



**5 - CONSULTATION EXERCISE**

<b>Outcome</b>	To plan how to identify areas for children's services' to develop, in relation to young people's substance use/misuse issues
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<b>Preparation:</b>	Obtain examples of consultation methods used with children, young people, parents, carers, local communities and other services Flipchart Handout to help plan consultations (make photocopies for the group)
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<b>Can be used with</b>	√ Staff
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<b>Total Time</b>	60 mins
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METHOD	TIME	TOOLS
1. Explain the purpose of the exercise is to plan how to identify areas for agency development in working in young people's services in relation to substance use/misuse issues.	1 min	
2. Ask the large group if their agencies ever consult children young people, parents, carers, local communities or other services about the development of their service (in general, does not need to be specific re: substance use).  Trainer/s may need to provide additional examples.  Process both yes and no answers as follows:  If YES, how does the service do this? (methods, frequency etc) If NO, why not? What are the barriers to doing this?	5 mins	Flipchart, pens
3. Explain the next exercise is to look specifically at planning a consultation exercise for children, young people, parents, carers, local communities and other services about the development of	20 mins	Flipchart, pens

Disclaimer – Reviewed December 2009





## Consultation

### Exercise

### Questions for considering (Handout)

Does your service have a process for consultation?

What consultation methods would be appropriate for each group?

How would they address equality and diversity issues for each group?

Give specific examples of what and how they would consult young people specifically in relation to substance use/misuse.

How do you plan to use the results from the consultation to inform your policies and plans?



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## Trainers

### Notes

#### Methods

Think about why you want to consult, what method would suit your user group and which policies and plans would benefit from your consultation feedback.

There are a range of consultation methods including creative methods, used mainly with children and young people for e.g. drama, role play, photography and graffiti boards/collage. Other qualitative methods include focus groups, structured and unstructured interviews. Quantitative methods like surveys gather information from a larger number of participants.

#### Equality and Diversity

Equality and diversity issues to consider include

- an awareness of user groups needs
- Speech and language needs
- Accessibility
- Appropriate timing for events (young people should not be taken out of school for consultation events). Be aware that your consultation date does not clash with religious festivals as this might exclude certain groups.

A key consideration when looking at equality and diversity should be that every participant is given an equal opportunity to attend and access the consultation in a meaningful way.

#### Consultations relating to substance use/misuse

Discussions around substance use and misuse should be carefully considered. Issues to be aware of include:

##### Confidentiality

\*Ensure participants are aware that their feedback will be anonymised. Where appropriate written consent would need to be obtained that states the nature of the activity and how the data will be used.

##### Size of group

Smaller groups make sensitive discussions more effective. Not more than 13 participants for a focus group.



### **Choosing the group**

When working with children and young people it might be useful to consider having separate groups for the different age bands, and to be aware that placing together children and young people with different levels of substance use and misuse will have to be closely managed. (See approach)

### **Appropriate methodology**

A wide range of methods could be used, it might be worth being aware that sensitive issues might arise from discussions and the group need to be alerted to this, or steered away from disclosures, being clear on the nature of the group might help, i.e. that the consultation aim is to explore how to create an effective service for instance.

### **Approach**

Discussions around drugs use and misuse should be explored alongside other healthy lifestyle options, exploring a range of effective life skills. It is important to be clear that all discussions take place within a safe framework and all views are respected alike.

\* Children and young people should be made aware that if disclosures are made that puts them at risk, the trainer is obliged to report the incident under Child Protection Guidelines.