

1. NSPCC- Interviewing young people

October 2016

The NSPCC's Impact and evidence insights series features a blog by Paul Whalley, Senior evaluation officer, who offers tips on interviewing children and young people to help evaluate services.

No interview is perfect, but being well prepared is a good start. These tips should help you to include the views of children and young people in your evaluation

Tip 1. make it fun

Children are experts when it comes to their own views, but you can help them express themselves. Make interviews fun. Think about what children enjoy – it could be colouring in, playing a game, doing a quiz or making something..

Tip 2. Be clear and confirm consent

Make sure the child knows why they are talking to you.

There are lots of reasons children won't understand what you want from them. They might be used to adults making their decisions, worried about the service being taken away or people being cross with them if they don't do the interview.

Tip 3. Create the right atmosphere

The venue should be comfortable to settle the child's nerves. Early impressions are important. The young person will be assessing you as much as you're assessing them.

The atmosphere of the interview is your responsibility.

Explain when confidentiality might have to be breached. This is an area of particular importance to the NSPCC and we ensure that a possible disclosure of abuse is followed up. In this scenario, your precious interview data is set aside, but the welfare of the child is paramount. There's no other ethical position.

Always keep eye contact with the child or young person, not your paperwork.

Tip 4. Think about who is sitting in

Some children may want another person present to reassure them. It could be a big sister, a foster carer, a residential worker or their pet dog.

Allowing people to sit in is fine if they're clear on their role. Some adults hate silences and try to help the child answer questions. This can compromise data accuracy.

Link: <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/services-and-resources/impact-evidence-evaluation-child-protection/impact-and-evidence-insights/tips-interviewing-children-young-people>

2. Research- Using mobile devices over night

The Headmaster's and Headmistresses' Conference (HMC) has carried out research in partnership with Digital Awareness UK (DAUK) into teenage use of mobile devices overnight. Of 2,750 pupils aged 11-18 who were surveyed, 45% admit they check their mobile device after going to bed (some more than 10 times a night). 32% of these students' parents are not aware that they check their mobile device after going to bed.

Link: <http://www.hmc.org.uk/blog/research-teenage-use-mobile-devices-night>

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3. Online safety advice

Internet matters shares advice for parents helping their children to deal with internet safety issues as the new school term progresses. Topics covered include: cyberbullying; sexting; social media.

Link: <https://www.internetmatters.org/hub/expert-opinion/expert-advice-key-e-safety-concerns-kids-head-back-school/>

4. Engaging dads

Community Care shares learning from the evaluation of Mellow Dads, an attachment-building programme for the fathers of at-risk children. Key issues raised include: it is difficult for dads to prioritise the parenting course, especially if they have a clash with another group meeting; the men on the programme were often living apart from their children so lacked the opportunity to practice parenting skills; despite the challenges, practitioners used their considerable interpersonal skills to engage and work with fathers.

Link: <http://www.communitycare.co.uk/2016/10/04/can-social-workers-better-engage-fathers/>

5. Child and adolescent mental health

The Guardian features a 2 day series on child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS). Key issues raised include: 235,189 young people were in contact with NHS mental health services in England at the end of June 2016 including 65,000 children under 11. In a survey carried out by the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) for the Guardian, 43% of the 631 mental health nurses working in CAMHS who took part said services were getting worse, despite government promises of extra investment. Advice on what to do if you are worried about a child's mental health is offered and innovative programmes and projects to help children's mental health are discussed. This includes the Triple P programme which was evaluated by the NSPCC.

Link: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2>

6. Louis Theroux on Jimmy Savile

In a BBC documentary, Louis Theroux, who first met Jimmy Savile in 2000, tries to understand how he was able to get away with his crimes.

Link: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b05qzmgd>

7. Training teachers about FGM

Schoolsweek features an article by Hibo Wardere on raising awareness of FGM among teachers and school leaders. Key issues highlighted include: FGM is child abuse and needs to be talked about in the same way society would tackle any other child abuse.

Link: <http://schoolsweek.co.uk/fgm-is-child-abuse-and-schools-need-to-talk-about-it/>