Recipes for Engagement

Children and young people in the lead
It’s their agenda

Educate. Collaborate.
Engage. Change.
#voicematters to the RCPCH and we want to make it as easy as possible for you to find out what children and young people using your services think.

The resources in this booklet will take you through engagement using tried and tested activities from our “Engagement Café” series.

The recipes will work as icebreakers for groups, activities to give you their views, ideas and wishes and a range of evaluation activities either for services or your group work sessions.

If you would like any further resources, ideas or engagement activities, please get in touch via and_us@rcpch.ac.uk and sign up to the Engagement Collaborative at: www.rcpch.ac.uk/and_us
### 1. Art Whispers

**Ingredients**
- 8+ people
- Paper
- Pen
- Picture sheet
- Music

**Method**
1. Split the group into different lines with around 8-10 people per line.
2. First person from each line is shown a set of pictures (see examples below) for 10 seconds but you can decide what pictures to include. Use a mixture of logos, objects, words and numbers.
3. They have to remember as much as they can and then whisper a description to the next person, who passes the message on to the next person and so on down the line.
4. The last person has a paper and pen and has to draw the message they hear – remember to have music playing to stop stage whispers!
5. Everyone can only whisper to the next person once then sit down.
6. Once everyone has whispered/drawn, show the pictures to the group comparing the original to the group drawn pictures.

**Recipe review** (share with group at the end)

Sometimes going to a strategic meeting for children and young people can be a bit like this. They have the paperwork in advance then people in the meeting start using jargon, talking about different projects, organisations, dates and by the middle of the meeting the message is starting to get distorted. In order to effectively engage children and young people in strategic meetings, have clear objectives, clear communication, time to take in the message and to check back with a named worker/chair/support worker.

### 2. Click Clap Stomp

**Ingredients**
- 6+ people
- Click
- Clap
- Stomp

**Method**
1. Pair everyone up. Ask them to count to 3 between them saying ‘1 – 2 – 3’ (person A = 1, person B = 2, person A = 3, person B = 1, person A = 2, person B = 3 etc.)
2. When they have mastered the numbers, substitute number 1 for a finger click then practice; ‘click – 2 – 3’, ‘click – 2 – 3’
3. Then substitute number 2 for a clap so pairs practice ‘click – clap – 3’, ‘click – clap – 3’
4. Then substitute number 3 for a stomp with pairs now doing ‘click – clap – stomp’
5. Ask the group who found the numbers easier than the actions?

**Recipe review** (share with group at the end)

This activity warms up both sides of your brain. The right side is creative so you can manage the click clap stomp better, the left side is language and maths so you would have found 1 – 2 – 3 easier. This is important when you are thinking about engaging with children and young people as you will need to create options that work for all kinds of people, all learning styles, all processing styles.
3. Who am I?

**Ingredients**
- 1+ people
- Crest or paper to draw
- Pens

**Method**
1. Give everyone a crest or ask them to draw on a piece of paper (including the worker).
2. Ask the group to think of 4 topic areas that they would be happy to share information about themselves on, (e.g. my best experience in hospital, something I like about me, my favourite food, the way I would describe myself, etc.).
3. When the 4 topics have been agreed, ask everyone to draw or write their answer to that topic, with each topic in one quarter of the crest.
4. Ask them to write their name and/or a motto for their crest.
5. Share crests between group members.

**Recipe review**
This activity gives people a chance to share information about themselves whilst also identifying shared experiences, consultation answers (e.g. best experience in hospital) and creates artwork for the project/setting.

4. Tell me...

**Ingredients**
- 6+ people
- Post-it™ notes
- Flipchart
- Pens

**Method**
1. Ask the group to write the first 3 words on a Post-it™ note that comes into their head when you say different topics (e.g. health, child, doctor, mental health, counselling, treatment). Use a different Post-it™ note for each idea for each topic.
2. In small groups, ask them to look through the answers for one topic (e.g. health) and work out which word comes up the most (e.g. everyone wrote down illness) and how many different words there are for that topic (e.g. 15 different words).
3. With the group, discuss if there were any surprises? Any words that came up lots of times? What are the reasons for that?
4. For each topic ask the group to then look at how they would want to change the myths, stereotypes or promote the positives that came up.
5. Ask the group to write a ‘words to use’ and/or ‘words to avoid’ plan for health settings based on their findings.

**Recipe review** (share with group at the end)
This activity looks at paradigms - where one word will mean different things to different people due to their personality, knowledge and experiences. By knowing and understanding the different paradigms that happen when you say ‘medical appointment’ or ‘treatment plan’ you can create better information and support communication that is positive and clear avoiding children and young people being triggered by words that might hold a different meaning for them.
**Method**

1. Split your group into two with one half creating an inner circle facing out and the other half creating an outer circle facing in around the inner circle.

2. The outside circle has one minute to talk to the person they are standing opposite from in the inside circle about a topic like ‘hospital experiences’, ‘when I felt listened to’, ‘when I didn’t feel involved in my care’.

3. After a minute shout ‘change’. Now the inside circle has one minute to share ideas on how to improve or extend the topic discussed (e.g. ‘great that you felt listened to by the doctor who used a communication aid like an iPad™ – if we train people then more can do it that way’).

4. The outside circle then take one step left. The inside circle have one minute to talk about a topic and then the outside circle will have one minute for their solutions.

5. The outside circle then take one step left – and as before, the outside circle will talk about a topic and the inside circle will offer solutions.

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**Recipe review**

This activity is great for finding out new ideas and for extending ideas and building on them bringing together different experiences across the group.
7. Who is the most involved in afternoon tea?

**Ingredients**
- 2+ people
- Afternoon tea pictures or words

**Method**
1. Print or write out different roles in an afternoon tea (e.g. host, waiter, taxi driver, chef, delivery driver for the food, laughing guest, unhappy guest, someone who arrived too late, etc.).
2. Ask your group to spend 5 minutes discussing ‘who is the most involved?’ Listen to their discussions and see if anyone is talking about ‘who is the most important’.
3. Ask different groups or individuals to share their top and bottom – has anyone made everyone equal? Any roles that are controversial (usually the taxi driver).

**Recipe review** (share with group at the end)
This activity can often be misunderstood around ‘important’ which can happen when starting on your child and youth voice journey. It is important to remember that all roles are as vital as each other in having a successful product which is the same as meaningful engagement. All roles are as involved in different ways and are required for it to be meaningful and successful (e.g. without the taxi driver the guests couldn’t get there, without the host the group doesn’t know where things are). This is a great activity to do to start a conversation about involvement.

8. Visual Voting

**Ingredients**
- 6+ people
- Dried pasta
- Different pots or cups
- Post-it™ notes
- Pens

**Method**
1. On 5-10 Post-it™ notes write down with the group (or by the worker if adult initiated) topics relating to your discussion area (e.g. if talking about setting up a youth forum the topics could be; meeting time, meeting style, who is involved, budget etc.).
2. Stick one idea/topic Post-it™ note on each pot or cup.
3. Give everyone 5 bits of pasta and ask them to vote on which idea they think is the most important. They can split their pasta votes between topics or vote all in one topic!
4. Ask group members to count the pasta in each pot.
5. With the topic with the most votes, ask the group to think about sub topics (e.g. mental health can be broken down into sub topics like: support, anxiety, counselling, taboo, isolated). Ask the group to get 5 bits of pasta and vote again using the new sub topics.
6. After counting the votes, split the group up to discuss/plan the top 2 areas, or have a discussion about the results (e.g. if the group all said that the most votes went to ‘worker decides what is spent’, what could be the impact of this? What information would they like to know?)

**Recipe review**
This activity helps people to share their opinions without having to speak by voting, warming up the group and depersonalising the responses. When you begin the discussions you can then start to look at reasons as a group again ensuring that people can engage and share without feeling the need to justify their decision.
9. Body Map

**Ingredients**
- 6+ people
- Body map sheet
- Pens

**Method**
1. Ask the group to think of a health topic that fits your work. Draw an outline of a body or use a pre-printed sheet.
2. On the inside of the body ask the group to write down what the individual can do, can be responsible for or what skills/qualities they need. (E.g. if the topic is ‘health champions for our NHS Trust’ on the inside they could write down; smiley, approachable, helpful, knowledgeable, understanding).
3. On the outside ask the group to write down what other people can do to support the topic (E.g. resources, training, support, healthy choices).
4. Ask the group to choose the top 3 ideas inside and outside the body. How would you share that message with others? What needs to happen next?

**Recipe review**
This activity supports exploration of different people’s roles and responsibilities in achieving a goal - individual and the role of others.

10. Target Time

**Ingredients**
- 6+ people
- Target sheet
- Sticky dots
- Pens

**Method**
1. Pre-prepare a target sheet (or draw on the day) with 6-8 sections.
2. On 4 sections add in areas that you would like the group to evaluate (e.g. meeting time, achievements, team work, activities).
3. On the remaining sections ask the group to identify as they would like to evaluate.
4. Ask everyone to then tick or stick a dot on the target for their answer. Closer to the middle means not so good, around the outside means very good.
5. Note down any discussions or comments made by the group whilst deciding on their tick or dot response.

**Recipe review**
Quick way to capture the evaluation comments visually using the target which can be photographed and shared quickly by social media or used in reports. Comments can be captured to add to the understanding of the choices made.
11. Corners

**Ingredients**
- 6+ people
- Emoji faces
- Evaluation statements

**Method**
1. Put the emoji faces around the room.
2. Read out a number of evaluation statements and ask the group to go to the face that matches their feeling on the statement (e.g., I enjoyed today, I felt my views made a difference, I shared an idea).
3. Ask individuals to share their views in each area (if they are happy to).

**Recipe review**
This activity supports an active way to evaluate the session moving away from evaluation forms. This can be adapted to use traffic lights where RED = undeveloped/disagree, AMBER = emerging/ok, GREEN = developed/agree.

12. Park it, Pose it, Prioritise it, Plan it

**Recipe review** (share with group at the end)
These activities are useful to do in a group when you want to review past experiences and move to focus on the future and new beginnings. You can pick and choose different Recipes for Engagement activities from booklet 1 or 2 for each section – or create your own! The activities can also be changed to meet the needs of your group, where you can use drawings instead of writing, or ask for ideas and have an adult do the writing where needed.
13. Our Journey to Article 12

**Ingredients**
- Paper
- Pens
- Flip chart paper

**Method**
1. Draw a road map on a piece of flip chart that has some bends, sign posts dotted along the way and a clear start and finish.
2. Ask the group to think about when they go to see a health service (experience or expectation) or about their journey with a condition.
3. Mark on the road all the things that happen from start to finish – this could be when they first enter the service (what do they see/hear/feel) to when they are diagnosed (what information did they get) all the way to the present day.
4. Throughout the journey, think about where children and young people are informed about what is happening, consulted on their ideas, involved in decisions and have the chance to represent their views. These are all parts of the journey to Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) – being actively involved and informing decisions that affect them.

**Recipe review** (share with group at the end)

Sometimes as services we focus on one part of the rights journey and miss the other steps. How do we make sure that we include all four parts of the journey so that we can empower people to know their rights and take an active part in their healthcare?

14. Plan it

**Ingredients**
- Pens
- Flip chart paper

**Method**
1. Identify a topic or area of work that you would like to involve children or young people to think about e.g. a plan for the “best healthcare possible”.
2. Divide a flip chart into 6 sections (see below) and ask the group to think about these questions, writing their answers in the visual action plan. They can also think about when, where, why, and note down other ideas as they come up.
3. As ideas are generated, think about which ones are no cost (£0), low cost (£1000) and maximum cost ideas (£unlimited).
4. Time to start on the actions and turn the plan into a reality!

**Recipe review** (share with group at the end)

Developing an action plan will help your group identify a vision and the specific tasks to be successful and make a difference. Being focused on no cost options also give you quick wins and helps to get the outputs started while you build up evidence for funding for the maximum cost suggestions.
15. Card Swap

**Ingredients**

Cards with a different question on (enough for each group member) – these can be questions about your project, your setting, best holiday ever, hopes for the future, how you would spend £1million!

**Method**

1. Ask everyone to stand up in a big space and give each person one card
2. Ask the group to move around and every time they see someone, to say “hello my name is xx” and change cards
3. When the group leader shouts “question time”, each group member stops and asks the person next to them their question and answers their question
4. After a few minutes, repeat stage 2 and 3 until nearly all questions have been answered.

**Recipe review**

This is a great icebreaker to get people moving, talking, sharing and thinking! It helps to have a mix of project / engagement focused questions and everyday ones and to be aware of your group needs where images or symbols may be more appropriate.

16. Clinic Chats

**Ingredients**

Agreement from the lead clinician to sit in the waiting room for a clinic, ID badge / letter, flyer for participants, paper, pens

**Method**

1. This activity is great when you want to get service feedback from specialist service users such as those with a specific condition or health care experience. Before the clinic chat, meet with the lead clinician and agree questions
2. Create a quick flyer for people in the clinic that says who you are, what you are asking and how you will use it. Ask the clinic to send these in advance and have copies on the day
3. When you arrive, speak with the clinician and support staff to agree how it will work – will you sit in one place? Will support staff introduce you to patients?
4. When you start – always let patients and families know that it is free choice to take part and that you will be writing down their ideas but not their name (anonymous)
5. Each chat should take about 5 – 10 minutes and will give you lots of useful feedback and ideas on your setting and topics.

**Recipe review**

Remember – you will be in an open area so your questions need to be non sensitive (e.g. my best experience of care, my wish for the future, this service in 3 words). We have used this activity to test out ideas on standards, guidelines or to find out what works in one place that could work elsewhere. It is also a great promotion opportunity for your own specialist or support services so make sure you have leaflets for your youth forum or services!
17. Rights Pyramid

**Ingredients**
- Paper
- Pens
- Post-it™ notes
- Flip chart paper
- Child friendly version of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (widely available online)

**Method**
1. Draw a pyramid on the flipchart
2. With the group, talk through the different rights, asking the group to pick out rights that they think are important to them, writing each one on a separate post-it™ note
3. Ask the group to prioritise their rights into a pyramid shape – which is the top right for them as a group? You can build up a tiered approach with 4 on the base level, 3 on the next level, 2 on the next level and 1 at the top
4. Ask the group to think about the top 3 rights in the pyramid and what this means to them, who it involves, what needs to change locally and what difference this change could make.
5. You can find out more about rights in healthcare at [www.rcpch.ac.uk/superhero](http://www.rcpch.ac.uk/superhero) where there is a short animation, a game and more rights activities.

**Recipe review**
This activity helps to increase knowledge and understanding on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. RCPCH &Us focuses on articles 12, 23, 24, 28 and 31 – you might choose different ones! The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child looks at protection, provision and participation – these 3 Ps are vital for good practice child health care practice.

18. Support the Duck!

**Ingredients**
- 15 elastic bands per group
- 3 pencils/pens per group (or doweling!)
- An A4 piece of thick plastic (use a plastic punched pocket cut up or a plastic A4 wallet folder cut up)

**Method**
1. Give each group a set of the ingredients
2. Ask them to create a survival story for their duck (e.g. – out driving in the dessert and got lost, going through space and landed on a new planet – the stranger the better!) and they need a name!
3. Give each group 5 minutes to plan how they will create a survival tent for their duck – think about why it is needed and how they will do it
4. Each group then gets 10 minutes to make their survival tent
5. Ask every group to present their duck story, explain why they chose the tent structure they did, how they worked together as a group and what they all did.

**Recipe review** (share with group at the end)
This activity helps groups to work together, to think about the why, how and what and starts to look at different rights and needs. Every duck story will be slightly different (like children and young people), but their needs and rights are similar – the right to protection, the right to shelter, the right to a name, and needs such as friends (did anyone make a duck friend?), safety and security, food, water, warmth. Thanks to Jo and Jamie (Lincoln) for sharing this activity!
19. Who would you tell if....

**Ingredients**
- Paper
- Pens
- Magazines
- Glue

**Method**
1. This activity can work with individuals or in small groups. Give everyone a blank sheet of paper and ask them to split it into 4 sections or speak with them 1:1.
2. Ask the group to think about who they would tell if they... had questions about school, wanted information about health topics, they were not happy with something to do with their health care, had a fantastic health care experience?
3. In each section write, draw or pick pictures from the magazines that show who you would tell – during the sticking, writing and drawing, ask questions to understand this further such as why, when and how.
4. As a group, find out what everyone would do if they were in charge. Are there things that are the same? Different? Unusual? Funny?

Recipe review
This activity is a starter to discussions around how to raise comments, compliments and concerns. Staff running this activity need to be mindful around safeguarding and disclosures (check your local policy for further guidance). This activity was developed by peer consultants age 14-18 who spoke with in-patients and out-patients with the support of an engagement worker to find out who and how people share information. Thanks to Bec, Niamh, Emily, Josh, Rosie and Clare for sharing this activity (Alder Hey Youth Forum).

20. ChatterBox

**Ingredients**
- Square piece of paper
- Pens
- Expert folding!

**Method**
1. Using a discussion or other games from the Recipes for Engagement series, identify key health topics that children and young people would like to inform or educate others on.
2. Give everyone a square piece of paper and support the folding to create a chatterbox template (you may need to practice this before! There are online video tutorials if needed).
3. Think about the message for your chosen topic in terms of - key message, questions to ask and key facts or ideas. These can be created individually or in discussion as a group – make sure to check they are factually correct!
4. Create your chatterbox by filling in each section - this may take some time to get right as you fold and re-fold.
5. Use your chatterbox as a trigger object to start conversations, to raise awareness or as an icebreaker.

Recipe review
This activity is a great, cheap way to turn an idea into a product, getting individuals or groups to think about different levels of messaging from the topic. This idea was developed from consultation with children and young people on mental health to create an activity that could support Doctors or Healthcare Professionals to start a conversation to find out what matters to the child or young person. You can now download Papia’s mental health chatterbox health template [https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/sites/default/files/Chatterbox_Mental_Health.pdf](https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/sites/default/files/Chatterbox_Mental_Health.pdf)

Thanks to Papia (17) from London for sharing this activity!
21. Right Rights?

**Ingredients**
- Flipchart
- Pens
- Post-it™ notes
- List of 10 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (child friendly version widely available online)

**Method**
1. Draw an outline of a person on a flipchart
2. Write 10 rights of the child (from the UN Convention on Rights of the Child e.g. right to be involved in decisions, right to play, right to information) and 10 non rights (e.g. right to a laptop, right to stay in bed all day) on post-its™ (one per post-it™)
3. Ask the group to stick the rights they think are UN rights on the person
4. Discuss the difference between rights, responsibilities, needs and wishes, linking to participation and engagement in healthcare.

How do all children, young people and adults know about their rights and responsibilities and how to support each other? How can we improve understanding about this?

**Recipe review**
This activity will help support the distinction between Rights of the Child (UN), rights in terms of local policy and practice (e.g. to share comments through PALS) and wishes (e.g. laptops) and needs (to have friends). This will also support discussions around what rights they have in healthcare in an active and engaging way. Thanks to Harry, Ella, Chelsea, Tiger and George for sharing this activity! (Central Bedfordshire Youth Voice ages 12 – 18).

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22. Understand Us

**Ingredients**
- The Understand model (below)

**Method**
1. Download the Understand Model from [www.rcpch.ac.uk/resources/rcpch-us-understand-101-tool](http://www.rcpch.ac.uk/resources/rcpch-us-understand-101-tool)
2. Discuss this in your teams to think about how well does your service, setting or practice support each one of the elements of ‘Understand’
3. Think about how you could work with children and young people to find out more about their experience and work with them to develop ideas to improve services
4. Let the RCPCH &Us team at RCPCH know what you are doing and invite Us to come and visit!

**Recipe review**
In 2017, Scott, 19 (Llanharan Drop In) and Alex, 18 (Scottish Youth Parliament) co-created a new model to help healthcare professionals to think about their work with children and young people. To find out more about this model go to [www.rcpch.ac.uk/and-us-resources](http://www.rcpch.ac.uk/and-us-resources) and download the Understand pack! This is a discussion activity that can also work well with youth forums to help review practice and experience.
The RCPCH has a number of different ways that you can get involved to share your ideas and views on child health and healthcare, shaping policy and practice in the UK. The RCPCH &Us network brings together children, young people and families via a virtual network, projects and events, sharing information through a monthly newsletter.

Want to get involved?

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Healthcare Professionals &Us

Help make the NHS a better place

RCPCH &Us works with children, young people and families across the UK to improve child health.

Join RCPCH &Us to make a difference.

Useful Links

These links provide useful information on how to engage and involve children, young people and their families: (Click on links to direct to websites.)

- The British Youth Council has a number of resources on involving children and young people across a range of projects and initiatives. www.byw.org.uk/resources
- Contact has lots of resources about family participation and engagement. www.contact.org.uk
- The Council for Disabled Children has a range of resources and materials to support involving children and young people with disabilities. www.councilfordisabledchildren.org.uk
- Disability Matters has a range of free e-learning resources for professionals to support understanding disability and communication with disabled children and young people. www.disabilitymatters.org.uk
- The NHS Youth Forum have created a range of resources about rights in healthcare including an easy read leaflet that talks about consent and confidentiality. www.england.nhs.uk/participation/get-involved/how/forums/nhs-youth-forum/
- The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health have resources and publications relating to participation, voice and engagement. Visit www.rcpch.ac.uk/work-we-do/working-children-young-people-families
- The Children and Young People’s Commissioner Scotland has developed the 7 Golden Rules for Participation. https://www.cypcs.org.uk/education/golden-rules
- The Commissioner for Children and Young People Order in Northern Ireland has an active Youth Panel supporting the work of the commissioner. https://www.niccy.org/professionals-practitioners-policymakers/
- Children’s Commissioner for Wales has various resources on helping children and young people understand their rights. www.childcomwales.org.uk/about-us/childrens-rights/

The Engagement Collaborative is for workers and professionals in health, social care, education, government, voluntary sector and other organisations sharing resources through a monthly eBulletin, training, collaborating on consultations and a range of events.

To find out more:
Email: and_us@rcpch.ac.uk
Web: www.rcpch.ac.uk/and_us
Phone: 020 7092 6076 / 6079
Get involved and make a change with RCPCH &Us


Use your voice to help improve child health across the UK.

We have opportunities for:

• **Children, Young People and Families** through the &Us Network

• **Healthcare Professionals** through the Engagement Collaborative

Contact us for further information:
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