

'I Have a Voice' Film

What are we making better?

In the 2018 Local Area Ofsted Inspection, it was reported that co-production with children and young people was 'weak'. As an organisation who are commissioned by Swindon Borough Council to lead on children and young people's participation we felt that the best way to improve practice across the local authority would be to talk to our young people as to how to make things better and how they felt they could encourage adults to listen to them.

What have we done?

We worked with 16 young people across our SEND provision, and the consensus was that they would like to create a film to remind adults that they do 'have a voice' and would like to be listened to. Young people created some questions to ask each other around: why it is important to be listened to, who they want to listen, what makes a good listener, what it feels like to be listened to and not listened to.

When the film was complete the young people came up with the idea to come up with some 'Top Tips' for listening aimed at professionals, services and other adults who may be supporting them, this was turned into a leaflet and the tips were added to the film.

The Film was presented at the 'SEND Forum' along with the 'Top Tips' leaflet to professionals working with SEND. It is now presented to all Disabled Children's Team Social Workers and Aiming High staff. It is also be shared on the Local offer site and on social

Top Tips for Listening to Children & Young People with SEND

1. Take time, and be patient with us - don't put us on the spot and give us time to prepare what we want to say....and how we want to say it.
2. Check we understand what we are being asked, and if we don't understand, try something different - be creative!
3. If you are talking for us, say what we want others to hear.
4. Be honest with us - if what we want isn't possible, tell us why.
5. Make sure we agree and understand the decisions that are being made....because it's our life.

Logos: STEP Swindon, Thought Tank

What has been the Impact?

Feedback from adults attending SEND forum

What was the number 1 thing you learnt from our film?

- 'That young people do want to be listened to and are passionate about it'
- 'Their choices should be respected'
- 'How important it is to actually listen to young people's views and that each young person is unique with different voices and different support needs'
- 'It's not just the big issues its little things that we could instantly do something about that are just as important'
- 'That if we don't listen can have profound effect on them'
- 'Young people want to be listened to by everyone and this is not happening enough'
- 'The importance of asking for views from SEN children and giving them a voice (in school)'
- 'To make sure we are saying (as adult) what you want us to say and not changing the meaning'

After watching our film is there anything you will now change when listening to young people?

- 'Where young people's voices have not been submitted for a statutory assessment, I will try to be more persistent in asking for these to be submitted'
- 'Plan to set up a group in school of SEN students to consult with about what they want from school'
- 'Ensure increase participation in school to get the views of young people'
- 'Find ways of working more effectively to gain the views of young people (education)'
- 'Disseminate the 'Top Tips' to all staff in school'
- 'Be mindful in school - It's not just the big issues its little things that we could instantly do something about that are just as important'
- 'Think about best time to involve young people – be mindful of time constraints'
- 'More patience and give more time to listening to young people (education)'
- 'Try to fully understand what it is that the young person is trying to say'
- 'Supporting them to make sure engaged with processes and listened too (parent)'

What has been the evidence?

The film can be viewed here <https://youtu.be/whf2hwpTx4w>