Participant 31, Part 2 – Female, 24, Tower Hamlets

Interviewer: So this is task two. [Interviewee: okay] Can we start by talking about box one please?

Interviewee: Yup. So there’s a children centre in Wapping-

Interviewer: Sorry?

Interviewee: There’s a children centre in Wapping area. So this area is like Wapping and Shadwell. Um… um they do like lots of different types of activities for kids, children and parents. So they do like arts and crafts for parents like us. And what they do is they- in the children’s centre, there’s a cresh- cresh downstairs. And upstairs, we go and we do like our- our own thing. We do arts and crafts, um paintings, we do like sewing, we do like [unintelligible 17:27] arts and all that. And what they do is they allow two hours of free um childcare downstairs. So the place that- where you’re at, they do um the cresh.

Interviewer: Mhm. When you say cresh, what do you mean?

Interviewee: It means childcare basically. [Interviewer: oh okay] It means childcare. Like pe- they look after your child for you while you’re doing the two hours of arts and crafts and your um… different kinds of activities. Like sewing, box designing, so many things. So many different things. Making pillows. It’s- it’s designed for parents. They do what we want to do. They do basically what we say. ‘Cause then they’ll ask us parents, they’ll say what would you like to do this week? And it depends of how many votes they get. So for example I would say oh, we’d like to make aromatherapy oils. Oh I don’t mind making um boxes, toy boxes for kids or someone would make like um pillows and stuff. So they listen to us. Such a good place. That makes me feel so connected and makes me feel so much better when I’m with them as well. Doing different sorts of activities, meeting different people from all sorts of culture. Like Somali people- like So- Somali, um people from Iran, Arab- Arabian people, different people from different backgrounds. And you can talk to them. They talk about their cultures, and we talk about our cultures. Um it’s really nice actually. And for free. You don’t really get that everywhere, not in every centres do it for free. Especially looking after your child while you’re having fun. That is such a good thing. For two hours. Making time for yourself. And the people there are really friendly and um very flexible. So sometimes when the- you know the um people downstairs that look after her, um she would start crying so much. My child would start crying and then upstairs- like normally it’s not allowed, we can’t like keep child- children’s with us. But the staff are so nice and helpful that they let her. They let her um stay with me. So that is such a nice gesture. Really, really [interviewer: mm] makes me feel better. Not every- every centres do things like that. They’re really, really nice and friendly, even the receptionists are really nice. And um the people that look after her, they’re so lovely. [Interviewer: mm] In the- you know, children’s centre. They’re so nice, friendly, such a good centre, that is- I go to. Yeah.

Interviewer: So how does that make you feel?

Interviewee: Makes me feel good. Really good. Happy. [Interviewer: mm] Like lighter. You know, when you’re doing things, like it’s a different-

Interruption

Interviewer: So it sounds like what you’re saying is uh you feel very socially connected there because you meet a lot of people [interviewee: yeah] and staff are really friendly [interviewee: mhm] and you get to do some of the things you want to [interviewee: yeah] while they look after your child.

Interviewee: Yup.

Interviewer: And so when you say you feel socially connected there, is it because you chat with people who are similar to you in terms of being a mother [interviewee: yeah] and being a [unintelligible 21:19]-

Interviewee: Yeah, yeah. Yeah, even though they’re from different backgrounds, like Arabian ladies, maybe Somali ladies, could be like white ladies, but we’re all doing the same kind of responsibilities. Like we’re all mothers. And we can talk about tips, how to feed the kids. It’s such a nice thing [interviewer: yeah] to share with each other.

Interviewer: So- so it sounds like that common sort of interest- common purpose makes you feel connected with other people.

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: So in this- in your case being a mother.

Interviewee: Yeah.

Interviewer: Um is there anything else you wanted to say about this box?

Interviewee: Um… they also do courses. Like childcare courses.

Interviewer: What courses?

Interviewee: Childcare. [Interviewer: oh, childcare courses] They do childcare courses, health and social care, um… but at the moment they’re not doing health and social care. Um… they do voluntary work, they do first aid training in that place uh for free [interviewer: mhm] for like [unintelligible 22:22] residents, [interviewer: okay] which is really good. And I think- it’s really- they have a wide range of um stuff to do… in that place. It make me feel happy.

Interruption

Interviewer: Um is there anything else you wanted to say about this box?

Interviewee: Um no. It’s every- I’ve said everything.

Interviewer: Okay. Thank you. Um can we start talking about what you’ve put in box two [interviewee: yeah] please.

Interviewee: Place where I feel most lonely is um children’s park. Um you know the public parks? Where childrens play? [Interviewer: mhm] Swings and um… slides and stuff. [Interviewer: mhm] So I would just sit there while the kids are playing. I like- I- I take my neighbour’s kids with me. And my child- she’s gone to my mum’s, my elder child, she’s three years old, she’s gone to my mum’s now to stay over. Um so I take them with me. They love the slide and swings. It’s- it’s such a good thing for them. They have fun. But I feel lonely. I like- I have nothing to do. And I just sit there. Um I don’t feel- I don’t feel happy or I don’t feel- I don’t- I feel lonely. Feel like I can’t- there’s no one to talk to. [Interviewer: mm] But then it makes me feel happy that they are enjoying themselves. The kids are enjoying. But I feel a bit lonely. [Interviewer: mm] Sometimes there would be like other parents that would come and talk to you. But uh most of the time no one would really come to you and talk to you. So yeah. It’s- most of the time no one really comes to that park. ‘Cause there’s not much things to do. And I just go there ‘cause it’s right near my house. Like behind my house… the park. And that’s where I mostly feel lonely. And actually I sometimes feel lonely um… at my older child’s preschool. She goes-

Interviewer: Sorry?

Interviewee: At her preschool. ‘Cause I haven’t made much friends ‘cause I’m new to this area, I haven’t made much friends. Um… so when I go and pick my child up from her preschool, I feel- I feel a bit lonely. And I see like other parents talking as a group. They have their own groups [interviewer: mm] and they have friends. But I don’t- I haven’t really made any friends. It’s been a year like I’ve come here, but I haven’t really made any um friends yet. So yeah that makes me feel a bit lonely.

Interviewer: Mm. So it sounds like, for example the park, uh because there’s no one to talk to or you might see other families or other mums and dads, but because you’re generally on your own with your kids [interviewee: yeah] that’s where you feel most lonely. [Interviewee: yeah, yeah] No one to talk to. [Interviewee: yup] And you enjoy when the kids are having fun but you feel bad ‘cause your needs are not being fulfilled. [Interviewee: yeah] How does that make you feel?

Interruption

Interviewee: Um yeah it makes me feel a bit sad. I have old- like I have mixed emotions. Like s- I’d- I would feel- I would- sometimes I would feel happy, sometimes I would feel lonely, sometimes I would feel sad. Depending on the mood and… yeah. [Interviewer: mm] So even in the park, at- some days I would feel lonely ‘cause I have no one to talk to. But then again when I go with her dad, like um my partner, I do feel happy. Like we can talk and laugh with each other while the kids are playing, while swinging the kids on the swing together. Makes me feel a bit- a lot happier. [Interviewer: mm] So sometimes- when I’m on my own, that’s when I feel lonely… and upset.

Interviewer: Sounds like… sounds like-

Interviewee: I like being around people. [Interviewer: mm] I like having friends. That’s when I feel better. But when I’m alone or- I don’t really like it. [Interviewer: mm] ‘Cause during school times, I’ve had a lot of friends. And work life I’ve- I have a lot of colleagues and I’m always around people. So when I’m alone, like I don’t really like it. I feel lonely. [Interviewer: mm] ‘Cause I’m used to being around people, used to having lots of friends. That’s why. And do you know ‘cause it’s been a year, I haven’t really made friends in this area, so I think that’s why um I would feel a bit lonely j- [interviewer: mm] at her preschool, like children’s park. I don’t know much people around this area [interviewer: mm] ‘cause I’m generally fr-born and brought up in Bethnal green. [Interviewer: mm] It’s not far from here [interviewer: mm] … about um… fifteen minutes- fifteen, twenty minutes’ walk. [Interviewer: mm] So yeah. That’s it for that box.

Interviewer: Anything else you wanted to say?

Interviewee: Um not really, I’ve said everything in that box.

Interviewer: Okay. Thank you.