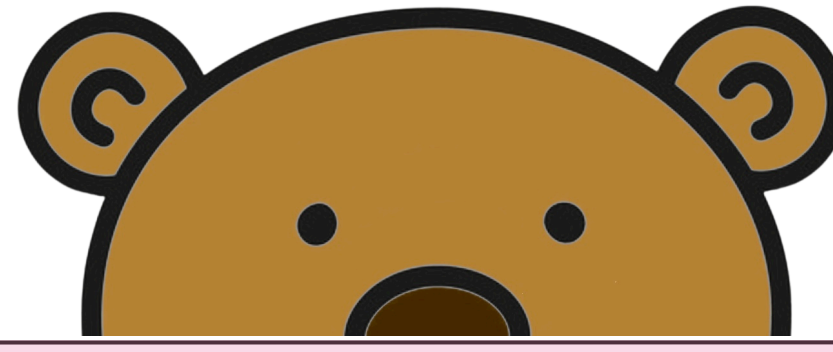


# Evaluation of the Merthyr PIPYN intervention



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## Background

Recent data shows that 29.4% of children and 74.6% of adults in Merthyr Tydfil are now living with either overweight or obesity.<sup>1,2</sup> This is higher than the Welsh national average. (24.8%<sup>1</sup>, 61.8%<sup>2</sup>)

PIPYN (Pwysau Iach Plant Ung Nghymru; Healthy Children Healthy Weight in Wales) is a collaboration between Public Health Wales, Welsh Government, Public Health Dietitians in Wales and the Directors of Public Health in Anglesey, Cardiff and Merthyr.

Pilots are established using a whole systems approach with a nested family based intervention. The three pilot areas are testing a range of approaches for working with children aged 3-7 years and their families, to support healthy weights.

There is limited evidence on the effectiveness of weight management services for children and young people however, a person centred family based approach is recommended to maximise outcomes.<sup>3,4</sup>

## Aim

To identify the impact of Merthyr PIPYN on family lifestyle behaviours

## Methodology

The PIPYN intervention evaluation framework, is designed by Public Health Wales with input from Glasgow University. All families who attend a PIPYN programme receive a pre and post intervention questionnaire measuring patient reported baseline and outcomes related to obesity risk. Both qualitative and quantitative data is collected.

Data was collected for families completing the intervention between August 2023 – May 2024.

## Introduction

Working in collaboration with Public Health Wales, the Merthyr PIPYN intervention has been designed and delivered by the CTMUHB Public Health Dietetic team; following insight work with over 150 local partners and families.

As a universally accessible programme, targeting areas of deprivation, group and individual family based interventions are offered. Merthyr families opted for group based delivery only; tailored to individual family needs and delivered over 8 weeks.

Public Health Dietetic Assistant Practitioners facilitate groups with oversight from the Public Health Dietitian, following extensive training. Staff apply motivational interviewing and behaviour change methodology within sessions such as sleep, oral health, screen time, nutrition, fussy eating and active play.

PIPYN employs a prudent healthcare approach, utilising essential governance and competency principles, to deliver safe and effective services.<sup>3,5</sup> This aligns with the Healthy Weight Healthy Wales Strategy.

## Results

Data collection from 156 of the 180 families engaging with Merthyr PIPYN provided data (87% response rate). This includes reported behaviours from 284 children.

Figure 1. Percentage of families reporting positive lifestyle changes post PIPYN

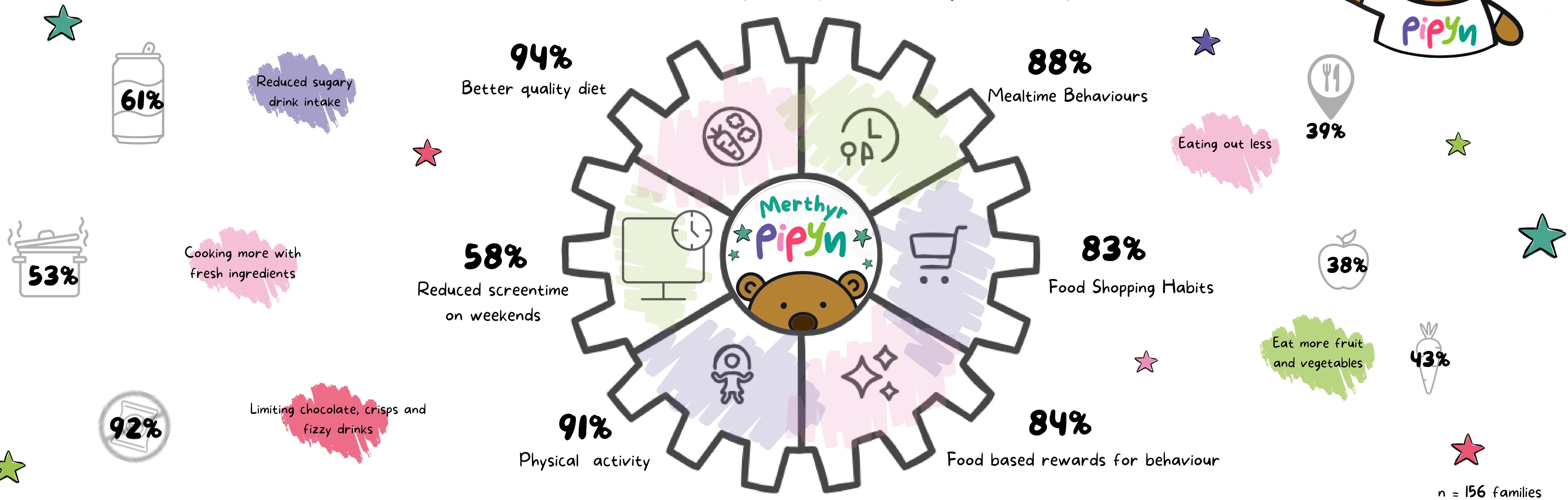
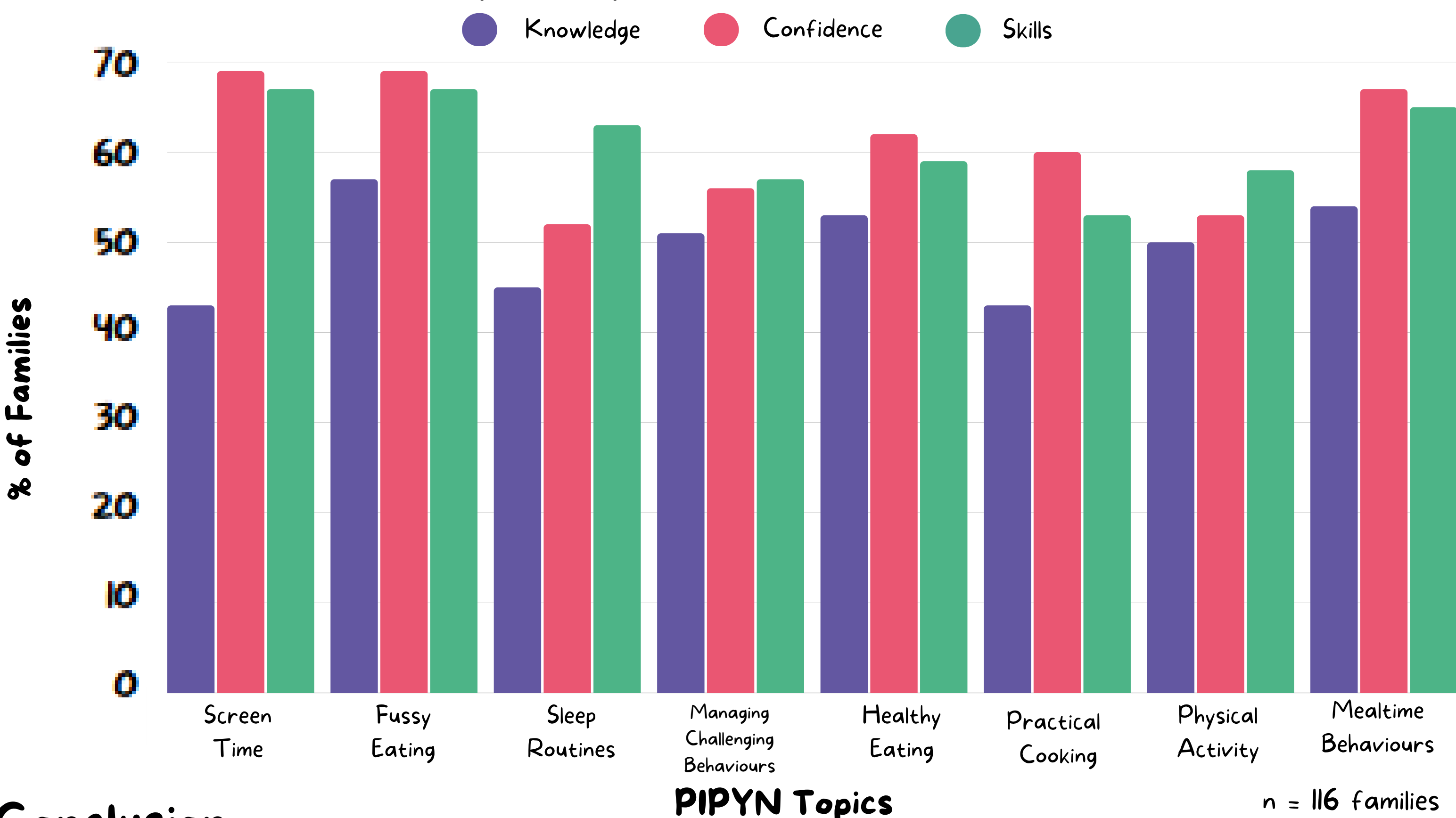


Figure 2. Percentage of families reporting improvements in knowledge, confidence and skills to implement positive behaviour change



## Discussion

Merthyr PIPYN appears effective in improving family's knowledge, skills and confidence to implement positive behaviour change related to healthy weights, when measured between baseline and immediately post intervention.

Self-reported data at the same collection points also reports that the large majority of families have implemented improvements across a range of key lifestyle behaviours covered during the delivery of the Merthyr PIPYN intervention.

Further evaluation is required 12 months post intervention. This will provide insight into any sustained behaviour change within families as a result of the Merthyr PIPYN intervention and identify and system level support needed in this area.

## Conclusion

The Merthyr PIPYN pilot has achieved positive engagement figures and improvements in self-reported health behaviours in the short-term. This is amongst families within areas of highest deprivation where risk of overweight and obesity is greatest.

CTMUHB does not currently have a Children, Young People and Families Weight Management Service however, PIPYN meets the majority of the requirements of level one and two of the pathway.<sup>7</sup> With further investment there is an opportunity for spread and scale of the service pan CTMUHB and taking a once for Wales approach to delivery, through Public Health Dietitians in Wales.

The success of PIPYN has enabled a greater collaboration and focus on children and young persons obesity across Wales. Further work is needed to consider how PIPYN could be used to increase the reach and scale of work for early obesity prevention and systems of prevention in Wales.

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