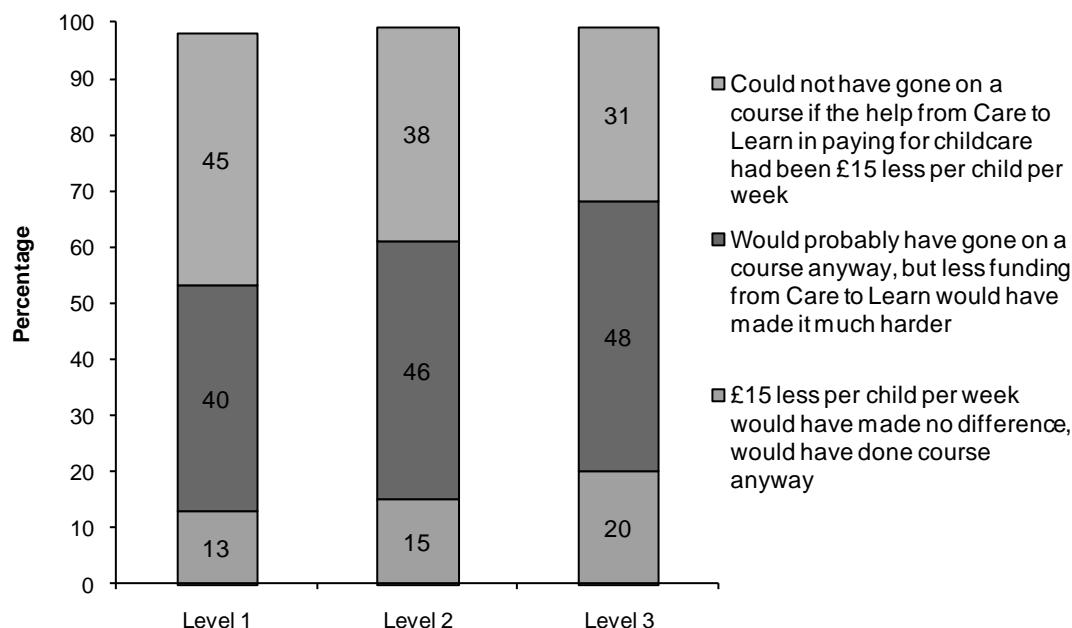
⁷¹ 59 young parents – extreme care should be taken when interpreting these figures.

funding than those receiving the national rate said they would have been unable to go on a course had £15 less per child per week been available (46 per cent in London compared to 36 per cent receiving the national rate). This result is likely to be explained by the fact that a significantly higher proportion of those receiving the London rate of funding had reached the maximum level of funding (34 per cent) than those receiving that national rate (12 per cent),⁷² suggesting that funding is tighter in London. However, it is worth noting that those receiving the London rate of funding were no more or less likely to complete their Care to Learn funded course or have been NEET in spring 2010 than those receiving the national rate.

- 6.15 Black African young parents were more likely than white or black Caribbean young parents to have said that they could not have gone on a course with £15 less per child per week (64 per cent compared to 34 per cent and 35 per cent respectively). Even taking into account the fact that many black or black British young parents live in London (making up nearly two thirds of young parents receiving the London rate of funding), that black African young parents were 18 percentage points more likely to say this than those in London as a whole does suggest that reducing the rate of funding by £15 per week would disproportionately disadvantage black African young parents throughout the country.
- 6.16 Those who were working towards lower level courses were more likely to report that £15 less per child per week would have meant they could not have gone on the course, suggesting that such a reduction would particularly harm those with the lowest skill levels (see Figure 6-4). It is unclear why this is the case. Whilst younger young parents were more likely to have studied towards a lower level qualification than older young parents, there was no significant difference to this question by age. It may be, therefore, that those with the lowest skills need the most support to encourage them to undertake learning.

⁷² See chapter 4.

Figure 6-4 Impact of £15 less Care to Learn funding per child per week by course level



Source: *Inclusion 2010*
Unweighted base: 1,347

Importance of Care to Learn – stakeholder perspectives⁷³

6.17 There was a strong consensus among all stakeholders that Care to Learn was vital in allowing young parents to go back into learning, and that without it most young parents would have had to end their education. Whilst the Discretionary Learner Support Fund had previously helped young parents with childcare costs, Care to Learn was seen as very much preferable because it is more comprehensive. As well as providing financial support, it was noted that Care to Learn helped raise the aspirations of young parents who would not have tried to go back into education.

6.18 Specific elements of Care to Learn that drew approval included the fact that it was not means tested, and that Care to Learn did not affect other benefits that young parents might be on. In addition, there was approval that some transport costs were covered in the payment, as young parents on low incomes may not otherwise be able to afford this additional cost.

“If [Care to Learn] ever went there wouldn’t be any incentive for those young mums to go to college, because it would just be too hard. As a parent myself I know how hard it is. So think for some young parents, I just don’t know how they would do it, to be entirely honest” (Teenage Pregnancy Coordinator)

⁷³ These included Teenage Pregnancy Coordinators, Connexions advisers, and staff at learning and childcare providers. See Introduction for more details of stakeholders interviewed.

- 6.19 Stakeholders reported that the majority of young parents who were eligible for EMA received it, but that very few had any income from employment. On the other hand, it was reported that some young parents did receive some financial support from their parents or family, and some were on Income Support.
- 6.20 As well as removing financial barriers for young parents wanting to study, it was noted that Care to Learn was important because it helped challenge negative perceptions of young parents. It was felt that historically there was a view within learning providers that if a girl became pregnant she should leave education because she would be a bad example to other students and could be disruptive. In addition, it was felt that she would not be able to keep up with the rest of the class, was more likely to drop out of the course, and that this would affect the school's position in league tables. Therefore, learning providers may have not provided enough support for young parents. Care to Learn, however, challenged the perception that motherhood should be the end of education, and presented a viable means of staying in education.

Learning outcomes⁷⁴

- 6.21 In line with last year's findings, 64 per cent of young parents had completed the course they received Care to Learn funding for in 2008/09 by the time they were interviewed in spring 2010, and a further 19 per cent were still on the course. This compares to 63 per cent and 20 per cent of those funded in 2007/08 who were interviewed in spring 2009. One in six young parents (17 per cent) had left the course they were studying for in 2008/09 early or had dropped out.
- 6.22 As expected, receiving Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) had a positive impact on course completion. Young parents aged 16 to 18 receiving EMA were more likely to have completed their course or still be on the course than those aged 16 to 18 not receiving it. Furthermore, those receiving EMA were less likely to drop out of their course than those not receiving EMA. It may be that young parents receiving extra financial support to cover their expenses are less likely to work or look for work and thus find it easier to focus on their studying. Moreover, the weekly EMA payments are highly likely to act as an incentive for young parents to stay on in learning.⁷⁵

⁷⁴ This section is based on only those funded in 2008/09 (group 3) and does not include young parents funded by Care to Learn in both 2007/08 and 2006/07.

⁷⁵ See also <http://readingroom.lsc.gov.uk/lsc/National/nat-emaevaluationreportnov07-jan2008.pdf>, last accessed 03/08/2010.

Table 6-2 Whether completed course or not by whether received EMA (for those aged 16 to 18)

	Received EMA %	Did not receive EMA %
Completed course	64	57
Still on course	23	16
Left course early / dropped out	13	27
<i>Unweighted base</i>	493	364

Source: *Inclusion 2010*

6.23 There were not significant differences by age, funding rate or whether or not the young parent was a new 19 year old. For example, the majority of new 19 year old parents (83 per cent) either completed their course in 2008/09 or were still on it when interviewed, in line with all young parents.

6.24 For those who left their course early or dropped out, findings suggest that personal reasons are the most common causes (35 per cent⁷⁶), followed by problems with the learning itself (27 per cent⁷⁷). Problems relating to the fact that the learner already had a child accounted for only a fifth of those who dropped out from learning (22 per cent⁷⁸). Whilst personal reasons were the most common causes, it may be that some of the personal reasons were complicated by the fact that the learner was also a parent.

6.25 More specifically, the most common reason young parents gave for dropping out of the course was that they had too many personal problems (19 per cent, compared to 22 per cent last year). In addition, 11 per cent became pregnant and had another child (nine per cent last year) and nine per cent said they became bored and they were not interested. Other answers included:

- The course was not what they expected (eight per cent);
- It was too difficult looking after their child and studying (seven per cent);
- Their child was ill (four per cent);
- They missed too much of the course and fell too far behind (four per cent);
- They could not cope financially (four per cent); and
- They moved to a new area and the travel was too far (four per cent).

⁷⁶ Including those who said that they dropped out because of personal problems, that they became pregnant again with another child, that they moved out of the area and the travel became too difficult or that they had health problems.

⁷⁷ Including those who said that they dropped out because the course was not interesting, that the course was not what they expected, that they wanted to start a different course, that they didn't like their teachers/lecturers, that they found the course too hard/couldn't keep up, that they were expelled or that there was another miscellaneous problem with the course.

⁷⁸ Including those who said that they dropped out because it was too difficult to look after a child and study, that their child was ill, that they or their child were not happy with the childcare for some reason, that Care to Learn funding was too slow or stopped, or that they decided they wanted to spend more time with their child.

- 6.26 In total, 75 per cent of young parents gained a qualification or partial qualification from their course. This is exactly the same proportion which gained a (partial) qualification last year.
- 6.27 The national FE College success rate in 2008/09 was 80.6 per cent⁷⁹, whilst 75 per cent of those who received Care to Learn funding in 2008/09 had gained a qualification, and 76 per cent of those at FE colleges had. One would expect the proportion gaining a qualification to rise further, given that 19 per cent of young parents are still on their course. It therefore seems clear that success rates of those receiving Care to Learn are at least comparable to the national FE College success rate.
- 6.28 As may be expected the proportion gaining a (partial) qualification was lower for young parents who were still on the course or did not complete their course. However, nearly three in ten (28 per cent) young parents who did not complete their course reported achieving a partial qualification (see Table 6-3 below).

Table 6-3 Proportion of young parents who gained a qualification by whether or not they completed the course

Whether they gained a qualification or partial qualification	Whether young parent completed the course			All young parents %
	Yes %	No – left early/dropped out %	No – still on course %	
Yes	94	28	56	75
No	6	70	43	24
Don't know	*	2	1	1
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>830</i>	<i>223</i>	<i>248</i>	<i>1,301</i>

Source: *Inclusion 2010*

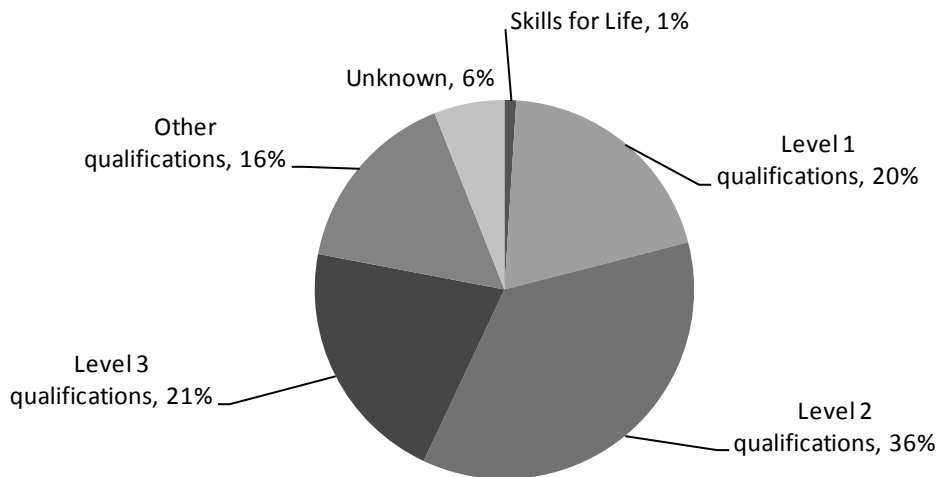
- 6.29 At the time of the survey in spring 2010, the majority of all young parents had both completed their 2008/09 course and achieved a qualification (60 per cent, compared to 59 per cent last year), 12 per cent did not complete the course or achieve a qualification (11 per cent last year), 11 per cent reported that they were still on the course but had already gained a partial qualification (unchanged from last year), and eight per cent were still on their course and had not gained any qualifications.⁸⁰ The proportion of new 19 year olds who achieved a full or partial qualification was in line with all young parents (78 per cent of new 19 year old parents gained a full or partial qualification).

⁷⁹ The success rate is calculated as the number of learners achieving the qualification divided by the number of those starting, excluding any learners who transferred onto another qualification. Post-16 Education & Skills: Learner Participation, Outcomes and Level of Highest Qualification Held, http://www.thedataservice.org.uk/NR/rdonlyres/8D25DE64-8FA6-49B1-B482-14D10CDBB8B1/0/Post_16_Education_June_2010.pdf, last accessed 06/07/2010.

⁸⁰ Smaller proportions had dropped out of their course and gained a qualification, finished their course and not gained a qualification, or didn't know whether they had gained a qualification.

6.30 Of those who had gained a qualification most had gained one at Level 2, with roughly the same proportion having achieved either a Level 1 or Level 3 qualification (both about a fifth).

Figure 6-5 Qualifications and partial qualifications gained whilst receiving Care to Learn Funding



Source: *Inclusion 2010*
Unweighted base: 981

6.31 In addition, 20 per cent of all young parents obtained another qualification between September 2008 and July 2009 apart from the one gained from the original course already discussed.

6.32 These qualifications were most likely to fall into the other category (46 per cent), and the lower levels of qualification (20 per cent at Level 1 and 17 per cent Level 2). Only five per cent of these courses were Level 3 (or higher), suggesting that they were often shorter courses than the main one funded by Care to Learn. More specifically these qualifications were most likely to fall into the following categories:⁸¹

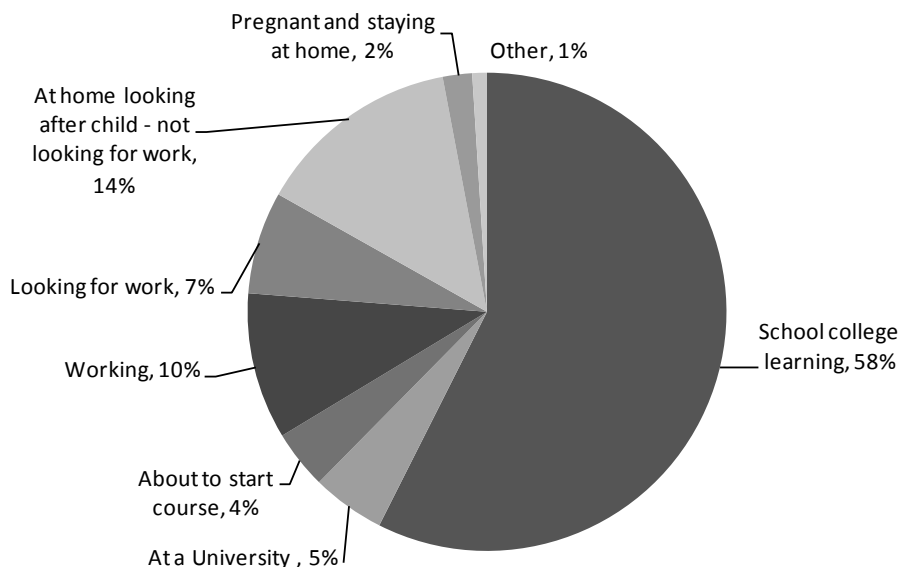
- GCSEs (15 per cent);
- Basic skills (13 per cent);
- NVQs (12 per cent);
- First aid (11 per cent); and
- Key skills (10 per cent).

⁸¹ The remainder were made up of small percentages (less than five per cent) of various other qualifications. Nine per cent of young parents answered 'Don't know' to this question.

Young parents' destinations⁸²

6.33 Figure 6-6 shows the main activities young parents, who had received Care to Learn in 2008/09, were involved in during spring 2010.

Figure 6-6 Destinations of young parents funded in 2008/09 circa 16 months after starting Care to Learn funded learning



Source: *Inclusion 2010*
Unweighted base: 1,728

6.34 The majority of young parents were in education or training, with 63 per cent either at school, college, a university or other learning. A further four per cent were about to start a course. One in ten young parents (10 per cent) were working, with a further seven per cent looking for work. Sixteen per cent were either not looking for work and at home looking after their child, or pregnant.

6.35 Of those who were at home looking after their child and not looking for work,⁸³ nearly half (47 per cent) reported that they wanted to look after their child or baby. In addition, 22 per cent had had another baby since April 2009.⁸⁴ Ten per cent reported that they were looking for another course. However, the next largest group, although only eight per cent of these young parents, said that the reason was that they could not afford childcare. Other reasons for staying at home were:

- waiting to start a new course (six per cent)
- pregnant or child too young for childcare (five per cent)
- dealing with personal problems (four per cent)

⁸² This section is based on all those funded in 2008/09 (group 1).

⁸³ This is based on 168 young parents.

⁸⁴ These figures are based on group 3 young parents. The equivalent figure for all young parents is 27 per cent.

6.36 The spread of destinations for the 2008/09 cohort about 16 months after starting to receive Care to Learn funding is very similar to that of the 2007/08 cohort a similar period after starting their Care to Learn funded learning (see Table 6-4). However, when compared to 2006/07 cohort, a smaller proportion are currently in work, but a higher proportion are in education or training, which is likely to be the result of the recession.

Table 6-4 Young parents' destinations circa 16-18 months after starting to receive Care to Learn funding, by cohort

	2006/07 %	2007/08 %	2008/09 %
School / college / learning (incl. at a university)	58	64	63
About to start course	4	5	4
At home looking after child - not looking for work	11	13	14
Looking for work	7	7	7
Working	14	9	10
Pregnant and staying at home	3	2	2
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>1,350</i>	<i>1,964</i>	<i>1,728</i>

Source: *Inclusion*

1. Base includes those who gave other answers or refused to answer which equates to one per cent of all young parents.

6.37 Table 6-5 shows young parents' destinations by age on 31 August 2008.⁸⁵ As one would expect, younger parents were more likely to be undertaking education or training apart from university education, whilst those aged 19 or above were more likely to be at university, working, looking for work, or at home looking after their child and not looking for work.

Table 6-5 Young parents' destination by age on 31 August 2008

Young parents' destination	15 or younger (%)	16 years old (%)	17 -18 years old (%)	19 years old (%)	20 + years old	All young parents (%)
School / college / learning	83	76	56	46	40	58
At home looking after child	7	9	15	14	19	14
Working	3	2	10	15	14	10
Looking for work	3	5	7	8	10	7
At university	-	-	4	10	9	5
About to start course	5	5	3	4	5	4
Pregnant and staying at home	-	2	3	2	1	2
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>124</i>	<i>210</i>	<i>842</i>	<i>382</i>	<i>170</i>	<i>1,728</i>

Source: *Inclusion 2010*

1. Base includes those who gave other answers or refused to answer which equates to one per cent of all young parents.

⁸⁵ I.e. at the start of the academic year.

6.38 Table 6-6 shows that, like last year, parents from black African backgrounds were more likely to be in school or college after the end of the course compared with other ethnic groups. Young parents from black Caribbean and African backgrounds were more likely to be at university than white young parents, although white young parents were more likely to be in work. There was little difference in the proportion of young parents that were at home looking after their child and not looking for work, but black Caribbean young parents were most likely to be looking for work. Those receiving the London rate of funding were also less likely to be in work, reflecting the fact that black or black British young parents made up a high proportion of Care to Learn customers in London.

Table 6-6 Young parents' destination by selected ethnic group

Destination of young parents	White %	Black or black British Caribbean%	Black or black British – African %	All young parents %
School /college/ learning	57	53	62	58
At home looking after child	13	13	15	14
Working	11	6	3	10
Looking for work	7	12	4	7
At a University	5	13	10	5
About to start a course	4	3	5	4
Pregnant and staying at home	2	1	1	2
<i>Unweighted base</i>	1,230	123	211	1,728

Source: *Inclusion 2010*

Base includes those who gave other answers or refused to answer which equates to one per cent of all young parents.

6.39 There was also variation by the type of learning provider young parents had used. Young parents who were undertaking learning at a school were much more likely still to be at school, college or learning other than at a university (80 per cent) than those using FE colleges (57 per cent) or sixth forms / sixth form colleges (56 per cent). This is likely to be because young parents studying at a school are younger, and therefore more likely to still be in compulsory education. Those who had undertaken learning at an FE college were more likely to be in work (11 per cent) compared to those at school (four per cent) but also more likely to be at home looking after their child and not looking for work (14 per cent, compared to six per cent of those who had been at a school). Those who had undertaken learning at a sixth form / sixth form college were more likely to be at university (12 per cent) than other young parents.

6.40 Finally, lone parents were less likely to be working (nine per cent compared with 13 per cent of those who were not lone parents), but new 19 year old customers were significantly more likely to be in work (17 per cent compared to nine per cent of those who were not new 19 year old customers).

The impact of Care to Learn on NEET young parents⁸⁶

6.41 At the end of 2008, 10.4 per cent of 16 to 18 year olds in England were NEET, which fell to 9.3 per cent at the end of 2009.⁸⁷ The proportion of young mothers NEET, however, is much higher. Department for Work and Pensions data indicates that 67.1 per cent of young mothers aged 16 to 19 were NEET on average between 2007 to 2009, having fallen from 71.9 per cent between 2003 to 2005 and 77.8 per cent between 1997 and 1999.⁸⁸ It is clear that young parents have a much higher likelihood of being NEET than other young people. Furthermore, of all NEET 16 to 18 year olds, it has been found that 15 per cent were either pregnant or young mothers.⁸⁹

6.42 These findings are supported by *Barriers to Participating in Education and Training*,⁹⁰ published in 2010 by the Department for Education, which shows that young parents were more likely to face barriers to staying in post-16 education than other young people, and as such were more likely not to be in education or training after leaving Year 11. There were also significant barriers in their knowledge, for example:

- 30 per cent of young parents did not know anything about the different types of education or training available in their area (compared to 13 per cent of all young people);
- 41 per cent of young parents did not know anything about funding to help them continue in education or training after Year 11 (compared to 26 per cent of all young people);
- 58 per cent of young parents did not know anything about financial support available to help with travel costs (compared to 41 per cent of all young people);
- 26 per cent did not know anything about the qualifications required to get certain jobs or careers (compared to 16 per cent of all young people); and
- 18 per cent said their lack of knowledge had stopped them doing what they wanted to do (compared to four per cent of all young people).

6.43 The same study also found that the availability of childcare was, after earning money for their family, the most important factor in deciding what to do after leaving Year 11, and more affordable childcare was also noted as the most important factor that would help NEET young parents and those in jobs without training to re-engage with learning.⁹¹

⁸⁶ This section is based on only those funded in 2008/09 (group 3) and does not include young parents funded by Care to Learn in both 2007/08 and 2006/07.

⁸⁷ Source <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/STR/d000924/NEETQ12010final.pdf>, last accessed 21/05/10.

⁸⁸ <http://www.dwp.gov.uk/publications/policy-publications/opportunity-for-all/indicators/table-of-indicators/children-and-young-people/indicator-3>, last accessed 17/06/2010.

⁸⁹ *Investing in potential*, DCSF, DWP, BIS, <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/14-19/documents/8537-DCSF-Investing%20in%20Potential-WEB.pdf>, last accessed 03/08/2010

⁹⁰ *Barriers to Participating in Education and Training*, DfE, <http://www.education.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/DFE-RR009.pdf>, last accessed 06/07/2010. Findings for teenage parents are based on 93 interviews.

⁹¹ Although only 74 young parents were either NEET or in jobs without training.

- 6.44 Furthermore, findings from the Youth Cohort Study & Longitudinal Study of Young People in England show that young people tend to move in and out of being NEET over time. Females were slightly less likely than males to have spent time NEET, however the proportion having spent 12 months or more NEET is similar between males and females.⁹²
- 6.45 The proportion of young parents who received Care to Learn funding in 2008/09 and were NEET in spring 2010, was significantly lower than the proportion in the summer of 2008, before their Care to Learn supported course. This suggests that Care to Learn has a positive effect on reducing the likelihood of a young parent being NEET after their course has ended.
- 6.46 Table 6-7 shows that only 27 per cent of young parents were NEET at the time of the interview compared with 69 per cent who were NEET before the start of the course.⁹³ In 2009 the equivalent figures for the 2007/08 cohort were 27 per cent NEET at the time of interview and 66 per cent NEET before the start of the course.

Table 6-7 Proportion of NEET young parents (all ages) before and after the 2008/09 Care to Learn supported course

	Activity before the start of the course (2008) %	Current activity at the time of the survey (2010) %
NEET	69	27
In education, employment or training	28	73
Don't know	3	0

Source: *Inclusion 2010*
Unweighted base: 1,301

- 6.47 Thus, there has been a 42 percentage point reduction in NEET of young parents from summer 2008 to spring 2010, which compares to a 39 percentage point drop in NEET for the 2007/08 cohort between the summer of 2007 and spring 2009.
- 6.48 Table 6-8 shows the same information but includes only those young parents who would be included in the government definition of NEET (that is, those aged 16 to 18 years). Only 28 per cent of young parents aged 16-18 were NEET at the time of the interview compared with 71 per cent who were NEET before the start of the course.

⁹² Source <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/SBU/b000937/BUL01-2010.pdf>, last accessed 03/08/2010.

⁹³ There are seasonal differences in NEET rates, with most young parents NEET in the third quarter of the year (i.e. the summer) and the least in the fourth quarter (i.e. when many will have begun a course at school or college), with the NEET rate gradually climbing in the first two-quarters towards the summer high. This survey has measured NEET rates in summer 2008 against spring 2010, and thus this fall in NEET rates will probably involve an element of this seasonal effect. Nevertheless, the difference in national NEET rates of 16 to 18 year olds in 3rd quarter of 2007 and the 1st quarter of 2010 is only two percentage points, signifying that whilst seasonal changes may make a slight contribution to these figures, the vast majority of the difference is likely to be the result of Care to Learn. <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/STR/d000924/NEETQ12010final.pdf>, last accessed 21/05/10.

This represents a 43 percentage point drop. These figures are virtually identical when compared to all young parents (including those aged 15 or younger and 19 or older).

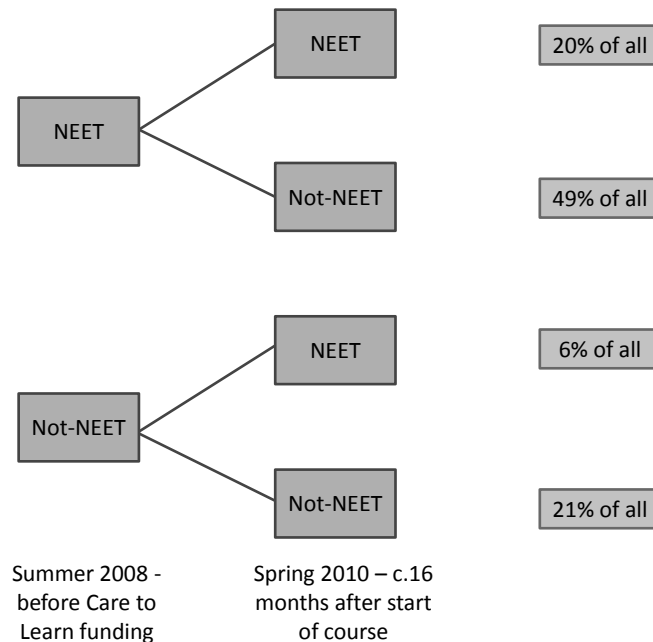
Table 6-8 Proportion of NEET young parents (aged 16 to 18) before and after the original course

	Activity before the start of the original course (2008) %	Current activity at the time of the survey (2010) %
NEET	71	28
In education employment or training	26	72
Don't know	3	0

Source: *Inclusion 2009*
Unweighted base: 857

6.49 Table 6-9 shows the proportion of young parents who had followed different pathways of being NEET and in education and training. Only a small proportion of young parents (six per cent), had moved from being in employment, education or training in summer 2008 to being NEET in spring 2010. On the other hand, a half of all young parents had been NEET before their Care to Learn funded course but were in employment, education or training by spring 2010, and a further 21 per cent were neither NEET before their course, or circa 16 months after their course started. Just over two-fifths of young parents had not changed their NEET status.

Table 6-9 Proportion of young parents that were NEET at different points in time



Source: *Inclusion 2010*
Base: 1,301

Impact of Care to Learn: tracking the destinations of young parents funded in 2008/09

1. Three per cent of respondent could not remember their activity in summer 2008, and as such percentages do not sum to 100.

6.50 Young parents who were NEET around 16 months after starting their course were similar in characteristics to other young parents. They were most likely to have been studying towards a Level 2 course (37 per cent) and been at an FE college (68 per cent). The course was most likely to have lasted 16 or more hours per week (62 per cent), and between nine months and a year (28 per cent). Moreover, they were likely to either be single (56 per cent) or in a relationship but not married (41 per cent), and to live in their own home (79 per cent).

6.51 There were, however, some differences in the characteristics of young parents who were NEET when interviewed in spring 2010.

6.52 Table 6-10 shows the proportion of young parents in different age groups who were NEET before their course started and in spring 2010. Younger parents were less likely than older parents to be NEET both before and after their course, although the net percentage point reduction is relatively stable, around 42 percentage points. For the youngest parents, aged 15 or younger only 57 per cent were NEET in the summer of 2008/09, compared to 15 per cent in spring 2010.

Table 6-10 Proportion of NEET young parents before and after the original course by age

	15 or younger	16 years old	17-18 years old	19 years old	All young parents
Proportion of young parents who were NEET in the summer of 2008 (%)	57	64	73	70	69
Proportion of young parents who were NEET in spring 2010 (c. 18 months after the start of 2008/09 funded course) (%)	15	24	29	29	27
Difference NEET in percentage points	-42	-40	-44	-41	-42
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>106</i>	<i>171</i>	<i>686</i>	<i>282</i>	<i>1,301</i>

1. The percentages do not sum to 100% as they are from two different periods of time and therefore show the proportion of all young parents in a particular group who were NEET at a particular point in time.

2. Age is the young parents' age at 31/08/08.

6.53 Table 6-11 shows that those aged 16 to 18 who received EMA in 2008/09 were less likely to be NEET in spring 2010 than those aged 16 to 18 who had not received it. This translates to 46 percentage point fall in NEET for those who received EMA, compared to only a 40 percentage point fall for those who did not.

Table 6-11 Proportion of NEET young parents (aged 16 to 18) before and after the original course by age by whether received EMA

	Received EMA %	Did not receive EMA %
Proportion of young parents who were NEET in the summer of 2008 (%)	70	73
Proportion of young parents who were NEET in spring 2010 (c. 18 months after the start of 2008/09 funded course) (%)	24	33
Difference NEET in percentage points	-46	-40
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>493</i>	<i>364</i>

Source: *Inclusion 2010*

1. The percentages do not sum to 100% as they are from two different periods of time and therefore show the proportion of all young parents in a particular group who were NEET at a particular point in time.

6.54 Those receiving the London rate of funding and new 19 year olds were no more or less likely to be NEET in spring 2010 than those receiving the national rate of funding or who were not new 19 year olds. In addition, there were no significant differences in likelihood to be NEET by whether the young parent lived in an urban or rural area, or whether they were a lone parent or not.

Further learning⁹⁴

6.55 This section looks in more detail at further learning that young parents who received Care to Learn funding in 2008/09 were undertaking when interviewed in spring 2010.

6.56 Of young parents who were studying or about to start a course when interviewed in spring 2010, almost half (48 per cent) were attending a new course which was not the same as the course they were doing between September 2008 and July 2009. The equivalent figure for the previous cohort, who received funding in 2007/08, was also 48 per cent. Taking all young parents into account, and not just those who continued in learning, this suggests that around a third of all young parents (32 per cent) used Care to Learn funding as a stepping stone to undertaking further learning.

6.57 Young parents' motives for going into further learning were most often forward looking; the most common reasons were to continue or progress previous learning (42 per cent), or to get a better or good job (24 per cent). The other major reason was that it was something they always wanted to do (nine per cent).⁹⁵ Whilst a similar proportion of young parents interviewed in the previous wave of research said that they wanted to progress previous learning or that the learning was something they had always wanted to do (44 per cent and 11 per cent respectively), the proportion who mentioned

⁹⁴ This section is based only on those funded in 2008/09 (group 3) and does not include young parents funded by Care to Learn in both 2008/09 and either 2007/08 and/or 2006/07.

⁹⁵ No other reason was mentioned by more than five per cent of young parents.

wanting to get a good or better job was smaller this year (24 per cent) compared with last year (30 per cent). This is possibly a result of the recession, during which immediate employment opportunities are rarer.

6.58 As last year, nearly all young parents undertaking a new course were on courses that led to qualifications (97 per cent, in line with 96 per cent last year).

6.59 In terms of course level, Table 6-12 shows that young parents attending further courses after the original one in 2008/09 were mainly studying for Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications, although one in eight young parents on a new course (12 per cent) were studying for a Level 4 qualification.

Table 6-12 Level of qualification studied for in subsequent course attended by young parents in the academic year 2008/09

Level of qualification	%
Level 1	12
Level 2	30
Level 3	30
Level 4	12
Other qualification	10
Don't know	7
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>444</i>

Source: *Inclusion 2010*

1. The table does not sum to 100% due to rounding.

6.60 Young parents who were studying for a qualification on a different course from the one they were attending in 2008/09 were mainly studying for one of the following qualifications:⁹⁶

- NVQ (30 per cent)
- BTEC (15 per cent)
- A or AS level (14 per cent)
- Degree (11 per cent)
- GCSE (five per cent)

6.61 Table 6-13 demonstrates the level of learning progression from the level of the original course in 2008/09 for young parents who were studying for a new qualification in spring 2010. For example, 34 per cent of young parents who studied at Level 1 in 2008/09 and were studying on a new course towards a qualification in 2009/10 were studying towards a Level 2 qualification.

⁹⁶ The remainder (25 per cent) were made up of small percentages of various other qualifications, or didn't know.

Table 6-13 Learning progression of young parents who continued in learning from 2008/09 to 2009/10

Level of the original course 2008/09	New qualification level 2009/10						
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Other qualification	Don't know	<i>Un-weighted Base</i>
Level 1 %	22	34	18	3	10	12	90
Level 2 %	8	31	50	3	6	3	158
Level 3 %	7	17	18	47	7	3	90
Other qualification %	14	34	25	-	23	3	73

Source: *Inclusion 2010*

1. Level information is based on the qualifications young parents reported to have achieved or been working towards and should therefore be treated as an indication of course level rather than level as confirmed by learning providers.

6.62 Of those whose qualifications were classified to a level in both 2008/09 and 2009/10 (i.e. excluding those studying for other qualifications and those who didn't know), three in five (60 per cent) had progressed at least one level since their course in 2008/09. Fifty-two per cent had progressed exactly one level, and nine per cent had progressed more than one level. Eleven per cent of these young parents were studying for a qualification at a lower level than the course they were studying for in 2008/09, and 29 per cent were studying at the same level.

6.63 The majority of young parents who continued studying in 2009/10 were using or were planning to use childcare, including childcare that was free (92 per cent). Of those using childcare 80 per cent were using Care to Learn or were applying for it, suggesting that Care to Learn was important in allowing them to continue their studies.

6.64 Those who were using or planning to use childcare, but not Care to Learn⁹⁷ were asked why they did not plan to apply for Care to Learn. Most young parents reported that they were not claiming Care to Learn because they were now ineligible: 40 per cent said they were too old, 10 per cent said they did not think they were eligible for an unspecified reason, and nine per cent and eight per cent respectively said their course was too high a level or that they were at university (which suggests they may have been too old as well).

Impact of Care to Learn on young parents moving into work⁹⁸

6.65 One in ten young parents who received Care to Learn funding in 2008/09 were in work in spring 2010. This section examines in more detail their motivations for and experience of work.

6.66 Over a third of young parents who were in work at the time of the interview in 2010 said they decided to take their job due to their career aspirations or because it presented an opportunity to 'get on' (35 per cent, in line with 32 per cent in the previous wave of research). Nearly one quarter (25 per cent, down from 34 per cent in

⁹⁷ Unweighted base of 158 young parents.

⁹⁸ This section is based only on those funded in 2007/08 (group 3) and does not include young parents funded by Care to Learn in 2007/08 and/or 2006/07.

the previous wave) said they decided to take their job to earn some money, and 16 per cent because they wanted the experience or some training (from 12 per cent in the previous wave). In addition to this:

- 11 per cent because the working hours were suitable;
- seven per cent said it was a job they wanted and enjoyed;
- five per cent because it was the only job available;
- four per cent because of the location;
- four per cent were self employed or working with family; and
- four per cent because they wanted to get off benefits and get busy.

6.67 The most common type of occupation for young parents to work in was personal service occupations (45 per cent).⁹⁹ This was followed by sales and customer service occupations (20 per cent),¹⁰⁰ administrative and secretarial jobs (17 per cent),¹⁰¹ and elementary occupations (13 per cent),¹⁰² showing that employment for young parents tended to be focussed in relatively low skilled jobs, and with a focus on occupations involving care.

6.68 Over six in ten young parents in work (63 per cent) were working part-time and only 37 per cent full-time. This is likely to be the result of a combination of factors, including young parents' desire to balance work and childcare, and also because they may not have been able to find full-time work. Encouragingly 83 per cent were in permanent jobs, compared to only 17 per cent in temporary jobs. Forty-four per cent reported receiving training as part of their job (56 per cent were not) and 70 per cent said they were still using childcare (30 per cent were not).

6.69 Young parents in work were asked whether they felt the course they were doing between September 2008 and July 2009 helped them to find a job. Thirty-six per cent of them reported that the course had a role in moving them into work, although nearly two-thirds (64 per cent) did not.

⁹⁹ This is defined as having a Standard Occupational Code (SOC) 2000 of 6. The main tasks associated with these occupations involve the care of the sick and the elderly; the supervision of children; the care of animals; and the provision of travel, personal care and hygiene services.

¹⁰⁰ A SOC 2000 code of 7. These are occupations whose tasks require the knowledge and experience necessary to sell goods and services, accept payment in respect of sales, replenish stocks of goods in stores, provide information to potential clients and additional services to customers after the point of sale.

¹⁰¹ A SOC 2000 code of 4. These occupations within this group undertake general administrative, clerical and secretarial work, and perform a variety of specialist client-orientated clerical duties.

¹⁰² A SOC 2000 code of 9. These occupations require the knowledge and experience necessary to perform mostly routine tasks, often involving the use of simple hand-held tools and, in some cases, requiring a degree of physical effort. Most occupations in this major group do not require formal educational qualifications but will usually have an associated short period of formal experience-related training.

7 LONGER TERM IMPACT OF CARE TO LEARN: DESTINATIONS OF 2006/07 AND 2007/08 RECIPIENTS

Chapter Summary

- Learning is still the main destination of young parents who received Care to Learn in 2007/08, with 50 per cent in education or training. This includes 12 per cent who were at a university. In addition, 17 per cent were in employment.
- When the destinations of young parents in 2010 are compared to their destinations in 2009, a smaller proportion were currently in education or training (50 per cent compared to 72 per cent), but a higher proportion were working (17 per cent compared to seven per cent).
- Of those interviewed who had first received Care to Learn funding in 2007/08, 65 per cent had been NEET before beginning their course. This fell to 22 per cent in the spring of 2009, and 33 per cent were NEET in spring 2010. Although there has been a slight increase between 2009 and 2010, as was experienced with the previous cohort, this still represents a large and sustained reduction in the proportion of young parents who were NEET before and after receiving Care to Learn.
- Nearly half (47 per cent) of those receiving funding in 2007/08 had achieved a qualification between spring 2009 and spring 2010.
- Of those for whom it was possible to assign a level to the course studied for in 2007/08 and studying for in 2010, 63 per cent had progressed to a higher level qualification. Thirty-one per cent of those studying for a new qualification in 2010 were studying for a Level 4 qualification.
- Of those who were not working at the time of the survey, nine per cent had had employment that lasted for three months or more.
- Two-thirds (66 per cent) of those either in employment, or who had been in employment for three months or more since the previous interview in 2009 agreed with the statement “This job is a better job than any I have done before,” and 47 per cent agreed strongly.
- Education and learning continued to be the main longer term destination of young parents funded in 2006/07, with 24 per cent at school, college or on a training course and a further 20 per cent in university at the time of interview in 2010. Furthermore, the proportion of young parents funded in 2006/07 who were NEET has stayed relatively stable in the last three years.

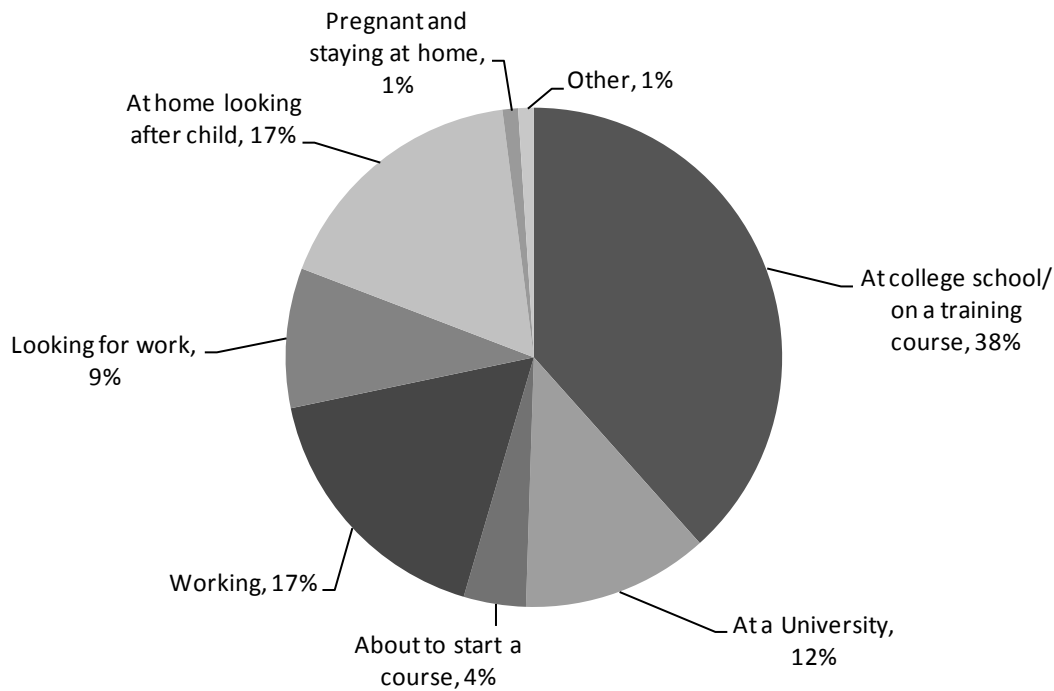
7.1 This section explores the longer term impact of Care to Learn by tracking the destinations of young parents who were funded by Care to Learn in 2007/08 and 2006/07. In total 594 young parents agreed to be re-contacted for this wave of research and had received Care to Learn funding in 2007/08 (group 2 young parents), and a further 238 who had received Care to Learn funding in 2006/07 were re-contacted.

7.2 More specifically, this chapter examines the main destinations of these young parents in 2009 and compares this to their destinations in previous years. It then goes on to examine those destinations in greater detail, looking first at learning destinations, then employment destinations and the proportion of young parents who are NEET.

Destination of 2007/08 Care to Learn recipients

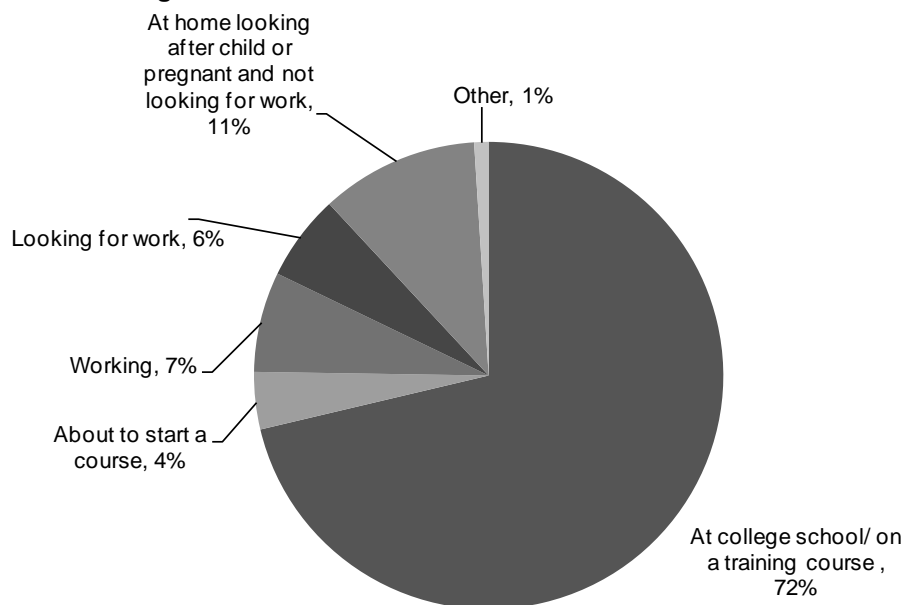
7.3 Figure 7-1 and Figure 7-2 show the main activities young parents were engaged in at the time they were surveyed in 2010 and at the time of the previous survey in April-May 2009.

Figure 7-1 Re-contacted young parent's destinations in 2010



Source: *Inclusion 2010*
Unweighted base: 594

Figure 7-2 Young Parents' destinations in 2009¹⁰³



Source: *Inclusion 2009*
Unweighted base: 594

7.4 As Figure 7-1 shows, of young parents receiving funding in 2007/08, 50 per cent were in education or training of some sort when interviewed in spring 2010, including 12 per cent who were at university. A further four per cent of respondents were about to start a course. In addition, 17 per cent were working, and a further nine per cent looking for work, whilst 17 per cent were at home looking after their child and not looking for work.¹⁰⁴

7.5 When the destinations of young parents in April-May 2009 and the same re-contacted respondents in February-March 2010 are compared (see Figures 7-1 and 7-2) a smaller proportion were currently in education or training in 2010; whilst 72 per cent were in education or training in 2009, only 50 per cent were in 2010. On the other hand, a higher proportion were working in 2010 compared to 2009 (17 per cent compared to seven per cent). In total 76 per cent of young parents were in learning or about to start a course in 2009, compared to 54 per cent in 2010, and 13 per cent were either in work or looking for work in 2009 compared to 26 per cent in 2010. This demonstrates an increased importance attributed to work and / or greater employment opportunities for this group.

7.6 More young parents were at home looking after their child and not looking for work in 2010 compared to 2009 (17 per cent in 2010 compared to 11 per cent in 2009).

¹⁰³ The proportion of young parents at university was not captured in the 2009 survey.

¹⁰⁴ When those who received Care to Learn funding in 2006/07 were asked a similar question in the evaluation conducted in spring 2009, the equivalent answers were: 46% at school, college or on a training course, 6% about to start a course, 20% working, 5% looking for work, and 19% at home looking after their child and not looking for work. This year there is a slightly higher proportion in education, and a slightly smaller proportion working, probably reflecting increased numbers of people out of work during the recession.

- 7.7 As Table 7-1 shows, young parents were quite likely to be undertaking the same activity as they were when surveyed the year previously.¹⁰⁵
- 7.8 Of those who were in or about to be in learning in 2009, around two-thirds (67 per cent) were still in or about to be in learning in 2010. The remainder either working or looking for work (17 per cent) or at home looking after their child or pregnant and not looking for work (16 per cent).
- 7.9 There is a similar picture for those who were in work or looking for work in 2009, of whom 66 per cent were still in work or looking for work in 2010, with 24 per cent in or about to be in learning and 10 per cent not looking for work either because they were pregnant or looking after their child.
- 7.10 Of those who were at home looking after their child or pregnant and not looking for work in 2009, around half (48 per cent) were still doing so in 2010, with 30 per cent working or looking for work, and 24 per cent in or about to be in learning.

Table 7-1 Current destinations by destinations in 2009

Young parent's destinations in 2010				
Young parents destinations in 2009	In or about to be in learning %	At home looking after baby/child or pregnant/not looking for work %	Working or looking for work %	Unweighted base
In or about to be in learning %	67	16	17	458
At home looking after baby/child or pregnant/not looking for work %	23	48	30	61
Working or looking for work %	24	10	66	68

Source: Inclusion 2010

- 7.11 Table 7-2 shows, black or black British young parents were less likely than white young parents to be in work in 2010. On the other hand, black or black British young parents were more likely to be at a university than white young parents, although they were not more likely to be in other forms of training

¹⁰⁵ Note, however, the small unweighted base sizes for those at home and looking after their baby/child or pregnant and not looking for work (60), and for those working or looking for work (70).

Table 7-2 Destinations of re-contacted young parents by ethnicity

Young parents destinations in 2010	White %	Black or black British %
At school/college/on a training course	38	40
At a university	12	19
At home looking after baby/child or pregnant/not looking for work	15	17
Working	20	7
Looking for work	9	10
About to start a course	4	7
Pregnant and staying at home	1	1
Other	1	-
<i>Unweighted base</i>	365	186

Source: *Inclusion 2010*

1. Other ethnic groups have bases too small to report.
2. Totals may not sum to 100% due to rounding.

7.12 Those who were NEET when interviewed in spring 2009 were more likely to be at home, looking after their child and not looking for work in 2010 than those who were in education, employment or training in spring 2009 (30 per cent compared to 13 per cent). They were also correspondingly less likely to be at school/college/on a training course (18 per cent against 44 per cent), at a university (three per cent against 15 per cent), or working (11 per cent against 19 per cent).

7.13 Those young parents who reported that they were currently staying at home looking after their child and not looking for work,¹⁰⁶ were asked for the main reason they decided to do this. The most common reason was that they wanted to be at home to look after their child (49 per cent), whilst five per cent said it was because they were pregnant. However, 12 per cent reported that the main reason was not being able to afford childcare.

Learning destinations

7.14 Approximately half (47 per cent) of the re-contacted young parents funded in 2007/08 had obtained qualifications since the time of the last interview in spring 2009. This is stable compared to those re-contacted in 2009 who had used Care to Learn in 2006/07, of whom 50 per cent had achieved a qualification. Of those who had achieved a qualification, 91 per cent had been in or were about to be in learning in 2009, with nine per cent not in or about to be in learning. Only 13 per cent of young parents who were NEET in spring 2009 had gained a qualification, compared to 57 per cent of those who were in education, employment or training.

7.15 White young parents were less likely than black or black British young parents to have gained a qualification in the past year (45 per cent compared with 62 per cent respectively).

¹⁰⁶ An unweighted base of 108.

- 7.16 Of those who were studying both in 2009 and 2010 (44 per cent of all young parents receiving Care to Learn funding in 2007/08), 49 per cent were on the same course, and 49 per cent were on a different course.¹⁰⁷
- 7.17 Those young parents who were studying on a different course from the one they were on in 2009¹⁰⁸ were asked what their main reason was for starting this new course. Half of these young parents reported that the main reason was to continue or progress previous learning (51 per cent), with a quarter (24 per cent) saying the main reason was to get a good or better job. No other reason was mentioned by more than seven per cent of young parents, though seven per cent said that they undertook learning because it was something they had always wanted to do, and five per cent because they wanted a better future for their child.
- 7.18 Those who received funding in 2006/07 and who were interviewed in 2009 at an equivalent time after receiving this funding were more likely to report that they undertook learning to get a good or better job (34 per cent compared to 24 per cent this year). This suggests that the recession experienced in 2009 has reduced people's immediate employment focus.
- 7.19 The vast majority of young parents (98 per cent) who were undertaking a new course in 2010 were on a course that was intended to lead to a qualification.
- 7.20 Table 7-3 provides a summary of the levels of these new qualifications that were being studied for.

Table 7-3 New qualifications being studied for at time of interview in 2010

Level of qualification	%
Level 1	8
Level 2	23
Level 3	24
Level 4	31
Other qualification	10
Don't know	4
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>178</i>

Source: Inclusion 2010

- 7.21 Table 7-4 shows the scale of learning progression between 2007/08 and spring 2010 for those who originally received Care to Learn funding in 2007/08 and who were studying towards a new qualification in spring 2010.¹⁰⁹ Over three-fifths of young parents were studying towards a qualification at a higher level than their original course in 2007/08, and one in seven were studying for a qualification two levels higher.

¹⁰⁷ One per cent of young parents did not know if the course was the same one they were doing in 2009.

¹⁰⁸ Including those who were not studying when interviewed in 2009.

¹⁰⁹ This is based on 97 young parents for whom it was possible to assign a level to qualifications achieved / studied for in 2007/08 when originally using Care to Learn funding and the new qualification in 2010.

Three in ten were studying at a qualification of the same level, and nine per cent were studying for lower level qualifications.

Table 7-4 New qualifications being studied for at time of interview in 2010

Level of qualification	%
New qualification is at a lower level	8
New qualification is at the same level	29
New qualification is at a higher level (one or two levels)	63
New qualification is one level higher	49
New qualification is two levels higher	14
<i>Unweighted base</i>	<i>97</i>

Source: *Inclusion 2010*

1. Level information is based on the qualifications young parents reported to have achieved or be working towards and should therefore be treated as an indication of course level rather than level as confirmed by learning providers.

7.22 Of those who were undertaking a new course, 86 per cent were (or will be) using some form of childcare, including free childcare. Of these nearly half (48 per cent) were using or applying for Care to Learn to pay for this childcare, 20 per cent said their learning provider was paying for it, and 12 per cent said student finance or a childcare grant paid.¹¹⁰ Only 11 per cent said that they were paying for childcare themselves. It is unclear exactly how young parents would have paid for childcare themselves, but it is likely to include work from part-time jobs and Child Benefit / Child Tax Credit.¹¹¹

Employment destinations

7.23 One in six young parents who received Care to Learn funding in 2007/08 (17 per cent) were working at the time of the interview in spring 2010. In addition, of those who were not working when interviewed in 2010, nine per cent had had a job since they were last interviewed in 2009 that lasted for three months or more. This section presents findings from a series of questions about employment that were asked of young parents who were in either of these groups.¹¹²

7.24 The most common reason young parents gave for why they decided to take the employment they had chosen was that they wanted to earn some money (38 per cent). In comparison, the most common reason given for choosing employment among those in work in the 2008/09 cohort was to progress their careers, suggesting that the 2007/08 cohort was slightly less career focussed than the 2008/09 cohort. Encouragingly, others in the 2007/08 cohort suggested that the main reason for taking the job was a desire to progress and get a better job in the future; 26 per cent said their career aspirations and opportunities to get on were most important, and 19 per cent said that they wanted to get some training. In total 39 per cent of young parents either in employment at the time of the interview in 2010 or who had been in a job that

¹¹⁰ It is unclear exactly what is meant by 'student finance', but it is likely to include Student Loans for those in higher education. Childcare grants can be paid to those in higher education. Some receiving Discretionary Learner Support Payments are also likely to fall into this category.

¹¹¹ See Chapter 6.

¹¹² This covered 115 young parents.

lasted for three months or more had actually received some training as part of their job, demonstrating that most of those in employment, 54 per cent, were in Jobs Without Training (JWT).

- 7.25 A small proportion (five per cent) said they chose their employment because the working hours were suitable, perhaps suggesting that their childcare needs affected their choice of employment.
- 7.26 The most common type of occupation for young parents to work in were personal service occupations (44 per cent).¹¹³ This was followed by elementary occupations (19 per cent),¹¹⁴ and sales and customer service occupations (18 per cent),¹¹⁵ showing that employment for young parents tended to be focussed in relatively low skilled jobs. Nevertheless, eight per cent of these young parents supervised or managed other workers as part of their job.
- 7.27 The majority of young parents, 81 per cent, were in permanent employment, with 13 per cent working in temporary jobs. Three in five young parents (60 per cent) were working in part-time jobs, with 35 per cent working full-time, which may suggest that they needed to juggle work and looking after children. This is supported by the fact that over a third (36 per cent) of these young parents were not using childcare, whilst 58 per cent were.
- 7.28 In total, two-thirds (66 per cent) agreed that “This job is a better job than any I have done before,” and 47 per cent agreed strongly. Only 14 per cent disagreed with this statement. Those who agreed with this statement¹¹⁶ gave a variety of reasons for this, including:
- That they were doing what they were interested in (21 per cent);
 - That they enjoyed the work more (19 per cent);
 - That the pay was better (18 per cent);
 - That it was their first job (13 per cent) ;
 - That there was a better working environment (13 per cent); and
 - That the hours were more flexible / suitable (10 per cent).

¹¹³ This is defined as having a Standard Occupational Code (SOC) 2000 of 6. The main tasks associated with these occupations involve the care of the sick and the elderly; the supervision of children; the care of animals; and the provision of travel, personal care and hygiene services.

¹¹⁴ A SOC 2000 code of 9. These occupations require the knowledge and experience necessary to perform mostly routine tasks, often involving the use of simple hand-held tools and, in some cases, requiring a degree of physical effort. Most occupations in this major group do not require formal educational qualifications but will usually have an associated short period of formal experience-related training

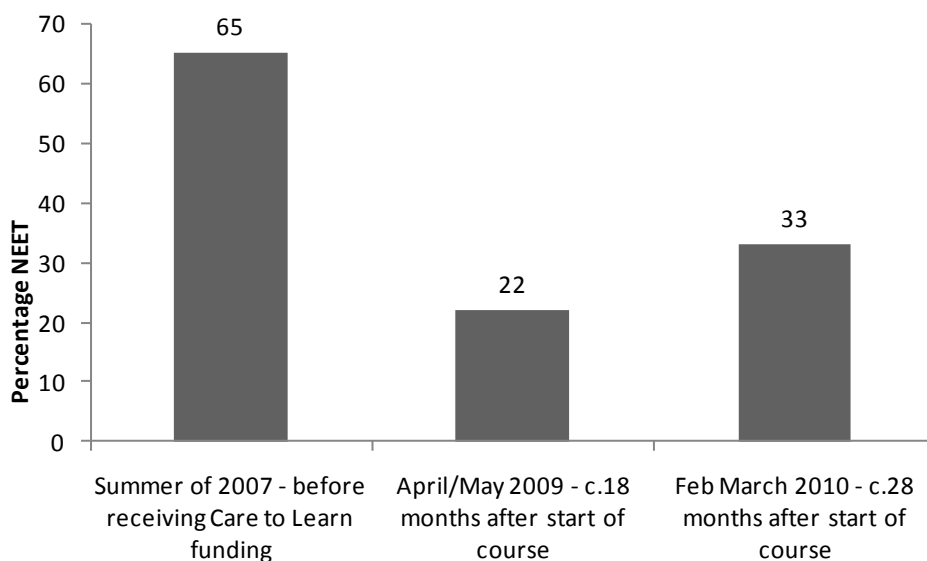
¹¹⁵ A SOC 2000 code of 7. These are occupations whose tasks require the knowledge and experience necessary to sell goods and services, accept payment in respect of sales, replenish stocks of goods in stores, provide information to potential clients and additional services to customers after the point of sale.

¹¹⁶ These findings should be treated with caution as they are only based on 73 young parents.

NEET¹¹⁷

7.29 Two-thirds (65 per cent) of young parents who received Care to Learn funding in 2007/08 were NEET in the summer of 2007, but by spring 2009 only 22 per cent were NEET.¹¹⁸ One year later, in early 2010, the proportion of young parents who were NEET had gone up slightly, to 33 per cent (see Figure 7-3).

Figure 7-3 Proportion of young parents in re-contact study (funded in 2007/08) that were NEET at different points in time



Source: *Inclusion 2010*
Unweighted base: 438

7.30 This suggests that there was a large and sustained reduction in the proportion of NEET young parents in the 2007/08 cohort, despite the higher proportion young parents who were NEET two years after their course ended compared to one year after. These findings reflect those from the previous year's research.¹¹⁹

7.31 Figure 7-4 shows the path that these young parents have followed since the summer of 2007, and supports other research demonstrating that young people often move in and out of being NEET, rather than remaining NEET for long periods of time. Nearly six in ten young parents (58 per cent) remained in education, employment or training since the spring of 2009. Most of these, comprising 38 per cent of all young parents,

¹¹⁷ The NEET statistics in this section are based on young parents who first received Care to Learn funding in 2007/08, and excludes young parents who took up Care to Learn funding in 2006/07 and 2007/08. NEET figures for the 2007/08 cohort, therefore differ from those reported in Vaid et al, *Impact of Care to Learn: tracking the destinations of young parents funded in 2006/07 and 2007/08*.

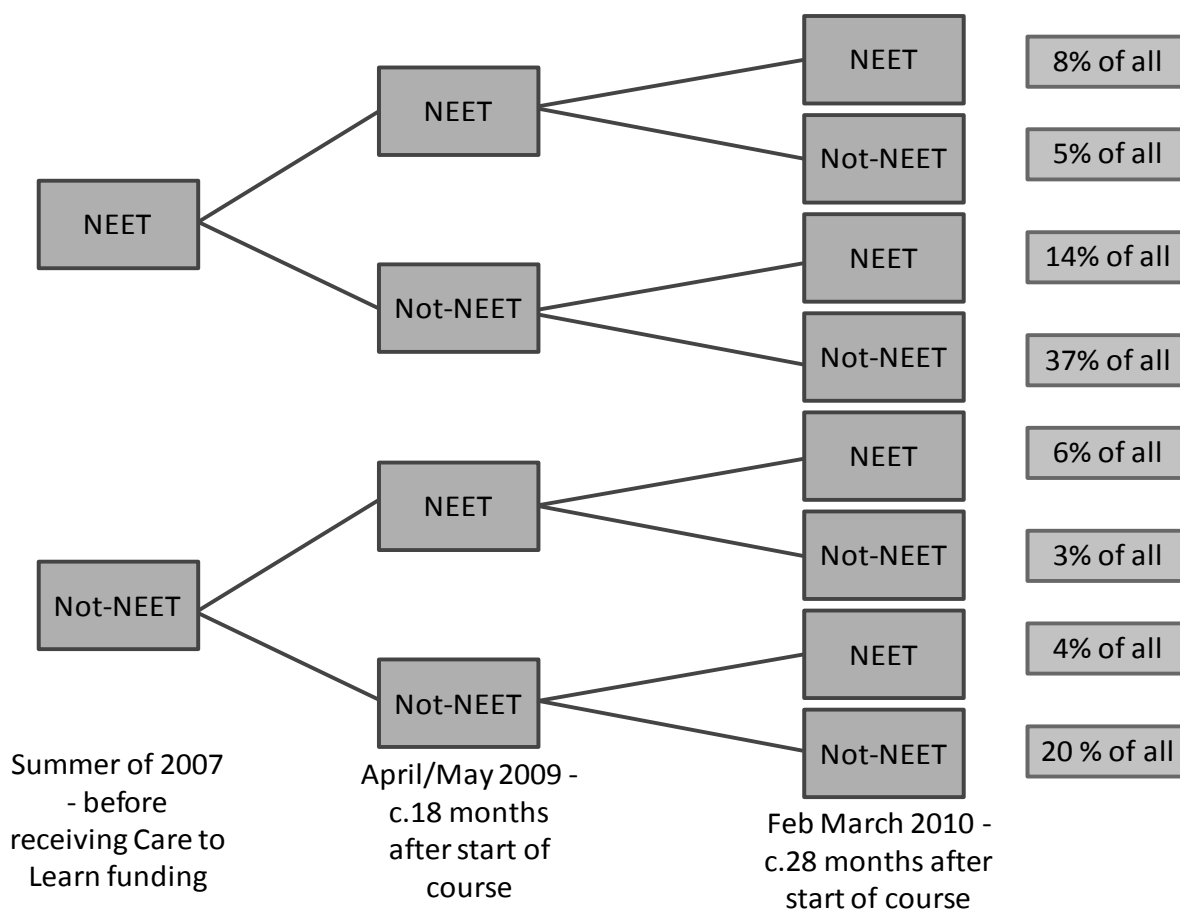
¹¹⁸ As many young parents funded in 2007/08 were aged over 18 at the time of interview in 2010 this definition of NEET is based on all young parents rather than the government's 16 to 18 year old NEET measure.

¹¹⁹ For the 2006/07 cohort, 65 per cent were NEET in the summer of 2006, 25 per cent were NEET in spring 2008, and 33 per cent were NEET in spring 2009, roughly the same time after starting Care to Learn supported learning.

were NEET before starting their Care to Learn funded course, and have been in education, employment or training since then. The next largest group comprised 20 per cent of young parents, who had never been NEET.

7.32 Nearly three in 10 young parents had changed their NEET status between spring 2009 and spring 2010, although 71 per cent had not. Between the springs of 2009 and 2010 there was movement between being in education, employment or training to becoming NEET (20 per cent of young parents), as well as from being NEET to being education, employment or training (eight per cent).

Figure 7-4 Proportion of young parents in re-contact study (funded in 2007/08) that were NEET at different points in time



Source: *Inclusion*
Unweighted base: 438

1. Two per cent of respondent could not remember their activity in summer 2007, and as such percentages do not sum to 100.

7.33 Half of all young parents who were NEET when interviewed in 2010¹²⁰ were either at home looking after their child(ren) (51 per cent of NEET young parents), or pregnant and staying at home (four per cent). However, 13 per cent of NEET young parents said they were about to start a course and 29 per cent were looking for work.

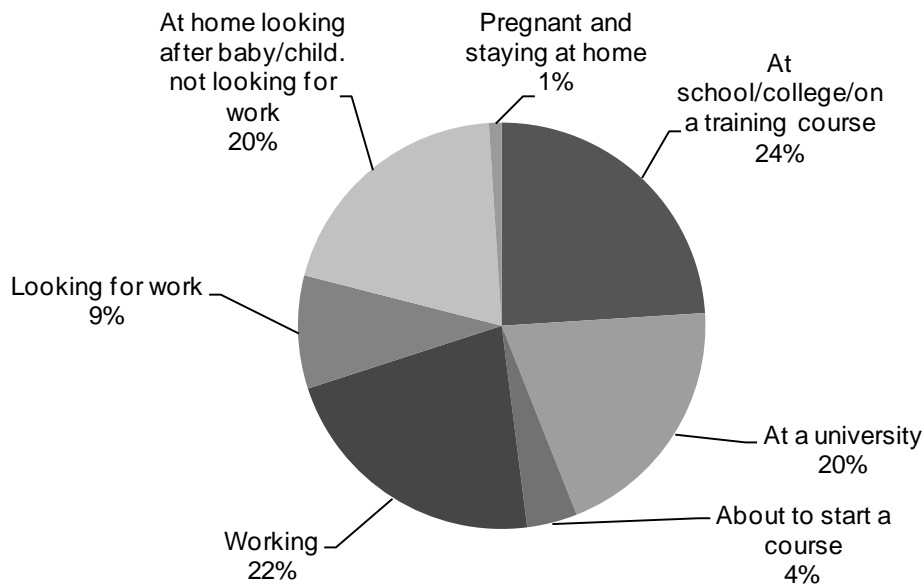
¹²⁰ This question is reported with an unweighted base of 594, i.e. it includes all young parents who were receiving Care to Learn funding in 2007/08, rather than those who *first* received it in 2007/08.

Destination of 2006/07 Care to Learn recipients

7.34 Figure 7-5 shows the main activities that young parents who received Care to Learn in 2006/07 were engaged in at the time they were surveyed in early 2010.

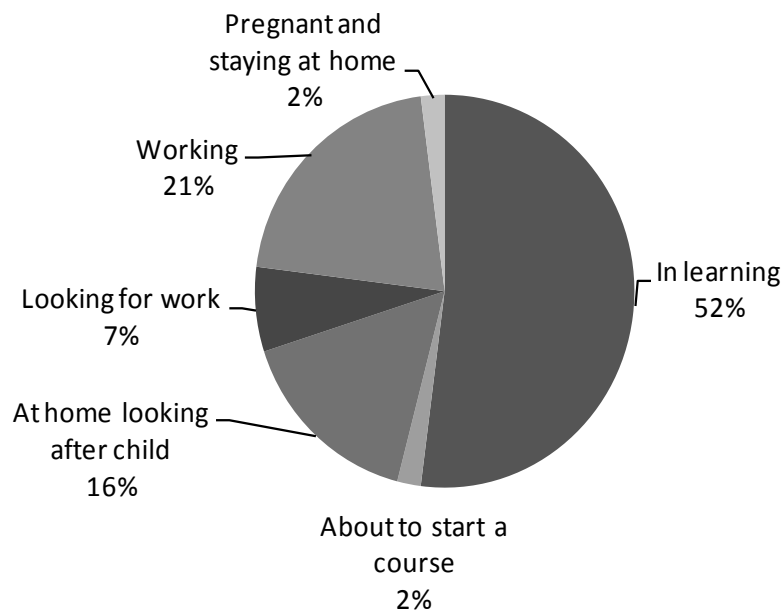
7.35 Figure 7-6 shows the main activities for the same group one year earlier at the time of the previous survey in spring 2009.

Figure 7-5 Destinations in 2010 of re-contacted young parents who claimed Care to Learn in 2006/07



Source: *Inclusion 2010*
Unweighted base: 238

Figure 7-6 Destinations in 2009 of re-contacted young parents who claimed Care to Learn in 2006/07



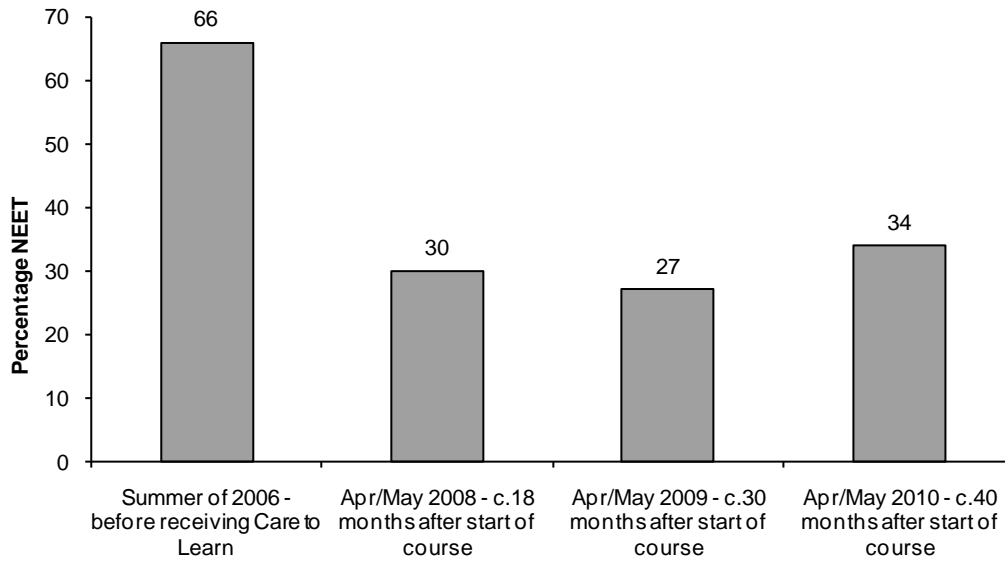
Source: *Inclusion 2009*
Unweighted base: 238

7.36 Overall, 44 per cent of young parents who received Care to Learn funding in 2006/07 were in education or training when interviewed in early 2010, including 20 per cent who were at university. A further 22 per cent were working and 20 per cent were at home looking after their child and not looking for work.

7.37 When the destinations of these young parents are compared with their destinations a year previously, the results are quite stable. The biggest difference is the eight percentage point drop in the proportion of young parents in learning (from 52 per cent in 2009 to 44 per cent in 2010). This might be expected as some of the courses that young parents were on in 2009 may have finished in the interim period. It does not appear that those young parents who have left learning since 2009 have largely moved to any single other destination. Rather, the minor increases in several other destinations suggest that they are spread across these: at home looking after child, about to start a course, working and looking for work.

7.38 Analysis of the incidence of young parents who received Care to Learn in 2006/07 who were NEET gives some further indications on movement between destinations over time. As figure 7-7 shows, the drop in the NEET rate seen after receipt of Care to Learn, compared to before receipt of Care to Learn, remains relatively stable. In summer 2006, before receiving Care to Learn, two thirds of the young parents surveyed were NEET. Since receiving Care to Learn, between one quarter and one third of young parents have been NEET.

Figure 7-7 Proportion of young parents in funded in 2006/07 that were NEET at different points in time



Source: *Inclusion*
Base: 238

8 YOUNG FATHERS

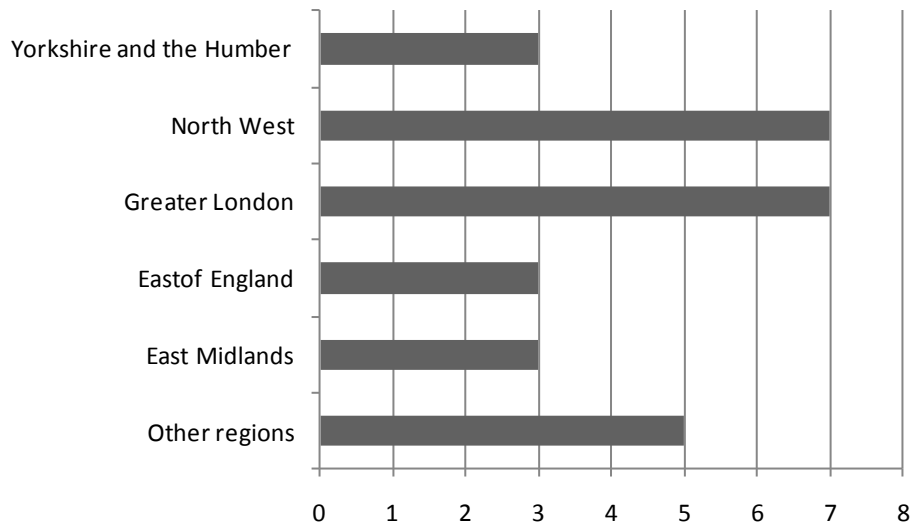
Chapter Summary

- Twenty-eight young fathers took up Care to Learn funding in 2008/09, and interviews were conducted with four of them. They were spread throughout England, with the greatest numbers in London and the North West.
- The young fathers generally found it easy to apply for Care to Learn funding.
- The young fathers interviewed thought take-up was low among other young fathers because of a lack of awareness about Care to Learn and also that service providers are often unaware whether their young male clients are fathers or not.
- Some young fathers encounter negative attitudes from service providers.
- Some of the young fathers had considered moving into work in order to provide for their children before deciding that continuing their education would help them to provide for their children more effectively in the long term.
- The young fathers were attending courses at a range of levels from school to Access to Higher Education.
- At the time of interview one young father was at university, one young father was attending college and working part-time, one was working part-time and planning to attend university the following year and one young father was looking after his child full-time.
- Some of the young fathers were with their child's mother at the time of application and had applied because their plans for education were more advanced than the young mother's. Other young fathers applied for Care to Learn because they had taken sole custody of their child, because the child's mother's life was chaotic.

8.1 In 2008/09, 8,000 young parents took up Care to Learn funding. Of these, 28 were young fathers. The young fathers were removed from the main quantitative survey sample and each were invited to take part in in-depth telephone interviews, of which four were completed.

8.2 As seen in Figure 8-1, the young fathers were spread throughout England with the greatest number in the North West and Greater London, each with seven.

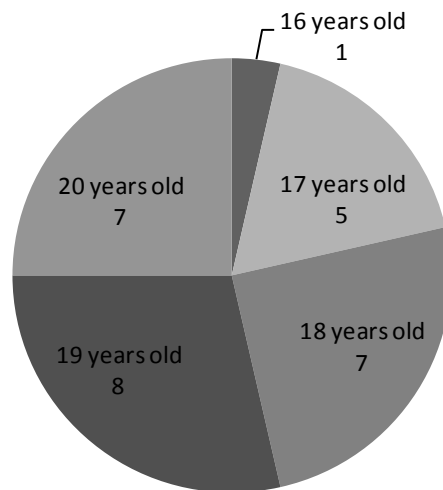
Figure 8-1 Number of young fathers by region



Source: YPLA

8.3 Figure 8-2 shows that the ages of the young fathers at 1 August 2008 ranged from 16 to 20, with the greatest number being 19, followed by 18 then 20.

Figure 8-2 Age of young fathers at 1 August 2008



Source: YPLA

8.4 Nineteen of the 28 young fathers were white British, six were black British and three were of mixed or other ethnicity.

8.5 The four young fathers interviewed all lived with their own parents at the time that they were using Care to Learn funding in 2008/09, and two of the young fathers were also

living with the mother of their child in their parents' home. In these cases, the young father's plans for continuing his education were more advanced than the mother's, and therefore he applied for Care to Learn rather than the child's mother. In the other two cases, the young mothers had chaotic lifestyles and the young fathers had taken sole custody of their children. At the time of interview in early 2010, however, none of the young fathers were in a relationship with their child's mother.

What young fathers say

- 8.6 The young fathers were asked about the application process and whether they received support in applying for Care to Learn. All of the young fathers said that the application process was generally easy and that they had had no problems. One young father received support from a Connexions adviser in completing his application. Another young father received assistance from his college. The other two young fathers completed the forms with no assistance or with support from their parents.
- 8.7 Three of the four young fathers used day nurseries and all were very happy with the care that their children received. For example, one young father said:

The nursery we picked was actually one of the best nurseries ... The way they do their system is very good for kids, and the atmosphere and everything was really solid for a child ... and so we really liked that nursery.

The fourth young father was using a childminder for his daughter.

- 8.8 Some of the young fathers considered that it was less likely that young fathers would receive Care to Learn than young mothers. One young father raised the problem of a lack of awareness about Care to Learn funding among young fathers: *"If you don't know what you're entitled to, you would never get it to go on"* He suggested that advisors, particularly at Jobcentre Plus, should advise young fathers of their entitlement. Linked to this, another young father suggested that advisors were often unaware whether young male clients were fathers. He said, *"how can you actually know? ... I don't know how the system works, but they can find out who the young fathers are They [should] have a system that will tell them that."*
- 8.9 In keeping with other studies of young fathers,¹²¹ some of the young fathers in this study reported the negative attitudes of staff as barriers to accessing services. One young father had problems with his college completing their section of his application form. He remembered *"I did have a little bit of a problem ... because they didn't really believe that my daughter was even going to nursery. So I had to try and convince them that she was in nursery."* He did so eventually, but it is possible that he faced scepticism because he was a young father rather than a young mother.

¹²¹ See for example: *Young Black Fathers and Maternity Services*, available at: <http://www.bristol.ac.uk/news/2006/11377555468.html>

- 8.10 Other studies have indicated that young fatherhood may disrupt education and career pathways,¹²² and that there was a dilemma as to whether learning or work was better for their child. One of the young fathers in this study considered leaving his education in order to work and provide for his son, but decided that continuing his education would enable him to provide for his son better in the long-term. He said, "*I just would settle for ... working normally and providing for him. But then if you look at things in the future, it'll be a case where your chances might go really slim*" He went on to say that continuing his education was "*a risk to take ... I can use this in the future ... and that would be strong for the fact that my son is growing up.*"
- 8.11 The young fathers had all studied full-time courses. One young father had used Care to Learn funding for several years, using it to help him finish school and then go on to college. Two young fathers had studied courses leading to university entrance and a third had studied towards a two year course in construction and the built environment.
- 8.12 At the time of interview, the two young fathers who had studied courses leading on to university had successfully completed the courses. One was at university, while the other was on a gap year, working and deciding where to study (that best combined his academic needs and parenting responsibilities). One young father was still at college and the fourth had dropped out of his course after the first year and was looking after his daughter full-time.
- 8.13 The young fathers had a variety of ambitions for the future. These ranged from working in graphics and animation to psychology to being a personal trainer to working in construction.

¹²² Sigle-Rushton, W. (2005). 'Young fatherhood and subsequent disadvantage in the United Kingdom'. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, vol 67, no 3, p748.

Case Study 1

David,¹²³ aged 18

David is from the East Midlands and his ambition is to be a personal trainer. He was 16 when his son was born and he used Care to Learn funding to complete his schooling and go on to college where he is currently studying exercise and fitness. He found out about Care to Learn on the internet while searching for cribs and pushchairs for his son. His parents helped him with his application and he didn't have any external support. David and his parents found the application process easy. He used the Care to Learn funding to pay for a nursery, which he was happy with and his son enjoyed. He lives with his parents and shares custody of his son and also has a part-time job. He and his girlfriend broke up when their son was less than one year old. Although they share custody of their son, David doesn't know what she is currently doing. He said that Care to Learn funding was "very helpful" and "made it a lot easier" for him to continue with this education. He wanted to stay in education "Because it would help him in the future and help me get a better job to support my child."

Case Study 2

Ashleigh, aged 19

Ashleigh is from the South West of England, although he is currently living in the North West where he is studying at university. He has a three year old daughter and used his Care to Learn funding to complete an Access to Social Sciences course. Ashleigh found out about Care to Learn from an adviser at his college whom he told about his situation as a lone parent. Without Care to Learn funding he would have been unable to study full-time, as he would have relied on his mother to care for his daughter while he was studying. He uses Care to Learn funding to pay for a childminder because at first he thought his daughter was too young for nursery and she is now settled with the childminder. Ashleigh enjoyed his course, especially mixing with fellow students who were more mature than those at school. He became a lone parent because he had taken sole custody of his daughter. Now that he is away at university they share custody. Ashleigh is studying for a psychology degree and wants to be a psychologist although since he has started he is now looking into other options as well because he is enjoying his sociology units and "there's a lot more than just psychology."

¹²³ Names in case studies have been changed.

9 RECOMMENDATIONS

Policy recommendations

1. Continue Care to Learn funding

- 9.1 Care to Learn continued to provide important financial support to the young parents who received it in 2008/09. In fact the majority of those who received it reported that they could not have gone on the course without the help from Care to Learn in paying for their childcare (77 per cent of all young parents). Furthermore, only two per cent of young parents reported the help with paying for childcare made no difference and they would have done a course anyway.
- 9.2 All stakeholders interviewed also agreed that Care to Learn was critical in allowing young parents to continue their education, and that without it a large majority would have to stop learning.

2. Maintain and monitor the amount of funding

- 9.3 The amount of funding provided in 2008/09 appears to be at the right level for that year as almost all young parents (96 per cent) reported that the funding covered the entire period they were on the course. Furthermore, Care to Learn covered childcare costs for the time young parents travelled between childcare providers and learning for most young parents (79 per cent) and private study time for 71 per cent of young parents. While these proportions remain high, the proportion for which Care to Learn funded their private study time has been decreasing since the 2006/07 cohort. This is likely to be a result of rising childcare costs¹²⁴ and the fact that the level of Care to Learn funding has stayed the same since 2007/08.
- 9.4 As time goes on and the level of Care to Learn funding remains at the 2007/08 levels, it is feasible that the proportion of young parents reaching the maximum amount of funding will increase. Consequently the proportion of young parents not being able to cover all of the childcare time needed is likely to increase. Therefore, we recommend continuing to monitor these levels going forward.

3. Maintain the current (2008/09) eligibility criteria

- 9.5 In 2006/07 the age eligibility for Care to Learn was adjusted to include 19 year old young parents starting a new course. These new eligible 19 year olds (referred to as 'new 19 year olds') could continue receiving support past their 20th birthday until they have completed their course. Care to Learn funding is highly valued by these young parents with almost four in five of them agreeing that they could not have done the

¹²⁴ The Daycare Trust's 'Childcare costs survey 2009' reports that the cost of childcare continues to rise above the rate of inflation (see http://www.daycaretrust.org.uk/data/files/Policy/costs_survey_2009.pdf). It is therefore reasonable to assume that the weekly rates of Care to Learn in 2007/08 are not going to cover all childcare costs in the future.

course without funding from Care to Learn. These new 19 year olds also achieved similar positive learning outcomes to other young parents funded by Care to Learn. In particular the majority (83 per cent) either completed their course in 2008/09 or were still on it when interviewed. Seventy-eight per cent of new 19 year olds gained a full or partial qualification. Similarly, the high levels of course completion and qualifications gained were fairly consistent across the different learning providers attended by all young parents. This suggests that there is no reason to restrict the variety of courses being funded compared with those funded in 2008/09.

4. Increase awareness and marketing for some groups of young parents

- 9.6 Findings from interviews with key stakeholders suggest that there may be more work to be done around increasing awareness and marketing for some groups of young parents who are not otherwise in touch with support workers. For example, young parents not in touch with specific teenage parent midwives, or health visitors. Similarly, there may be more young fathers who would benefit from Care to Learn who are not finding out about it at present.

5. Continue to promote good practice among support workers and stakeholders

- 9.7 Examples of good practice emerging from the qualitative interviews with key stakeholders included effective operational networks and co-location of key workers. For example, in the case study area with high take-up rates of Care to Learn a specially designated teenage parent Connexions adviser, teenage parent midwife and teenage parent health visitor were based in the same building, and could easily share knowledge. Consequently all young parents would be seen by this designated midwife and health visitor who would refer them to the Connexions adviser who would in turn make them aware of Care to Learn. Having designated people working with this vulnerable group, and having them co-located, was seen as a great success, and the key reason for the high take-up in the area.
- 9.8 In the three case study areas for the qualitative stakeholder work, childcare providers seemed to be less integrated into the Care to Learn network, and more work could be done at a local level to increase childcare provider involvement with the programme. That is not to say, however, that there were not examples of good practice which can be built upon, including Connexions advisers who proactively encouraged young parents to visit local childcare providers to overcome concerns they may have about using formal childcare.

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