

#VoiceMatters in the pandemic

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Children, young people and families' (CYP) involvement in their healthcare and health service development is critical to RCPCH.

Who are RCPCH &Us?

RCPCH &Us was established in April 2015 to ensure that patient and public voice of under 25s across the UK makes a difference in the work of RCPCH, the child health sector and in healthcare services and policies through projects, events, activities and consultations.



RCPCH &Us works with and listens to CYP which has been defined by the College Engagement Committee as including: children, young people and their advocates: parents, carers, families, friends, healthcare professionals, support workers & others as appropriate.



From lockdown in March 2020 - to the end of May 2021 restrictions:

720 RCPCH &Us volunteers

1031 hours volunteered

679 professionals trained

COVID-19 projects with children and young people

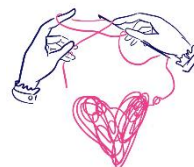
Virtual health services: sharing views from young people on digital health services

Winter Posters: young people, parents and paediatricians worked together to share health advice by video

COVID Book Club: review of published feedback from under 25s with ideas for the NHS and partners

Random Acts of Kindness: online knitting club to thank key workers and have something positive to do through lockdown

Mental health in a national crisis: young people led review of mental health support at the start of the pandemic



COVID-19 challenges, opportunities and solutions

Children and young people over the last year have identified the following to share with doctors and services:

Challenges

- Worries, pressure and anxiety linked to education, money, food, poverty, health and future aspirations
- Not having private and confidential spaces at home during lockdown for health and mental health support, or devices to use

Opportunities

- Online has made it easier for some, no more missing whole days of school or work for health appointments
- Online volunteering has brought children and young people together to make a difference during the pandemic

Solutions

- Involve children and young people in discussing the challenges and finding the opportunities!
- Always provide choice - meet face to face if you can (following the rules) or find out which virtual ways work best for children and young people.