

Making Sense of Assessment

Co-producing information for children and young people

Young people in West Sussex designed and recorded a short [digital video](#), with accompanying [leaflet](#), to explain to other young disabled people what they can expect when a social worker visits them to make an assessment of their social care needs.

The team committed to a process of co-production, working with young disabled people from across the authority to ascertain how information about assessment processes could be best explained. Through a series of events it was decided that a digital video and leaflet would be the best way to deliver the information.

The information gathering events each used person-centred planning to explore ideas and experiences. The groups were encouraged to explore their experiences of engaging with social care and what they wanted from such encounters.

After these events a group of young disabled people worked with us to create a digital video that would explain what a young person should expect from a social care assessment. The video and leaflet is hosted on the Local Offer website.

Outcome and Impact

The engagement with young disabled people through the events was followed by the project facilitators working with a smaller group of young disabled people to plan and record the digital video. This group was drawn from a local special needs college and supported by a teaching assistant with Makaton signing skills. The appropriate permissions were gathered from participants, parents and carers.

The digital video was created in a day. A story board, informed by the input of the events, was created and the working group decided role play, played out on the screen, with some pieces to camera thrown in, was the best way to share information about needs assessment. Locations were identified for filming, the script built and the recording took place. This group also saw the edited piece and gave "sign off" to it.



Alongside this work ideas were gathered for the leaflet to accompany the digital video. Those young people involved were determined that images of disabled young people, across a wide age range, would be used, along with appropriate symbols. From this input a brief for the design team was produced.

A local mainstream school with a special unit attached was able to review both the leaflet and the digital video. Changes to the leaflet were suggested. This piece of engagement brought added value to the process. Young people without disabilities were involved and found the exercise expanded their understanding of communication needs.

Learning

The difference between parents / carers' views and those of young people was made very apparent through this process. This was highlighted, for example, in the concerns raised by the former over the use of the word "worry" in the young person's leaflet. The concerns expressed by the parents and carers, that this might encourage young people to worry where they might not have before, was never raised by the young people engaged in reviewing the materials.

The use of a range of young people throughout the development of the materials demonstrates that it is quite possible to engage more than "the usual suspects" when engaging in participation and co-production work.



This resource is part of the Making Participation Work programme, a joint partnership between the Council for Disabled Children and KIDS, and funded by the Department for Education. For more information about the Making Participation Work programme, visit us at:

<https://councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk/our-work/participation/practice/making-participation-work>



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