



# Improving resources project - an update



Resources have been a rumbling issue for many practitioners for some time. I joined NCT six months ago to kick-off a project looking at how to improve the support provided to practitioners with resources. I'm now about to move on but the project will continue.

It has been an absolute pleasure to work with such a committed, enthusiastic and, above all, reflective group of practitioners. We've made great progress in six months and I think it really important to report that progress to practitioners as well as staff.

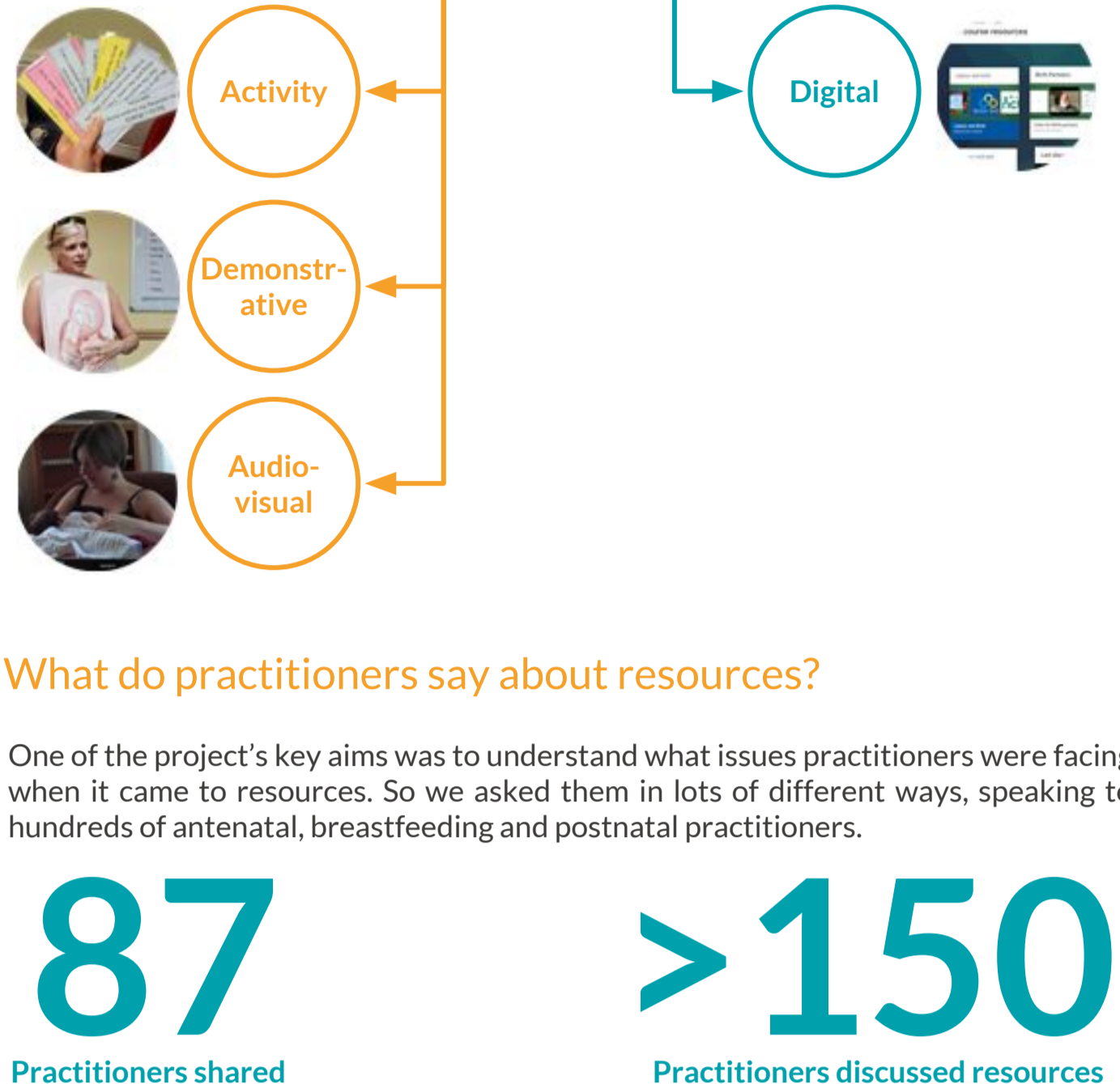
There's more work to do, but I'm confident that we're heading in the right direction to improve how we all work together to develop and share quality resources.

## What we've found out

Nearly every practitioner we've spoken to sees resources as an area that needs improvement and parents tend to agree: more of them than expected rate our resources as *Fair* or *Poor*. The project started by listening and analysing data to build a clear picture of what practitioners and parents see as the key issues.

### What do we mean by resources?

Practitioners use many different resources. Most of these are resources they use with parents in-session but nearly all practitioners provide parents with out of session resources too.



### What do practitioners say about resources?

One of the project's key aims was to understand what issues practitioners were facing when it came to resources. So we asked them in lots of different ways, speaking to hundreds of antenatal, breastfeeding and postnatal practitioners.

**87**  
Practitioners shared their views in project phone calls

**>150**  
Practitioners discussed resources with us at events such as Regional Practitioner Forums

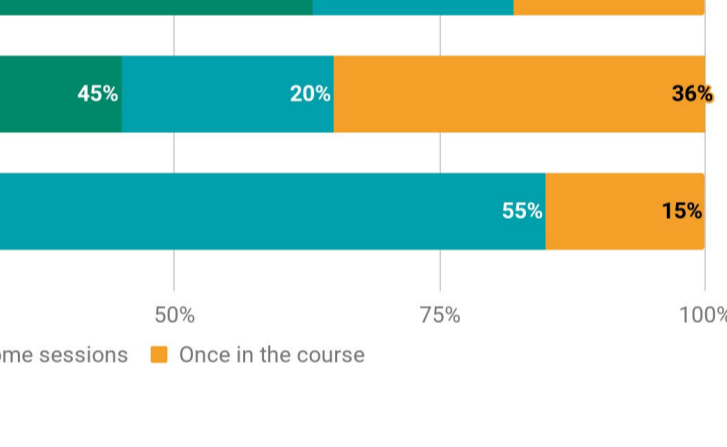
**383**  
Practitioners took part in a survey about take home resources

Practitioners raised five key issues with resources:

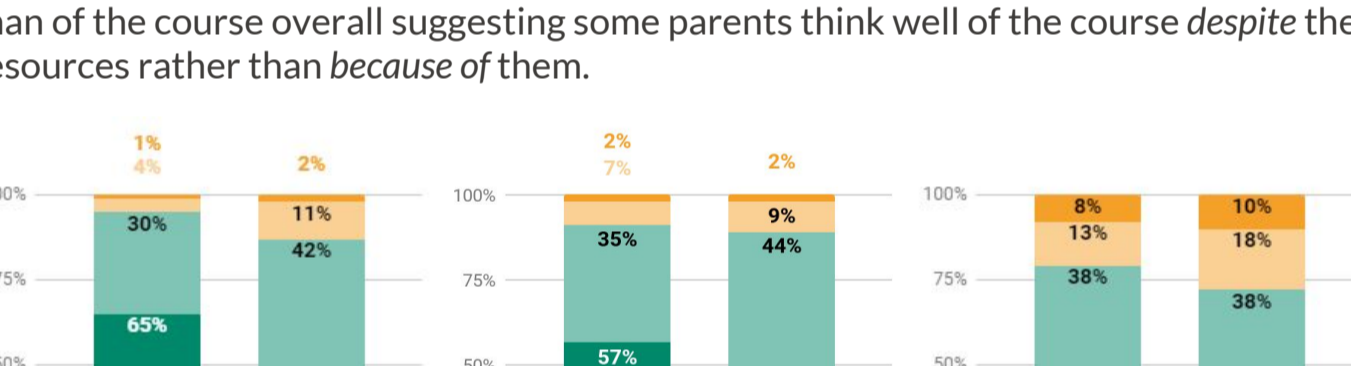
- Access**  
Good resources are hard to come by with all the money and will in the world. Practitioners are generous, like to share but Facebook and Yahoo groups really aren't that great for sharing resources.
- Lack of system knowledge**  
Practitioners had different views on who had responsibility for what on resources and many said they wanted more clarity on what 'good' looks like. Many practitioners didn't know how to ask PSAs for resources.
- Costs**  
Good, up-to-date resources cost a huge amount of money and practitioners had different views on whose responsibility that was. This was especially hard for practitioners who only do a few courses a year.
- Tools and skills**  
Many practitioners don't have the tools to modernise their resources (many venues don't have projectors or TVs for instance). Some also said they want training on creating and using resources.
- Time and effort**  
Storage and transport of resources is painful for nearly all practitioners. Using resources normally involves setting them up and taking them down which can take a lot of time.

We asked practitioners about take home resources in particular. Nearly everybody regularly sends something home with parents across all our courses. Most practitioners use emails as their main method.

**96%**  
of practitioners regularly provide parents with take home resources

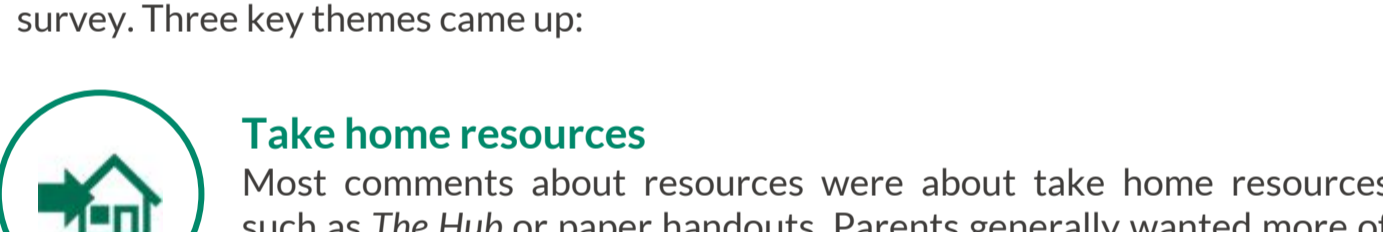


And practitioners tend to send emails out most regularly too:



### What do parents think about our resources

In every course we collect data on, parents think less well of the resources we use than of the course overall suggesting some parents think well of the course *despite* the resources rather than *because* of them.



Most parents think our resources are either *good* or *excellent* then. But what lies behind those *fairs* or *poors*? We analysed parents' written feedback in the post-course survey. Three key themes came up:

- Take home resources**  
Most comments about resources were about take home resources such as *The Hub* or paper handouts. Parents generally wanted more of them.
- Dated resources**  
The second most common issue for parents is that they saw our resources as old-fashioned. Some parents even linked this to thinking practitioners' views were old-fashioned too.
- Digital offer**  
Many practitioners don't use digital resources in-session for a variety of good reasons. Some parents were surprised by how few digital resources we used or weren't impressed at their quality.

## What we did about it

We know more about resources than we've ever done before but knowledge without action is useless. The *Improving resources* project aims to do four things to actually improve resources.

### We now offer some practitioners one-to-one support

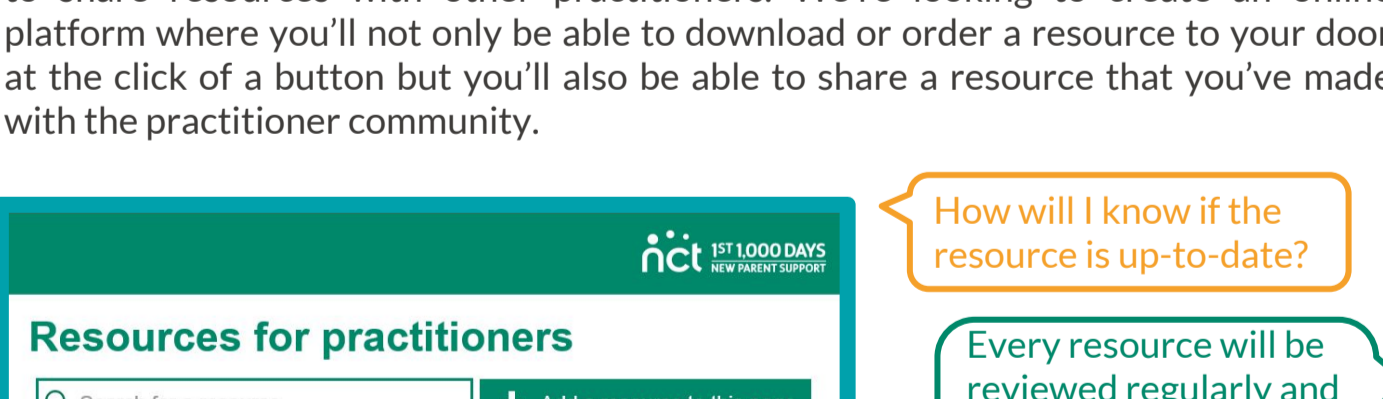
The Quality Team are now working with practitioners whose parent feedback suggests that their resources could be improved.

A member of the Quality Team will work holistically with the practitioner to help them improve their resources. The support offered will be tailored to the practitioner's individual circumstances and needs.

Early feedback suggests that this approach is working and improving parent feedback about resources.

### We're developing a new set of images

So many practitioners asked for a new set of photos of labour, birth, feeding and early parenthood. The *Wonderful Birth* set is over 30 years old now and it looks it. We're developing a new set of 40 A3 photos and illustrations to replace some of the main images, freely available for all practitioners.



- Online survey**  
Gathered the views of around 100 practitioners about what they wanted from the set and what they wanted it to cover.
- Advisory group**  
10 practitioners (antenatal, breastfeeding and postnatal) helped whittle down the >400 ideas to 70
- Review**  
Specialism tutors and senior practitioners reviewed these 70 and whittled them down to 40
- Sourcing**  
We're now sourcing the images through images we already own, ones donated by practitioners and external photography.
- Print & distribute**  
We'll then print these in A3, professionally laminate them and send them to you. They'll also be available via your PSA.

Got any photos that you own that you'd like to donate? [Click here](#)

### We're creating an online resource-sharing platform

Many of you asked for an easier way for resources to be distributed to you and for you to share resources with other practitioners. We're looking to create an online platform where you'll not only be able to download or order a resource to your door at the click of a button but you'll also be able to share a resource that you've made with the practitioner community.

How will I know if the resource is up-to-date?

Every resource will be reviewed regularly and you'll be able to see when it was last reviewed.

How will I know a resource is high quality?

Every resource will be checked with senior practitioners before it is put on the site.

How will I find a relevant resource?

We'll work hard to make the search function work but will also split them into categories.

Will it just be for paper resources?

The plan is to integrate the PSA-run loan library into the site so that you can order any NCT equipment.

Have a resource you want to share? [Click here](#)

### We're looking at what makes a good post-session email

Half of all practitioners send emails with links and attachments and many practitioners have shared such emails with us.



We're developing a set of templates and exemplars using real examples from practitioners for students



We're going to be asking parents both what they expect and what they found useful. We'll share what we find.

## What's happening now?

The project has been running for 6 months. So far, initial data suggests it's already having a great impact on what parents think about the resources we use. The project team is also going through some changes but it is continuing and we still want your help and your ideas.

It's very early days but the data suggests we're on the right track.



### Changes in the project team



**Philip Bray** is leaving us for his next placement on the Civil Service Fast Stream - in a Job Centre Plus in South Yorkshire.



**Maxine Palmer**, who has been involved in the project from the start, is taking on the Project Manager role.

You can still get in contact with the team by emailing [resources@nct.org.uk](mailto:resources@nct.org.uk)