

What do our young people think of your team plans?

Ambassadors for Vulnerable Children and Young People have embarked on a project over the last six months to provide a check and challenge to social work teams to ensure the child's voice is central to their work. They have visited 21 Teams, interviewing the Team Managers and evaluating the team plan to find out how the teams hear the voice of children, act on what they are saying and how they feed this back. The Ambassadors have written up their findings in a report, stating what teams do well and including recommendations about how teams can improve.

The Ambassadors found it a very worthwhile project. They enjoyed meeting Team Managers and hearing about the work of the different teams. In the main they were impressed with the plans and actions in place to hear the voice of children and young people that are being supported by the teams. Their recommendations included:

- Have a standing item on the team meeting for participation.
- Pull together resources for a team toolkit/resource box
- Explain to young people what changes are being made about the service the team offers
- Continue to seek feedback from children and young people about the service the team provides and explain how feedback has made a difference.



The Participation Team will be repeating the project later in the year to find out if child's voice is fully embedded into the team plans and whether it is making a difference to the lives of children and young people supported by our services.

MOMO (Mind of My Own) has been launched in Gloucestershire!



What is it?

It is an App to help young people to express their views, wishes and feelings. In addition to existing methods, young person can use it to Prepare for a Meeting, Sort out a Problem or Change Something.

Young people use the App to prepare a statement which they can send to a person of their choice ...it could be their Social Worker, IRO, Virtual School or someone else.

How can it be used?

The App can be downloaded on smart phones or tablets, free from

Hartwood House provides short break facilities for children eight to eighteen years, with a disability. There are a variety of activities offered which ensure the child has a positive experience and which provides adequate opportunities for children to mix with other people and develop new experiences. For example, there are visits to the cinema, swimming, shopping, trips out, artwork, music, and development of self help skills etc.



More recently we have teamed up with Allsorts where our children have enjoyed a vast range of activities including rebound therapy, a swimming pool party, and a trip to Worcester snoozleum, which included music therapy, family walks and ACE sports activity club. During the Easter holidays we joined Allsorts for a trip to Longleat Safari Park.

Our involvement with Allsorts has been very positive as it has allowed our children to try new activities in a safe welcoming environment. It has also been beneficial for our young people as they are meeting and working with adults outside their everyday settings as well as having the opportunity to make new friends.

Angela Fitzgerald, Hartwood House

I-tunes store or Google store; or it can be used online on a laptop or desktop PC, basically wherever there is an internet connection.

"MOMO is a brilliant and creative way of receiving children's views and complaints. The app keeps you up to date and can brilliantly be used 24/7!" – Misha, Ambassador

We would like you to take the time to have look at it, download it, and show it to young people you are working with

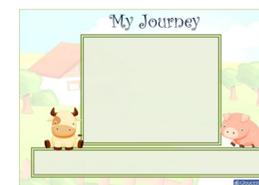
Go to <http://www.mindofmyown.org.uk> to take you to download options or to view online.

If you've got any questions, please contact Lyn Green, Participation Officer lyn.green@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Participation through Activities

'My Journey'

'My Journey' is a tool for practitioners to aid direct work with children and young people to hear their voice in assessment and planning. The templates, designed by Ambassadors, are for children and young people who have a care plan, a child protection plan, or a child in need plan. The tool enables social workers to work alongside the child/young person to translate their plan into a child friendly version. It is for the child/young person to keep, to help them understand what is in their plan; name the people who are working with them and comment on what difference it has made (what's changed). 'My Journey' has been launched to practitioners in a series of Practice Workshops delivered by Ambassadors. In total 141 practitioners/ managers attended one of eleven practice workshop to use the tool and hear about top tips when engaging with children and young people.



On the whole, feedback was very positive from staff about the workshop and about the 'My Journey' tool. Below are some quotes from feedback forms.

- Ambassadors facilitated well - input from people who are directly affected as service users is always helpful'
- It challenged my current practice to involve young people in plans'
- It will help me show evidence in my assessments of a child's wishes and views'
- I think it's a positive tool to support engaging effectively with children'

Watch out for Kathy O'Mahony's email which will detail where the 'My Journey' can be accessed.

Young People's Questions for Fostering Panel

Five care leavers who attended interview training produced questions which will be used at Fostering Panel. The young people came up with the questions based on their own experiences and those of other care leavers that they knew and what they thought a good answer would include. Questions were around areas such as pocket money, behaviour, helping a child feel welcome and what they would do if there were problems.

"The questions will help to inform Panel recommendations on applicants' suitability to foster" Liz Pickering, Agency Adviser