

# **kContact: Characteristics and perspectives of parents having supervised contact with their children in out-of-home care.**

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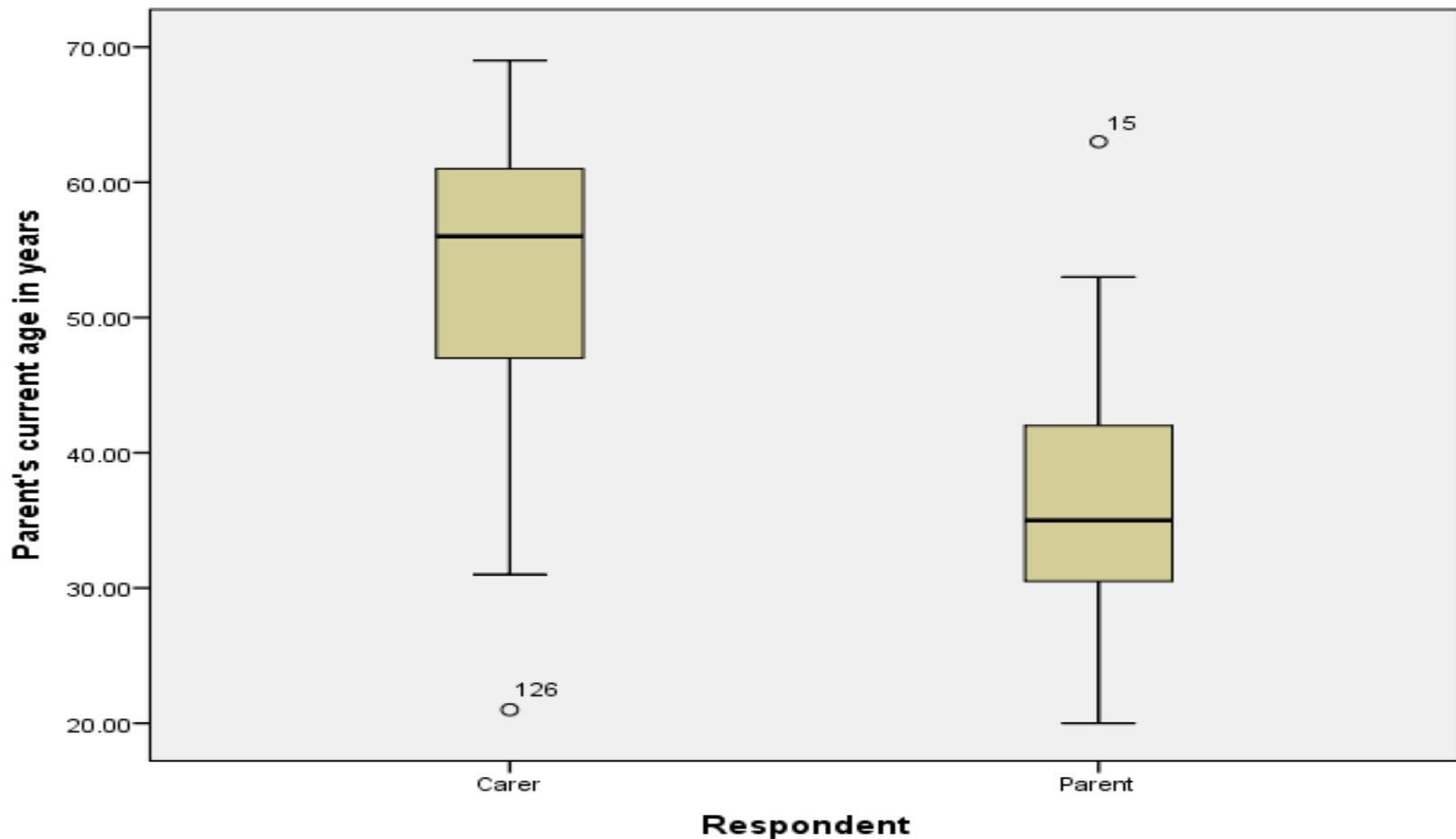
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# kContact: Selected Measures

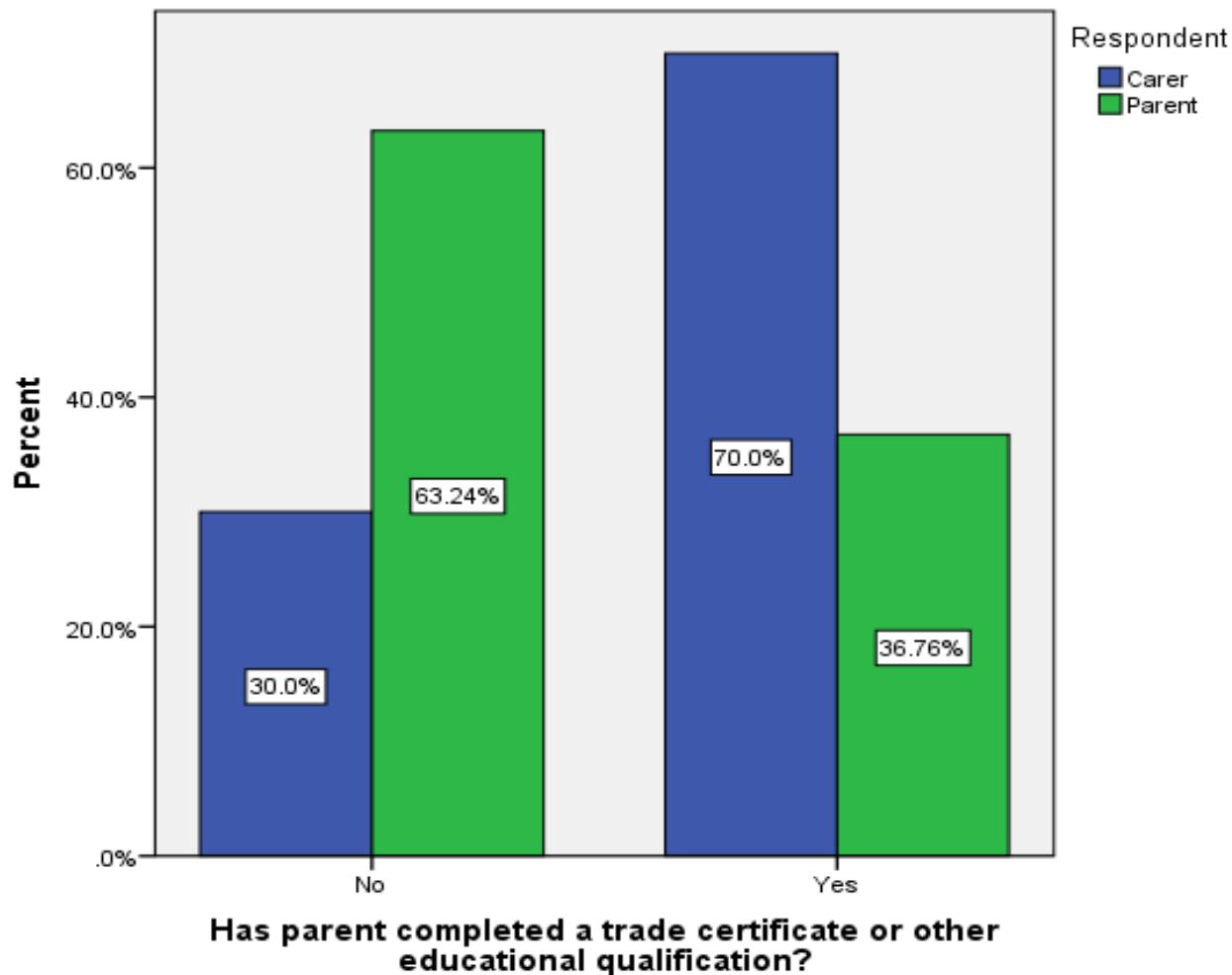
Outcomes	Outcome measures	Interviewee		
Outcomes		Carer	Parent	Worker
Quality of relationships between children, parents and carers	Child Parent Relationship Scale Short Form (CPRS-SF)	✓	✓	
Quality of relationships between children, parents and carers	NSW Pathways of Care Longitudinal Study questions		✓	✓
Abuse potential	Brief Child Abuse Potential Inventory (BCAP)		✓	
Adult distress	Depression Anxiety Stress Scale 21 (DASS-21)	✓	✓	
Satisfaction with contact	Adapted from Salveron et al (2009)		✓	

# Parent characteristics



Parents: n = 68 Carers: n= 100

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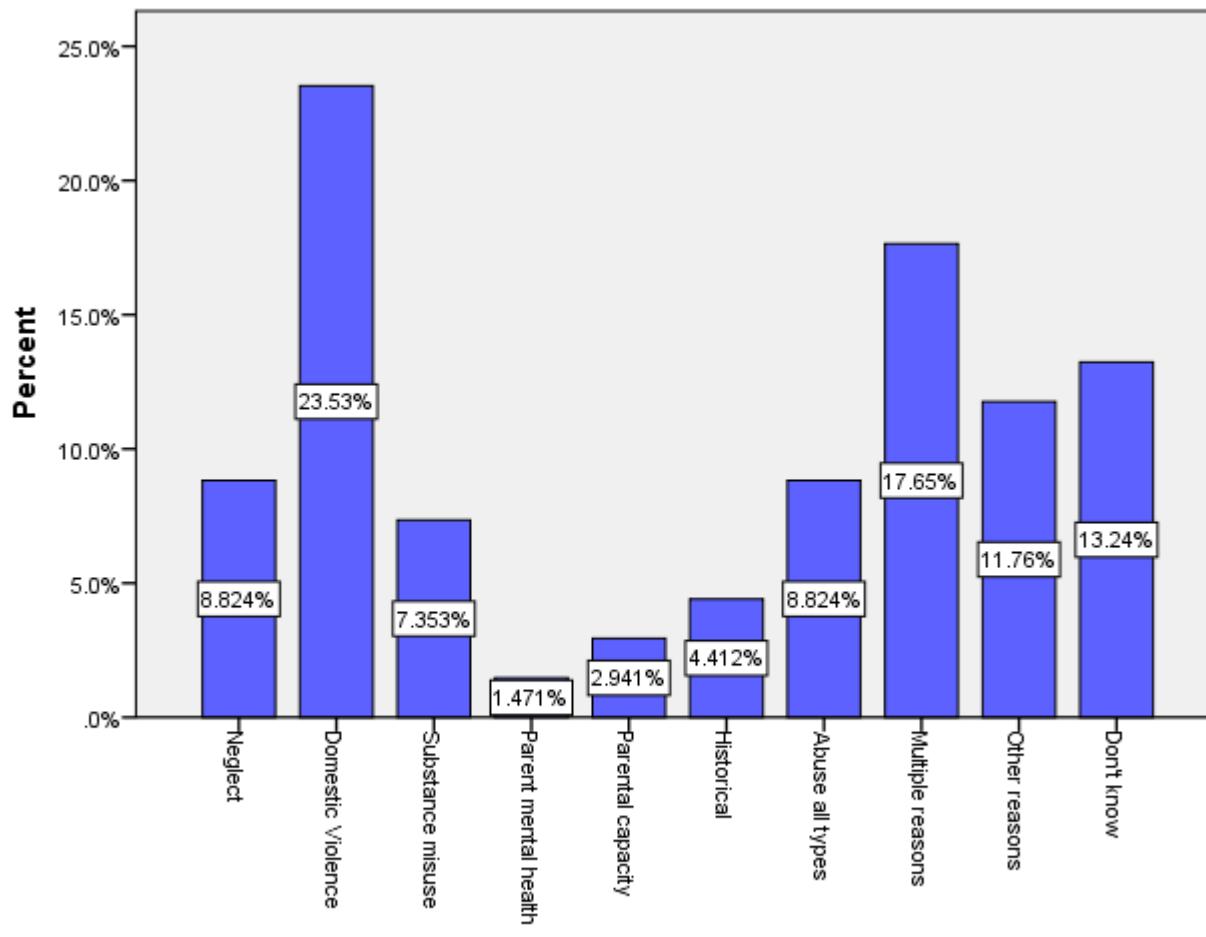


Parents: n = 68 Carers: n= 100

# Parent risk factor characteristics

		Parents (n= 68, n = 46 foster placements, n= 22 kinship or other)
Number of children in care	Median	2
Number of biological children	Median Range	4 1 – 8
Age at birth of their first child	Median age Range Number who were teenagers	20 years 14 - 41 years 49%
Financial stressors	At least 1 financial stressor	70%
Lived away from parents as a child	Yes	57%
Mental health	Recent treatment Current medication	55% 45%
Substance use	Alcohol Tobacco Other	48% 63% 19 %

# Parent reported reasons for removal



If in care, what was the major reason study child was removed?

Parents: n = 68

# Characteristics of contact: Frequency and location

- 40% of parents reported contact occurred quarterly.
- The most common location for visits as reported by all respondents was in the community followed by a contact centre or agency site.

# Characteristics of contact: Nature of supervision

*“Waiting to hear back about decisions regarding visits with young person and her siblings - can't get straight yes or no answer.” (Parent)*

*“Hard to know how parents can discipline them and how it will be judged by agency and child protection. Need clearer expectations of what is acceptable, how much of a parent are you allowed to be before it is frowned upon and judged negatively.” (Parent)*

# Characteristics of contact: Visit Quality

- The majority of parents reported they felt their last visit went very or extremely well.
- Positive interactions between everyone and if the children were happy were key indicators visits were positive experiences.
- Carers and workers tended to have more conservative ratings of visits.

# Supportiveness of contact

- Most parents reported the caseworker or carer were helpful or supportive at visits all of the time.
- A large minority of parents reported that carers were not supportive of contact at all.

# Perceptions of Parent Child relationships

*“[I] feel more connected to her. There is a sense of love and belonging and part of the contact, [I] (Mum) sees her as [my] daughter as she (child) has memories of [me].” (Parent)*

*“It could be better. You could also say “What relationship?” because it's hard to build a relationship when I only see her once per month.” (Parent)*

# Importance of contact

*“Seeing her [my] children to reassure her [me] they are ok. To see how they are doing, getting information about school, sport, general life activities” (Parent)*

*“Let the children know I am still their mum and I can be there for them. Tell about the family history so they don't forget where they come from.” (Parent)*

# Importance of contact

*“It's her family. That's where she belongs. Her people. Her story. Her history. They are her future relationships as well, whether positive or negative.”  
(Carer)*

*“Important that we communicate (mum and I) gives him the ability to see [he] can love and share us both. Not needing to put a show for anyone. Needs to know it will happen regularly and that he can contact her when he wants to and chat.” (Carer)*

# Importance of contact

*““Maintain his identity to his birth parents and maintain his life story and who he is. He can choose to have more or less when he gets older. Need to support him to have his visits and he is happy to have them currently.” (Caseworker)*

*“He [child] is very close to mum, closer than other siblings. He remembers/they talk about things they did when he was at home. He needs to continue to believe his mum is a good person and a good mother, that she loves him.” (Caseworker)*

# Conclusions

- When contact visits and the parent child relationship were viewed positively respondents views of the quality of contact visits and how the parent child relationship was perceived were consistent.
- Workers did not perceive the difficulties in the parent-child relationship when parents reported a lack of warmth and closeness in their relationships.
- The diverging views on the importance of contact between respondents demonstrate one aspect of the complexity of managing contact well.

# Implications

- Build into practice actively reviewing the quality of contact and the parent child relationship to ensure difficulties that may impact upon both parents and children are addressed.
- Recognise that parents may have differing views on the parent child relationship and what contact is like when contact may be viewed as going well by carers and workers.

# **kContact Research Partners and Funding**

## **ARC Linkage Grant (LP13010028) (2013-16)**

### **Partner organisations:**

- ACT Community Services Directorate
- Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare,
- Barnardos Australia
- Marymead Child and Family Centre

# Publications

Taplin, S. & Mattick, R.P. (2014). Supervised contact visits: results from a study of women in drug treatment with children in care. *Children and Youth Services Review*. 39, 65-72. <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S019074091400036X#>

Taplin, S., Bullen, T., McArthur, M., Humphreys, C., Kertesz, M., & Dobbins, T. (2015). kContact, an enhanced intervention for contact between children in out-of-home care and their parents: protocol for a cluster randomised controlled trial. *BMC Public Health*, 15, 1134. <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/s12889-015-2461-3/fulltext.html>

Bullen, T., Taplin, S., McArthur, M., Humphreys, C., & Kertesz, M. (2016). Interventions to improve supervised contact visits between children in out of home care and their parents: a systematic review. *Child & Family Social Work*.  
<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/cfs.12301/abstract>

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