

BRING IT ON BRUM 2022

An Evaluation of Birmingham's HAF Programme

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Executive Summary

The Healthy Living Lab was commissioned by StreetGames to evaluate Birmingham City Council's Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme, named 'Bring it on Brum' through the administration of a large-scale parent survey and a large-scale holiday club leader survey. This was the largest Local Authority HAF programme in England in 2022, and aimed to address childhood food insecurity, physical inactivity, social isolation, mental wellbeing, childcare needs, learning and skills development amongst vulnerable children and young people in Birmingham. Following DfE guidance, a specific aim was to increase uptake of the programme by free school meal children. Where appropriate, comparisons have been drawn between the outcomes of this year's evaluation with the outcomes of the Bring it on Brum evaluation conducted in 2021. In addition, where appropriate, outcomes are compared to a control group of parents whose child/children did not attend Bring it on Brum.

Desktop analysis of management information showed a continued high demand and uptake of Bring it on Brum, with 151 providers having delivered 277 clubs. Although there was a decrease in the number of providers (151 versus 243) there no change in the number of holiday clubs (277 versus 278) delivering the programme compared to 2021. Overall, 'Bring it on Brum' reached 26,101 eligible children (75% FSM) generating 162,556 attendances. The data, split according to primary and secondary school aged children, showed that the vast majority of attendees were primary school aged children (n =21,142) with far fewer secondary school aged children in attendance (n=4959). Clubs were run by a mixture of community organisations, leisure centres, youth services, children's services, schools, and some commercial operators, with a 16 % increase in the number of schools engaging with the programme, and a 11% increase in SEND provision between 2021 and 2022. Clubs delivered a wide range of physical activities and enrichment activities, food and trips for children and young people. The increase in SEND provision is important in terms of equality, diversity and inclusion but has cost and resource implications in terms of delivery at the local level.

Parent Survey

A large-scale survey was sent to all parents and carers of children attending Bring it on Brum and to all holiday club leads. Analysis showed clear evidence that Bring it on Brum delivered a range of positive outcomes for children, parents/carers, and local communities. Given the recent cost of living and the steep increase in food prices that have contributed to a nationwide increase in the number of households experiencing food insecurity we analysed attendance data according to

household food insecurity and free school meal eligibility and compared these data to a national sample of parents whose children did not attend HAF. The data clearly show that for both groups household food insecurity has increased, and time spent at Bring it on Brum is dependent on free school meal eligibility and household food insecurity. Time spent at Bring it on Brum is also correlated with parent's perceptions of affordable childcare over the summer, and children's level of physical activity. Overall, stress is lower for parents whose children attend Bring it on Brum, in comparison with no club attendance and other childcare settings, but parental stress is not correlated with the hours that children attend clubs. We gathered data on parent's perceptions of the benefits of Bring it on Brum and compared these data to data collected in 2021. Analysis showed no difference in the proportion of parents that "agree" that clubs Prevent Social Isolation, Raise Aspirations, or Boosts Confidence in their children, meaning that there is not yearly change in parents' perceptions about clubs on these indicators. However, there was a significant decline in the proportion of parents who agreed that Bring it on Brum increases School Readiness. Over 75% of parents believe that Bring it on Brum helps prevent Anti-Social behaviours, a similar finding to the findings reported in 2021. Parents have positive perceptions about Bring it on Brum staff, and the percentage of parents who believe that staff have good relationship with children remained constant between 2021 (76%) and 2022 (76%). Likewise, the percentage of parents who think that staff deal with behavioural problems effectively remained constant (65% in 2022 compared to 64% in 2021). However, there was a significant increase in the number of parents reporting that they were more confident in leaving their children with staff (81% in 2022 versus 75% in 2021). Parent's perceptions of the food on offer at clubs improved overall, although parents thought their children had fewer opportunities to try new foods and to engage in hands on cooking experiences.

Holiday Club Leader Survey

The club leader survey showed that the majority of clubs (98%) were either very prepared or somewhat prepared to deliver Bring it on Brum. The range of children clubs targeted is particularly pleasing with 27% clubs specifically targeting 'looked after children', 30% of clubs targeting children with an Education, Health and Care plan, and 30% of children assessed as being in need. These outcomes are comparable to the findings reported in 2021. Ninety-Eight percent of clubs surveyed planned to deliver Bring it on Brum in 2023. Most clubs aim to support primary school aged children and children living in areas of high deprivation, although there appears to have been a slight increase in secondary provision. Clubs sourced food from local supermarkets (32%), central meal provision organised by Street Games (39%), a catering company organised at club level (37%), and 7% used

charity food aid provision. Overall, holiday club leaders rated the food served at club as good (M = 7.8, on a scale of 0-10), with club catered sourced food rated as better than the food sourced by Street Games/Birmingham City Council. In terms of food waste, holiday club leaders reported very little food waste; a marked improvement on the food waste data reported in 2021.

Summary:

Bring it on Brum is an excellent programme that offers good value for money. It is highly regarded by leaders in delivery organisations and by parents. During the current cost of living crisis, it is a programme that provides much needed support in terms of food, physical activity, and socialisation. Many families would be unable to partake in all these important activities without Bring it on Brum. Overall, this programme provides invaluable support to families in terms of physical, emotional and social support, bringing together families within communities through activities and food.

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Chapter 1: Review of Existing literature on HAF and holiday clubs in the UK

Chapter 1 will present an *updated* collation of peer-reviewed articles and the ‘grey’ literature on the implementation and impact of the Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme with reference to the wider context under which HAF currently operates. The review will begin by providing contextual information in relation to poverty in the UK and examine the need for HAF. This review will then explore the current literature on the implementation and delivery of holiday clubs in deprived communities across the UK and conclude by discussing peer-reviewed studies on the impact of HAF/holiday club attendance for children, their families, and communities.

1.1 The need for Holiday Activities and Food (HAF)

1.1.1 Background:

In the UK, approximately 4.3 million children are living in poverty. Evidence published by the Food Foundation (2017) suggests that the UK leads all of Europe (by a significant margin) when it comes to childhood hunger (see also (Lambie-Mumford & Sims, 2018)). Nearly one in ten UK children face severe food insecurity, a term that is often used technically and summarised numerically to measure the availability and accessibility of adequate food, which is more than double the rate in most other European countries such as Italy, Portugal, Greece, Slovenia, Spain, Hungary and Latvia (The Food Foundation, 2017, p. 4). Furthermore, the level of food insecurity in the UK has also worsened in recent years, particularly following the outbreak of COVID in 2019 (Loopstra, 2020; Loopstra et al., 2019), with 41% of children eligible for free school meals (FSM) experiencing some level of food insecurity during the coronavirus pandemic lockdown (Goudie & McIntyre, 2021). Children have also experienced disruption to their education and social environment with numerous reports showing an increase in poor dietary habits, poor mental health and wellbeing and a reduction in physical activity (Bates et al., 2020; Brooks et al., 2020; Defeyter et al., 2020; James et al., 2021; Van Lancker & Parolin, 2020). There is emerging evidence that suggests that inequality has widened even further as a result of the Covid pandemic, with the financial situation of almost 4.7 million households deteriorating (Collard et al., 2021) and modelling data suggesting that the position of many households is going to deteriorate even further in 2022.

Within the context of UK childhood hunger, the problem of “holiday hunger” has recently gained attention among politicians, the media and the public. The phrase holiday hunger has been used extensively by the British media (e.g., “Holiday hunger should be the shame of this government and it isn’t”-*The Guardian* (Foster, 2018); “They hadn’t eaten all day: food banks tackle holiday hunger – *The Guardian* (Perraudin, 2018) “Emma Thompson: my fight to end Easter holiday hunger for 4m

British schoolchildren”- *The Times* (Griffiths, 2019); “Nearly four in five teachers say holiday hunger is failing to improve” –*Independent* (Osborne, 2018); “School holiday hunger: Parents 'living on cereal', says MP”- *The BBC* (2019). Despite the widespread use of this term, it is not always clear what it means. In our book, titled “Holiday hunger in the UK”, we define holiday hunger “as a situation that occurs when economically disadvantaged households with school-aged children experience food insecurity during the school holidays (Long et al., 2022)

Holiday clubs, managed by local organisations, are a response to holiday hunger in the UK (Mann et al., 2018). In 2017, the All-Party-Parliamentary Group on School Food asked the Healthy Living Lab to map holiday provision across the UK to gain an understanding of what was being done about holiday hunger at the local level. The researchers found hundreds of holiday clubs had been established across England and many existed to provide support to children living in disadvantaged areas (Mann et al., 2018). Until recently, holiday clubs were largely viewed as spaces for feeding children during the summer (Mann et al., 2018). Emerging research shows, however, that these clubs offer communities a means to organise and provide a variety of material goods, services and information to children, caregivers, parents, volunteers, and staff (Stretesky, Defeyter, Long, Sattar, et al., 2020).

Research shows that holiday clubs provide children with a safe place to be physically active during the summer (Mann, 2019; Shinwell, 2019; Shinwell et al., 2021). Holiday clubs may prepare pupils for return to school, aid parents with childcare so that they can continue to work in paid employment during the school holidays, increase the wellbeing of children and parents and provide communities with the opportunity of improving dietary intake (Crilley, 2021; Defeyter et al., 2015a, 2019; Holley & Mason, 2019; Long, Stretesky, et al., 2020; Mann et al., 2020; Morgan, McConnon, et al., 2019a; Shinwell, 2019; Shinwell et al., 2021; Stretesky, Defeyter, Long, Ritchie, et al., 2020; Stretesky, Defeyter, Long, Sattar, et al., 2020). Holiday clubs have even been found to signpost parents to resources and other community services, such as healthcare, financial services, and housing advice (Long et al., 2022; Mann, 2019; Shinwell, 2019; Stretesky, Defeyter, Long, Sattar, et al., 2020). In short, it is clear that holiday clubs do more than simply feed children.

More recently, the Department for Education (DfE) recognised the need for holiday provision to provide children with access to activities and nutritious food and funded several pilot Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) projects, commencing in 2018. This involved local authorities recruiting community organisations to deliver free, healthy food and activities for children during the school summer holidays. Following an evaluation of a number of HAF pilot projects, the DfE announced an expansion of the HAF programme across all 151 higher-tier Local Authorities in England in 2021, at a cost of approximately £220M p.a. (Department for Education, 2021a). The four main aims of HAF are

1) to improve the nutrition of children who are eligible for benefits-related FSM, in the holidays, 2) To increase healthy behaviours (e.g., participation in physical and enriching activities), 3) To improve school readiness, and 4) To improve parent's confidence and behaviour around purchasing and preparing healthy meals on a sustainable basis (Department for Education, 2021a). The HAF programme is free for children who receive benefits-related free school meals. Whereas any children not eligible for and in receipt of means-tested free school meals can also attend but they should pay to do so, or their places paid for by alternative funding. Local authorities can either coordinate their local HAF programme themselves or work with another organisation to coordinate the provision on their behalf (Department for Education, 2021a). Notably, HAF 2021 was larger in terms of funding and scope to prior HAF programmes and included some new programme outcomes; including engaging families in nutritional education, budgeting, providing better referral systems to other services, and offering increased flexibility in the funding terms for Local Authorities to provide HAF for a week during the Easter and Christmas holidays.

1.2 Household Food Insecurity and Dietary Intake

In the UK the terms "food insecurity", "food poverty" and "hunger" are often used interchangeably to describe those who meet the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations definition of food insecurity, defined as: "the inability to acquire or consume an adequate quality or sufficient quantity of food in socially acceptable ways, or the uncertainty that one will be able to do so" (FAO, 2015, p. 53). The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) further categorises food insecurity as mild, moderate or severe (FAO, 2015). Those suffering mild food insecurity worry about their ability to obtain food, moderate food insecurity occurs when people start compromising on the quality and variety of food they eat and reduce the quantity of food they consume, and severe food insecurity occurs when people experience hunger (FAO, 2015). Current estimates from the FAO suggest that 10.4% of the UK population, some 8.4m people over the age of 15 years, live in moderately or severely food insecure households, with approximately half experiencing the most severe form of food insecurity, and 20% living in homes that lack the funds to purchase food. Furthermore, one in five children under the age of 15 years are estimated to live in households where there isn't enough money to buy food, with 4% of UK children not eating three meals a day (Pereira et al., 2017). Furthermore, the level of food insecurity in the UK has worsened in recent years (Loopstra, Reeves & Tarasuk, 2019; Loopstra, 2020), with 41% of children eligible for FSM experiencing some level of food insecurity during the coronavirus lockdown (Goudie & McIntyre, 2021). A more detailed discussion on this topic in relation to HAF can be found in Long, Defeyter & Stretesky (2022).

Dowler et al., (2001) identified three main factors that influence food (in)security status: (i) affordability of food and sufficient income to purchase food; (ii) accessibility of shops to buy a range

of food at a reasonable price; and (iii) knowledge of food and food skills. Because low-income households spend a greater proportion of their income on food compared to better off families, the price of food has a significant impact on low-income families' food purchasing abilities. An analysis of the cost of complying with the UK Government's food-based guidelines contained in the Eatwell Guide indicated that low-income families would need to spend nearly three quarters of their income on food (Scott et al., 2018). Whilst low-income families considered a healthy diet was important, and 60% of parents and carers indicated that they would change their children's diets and buy more fruit and vegetables, their lack of income meant they were unable to do so.

Likewise, analysis of data contained in the National Diet and Nutrition Survey (2020) found that consumption of fruit and vegetables was below the 5-A-Day recommendation in all groups and oily fish consumption was well below the recommendation. Furthermore, intakes of free sugars exceeded recommendations in all age groups and only 4% children met recommended fibre intake. These findings broadly align with prior results of this survey, but it is important to note that the survey was not administered at the height of lockdown and other surveys report a deterioration in children's dietary intake, especially children in low-income households (e.g. (James et al., 2021).

Recent research conducted in Northern Ireland suggests that household food insecurity may be a dynamic process and that people may move in, out and along the continuum of household food insecurity (Shinwell et al., 2021). For some families, experiencing household food insecurity may be cyclical, for example towards the end of the month when money is low, whilst for others, a shock to their income such as losing their job, increased energy prices, or a relationship breakdown may result in experiencing episodes of food insecurity. A range of tactics are adopted by people to cope with having insufficient money for food. This includes, at the most basic level, shopping in multiple stores for food to take advantage of special offers to make money go further and eating food of poorer nutritional value. However, as the level of food insecurity becomes more severe, tactics change to seeking (and reciprocating) support from friends and family, to cutting down food portion sizes and parents and carers often, and children occasionally, skipping meals altogether (Gooseman et al., 2019b; Shinwell & Defeyter, 2021). However, the strategy of last resort used by many facing household food insecurity is to seek support from a food bank (Loopstra & Tarasuk, 2015; Shinwell & Defeyter, 2021).

1.3 Holiday Hunger

There is evidence of low-income families being at risk of experiencing holiday hunger in the UK. Oral evidence presented to the APPG on Hunger in 2017, showed that that during the summer, food shopping bills of parents whose children receive free school meals increase by an average of £30-40

per week and that parents will often compromise on the quality of food they eat, will eat their children's leftovers and skip meals in order to cope with the extra pressure of the summer break (Andrew Forsey, 2017). This evidence reflects earlier research which highlighted that during the school holidays food shopping bills increased and parents compromised on the quality of food they bought, relying on offers in supermarkets to feed their children which often meant buying food of a lower nutritional quality (Defeyter et al., 2015a; Gill & Sharma, 2004). However, it is not only children who are eligible for FSM that are at risk of experiencing holiday food insecurity, the oral evidence to the APPG on Hunger highlighted that up to 2 million children from families whose parents "work for their poverty" may also be going hungry in the holidays (Forsey, 2017).

The risk of low-income families experiencing food insecurity during the school holidays was further reinforced by a pilot study by (Long et al., 2017). Using the six-item food insecurity questionnaire, developed in the USA, to identify households experiencing food insecurity, this research examined the food (in)security status of parents (N=38) attending holiday provision clubs alongside their children in Wales. The findings established that 58% (N=22) of parents identified as food secure, 18% (N=7) as food insecure without hunger and 24% (N=9) as food insecure with hunger (Long et al., 2017). All parents, from both food secure and food insecure households, agreed that they spend more on food during the summer holidays than during term time and some parents reported that without a summer holiday club, they would not have been able to afford to buy food during the summer. Importantly, the researchers found that holiday clubs disproportionately help food insecure households and attenuate food insecurity for these families.

Similarly, more than 90% of parents (N=72), in a mixed methods study examining the experiences of food insecure families in London, reported that in the previous year, they had worried about having enough money for food and had run out of food (Harvey, 2016). Parents also reported that they could not afford to buy healthy food for their children and had reduced their food intake and had skipped meals so that their children could eat. Nonetheless, despite parents' best efforts to protect their children from food insecurity, in qualitative interviews conducted with children (N=19) in the same study, children indicated that they were aware that there was not enough money for food at home and that they had gone to bed hungry. Children also reported that they were more likely to miss meals during the weekends and holidays when school meals and after school clubs were not available. Furthermore, teachers in the UK have also reported that they are aware that low-income families struggle during the summer holidays. In a survey conducted by the NUT teaching union, more than half of the 619 respondents said there were children in their school who did not get

enough to eat during the summer holidays and the number of children who were affected was increasing (National Union of Teachers, 2017).

1.4 Health and Wellbeing of Children and Parents

Under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, signatory states are required to ensure a standard of living of every child that is adequate for their physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development (The UN Convention of the Rights of the Child, 2003). Nevertheless, a recent review of food insecurity in advanced capitalist nations shows that it is widely recognised that insufficient household income is associated with negative outcomes for children and adults across all domains including mental and physical health, life expectancy, social wellbeing, cognition, and educational attainment (Long et al., 2020).

A survey conducted by the Royal College of Paediatricians and Child Health (RCPCH) and Child Poverty Action Group (CPAG), highlighted that 99.6% of paediatricians (N=265) considered poverty contributes to the ill health of a child (RCPCH & CPAG, 2017). Moreover, families living in poverty have insufficient income to obtain a healthy diet. Nutritionally poor food tends to be cheaper and have higher fat and / or sugar content than more healthy food items. It is, therefore, unsurprising that there is a greater prevalence of overweight and obese children in the poorest families (Donkin & Marmot, 2016). Using data from the Millennium Cohort Study, (Goisis et al., 2015) examined longitudinal data of children aged 5 years and 11 years (N=9,384). Their findings illustrate that the prevalence of obesity is considerably higher amongst poorer children than their more affluent peers. While there was no evidence of an association between household income and weight of the child at age 5 years, there were emerging inequalities by age 11 years, and a poor diet and lack of physical activity are contributing risk factors (Goisis et al., 2015). Moreover, high levels of obesity in children are associated with poorer health outcomes in adulthood; obesity and being overweight are linked to a wide range of diseases including diabetes, asthma, hypertension, cancer, heart disease and stroke (Marmot, 2010; Public Health England, 2015). Finally, a recent study published in the BMJ (Open) shows an increase in infant mortality with body weight status. However, this sustained and unprecedented rise in infant mortality in England from 2014-2017 has not been experienced evenly across the population. In the most deprived local authorities, the previously declining trend in infant mortality reversed and mortality rose, leading to an additional 24 infant deaths per 100,000 live births per year, relative to the previous trend (Taylor-Robinson et al., 2019a). The findings suggest that about a third of the increases in infant mortality between 2014 and 2017 may be attributed to rising child poverty, equivalent to an extra 172 infant deaths (Taylor-Robinson et al., 2019b).

Whilst growing up in poverty can have a negative impact on a child's physical and mental health, there exists an association between household income and children's outcomes in terms of cognitive, social, and emotional behavioural development (Cooper & Stewart, 2017). Moreover, a qualitative study conducted with children living in poverty in the UK illustrated that a limited household income restricts children's access to services and opportunities, and these have a wider impact on their social relations (Ridge, 2002). Children find it difficult to form friendships and fear social exclusion as they are unable to share similar experiences with their friendship groups. (Ridge, 2013) further argues that childhood is becoming increasingly commodified and the participation of children in social activities and clubs is controlled by the cost of the activities and other factors including access and transport. Children living in poverty are often confined to their neighbourhoods which frequently lack adequate and affordable resources and opportunities to be able to socialise with their friends. Thus, according to Ridge (2002,2013) poverty is a localised experience and children from disadvantaged families are restricted to what is available within their neighbourhood.

1.5 Poverty, Food Insecurity and Educational Attainment

As discussed above, children growing up in low-income households are likely to have a poor diet and are more likely to be overweight or obese with associated poorer health outcomes both physically, mentally, and socially compared to their more affluent peers. Research has investigated the effect of living in food insecure households on the educational attainment and social and emotional well-being of children. (Johnson & Markowitz, 2018) analysed data on the results of 3,700 children's reading and maths skills using tests specially designed for the Early Childhood Longitudinal-Birth (ECLS-B) study and teachers' analysis of children's social and emotional well-being. Data on parental levels of household food insecurity were collected at three time points (when children were aged nine months, when they were two years of age and when they started kindergarten) using the USA Household Food Security Survey Module (HFSSM). The authors found that children who experienced food insecurity performed less well both academically, socially, and emotionally than children who were food secure. Furthermore, children who experienced repeated episodes of household food insecurity, and the greater the frequency of exposure to household food insecurity, the less well children performed in tests.

Using data on children in receipt of FSM as a proxy for disadvantage, data from National Pupil Database (NPD) which contains data on children's performance in tests and teacher assessments when they start school, at Key Stages 1 and 2 and GCSE exam results, researchers found that by the time children reach the age of 16 years, children who were in receipt of free school meals were 24.3 months behind children who did not (Andrews et al., 2017). More recent analysis of the data in the

NPD and FSM recipient status suggests that at the current rate of progress, it will take more than 500 years to narrow the gap in attainment between children from different socio-economic backgrounds (Hutchinson et al., 2019).

1.6 Childcare

An additional challenge for families during the school holidays is childcare provision. A survey of leaders of holiday clubs, located in deprived communities across the UK (N=325), illustrated that along with the need for food provision, childcare provision and a safe place for children to play formed the top three needs for their communities during the school holidays (Mann, 2019). The Childcare Act 2006 requires local authorities in England and Wales to ensure sufficient childcare is available for parents with children up to the age of 14 years. Nevertheless, a recent survey carried out by Family Childcare Trust (2019) illustrated that there is a lack of affordable holiday clubs and shortages of childcare across some regions of the UK. The most notable gaps in provision are for children aged 12 years or over, for families living in rural areas and for children with special education needs and disabilities (Cottell et al., 2019). The need for childcare provision during the school holidays was further highlighted in a survey of head teachers of primary and secondary schools in England: 39% (N=424) of head teachers stated that parents and carers require access to holiday clubs to support their working and caring commitments during the school holidays (Diss & Jarvie, 2016). Yet, despite the perceived need for holiday provision, only 29% (N=315) of schools offer additional provision during the school holidays with head teachers citing funding and lack of staffing capacity as the main barriers to providing holiday provision for families (Diss & Jarvie, 2016). The challenge of sourcing adequate and affordable childcare provision during the school holidays has been highlighted by a survey conducted by CPAG in Scotland (2015). The survey of parents (N=223) living in Glasgow cited the high cost of childcare provision as one of the main challenges of the school holidays, with many out of school providers oversubscribed or unavailable across all regions of the city (Butcher, 2015). Moreover, a recent investigation by a joint Department for Work and Pensions and Education Select Committee of the House of Commons into poverty during the school summer holiday period heard evidence from parents who said that the requirement to pay child care costs up front and then claim them back through Universal Credit prevented them from being able to work during the summer holiday period and the absence of FSM meant they relied on food aid from food banks to feed their children during the summer holidays (House of Commons, 2019).

A survey commissioned by the Family and Childcare Trust highlighted that families adopt a number of approaches to address their childcare needs in the school holidays, which include: using formal childcare provided by local authorities and the private sector; using informal holiday camps and

activities; adopting shift parenting by using the annual leave of both parents to cover holidays; using informal care provided by extended families and friends; and committing to term time only work (Cottell & Fiaferana, 2018). Moreover, while childcare is a constant challenge for some families, the length of the school summer holiday creates a significant challenge for families to be able to source affordable and consistent childcare, which in turn creates additional financial and emotional pressures for families.

1.7 The benefits of HAF/Holiday Clubs

The previous section discussed several factors regarding the need for HAF during the school holidays. In this section, studies focussing on the multi-faceted benefits of participating in holiday clubs will be discussed. A number of studies have shown that the provision of food at holiday clubs has the potential to make a difference to family food and finances by alleviating financial strains on household budgets (Defeyter et al., 2015a; Graham et al., 2016; Morgan, Melendez-Torres, et al., 2019; Shinwell & Defeyter, 2021; Stretesky, Defeyter, Long, Ritchie, et al., 2020). Other studies have shown, holiday provision has the potential to reduce the risk of families experiencing household food insecurity, which has been discussed earlier in this literature review (Holley et al., 2019; Long et al., 2018), and improving children's dietary intake (Crilley et al., 2022; Mann, 2019; Shinwell, 2019). In addition, holiday provision offers numerous additional resources that improve the wellbeing for parents, children, volunteers, and staff (Defeyter et al., 2018b; Stretesky, Defeyter, Long, Sattar, et al., 2020). A summary of peer-reviewed research on the impact of attendance at holiday provision in the UK is presented below in Table 1.

In addition to the published academic literature on holiday provision, there are several third sector reports that focus on various outcomes for families and the communities in which these clubs operate. Many of these case studies feature in *Holiday Hunger in the UK: Local Responses to Childhood Food Insecurity* (Long, Defeyter & Stretesky, 2022). Details of example holiday programmes, abstracts of research and policy papers can be found in *Holiday Programmes: Activity and Food* at <https://www.northumbria.ac.uk/takeontomorrow/it-is-time/holiday-activity-and-food-programmes>. Further details on how holiday clubs have adjusted their mode of delivery as a result of Covid social distancing rules are emerging in the literature (Bayes et al., 2021; Long, Defeyter & Stretesky, 2022), as are a number of case studies detailing approaches to holiday provision during Covid by the Governments of England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland (Long, Defeyter & Stretesky, 2022). Finally, little is known about the modes of delivering nutritional education within HAF (Round et al., 2021.) .

Table 1. Summary of peer-reviewed research on the impact of attendance at holiday provision in the UK

Author, year	Aim of study	Sample	Data collection	Context	Key findings
Defeyter et al., (2015)	To determine the impacts of holiday breakfast club participation and investigate potential areas for future development	Children: <i>N=17</i> ; Parents/ Carers: <i>N=18</i> ; and Holiday club staff: <i>N=15</i>	Semi-structured interviews	North West England and Northern Ireland	A need for holiday food provision and revealed a multitude of nutritional, social, and financial benefits for those who accessed holiday breakfast clubs.
Graham et al. (2016)	To examine the views of holiday club staff on the need for and benefits of holiday food provision and potential areas for development	Holiday club staff: <i>N=14</i>	Semi-structured interviews	Wales and South of England	Families were perceived to be facing food insecurity and isolation during the school holidays. Holiday clubs are a valuable source of support for children and adults providing food, activities, and learning experiences. Highlighted areas for improvement in delivery of provision.
Shinwell & Defeyter (2017)	To investigate whether summer learning loss in word reading and spelling occurs in primary school aged children living in areas of high deprivation in England and Scotland	Children: <i>N = 77</i>	WRAT 4	England and Scotland	Performance in spelling declined when children returned to school after the summer holiday. However, after seven weeks of learning children caught up and exceeded levels achieved in spelling prior to the summer break. Learning loss did not occur in relation to word reading.
Long et al., (2018)	To investigate if holiday clubs have the potential to reduce food insecurity among households in the UK.	Parents/carers: <i>N=38</i>	Self-completing survey	Wales, South of England and Scotland	42% (16 out of 38 respondents) of children come from households defined as “food insecure” and 24% (9 out of 38 respondents) come from households that are “food insecure with hunger.” Holiday clubs can play an important role in mitigating household food insecurity.

Author, year	Aim of study	Sample	Data collection	Context	Key findings
Mann et al. (2018)	To investigate whether holiday clubs are serving the most deprived communities in England and Wales	Holiday club staff: <i>N</i> = 428	Self-completing online survey	England and Wales	Holiday clubs are likely to be located in deprived areas where there are a high percentage of minority ethnic residents, low average income, high levels of childhood deprivation and unemployed single parent households
Defeyter et al (2019).	Policy paper on the government removing inequalities in children's access to holiday clubs	<i>N/A</i>		UK	Policy recommendations that the root cause of poverty should be addressed but that in the interim, holiday provision should be universal and available during all school summer holidays and not just during the summer break.
Gooseman, Defeyter, & Graham, (2019)	To investigate the existence, impact and potential solutions of holiday hunger	Primary school staff: <i>N</i> =12	Semi-structured interviews	North East England	Year-round hardship as well as holiday hunger exists. The study identified a need for a multi-agency approach to address the complex needs and provide support to families.
Holley et al., (2019)	To examine what opportunities are provided by community holiday sports clubs which include free food and challenges of delivering food provision.	Holiday hub leaders: <i>N</i> =15	Focus groups x 2	UK	Benefits of holiday clubs include alleviation of food insecurity; promoting engagement; encouraging healthy eating habits; promote positive behaviour. Hub leaders highlighted challenges with delivering food provision.

Author, year	Aim of study	Sample	Data collection	Context	Key findings
Morgan, McConnon, et al., (2019)	To examine opportunities for healthy eating and physical activity and explore delivery processes in school-based holiday clubs.	Child survey: <i>N=196</i> Parent/carer survey: <i>N=84</i> Child focus groups: <i>N=74</i> Parent focus groups: <i>N=69</i> Staff/volunteer interviews: <i>N=32</i>	Mixed methods	Wales	Holiday clubs provide opportunities for healthy eating: children consume fewer sugary snacks, fewer sugary drinks and more fruit and vegetables compared to a non-club day.
Stretesky et al., n.d.)	To determine the range of resources offered by holiday clubs	Staff: <i>N=35</i> ; Volunteers: <i>N=29</i> ; Parents: <i>N=77</i> ; Children: <i>N=220</i>	Semi-structured interviews and focus groups (children)	North East England	Holiday clubs deliver a range of anti-poverty resources and services, and these are linked to the staff networks and partnerships at the holiday clubs.
Stretesky et al (2020).	To investigate if there is an association between summer food insecurity and parental stress.	Parents: <i>N = 252</i>	Self-completing questionnaire	North East England	Parental experience of holiday hunger is associated with high levels of parental stress, intrusive thoughts and avoidance behaviours.
Bayes et al (2021).	To investigate how holiday club leaders adapted their food provision and food related enrichment activities during the first UK Covid-19 pandemic lockdown during summer 2020.	Holiday club staff: <i>N = 25</i>	Semi-structured interviews	England and Wales	Holiday clubs introduced new ways of working to ensure that food insecure households with children were able to access support including food aid & enrichment activities during the first Covid-19 national lockdown in summer 2020.
Long et al (2020).	To provide an overview of literature relating to food insecurity in advanced capitalist nations.	<i>N/A</i>	Literature review		Governments in advanced capitalist states are more likely to favour a neoliberalist approach to food

Author, year	Aim of study	Sample	Data collection	Context	Key findings
Defeyter et al. (2020)	Feeding children during the Covid-19 pandemic	N/A	Policy & practice review	UK	insecurity with food aid-based solutions led by not-for-profit and charitable organisations. Parents of children who normally receive free school meals experienced difficulties in accessing and using food vouchers to the value of £15 per child which were introduced during the Covid-19 pandemic.
Mann et al (2020).	To investigate the views of senior stakeholders regarding the need for and barriers to effective holiday provision.	Senior stakeholders: <i>N</i> = 15	Semi structured interviews	England	Cuts to welfare provision are impacting on family budgets and driving the need for holiday provision. Multiple barriers inhibit the successful delivery of holiday provision which to a large extent, depends on using existing networks of community-based organisations.
Shinwell, Finlay & Defeyter (2021)	To investigate the views of children and young people regarding holiday club programmes in Northern Ireland	Children: <i>N</i> = 34	Semi-structured interviews	Northern Ireland	Children were aware of the driving factors behind holiday provision including poverty and food insecurity but did not feel stigmatised by attending holiday clubs and welcomed the inclusive approach of holiday provision as a way of meeting and making new friends out with their normal friendship groups.
Mann et al. (2021).	To investigate how holiday club leaders in London source and buy food to be served in holiday club settings	Holiday club leaders: <i>N</i> = 53	Self-completion online survey	London	Holiday club leaders face significant challenges sourcing and buying food, using multiple strategies and tactics to enable them to serve healthy meals to child holiday club attendees, Clubs rely heavily on donations from surplus food charities.

Author, year	Aim of study	Sample	Data collection	Context	Key findings
Long et al (2021)	To investigate the relationship between child holiday club attendance and parental mental wellbeing	Parents/carers: <i>N</i> = 133	Self-completion questionnaire	North East England	Holiday club attendance reduces social isolation for families and promotes the development of relationships between parents and children

Chapter 2: Bring it on Brum Evaluation 2022

Birmingham City Council received £8,029,880.00 to deliver the HAF programme in Birmingham, in 2022. The Council commissioned StreetGames as the co-ordinating organisation and Street Games commissioned the Healthy Living Lab, at Northumbria University to evaluate Bring it on Brum by administering a parent survey and a holiday club leader survey. While the survey administered in the 2021 evaluation of Bring it on Brum provided strong evidence of the impact of Bring it on Brum across a wide range of measures, made possible through the inclusion of a control group, no studies or reports have been published that have researched HAF outcomes over time. This is important as the outcomes reported in 2021 may be attributable to a novelty effect or may not be sustainable over time. To our knowledge, this is the first report to systematically conduct cross-sectional analysis over two years, enabling Birmingham City Council and Street Games to gain insight to change over time.

2.1 The Evaluation

To evaluate the impact of 'Bring it on Brum' the research team used the two online parent surveys, that had been co-produced in consultation with a Participant Involvement and Engagement Steering Group in 2021, to compare HAF attendees to non-HAF attendees. Both surveys are tried and tested and have good face and construct validity and reliability. One parent survey was distributed to all parents and caregivers with children attending Bring it on Brum, whilst another other parent survey was distributed to a matched group of parents and caregivers, in terms of gross household income, whose children who did not attend Bring it on Brum.

The parents and caregivers with children who did not attend Bring it on Brum were composed of two groups: (1) those with children who did not attend any type of childcare outside of the home and (2) those with children who attended non-HAF childcare. This second group of parents included those who sometimes paid significant sums of money for summer childcare. This design allowed the research team to allocate parent/caregivers into one of three groups according to: a) whether one child or more attended Bring it on Brum, b) whether one child or more attended other childcare during the school holiday, and c) whether children attended no form of holiday provision or childcare outside of the home. To reduce contamination across groups, and to ensure that parents were allocated to the correct group, a series of specific screening questions were employed.

In addition to evaluating differences between Bring it on Brum (HAF) and non-HAF attendees/families, the present evaluation also accounts for dose (i.e., the number of hours children attended Bring it on Brum or accessed another childcare setting). Assessing dose is important in

shaping policy and mechanism of delivery at a national and local level. That is, it may be the case that some children or youth only attended one day of Bring it on Brum while others attended multiple days over the course of the summer holiday. Accounting for variation in dose helps provide additional data on the impact of Bring it on Brum club attendance.

Both sets of parent surveys (Bring it on Brum and non-HAF) were asked the same set of questions, except that the parents with children attending Bring it on Brum were asked additional questions to evaluate their unique experience of Bring it on Brum in Birmingham. Across all participant groups, parents were asked to focus on one child within the family, determined by asking parents or carers to focus on their eldest child between 5-to 16-years of age. Participants with children attending Bring it on Brum were sampled through Bring it on Brum parent/caregiver email addresses provided when registering for Bring it on Brum. Street Games sent the online survey link to parents. The comparator group (excluding all families in Birmingham) were recruited through Prolific, an online survey platform frequently used by social science researchers. Given the Healthy Living Lab's past experience in evaluating Bring it on Brum we attempted to match the control group with the Bring it on Brum group, basing our calculations for last year's FSM Bring it on Brum attendees. However, based on management information and sample demographics, post intervention, Street Games targeting of FSM children proved effective, and it is notable that there is a marked increase, in our sample, from 65% in 2021 to 84% in 2022 in the percentage of parents whose child/children were eligible for FSM. Furthermore, there was a greater percentage of parents not in full time employment in the Bring it on Brum group compared to the other groups; again, a change from the data collected in 2021. This suggests that Bring it on Brum was effective in a) increasing the engagement of FSM children in the programme and b) attracting some of the most disadvantaged families in Birmingham (see Figures 1-3). However, we must acknowledge that despite our efforts, the groups in our samples are not matched in terms of demographic data; hence a degree of caution is required in making direct comparisons between groups.

2.1.2 Aims, Objectives and Research Questions

In terms of the evaluation, the research team decided to use the same surveys used in the 2021 evaluation of Bring it on Brum. The parental survey was used to compare attendees to a matched group of parents using other childcare provision and a group of parents using no club/childcare over the summer holiday period in 2022. Where possible, parent questionnaires incorporated standardised measures (e.g., the complete 6-item USDA measure of food security, the Warwick and Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale, the Global Perceived Stress Questionnaire). While the holiday club leader survey captured the views of holiday club leads on the effectiveness and delivery of Bring

it on Brum at the local level. Using the same tried and tested surveys also enabled the research team to make comparison to the findings reported in 2021.

2.1.3 Aims and Objectives:

The main aim of this research study is to explore the impact of Bring it on Brum on a range of outcomes collected by a parent survey and a holiday club leader survey. The first objective of this study is to collect the views of holiday club leaders and parents on the perceived benefits of Bring it on Brum during the summer of 2022. The second objective of the study is to analyse quantitative data from the parent survey and the holiday club leader survey regarding the impact of Bring it on Brum on a number of outcomes, and to compare, where appropriate, data between 2021 and 2022 to assess change. The third objective is to compare data, where appropriate, to a control group of parents whose child/children did not attend Bring it on Brum.

2.1.4 Research Questions:

The following research questions were addressed:

- What was the impact of Bring it on Brum on children's health and wellbeing?
- What was the impact of Bring it on Brum on parents and caregiver's health and wellbeing?
- What are the views of holiday club leaders and parents on the perceived overall effectiveness of Bring it on Brum?
- Are there any notable differences in the data between 2021 and 2022?
- Are there any significant differences between the Bring it on Brum group and the control group?

2.1.5 Design

To address these key research questions, we administered an online parent survey and an online holiday club leader survey.

2.2 Surveys

The evaluation consisted of a parental survey to compare HAF attendees to two counterfactual groups. One group consisted of parents whose children attended Bring it on Brum, while the first counterfactual group were parents that used alternative childcare, and the second consisted of parents who did not access any childcare provision during the summer holiday 2022. The survey for the Bring it on Brum group also collected data on dose (number of hours attending club across the summer) and additional outcome measures. The research team either used standardised measures

or measures that the research team have used in the past and have published in peer-reviewed journals. The parent survey collected data on the following outcomes:

- Household food security was measured using the US Department of Agriculture “FS Scale” for a 30-day reference period (USDA Economic Research Services, 2020), recently validated by the UK Department of Work and Pensions for use in the Family Resources Survey (Department for Work and Pensions, 2021).
- Parental Stress was measured using a Global Perceived Stress Scale (Cohen et al., 1983)
- Childcare
- Children’s Physical Activity

2.2.1 Bring it on Brum Parent Survey Only:

- Safety
- Anti-social behaviour
- Social Isolation
- Activities
- School Readiness
- Confidence
- Aspirations
- Registration/booking
- Food Provision

2.2.2 Holiday Club Leader Survey:

At the beginning of September 2022, an online holiday club leader survey link was sent to all holiday club leaders participating in Bring it on Brum. The survey asked questions on:

- How well prepared were you to deliver Bring it on Brum?
- How subscribed was your holiday club?
- Who did your club target?
- How do parent’s/carers register?
- Where did you source your food?
- Quality of food provision
- Food waste
- Number of cooking sessions
- Number of physical activity sessions

2.3 Ethics

Full ethical approval for this research programme was obtained from the Faculty of Health and Life Science at Northumbria University (Number 33684). The Healthy Living Lab worked in partnership with Birmingham City Council and Street Games to ensure that all ethical protocols were followed, and all data protocols complied with GDPR.

2.4 Methods

All participants were recruited online. The Bring it on Brum sampling frame consisted of all parents/caregivers whose child(ren) attended a Bring it on Brum holiday club and who shared their email address with Street Games. Street Games sent an email to all parents/carers in the sampling frame asking them to participate in the research. That email contained a link to the survey. A total of N=1,339 parents agreed to participate in the research and completed the survey. These 1,339 parents/carers represented experiences at just over 100 different clubs across Birmingham. It is important to point out that not all Bring it on Brum parents/carers who filled out and returned the survey answered all survey questions. Thus, the statistical summaries for the Bring it on Brum sample are based only on items that participants answered. Descriptions of survey items presented in this report for the Bring it on Brum parents/carers are therefore dependent on the number of parents/carers who responded to that item. The Prolific sample was also recruited online and consisted of N=220 parents/carers whose children attended childcare other than Bring it on Brum during the school holiday and N=889 parents/carers whose children did not attend any form of holiday provision outside of the home. Parents and carers who completed the Bring it on Brum survey were given a chance to win a £500 Love2Shop gift voucher as a token of appreciation for their time. Prolific participants were compensated £2.50 for their time. Figures 1-3 (below) presents the demographic composition of each group. Once all data were collected from the Bring it on Brum and Prolific sample the data were coded, cleaned, and merged into a single file for reporting purposes.

The combined parents sample consisted of $n = 2,447$. This is over double the sample size of 2021 ($n = 1,110$). *It should be noted that Northumbria University paid for the survey administration, hosting, data collection and analysis of the control groups.* The Holiday club survey was completed by 57 holiday club leaders, from across 57 independent organisations. Holiday club leaders were given a chance to win two £250 Love2Shop vouchers as a token of appreciation for their time.

Chapter 3: Impact Evaluation Findings

3.1 Parent Survey

The data from the parent survey (n = 2,447) are presented according to group; a) Bring it on Brum group (n= 1,339), b) parents of children in other childcare settings (n =220), and c) parents of children who received no summer holiday provision (n=888), and where appropriate by year and dose. Firstly, it should also be noted that 55.4% (95% CI, 50.7% to 60.1%) of Bring it on Brum parents said that 2022 was the first year that their child/children had attended Bring it on Brum (n=437). Secondly, a comparison of group demographics showed that the groups were not comparable in terms of FSM, ethnicity, and full-time employment. Indeed, the economic makeup of the Bring it on Brum households changed significant between 2021 and 2022. As was the case in 2021, Bring it on Brum households are much more diverse than households in other areas. The demographic differences between group are illustrated in Figures 1 – 3. Figure 1 clearly shows that the number of children attending Bring it on Brum who are eligible for free school meals has risen significantly.

Figure 1. Comparison of Free School Meal Status of Household (n =2,091) – Children Eligible for FSM attending Bring it on Brum between 2021-2022.

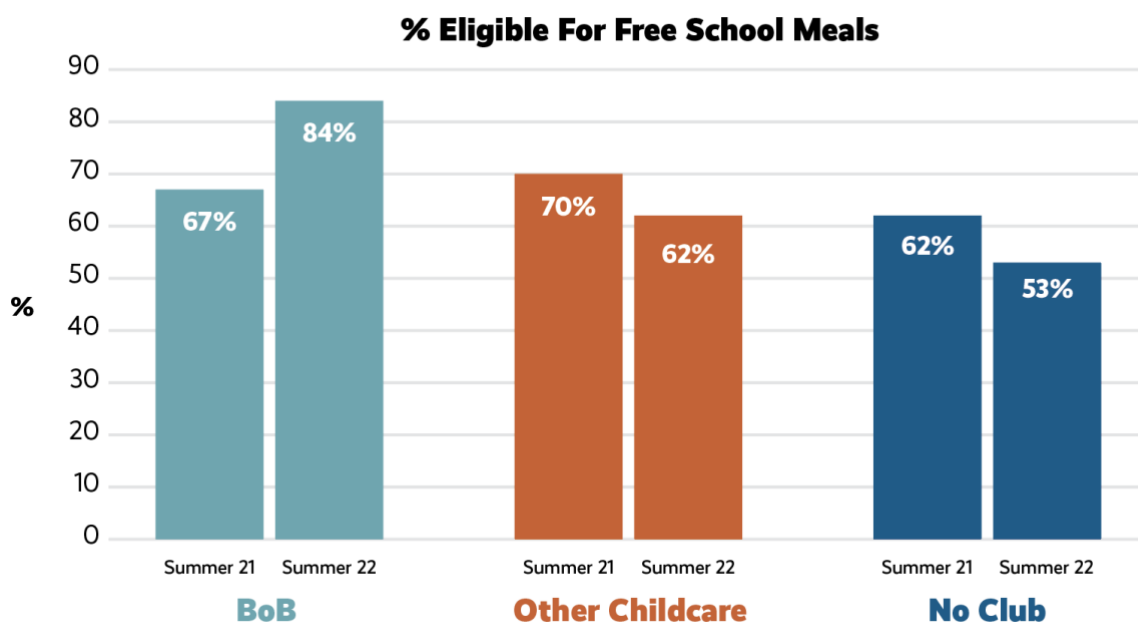


Figure 2. Comparison (%) of Racial/Ethnic Status of Parent/Caregiver

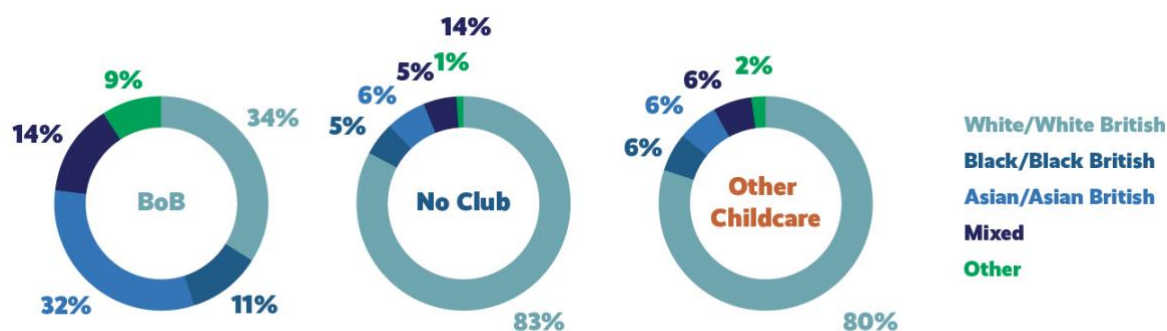
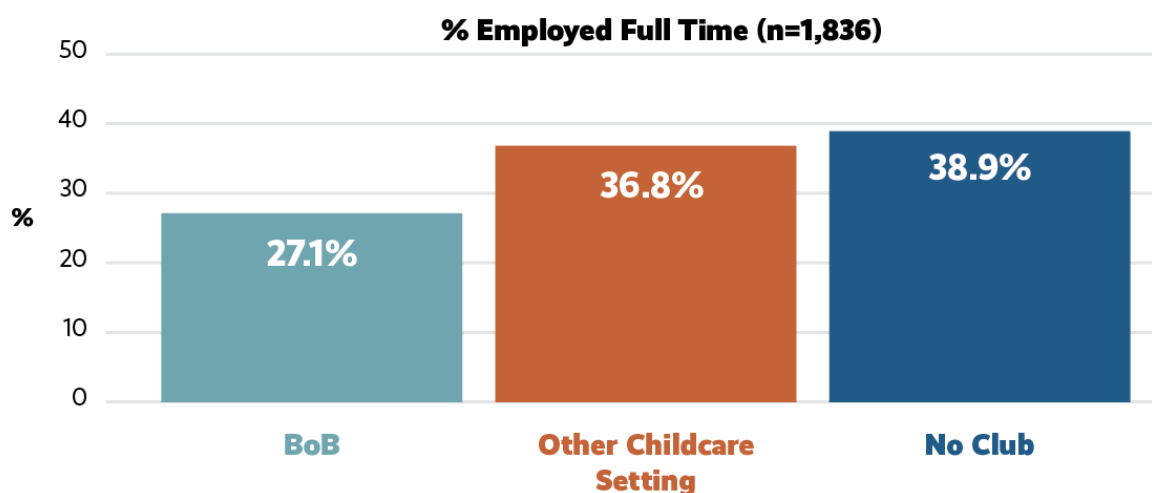


Figure 3. Comparison of Parent/Caregiver Employment Status according to Group

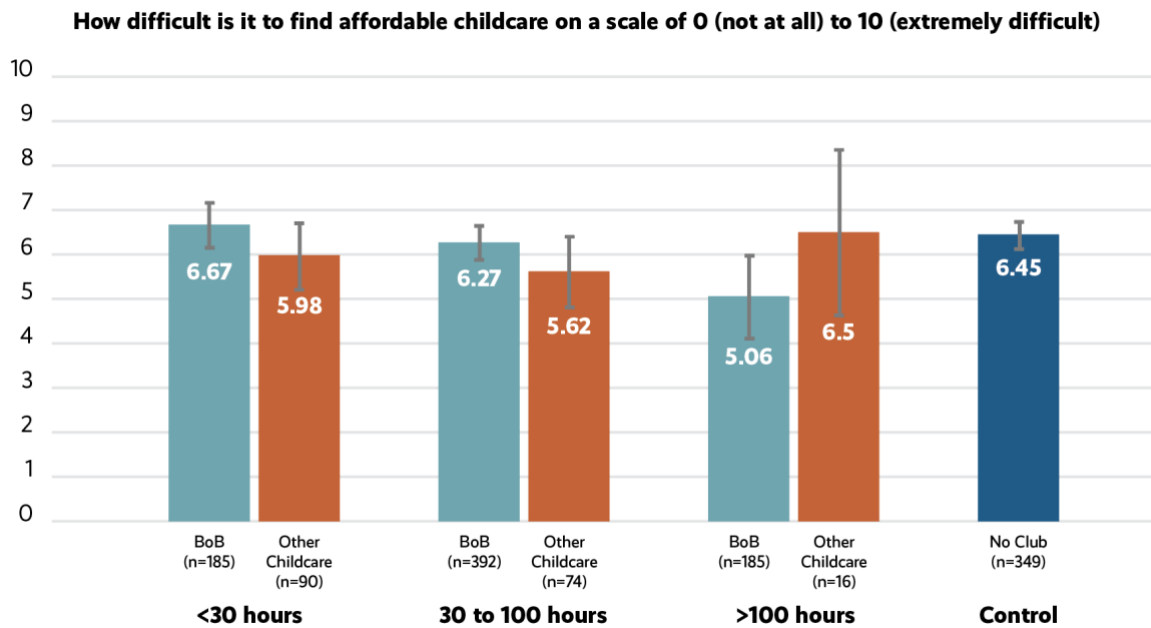


3.1.2 Childcare

The parent/carer survey asked parents about how easy it was on a scale of 0 (not at all difficult) to 10 (extremely difficult) to find affordable childcare during the summer holiday 2021. As shown in Figure 4 parents across all groups struggle to find affordable childcare. Parents in the Bring it on Brum sample found it more difficult to access childcare provision for under 100 hours across the summer holiday, compared to the no club sample. Although there is some evidence that Bring it on Brum parents/carers found accessing childcare less difficult in 2022 than in 2021 (mean = 6.47 vs. 7.10). When parents accessed over 100 hours of childcare, the differences between the two groups were statistically significant (i.e., mean = 5.06 vs. mean = 6.5) suggesting that Bring it on Brum may play an important role in the so called, 'levelling up' agenda when parents can access over 100 hours of childcare across the summer holiday. Moreover, there was a significant correlation between

hours attending Bring it on Brum and parents' perceptions of affordable childcare; as attendance in Bring it on Brum increased, so did parents' perceptions about being able to find affordable childcare. One hundred hours is approximately equivalent to 16 hours a week, which aligns to the DfE's 4 X 4 X 4 model. However, further research is required to ascertain the best model of delivery in terms of childcare provision and other key factors.

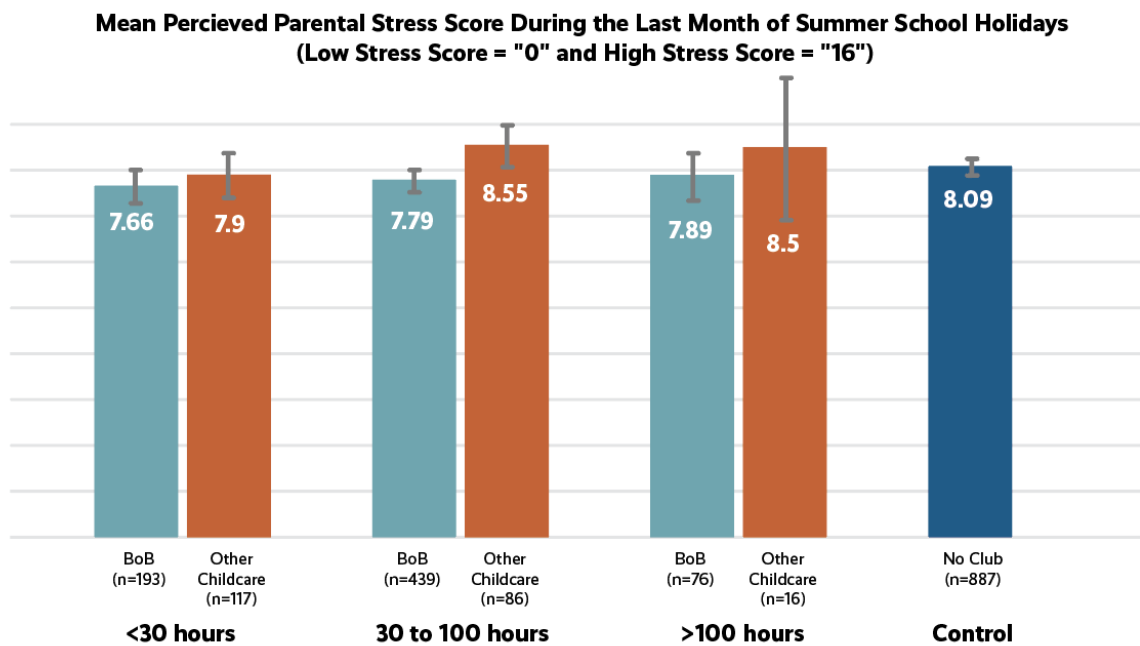
Figure 4. Affordable childcare during the summer according to group and dose



3.1.3 Parental Stress

Parental stress was measured using a Global Measure of Perceived Stress (Cohen, Kamarck, & Mermelstein (1983). The current findings support prior research from the Healthy Living Lab (Stretesky et al., 2020) in showing that overall stress is lower in the Bring it on Brum sample compared to the No Club sample. However, unlike the finding in 2021, in the current study there was no significant correlation between parental stress and hours of attending Bring it on Brum ($r = -0.14$, $p < 0.62$; not significant; $n = 708$)

Figure 5. Perceived Summer Stress Scores of Parents

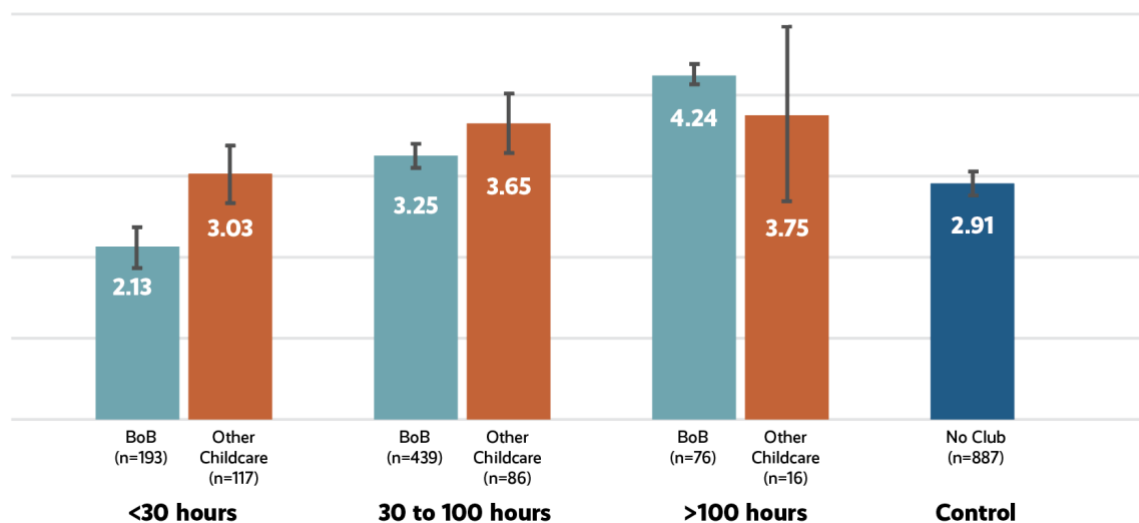


3.1.4 Children's Physical Activity

The World Health Organisation (2020) defines physical activity as any bodily movement that requires energy expenditure including walking, running and playing sports. The Chief Medical Officers (2019) recommend participating in at least 60 minutes of moderate to vigorous-intensity physical activity every day. This can improve muscular and cardiorespiratory fitness and improve bone and functional health (World Health Organisation, 2020). Whereas, inactive behaviours, also referred to as sedentary behaviours, are defined by the Chief Medical Officers (2019) as undertaking little movement or activity and using little energy above what is used at rest. Given the range in opening times of clubs the researchers used the CMO recommendation of 60 minutes participation in MVPA per day for a minimum of 4 days per week, with a full explanation of MVPA provided to parents. Figure 6 clearly shows a significant positive correlation ($r=0.39$, $p < 0.01$; $n = 817$) between the number of hours attending Bring it on Brum and the number of weeks that children were engaged in MVPA (defined as at least 4 days a week for at least 60 mins a day). Analysis also showed a significant difference between Bring it on Brum and No Club attendance, with children participating in Bring it on Brum as engaging in more MVPA than the children in the No Club group. These data replicate the pattern of data reported in 2021.

Figure 6. Physical Activity Levels of Children During the Summer School Holidays

**Mean Number of Weeks Children Physically Active During the 6 Week Summer Holiday
(Defined as at least 4 days a week at least 60 minutes a day)**

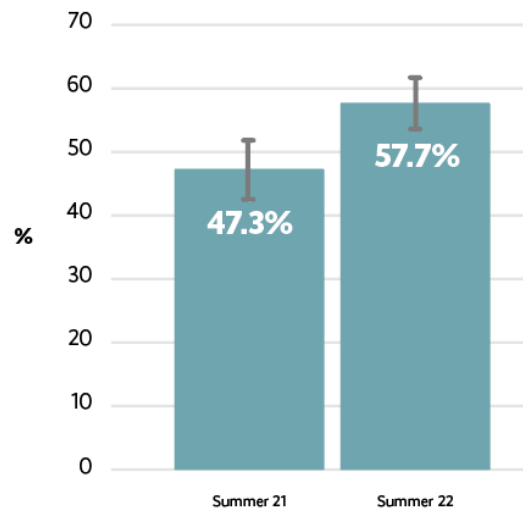


3.1.5 Food Insecurity

Given that a key aim of HAF is the provision of at least one healthy meal to children during the school holiday, accompanied by the recent data demonstrating increasing levels of food insecurity in the UK, the research team measured household food security using the Six-item US Household Food Security Survey Module. Analysis showed an increase in the number of households experiencing food insecurity nationally and for those families whose children attended Bring it on Brum between 2021 and 2022 (see Figure 7 and Figure 8). Although there was an increase in household food insecurity for both groups, the level of food insecurity is higher in the Bring it on Brum sample (67%) compared to the national sample (58%). However, it is important to note the different demographics between samples. Notably, in 2021 approximately 66% of children attending Bring it on Brum were in receipt of means-tested FSM, but this percentage rose to approximately 75% in 2022, by contrast the percentage of children in receipt of means tested free school meals declined in the national sample (see Figure 1).

Figure 7. National Comparison in Food Insecurity During School Summer Holidays in 2021 and 2022.

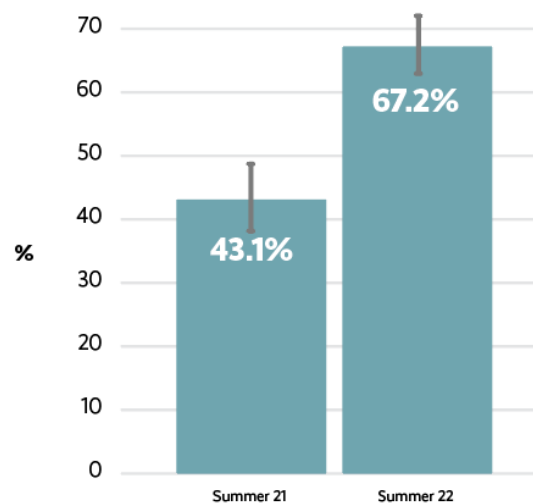
% Households Earning Less than £20k Reporting Low Levels of Food Security During the Summer School Holidays



Note: Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals around the estimate (n=1,107); "Low Food Security" during the Summer School Holidays is measured using a self-administered and modified version of the Six-Item USDA Household Food Security Module; Diffe

Figure 8: Bring it on Brum Comparison in Food Insecurity During the Summer Holiday in 2021 and 2022.

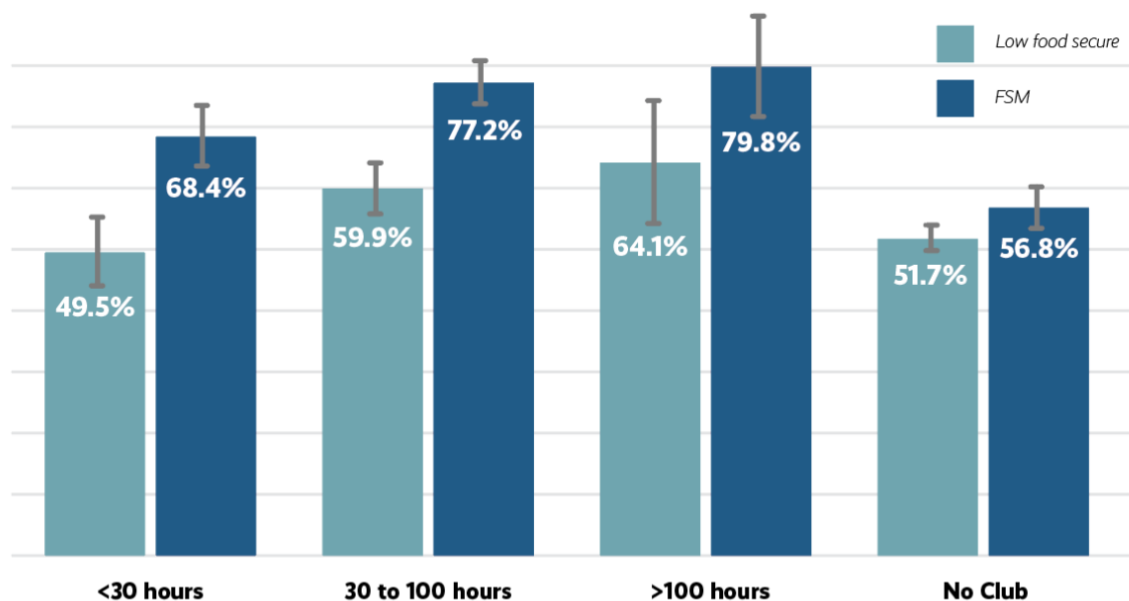
% of BoB Households Reporting Low Levels of Food Security During the Summer School Holidays



Note: Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals around the estimate (n=753); "Low Food Security" during the summer school holiday is defined using a self-administered and modified version of the Six-Item USDA Household Food Security Module

To explore this finding in more detail, we conducted analyses to explore the association between time spent at Bring it on Brum, free school meal eligibility and household food insecurity (Figure 9). As shown in figure 9, time spent at Bring it on Brum is dependent on free school meal eligibility and household food insecurity.

Figure 9. Time spent at Bring it on Brum is Dependent on Free School Meal Eligibility and Household Food Insecurity.



Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals for estimate;
 (Pearson Chi-Square: Low Food Security (yes/no) by Time (4 categories) = 13.54; 3 df; $p < 0.05$)
 Summer food security measured with modified version of USDA six-item HFSM

3.1.6 Bring it on Brum Additional Parents Questions

The Bring it on Brum survey contained additional questions to gather parent's (n=1,339) views on the holiday club(s) that their child/children attended. Where a family had multiple children attending Bring it on Brum, and the questions asked about individual child characteristics or outcomes, we asked parents to focus on their eldest child. As the number of parent responses varied according to question, we report the sample size for each outcome.

3.1.6.1 Parents Perceptions about Registering a Child/children for Bring it on Brum

Firstly, we were interested in finding out how parents had heard about Bring it on Brum. The findings showed that the largest proportion of parents/carers (37.3% in 2022 versus 45.8% in 2021) found out about Bring it on Brum from their child's school, although the percentage of parents hearing about Bring it on Brum from schools declined between 2021 to 2022. This decline between may reflect greater engagement by school in delivering Bring it on Brum, rather than acting purely as a referral point. Secondly, we were interested in whether their child/children had attended free holiday provision in the past, our data show that 55.4% (95% CI, 50.7 to 60.1% of Bring it on Brum parents said 2022 was the first year their children attended Bring it on Brum (n =437), suggesting that Bring it on Brum is reaching new families whom have not previously engaged with Bring it on

Brum. The survey also showed that 20.5% of families learnt about Bring it on Brum from past attendance (Table 2). A significant increase from 2021, when only 2.3% of families had learned about Bring it on Brum because they previously attended a free activity and holiday club.

Table 2. How parents/carers found out about Bring it on Brum (n= 1110)

	Percentage
Child’s School	37.3
Family/Friends/Neighbours	10.2
Bring it on Brum social media	9.9
Youth Centre of Charity	19
Local Council	3.1
Attended before	20.5

In our sample (n=900), the majority of parents (85%) registered for Bring it on Brum via the Bring it on Brum website, with the remainder registering at the community venue. Regardless of the registration route, most parents reported (92%) that that registration process was easy.

Finally, we were interested in parents’ perceptions about their child’s/children’s holiday club opening days and times. The descriptive findings showed that 68% of parents thought the opening days and times to be ‘about right’; an increase of 22% on data in the 2021 evaluation.

3.1.6.2 Food

Although prior research has shown that parents perceptions about whether food adheres to the School Food Standards may be problematic, we wanted to collect parent’s views on the food served at club as HAF affords the opportunity of improving dietary intake, increasing the range of food consumed, and opportunities for children to be engaged in hands on food preparation. To measure these outcomes, we asked parents to agree or disagree with the following statements in Table 3.

Table 3. Parent/caregiver perceptions about food during Bring it on Brum

	% Agree
Club served nutritious food	88.8

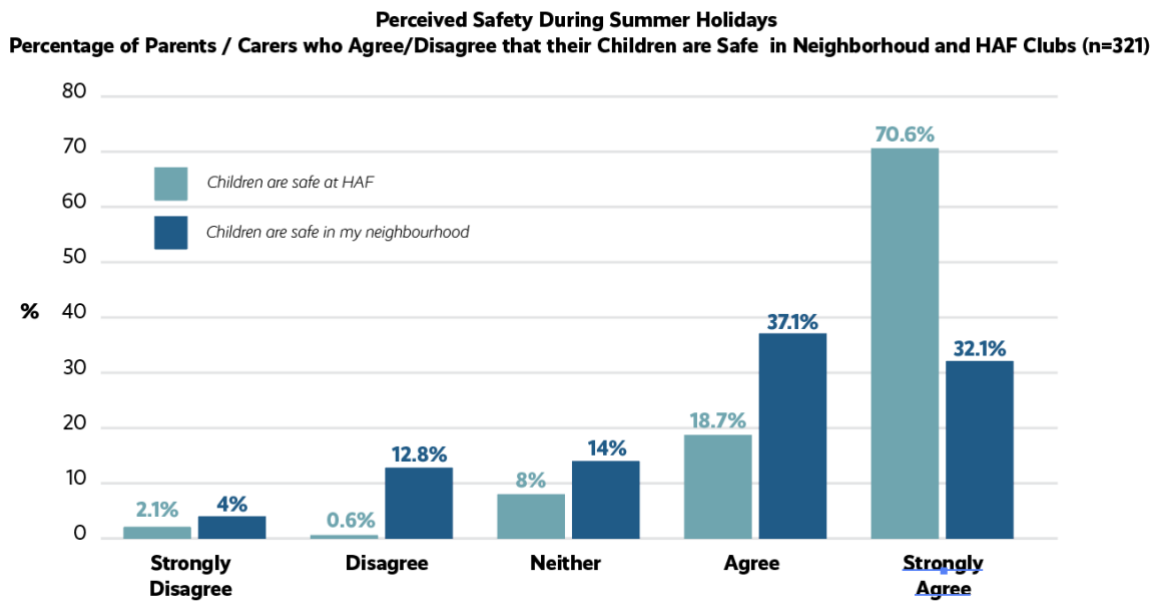
My child(ren) enjoyed club food	76.7
Child(ren) tried new foods at club	31.2
Child(ren) ate wider variety of foods at club	31.3
Club met food and dietary requirements	67.7
Opportunities at club for hands on food activities	19.2
Club improved child(ren) knowledge & confidence to prepare food	11.2

Although there was an increase in the percentage of parents agreeing the holiday club served nutritious food, that their child(ren) enjoyed club food, and an increase in the percentage of parents agreeing that the club met food and dietary requirements; there was a decrease in the percentage of parents that thought their children tried new foods, ate a wider variety of foods, had opportunities for hands on food activities, and that club improved their child's knowledge and confidence to prepare food.

3.1.6.3 Safety

In terms of perceived safety, we compared the percentage of parents who agreed that their children were safe while attending Bring it on Brum compared to their local neighbourhood. The results clearly show that 71% of parents strongly agree that their children are safe whilst attending Bring it on Brum (a 10% increase compared to last year) versus 32% who strongly agree that their children are safe in their immediate neighbourhood. Together these findings show the parent's think their children are safer whilst attending Bring it on Brum and in their immediate neighbourhood.

Figure 10. Perceived safety during summer

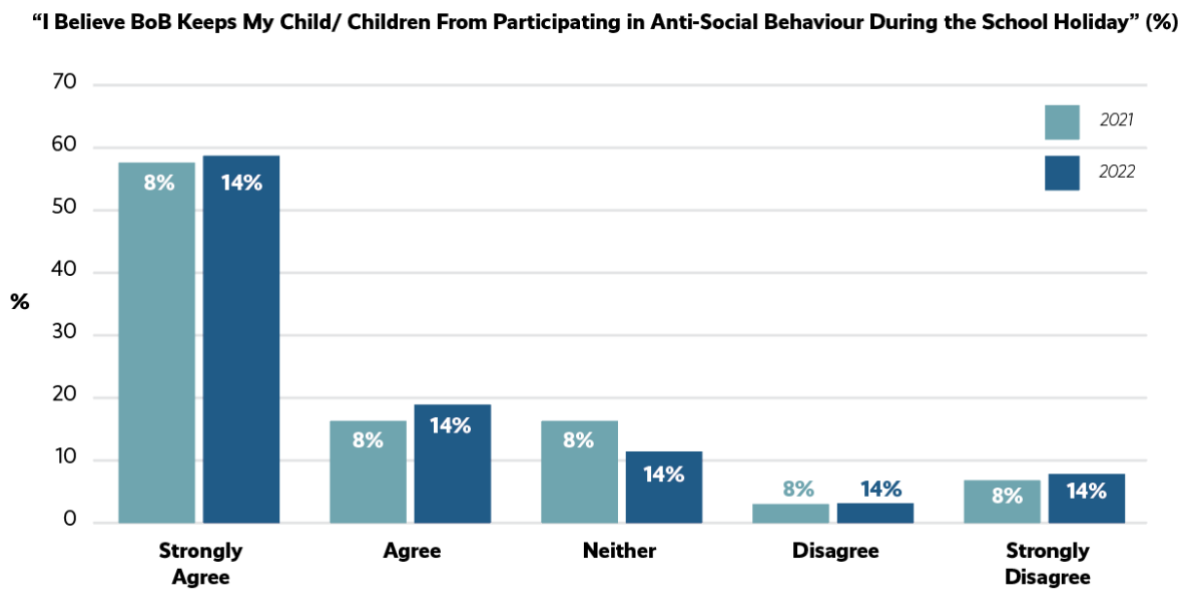


3.1.6.4 Anti-social Behaviour

Some of the early research by the Healthy Living Lab showed that parents thought that holiday clubs kept children from participating in anti-social behaviour during the school holidays (Defeyter et al., 2015a, 2018a; Mann, 2019; Shinwell, 2019). These findings were replicated in the current study, with nearly 77% of parents strongly agreeing or agreeing that Bring it on Brum kept their children from participating in anti-social behaviour (see Figure 11). Overall, these findings are comparable with the findings of the Bring it on Brum evaluation conducted in 2021.

More than 75% of parents believe that Bring it on Brum help prevent anti-social behaviours (n=784). T-test analysis for difference between the proportion of parents that “Agree/Strongly Agree” to the question, “I believe that Bring it on Brum keeps my child/children from participating in anti-social behaviour during the school Holiday”, between 2021 and 2022 are not statistically significant, indicating no change over time.

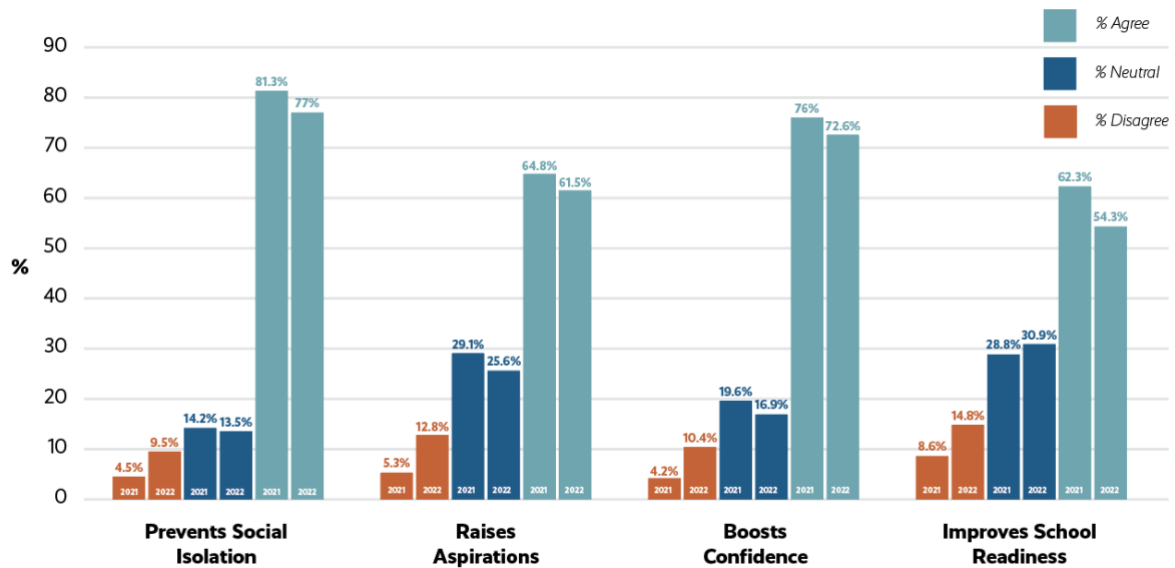
Figure 11. Perceived anti-social behaviour during summer.



3.1.6.5 Parent reported benefits of Bring it on Brum

In addition to the above factors, the research team explored parents’ perceptions about the social and psychological benefits for children afforded by attending Bring it on Brum. We compared data between 2021 and 2022. T-tests for differences between 2021 and 2022 in the proportion of parents that “Agree” that clubs Prevent Social Isolation, Raise Aspirations, and Boosts Confidence are not statistically significant, meaning that there is no yearly change in parents’ perceptions about clubs on these indicators (Figure 12). The decline in parents who agreed that Bring it on Brum improved School Readiness was significant ($t = 2.3(784)$ $p < 0.05$).

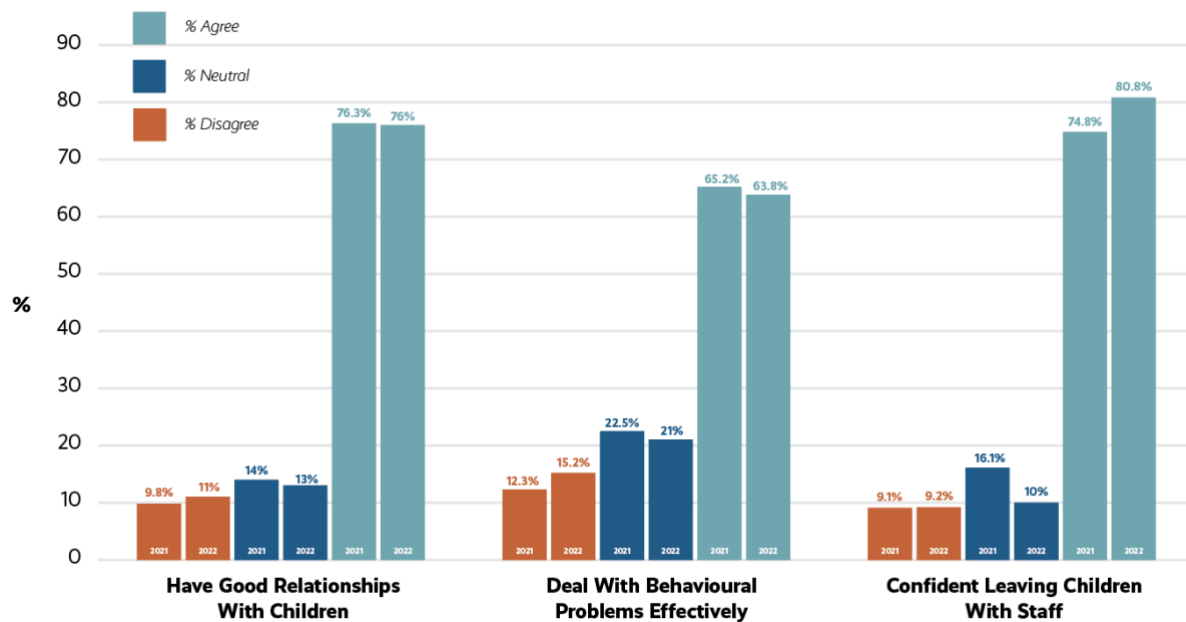
Figure 12. Parents perceptions of holiday clubs in terms of preventing social isolation, raising aspirations, boosting confidence, improving school readiness. For each series, the first column represents data from 2021 and the second column data from 2022.



3.1.6.6 Overall parent satisfaction

Overall parent satisfaction of parents whose children attended Bring it on Brum was measured by the likelihood of parents choosing to send their children to Bring it on Brum in 2022. Overall satisfaction of Bring it on Brum was very high, with 98% of parents reported that they were very likely to send their children to a Bring it on Brum in 2022, similar to last year's finding of 95%. We also analysed the percentage of parents who agreed that a) staff at the holiday club have good relationships with children, b) deal with behavioural problems effectively, and c) they are confident in leaving their children with staff (Figure 13).

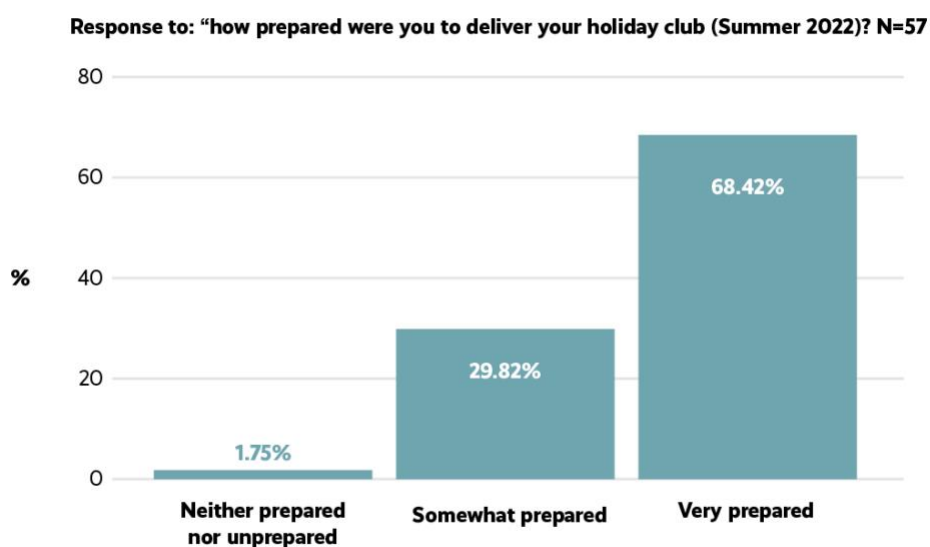
Figure 13. Parents perceptions about Bring it on Brum 2021/2022 (n =822). For each series, the first column represents data from 2021 and the second column data from 2022.



3.2 Preparedness of Holiday Clubs

Firstly, we asked how prepared club leaders (n =57) were for Summer 2022 delivery of Bring it on Brum. The findings (see Figure 14) showed that nearly approximately 98% of clubs were either very prepared or somewhat prepared to deliver summer provision; an 8% increase on data reported in the 2021 evaluation, mainly driven by clubs moving from ‘somewhat prepared’ to ‘very prepared’.

Figure 14. Preparedness to deliver Bring it on Brum

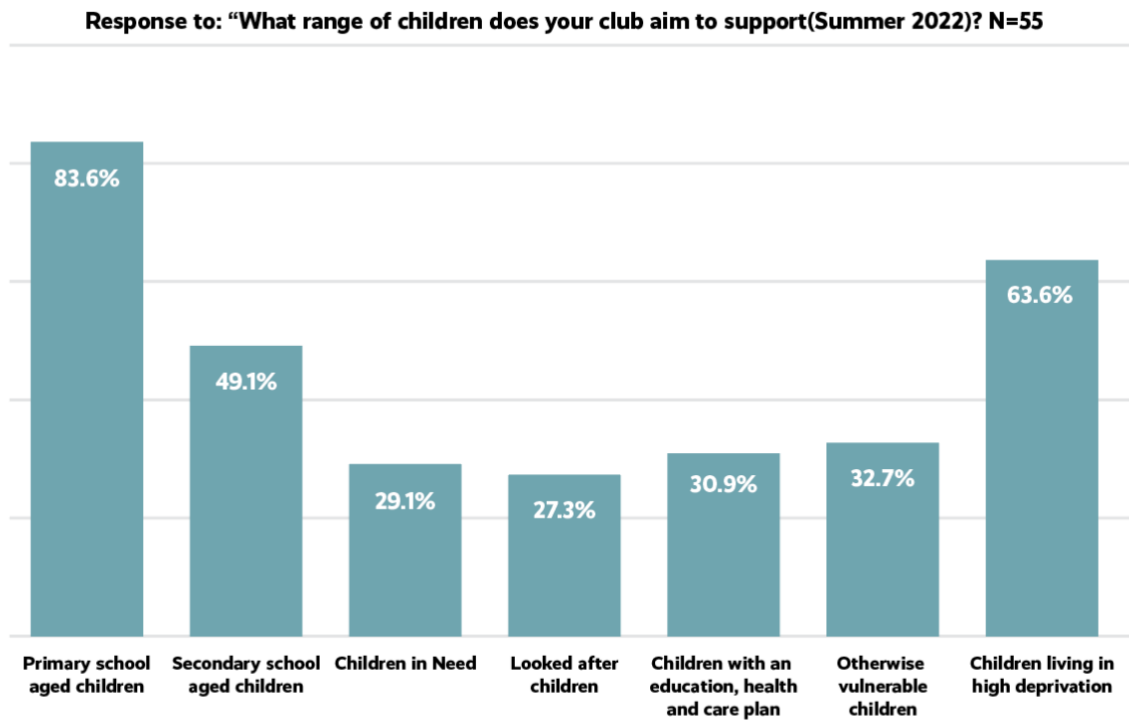


Note: n=16 clubs did not answer

3.2.1 Target Population

Next, we explored the population that clubs targeted. In terms of the target population, the majority of clubs aimed to serve a wide range of children. Encouragingly, clubs aimed to target their provision to accommodate a wide range of children (see Figure 15).

Figure 15. Target Population across clubs



Note: most clubs aimed to support more than one type of child

3.2.3 Activities:

Most clubs offered a range of physical activities and enrichment activities to children. However, as shown in Table 4, the majority of physical activity sessions are provided for primary school children and far fewer for secondary school aged children.

3.2.4 Nutritional Education Sessions:

In comparing the data on clubs delivering 1-10 nutritional educational sessions in 2022; the data showed a marked increase for both primary (88.5% versus 71%) and secondary (67% versus 47%) compared to 2021. By contrast the number of clubs offering more than 10 sessions in 2022 compared to 2021 decreased (5.8% versus 16.8% for primary) and (2.3 versus 4.9% for secondary). The decline in clubs offering more than 10 sessions in 2022 may account for the parents thinking that fewer nutritional education sessions were delivered.

Table 5. Number of cooking/nutritional education sessions offered to primary school children, secondary school children and parents/carers (Summer 2022) n= 52 clubs

	0 Sessions	1 to 10 Sessions	More Than 10 Sessions
Primary School Children	5.80%	88.50%	5.80%
Secondary School Children	30.20%	67.40%	2.30%
Parents/carers	50.00%	50.00%	0.00%

Table 4. Number of Physical Activities sessions offered to primary school aged children, secondary school aged children and parents/carers (Summer 2022)

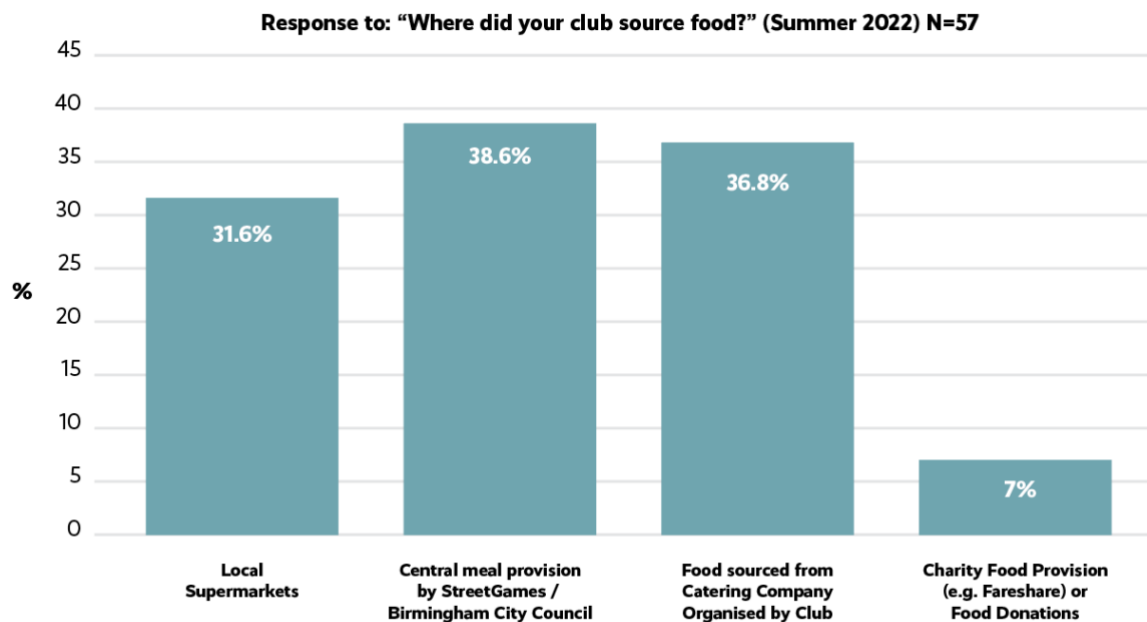
	0 Sessions	1 to 10 Sessions	More Than 10 Sessions
Primary School Children	7.50%	60.40%	32.10%
Secondary School Children	31.80%	50.00%	18.20%
Parents/carers	70.30%	29.70%	0.00%

n = 53 clubs

3.2.5 Food & Meals Served:

The sustainability of the food provided was explored by asking club leaders about where they sourced food and food waste. The data for 2022 differ from the findings of the evaluation conducted in 2021 in the following ways. There is a noticeable shift from sourcing food from local supermarkets (32% in 2022 versus 58% in 2021), to a reliance on food sourced from a catering company (37% in 2022 versus 27% in 2021).

Figure 16. Where food was sourced by holiday clubs



Note: some clubs used more than one source of food provision

3.2.6. Quality of Food Served

Holiday club leaders were asked to rate the quality of the meals served on a scale of 1 (poor) to 10 (excellent). The overall median score was 8, with the majority of clubs scoring their food provision as good or excellent (Figure 17). These findings remain consistent with the findings reported in 2021, suggesting that the changes in sourcing food have not impacted on perceived food quality. In addition, we separated club leaders' ratings according to on-site versus central meal provision (Figure 18). We purposefully asked club leaders to provide a rating of meals served, rather than asking club leaders to rate meals in terms of adherence to School Food Standards, as our prior research on holiday clubs has demonstrated that club leaders often rate the food offer as excellent, even in cases where the food does not fully adhere to School Food Standards.

Figure 17. Holiday club leader's ratings of food served at clubs

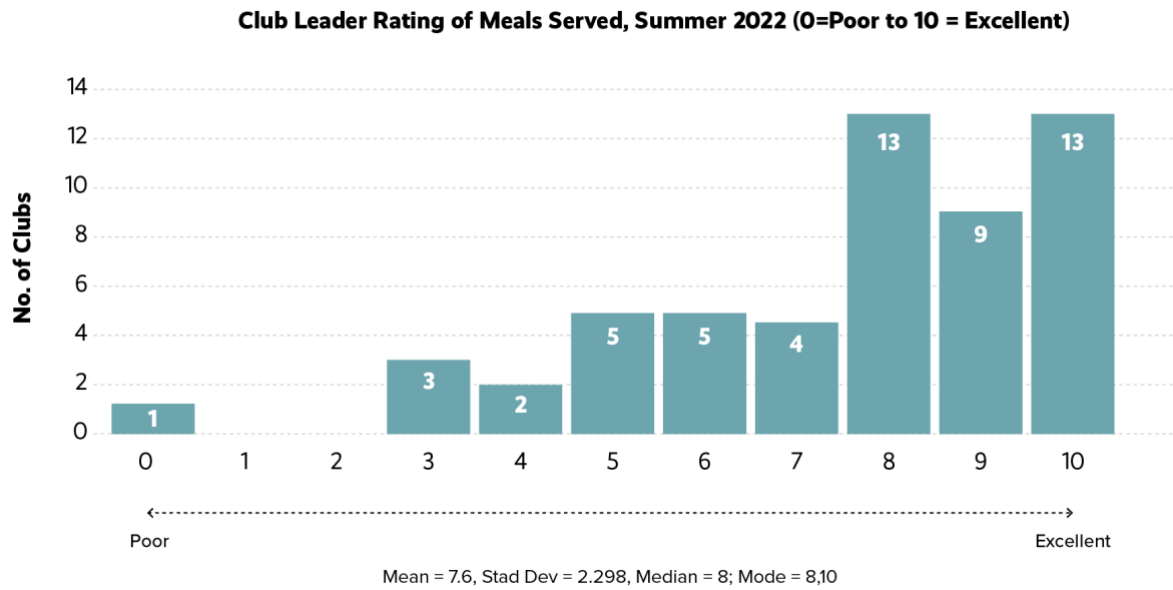
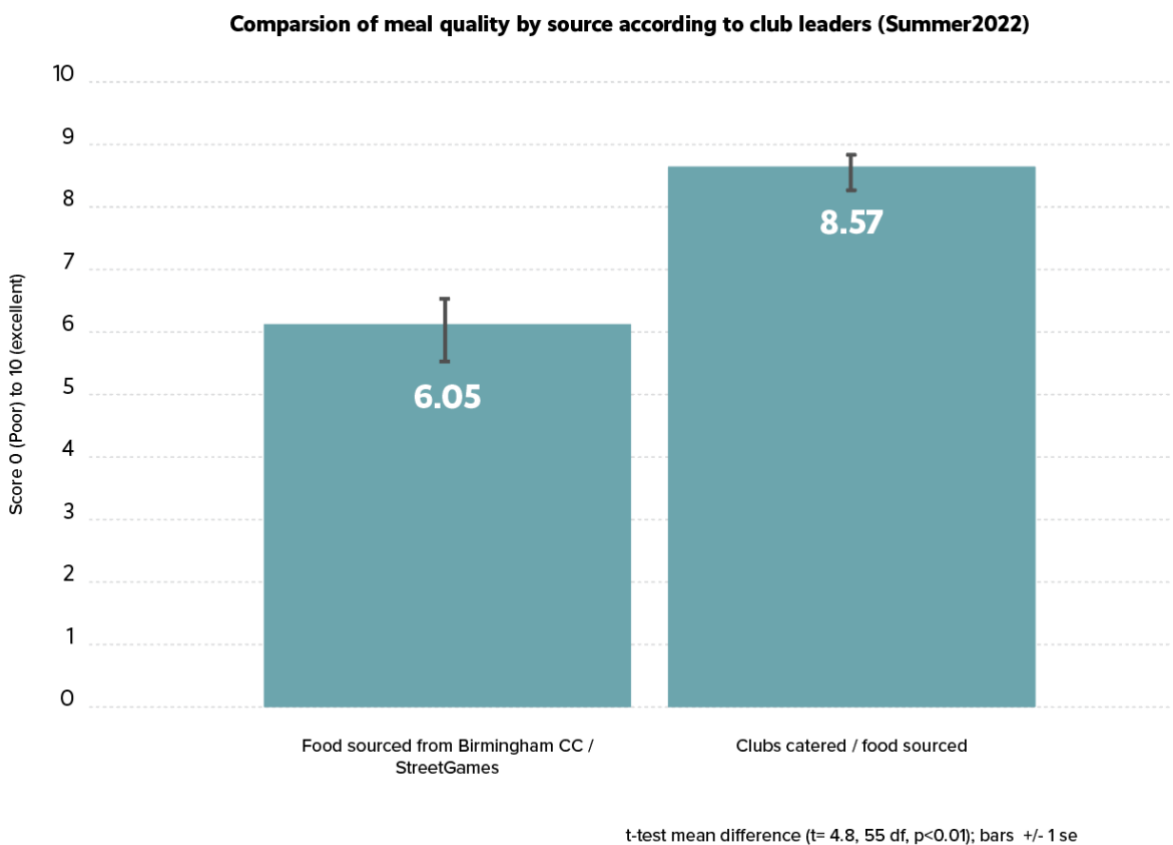


Figure 18. Comparing Meal Quality Score According to Source



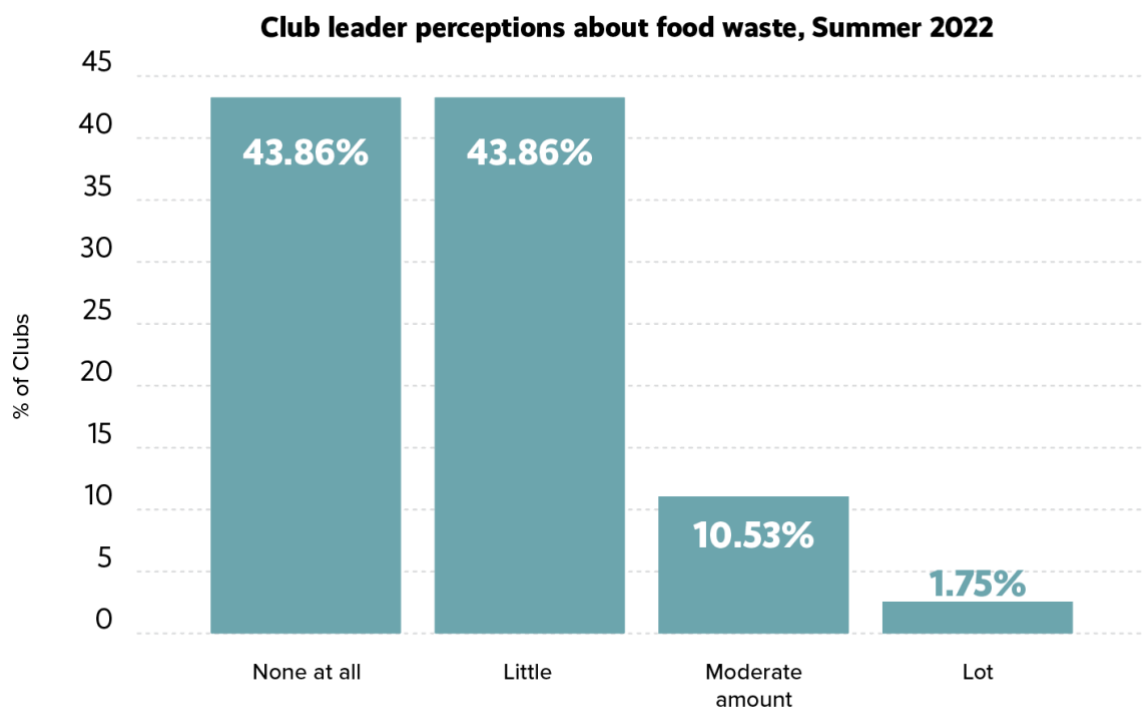
Analysis showed a significant difference in perceived meal quality between centrally sourced food and food sourced by clubs ($t(55) = 4.8, p < 0.01$), with club food being rated significantly higher than

centrally sourced food. However, centrally sourced food provision has improved between 2021 (Mean rating = 4.9) and 2022 (Mean rating = 6.0).

3.2.7 Food Waste

In our 2021 evaluation we highlighted how managing varying attendance patterns and ‘no shows’ can prove complex in terms of meal provision. However, the findings of the current project (Figure 19) show that very little food is wasted, with nearly 88% of clubs reporting ‘none’ or ‘little’ wastage; an improvement compared to the 71% reported in 2021.

Figure 19. Holiday Club Leaders Perceptions About Food Waste



4. Conclusion and Recommendations for Future Delivery

Overall, Street Games were effective in engaging local organisations to deliver 'Bring it on Brum' to over 20,000 eligible children, with 75% of this population eligible for free school meals (75% FSM). Although the number of organisations delivering HAF has dropped, the number of clubs delivered between 2021 to 2022 has remained constant, as has the overall level of quality. The data, split according to primary and secondary school aged children, showed that the vast majority of attendees were primary school aged children (n =21,142) with far fewer secondary school aged children in attendance (n=4959). These data follow the same pattern as national data (Ecorys, 2022). It is particularly encouraging to see an increase in the number of schools (16%) directly engaging with Bring it on Brum, alongside an increase in SEND primary school children (11%), and a slight increase in terms of secondary provision between 2021 to 2022.

The research team merged data files across years to enable a comparison between Bring it on Brum 2021 and Bring it on Brum 2022. Our data from the parent's survey show, that for 2022, that 50% of children whom attended Bring it on Brum had not previously engaged in Bring it on Brum. Whilst this is positive, it also suggests that a number of families who attended last year, have not attended this year. Local evaluation should seek to identify reasons for the 'churn' in attendance. Our data clearly demonstrate that Bring it on Brum is reaching some of the most deprived families in Birmingham, as evidenced by the percentage of children eligible for free school meals, the percentage of families experiencing food insecurity, and the percentage of parents not in full time employment. On each of these measures the parents in the Bring it on Brum sample fared worse than the national sample, matched in terms of gross household income.

It is important to note that the high level of household food insecurity found in 2022 is worrying, particularly amongst the Bring it on Brum sample. It should be remembered that the parent's surveys were administered in September 2022 and these surveys asked parents to base their responses on the past month. Whilst household food insecurity is higher in the Bring it on Brum sample compared to the national comparator sample, the samples are not matched in terms of a number of other factors (e.g., employment, free school meal eligibility), so any direct comparisons must be taken with a degree of caution. Perhaps, more importantly, with the high percentage of households currently experiencing medium/high food insecurity it is not particularly surprising that one meal per child per day does not significantly affect food insecurity at the household level. If one meal per child, per day, alleviated household food insecurity then no household whose children received means tested free schools would be in household food insecurity. National data clearly show that this is not the case. We propose that when household food insecurity is at a low level, the

addition of one meal per child, whether through free school meals or HAF provision, makes a significant difference in whether the household experiences food insecurity. However, when the level of food insecurity is medium/high, the addition of one meal per child is not enough to tip households from being food insecure to being food secure, whether the meal is provided at school or HAF. So, under conditions where the majority of households face medium/ high levels of food insecurity, HAF (like free school meals) supports families by ensuring that children receive a minimum of at least one nutritionally balanced meal per day during the school holiday period.

Unlike HAF delivery during Covid lockdowns where cold food provision was a viable option, the current cost of living crisis suggests that there may be a need to provide hot food options for children, particularly when households are experiencing so called, 'fuel poverty'. Furthermore, given the high level of household food insecurity in the Birmingham sample, clubs should try to provide more than one meal per day, either a breakfast, tea, or healthy snacks, and/or take-home food. Furthermore, as only approximately 4% of households experiencing food insecurity visit a food bank, the Council should explore ways of supporting families attending HAF in the immediate term (i.e. food provision), but also longer-term strategies (e.g. an embedded member of council staff to provide support in terms of housing, benefit claims, debt advice). Such interventions should be carefully planned by working with communities to reduce stigma.

However, Bring it on Brum, is not solely a child feeding programme. Indeed, some of the biggest impacts on children and parents are in found in terms of a) increased physical activity in children, b) raising children's aspirations, c) boosting children's confidence, d) reducing anti-social behaviours, e) reducing social isolation and g) improving mental wellbeing in parents. Clearly, Bring it on Brum offers a wide range of activities that drive positive outcomes for both parents and children.

All the key recommendations in this report result from the research findings of the current evaluation and the evaluation undertaken in 2021, in combination with the HAF+ Design Sprint workshops that involved young people from Birmingham. There may be additional learning by participating organisations and evaluations that are not captured in this evaluation. The key recommendations of this report for the future delivery of Bring it on Brum include:

- Ensure that an appropriate process is in place to record reasons for non-attendance, in the case of 'no shows' and for parents who decided to no longer participate in the programme. This feedback will improve the quality-of-service provision, identify possible blockers, and will help to identify patterns that may inform future policy and practice.

- Implement recommendations from the HAF+ Design Sprint, specifically young people's recommendations for Birmingham. It is predicted, that if implemented, this will help to drive youth participation in Bring it on Brum.
- Continue with a community targeting approach to prevent stigma and drive positive outcomes at all levels by exploring how HAF could integrate with other city-wide programmes.
- During such high levels of food insecurity, consider serving mainly hot food and consider how to work in partnership with other local agencies to attenuate household food insecurity.
- Build on the excellent staff development programme delivered in 2021 and 2022.
- Consider activities that will support children and young people to return to school in the Autumn term. This is particularly important, given the educational loss many children and young people experienced during covid combined with 'summer learning loss' that disproportionately affects disadvantaged children (Shinwell & Defeyter, 2017).

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