YOUTH VOICE

IDEAS TIPS & TOOLS

street GAMES

WHAT IS CONSULTATION?

Consultation is simply about asking people for their views, making sure that their views are listened to, and then acting on that feedback to improve or develop.

> *"A meeting to discuss something or to get advice"*
> **Cambridge Dictionary**
>
> *"A meeting which is held to discuss something"*
> **Collins Dictionary**
>
> *"The act of discussing something with somebody or a group of people before making a decision about it"*
> **Oxford Dictionary**

WHY IS CONSULTATION IMPORTANT?

Young people always have lots of very valuable things to say - whether you are setting up a new project, trying out a new session or want to hear ideas and views about the local community and ways to improve it etc.

- Consult to understand and shape — NOT to confirm

- Consult to engage - so young people feel part of a project and invested in the solution

- Get everyone's views — don't let quiet voices be drowned out.

UNDERTAKING RESEARCH & CONSULTATION

There are lots of different ways of gathering views, opinions and attitudes, it doesn't just have to be done through a structured interview, survey or group discussion.

It can sometimes be really helpful to use **enabling activities** (or what is sometimes called facilitation or projective techniques) to help gather views and opinions. This can be particularly helpful, where there are people who don't feel comfortable speaking up in a group, or don't want to be interviewed one-to-one.

It can also be a really useful way of delving a little deeper - to help understand different people's attitudes, opinions, behaviours and motivations.

Using enabling activities also provides the opportunity for research & consultation to be undertaken in a much more interactive and engaging way – so often really useful with young people and it can give them a chance to get actively involved in decisions about their local area or project.

In the pages which follow, we have provided a range of different enabling activities that are simple to use and could help you gather the views and ideas of others from your community in an interesting and engaging way.
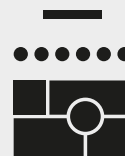
HOW DO YOU DO IT?

HERE ARE SOME IDEAS AND ACTIVITIES TO HELP YOU GET PEOPLE'S VOICES HEARD

THOUGHT WALL/GRAFFITI BOARD
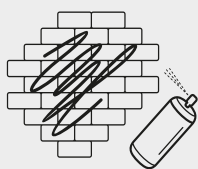
MOOD BOARD
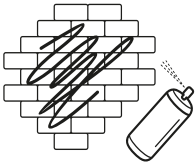
QUESTIONNAIRES AND SURVEYS

INTERVIEWS

VOTE WITH YOUR FEET ACTIVITIES
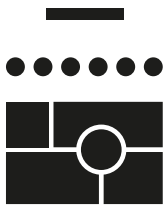
CONTINUUM QUESTION ACTIVITIES

THOUGHT WALL/GRAFFITI BOARD

Using flipchart paper or a whiteboard, write a question and ask people to write their answers. This can be anonymous or people can write their names, the group sets the rules. You can ask more than one question at a time, but make sure you can clearly see the answers to the questions!

Notes:

MOOD BOARD

This activity is getting people to think about how they feel about a particular thing. It could be a question, for example, "how do you feelabout the local sport provision for females" or a picture/video is shownand participants are asked how it makes them feel. Each person isgiven a piece of paper and asked to write or draw how it makes themfeel. You could also use a stack of newspapers and magazines, and askparticipants to cut out and stick down words and images that help to showhow they feel about the question or topic.

Notes:

QUESTIONNAIRES AND SURVEYS

Firstly, you need to decide what you are trying to find out, what's the "Big Question" Then, you can break it down into smaller questions that build on each other. Try to make sure they are not leading questions, for example "The Friday night club is brilliant, don't you agree?", and try to keep them short and simple. Next you need to decide if you want to ask the questions face to face, online, or on a paper questionnaire. However you decide to do it, just make sure you can easily collect the results into one place, and then easily analyse what you get back.

Notes:

INTERVIEWS

Really similar to questionnaires and surveys, you need to decide on what you want to find out. Think about what the "Big Question" is that you are trying to work out and break it down. Write down your questions in advance, and think about how well they will flow – what's it going to feel like asking the questions in this order. You will need to decide if you are going to write notes whilst you are interviewing, or if you want to record the conversation, and listen back to it at a later date. If you want to record it, be sure to get permission from the person you are interviewing first!

Notes:

VOTE WITH YOUR FEET ACTIVITIES

If you have questions to ask a big group that have clear answers, for example multiple choice, or yes/no answers, then this activity could engage quickly. Make sure you clearly communicate which area people move into for what answer. You could stick answers on paper on the wall, or you could just tell the group. Depending on how big the group is, some people may 'follow the crowd' on the answers that they give. Try to think of ways that you could make people feel comfortable expressing their opinion, or other follow up activities you could use to make sure the results reflect the group accurately.

Notes:

CONTINUUM QUESTION ACTIVITIES

Get people to stand or place something on a linear scale – this could be a line on the floor or wall (the scale should then be marked e.g. using numbers from 1 to 10, or a scale with strongly agree at one end of the line and strongly disagree at the other end of the line) depending on the question. Eg: how safe do you feel walking home from the youth club on a scale of 1-10, where 1 is not safe at all and 10 is very safe. Once people have placed themselves on the scale, this could then be used to start a further discussion about why people chose that particular number...what makes them feel safe / unsafe and what could help.

Continuum activities can be good for ice breaking and movement breaks but also to reveal knowledge of issues, assumptions and biases. Begin with fun and easy questions and work to more complex questions as young people settle and become confident. Support young people to explain their choices especially if there are splits across the agree/disagree group – as this is where there can be really useful intel.

GROUP PRIORITIES

Create a line down the middle of the room using tape/chalk/chairs, anything to split the room into two sections. The whole group stands/sits on the middle line. The facilitator then gives the group two options to choose from, and assigns each option to one side of the line e.g Option 1 = stand to the left if you would feel safer in the park with better lighting, Or option 2 = stand to the right if you would feel safer in the park if there were more organised activities taking place in the park. Whichever option most people select gets chosen.

The group need to agree to a majority vote for this activity to work. If the group split is equal, give the two sides 2 minutes to prepare a debate argument for why their side should be chosen, then vote again.

Notes:

STICK MEN TALKING
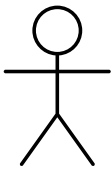
Provide the group with sheets which have stick men drawings on them each with a BLANK speech bubble attached. Ask the people to write into the speech bubble to finish off a sentence – linked to your particular question e.g. What I really like about my local community is……….. / What I really dislike about my local community is………..

Notes:

PRIORITY DOTS (UNDERSTANDING PRIORITIES)
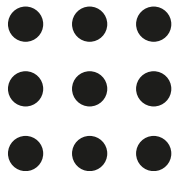
This technique is helpful if you have a number of different options and need to prioritise something, so for example if you wanted to decide what 5 activities you are going to run at a local community festival, give each person in the group ten sticky dots and then say put the dots on the activities they most want, they can put all of their 10 dots on one activity if they feel really strongly about that one activity or split them up across the different options if they like a few different activities. You can then discuss with the group what the dots show in terms of most/least popular and which activities should be selected.

Notes:

HOT AIR BALLOON (DESIGNED TO UNDERSTAND PRIORITIES)

On each table you have a basket (the hot air balloon) and photos of relevant items – so for example if you were asking people what activities they would like to be provided at holiday clubs for teenagers you might have a photo of a climbing wall, bubble football, a camp fire, etc. First you ask them to pick all the items they want at the Club and to put them into their hot air balloon. Then say: 'Your hot air balloon is losing power, what would you throw out first….what would you throw out second…..etc'

Notes:

DEPRIVATION (DESIGNED TO UNDERSTAND PRIORITIES)

Ask people: 'How would they feel without……..'

Probe around their answers

Notes:

CAR ANALOGY

Ask people to draw the type of car that best describes [xyz] i.e. whatever it is you are consulting about, so for example it could be asking them about their local park or community centre. Once they have done the drawing, ask them to explain why they chose that car and drew it in this way. By using an analogy you often get far more depth/clarity about what they like and don't like about something.

Notes:

SPEEDBACK

Place 4-5 sheets of paper by the door with the 'options' on. Ask the people in the group to 'High 5' the option of their choice. You can either film them leaving or they use a post-it to stick on their option they 'High 5'.

Notes:

EMOJIS

Can be used to gather opinions about how people feel about a particular thing? Provide the group with a set of different emojis such as thumb up/thumb down or smiley face/sad face and then either asking them to hold up the emoji/emotion they have in front of them, or standing somewhere in the different corners, or having a range of emotions on the floor for all to see and they have to touch the emoji that best describes how they are feeling. This is not restricted to emoj's – could be other images that are relevant.

Notes:

VLOGS AND MOVIE SHOWCASE
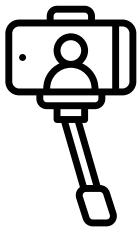
Support young people to record and edit a vlog style video to capture their perspectives on an issue and present movies as showcases for stakeholders. Incorporate 'meet the young people' into showcases so that young people ask and answer questions/challenge stakeholders on provision or local issues. This would work well longitudinally with a project to chart the social action over vlog episodes.

Notes:

PHOTO ELICITATION

Photo elicitation essentially means - using photographs to begin or aid discussions. For example, you could ask young people to take photos of significant places and spaces to them, then come together as a group and ask each young person to choose 1 or 2 photographs to share on screen or print. Ask them to share why these are significant to them and follow-up on things that potentially the photos don't show – for example, perhaps a safe area in the daytime but not at night.
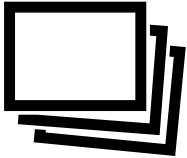
Alternatively you can provide images for teams/ groups/pairs/young people to sort into an order as an answer to a question – for example: rate these images in most inclusive sports to least inclusive.

Then follow up by asking young people to share the reasons for their choices, if anything resonated with their experiences and encourage supportive debate between young people. Facilitator records notes or the discussion as the debate (rather than the order of images) is the important data and can help to define research questions. Would work well with community spaces, safe to unsafe etc.

Depending on the group, there is also scope to bring in different forms of media. For example, some sensationalised stories (from the news, newspapers and/or social media) for example on knife crime and get them to rate, discuss and debate the truth or resonance of the stories.

Notes:

FIND THE PUZZLE PIECE
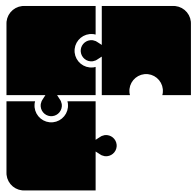
Option 1: Divide the group into smaller equal groups and give them a piece of flipchart paper with a large puzzle piece drawn on it. Note: all the flipchart puzzle pieces need to be drawn so that they will all fit together in the end. Each group is given one area of the problem to think about and write down on the flipchart. The group then brings its puzzle pieces together to see 'big picture' thinking of how to solve the issue. The purpose of this activity is to a) breakdown the problem into smaller manageable chunks and b) help the group to each understand their role in solving the problem.

Option 2: using pre-prepared puzzle pieces, each person adds their solution to a problem to their puzzle piece. The group then comes together by fitting the ices together to create one big plan of action. Note: all puzzle pieces need to be able to fit together.

Notes:

DRAWING OR WRITING
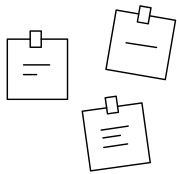
Some young people prefer to draw rather than write their thoughts/opinions – so they could be asked to for example:

Benefits Bob – to draw a picture of a person (not stick man). On the inside of the body/drawing write the benefits to the individual. On the outside of the body/drawing write the benefits to others/community.
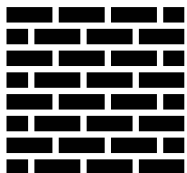
Notes:

POST-IT NOTE RACES

This can be used for whole range of scenarios. For example: Generating Ideas: Divide the group into equal teams. Each group has post it notes and pens and are given a set amount of time to come up with as many different ideas on a topic as possible. After the time limit is up, the groups all start behind a start line and move to the other end of the room to stick their post-its (one at a time) on the flipchart/wall. When all the post it notes have been stuck, facilitator leads a group discussion summarising/grouping all of the ideas from all of the groups.

Notes:

BARRIERS WALL

Either draw a brick wall onto flipchart and stick on the wall, OR, give out rectangular pieces of card, OR, post it notes that represent bricks. Get the group to write one barrier per brick/rectangle/post-it note and assemble to form a brick wall.

Follow on activity – finding the solution: For every barrier, on paper shaped like a balloon, write the solution. Attach the solution to the appropriate barrier using string, to symbolise the brick being pulled away. If the above activity has been done with post it notes or rectangles, simply remove them from the wall and reposition them to form a path to symbolise the way forward.

Notes:

CAUSAL LOOPING DIAGRAMS
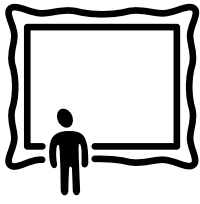
A casual looping diagram can be used to capture complex issues and reveal the big picture. Central issue in the centre and populate with context who/where/cause/impact/affect then join to demonstrate relationship. Good for visual mapping and generating research questions. This can be made visual with images and illustration.

Facilitator to draw while young people debate.

https://www.marketlinks.org/resources/what-causal-loop-diagram-and-what-it-good

Notes:

SOCIAL STORIES

Provide young people with scripted scenarios that are tailored to the issue (you could use data from causal loops to create the story). Build in a question or series of questions to get young people talking about the issue. Can do this in groups, individually or with research participants. Try and make it visual, perhaps young people could draw there own stories?

Notes:

INDIVIDUAL FEEDBACK

Providing a feedback form with the key elements below, it enables you to gather group feedback on peers, this lets people express views anonymously but in a positive frame. The individual writes their own name on the top of their sheet and leaves it on the table. The whole group then move around the room writing on each other's sheets. The idea is to encourage everyone to write something positive/constructive on everyone's paper.

Notes:

WHAT WOULD THEY SAY..?
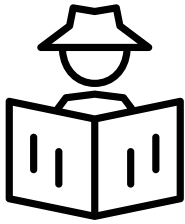
A range of fictional people are created in advance to illustrate the difference in the topic. E.g Monica is 17 years old, she is at college and had a part time job. She lives at home with her mum and three younger brothers. She wants to move away to university when she finishes college and is working to save money to do so.

These people are placed within the groups and a question is posed to the whole room. Each group must answer the question, trying to give the point of view of the fictional character they have been given.

The idea is to get the group to think about the question from a range of different viewpoints in order to solve it effectively.

Notes:

DIAMOND 9

This can be delivered in different ways:

1) Have 9 (or more) cards ready with different items/statements on them – which are relevant to a certain topic (eg what is most helpful: work experience, training, qualifications, awards, a mentor, funding, etc..) and they arrange them into a diamond 9 shape – where the top of the diamond is the 'best' or highest priority.

2) This could also be done with blank post-its/cards, where the users come up with their own answers to the topic, and then arrange the top 9.

Notes:

IMPORTANCE/URGENT QUDRANT
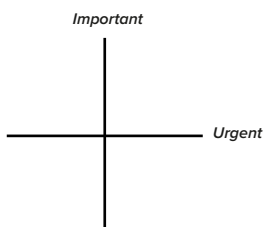
Important

Urgent

Draw an axis (a simple cross like the diagram on the left) with: importance on the vertical axis and urgent on the horizontal axis. So that the top right area = high importance and high urgency whilst the bottom left area = low importance and low urgency. You can then use the box to ask a particular question and gather views, so for example if you are asking young people what they need to help find a job and they think work experience is really important and urgent then they would write this on a post it note and then place it in the top right area.

Notes:

RELATIVE IMPORTANCE GRID (DESIGNED TO UNDERSTAND PRIORITIES)

If you want to find out what is a key priority for a particular thing, so for example say you were looking to choose a holiday. List the factors that are important like cost, weather, travel time and activities available; then rank each aspect against the other – scoring the item you think is more important '1' and the item you think is less important '0' and keep going till you have ranked every item against every other item. So for example, in the first column below if you think cost is a less important factor than weather then put a 0 against cost. In the example below – it can be seen that weather with the highest score is the most important factor, followed by the activities available then cost – whilst travel time is not an important factor.

	Cost	Weather	Travel Time	Activities	Row Total
Cost		0	1	0	1
Weather	1		1	1	3
Travel Time	0	0		0	0
Activities	1	0	1		2

BUSINESS CARDS

Each person is given one sheet of A4 paper and asked to divide it into 4 equal sized smaller pieces of paper by tearing it. They then write their name at the top of each piece. The facilitator puts a question on the wall/screen that everyone needs to answer. In a given time period, everyone moves around the room and speaks to one person at a time discussing the question. You swap paper with the person that you are talking to and make a note of their answer during your conversation. At the end, all the answers are displayed and discussed. This can be done with multiple questions displayed one at a time.

(This activity is usually done as an icebreaker where you find out an interesting story about the other person and make a note of it on their business card. At the end, all the stories are displayed and the facilitator asks for anyone to share particularly interesting/funny stories to be shared)

Notes:

#HASHTAG OF THE DAY

At the end of a session, ask the group for their 'Aha moment,' their 'so what' of the day and turn it into a #hashtag. Write these on a collective flipchart and ask each person to explain theirs to the group. This will help to summarise the learning and/or the takeaway from the session.
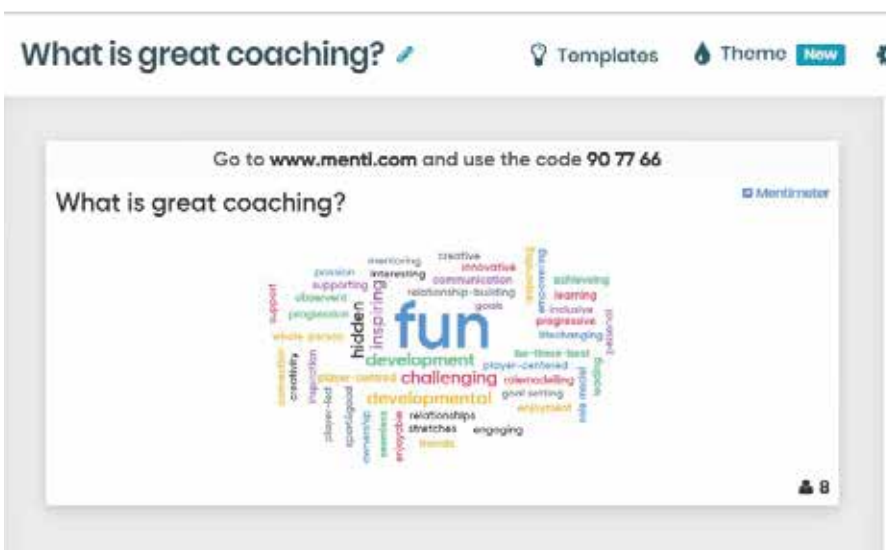
Notes:

PADLET

This is basically an online pinboard - you send the link to the people you are consulting with and they can add text, pictures, videos, links etc. They can comment on other people's posts too.

MENTIMETER

People go to an online link on their mobile or text their answer. The programme creates an instant word cloud from the responses.

ETHICS

In undertaking research it is essential to inform the research participants on what their participation entails. In doing so, it will be important to make sure the information provided is clear and accessible – so ideally no long sheets of information or forms to complete.

One option may be to use Augmented Reality (AR) – a QR link would work equally well to link the paperwork to a video that illustrates the key concepts and core ethical requirements of the research.

By providing a link to the (visual) information in addition to the (written) form means that research participants can watch, share and discuss their participation with others and reflect on whether to become involved.

QR codes or AR marker can for example be embedded into information packs or the other resources that are shared. These could be hosted for example on a YouTube account. There are also platforms that host consent forms so young people and their guardians (if required) can complete consent forms online via a QR code.