



180Degrees
CONSULTING

FINAL REPORT

Produced for: New Zealand Foundation for Conductive Education

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report was prepared for the New Zealand Foundation of Conductive Education by 180 Degrees Consulting Canterbury. The purpose of this report was to investigate the experiences and perspectives of key stakeholders of Conductive Education, parents with children who have motor disorders, in order for NZFCE to develop a marketing plan to increase enrolments

We deemed it important to understand the experiences and perspectives of beneficiaries of Conductive Education, so that any recommendations could be made in context. To do this we initially researched the organisation holistically and visited centers based in Christchurch. A resulting survey was produced and shared amongst families associated with Conductive Education centres throughout New Zealand.

Survey participants were overwhelmingly positive, with many anecdotes to develop an effective marketing image around.

Summarily we could see a number of issues facing Conductive Education, the main issue being the lack of public and governmental understanding of the Conductive Education process.

From our perspective it seems that Conductive Education should focus on its 'branding' as an effective means of treatment.

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Charity Background

Conductive Education was created in Hungary around 1940 by Dr. Andras Peto (1893-1967) who believed that children affected by motor disorders could learn movement and coordination and complete basic problem solving. This belief drove him to set up a foundation for helping children achieve these goals. The foundation grew in popularity and now runs through the Peto Institute in Budapest (András Pető College, 2008). This institute provides children complete a summer program, which is an intensive four week program of training. During the 1980's Conductive Education was brought in to the public interest of Western Europeans through television shows about the charity such as 'Standing Up for Joe'.

Conductive Education gained international recognition and began to grow in popularity in many countries including New Zealand. In 1993 the New Zealand Foundation for Conductive Education (NZFCE) was established with the aims of promoting and advocating Conductive Education (New Zealand Foundation for Conductive Education, n.d.). There are currently 11 centres in Christchurch, Auckland, Wellington, Invercargill and Hamilton that provide specialist services to teach children the necessary skills required to live a more independent life. The NZFCE website outlines the following purposes for the foundation:

- Promotion and raising the profile of Conductive Education
- Promoting cooperation between the groups providing Conductive Education
- Advocating for those involved with Conductive Education
- Networking with the disability community
- Facilitating research into Conductive Education
- Promoting standards for Conductive Education in New Zealand

1.2 Problem Definition

A significant issue facing Conductive Education for children in New Zealand is the lack of public understanding of Conductive Education and the lack of awareness of Conductive Education as an option for children with motor disorders. Additional issues include parents not being aware that children are most responsive to treatment when in the early stages of development and a lack of recognition of Conductive Education by ACC and other governmental organisations.

Our research aims to produce a survey that will obtain specific quantitative and qualitative data which will provide evidence for the effectiveness of Conductive Education for children, based on the experiences of their parents. This can be used by NZFCE to raise awareness in New Zealand with both parents and governmental organisations, with the intention to increase the roll numbers of facilities providing the service.

1.3 Initial Research

A critical theme found in the academic research on charity is the need to understand their key stakeholders, i.e. families who benefit from Conductive Education programs. This understanding does not only enable charities to provide the best possible service, but also enables them to raise awareness for their cause. Global leading non-for-profit organisations use in-depth information about their stakeholders as a key instrument for attracting funding and to justify their existence. It is especially important for stakeholders to understand the purpose of the charity. As Mother Teresa aptly said “Love is not patronizing and charity isn't about pity, it is about love.” People need to feel connected to the organisation's purpose, which is facilitated through natural interest and effective appeal.

Initial academic research provided guidance and informed the structure of this research. It was clear that any recommendation would require an investigation into understanding the key stakeholders. New Zealand Foundation of Conductive Education has solicited 180 Degrees Consulting Canterbury to provide evidence and recommendations with the purpose of increasing awareness around Conductive Education for children amongst the relevant stakeholders. In the next section, we will outline in detail the research methodology through which we achieved this.

METHODOLOGY

Our initial approach to the task at hand was to gain a better understanding of what Conductive Education was all about. To do this, we read relevant literature and visited some of the centres based in Christchurch so we could understand how the centres operated.

For us to better grasp the issues potentially facing Conductive Education around public awareness we conducted an online survey through Qualtrics. This survey was sent out to the various centres around the country. The survey was developed through discussions with Dave Ching, our contact at Conductive Education and coordinator at NZFCE, and from our experiences and interactions with children and staff at the centres we visited. The questions contained in the survey can be found in Appendix A.

This research required approval from the University of Canterbury Ethics Committee to ensure that participants were not exposed to undue harm and protect privacy of participants. This however did limit the time that the survey was open. Despite this, we are positive that that we have received an adequate level of response.

As the research group did not have access to the email addresses of parents or Facebook pages, the survey link was sent to coordinators at each Conductive Education centre around the country with an explanation of the project and a copy of the survey questions. The individual centres were responsible for sending the link on to parents via their own email databases and posting the link to their relevant Facebook pages. This email to Conductive Education centres was then followed up by phone call to ensure that the email had been received and that each centre understood what the project was aiming to achieve.

The survey was opened Tuesday 15th of September and was closed on Friday 25th September. The multi-choice questions were analysed on the Qualtrics survey website and with Microsoft Excel, while open-ended questions required a more detailed approach. The researchers discussed the answers to each survey question until a number of themes emerged. The answers were then summarised under each of these themes and quotes that exemplified the overall responses were used as evidence to support the discussion.

Summary of method:

1. Research Conductive Education
2. Visit Centres to interact with the staff and children
3. Develop and implement a survey
4. Analyse and qualify the results
5. Prepare the report on our findings

LIMITATIONS

Before results are discussed and recommendations are proposed, it is important to recognise the limitations of this study. A major limitation to the project was the amount of time that was available to members of the consulting team. The short length of the project and the limited hours available each week to put towards the research meant that our findings have been limited to what was reasonable with the given time.

The survey was limited by the amount of time available for respondents to complete the survey as well as the validity of the responses that were received. The validity of the sample indicates whether an accurate conclusion can be drawn from the data gathered to the extent that it represents the population being measured and that it measures the issue of importance (NBRI, 2015). For the statistics to be valid the questions must be relevant, all biases must be removed or minimized and no selective process should have been taken. 83 responses were received; however we were unable to obtain the number of parents that were offered the chance to participate and thus a non-response rate, as the individual centres were responsible for forwarding the survey link on to parents. It has been assumed that all participants did in fact fit the criteria of the survey, despite the link being posted to Facebook pages that many people would have had access to. However 100% of respondents answered yes to Question 1: "Do you currently or have you previously had a child in Conductive Education", supporting this assumption. To ensure relevance of the survey questions, they were carefully formulated with assistance from Conductive Education contacts in Christchurch before the final questions were put forward for ethics approval.

It is important to consider when reading the results that respondents were parents who have chosen Conductive Education for their child over other methods and are therefore more likely to view it in a positive light. This report does not dismiss any other methods for dealing with motor disorders; rather it reinforces the evidence for Conductive Education as an effective method for enabling children to reach their full potential. Due to the large number of responses from around the country, it can be assumed the data provides a robust insight into the effectiveness of Conductive Education from the parent's perspective.

FINDINGS

4.1 Quantitative Results

The nine closed ended questions asked in the survey were analysed quantitatively using Excel. A number of graphs have been included to outline the results. The first questions gained some descriptive information about the participants to gain context for their responses.

Although contact was made with all five centres, the majority of responses (38%) were from Christchurch parents (see figure 1). This is possibly due to the visits made to the centres in Christchurch meaning the staff were more aware of the survey and therefore promoted it more heavily.

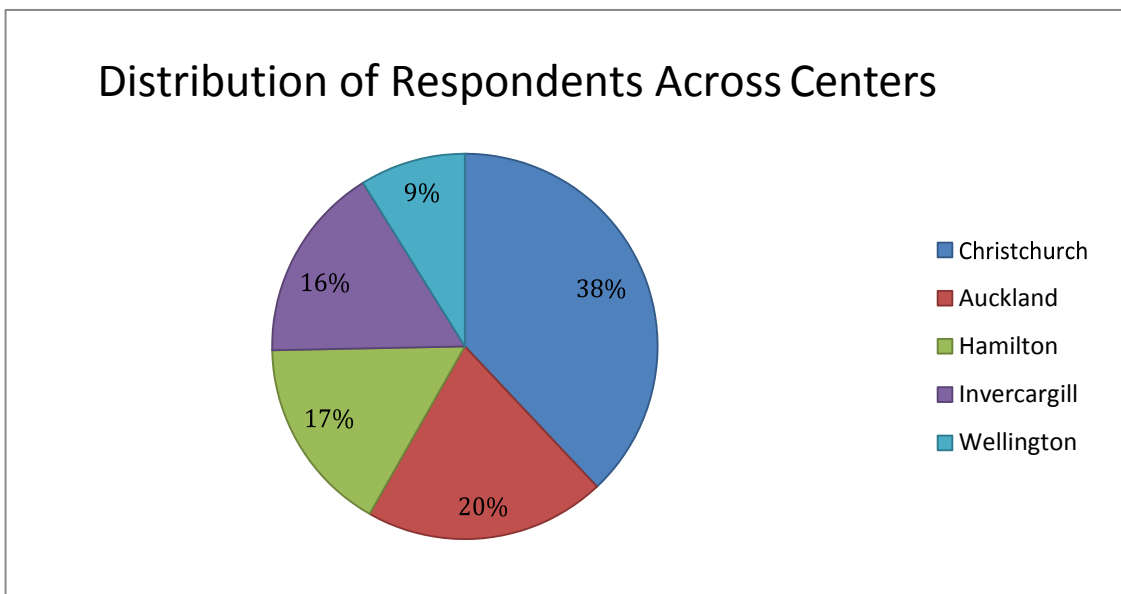


Figure 1. Graph of Respondent Location Distribution

Age Child Started Conductive Education

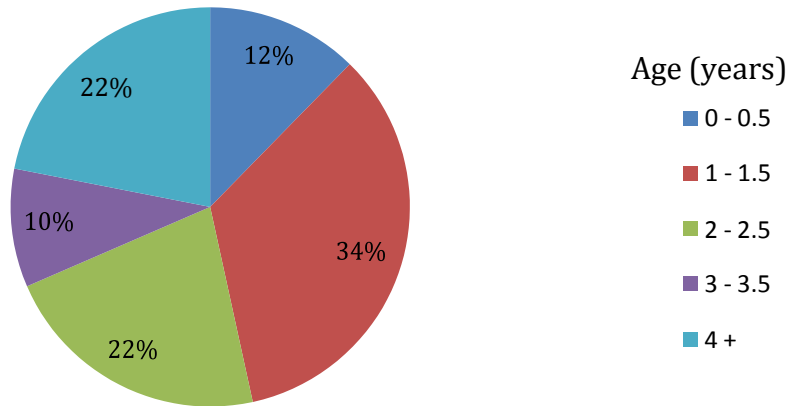


Figure 2. Graph of Child Age

For how many years has your child received

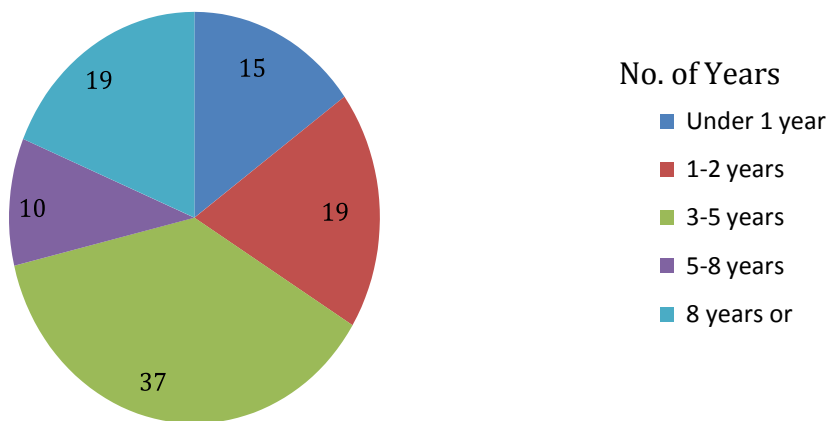


Figure 3. Graph of Years of Attendance

Would you recommend Conductive Education to other parents?

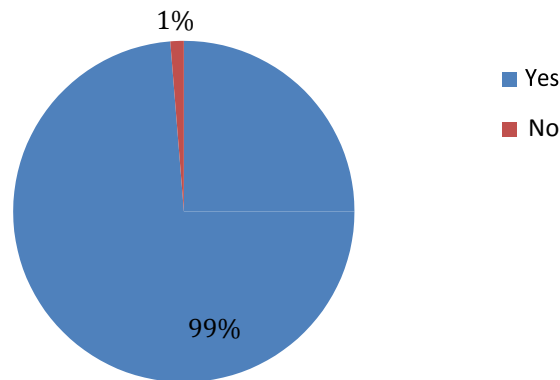


Figure 4. Graph of Recommendation

Overwhelmingly, as shown in Figure 4, parents would recommend Conductive Education to other parents whose children could benefit from it. The respondent who would not recommend it, said that the transition from pre-school to primary school was difficult and the primary school practice was not as beneficial for their child.

How did you become aware of Conductive Education?

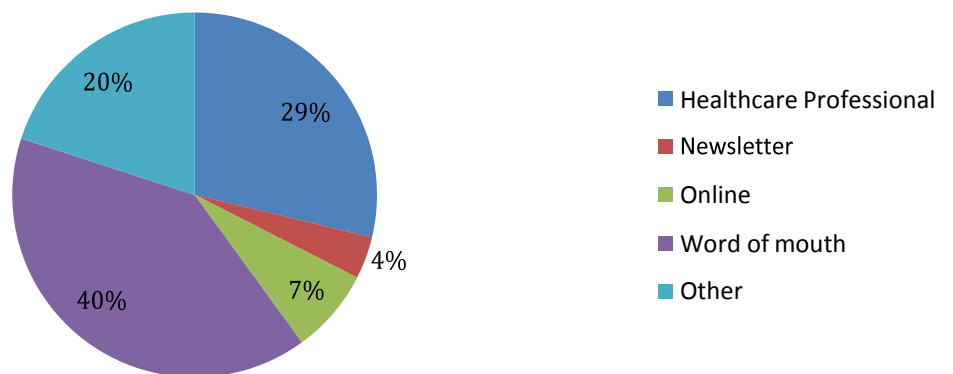


Figure 5. Graph of Awareness

The most common way of parents learning about Conductive Education is word of mouth (see Figure 5). We believe that these results indicate that there is scope for NZFCE to focus on referrals from medical professionals and through readily available information that parents can discover online. Our recommendations for this will be outlined below.

How satisfied are you with the effectiveness of Conductive Education?

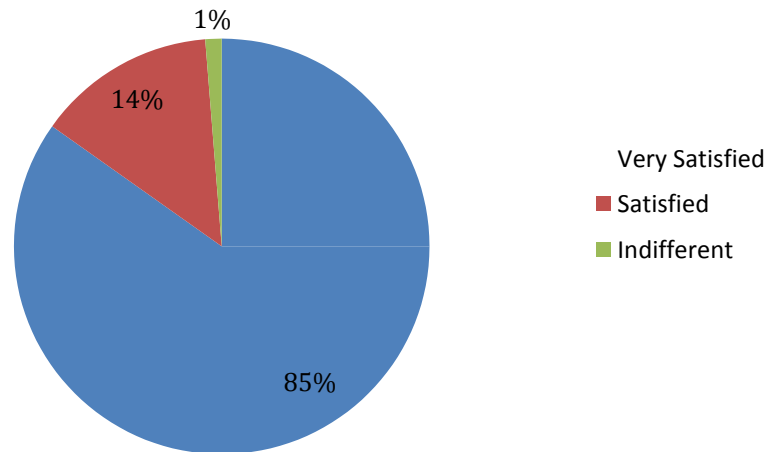


Figure 6. Graph of Satisfaction Levels

Out of all 83 respondents none answered that they were dissatisfied by the effectiveness of Conductive Education (see figure 6). This statistic reflects the excellent work Conductive Education does and how in the eyes of parents, it is widely believed to be one of the best things that has ever happened to their child.

4.2 Reason for Choosing Conductive Education

Based on survey results, 78 parents responded and gave reasons for choosing Conductive Education for their child.

Table 1 Reason for selecting Conductive Education

Category of Reasons	Count	Percentage
Last option but best one	8	10%
Child relation with Conductor	1	1%
Method of therapy	57	73%
Only early intervention provider	1	1%
Positive environment	4	5%
Was recommended	7	9%
Total	78	100%

As illustrated in the Table 1, 57 out of 78 parents (73%) chose Conductive Education due to its method of therapy. The term “method of therapy” includes ideas such as an intensive process and activities, more frequent visits than offered by other therapies, experienced conductors, and customised therapy for each child’s circumstances.

The next notable grouping said they chose Conductive Education either because it was recommended to them or it was their last option after trying other therapies. Many said they were lucky to find Conductive Education and believe it's the best option. A variety of reasons were stated for the 'last option' response, some of those being disappointment with what was available, along with the apparent ineffectiveness the other therapies.

It is also noteworthy to cite that among reasons given by the parents, a key point was the positive relationship of the child with their conductor and how the environment of the centres are bright, cheerful, and alive.

"As soon as I walked in I felt a normal bustling school environment with lots of cheerful bright colours to greet you..... The staff made me feel at ease, they are experienced, knowledgeable, and answered any questions I had and explained to me what they offered. I left with a feeling that this was the right place for my daughter and she would thrive there."

"Sure, she cried to start with. A lot. But the relationship she has with her conductor now is so special. Best decision I ever made! Her conductor amazes me daily with her creativity, patience and genuine love."

4.3 Benefit to child, parent, and immediate family.

Conductive Education benefited children in a number of ways. The range of benefits does vary depending on the severity of the child's disabilities, but at all levels positive effects are seen. Summarily they are as follows:

- Decreased frustration
- Social skills and the development of interpersonal relationships
- Ability to eat and toilet independently
- More confidence in themselves and their surroundings
- Defying expectations and reaching new heights

The benefit of Conductive Education extends to parents who commented on the following:

- Ability to relax due to reduced workload and knowledge that their children are in capable hands.
- Being provided with open and honest information.
- The ability to see their child's progress, and to be actively involved.
- Emotional support and empowerment.
- Support from staff.
- Networking with other parents.
- New found motivation.

- Access to equipment.
- Extra medical support.
- Huge physical improvements around their mobility, gross and fine motor skills, strength and balance
- Emotional control

4.4 How would you describe Conductive Education?

Conductive Education was described as a holistic, hands-on, intensive therapy that is driven by building relationships with the children rather than ticking boxes. The programme was stated to be tailored to each individual child and consequently able to bring out the best in them.

Many parents said Conductive Education provided physical and emotional skills that allowed their child to participate fully in life. Ultimately many parents described Conductive Education as the best thing that parents can do for their child. The respondent's answers can be summed up by the following extract:

"I would say it is an intensive program that has a holistic approach. It is very family orientated, supportive and encouraging environment. Conductive has a "Can Do" approach. They are always encouraging the kids to give it a go. In our time at Conductive our children went skiing, swimming, and ice skating, along with the supermarkets, libraries and Willowbank trips. They are teaching the children how to live with their challenges and to never give up. They always involved us as a family (parents and siblings). They were always seeking options for us. We had access to the Conductor, a speech language therapist and Occupational therapist and a physio who came to the centre. No stone was unturned for the benefit for our child. They always made us feel important and always made us feel they were continuing to find options for us."

4.5 Anecdotal Experiences

Question 15 asked the respondents if there was any particularly memorable experience they would like to share. These powerful stories can be read in Table 2 below. Please note that names have been changed to protect privacy.

Table 2: Text Responses

Bursting with pride (and tears) as my daughter walked onto stage in her walking frame for the first time to receive her achievement award!! :DD

The unbelieving love and care to do the right thing for my son. The day they said 'yes we can help' was bittersweet I wanted them to say 'he is not severe enough' on the one hand and then the other I wanted to know there was an option to help him. I owe the Conductor's and what is now Glow Kids the world for what they have enabled for Jack he is now a mainstreamed 8 year old in Year 3 at school with 760 kids where he went in only just able to take a few steps without falling, determined not to need a walker. Now he can walk with his own school bag on to class independently and embraces everything that life has to offer. We have a kid that is differently abled who has some challenges and always will but he is not what we label a disabled kid and that is the mindset that Conductive creates.

Every time we went to a programme it was a great experience. I always came away feeling things weren't as bad as they were when I left home that morning. When Sophie rolled over for the first time the cheers and tears from me, the staff and the other family members attending on that day will never leave me.

Seeing my daughter walk along the bars unassisted for the first time.

I believe what stands out for me are the conductors. The care and dedication they put into our children is priceless. They are constantly working to bring out the best in each child. My child's milestones especially when we did not need the walker or when she started crawling. Or just learning to hold a spoon and feed herself. Seeing pull herself to sitting or standing on her own. Will always remind me of daily activity. "Jack in the box." It was all worth it.

My daughter picks up on the way her conductor phrases things. It's very cute. As we pull up to ce she often says "how are we going to do this" as her conductor says often lol. Singing in Hungarian is very cute too.

There are so many memories that we had the privilege of sharing at Conductive Ed. But one of the most significant and memorable for us was when Oliver began to walk. He had always lay on his side and because of his condition we were told it was quite traumatic for him to stand upright on his own. It wasn't long before Oliver was walking up the path with his little walker all by himself. I can still remember the smile on his face as if it were yesterday. To see him feel that sense of pride in himself was something I, as his father, will never forget!

Our whole 5 years there has been memorable. It has been a huge commitment from us but we wouldn't have it any other way. There is no experience that can compare to this in New Zealand. It has made a great start for our son attending from a young age.

I had a little girl who was terrified of her own body and crippling anxiety. Probably the most memorial moment was seeing my girl walk unassisted for the first time in her life. There were lots of steps here and there...and only at GlowKids... but that day that she walked off...for 5 minutes I must add...on her own in and out of rooms was incredible and I recorded every step. Reka the Conductor slowly built up Ruby's confidence by pushing her boundaries slowly

and then off she went and she has never looked back.

I mentioned to my little girls workers that she seemed to favour one hand over another and was given some methods of play to encourage use of both hands, within a few days my little girl was more confident using her other hand

The day William took his first step after being told by health professionals it was very unlikely he would walk.

Our child was 7 months old when we started and in the first week she held a spoon and put it to her mouth, we didn't think she could do it as she couldn't suck her thumb, so we had never tried, Conductive see her potential and remind us all the time she can achieve more than we had ever dreamed of, we are very grateful everyday

For our daughter she has a form of Cerebral Palsy called Hemiplegia. Her left side does not work well. I remember coming to Conductive one day to collect Olivia and everybody was waiting for me. The teachers and Conductor and Management all came into the class room and said "we have something to show you mummy!" And Olivia was grinning like a Cheshire Cat. She left the room with her Conductor and when she came back she was (very slowly) riding a trike. It was a magical moment. She was 4 and this movement was impossible for her to do. It was so lovely how they made such a celebration about it. We even had cupcakes to celebrate. They also did this when she managed to put her socks on by herself and her shirt. They celebrated the positives all the time. I also loved how Olivia's twin brother was able to attend the preschool with her. They did not like being separated and she relied on him and he hated being without her. It was so lovely to not have to separate them before they were ready.

When the children are doing their individual programmes, always stand clear of the child with spastic cerebral palsy when they are doing water activities because you will end up wearing and they will think it is hilarious.

In Wellington they also run an afterschool and holiday programme (and have some volunteers who have cerebral palsy). It was very beneficial for me to also meet other older children and see how they get around and interact with others. Talking to their parents was hugely beneficial as it helped me to understand what the future may be like for my son and helped allay some fears when I see how happy the older children seem.

My both girls have learnt to walk and keep up with normal kids of their age. The learning environment made colourful, attractive and provided an excitement for kids to take interest. The best part is that they have made and created such an environment to be welcoming for children and parents to learn and live with disabilities.

We were not allowed to have funding for both the hospital physiotherapist and Conductive Education. Conductive Education came at a cost which was something we could cope with but I feel for other families who don't have a choice - We attended in Auckland from 2008 to around 2012. As parents we wanted to have choice and to pull together different therapies as we saw fit. However, the Conductors could be purists. ConEd uses leather boots and one Conductor balked when they found out we were also using orthotics as well. On the other hand, the Orthotic Center would only give us funding for Conductive Boots or Orthotics - not both.

My daughter started conductive and had a massive interest in dinosaurs and was telling all the other children all about dinosaurs then the next term the topic was about dinosaurs and they all learnt about them and all the activity do we're about dinosaurs ie dinosaur stomping it was

really great how they made the effort in listening to the children and finding out what they like and want to learn about

Our daughter has hemiplegia that means she has paralysis down one side of her body, head to toe. The CD staff had her dancing and singing in productions. She did practical living tasks, helping with cooking cleaning as well as reading and maths etc. It is a joy to see her videos caring for others and supporting other children willingly and in an accepting inclusive loving way.

The therapist at our base hospital said that we should put my son in an assistive device where he is strap to an equipment standing with a small play table in front of him. (I believe they call this equipment "the monkey". At this stage, my son was not yet crawling. When I told my conductor this, she did not agree. She told me, my son must go through the stage of crawling as this is essential for him to learn about his environment, sensory perception and where he is in space. She then said that " I promise you, he will crawl, but you must not rush him to standing and walking as he is not ready. So I continued with my son's conductive program to help him with crawling and lo and behold , he did crawl! I am proud to say that he is now walking!

There are a number of experiences. We use to sing a children's song where in the chorus we would encourage our girl to look up and reach, for a hanging puppet. Lying on her tummy our girl found it very difficult to lift her head. But I remember one day after 6 weeks of therapy she lifted her head to look at this puppet. This told me she was learning, she was aware, she was in her little limp body. We use to sing a bicycle song where our girl would lie on her back and i would help her feet and move her legs back and forward like she was riding a bicycle. For weeks and weeks, I would move her legs and not feel her taking control at all, I couldn't feel her try to move. The conductor one day asked me to not to lift her foot but put my hand near her leg so she could feel it and know that you were there. She asked her to lift it and started singing the song. My child knew the song and movement that she was meant to be doing, she lifted her foot and put it in my hand. After a year of therapy our child was able to sit with no additional support. Her first steps were about 3years of age, using a ladder frame to lean on and push. Her graduation at 5 years she was able to stand and step without assistance.

Watching her use the toilet. The compassion she has for the other children around her -the interaction she has with the teachers and Liam. Watching how happy she is to be at school. Watching her enjoy all the activities available to her. Art, music, dance etc. Her first time riding a horse, which she absolutely loves

The opening of the new centre at Addington and then the playground opening which I helped fundraise towards, Wayne Smith came along and it was a great opening afternoon with other parents and their families and friends who attended. And obviously my son learning to walk independently!

That moment when my son took his first shaky but unaided steps. Clear as a bell to this day. I believe he still would have walked anyway but they were able to speed up the process immensely. The Christmas parties and family days are pretty cool too.

The personal enjoyment of seeing the look on my sons face when taking his first steps with a walking trolley then this transitioning to being able to walk hand in hand. Something when he was younger I never thought would happen.

I loved it when Mason used a switch toy and hit the switch with purpose a few times in a row- it was very cool to see and realise he was really taking everything in and he was also very

he was doing something himself - big smile

He lost conductive education programme when he left school and didn't have the exercise he needed for 6 years. This was since there was no such programme for students (adult) after school. Due to this factor he regressed very much. Conductive education was restarted as many parents felt it was needed, by forming a trust (charity organisation) to provide conductive therapy. But his regression cannot be corrected. (In other words damage done because of no conductive therapy cannot be corrected) His toes have inverted and the bones of the toes are deformed, although we have special boots made for him to correct this, he cannot wear them now as there are wounds appearing.

I remember the first day taking my child to visit Conductive Education preschool. I had had a sad experience the previous week with another, speech language therapist, as a first time parent I excitedly expressed my disabled child was signalling to me the colours blue and red in books. I received a comment from her "well your child would be doing great if they could do that" with a look of disbelief on her face. My heart was totally hurt. Arriving at CEC preschool the conductor put up four pots of paint red, blue, yellow, green. My child who physically could not do much knocked down the red when asked and then knocked down the blue when asked. I felt we had found the right place and belonged.

My child walking for the first time on his own.

Samuel first experience at Riding for the Disabled was amazing. He loved sitting up on this massive stallion, and you could suddenly see that the movement of the horse was truly similar to walking. He still loves horses. The two other activities he loved most were the obstacle courses and weekly swimming which he went with his dad. That set up a routine for life as 8 years later he still goes to weekly swimming with his dad.

My most memorable experience was when I first took my daughter into be assessed there was a little boy of about 2 or 3 years old who could not sit unassisted and was drally from the mouth. I had not been around disability much prior to that and I assumed that he would lead a pretty limited life. I got to know him better over time as he was in my daughter's therapy group. I realise what a cool personality lay behind the disability and the Conductor could see that and the potential in every child. When my daughter left the programme that little boy was walking! I would never have imagined that was possible but the Conductors did. Whilst my daughter disability was not so severe in each IP meeting the Conductor constantly surprised me at how ambitious their goals for my daughter were. Sometimes I thought these goals were unrealistic but the Conductors patiently worked with the child in an unpressured way and achieved great results

Our Daughter was 1 of the 1st group of kids to access the preschool, primary school, high school units here in Christchurch. I as a parent, am extremely proud to be on the committee of the Adult Conductive Education Trust and we have been able to provide 3 years of programme sessions to our young people since they have left school. Just to see the joy on the participants faces makes the hard work seem worthwhile.

The importance of crawling is well known. I was unsure my son would be able to but the staff gave it their all. I remember the conductor wearing knee pads for weeks of sessions as she crawled around the floor encouraging my son to copy. After a month they were crawling around together. They never gave up!

Too many to be honest

There have been many amazing moments over the years of achievements my son has made but him walking to me unaided on mothers day was extremely special. Another special moment was my son being the handsome prince in sleeping beauty the Christmas play when he was 4yrs old.

The most memorable was when my daughter was assessed by one of the Senior Conductor and I remembered my husband and I were in tears. She gave us hope and ensured us that my daughter has the potential to improve her physical movement. I was hoping to enrol her the next day !!!! But of course there are paper works and other arrangement that they have to work on before my daughter can be enrolled - I understood that. Within 6 months of enrolment, my child met her milestone and we set the 2nd milestone, again she met that. I was very touched on how supportive they were. Every time my child met her milestone - we felt like going for a party. Thank you so much Conductive Education.

1) Lucas loves to dress up and I have great memories of some of the plays we were invited to watch, when he was at preschool. 2) At Addington School, the children from the Unit were include in the Woodend Camp. it wasn't easy to make provisions for our kids, but there was never a thought that it was too hard and they should left out. We have great pictures of Lucas taking part in activities with the other school kids, such as the climbing wall, go-karts and wobbly bridge. Lucas still bumps into 'normal' kids at the mall who were at Addington when he was in the Unit there. 3) At high school, in his last years, Lucas worked with a teacher aide to learn bussing skills to his work experience site. It seemed like an impossible task due to Lucas's hearing difficulties and slow processing skills, and we expected to have to use taxis or take him to activities by car once he was out in the world. However, we persevered, with the help of CCS workers, and he became able to catch the bus from home into work on Fridays and from his day centre on Mondays and Wednesdays. He even learnt to catch one bus into the bus exchange and catch another home, when his day centre was changed. However, the biggest achievement came a couple of weeks ago when he caught the bus from home into the Palms and then changed bus stops to catch the Orbiter to Northlands mall - the second part of the trip totally unpractised! We were very impressed! In Chch bus routes and bus stops are constantly changing and this is hard our kids.

My daughter started at CE when she was 8 months old. She was not rolling, crawling, sitting and she hated being on her tummy. We worked really hard with the Conductors for 6 months on getting her to be comfortable on her tummy, in the hands and knees position and to sit without being supported. I had built up a good relationship with the Conductor and one afternoon at home she crawled all by herself for about 2 metres. This was an enormous moment! The first thing I did was call the Conductor and tell her the news! That is one of the many milestones that my daughter has now reached and the first big one that I truly believe would not have happened that early if it had not been for the services and programme provided at Conductive Education.

I really enjoy the singing and choice of toys/activities that the conductor uses during a session. She makes the whole experience enjoyable.

The first time I saw my daughter walk with help, & we had only been attending Cond Ed for about 6 weeks, ever won Lotto well I can tell you that day we had exceeded that & have achieved 100% more than we ever thought possible.

Just watching him make fantastic progress on a weekly basis.

My son has achieved all that he can do through the teaching of CE. We started at the age of 11

months old and we are still attending at the age of 21 yrs. He is still developing and making progress -that is why we are still attending. i.e one particular movement of his leg that has been practiced for years, was achieved by my son last year independently- this has a flow on effect to help with his walking in his frame and movement. Their support and knowledge they have of my son is huge and I feel he has developed many life skills to carry him through to his next phase in life -after school.

A fond memory I have is when my son was at the pre-school and was just learning to walk with quad sticks, Anna-Maria looked up and saw him walking towards her using them and said that he was going to make her cry. To me that just demonstrated that it was more than a job to her and that she genuinely cared for the children.

Our son loves our teacher Judit who has a wonderful way with young children. She has brought out characteristics in him that we thought we'd never see.

I remember getting so excited when my child started clapping hands - huge milestone!

The Graduation Ceremony when our child left Conduction Education is something to be remembered. A very emotional occasion.

When my child was nine months old he had not yet been diagnosed, and it was a Conductor who first agreed with me that something was not quite right. At 12 months he was seen by a paediatrician who did not think there was anything wrong. The DHB Physio was concerned however. These Conductors are experienced at working with children with Cerebral Palsy and they are a great option for the regular intervention and therapy that is required with cerebral palsy. To get a Physio to see our child weekly would be prohibitively expensive - this is an affordable way to ensure children are getting regular therapy whilst still being monitored by the DHB Physios.

There are too many to bring one directly to the front but the pure pleasure as a parent seeing the children achieve something that they had never done before always brought tears to my eyes. Many times we would have an entire class of parents and conductors in tears as a child rolled for the first time, stood or took a step when it all seemed impossible. I do actually remember the first day that Noah learned to sit cross legged without support around him. He was four years old, he had been attending conductive ed for 3 and a half years and we actually never thought he ever would. Until 2 years ago he still sat like this but due to major hip surgery we have lost the ability again and he won't ever regain this.

I still think it's interesting that we chose Conductive Ed and when we left we went full mainstream. From something so specifically for a child with a disability to "the big wide scary world!" That just goes to show how empowering they were for us as a whanau. I loved how they supported us culturally; the conductors learnt some Maori and became familiar with our traditions. The admin there at the time were sooo amazing as well. They recognised my grief but didn't pander to it, Sally Thomas was a huge support for me there because she knew exactly what I was going through.

4.5 Contact Details

In response to Question 17, a number of parents provided their contact details so that their experiences could be collected and shared on an online format such as the NZFCE website, Facebook and YouTube. These have been passed on to the National Coordinator for NZFCE.

DISCUSSION

The effectiveness of Conductive Education for children can best be assessed by looking at the personal experiences of parents whose children participated in a conductive education program.

Results of the survey showed that most parents saw significant physical improvement of their children's condition. In many cases children whose limitations were thought as impossible to overcome achieved significant improvements. For example one response to the survey was: "I was told my child would never crawl, sit by themselves. My child now does all these things and more" or "She is doing stuff that the doctors said she wouldn't." or "Had we continued with the state system and assistance my son would now be in a wheelchair, parents learn about the abilities of their child rather than about their disabilities " Especially for parents who were desperate with the conventional approach Conductive Education has proven to be an alternative which changed the lives of their whole family.

Next to physical improvement most parents' responses indicated that their children became much more independent. The responses of the parents show that this is not only the result of physical improvement but also of increased self-esteem. A good quote from the survey is: "I hands down can tell you without conductive education our boy would not be near as independent as he is within the first few weeks we saw more progress than ever before" Responses also show that the Conductive Education program provides parents with a can-do attitude, which is hugely beneficial to the progress of their children.

In addition to this parents often mentioned that Conductive Education improved their children's cognitive abilities "Mentally - my son developed his own personality and confidence thanks to the skills he learnt at CE " This cognitive improvement is often accommodated making of friends and an increase in awareness of other.

Overall Conductive Education provides an individual approach, which should be an alternative option available to all parents. It is especially important for families who are not happy with the treatment they have received so far to have an alternative. This is the only way to prevent individual children from falling through the system.

RECOMMENDATIONS

From the survey we conducted we looked at the position of Conductive Education holistically and in response we put forward the following recommendations:

- Use social media to raise awareness and advertise the effectiveness as stated by parents to connect with similar parents so they feel attracted to the organisation at a personal level.
- As this survey has shown through its qualitative analysis, the effectiveness of conductive education is unquestionable. Therefore using this form of data as opposed to strictly quantitative figures may be more effective in establishing greater recognition for conductive education in the medical community.
- Maintain a stronger Internet presence through a modern and well maintained website.
- Collect strong evidence and ensure this gets to all the relevant stakeholders, and not solely through passive form such as newsletters
- More professionals need to be informed of the effectiveness of Conductive Education so that there is an increase in the number of recommendations from them.
- Make the benefits and advantages of Conductive Education more widely know to parents as oppose to taking a seemingly conservative manner to promoting the organisation's success.
- 42 parents agreed to share their experiences via Internet and social media platforms. We recommend that NZFCE take full advantage of this opportunity.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, there is strong evidence for the effectiveness of Conductive Education for children. 99% of parents were either satisfied or very satisfied with the effectiveness of the Conductive Education and 99% of parents would recommend it to other parents who have children with motor disorders. The results indicated that Conductive Education was not just effective at dramatically improving the children's physical abilities but also their independence, confidence, social skills and emotional control. This was credited to the frequency and intensity of the programme as well as the exceptional skilled conductors who facilitate it.

The benefits of Conductive Education were visible not only in the child but also in the parents and the throughout the immediate family. Parents were immediately welcomed in to the Conductive Education environment and felt a huge sense of relief that they were doing the best they possibly could for their child. Parents received invaluable support from staff and other parents at the centre. The conductors taught parents activities that could be done at home, enabling them to. Most importantly Conductive Education gave the parents hope and the chance to their child reaching their fullest potential.

Moving forward NZFCE should use the evidence collected through the online survey to raise awareness in all relevant stakeholders in a range of formats. Parents with disabled children, health professionals, government organisations and the general public could be hugely influenced by the evidence gathered here if it is distributed in an appropriate format.

APPENDIX

Appendix A: Survey Questions

Q1 Do you currently or have you previously had a child who has received Conductive Education in New Zealand?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q Where in New Zealand does your child (or did your child last) receive Conductive Education?

- Christchurch (1)
- Wellington (2)
- Hamilton (3)
- Auckland (4)
- Invercargill (5)
- Other (please identify) (6) _____

Q3 At what age did your child begin Conductive Education?

Q4 For how many years has your child received Conductive Education?

- Up to 1 year (1)
- 1-2 years (2)
- 3-5 years (3)
- 5-8 years (4)
- 8 years or more (5)

Q5 At what age do you think it is beneficial for children to be first enrolled in Conductive Education? Why?

Q6 How did you become aware of Conductive Education as an option for your child?

- Word of mouth (1)
- Newsletter (2)
- Healthcare professional (3)
- Online (4)
- Other (please explain) (5) _____

Q7 How would you describe Conductive Education to other parents who are investigating providers for their children with motor disorders?

Q8 Why did you choose Conductive Education for your child?

Q9 Overall, how satisfied were you with the process of enrolling your child in Conductive Education? Feel free to expand your answer below

- Very Satisfied (1) _____
- Satisfied (2) _____
- Indifferent (3) _____
- Dissatisfied (4) _____
- Very Dissatisfied (5) _____

Q10 Overall, how satisfied are you with the effectiveness of Conductive Education in regards to your child's progress? Feel free to expand on your answer below

- Very Satisfied (1) _____
- Satisfied (2) _____
- Indifferent (3) _____
- Dissatisfied (4) _____
- Very Dissatisfied (5) _____

Q11 In what ways has Conductive Education

benefited your child? Q12 How has Conductive

Education benefited you as a parent?

Q13 How has Conductive Education benefited your immediate family?

Q14 Would you recommend Conductive Education to other parents? Why?

- YES (1) _____
- NO (2) _____

Q15 As part of the survey we are collecting anecdotal experiences from parents who have been in the Conductive Education program - would you like to share any experience that was particularly memorable to you?

Q16 Is there anything else you would like to share?

Q17 Would you be prepared to share your experiences on an online format such as Youtube or Facebook? If so, could you please provide contact information?

- YES (1) _____
- NO (2)

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