

# Evaluation of Early Parenthood Domain

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URBAN95  
עיר גדולה לילדים קטנים

מטח  
המרכז לטכנולוגיה חינוכית



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# Table of Contents

<b>Background &amp; Research Objectives</b> .....	<b>4</b>	<b>Designated Activities &amp; Events</b> .....	<b>22-27</b>
<b>Logic Model for Early Parenthood</b> .....	<b>5</b>	Types of Activities - Supply & Demand.....	22-23
<b>Research Layout - Mapping of Tools and Indicators</b> .....	<b>6</b>	Types of Activities – The Indoor Play Area.....	24
<b>Research Layout - Evaluation Activities</b> .....	<b>7</b>	Opportunities following COVID-19.....	24
Early parenthood - Summary of activities (2017-2019).....	<b>8</b>	Joint Play Kits.....	25-26
Early parenthood - Summary of activities (2020).....	<b>9</b>	Mid-Summary: Designated Activities & Events.....	27
Research Demographic.....	10	<b>Parental Knowledge and Tools</b> .....	<b>28-29</b>
<b>Consumption of Services &amp; Satisfaction</b> .....	<b>11-13</b>	Workshops’ criteria set implementation.....	28-29
Target Audiences.....	12	<b>Sense of Community &amp; Social Belonging</b> .....	<b>30-31</b>
Parents as Early Childhood Leaders.....	12	Salta Workshops.....	30
Mid-Summary: Consumption of Services & Satisfaction.....	13	The community centers.....	31
<b>Availability of Services Close to Home</b> .....	<b>14-16</b>	<b>Regional Summary</b> .....	<b>32-35</b>
Access to Community Centers.....	14	Center.....	32
Centers Design and Adaptation for Young Children.....	15	North.....	33
Mid-Summary: Availability of Services Close to Home.....	16	South – “Neighborhood as a City” .....	34
<b>Satisfaction with Centers Operation &amp; Staff</b> .....	<b>17-21</b>	Jaffa.....	35
Centers’ Operation & Relations with Staff.....	17	<b>General Summary - Insights &amp; Recommendations</b> .....	<b>36</b>
Advertising Channels.....	18	<b>Case Study - Arabic speaking Jaffa Residents</b> .....	<b>37-43</b>
Quality of Activities & Operators’ Professionalism.....	19	Background & Research Layout.....	38
SALTA as a Professional Standard.....	20	Population & Community Life Characterization.....	39
Staff Trainings.....	20	Use of Services & Participation in Activities.....	40
Mid-Summary: Centers Operation & Staff Satisfaction.....	21	Opportunities & Challenges.....	41-42
		Recommendations.....	43
		<b>Appendices</b> .....	<b>44-52</b>

# Background & Research Objectives

The Urban95 Program strives to advance Early Parenthood as one of the program's main action domains, aiming to develop knowledge, awareness and parental efficacy to promote optimal development of young children. The main actions taken as part of the establishment and development of the **SALTA** brand are:

- **Develop a basket of services**, that serves as a kit of professional services, such as: Workshops and activities for young children and their caregivers, in SALTA community centers and well-baby clinics; trainings and enrichment sessions for workshops' operators and early childhood coordinators in community centers and indoor play areas (parent-child play). *"Urban95 has put things in order in terms of the Social Services Administration and Digital and created a standard. In SALTA, for example, there is a professional layout of workshops and physical resources."* (Senior official in Community Administration)
- **Establish Community Centers**, which provide a high-quality basket of services (SALTA) for children from birth to 3 years old, appointing designated early childhood coordinators in the community centers.
- **Developing SALTA Workshops** for parents and their young children, in accordance with the criteria set\* by Dr. Dana Shay and the Urban95 team, which emphasize essential elements to child development, amongst which, parent-child relationship, using indoor play areas for mutual enjoyment and the importance of parents' mental and emotional wellbeing. Also, conducting professional seminars and trainings with workshops' operators and SALTA coordinators.
- **Creating a Design Plan for Indoor Play Areas** according to which new indoor play areas are built: *"Urban acts in accordance with a unified design plan for indoor play areas and the centers cannot wait to receive the plan for the play area. The residents see the same thing across the centers, no matter whether it's in the south, north or center of the city and it is wonderful!"* (Senior official in Community Administration)
- Systemic perception of the neighborhood. The objective is that all services for young children and their parents are provided at a distance of up to 15 minutes – **15 Minutes Neighborhood**

Evaluation Research Objective – to map needs, review stances and evaluate various services provided by the municipal entities as part of the early parenthood domain of the Urban95 program, amongst city residents - parents and their children from birth to 3 years old.

\* The criteria set definitions provided at the appendix

# Logic Model for Early Parenthood

Actions	Outputs*	Short Term results (End of Phase II)	Mid-Term results (3-5 Years)	Long Term Results (5-10 Years)
<p>Range of high-quality content &amp; accessible services near homes to prompt parental knowledge, awareness and best practices development enabling better early childhood development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Para-medical activities</li> <li>- Leisure and enrichment activities</li> <li>- Workshops for strengthening parent-child relations and building a 'parental community' in the neighborhood</li> <li>- Tailoring services and content for specific needs of vulnerable populations</li> </ul> <p>Training professionals to provide qualified service for early childhood (Designated coordinator in community center, instructors and operators)</p> <p>Opening of SALTA community centers all around the city, including fitted content and services (specifically in southern neighborhoods and Jaffa, for asylums, Arabic speakers)</p> <p>Built an independent activation models for SALTA community centers, allowing operation without the support of Urban95 program</p>	<p># of caregivers all around the city, and specifically in southern neighborhoods, who are aware and familiar with the various SALTA services</p> <p># of caregivers and their children who use SALTA services (Workshops, playrooms, community well-baby clinics)</p> <p># of caregivers and their children who participate in workshops, acquiring knowledge and tools</p> <p># of participants satisfied with services</p> <p># of new SALTA centers, specifically in southern neighborhoods &amp; Jaffa</p>	<p># of caregivers satisfied with affordability &amp; accessibility of services (near their homes)</p> <p># of caregivers satisfied with availability, frequency and quality of SALTA services, including staff attitude</p> <p># of caregivers implementing knowledge and tools acquired through SALTA workshops and services, strengthening parent-child relation and parental self-efficacy</p> <p>Caregivers meet neighbors and establish new relations thanks to SALTA workshops</p> <p>Implementation of independent activation models in primary SALTA community centers</p>	<p>Services offered to caregivers near their home throughout the city (in each neighborhood: community center services, well-baby clinic, pregnancy and birth communities):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Provide comprehensive, accessible and suitable service to the local community</li> <li>- Services consumption by caregivers and their children</li> <li>- Establishment of parental groups and a sense of connectedness to the community</li> </ul> <p>Strengthen parental self-efficacy, and establish best parental practices: Reading stories and joint play in the home and in public spaces</p> <p>Establishment of independent activation model in all SALTA community centers</p>	<p>All range of services in SALTA community centers, are perceived as providers of professional and qualified assistance and consulting early childhood development</p> <p>Improvement in parental behaviors, sense of parental self-efficacy and wellbeing (including, but not limited to, sense of community, reduction in loneliness)</p> <p>Increase in amount and variety of community and public events focused on caregivers and their children</p>

\*Collection and measurement of output evaluations is carried out on an ongoing basis by the Urban95 staff of the Tel Aviv - Jaffa municipality





# Mapping of Tools and Indicators – What Tool Measures which Indicator

Indicator* / Tool	Retrospective Review & Data Analysis	In-depth Interviews	Field Observations	Focus Groups	Activities Feedback Surveys	Caregivers' Surveys
Service utilization & satisfaction			V	V	V	V
Availability of all community center services near the home	V	V		V		V
Satisfaction with operation and staff of community centers			V	V	V	V
Extent of activities & designated events for caregivers & young children	V	V	V	V	V	V
Acquire and Implement of parental knowledge and tools			V	V	V	V
Implement of advancing parental practices (joint play)			V	V	V	V
Strengthen parental perceptions and parent-child relationships			V	V	V	V
Improved in sense of parental wellbeing and self-efficacy			V	V	V	V
Community & social belonging		V	V	V	V	V
Independent activation model	V	V		V		

The findings will be presented in the report according to the order of indicators.  
 All parental issues will be included under - *"Acquiring and Implementation of Knowledge and Tools"*.

\* Evaluation indicators definitions provided at the appendix

# Research Layout - Evaluation Activities

**Most research activities took place between June 2020 – January 2021 and included:**

Research Tools	Quantity	Number of Participants / Respondents	Gender	Age	Region	Data Collection Time
<b>Observations of Activities</b>	3 SALTA “toddlers at the park” 3 Ongoing SALTA workshops	Approx. 70 adult participants Approx. 60 children	57 women 15 men	Adults (mostly parents) age 30-40, with children from birth to 9 years old	2 observations in each of the regions: North, Center, South, Jaffa	Aug’ – Nov’ 2020
<b>Interviews with Participants in Observed Activities</b>	2 Activities in capsules 2 Zoom workshops	Approx. 40 interviewees	36 women 8 men			
<b>Feedback surveys</b>	Approx. 20 activities (distribution by municipality)	184 respondents				
	6 types of quarantine kits & Joint play kits	216 Respondents	204 women 12 men		“Neighborhood as a City” * In Jaffa – amongst Hebrew speakers	Sep’ - Dec’ 2020
	4 staff training (distribution by municipality)	93 respondents				Dec’ 2018 - Sep’ 2020
<b>Focus Groups</b>	2 parents’ groups in the South (“Neighborhood as a City”)	15 participants	46 women 3 men	Parents 25-40 years old	South – HaTikva, Ezra & HaArgazim	July 2020
	2 parents’ groups in Jaffa – (Arabic speakers)	15 female participants			Jaffa	Sep’ - Nov’ 2020
	2 parents’ groups in the North	15 female participants			North	Jan’ 2021
	1 group of kindergarten teachers from Jaffa (Arabic speakers)	4 female participants		Jaffa	Nov’ 2020	
	Southern staff group ("Neighborhood as a City")	8 participants	15 women		South – Beit Dani & Urim Center	July 2020
	2 groups of the Northern staff members	16 participants	9 men		North + Center	Jan’ 2021
<b>In-depth Interviews</b>	5 interviews with early childhood coordinators/community centers’ managers	5 participants	6 women 4 men		North + Center	Jan’ 2021
	5 interviews with officials in Community Administration	5 participants				July - Aug’ 2020
<b>Data from "City Survey" Submitted by municipality</b>	Data segmentation according to region and amongst parents of young children up to 6	Representative sample of 3000 residents age 20+			Across the city	Sep’ 2020
<b>Poll amongst Jaffa residents</b>		37 respondents	33 women 4 men		Jaffa	Nov’ 2020
<b>Observation in Jaffa Playground</b>		10 adults and approx. 20 children	6 women 4 men		Jaffa	Nov’ 2020

## Early parenthood- Summary of activities (2017-2019)

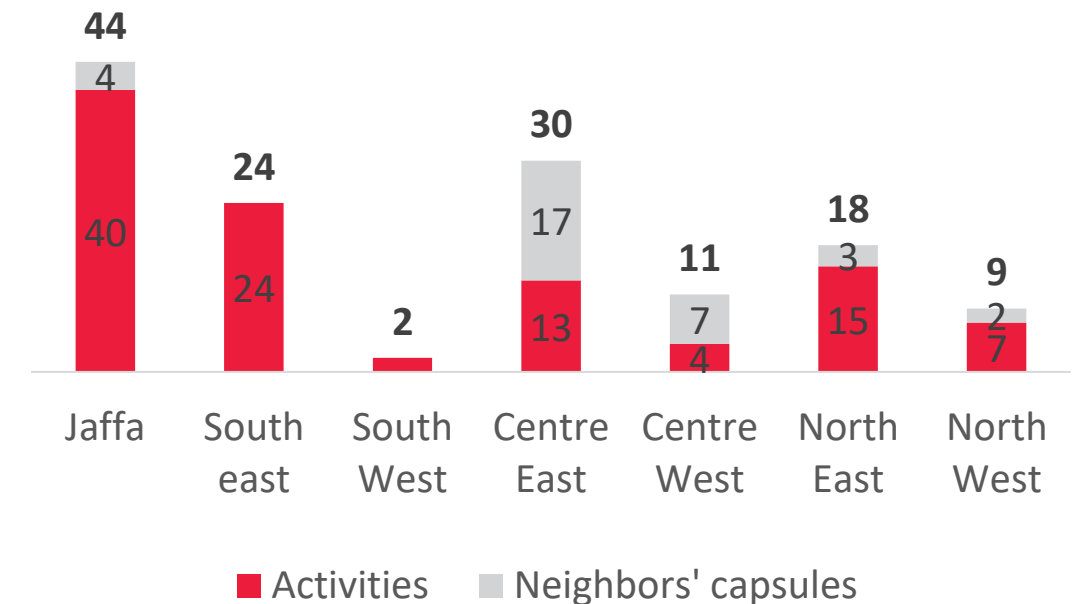
SALTA – Community Centers & Workshops	Indoor Play Areas	Southern Tel Aviv & Jaffa	Collaboration with MESILA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Establishment of 16 SALTA community centers with municipal funding (160K NIS each).</li><li>• Development of 30 different types of SALTA workshops.</li><li>• 600 monthly activities in 32 SALTA centers and Well Baby clinics in the community.</li><li>• 13,000 participants (parents and their children) who expressed high satisfaction with the contents of SALTA workshops (4.75 out of 5).</li><li>• Story time and parenthood workshops in libraries: about 40 librarians and 450 participants during Sep'-Oct' 2019.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Development of a design plan for indoor play area.</li><li>• 10 indoor play areas have been built or renovated according to Urban95 principles.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 11 ongoing workshops in the south of the city</li><li>• 8 ongoing workshops were held in Jaffa</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Exposure to thousands of parents from the community of asylum seekers.</li><li>• 3 workshops for parents and children (about 18 dyads).</li><li>• 600 children participated in Urban95 activities.</li><li>• Vroom videos: 150,000 views, 668 Likes and about 300 Shares.</li><li>• Establishment of a therapeutic indoor play area (budget of the Ministry of Welfare: 50,000 NIS).</li></ul>



## During the year of 2020 (COVID-19 crisis):

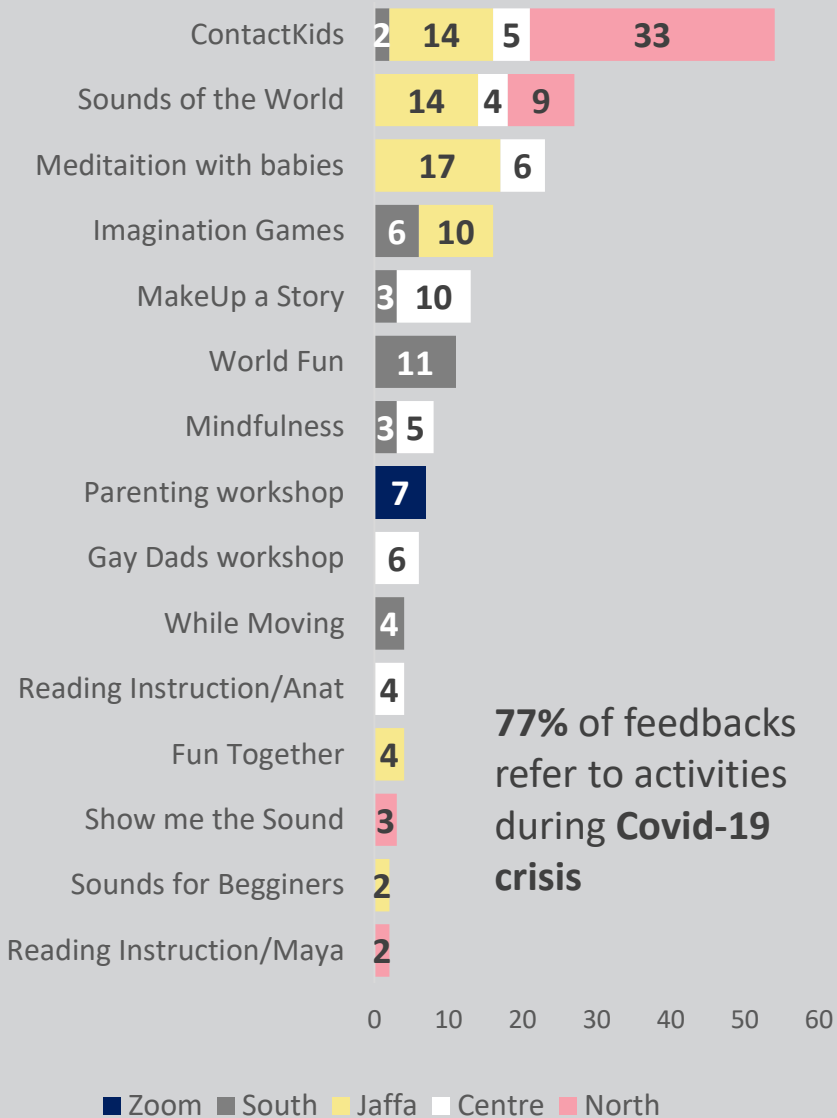
- Recruitment of a local Arabic speaking coordinator by the Jaffa Division in the Community Administration.
- 26 activities were adjusted to public space format.
- 600 Neighbors Play kits were produced and distributed with municipal funding (40%), 60 kits in Arabic.
- 200 Quarantine kits were distributed: 100 in southern neighborhoods and Jaffa, 50 in Arabic and 50 adapted for the ultra-orthodox population.
- Collaboration with MESILA: 200 art kits and play sets, 3 toddler booklets were distributed on 300 copies.

## Volume of Activities at Community Centers during July-November 2020\*



\* According to community administration data

## Feedback for Salta activities (Region by activity) N=184



77% of feedbacks refer to activities during **Covid-19 crisis**

The research demographics includes **739 participants\***:

Mostly **parents\*\*** aged 30-40 – **403 mothers & 59 fathers**

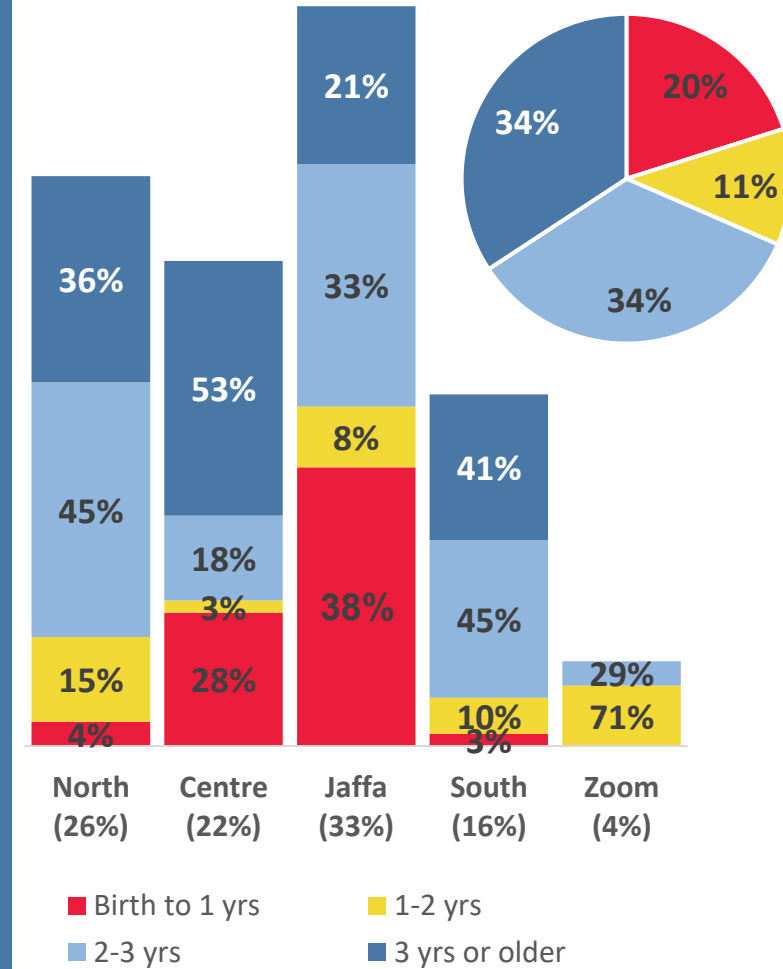
612 city residents & 127 staff members

About **80** babies, toddlers and children from birth to 5 yrs~

\* Not including City Survey 2020 respondents

\*\* Not including respondents to: City Survey 2020, staff feedback surveys

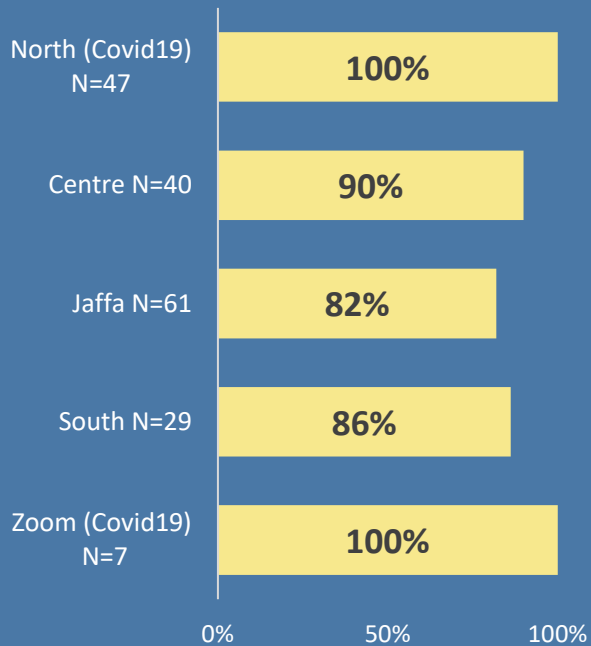
## Feedback for Salta activities (Children's age by region) N=184



In (-) - % of respondents per region

# Consumption of Services & Satisfaction

## Satisfaction & Enjoyment Salta Activities & Workshops to a high/very high extent

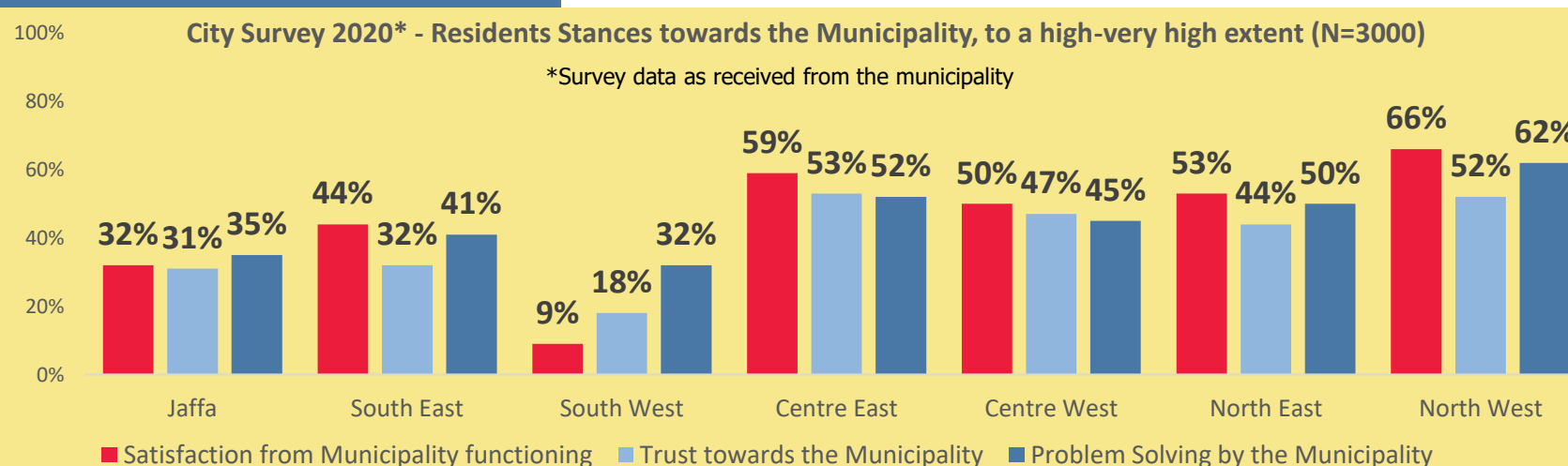


The COVID-19 crisis has affected the community centers and required adjustments in services and activities operation. **Going out to public space** made the services accessible to residents, increased scope of exposure, and by that contributed to an increased sense of belonging and identification with the community. *"It feels like we are the center of the community, now more than ever. Things are done despite the lockdown, the municipality invests... People who haven't heard about us, are joining us now"* (Centre's staff), *"Great activity and the municipality's contribution is highly appreciated!"* (Parents' focus group – North)

In **city Centre**, Both residents and staff indicate **high demand and satisfaction** rates from services and functioning of the community centers. In the **North**, residents are satisfied with existing activities, but there **aren't enough centers and accessibility is limited**. In the **South** ("**Neighborhood as a City**" - NaaC) range of activities and staff's functioning have improved, but the general attitude towards community services is yet **controversial**.

Observations revealed optimal conditions for activities (convenient, pleasant and accessible space), no significant barriers were observed, and the participants expressed a **high level of satisfaction**. The feedback from the workshops in the North and via ZOOM included only workshops held during COVID-19 period. In the South, participant were more satisfied with activities held during Covid-19 period (100%), compared to respondents' general evaluation of activities (86%). In Jaffa a high level of satisfaction is evident (82%). In addition, there is no significant difference between participants' evaluation of workshops held during the COVID-19 crisis and the previous evaluations.

The centers' staff perceives the SALTA workshops as **high-quality and valuable**. Nevertheless, they claim that the range should be updated: *"Less familiar, special contents should be offered... things that are unique to SALTA, parents' workshops and parent-child's activities. There isn't enough diversity, it is wonderful, but the **variety of contents should be expanded..**"*



As evident from the "City Survey" (2020), levels of satisfaction with municipality's functioning, trust in it and perception of it as capable of solving problems, might shed light on the level identification of residents from different regions with the municipality and its function. The respondents from each region evaluated the different issues concerning the municipality similarly, except for the Southern residents who provided a somewhat different evaluation.

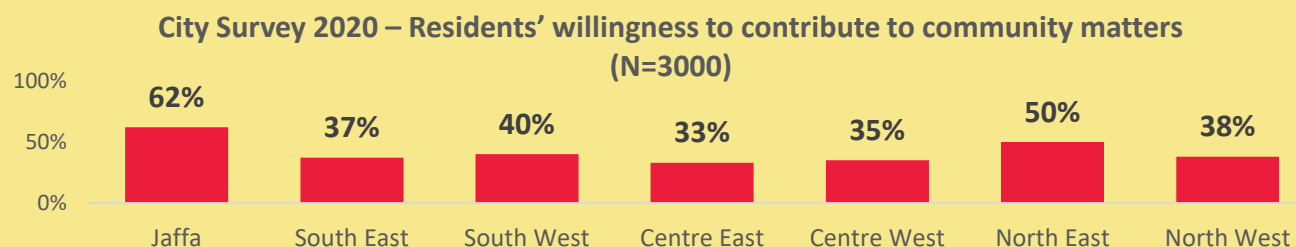
# Consumption of Services & Satisfaction

## Parents as Early Childhood Leaders

**Centre staff members** are divided regarding the Early Childhood Leaders concept. Everyone acknowledges open communication with parents is important: *"We told parents to talk to us about everything they want to do."* In Bavli neighborhood there is significant willingness to recruit parents and integrate them in staff training. Nevertheless, alongside staff providing service and information, conducting highly satisfying activities, in other centers the need to involve parents in organizational roles has not been raised: *"One should be familiar with the demands, what activities are popular. Parents tell what activities they liked and would like to have again.."* Moreover, some thought **parents are unavailable for it**, beyond 'spreading the word'- this is further supported by the "City Survey" 2020: Only a third of Centre residents expressed willingness to contribute to community matters.

**Northern** staff believe parents' feedback is vital: *"It's important to ask what they want and not to dictate activities,"* *"Early childhood leaders might help improve our ability to reach target audience and their needs ...they need to undergo trainings."* Residents were interested in being community leaders but were skeptical of their impact: *"But it means they listen to us. There are always ideas, but then there aren't enough budgets"* (East). In the West, people were willing to volunteer in specific cases: *"When it's something that must be managed regularly, a professional should do it."* The difference between North-Eastern to North-Western residents can also be seen in the "City Survey" 2020 below.

According to "City Survey" - Jaffa residents are the most willing (62%) to engage in the community.



## Target Audiences

According to the staff members, the residents of the Northern and Central parts of the city are opinionated, consistent and willing to pay for quality: *"Picky, carefully choose the activity and whom to pay,"* *"I try to maintain a high quality of contents.. Although some of the activities are rather expensive, parents want to come because it's associated with a high standard, a 'superior, patronizing' community center".* *"This is parents' community that knows how to make demands, but also knows how to join in and help".* *"Some people are more engaged than others... shared parenting, surrogate mothers, all works.. It's important for me to create a place that accepts all types of parents. It's highly emphasized here."* (Centre's staff)

**South residents of "NaaC"**\* don't realize the full potential of community services: *"People from the neighborhood don't use the services enough, not aware to the importance, it might be a financial matter."* Moreover, the community center is perceived as a place that offers minimal public services, as opposed to some private, prestigious alternatives. Some residents **don't use services** (perceiving it as "luxury" because of **lack of awareness, emotional availability, and/or financial resources**. Others, who are interested in such services, but see the **public option as "cheap" and of poor quality**: *"There is an image we need to change. By changing perception. Revolution rather than Evolution. We need to change the notion this is an inferior place. We should Restart the whole concept. This is exactly the kind of place parents need in the winter - a pleasant place to go to, one that does not cost money."*

The **Southern** staff are willing to cooperate with leading parents to distribute information and plan activities. Also, they tried initiating a 'public participation' survey, which resulted, as they claimed, in a low volume of cooperation.

\*Focus groups were held with residents of HaTikva, Ezra & HaArgazim neighborhoods

- SALTA activities are perceived as **high-quality, valuable** activities. There is room for **updating** and adding more contents.
  - 88% of participants assessed that the **SALTA workshop met their expectations / was enjoyable** to a large / very large extent.
  - **The COVID-19 crisis**, following which the activities were shifted to public space, **contributed to greater exposure of the services provided by the community centers** amongst additional residents.
  - It seems that the residents appreciate the fact that the **activities took place during the crisis**, and that the opportunity for a social gathering contributed to **communal bonding** and identification with the municipality.
  - There is a similar residents' profile in the Central and Northern parts of the city: The parents are interested in services provided by the community centers, they set high standards and have critical approach.
- 
- In the South ("Neighborhood as a City") there are **recruiting challenges** amongst two distinguished types of residents: vulnerable population with low awareness of the importance of services and lack of emotional availability and financial means; and on the other hand, population that is interested in services but perceives the public community center as an inferior option compared to the options offered in the private sector.
  - Southern staff express high willingness to involve parents in organizational activities but indicate that a previous attempt for public participation yielded poor results.
- 
- **High level of satisfaction and steady activity** in the Centre. Staff members indicate close relations with residents, which enables them to provide optimal service. So, there is no need to integrate parents as early childhood leaders, as they are **unavailable for significant involvement**, beyond publicizing activities. Specifically, Bavli community center reports a high willingness to involve parents.
- 
- In the North, both parents and staffs show **high level of willingness to engage parents** as early childhood leaders. The residents express their concern that their suggestions are not always implemented in practice due to lack of budgets.

# Availability of Services within Walking Distance from Home

## Access to Community Centers

Stakeholders from the **Centre** reported in their interviews of **high accessibility** of the community centers and residents' tendency to reach the centers by foot or bicycles.

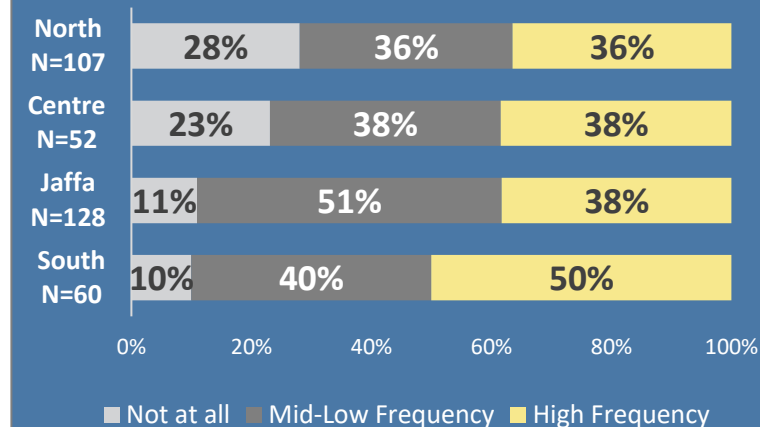
**Southern** residents of "NaaC" reported a busy, **unfriendly route for walking**, with multiple obstructions due to illegal parking and hazards on the pavements. **The southern community center is not perceived as attractive enough to be reached by car:** *"If I bother to start the car, I'll drive to the park or to some other place and not to the center."* Southern staff raised similar complaints about the problematic access routes, and their impact on residents' decision when they choose their destination: *"When it's a mother with a baby stroller, I have an advantage; but once they are in the car, there is no advantage whatsoever. A mother should not have to use a car to reach a place at 300 meters away... She needs to feel it's close and accessible, and most importantly, safe."*

Some residents reported **neglect of the public space, wreck and vandalism**. Suggestions were made to conduct more activities in the park, assuming it would advance enforcement and facilitate use of the park for positive purposes. Law enforcement and security concerns were mostly raised by residents who do not usually take part in the community center's activities: *"It all starts with feeling safe in your environment. Law enforcement. As residents, it is not our role to enforce law and order. As long as there is no enforcement, I won't visit the center."*

Observations (Aug'-Nov' 2020) showed most participants reached the center by foot.

Rate of use of community centers' services was higher among Southern interviewees, a figure also supported by information from workshops' feedback. In Jaffa, according to residents' feedback, about 90% of workshops' participants visit the community centers regularly.

Visits' frequency to the local community center  
Workshops' participants feedbacks



**Northern-East** residents reported **having to drive** to enjoy services of remote community centers, since there is **no community center** in their neighborhood, and if there is one, it is not enough for their needs: *"We go to Beit Frankfurt or Kimchi, which aren't located in Neot Afeka. We did not seem to find anything suitable at Neot Afeka centers."* **Northern-West** residents report similar situation, while sometimes they organize their own activities: *"There is nothing nearby, no library and place for extra-curriculum activities or Gymboree," "I'm very active in the neighborhood and try to serve as the community center of Afeka. There are many activities I manage to organize through the municipality – children's plays and movies in the summer," "The new Ramat-Aviv neighborhood is quite left behind in terms of early childhood activities. There is the school building and the sports hall which could be used for various activities for the residents, but somehow the residents are forced to go to other neighborhoods in order to participate in activities."* Moreover, community center staffs indicated **accessibility issues for baby strollers and insufficient parking space**, which was also evident during observations of activities.



## Community Centers Design and Adaptation for Young Children

Participants of staff trainings said changes and adjustments in the community centers are needed, to make them attractive for parents of young children: *"It's interesting to think about enriching the open space in the center in terms of motoric and sensory options. Adding elements which will attract the community: sand boxes, floor games, sensory trails."*

In the **North**, due to **insufficiency of community centers**, residents and staff desperately need activity spaces, so they are not picky – whether it's a school's sports hall or any other space that can be used for activities. Both residents and staff members want the centers to serve as a community meeting place used for educational and social activities.

According to interviews with stakeholders from the **Centre**, some community centers are mainly activities oriented, rather than serving as a communal meeting point (except while waiting for an activity): *"Before an activity starts, I would take out the imagination blocks and the kids could play together before to the activity or after it... It's not the kind of place where children hang around and play with each other... but it's a pleasant place, there are tables and seats for drinks."* It seems that at the community centers in the Centre, hanging out is not considered one of the demand criteria, there is no attempt to compete with the local offer and that's why whoever comes usually stays despite the inconvenience: *"People keep coming back, climb 4 flights of stairs, because they have someone to talk to (relations with staff)," "For early childhood you want a quiet space. Nowadays the space is not really adapted for young children, there is noise and bustle from the outside."* Nevertheless, it was reported that the residents are pleased with the sitting areas that are found in some of the centers.

**Southern** residents of **"NaaC"** said the centers' physical structure (Dani and mainly Urim) require renovation and adaptation for children in general and young ones in particular. Visually - the space is **not sufficiently pleasant and inviting**, practically - baby strollers' **accessibility** and a convenient waiting area next to the activities' room: *"On rainy days there aren't any inviting spaces, no book corners, nothing soft. Also the physical structure, the stairs, my daughter's activity is upstairs and I'm downstairs, it's too far apart," "Very often I found myself thinking about leaving, because I knew there was no convenient place for me to sit and wait."* In addition, residents reported **low sense of security** regarding the center and its surroundings, complaining about **cultural gaps amongst the diverse populations** of visitors. They claimed some visitors smoke in or near the center and sometimes yell at their children or even swear at them. *"There was someone (from the staff) who used to tell them off, but he would make them a cup of coffee to drink with the cigarette, so it turned out he actually encouraged them. I understand the complexity, because these people are part of the community, so they (the staff) do not want any unpleasantness."* The Southern staff acknowledge the tension around asylums population: *"There is a stigma on Beit Dani, as if they only host asylums populations, but families who visit there still feel at home, with other veteran families."* The Ramat Israel center in Bitzaron neighborhood is undergoing renovations, so other spaces in the neighborhood were turned into activity areas, including a ground-floor shelter which serves as a compound for early childhood activities including an indoor play area, community gardens and a roofed café which is suitable for spending time in on rainy days.

- It is recommended to maintain **pleasant and convenient spaces** within all community centers, in addition to designated activity areas. Such a space might improve communication amongst residents, sense of community and identification with the community center. Moreover, it is important to **adjust the structure** and design of the community centers to **early childhood needs**.
- The routes leading to the centers in the South (“Neighborhood as a City”) are **unfriendly for baby strollers**, which affects the residents’ willingness to use the services.
- Southern residents believe conducting activities in public space (playgrounds and parks) while promoting behavioral enforcement, will increase **sense of security** and contribute to a positive experience for the residents within the neighborhood.
- Physical improvement of the Southern community centers is needed, adjusting them for families with young children, in terms of baby strollers’ accessibility, convenient waiting areas situated near activity areas.
- In the Centre, the community centers are **easily accessible** and there is **high demand** for their services among residents. Some of the facilities require renovations, but that does not affect extent of use.
- **Sparsity of community centers** in the North means residents must **use their cars** to reach the centers, which are not always situated within their neighborhood.

# Satisfaction with the Community Center Operation & Staff

## Centers' Operation & Relations with Staff

Stakeholders from the **Centre** reported high availability of staff members, **friendly relations and regular communication**: *"All local moms are on my Facebook friends list, personal relations were formed... during events I sit and chat with them", "The girls (staff) became part of the community. Such a bond between the staff and the parents and children is inevitable", "People recognize me, whenever I hang out in the centre of town, people approach me."*

**Southern** Residents of **"NaaC"** said the Urim center director is **highly available and accessible** and reported of a **significant improvement in operation** since the personnel changed. It seems employing local staff who were raised in the neighborhood and are familiar with the population helped residents to identify with the community center. Positive feedback about the Beit Dani staff were also expressed: *"The staff are always very attentive."*

However, residents said organizational proceeding needs to be improved and pointed out a **sense of disorder** – people and children going in and out of the room during activities and lack of officials in charge of order and guidance. Also, some reported communication difficulties. There were similar claims regarding activities for grownups and parents: *"A couple of years ago I tried joining adults' activities, but something didn't feel right. No one would greet you, ask which activity you need, find out what was going on, make you feel you're in good hands. Nobody told you what was next or provide a clear picture."*

During observations (Aug'-Nov' 2020) interviewees reported a simple, friendly registration process to most activities. For some capsules' activities, participants did not know they had to register, so they just showed up. At one incident, a misunderstanding regarding the responsibility of the recruiting parent, led to sparsity of participants.

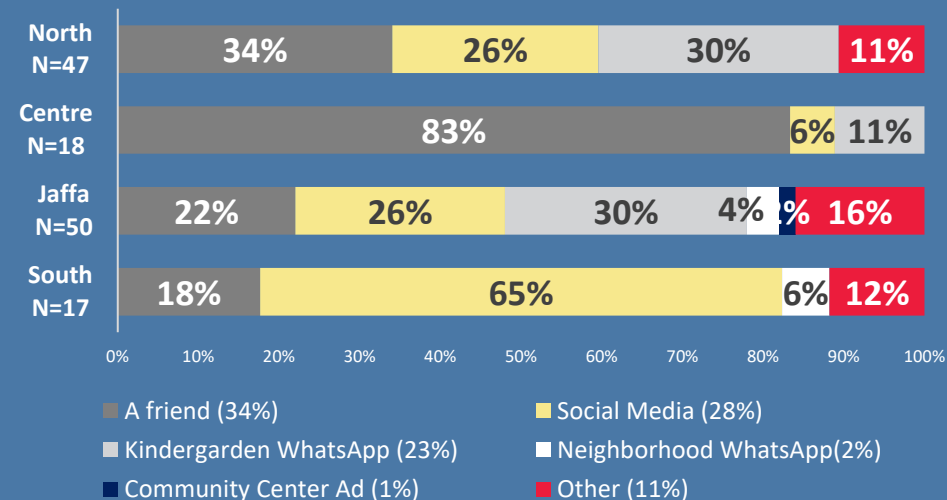
Both staff and residents pointed out the **high importance of the early childhood coordinator position**, responsible for developing adapted contents, building a work plan and retaining relationships with parents: *"She published a monthly chart, so parents knew what was happening... surveyed parents... opened a WhatsApp group with parenting tips. She maintained the early childhood domain"* (East staff). *"When no one is in charge of the entire domain, it just doesn't work well."* (parents' focus group, North-West). The Northern-west staff pointed out a **need to improve operation** in terms of registration and collection of payments: *"There is no unity in registration and payment – it is done by different people. We should change the procedure. Advertisement should also be unified for all the centers in the North."*

**Northern** residents did not share the same opinion regarding community centers' staffs. Neve Sharet's staff (East) was highly appreciated: *"Before COVID-19, they invited parents to discuss how to promote the sense of community in the neighborhood. It's really nice... new positions were introduced; new staff were recruited; people would consult with them."* Western residents felt **the staff is accessible**: *"There is someone to turn to and they will get back to me. I can send an email, call or just drop by."* While other residents experienced **inadequate, outdated service**: *"The information is not available. It feels very archaic, nothing is done online. Customer service is not what you would expect."* Also, they indicated that staff's attitude in Beit Frankfurt and Neve Tzahala is unpleasant: *"They are a bit slow, and probably have been in their roles for years. However, there is a new trend promoted by the municipality which tries to push them forward."*

# Satisfaction with the Community Center Operation & Staff

## Advertising Channels

Exposure to information about Salta Activities  
Participants feedback



In ( ) – total % of respondents from all regions (N=132)

According to the **"City Survey"**, the main channels through which parents get updates about municipality services: DigiTel Club (61%), Facebook (47%), Internet - excluding municipal site (34%), billboards (20%).

As per workshops' feedback, in Jaffa information is spread through variety of channels. All those who reported exposure through community center's ads were Jaffa residents.

**Southern** Staff indicated publications aren't targeted enough and that there is difficulty in **initiating collaborations**: *"The relationship with the Education and Kindergartens Administration is deficient. There is some kind of a barrier on behalf of the kindergarten teachers and all sort of procedures, it feels they see us as total strangers rather than partners who are supposed to complement each other."*

Staff in the **Centre and South** advertised activities mainly through **WhatsApp groups** they opened, existing groups they joined or a **designated Facebook page**. Moreover, **word of mouth amongst parents** significantly increases awareness and brings new participants. During observations, interviewees were informed by friends, WhatsApp groups (kindergarten, street), or through municipality's public channels (mainly Facebook). According to participants' feedback, in the Centre VOM is prominent, so most participants are exposed to activities through friends.

**Centre** staff use municipality's ad tools, including the Digitaf platform. Community centers that include **kindergartens' cluster reported fruitful collaboration** and interrelations that help the center: *"I give them free space and they advertise our activities."* "Try-out" activities were also initiated for the kindergartens' children for marketing purposes. Following COVID-19 crisis, there was a very high demand for activities and no special marketing efforts were needed.

**Northern** residents reported community centers' activities are advertised mainly on neighborhood **WhatsApp groups** or through "old-fashioned" **bulletin boards**, while designated channels (Facebook, website) do not advertise much. Centers' staffs also indicated **publication is done mainly in print, which yields low exposure**, as they lack marketing capabilities: *"There is insufficient access to parents and to this age group. Activities are not advertised properly, and we need help to reach the target audience."* In addition, they proposed enhancing collaborations with kindergartens and well baby clinics, that might provide additional spaces for activities: *"There is some collaboration, but it must be more intensive," "Might help finding additional spaces that are sometimes hard to find and help make it more accessible for populations who do not live near the centers."*

## Quality of Activities & Operators' Professionalism

Southern Residents of "NaaCi"\* perceived all activities at Urim center as unprofessional: *"It doesn't feel like a 'real' workshop, poorly organized and instructors are uninformed."* They indicated **low participation rate** and **low commitment** on their part, describing it as a cycle of **little demand and limited supply**.

It seems alongside centers' operation difficulties, a general sense of disorder, makes the services unattractive: *"the stigma is whoever goes to the community center cannot afford prestigious activities. The community center doesn't have an impressive status", "The activities don't gain popularity since there aren't enough people. There aren't enough interactions."* However, residents are pleased with the variety of parents' activities in Beit Dani: *"The Peimot Program, family guidance, parenthood workshops".*

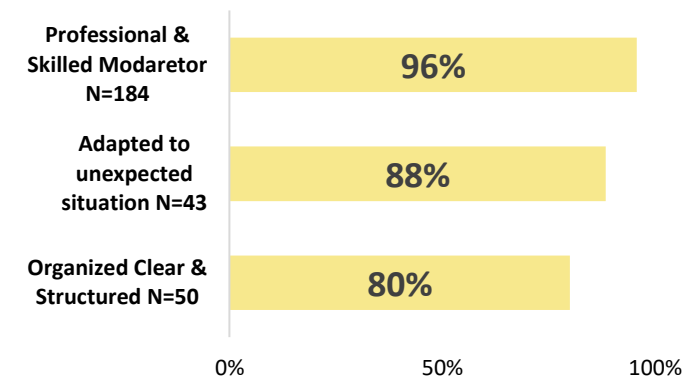
Southern staff acknowledged their difficulty in attracting participants to activities: *"The main challenge is to bring enough children... We have manpower variety of activities, but once I organize an activity and only a small number of children arrive, sometimes even in double-digits, it's frustrating... I will be delighted to cooperate with kindergartens, daycare centers, and whoever else is relevant, so they will enjoy what we have to offer.."* In addition, according to them, the low participation rate and lack of commitment limits their ability to offer the full scope of the professional tools and to be able to make an impact: *"When there is no advanced commitment for workshops, we are limited to the fun-oriented activities. With regards to more educational or therapeutic content – it is much more difficult. I would be happy to include it under the role of the community center, as a place that develops and nurtures excellence."*

\*Focus groups were held with residents of HaTikva, Ezra & HaArgazim neighborhoods

## SALTA Workshops

In observations operators demonstrated professional guidance and flexibility, adapting to different participants: *"Amazing moderator who talks to children at eye level."* (Inventing Stories). In some activities, participants received individual attention, providing them tip for self-implementation.

Participants' feedback on Salta Workshop Moderators  
To a large-very large extent



Stakeholders from the **Centre** believe **SALTA activities comply with the high standard community centers aspire for, and are perceived as high-quality**. Yet, while demand for SALTA workshops is high in some centers, others have their **own activity program**, based on the center's staff or regular operators, so SALTA workshops aren't dominant. A center's director hypothesized **permanent operators' relations with residents establish personal connection**: *"They know exactly what's going on... It's all about relationships, people want to come back and meet people who know them and take an interest in them."* These relationships are deepened by a dedicated WhatsApp group for each workshop and operators who are very attentive to the participants. These practices, according to the director, weren't common amongst SALTA workshops' moderators, which are perceived as external personnel. The director mainly referred to Covid-19 formatted SALTA workshops (single meetings). *"People don't get attached to the moderator, and relationships can't develop, as there is only one session. The center's staff opens a WhatsApp group for each workshop and creates this connection which is not necessarily top priority for the SALTA staffers."*



# Satisfaction with the Community Center Operation & Staff

## Staff Training

Feedback given by participants of staff training expressed a high level of satisfaction from the professional level and the relevance of the training to their daily work: "The updated studies and the vast amount of knowledge taught during the seminar are very important and will continue to be helpful when thinking and planning activities in the center." The participants said the seminar provided practical tools and an opportunity for peer meetings interrelated to the Urban95 program and to various municipal administrations dealing with early childhood: "Acquiring practical tools and professional know-how, meeting colleagues and learning from them. Ideas for new initiatives, exposure to the Urban95 program, getting familiar with various municipal administrations in charge of early childhood." Some of them mentioned that they would be interested in receiving additional tools: "More practices that can be implemented on site – more simulations of real-life situations", "Adjusting contents in accordance with phases of child development, the importance of socio-dramatic play, warning signs that help identify parents and children in distress."

## SALTA as a Professional Standard

Community centers' staff offered to **promote SALTA's basket of services**, implementing a **holistic operation model** upon which community centers and early childhood activities would be based: "the SALTA brand hasn't been assimilated. The early childhood coordinator works for the community center and sometimes cooperates with SALTA or Digitaf. If all early childhood activities were SALTA's... indoor play areas and community gardens were also branded as SALTA, then people would perceive the contents as high-quality."

Moreover, they said **SALTA services must be clearly differentiated** from services provided by Digitaf and the well-baby clinics: "We need a clear branding of SALTA to separate it from Digitaf and the well-baby clinics.", "Templates of SALTA's design for indoor play area design and center's lobby, drafting advertising texts together...", "I would like SALTA to be perceived as high quality content activities and extended workshops, to differentiate itself from Digitaf... which is known to all moms living in Tel-Aviv. Marketing would be easier, people would already know what it is, unified price, city grid" (staff meeting, North-West). Also, some staff members (especially from the North and Centre) argued **paying for activities** helps to position them as professional, high-quality activities and enhance participants' commitment.

At centers with experienced, successful operators, they suggested applying SALTA's criteria on existing activities and to grant them a **standard of quality**, rather than choosing from an existing basket. They further suggested that **SALTA's standard of quality** would be part of all **staff training** and serve as a **guideline for implementation of initiatives** across the city (pacifiers' tree, inspirational statements in playgrounds, etc.): "SALTA's tips can be used across the city, in public playgrounds. This requires implementation... All of SALTA's indoor play areas should be branded as SALTA center for parents and children." Potential barriers for the implementation of such a vision focused on complex bureaucracy and multiple responsible municipal entities, requiring coordination and permits.

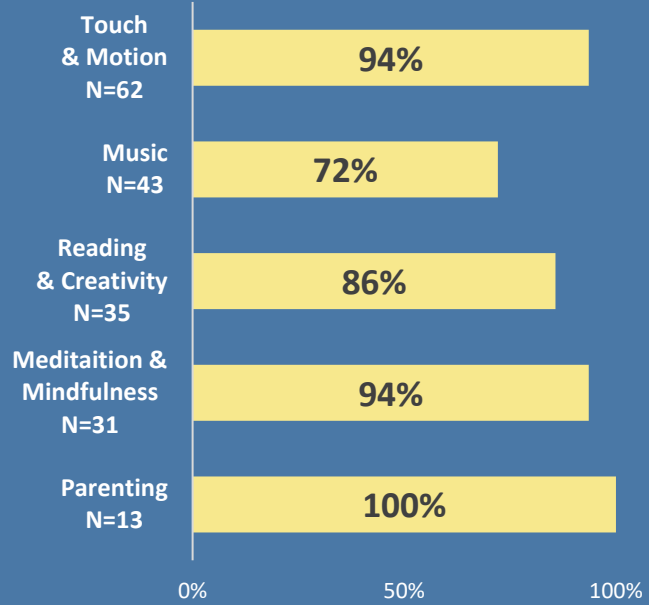
Moreover, the need for designated marketing formats and adapting activities to **different audiences** was also discussed. "We have to think about contents which can be adjusted to different populations, especially for Ethiopian immigrants, the Arab sector, Ultra-Orthodox and religious populations. Language could be a barrier for parents... and sometimes the contents are not fit to the culture. It's important that we train operators for different sectors... to create a basket...", "Specific marketing for the Jaffa community, marketing directed at a variety of cultures."



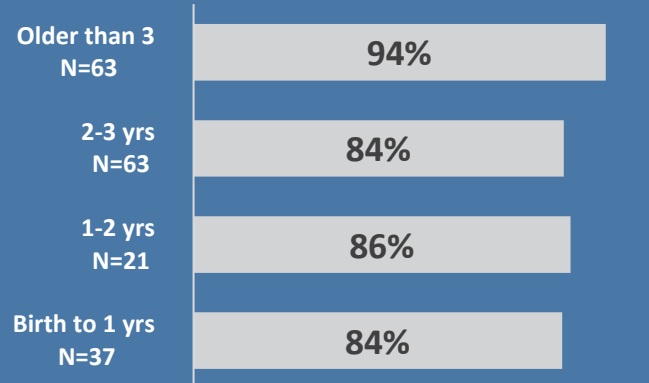
## Mid-Summary: Satisfaction with the Community Center Operation & Staff

- **Operators** of SALTA Workshops were perceived as high-quality, professional (96% of respondents), adjusting to different participants and flexible enough to address their needs (88% of respondents)
- Consider turning SALTA's basket of services into a **holistic operating model** - as the basis for early childhood domain activities, including implementing the SALTA standard of quality for activities at the centers, staff trainings and public initiatives across the city, while differentiating it from services provided by Digitaf and well baby clinics.
- Northern residents do not share the same opinion regarding community centers' staffs. Some experienced professional and friendly approach, while others reported old-fashioned procedures and low motivation.
- Both Northern residents and staff ascribe great significance to **appointing an Early Childhood Coordinator** in the centers, in charge of developing and implementing a high-quality, designated program.
- Northern community centers need to **improve operation procedures**, standardize registration and payment processes. The staff is in need for professional training to improve their **marketing efforts** for the centers' activities.
- **Good communication** between centers' staff and residents was reported in the Centre region. Staff members believe it is highly important to maintain relationships **between the activities' operators and the residents**, as it affects residents' willingness and persistence. Some of them thought that the SALTA's moderators cannot establish a relationship with the participants, since they are not an integral part of center's staff.
- Residents of the South ("Neighborhood as a City") don't have a unanimous opinion regarding communication with centers' staffs. Some reported high availability and warm attitude, while others had difficulty receiving information. Moreover, residents reported a **sense of disorder** with regards to the centers' operation and quality of activities.
- Staff members from the South reported **difficulty to obtain cooperation** from relevant entities that could help promote the marketing of services available at the centers.
- Staff members from the South expressed frustration and **difficulty in recruiting residents** and increasing their willingness and commitment – all of which could have allowed them to introduce contents of higher quality.

## Satisfied & enjoyed Salta Workshops\* to large-very large extent



\*Workshop type classification attached in Appendix



SALTA workshops participants feedback is similar among birth to 3 years old age groups (approx. 85%) and very high satisfaction for participants with children above the age of 3 (94%). participants who were less satisfied had hard time engaging the children (especially in music activities): *"The first session was very difficult for my son. The new situation and the noisy instrument. Later on he became more cooperative... I was expecting the activity to focus more on motion rather than music and on parent-child interaction, like in the last session, which was the most successful"* (Pleasant World). Another difficulty was focusing on capacity building with children present: *"The instructor was amazing! Took care of everything, very professional. But we expected something for the kids, not for us as parents. Children at this age look for action and they weren't really engaged", "It was not a good idea to plan a workshop for mothers with 10 children running about"* (Reading Instruction)

## Types of Activities - Supply & Demand

Stakeholders from the **Center** reported steady demand and busy routine. At small community centers activities are flexibly scheduled throughout the year, fitting in municipal providers (Digitaf, SALTA). At bigger centers, the timetable is published in advance and includes ongoing activities, one-time events and some centers organize "Mommy School" several times a week: *"It's all very dynamic... There is an annual plan, but things change, if something doesn't work, we'll find something else"*. They claim Digitaf's **free contents** are **perceived as less binding**: *"I prefer activities with commitment... If it's free of charge, 20 will register, but only 3 will show up."* Another challenge mentioned was approaching pregnant women to interest them in childbirth education workshops, due to privacy and information confidentiality issues.

**Northern** staff liked the music and motion activities, raising a need to expand activities in the morning and operate the indoor play area throughout the day. North-west residents suggested a multiple-entry ticket to facilitate registration and increase commitment: *"A fixed schedule might help us to plan the week better."* According to them, there is a high demand for Digitaf activities and people don't always manage to register on time: *"Digitaf offers free activities and good instructors... But registration requires refreshing the page exactly at 12:00 and it's a nuisance."*

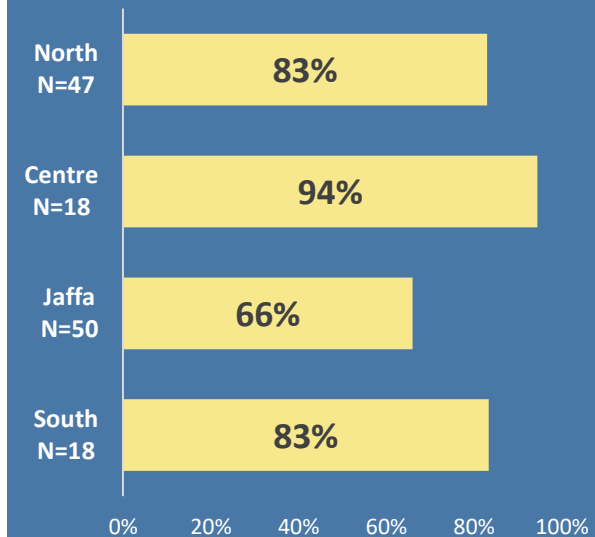
**Southern** Staff reported high demand for afternoon kids' activities, and low interest in morning activities for moms. Bitzaron center Staff launched a successful collaboration with well baby clinics, providing free comprehensive services: *"We arranged well baby clinic activities at the center, discussed with the moderators and initiated unique workshops (delayed parenthood, older siblings)."*

## Types of Activities - Supply & Demand

### Both residents and staff members find the following aspects as fundamental:

- **Multi-age options** that provide room for maneuver whenever several children arrive together, in a format of parallel activities or an activity suited for to a broad range of ages.
- **Activities for children from birth to 4 years old** that enable **parent-child quality time**: *"There is a huge need for activities for children up to the age of 3-4"* (Northern resident). *"Parent-baby / toddler relationship, new studies and peer-learning... could promote better activities selection and developing parent-child activities"* (Staff Training).
- Adjusting activities to **child's developmental stages**: *"How to match the stimuli to the developmental stage (games, exercises, books)"* (Staff Training), *"Something suitable for all dimensions of development - cognitive, emotional, physical, it's an important need and there is added value when it's close to home. You feel connected"* (Northern resident).
- Demand for **ongoing activities**: *"Digitaf's one-time encounters are superficial. The mothers don't get to know each other, no way of forming a bond with the instructor, which definitely happens in a continuous activity. You pay more for it, but you are more engaged and committed"* (Northern resident). *"We are practically raising them. They come to us and keep up, participate in activities and sometime register to our Mommy School"* (Centre Staff), *"Workshops that are spread over a few weeks give people the opportunity to get to know each other, get closer and develop together"* (North Staff). However, staff members mentioned parents find it hard to commit for the long run, so it's better to limit workshops to a maximum of 6 sessions. During staff training, participants raised the need to consistently define: *"which of the early childhood contents should be ongoing and which should be a one-time experience."*
- Activities for **post-birth parents**: *"it seems all the attention goes to the children. It needs to change... To offer guidance following difficult experiences, stillbirths, post-partum depression, or help in finding jobs"* (Centre Staff), *"It helps minimizing post-partum depression, and perhaps it's possible to arrange workouts with baby strollers and a workshop of massage for babies"* (Northern resident).
- **Parents' Workshops**: *"Compassionate Parenthood, educational approaches, etc. There is great interest in that"* (Northern resident). *"There are different types of parenthood, at this age it's more about the parents themselves"* (Centre staff) and **leisure activities for grownups**.

### Expressed interest in ongoing workshop at a symbolic price to a large-very large extent



**44%** of respondents (N=50) claimed the workshop was **too short**. The rest (58%) thought the workshop was at an optimal length

## Types of Activities - Indoor Play Area

The Urban95 program led a process of upgrading the indoor play areas in cooperation with an urban designer. Now, the design plan for the play area serves as municipal guidelines for building indoor play areas across the city, emphasizing the importance of maintaining a similar structure for all indoor play areas and using a unified design, while enabling adjustments to accommodate specific needs of residents across the city. *"When new centers are upgraded – we know how to include the early childhood design plan! For instance, the indoor play areas – very good work of Urban95 for an indoor play area standard and we use it"* (City Official from Community Administration)

**Southern Staff** believe it is highly important to have a **professional consultant** present during the activities: *"There should be solutions provided by professionals, taking the opportunity to identify parents who face difficulties... the indoor play area is supposed to serve as a field where we identify parents and children's needs... It must not serve just as a playground", "Unfortunately, the budget allocated to indoor play areas is insufficient and unsatisfactory. I'm forced to ask a resident who lives nearby for help, to sell entry tickets. These are Parent-child indoor play areas and it's important to have someone who is professionally trained, to help stressed or frightened moms, to add a professional touch, it will change the whole experience", "An indoor play area is an accessible place for many parents, and a professional support might give added value. Because it's not a Gymboree, it's a parent-child indoor play area."*

The indoor play area is liked by all residents, providing solution for parents who arrive with several siblings and want to split up into different activities. Moreover, opening hours are more flexible and parents are not required to show up at a specific time: *"Before they closed down the Gymboree because of COVID-19, we used to visit it regularly in the morning, and joined various afternoon activities."* (Northern resident). The indoor play area is perceived as an **anchor** amongst staff members, who reported high demand and perceive it as a good place for **exposing** residents to the **services provided by the community center**: *"The indoor play area is the heart. Residents who are not familiar with the activities arrive as well... They register and pay and we tell them what's going on"* (Centre staff). At small centers with very limited space for activities, the indoor play area temporarily operates in a space designated for other activities. In bigger centers, the indoor play area is open while activities and workshops take place, which enables parents who arrive with several kids to split up. Most **indoor play areas in the Centre** employ a development consultant who is available for assistance and consultation.

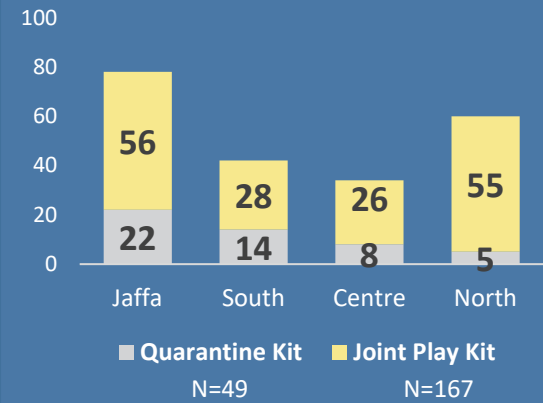
## Opportunities following COVID-19

According to staff members, adjusting activities to COVID-19 restrictions revealed new opportunities that can also be implemented routinely:

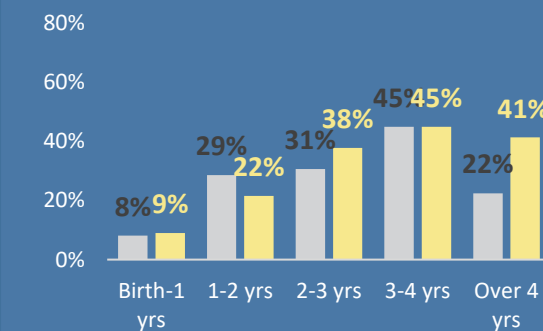
- Conduct activities in public spaces and not only indoors.
- Conduct online workshops for parents, to facilitate participation and remove barriers related to physical attendance.
- Offer an online consultation service for parents (an initiative implemented at Einstein center)
- Create a "near home" basket of services and personal activity kits which parents can rent / purchase from the community center and use at home.

## Joint Play Kits for Neighboring / Quarantined Families

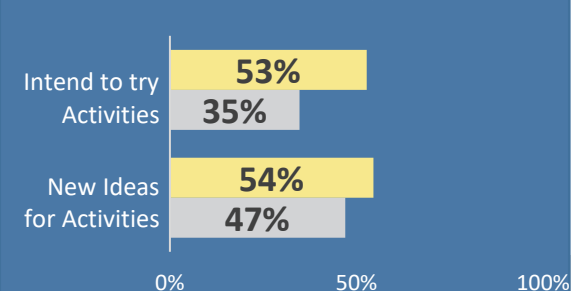
Kits' feedback, by region



Children's Age



Use of Kit's Magnet

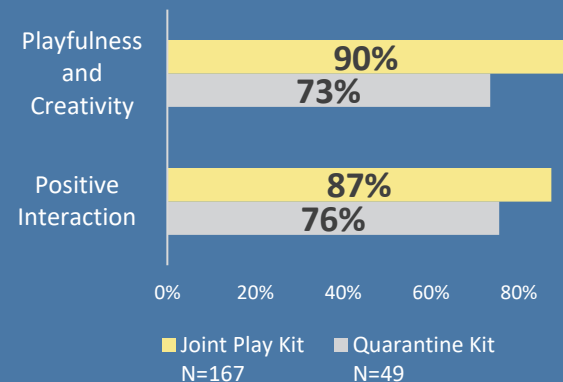


- High satisfaction across all regions, 97% of respondents will **recommend** the joint play kits **to others** and 90% will probably /definitely recommend the quarantine kit.
- The process of **registration and contact with community center** to order the kits was simple and user-friendly. *"It was very simple to get the kit, and everybody was happy to use it"* (North), *"Wonderful idea, great and efficient service"* (Centre).
- Most quarantine and joint play kits were perceived as **high-quality** (88% and 87% respectively), especially in the Centre & South; and **easy-to-use** (94% and 98% - with no significant differences across regions: *"A wonderful kit. The bubbles were awesome as were the hoops and ball. It was real fun"* (Joint play kits, Jaffa). Alongside gratitude, respondents raised several faults: *"The mat is genius, but the quality is rather poor, it gets torn when you touch it"* (Joint play kits, Jaffa), *"The skipping ropes remained untouched, maybe because of their poor quality"* (Joint play kits, North).
- 86% of respondents said joint play kits were especially **suitable for children from birth to 4 years old**, but only 65% thought so regarding quarantine kits.
- 80% of respondents stated the kit was highly suitable for joint play of several families, with no significant differences across regions; and indeed, in most cases (63%) the joint play kits were used by 1-3 families. Suggestions for improvement: *"The kit itself is nice, but not very rich. It's intended for 4 families, but when each family has two or three kids, they cannot all play together. They could include more creative games, art work and thinking games... but it's always nice to receive games and the idea to give something is very impressive and I really appreciate it"* (North).
- 76% believed they will **play** with the quarantine kit **again**. 93% believed they will play with the joint play kit again: *"An excellent kit, we took it out to the backyard and invited kids to play. Everybody enjoyed themselves. We used it several times, over a few days and kids who happened to be there, just joined in. It's a great idea both for kids who enjoyed playing together and for parents who got to know each other while kids were playing. Thank you very much!"* (Centre).
- The joint play kits' magnet** was perceived as partially useful. Half of respondents indicated it helped them with new ideas for activities and believed they will perform the recommended activities. **The quarantine kits' magnet** was not much appreciated: *"The magnet was lovely but more suitable for younger kids. They should include something more suitable for other ages. Anyways, we read together and learned from it (:"* (Joint play kits), *"Magnet's recommendations were **excellent for children under two**, but less relevant for older kids. Beside that, it's a great initiative. We keep the kit in the building's Sukkah and kids play with it downstairs and invent challenge courses"* (Joint play kits, North).



# Designated Activities & Events

## Kits' Contributions to a large - very large extent



Over 90% of parents reported the kit **made them happy and eased tension**, (quarantine kits - 90% and joint play kits - 92%, across all regions): *"It's really great to encourage families in this difficult time"* (Joint play kits, Jaffa), *"An amazing idea, it feels the municipality thinks about little things and really cares about residents and the difficult situation. A creative idea!"* (Quarantine kits, Centre), *"You really made it! Well done! It's a great idea and it was very easy to get the kit. Keep up the good work and keep investing in the children of Shapira!"* (Joint play kits, South).

Respondents felt the kits **greatly contributed to positive interaction with their children, were enjoyable and promoted playfulness and creativity**. The joint play kits were perceived as more beneficial in that sense, with no significant differences across regions.

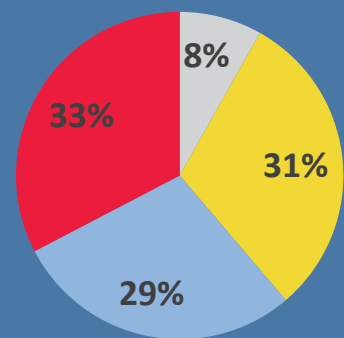
There was significant difference in use duration. Joint play kits were used by most respondents (62%) for over an hour. Alongside the different qualities that were mostly ascribed to the joint play kits with regards to all criteria, the continuous usage of these kits shows they created opportunities at the community level, as residents of the same building got to spend time together and the kits enabled children to play with other children.

95% of respondents (N=216) wanted to hear about more activities for their children

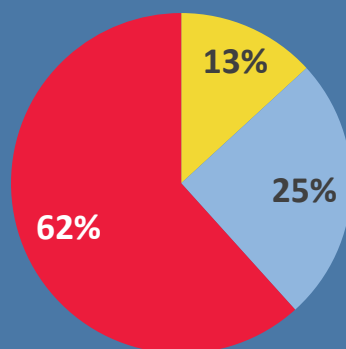
## Estimated Playtime Duration



### Quarantine Kit



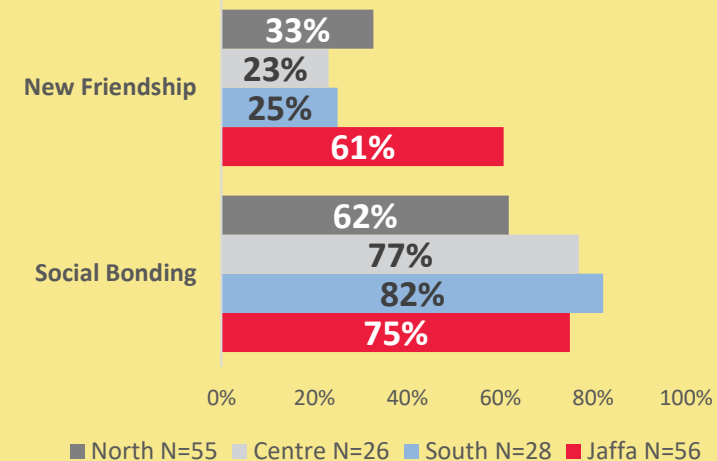
### Joint Play Kit



84% of the residents who received joint play kits are interested in leading similar activities in the future: *"The idea of giving the kit is very thoughtful and heart-warming. It shows that the municipality is attentive towards its residents and the neighborhood kids play with the kit. The residents / neighbors are very enthusiastic about such gestures and show a great interest in them."* (Centre)

## Joint Play Kits & Quarantine Kits

### Kits' Contribution to Sense of Community



Receiving quarantine kits from friends enhanced **sense of solidarity and belonging** amongst 88% of respondents.

Joint play kits did not contribute significantly to new relationships (except in Jaffa), probably because neighbors already knew each other. However, it strengthened **existing relationships** and bonding amongst participants: *"Enjoyable kit. My son wakes up every morning, gets the kit and calls neighbors to come play with him. We really enjoyed it"* (Jaffa).

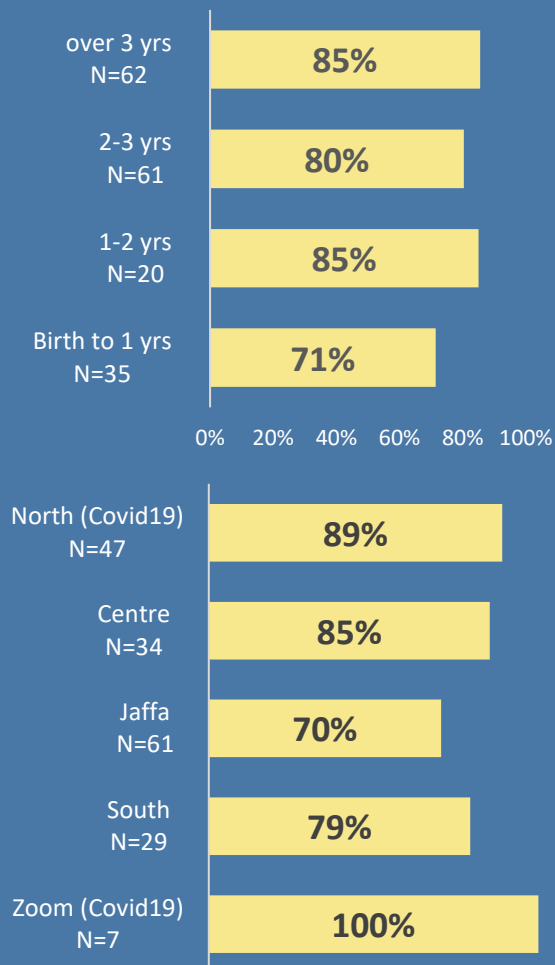


# Mid Summary: Designated Activities & Events

- All across the city, residents expect Salta activities to provide the following needs:
  - **Cross or Multi-age** suited activities
  - Activities suited for **children from birth to 4 years old**, including all developmental stages.
  - **Ongoing activities** - to create commitment among participants and provide an opportunity for a thorough exploration of the contents. As extended formats are difficult for parents, the max number of sessions per workshop should be limited to six.
  - **Parenting workshops** on various subjects, from birth to young children.
  - Face-to-face and online **leisure and enrichment** workshops for grownups.
- Across the city, **indoor play areas serve as an anchor** and are in high demand amongst residents. In the South, there was a recommendation to integrate a professional consultant at the indoor play area, who would advise residents, as is customary in community centers in city Centre.
- In the Centre and North, it seems that **prepaid activities** create a **higher level of commitment** and are perceived as **high-quality** activities. In the South, a balance between paid and free activities should be maintained, to accommodate all target audiences.
- **The COVID-19 crisis revealed new opportunities – should be considered to implemented routinely.**  
For example, activities in public space, online activities for parents, activities and kits for rent / sale.
- **The distribution of joint play kits for neighboring families and play kits for quarantined families was greatly appreciated** by residents. The kits enhanced positive interaction between parents and their children (84%), were enjoyable and enhanced play and creativity (86%) and helped parents to ease tension (92%) during the challenging period.
- The joint play kits were more appreciated, based on all criteria (compared to quarantine kits). They enhanced neighbors' connection and bonding amongst residents (72%).

## Workshops' criteria set implementation

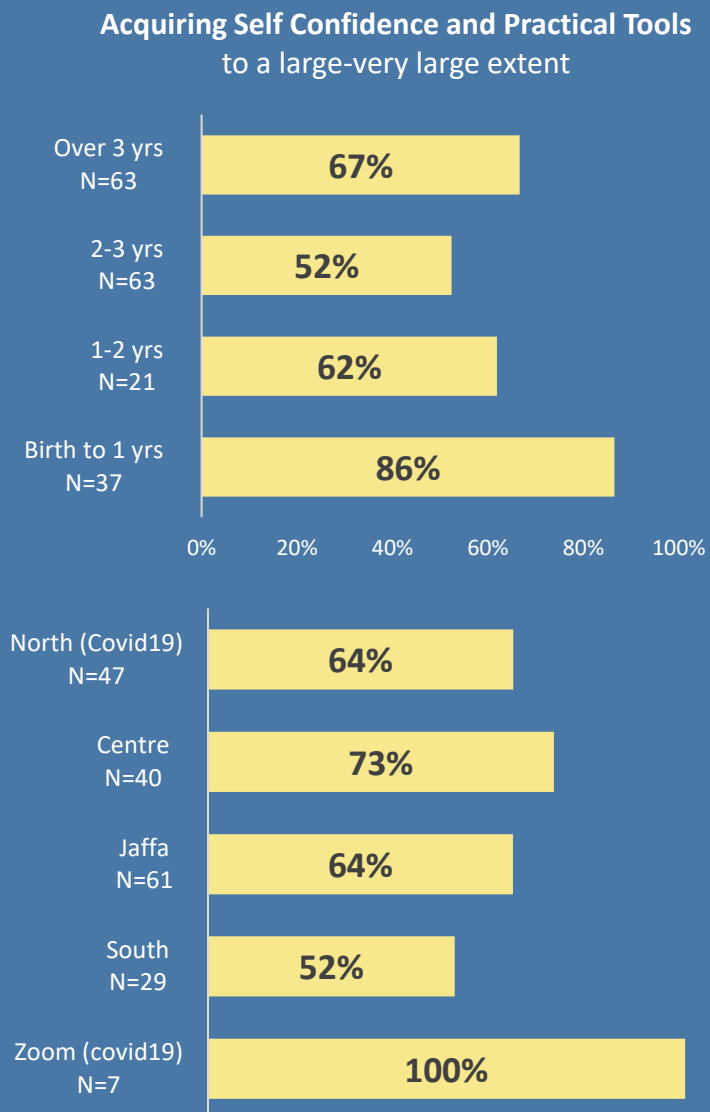
### Activity Contribution to Positive Interaction with Child



72% of respondents (N=43) reported the workshop encouraged playfulness and creativity to a large-very large extent

- Observations and feedbacks show that during the activities, **the interaction is focused on parent-child dyad**. Some respondents felt this was the main contribution: *"mainly enhancing communication between parents and children and physical exercise," "Recommendations for home practice.... Improved bonding through touch and laughter"* (ContactKids). *"A valuable time for parents and children, far from being just an extra curriculum activity"* (Parents focus group, North). Staff training feedback also showed parent-child relationships were perceived as very important. Staff members indicated topics that were brought up during training: *"Understanding the importance and impact of the environment (stress factors, relations with the environment) on brain development."*
- The activities were part of a structured framework and the parents could **devote themselves to guidance** (structured free-time) and experience the activities with their children, while the contents were taught in a way that enabled **playfulness and joint action**. The participants expressed satisfaction with the contents: *"Combines self expression, creativity, pleasant atmosphere. Quality time, instead of watching TV", "We continue to explore different behaviors inspired by the story he made up... He feels it is his and it's great for a three-year old's sense of efficacy.. The book enabled him to use his imagination freely and helped me emphasize the messages that are important to me"* (Making up a story), *"Music helps develop children's brain and it's important"* (Discover the Sound).
- Feedback shows parents assess workshop's high contribution to positive interaction with children mainly amongst children older than a year old. As younger babies are less-communicative, the workshop is not as beneficial for this age. Similar assessments were expressed by respondents from Jaffa, probably for the same reasons, **as** 38% of respondents participated in activities with their children from birth to 1 year old.

## Workshops' criteria set implementation



- Observations showed **ongoing workshops were more effective in providing tools**, as participants were more focused and arrived with children at relevant age, *"In SALTA the entire focus is on parent-child interaction, it's not intended only for children, unlike one-time activities. It's always about providing tools to parents and collaboration. It's all intended to provide a better experience for both parents and children"* (Staff meeting, North).
- One-time activities were opportunities to enjoy together with multi-age participants, as siblings also attended the activities - which affected level of concentration due to multiple distractions. *"It was a bit difficult; it was the first time we participated in an activity for the little one, and the older ones demanded attention"* (Motion activity)
- Workshops' feedback showed parents of babies younger than 1 year old, gained many more tools (86%). It seems in workshops for older children (1 to 3 years old), the children demand more attention and are physically active so parents have to split their attention between the children and the contents, while babies are usually more "easy to handle" and so parents can devote their attention to internalizing the contents and acquiring tools. In addition, parents of young babies are probably less experienced and knowledgeable, so they are more eager to learn.
- Workshops designated for parents and babies **improved parents' wellbeing** and promoted dialogues alongside providing practical tools, *"Meeting people and going out of the house. It's helpful for mothers' mental state."* (Meditation with babies)
- The parents' workshop on Zoom (without children) was effective in terms of **providing practical tools** since the parents were totally attentive. Besides the effective implementation, participants reported **enhancement of parents' self- efficacy** since they were able to deal with the difficulties: *"Highly useful sessions, in each session I chose few tools that were taught and implemented them at home."* *"Knowledge is power, it minimizes the sense of guilt and provides helpful tools."* Participants were satisfied with the format which enabled spouses' participation as well, while still being present at home and not having to leave the house.

# Sense of Community & Social Belonging

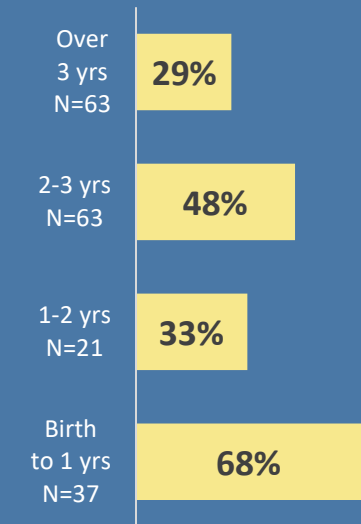
## SALTA Workshops

Observations showed **ongoing activities** contribution is greater in **content quality and richness of experience**, while **social aspect is not a participatory motivation**. Thus, in ongoing workshops, the community aspect was not prominent compared to one-time activities, but differences weren't significant: *"I don't come here to meet people, but I do want my child to have some company"* (Contakids). This was evident in activities **for toddlers**, while in **activities designated for parents and babies the community aspect seemed more important**.

Moreover, observations of one-time activities showed most participants knew each other prior to activity. Ongoing activities, especially toddler-designated ones, participants were more focused on the content and on seizing the opportunity to enjoy a parent-child experience. The community aspect was emphasized during one-time capsules activities, although it seems in most cases participants knew each other prior to the activity and the **community aspect helped recruit participants** while the ongoing activities enhanced the relationships. *"We know each other, and parents were in touch before the activity, but such opportunities enhance the connection"* (Motion activity).

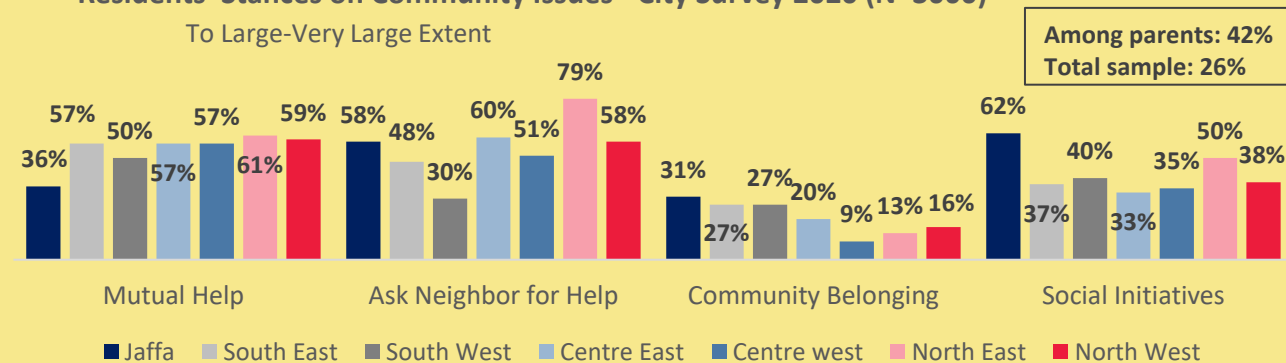
Feedback showed participants in activities for parents of babies younger than a year old, were more willing to form connections (68% formed new connections), and the activity provided an **actual need parents (mostly mothers) had, for sharing and supportive identification**: *"Any encounter connecting between mothers is a gift, because mothers find it difficult to go out. A group initiative is a real gift"* (Meditation with babies). *"During the activity we discussed parents' difficulties, and its something everybody can relate to"* (Discover the Sound). **A Zoom workshop for parents of children over 18 months was least community-oriented** - the moderator intentionally focused on providing tools rather than social bonding. According to participants, the workshop itself called for an open dialogue and a sense of partnership: *"it felt as a haven of sanity, all parents are in the same boat and my child is not the only one who throws food around,"* but the online setting limited the experience and prevented any attempts to pursue contact beyond the scope of the workshop. Participants' feedback showed no new connections were formed as a result of this activity.

### Establishing New Relationship - Salta Workshop feedback



### Residents' Stances on Community Issues - City Survey 2020 (N=3000)

To Large-Very Large Extent



Similar scope of mutual aid was reported across the city ("City Survey", 2020), except Jaffa. In terms of asking neighbors for help - in the North people are more willing than in the South. Maybe the social diversity that characterizes Jaffa and the South affects such sentiments amongst residents, while in the North, the population is more homogenous. In general, residents' feeling of social belonging are equally low, although parents of children from birth to 5 years old report higher feelings of social belonging than the rest of the residents.

## The Community Centers

**Northern** residents believe community centers can potentially become the beating heart of the neighborhood and community. They want it to serve as **community anchor**, on top of providing activities and workshops for parents and children: *"Community center is a place for residents' gatherings, where you can meet new moms who live nearby and form connections. When my oldest was born, I felt it was missing because I did not know any moms, the daycare centers or what was going on around here, so I tried to dig up information."* Residents suggested community centers will host social events like social sales, a give-and-take market, lending equipment, arranging meals for women after childbirth and so on.

The centers' staff referred to the difficulties following the COVID-19 crisis: *"We do not want to be arranged in capsules. We want a social network with real encounters", "Between the lockdowns we arranged sports activities for groups of 20 kids. It immediately turned into a community event although people were asked to register. There were mothers hanging around with baby strollers, older played with younger kids, it was so much fun. That's what people want to do, to gather."* they claimed the community potential has not been fulfilled and there is a lot to be done: *"We must dedicate ourselves to it. We need to sit down and talk, to bring a coffee stand which always makes people gather, to put more effort into it."*

According to stakeholders from the **Centre**, in recent years some centers have turned from sleepy places without any connection to the residents, into **active centers visited by a community of users**. For instance, at Bavli community center (with its kindergartens compound) there is constant activity all day long and afternoon activities for different age groups: *"The center is situated in a closed neighborhood, everybody knows each other... We made a decision to involve residents in everything... so people understand it not merely as a kindergarten, but as a community."* Other centers reported ongoing activities helped people to form connections: *"At first people would come separately and meet at the indoor play area. Then, I started seeing groups arriving together, straight from kindergarten or mothers who became friends and arrange to meet here."*

Southern Residents of **"NaaC"**\* wish to promote the community and a desire for a sense of belonging: *"I really want to see the community center as a community, meet parents with common interests, it creates social life for the kids as well."* Moreover, they (mostly mothers) expressed interest in near-home activities: *"I go to Yona playground on Saturdays, but I haven't connected with people from the neighborhood. I believe women-oriented activities promoting bonding might be helpful," "Ever since I'm on maternity leave, I found people in the neighborhood are very nice. There is a parents' community, and they are a lot of fun."*

Southern Staff want to affect the community by turning the center into a gathering spot, to encourage residents to use professional services (for example, on developmental issues) and to enhance residents' attachment to the region. According to them, social bonding provides great support for residents: *"They can play in the center and spend time together, so they are not alone. Support groups are formed. People who know each other arrive together. I think it is very positive for the community and for young parents' well-being", "The challenge is to create a high-quality community of parents of young children, so they would want to stay here and tell their friends it's a nice place to live, so others would follow. Otherwise, young families will leave the neighborhood, as is already happening."*

\*Focus groups were held with residents of HaTikva, Ezra & HaArgazim neighborhoods



- High demand for activities; some centers have an internal activities' schedule . Each center operates independently, building relations with its target audience.
- **Applying SALTA'a activities' criteria on existing activities** instead of adding new activities from Salta's Basket: "*Many good things have been disqualified'* (Centre staff). This may promote **an independent operating model**, as the activities' criteria will serve as a design plan, like the indoor play areas' design plan.
- Staff members believe parents are pleased with level of communication with the center, have room to express opinion and make requests. No need for higher parental involvement, besides WOM: "*It is a cool community and some of the people are involved, but they don't initiate community activities. We find it difficult. It's not like Hadar Yosef neighborhood or other united communities. Newborn mothers are not available for this, they are too busy surviving.*"
- Staff members report residents' who attend activities regularly became friends, and a sense of community was established as they meet in the center.
- Generally, centers are **physically accessible**, but some buildings need to be improved (staircases, etc.), but this does not prevent residents to attend activities.
- At centers with in-house kindergartens, a **fruitful cooperation** was reported with the kindergartens' staff, which promotes the center's services.
- Staff ask to conduct **research**, to validate decisions regarding services' operation: "*Provide me with data, focus groups, what do parents want. I want to obtain knowledge and insights from a study. The centers do not have the ability to bring someone who performs observations and produces some insights.*"
- Staff members indicated a challenge of recruiting high-quality moderators who **meet the high standard** set by the residents.
- The main challenge is about initial recruitment, focusing on specific audiences (for example, pregnant women whose information is confidential, a failed attempt to open a 'Mommy School' in Bavli). After people come once, they are usually **persistent** and even register for additional activities.
- There is **big competition around**, some of which operate on Saturday, which sometimes might affect the demand for similar activities.
- **Digitaf's free-of-charge format** is also perceived as an obstacle by staff members: "*Its the same activities. They provide it for free and we charge for them. It's true now [Covid19] and on ordinary days. They offer ongoing activities, child development workshops and sleep consultant. I cannot understand that. Why is there competition between us? I feel as if they try to put spokes in my wheels.*"
- Following adaptations that were made during **COVID-19 crisis** , high demand was reported for activities in public space. Staff members raised suggestions that might be implemented routinely, such as online activities for parents, online personal consultants' operation, "for rent" activities (based on the capsules' format).

## North

- Residents see the community center as a potential **place for social gatherings and communal sharing**, such as arranging meals for women after childbirth, locals' sales fairs, give-and-take markets, lending equipment.
- Both residents and staff want to **integrate parents in organizing activities** as “early childhood leaders”. Although residents expressed doubts regarding implementing their suggestions due to budgetary issues.
- Both staff and residents ascribe great importance to **appointing an early childhood coordinator** in community centers, who will be responsible for planning the activities’ schedule and keeping in touch with parents.
- There is a demand for **ongoing activities** that would call for a high level of participants’ commitment and would enable a thorough acquisition of contents. Staff members reported residents find it hard to be commit for a year long program and suggested limiting the workshops to 5-6 consequent sessions.
- **Inviting and pleasant waiting areas** should be set, available for residents who visit the community centers.
- **Number of community centers** in the north is insufficient and **does not provide accessible services** for all residents, who are forced to drive to the centers. Moreover, some centers are accessible to baby strollers and parking space is insufficient.
- Due to lack of community centers, **additional public buildings** like sports halls and schools, should be adjusted for community center’s activities.
- **Distribution of information and marketing** needs improving, alongside **enhancing collaborations** with kindergartens, daycare centers and well baby clinics.
- Staff members indicated they need **training and specialization in marketing and advertisement**.
- Adding activities and services in the morning in general and expending opening hours of the indoor play area in particular.
- High level of satisfaction with the concept of activities taking place in **public space**, which was initiated due to COVID-19 restrictions.

## South – “Neighborhood as a City”

- The residents reported **communication with the center and range of activities have improved** as a result of new management at Urim center.
- High level of satisfaction with range of activities at Beit Dani.
- Staff are **highly motivated to make a significant social impact** and to form a community through the services offered by the community centers.
- According to staff members, it is highly important to have a **professional consultant present during indoor play areas’ working hours**.
- **Well baby clinics and Digitaf** are perceived as **potential partners**. A range of free-of-charge activities is important, thus some officials believe different “brands” should be available at the community center.
- Following COVID-19 restrictions, activities were conducted in public space, so more residents were exposed to the services: *“Now, when there are lockdowns and we work outdoors, it draws the attention of passersby and more people join us, it’s also an advantage”* (Southern staff)
- Staff reported **difficulty in recruiting partners** to promote the center’s activities, like kindergartens and other next-door early childhood establishments.
- **Recruiting challenges** amongst two types of populations: vulnerable population with **low awareness** to the importance of the services (perceived as luxury) and lack of emotional availability and resources. On the other hand, population which is interested in the services but perceives the public center as an **inferior option** compared to the private sector.
- The population of Bitzaron is somewhat different and more similar to Centre-city residents: *“People here are very committed to the activities, they make time for the activities, most people use the time to spend some parent-child quality time”* (Southern staff).
- High demand for afternoon activities in Bitzaron, versus little demand for morning activities for mothers, as the well baby clinic offers free comprehensive services. Thus, some joint initiatives with the well baby clinic were launched.
- **Centers’ accessibility by foot** needs to be urgently improved, pedestrian routes to the centers are reported to be busy and dangerous.
- **Centers’ buildings needs to be adapted for families with children**, in terms of baby stroller’s accessibility, proximity of different activity spaces and adding general, unlimited services, prompting spending time in the community center: library, rest corner, computer station, private lessons for children.
- Adjusting the centers to families with children (smoking prohibition, accessibility, enforcement) might make the center more inviting for the relevant population and deter people who do not comply with the regulations in a way that would promote visitors’ sense of security.

## Jaffa

- **High satisfaction** amongst workshops' participants. 82% of respondents said SALTA workshop exceeded their expectations or that they enjoyed it a lot. All observations' interviewees (Meditation with Babies, Discover the Sound) said they would recommend the activity to friends and that would be interested in participating in additional activities in the future.
- Almost 90% of respondents reported **using the community center services** near their house. 51% of residents do not visit the center frequently.
- Respondents were **exposed to information** about SALTA's activities **through multiple channels**, mainly kindergarten's WhatsApp group, social media and friends. Only respondents from Jaffa stated they saw community center's advertisements and some observations' interviewees reported being exposed to the information through advertisement by Beit Cherner.
- Workshops' contribution to **Positive Interaction with Children** were **below average** (70%) among participants from Jaffa. Important notice: 38% of related activities in Jaffa were designated for **children from birth to 1 year old**, who are less communicative at this age.
- 66% of respondents were interested in ongoing workshops, for a symbolic price, a low figure compared to city average (78%).
- Respondents' assessment about **community-related aspects** were high in most cases:
  - 59% of respondents indicated they **formed new connections following SALTA's workshops**, higher than total average (43%).
  - 61% of respondents indicated they made new acquaintances **following the use of joint play kits**, much higher than total average (39%).
  - According to "City Survey", less residents reported mutual aid and caring for others in Jaffa (36%), but more than half of Jaffa residents feel they have someone to turn to in their neighborhood (58%). In addition, the highest percentage of residents who are willing to promote community-related and social matters was found in Jaffa (62%).

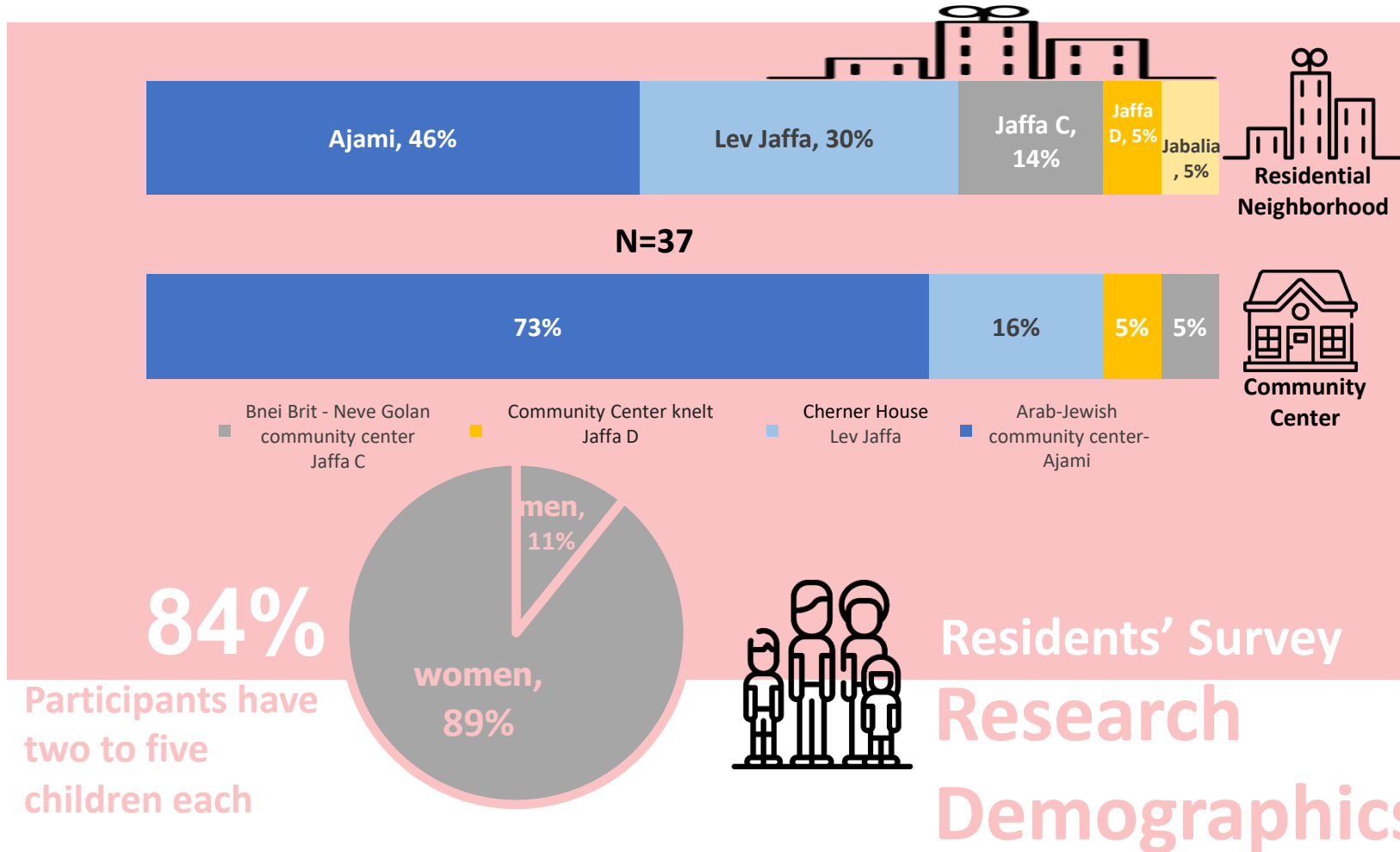
\*The regional summary is based upon workshops and kits' feedback surveys, activities' observation and "City Survey" data. Information about the Arab speaking community in Jaffa is presented in the case study chapter (next).

# General Summary – Insights & Recommendations

<p><b>SALTA's Workshops</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <b>SALTA's activities and workshops</b> are perceived by both residents and community centers' staff as <b>high-quality activities which are valuable in terms of acquiring and implementing tools for parents</b>, and it seems the activities <b>meet the criteria</b> they were based on.</li> <li>■ It is recommended to <b>differentiate the uniqueness of SALTA's workshops</b> and to include SALTA in the early childhood services with regards to activities conducted outside of educational institutions and provides professional support for young parents.</li> <li>■ Some centers in the city centre have their own activities layout, <b>the existing and/or additional activities should be examined against the SALTA's criteria</b>, to maintain the good results and expand range of activities. This can promote the <b>establishment of an independent operating model</b>, by using the SALTA's workshops criteria as a design plan for activities, similar to the indoor play areas' design plan.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Centers' Activity</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Continue using practices of <b>public participation</b> and maintain accessible and open communication with parents, to map needs and identify barriers.</li> <li>■ Allocation of inviting, comfortable waiting areas in or in the vicinity of the community centers might contribute to social interaction and social gatherings in addition to arrival to specific activities.</li> <li>■ The community centers in the city centre are "islands of success", serving as a model for a sustainable operating format that can be duplicated. Providing services and contents that meet a high and stable standard, adapted to the needs of different regions with the aim of <b>bridging gaps and providing comprehensive solutions to the residents</b>.</li> <li>■ All existing activities included in the program <b>should be further extended</b> for the benefit of residents across the city, and <b>especially for vulnerable populations</b>. <i>"The next stage must focus on the vulnerable populations on which we have not sufficiently focused"</i> (Senior city official from Community Administration).</li> </ul>
<p><b>South – "Neighborhood as a City"</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The following barriers to community centers' use were identified: residents lack a <b>sense of security</b>, accessibility issues in routes leading to the community centers and the surrounding environment. Also, there is a need to improve enforcement and infrastructures.</li> <li>■ To accommodate different populations, the community centers need to <b>balance between paid and free-of-charge activities</b>.</li> </ul>
<p><b>North</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ An accessibility barrier due to <b>not having enough community centers</b> in the region.</li> <li>■ Suggestions to use other public buildings and public spaces, to provide community centers' services under SALTA's activities basket.</li> </ul>



# Case Study - Jaffa Residents: Mapping Needs amongst the Arab community



\*The full research report was submitted to Urban95 team upon completion, as part of the formative research approach. The current case study presents main findings.

## Background

As Urban95 intends to promote the early parenthood domain amongst vulnerable populations, there has been collaboration with the Jaffa Department in cooperation with the early childhood coordinator from the Arab-Jewish community center in Jaffa. As part of the joint effort, the range of SALTA's workshops offered at the community centers in Jaffa is expanding, in addition to the range of activities designated for parents and young children which take place in the public space close to home across Jaffa.

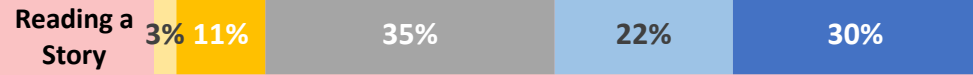
Following a request by Urban95, a comprehensive needs-mapping study was conducted amongst Jaffa's residents – Arabic speaking parents of children from birth to 3 years old, in order to understand their needs and identify potential opportunities and barriers for using SALTA's services.

## Research Layout

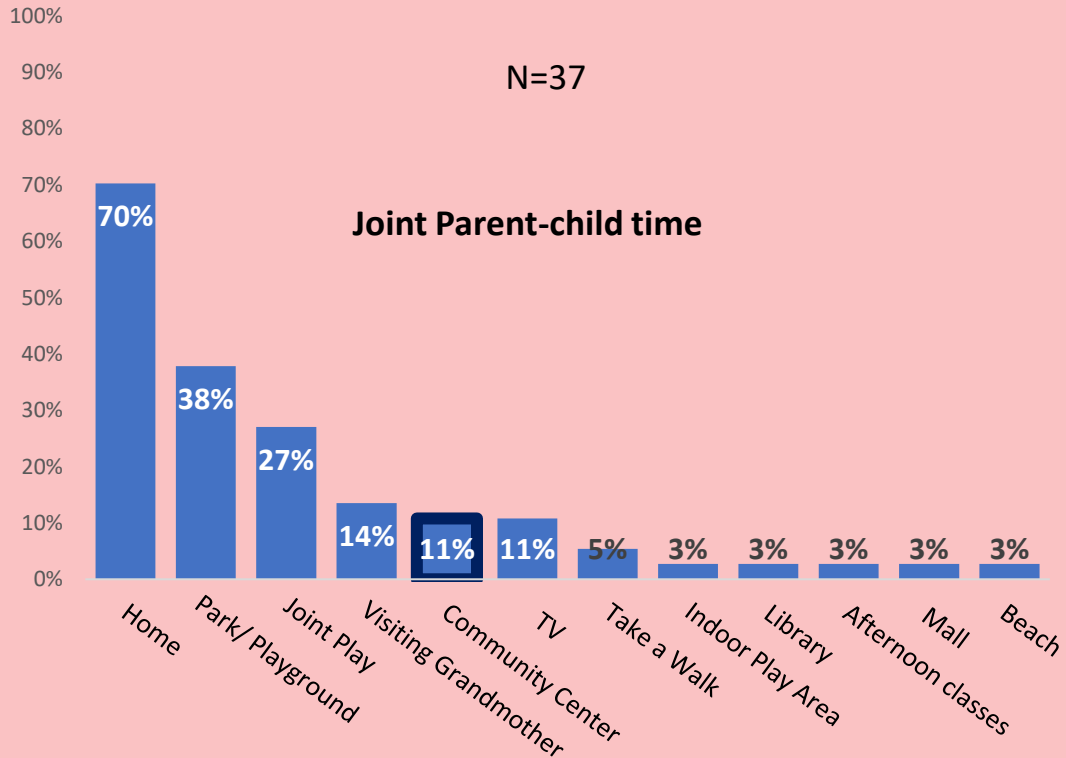
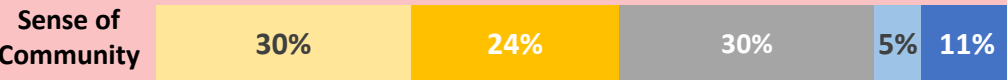
- Three focus groups with Arabic speaking residents:
  - "Actively participating" mothers – Seven participants who have one to five children each, all of whom are employed / high education students.
  - "Non-participating" mothers (Before Covid-19 designated activities) – eight participants who have one to five children each, all of whom are housewives.
  - A group of local kindergarten teachers, with 14-19 years of experience, provided their point of view on local young families – four participants representing different kindergartens: a private daycare, municipal kindergarten, bilingual kindergarten and kindergarten for children with special needs.
- A residents' survey in Hebrew and Arabic. The survey was distributed with the help of the early childhood coordinator from the Jewish-Arabic community center, convenience sampling based on the "snowball" method. 37 residents replied to the survey – 33 women and four men.
- In addition, the report included findings from an observation conducted in a public playground on Nahal HaBasor street in Jaffa, and from an observation conducted during a women empowerment workshop on Zoom, as part of SALTA's workshops' evaluation.

# Population & Community Life Characterization

Never Seldom Occasionally Frequently Very Frequently

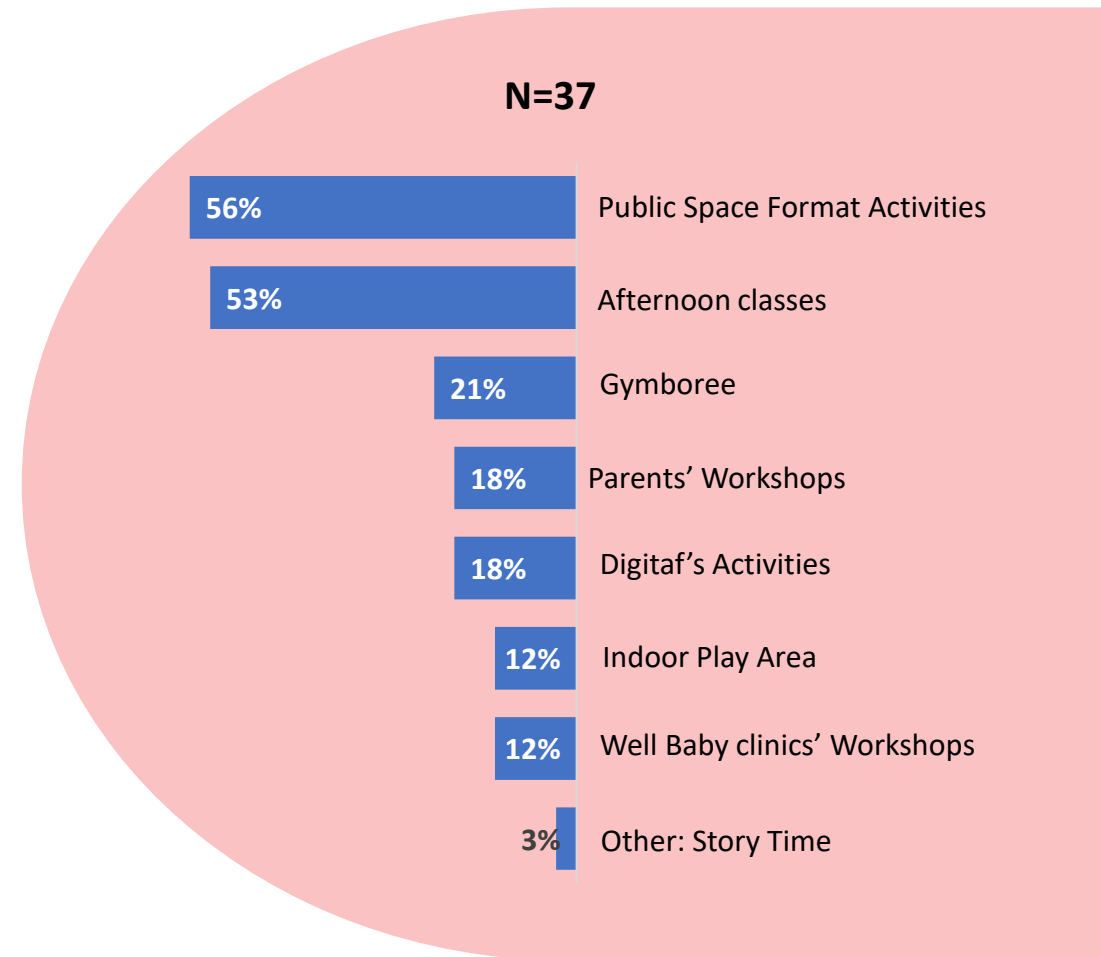


Not at all To a Small Extent To a Moderate Extent To a Large Extent To a Very Large Extent



- The population that takes part in the activities and services provided by the community center is a "stronger" population in terms of socio-economic status and most of the members are well-educated. Some of the women even see themselves as **part of the community center they used to visit as children**.
- "Non-participating" mothers reported a routine which is characterized by a **family-based community** - spending time with members of the extended family and friends' families. Most "non-participating" mothers are unemployed and have very basic education. The family unit usually includes **several children at different ages**, when usually older children help take care of their younger siblings. During a public playground observation in Jaffa, a few groups of young children accompanied by their teenage sisters who looked after them were observed.
- The kindergarten teachers reported a variety of parental approaches and practices they were exposed to. Some indicated parents of babies usually keep them busy at home and use ideas, songs and stories sent by the kindergarten teacher. Families from the bilingual kindergarten seem close to one another and spend a lot of time together compared to other families. Some kindergarten teachers also noted many parents use smartphones to keep their children busy and/or watch them while they play, rather than play along with them. During a playground observation, a group of mothers and children was observed, the interaction between them was mainly composed of yelling and warnings.

- 92% of survey's respondents indicated they use the community center services. Half of them said they take part in afternoon activities and capsules' activities near their apartment building. About a fifth indicated they visit the Gymboree and participate in Digitaf's activities and parents' workshops.
- "Actively participating" mothers (before COVID-19) expressed higher satisfaction with the activities that were conducted after the pandemic broke out (compared to previous activities).
- "Non-participating" mothers (before COVID-19), who only recently started taking part in activities, also expressed a high level of satisfaction. Their increased awareness may be a result of a broader community recruitment initiated by a designated early childhood coordinator (who had been recently appointed) and the fact that the activities are conducted in public space near their houses, rather than at the community centers.



- Half of respondents thought Jaffa residents have neither time nor motivation to participate in community center activities and indicated there were very few activities conducted in Arabic. Other barriers related to difficulty to commit oneself in advance (registration), lack of publicity and awareness to activities and activities not suitable for all ages.

## Following are additional issues that were brought up in focus groups:

- Language Adjustment:** "Actively Participating" mothers raised an essential need for designated activities in Arabic. According to them, and to survey respondents and kindergarten teachers, Hebrew classes for older children (school age) might be useful, but firstly activities must be adapted to Arabic speakers. However, this wasn't mentioned by "non-participating" mothers, who had not experienced the routine at the centers before the pandemic.

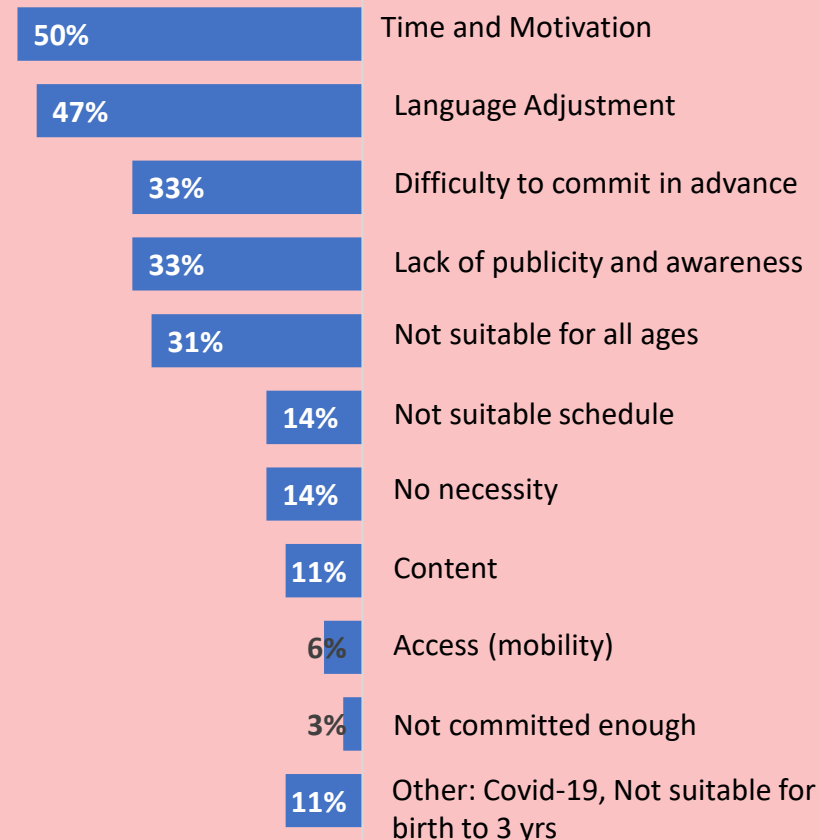
- Adapting contents to the Arabic Culture:** "Actively Participating" mothers were critical towards the existing range of activities (with an emphasis on the time prior to COVID-19) and raised the need to adjust the activities to the values and culture of the residents. Survey respondents also brought up the need for cultural adaptation: *"An activity or music session that focus on oriental instruments and rhythm, such as Darbuka, Nai, Mizmaar, rhythm games, traditional songs and reciting... Exposure to literary language through stories for young children and recitations."*

"Non-participating" mothers expressed interest in the activities. Some of them raised the need to help children with their studies, provide supervision and assist children with their homework.

- Adjustment of activities to multi-child families:** "non-participating" mothers and survey respondents raised the need for multi-age solutions and activities adjusted to young children. Some mothers showed interest to participate in early childhood activities in the morning. Kindergarten teachers also indicated the activities offered by the community center are not *"suitable for babies."*

## What Keeps people from participating?\*

N=37



\*Survey respondents were asked a multi-options question – "what keep you from participating in the community center activities?"



- **Emotional Availability, Awareness & Motivation:** Most “actively participating” residents are from a high socio-economic status. “actively participating” mothers and kindergarten teachers thought the center should reach out to vulnerable populations, who are not available (physically and emotionally) to use the center’s services. “non-participating” mothers exhibit low awareness to the various possibilities offered to parents by the community centers, and of the need for parenting workshops amongst many young families. Some of the kindergarten teachers pointed out an urgent need for increasing awareness for the availability of parenting workshops and the importance of maintaining good relationships with their children. In an observation on an Arab women empowerment workshop on Zoom, most participants were active and expressed a high satisfaction and keen interest to participate in additional activities.
- **Community Belonging:** The kindergarten teachers thought parents do not feel connected to the community center. Besides increasing the sense of community through activities, it is possible to use the community to promote participation: “If I knew there were other parents who need guidance and help as I do, it would encourage me to participate” (a non-participating mother). More than half (58%) of survey respondents were interested in taking part in the activities’ planning at the community center.
- **Mobility:** Most “non-participating” mothers reported difficulty to move around with several children and asked for a closer to home service, that can be reached by foot. When asked how they usually travel when they go out with children, most survey respondents (78%) said they use their car and 22% said they usually walk.
- **Costs:** “Non-participating” mothers reported they cannot afford to pay for afternoon activities. “Actively participating” mothers claimed that when it comes to large families, the cost is a barrier. A similar claim was raised by the kindergarten teachers.
- **Public Accessibility to Community Centers:** Some kindergarten teachers felt that prior to the coordinator’s appointment, the centers were less accessible and available for them and for families in the neighborhood.

**The COVID-19 crisis led to creative initiatives by the municipality, which removed some of the barriers.** The solutions for keeping social distance and public gathering limitations made the activities more accessible - by conducting workshops in public space (playgrounds, boulevards, backyards), turning ongoing activities into one-time sessions, conducting activities in neighboring capsules, distribution of play kits to quarantined families and joint play kits for neighboring families.

**Conducting activities closer to place of living** enabled families to participate as a whole family, with several children, close to home, without having to travel and free of charge. This opportunity exposed the activities to populations that were not aware of them and were not emotionally available beforehand. These residents later expressed their interest to join future activities. Kindergarten teachers reported that during this period, parents tended to tell them about the activities as part of their attempt to keep in touch. Moreover, the enhanced communication between the centers and the kindergarten teachers and their increased involvement, alongside the improved accessibility of the activities, were beneficial for the residents: *“I feel that I have someone to turn to and it feels that I really belong there”* (kindergarten teacher).

- **Designated activities for children:** especially early childhood activities and providing solutions for older children through multi-age activities or parallel sessions, as well as offering to look after children.
- Unique sessions that **do not require commitment.**
- **Training for parents of young children:** Workshops for parents that offer ideas for activities with babies and children under the age of two, as well as contents that include tools for supporting and promoting parental self-efficacy.
- **Professional consultation center:** Providing professional consultation for parents on everyday issues.
- **Leisure activities for mothers:** Designated activities for mothers so they could “clear their heads” and to encourage community bonding.
- **Improving physical accessibility and conducting activities near home:** Conducting activities in the public space close to home and offering a shuttle service to help residents who live far away from the centers.
- **Increasing awareness:** Increasing awareness for the services and activities proposed by the community centers. Optional platforms for advertisement: educational institutions, well baby clinics, social media, centers’ webpages, as well as through influential people and municipality’s service channels.
- **Recruitment of educational teams:** The group of kindergarten teachers showed a high level of willingness to take part in the planning of activities and some of them initiated suggestions for activities through the Jewish-Arab Center’s Facebook page. They opened an independent WhatsApp group designated for sharing knowledge, and prior to the pandemic arranged a monthly gathering for peer-learning. Moreover, they get updates about the various activities from their group, the Facebook group of the Jewish-Arab Center and through a WhatsApp group initiated by the early childhood coordinator. It is recommended to unite the various interfaces and to aspire towards a joint channel of communication that would be useful in terms of distribution of information regarding the services.
- **Public Participation:** The mere gathering of the focus group made the participants feel their voice is heard. In addition, a high level (58%) of willingness to participate in activities’ planning was expressed by the survey respondents. Thus, it is recommended to proceed with public participation and even to arrange periodic focus groups where participants would be able to discuss their positions.

# Appendices

## ***Short Term Evaluation Indicators:***

- Satisfaction with services (geographically and financially) - Extent of parents or primary caregivers:

Who have used and felt satisfied with a service in the past 30 days, recommending it to others.

Who have expressed satisfaction from the geographical distance of the service from their home.

Who have expressed satisfaction from the cost of the acquired services.

- Satisfaction with services availability, frequency and quality - Extent of parents or primary caregivers:

Highly satisfied from staff: Knowledge, expertise, accessibility and attitude towards participants.

Highly satisfied from services: Variety and quality of content and schedule flexibility.

- Parental knowledge and tools, strengthening parent-child relationship and parental self-efficacy - Extent of parents or primary caregivers, who reported an intent and/or execution of activities and use of tools acquired during the SALTA workshops, regarding their children's care.

- New social ties - Extent of parents or primary caregivers, who reported meeting new people following their participation in activities and through consumption of services offered by community centers.

- Implementation of independent activation model - Primary community centers independently operate all SALTA workshops, activities and services, without Urban95 program's assistance.

# Criteria for the SALTA Workshop Contents – Dr. Dana Shay

**Interaction with the Parent** – Contemporary studies clearly and unequivocally show that the inter-personal relationship between the baby and the main caregivers during the first two years of life significantly shapes the normal development of the brain's structure and function and that the quality of parent-child relationship affects, in the short and long term, all aspects of child development, including cognitive, emotional, social, medical, linguistic and motoric development (Fox & Rutter, 2010; Humpreys et al., 2018; Cicchetti et al., 2010). **Thus**, interaction with parents during SALTA workshops is not inevitable (due to the children's young age), but a goal in itself. Brain development and child's creativity or sociability are the consequences, a benefit that derives from the interaction with the parent. In this sense, **the customer is the parent-child relationship**. This is the focus. This is the prism.

**Parents' Importance** - Scientific literature proves, beyond any doubt, that parents' emotional and mental wellbeing significantly affects parent-child relationships. Parents' childhood experiences, the difficulties and challenges they face, as well as their capabilities and strengths, shape the kind of parents they become, the extent to which they are emotionally available for the multiple needs of the young child, and their ability to provide a positive environment for the child during the first, critical years of life (Fearon & Belsky, 2018; Zeanah, 2018). Some of the most significant aspects leading to an optimal parental functioning, as research shows, are social support and a sense of efficacy (Karp, Lutembacher & Wallston, 2015; Verhage et al., 2016; Wittkowski, Garrett., Calam & Weisberg, 2017). **Thus**, the workshops are designated for parents as well. Parental wellbeing (in addition to child wellbeing) is important and the workshop should address parents as well. Meaning, the workshop serves parents *as well*. As part of addressing parents' needs the aim is that participating in the workshop would enhance parenting experience, their parental efficacy, their ability to lead and their contribution to their child development. Thus, there might be workshops designated for parents only.

**Indoor Play Areas** – The most effective way to meet the workshops' objectives is through usage of indoor play areas – by both parent and child – and mutual enjoyment. Studies emphasize the importance of indoor play areas for young children which contribute to the development of diverse capabilities and as an important predictor for the child's ability to become a creative, thriving adult who contributes to society. Indoor play areas contribute to the development of the mind and the child's inner, creative world, as well as to his curiosity and ability to enjoy the world around him. In addition, it contributes to children's self confidence, regulation capabilities and creativity, as well as to children's inner motivation while coping with frustration, difficulties and fears (Brown, 2009; Pink, 2009; Whitebread, 2012; Winnicott, 1971). Moreover, joint parent-child play creates an opportunity to share moments of creativity, joy, discovery and curiosity – which enhances parent-child relationship (Winnicott, 1971). **Therefore**, the workshops should refer to indoor play areas for both participants – the child and the parent. Children's play areas include unstructured activities which encourage the use of imagination, creativity, without elements of judgement or right or wrong. In addition to that, it is important to enable parents to connect with the child within them (to be playful, easy-going, creative), a place that allows real encounter between parent and child and real enjoyment from workshops' activities. The program's slogan is reflected here – “seeing the world from the height of 95cm!”

**Structured Freedom** – The workshops must be very structured, planned, based on a clear, structured and detailed syllabus. Activities should be known in advance, so that the moderator knows exactly what he/she is supposed to do during the session. Such structure and framework will promote parents and children's ability to feel safe and liberated during the workshops. This is the rationale behind structured freedom.

**Modularity** – The programs should be adapted and flexible to suit different populations and age groups. Specifically, each of the workshops should be structured and adapted to stronger or vulnerable populations in terms of level of education, status, language. Moreover, each of the workshops should be adapted to the children's cognitive development and parental development. Thus, for example, workshops are supposed to be adapted to the duration of pregnancy when the relationship with the unborn child starts to develop (de Cock et al., 2016; Dubber, Reck, Muller & Gawlik, 2015).

**Continuity** - It is important that the workshop is designed in a way that takes into account the ongoing group process – beginning, middle and end. Participants' sense of belonging would improve as a result of such continuity.

**Considering the Group Composition**- The workshop moderator should take the group's composition into account and know how to work with groups. The group dynamics is very significant (for better or for worse) and the moderator should have experience with group work (Forsyth, 2018). This aspect of workshops enhances the sense of community and the sense of belonging amongst the participants. This aspect is significant since numerous psychological studies show that social support and sense of community are an important part of parents' wellbeing at all stages – from infancy to school age, from children who develop normally through premature babies to children with neuro-developmental problems (Ahlqvist-Bjorkroth, Boukydis, Axelin & Lehtonen, 2017; Raina et al., 2004; Twemlow, Fonagv & Sacco, 2005).

**Enhancing the Sense of Community** – Workshops that take into account integration of various populations (for example, golden age with little ones) are preferable, as well as workshops that have some affinity with the community, which might be expressed through a contribution to the community (concerts, exhibitions, community projects).



**All observations were conducted between August to November 2020:**

<b>Frontal Activities</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Activity Format</b>
(Sounds of the World	August 23 <sup>rd</sup>	North	One-time meetup
While Moving	August 24 <sup>th</sup>	South	One-time meetup
Meditation with Babies	August 26 <sup>th</sup>	Jaffa	One-time meetup
ContactKids	August 27 <sup>th</sup>	South	Part of an ongoing session
Show me the Sound	August 27 <sup>th</sup>	Jaffa	Part of an ongoing session
ContactKids	September 17 <sup>th</sup>	North	Part of an ongoing session
Make up a Story	November 24 <sup>th</sup>	Centre	One-time meetup
Fun Together	November 24 <sup>th</sup>	Centre	One-time meetup
<b>Online Activities</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>Activity Format</b>
Parenting instruction via Zoom	October 12 <sup>th</sup>	Centre	Part of an ongoing session
Women empowerment workshop (in Arabic)	November 4 <sup>th</sup>	Jaffa	Part of an ongoing session

# An Outline\* for Interviews / Focus Groups with Staff Members of Community Centers

**The purpose of the questionnaire** is to listen to your insights as the people who are most familiar with the residents and to try and understand how parents become motivated and how to increase the rate of service consumption amongst the residents who are parents of young children.

- 1. What does it mean to manage or work in the community center / to coordinate the early childhood domain? What are the main challenges?**
- 2. Tell me about the community centers. Where are they located in the neighborhood? What's around them (points of interest)?** (changes according to function – a director of a center will tell about the center, a district director might offer a broader perspective of the entire district and the centers included in it...)
- 3. How does the community center operate: Are there annual / multi-annual work plans? Is there a designated plan for early childhood? What specific aspects of early childhood does the center attempt to advance? Why those in particular? And how is it done? Are plans matched with specific seasons of the year?**
- 4. Describe the routine at the community center, prior to the pandemic, How does a typical day look like? Describe the atmosphere.**  
Staff members – Who are the service providers? Including indoor play areas, extra curriculum activities and workshops' moderators, consultants  
**Describe the interaction between staff and residents and amongst the residents** (What do parents do while waiting for their children - are there contents that are relevant for the waiting parents? A bulletin board? A coffee house? Some activities...)?
- 5. Characterize the participants – socio-demographically (type of population and which populations avoid the center)?** What is important to them? What bothers them? **Describe the composition** (parents only, parent / parents with child, grandparents, nanny)? **Children's age? Time of day? Regulars / passerby? The length of an average visit (arrives for activity and stays?)**  
**In what way do you maintain a direct connection with the parents of young children (what platforms are used)?**
- 6. Shortly describe what the community center offers parents and their young children (prior to the pandemic), including themes of activities, working hours and frequency. Which of the activities / services are considered as "anchors" and why?**  
**The intention is – What are the most popular activities / services and why? Which ones are less popular and why? How do you know? What is the difference in the popularity of different services / activities? What motivates parents?**
- 7. How were these services and activities marketed / advertised (prior to the pandemic)? Have there been some adaptations in advertising the different services?**
- 8. What activities / services are offered nowadays / planned for the near future? What adaptations have been made following the COVID-19 crisis?**  
**How are these services / activities communicated nowadays? Has there been a change in marketing / advertising strategy due to COVID-19?**
- 9. What would you retain out of the changes made during the COVID-19 crisis – will you continue to use the near-home / public space capsule model later on?**
- 10. What are the main barriers of the staff (operatively) with regards to implementing SALTA / early childhood at the community center (marketing, designated HR for early childhood, COVID-19 restrictions, space for activities, etc.)?**
- 11. In your opinion, what are the main barriers that prevent parents of young children from consuming the services offered by the community centers? What characterizes those who register and cancel / do not show up?**
- 12. In your opinion, what can be done in order to increase the rate of participation and consumption of services offered by the community center?**
- 13. How do you feel about the "early childhood leader"? Is it beneficial to lead a group of early childhood leaders (parents) through Urban95, with the aim of promoting residents' initiatives such as leading activities, marketing and a direct channel of communication with the centers, contact with local businesses, etc. (as part of promoting community networking in the neighborhood). We would appreciate any input on this matter, topics that "early childhood leaders" might promote. Do you need help in recruiting additional parents? Tools provided to those leaders in the neighborhoods?**
- 14. How do you imagine SALTA's success? How does it look like? How will it look like in a couple of years?**



# An Outline\* for Focus Group with Parents of Young Children

**The Purpose of the Meeting** is to learn about your thoughts, stances and needs from the community center as parents of young children who live in the neighborhood.

A round of introduction: “For me, the community center means ....”

**1. What needs does the community center fulfill for you and for you children (prior to the pandemic)? Are there other alternatives, private or public (in the neighborhood or outside of the neighborhood), for the services / activities provided by the center?** (extra curriculum activities at school, private workshops, well baby clinics, early childhood center)

**2. What is going on at the center routinely? Describe the atmosphere. Who comes to the center and when (Is there a difference between the visitors in the morning (mothers on maternity leave, grandmothers, nannies) as opposed to those who visit in the afternoon (parents and older children)? Do parents occasionally chat with each others? Do parents see themselves as part of a community? Do young families share a sense of “togetherness”?**

**3. Who are the staff members present at the center?** (directors, coordinators, indoor play areas’ operators, activities and workshops’ moderators, consultants)? **Describe the communication with the staff** (practical, consultation, personal connection)?

**4. What activities / services provided by the community center do you routinely use? Do you take part in them regularly / occasionally? How frequently? What is the length of an average visit?**

For the moderator: well baby clinic in the community, Gymboree, parent-child indoor play area, storytelling, SALTA’s workshops, one-time sessions, Digitaf’s activities, events in public space, parents’ workshops – parents’ groups, community garden

**5. How do you get to the center? Is the route convenient and adapted to your needs? What can be done to improve it?**

For the moderator: by foot, by bicycle, by car, by public transportation? (if they use transportation – why? Is it too far to walk?).. with a stroller/ toy car

**6. How do you learn about the different services / activities offered routinely for parents and children?**

For the moderator: Were some activities mentioned more than others? (Digitaf), advertising platforms’ mapping (offline / online) – Facebook and WhatsApp, word of mouth, partnership recruitment (amongst professionals – kindergarten teachers and consultants, and amongst the residents – agents of change and community leaders)

**7. What activities / services take place nowadays (including consumption of contents in public space, parks and playgrounds)? Do you know of any adaptations made following the COVID-19 crisis?**

**How did you learn about these activities / services? Do you take part in them? What do you think about the activities that are conducted these days?** For the moderator: capsules’ activities, SALTA’s activities, workshops on Zoom, joint play kits for neighboring families, well baby clinics in the community, guided parents’ group, community garden, prior registration, decreasing groups’ size.

**8. Is there an activity that you / your child wanted to participate in, but did not eventually join? Had you registered and did not show up? Why? What prevented your participation?**

Advertisement (publicity), willingness (free time, energy), adaptation to needs (type of activity, level of parent’s involvement, child’s age), adaptation of activities to the population (culturally, range of topics, cost, timing), commitment (one-time, ongoing), specific need (first aid) or expansion of knowledge about parental efficacy and child development, format (one-on-one consultation or community / group consultation), prior registration as a barrier, parents’ stances about the activities (do they understand the importance of joint play, parent-child relationship..., physical accessibility to the center, security and safety in the evening, mobility with strollers, avoiding populations that visit the center

**9. What services are missing? Have you ever asked to add another activity? Initiated an activity? What was the reaction of the staff in the community center to your request?**

**10. Have you ever filled in a feedback form or satisfaction survey initiated by the center?**

**11. If the community center decides to integrate residents as early childhood activity leaders, each parent in his / her field of expertise – will you be interested in becoming a leader? Will you be interested in taking part in activity planning? Is it beneficial to integrate kindergarten teachers in center’s activities? Other potential partners?**

**12. What can be done to increase the rate of participation of parents of young children and consumption of services offered by the community center? What can be done to promote persistence (as opposed to a one-time visit)?**

For the moderator: significant figures (community leaders, active organizations), channels of communication, potential collaborations, advertising in daycare facilities, engaging parents in planning, adding professionals, adaptation of opening hours for different populations – morning activities for mothers on maternity leave, addressing public space issues (accessibility and mobility)

**13. If the centers decide to promote multi-age, community-oriented activities** (such as a neighborhood picnic, Saturday camping at the neighborhood playground, Purim celebration, lighting candles with elderly neighborhood residents, etc.) **would you be interested in taking part?**

**14. Who do you consult with when you have questions concerning childcare / enhancing the relationship with them (medical and para-medical sources / organizational sources / online information / educational sources – kindergarten teachers)?**

# Feedback Questionnaire for Participants of SALTA's Workshops

▪ Name of workshop	
▪ Location of workshop	
▪ Region	
▪ Did the workshop take place at the community center close to your home?	
▪ Child's age: Birth-1 / 1-2 / 2-3 / older than 3	
▪ Currently are you: stay at home parent / grandmother / self-employed / working a part time / working a full-time / on maternity leave	N=50
▪ To what extent did the workshop meet your expectations? To what extent was the activity enjoyable for you and for child?	N=184
▪ To what extent do you feel that the activity contributed to a positive interaction between you and your child?	N=178
▪ B. before / after workshop hours?	N=38
▪ To what extent was the workshop enjoyable, encouraged play and creativity?	N=43
▪ To what extent was the workshop enjoyable, encouraged play and creativity for your child?	N=38
▪ To what extent did the workshop provide you with confidence or new and practical tools which you will continue to use in the future?	N=184
▪ Please specify (what tools / in what way)?	
▪ To what extent did you feel that the workshop's instructor was professional and skilled?	N=184
▪ To what extent did you feel that the workshop was well organized and clear?	N=50
▪ To what extent did you feel that the workshop's instructor adapted to unexpected situations and was flexible as expected?	N=43
▪ Have you made new connections with other parents who participated in the workshop?	N=184
▪ Do you feel that the length of the workshop (number of sessions) was appropriate? (too long / just right / to short)?	N=50
▪ To what extent would you recommend the workshop to others?	N=56
▪ Additional comments – we would like to hear your opinion! What did you enjoy the most/ the least? And any other input you would like to share with us, so we will be able to improve	
▪ Will you be interested in registering to an ongoing workshop (that includes several sessions) on the same subject at a symbolic price?	N=133
▪ Do you tend to visit the community center close to your home? *data unification with an identical question on the kits' questionnaire	N=347
▪ Where have you heard about the activity?	N=132
▪ If interested, please leave a phone number or email address so we will be able to contact you	
▪ To what extent were the physical and environmental conditions convenient for you and your child?	N=5
▪ To what extent did the activity adhere to the restrictions?	N=5
▪ To what extent did you get new ideas for a joint play with your child?	N=5
▪ Will you be interested in leading additional activities for neighboring families in cooperation with the community center?	N=2
▪ If interested, please leave a phone number or email address so we will be able to contact you	
▪ To what extent were the registration process and communication with the community center user-friendly?	N=5

\* Most questionnaires were distributed by the Tel Aviv – Jaffa Municipality. The questionnaires were distributed in several versions and the scope of respondents for each of the questions is different. Similar questions were unified for statistical data purposes.

# Type of Activity Categorizing for Feedback Surveys of Salta Activities and workshops

Type of Activity	Name of Activity	Total
Parental	Gay Dads workshop	6
	Parenting workshop	7
Total 'Parental'		13
Meditation/Mindfulness	Meditation with Babies	23
	Mindfulness	8
Total 'Meditation/Mindfulness'		31
Music	World Fun	11
	Sound of the World	27
	Sounds for Beginners	2
	Show me the Sound	3
Total 'Music'		43
Touch & Motion	Fun Together	4
	ContactKids	54
	While Moving	4
Total 'Touch & Motion'		62
Reading & Creative Thinking	Reading Instruction/Maya	2
	Make up a Story	13
	Imagination Games	16
	Reading Instruction/Anat	4
Total 'Reading & Creative Thinking'		35
Total Sum		184

# Feedback Survey for Users of Play Kits for Quarantined Families & Joint Play Kits for Neighboring Families

▪ Kits Specification	Quarantine only
▪ Where did the workshop / activity take place?	
▪ How did you hear about the workshop / activity?	
▪ Relation to child	
▪ Age of child who participated in activity	
▪ Currently are you: stay at home parent / self-employed / working a part time / working a full-time / on maternity leave	
▪ How frequently do you visit the community center close to your home?	
▪ To what extent were the registration process and communication with the community center user-friendly?	Joint play only
▪ To what extent was the kit you received a high-quality one (unique, durable, made of high-quality materials)?	
▪ To what extent was the kit you received easy to use?	
▪ To what extent was the kit you received suitable for the child's age?	
▪ For how long did you play with the kit?	
▪ How many families played with the kit?	Joint play only
▪ To what extent was the kit you received suitable for a joint play of several families?	Joint play only
▪ To what extent do you feel that the activity contributed to positive interaction between you and your child?	
▪ To what extent was the workshop enjoyable and encouraged playfulness and creativity for you and your child?	
▪ To what extent did the magnet include in the kit gave you new ideas for joint activity with your child?	
▪ To what extent, in your opinion, will you perform the magnet activities suggested in the kit?	
▪ To what extent did the kit cheered you as parents and ease the tension at home during this challenging period?	
▪ To what extent do you feel that receiving the kit from a friend enhanced the sense of solidarity and belonging in the neighborhood?	Quarantine only
▪ Did you make any acquaintances or got to know new families / parents thanks to the kit?	Joint play only
▪ If you already knew the other participants, to what extent did the activity make you closer?	Joint play only
▪ Will you play with the kit again (more than once)?	
▪ To what extent will you recommend the activity to others?	
▪ Additional comments – we would like to hear your opinion! (About the contents of the kit, using the kit and any other input you would like to share with us, so we will be able to improve).	
▪ Would you be interested in participating in additional activities suitable for your children's age at the community center?	
▪ Will you be interested in leading additional activities for neighboring families in cooperation with the community center?	Joint play only
▪ If interested, please leave a phone number or email address so we will be able to contact you.	