

The Voice of the Child and



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Why?

We are trying to design services created to meet the needs of children and young people. To do this effectively, we need to ask them what those needs are, how they feel they would like to be supported, and what skills the person working with them would have which would lead to improved mental health.

Children and young people desperately want to get involved because they want to make things better-we're all on the same team!

"So this person is going to have a job working with children and teenagers right? Children and teenagers are like who they are trying to help, so rapport needs to be with them right? So how will some adults who already haven't grown up where we have, who haven't ever lived how we live, and who we already don't like going to for help know what things we feel are important in a person getting a job who is supposed to be helping us?"

*It just goes on and on-see, and those people are PAID to help and they don't know **** because we won't talk to them and they don't ever come out to us."*

(Young person, local project, 15)

Key to successful outcomes

- Relationship between client and therapist

What does the child/ young person think is key to a successful therapeutic relationship?

If I was an emotional support worker I would...

- Play football with them
- Practically help them
- Talk about feelings more normally-they should talk about their own feelings too, not just like be a robot
- Give them good advice about dealing with difficult feelings. It is hard being in care, because lots of adults give you different advice about how to deal with things, and you just don't know who is right
- Read them stories and tell them about good things that happen in the world and happy things too to cheer them up, not just talk about bad things for an hour
- Make them see there are choices to make, not just feel like a helpless victim

What skills do I feel are important?

- Give them a hug
- Be patient
- A text message in between sessions to show they care
- Offer them a cup of tea
- Take them for a walk in the countryside to talk while they are walking
- Have pets there
- Leave me alone-space
- Make a list of all the things there are to look forward to in the future

- Someone who is not judgemental or patronising
- Someone like a parent
- Someone who is obviously kind
- Someone who is understanding
- Someone like a friend
- A good listener
- Someone I can trust
- Someone who can give good advice, not just 'listen'
- Web support-someone good at IT
- Someone young
- Someone 'real' ('in' with the real world)
- Someone who is caring
- Someone who is positive
- "It needs to be someone who is happy themselves"
- Someone you feel safe-feel comfy with
- Someone who is respectful
- Someone who tells the truth
- Someone who is accessible
- Someone who already knows a lot about me

Young offenders-who would you like to talk to?

- Your mother
- Family
- Family contact seemed as important in order to maintain wellbeing. However, most young people indicated they would prefer to confide in a family member rather than anyone else.
- Peer relationships were seen as highly important, both as a source of support and also as a potential source of stress.

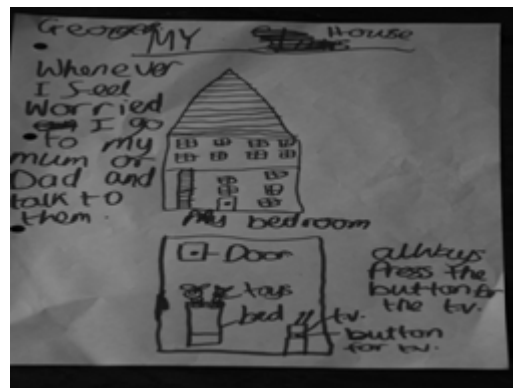
Where would you most like to go to for help?

LD

Church, Youth Group, Staff that work at church, My Aikido Sports Club, Aikido coaches, My House, My baby brother because he can't speak-he just listens, I would like it to be a house in the middle of a residential area-because it would feel better if it was just like a normal house you went to-not a 'special place' in the middle of nowhere, Young people like me, I would like a place where young people were workers and advisors for other young people who had problems (peer led), Home.

Who would you most like to get help from?

Church, mum/ dad/ brother or friends- because they would just listen, school-common room with my friends, my family in my house, my mum or dad in my bedroom, the dogs in the pub because they just listen to me and can't answer back, my bedroom in my house, whenever I feel worried I go to my mum or dad to talk to them, my bedroom in my house, when I am sad I talk to my mum. She listens and gives me good advice. Sometimes she also comes in to school and asks other people for advice about things and that is good, my bedroom, my mum, school-common room, my teacher, my friend and playing the drums helps me too.



LD/ Disabled YP

6 out of 13 young people said that they would like to seek help at home, and/ or in their bedroom at home. They explained that this was because they:

- Felt safe
- Knew no-one would disturb them
- It was quiet
- They were somewhere they knew well

- Of the people they had chosen to talk to or to support them, they said they had to be able to:

- Listen
- Keep secrets
- Sort out difficulties
- Make them laugh
- Cheer you up
- Offer guidance and solutions
- Care

Core participation rights in the UNCRC

Article 12 – the child's right to express and have their views given due weight in all matters affecting them.

Article 13 – the child's right to freedom of expression – to seek, receive and impart information orally, in writing or in print, in art form or through any other media of the child's choice.

What is consultation?

Consultation means involving children, young people and families in having a say about services created to meet their needs, in ways that are comfortable and natural for them, and to listen, understand and respond to what has been said with a vision of improving services to better suit the people for whom the services have been created.

Participation

Participation means actively supporting children, young people and families, to ensure that they can confidently and skillfully work in partnership with services to make joint decisions which lead to **shaping those services** in order to ensure that their needs and the needs of other children and families are met in the best possible way.

Participation means that services are trained and ready to regularly hear the voices of children, young people and families in order to learn from their experiences. It means that there is a commitment to share power with children, young people and families in order to **work in partnership with the very people for whom the services are created**.

CYP

- CYP need to be a part of the recruitment and selection of staff to ensure that they recruit staff with skills that children and young people value and will help to build rapport.

Summary of Why

- Ethically right to involve people we are targeted services towards in the decision making of how those services are designed
- Adds legitimacy to decisions that needs to be made
- Offers valuable information and data
- Ensures that services are effective, accessible, to the desired target group and lead to improved mental health

Participation

Children's voices is consultation.

Participation is creating an engagement strategy which ensures the involvement of a representative group of children and young people as key stakeholders at a strategic level in a sustained and supportive way.

Any help or support:

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