

Appointment or Disappointment? Activity

What you need to run the activity

- Flip chart paper
- Pens
- A personal success story of two of your own, around appointments, in case required!

Aim of the activity

- To enable participants to share a range of strategies and ideas to maximise successful outcomes from appointments with professionals.

How to run the activity

- Start by asking for a volunteer or two who could describe a productive and useful appointment they have had where they have come out feeling they had achieved whatever had been their aim - be it a diagnosis, a referral, a deeper understanding about their child's condition or that all important feeling that someone was really listening to them and taking on board their concerns.
- It's all too easy to have volunteers who want to share horror stories or bad experiences so if necessary to get the discussion flowing in a solution-focussed way, try and lead by example and share a story from your own child's care in the past if needs be.
- Then ask each volunteer in turn why do they think that was such a useful appointment - what were the key success factors?
- Then break the larger group into smaller groups of approx. 4 people who will need to be sitting around a table, give them a flip chart.
- Ask them to list all their 'top tips' about going to appointments with health professionals
- Take feedback, ideally asking each group to hold up and go through their flip chart
- You could offer to type these up (or ask for a volunteer within the group) to then share all these strategies and ideas as many parents may well want to use them in the future and would be frustrated not to capture the learning.

Key learning points

- This is an interactive and unthreatening group session that can prove very useful for parents who are new into the system, help consolidate understanding in others and above all build confidence for the future.
- The Expert Parent website has some really useful resources around appointments and if you have internet access it could be very empowering to show the group how their ideas align to the suggestions on the site and signpost them to where they can find further information in the future.
- On the Website you can find a guide to top tips for appointments and an extremely useful Health and Wellbeing form that can be used to inform a child's doctor before an appointment of issues a family might like to raise.