

# CORE COMPONENT ON CREATING A SAFE ENVIRONMENT



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# HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT

This document has been written by Helen Veitch and Claire Cody and outlines 9 tools and 5 exercises that can be used by facilitating organisations to create a safe environment for participatory work on CSEA that focuses on the **wellbeing and meaningful engagement** of children and young people. These activities were originally developed for use with young people who have lived experience of CSEA (survivors) engaged in campaigning and advocacy activities.

The Core Component on Creating A Safe Environment is adapted from 'Warrington, C. (2020) Creating a Safe Space: Ideas for Facilitators Delivering the [Our Voices Too](#) Participatory Advocacy Project', Safer Young Lives Research Centre, University of Bedfordshire and uses a new approach to safeguarding called 'Survivor-Informed Safeguarding for Campaigning', that has been developed by Helen Veitch and Rabia Gungor from [Children Unite](#).

The tools and exercises in this document **complement existing safeguarding or protection policies and procedures** – they do not replace them. Consequently, organisations facilitating participatory initiatives with children and young people should already have in place relevant 'safeguarding' or 'protection' policies such as a safeguarding/protection policy for children and/or vulnerable adults (which outline the organisation's commitment to safety and protection). Facilitating organisations may have other policies that are relevant to safeguarding/protection such as a digital security policy, a health and safety policy, a whistleblowing policy or policies on bullying and harassment. In addition, facilitating organisations may have relevant procedures (organisational practices) that support the implementation of safeguarding or protection policies such as:

- » reporting and response procedures – how to report a safeguarding/protection issue
- » the role of a safeguarding/protection 'lead' or 'focal point' in the organisation
- » a code of conduct
- » consent processes
- » risk management processes
- » case management procedures
- » a complaints mechanism
- » recruitment checks for staff or volunteers

As the name suggests **survivor-informed** safeguarding for campaigning is not a 'one size fits all' model, it is an approach which requires safeguarding practices and procedures to be informed by children and young people themselves and consequently adapted to each context. To date, the survivor-informed safeguarding approach has been adapted to the country contexts of Brazil and Colombia for participatory advocacy by young men on sexual violence against boys<sup>1</sup>. Consequently, some of the tools and exercises in this document are relevant to this context.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on an initiative called 'Hidden Figures' delivered by [Family for Every Child](#) members Projeto Legal (Brazil) and Taller de Vida (Colombia).

# 1. SURVIVOR-INFORMED SAFEGUARDING

Please note, in this document we use the term ‘survivors’ to mean ‘young people with lived experience of sexual abuse and/or exploitation’.

Survivor-informed safeguarding complements existing safeguarding practices. It is adapted to the campaigning environment and is designed to support the recovery process for children and young people. It consists of three continuous elements that take place before, during and after campaigning activities, providing as safe an environment as possible for children and young people to operate in:

**Trauma-informed:** using trauma-informed approaches is about accepting that different forms of trauma exist for children and young people as well as for staff and other stakeholders. Making use of trauma-informed approaches enables organisations to mitigate and respond to trauma when it arises. This is achieved by focusing on **wellbeing** and connecting children and young people with appropriate support services.

**Risk-informed:** for participatory activities to be safe for children and young people, all risks associated with participatory activities (for example the risk of being ‘triggered’) as well as the development of mitigation strategies (or response plans) are informed by children and young people and their support networks (individuals who provide support to them). Risks and mitigation strategies are carefully managed and are regularly re-visited through reflective practices.

**Informed consent:** to be truly informed and voluntary, ‘consent’ is a continuous conversation with children and young people where they understand the risks of their involvement in participatory activities and feel comfortable withdrawing their engagement when it supports their wellbeing and self-care (this can be a permanent or temporary withdrawal).

**Working in trauma-informed ways is about:**

- » **Recognising the signs or symptoms of trauma;** acknowledging the impact of traumatic experiences and actively seeking to avoid re-traumatisation.
- » **Focusing on wellbeing:** acknowledging that children and young people have different coping mechanisms, resilience factors and support and that children and young people have the capacity to identify these resources;
- » **Creating strong partnerships** and links with support networks and drawing on these when needed.

## Being **risk informed** is about:

- » **Detailed collaborative planning** - with young people and colleagues. This includes anticipating potential challenges, identifying individual needs and putting in place strategies and resources to respond;
- » **Ongoing reflective practice** – with young people and colleagues. Including a commitment to capture ongoing feedback and learning from all stakeholders and adapt and refine plans, and to create inclusive and easily accessible complaints mechanisms that are responded to quickly.

The topic of sexual violence is highly political, contentious and often stigmatized – in ways which are often specific to a country, community or group of people. For any individual, association with the issue of sexual violence - for example as a survivor, advocate, campaigner, or practitioner this can have significant implications and risks. These risks will vary according to a person's gender, sexuality, ethnicity, age, religion, disability or peer group and they may impact at an individual, organizational and/or community level.

## Continuous **informed consent** is about:

- » **Shared decision making with children and young people** in response to the unanticipated events or circumstances that arise during participatory activities to help identify how best to support children and young people.
- » **Regularly checking-in with children and young people** to ensure they are comfortable to participate in specific campaign activities and making it easy for children and young people to opt-out.

## 2. PREPARATION

**First steps:** Before children and young people are engaged it's crucial to undertake detailed planning and risk assessment; and identify resources needed to run a safe project, such as:

- I. **Developing a risk register:** although addressing risks and developing mitigation plans will be a continuous process that children and young people should be engaged in, before discussing risks with children and young people, facilitating organisations should undertake a 'whole project' risk assessment to develop a risk register for the project. The risk register can be used to plan and monitor safeguarding processes for the project and should be seen as a living document that is regularly updated.

See Tool 1: Risk Register Template

- II. **Identify and link with support networks.** Recognising that no one individual or organization has all the answers is important. Building relationships and alliances with other organisations means access to different types of support for children and young people if required.
- III. **Creating a safe context for the project.** Where and when the project will take place is an important consideration to promote inclusion and safety. If it's hard for children and young people to get to or it takes place in a potentially stigmatizing space then it will have significant consequences for the project.

# TOOL 1: RISK REGISTER TEMPLATE

A risk register is one way of assessing and managing risks within a project. It is a document that incorporates the key data from a risk assessment process. It can be a useful process to encourage reflection and learning and contribute to initial planning of a participatory activity, and it can also help facilitating organisations to prepare and increase confidence in their planning of the project.

## Instructions for a risk assessment

Risk assessments can be run as a group activity: Either face-to-face or virtually as follows:

- » **Bring together the relevant people.** At this stage this is the person or staff responsible for delivering the project (there will be opportunities to discuss risks and mitigations with children and young people later in the project cycle).
- » **Consider the most likely risks.** Start the assessment by asking all participants to think about the most likely risks for project and writing these down. Risks can be discussed in categories. For example, for a participatory research project risks could be discussed for a) the organisations running the research, b) child/youth researchers, c) research participants.
- » **Organise risks.** Participants take turns reading out a risk to the group and as themes emerge, risks are grouped together according to areas of risk.
- » **Rank risks.** Prioritise or rank the areas of risk according to which areas of risk are MOST LIKELY for the project by asking the group 'How likely is this risk if no mitigation strategies are put in place?' Then look at the SEVERITY of risk by asking 'How harmful is this risk?'
- » **Discuss mitigation strategies.** Go through each risk and discuss various strategies that could address or mitigate these risks. Explore the strengths and resources that exist in your organisation and/or your community as well as changes that may be needed to organisational practice to address these risks.

**Discussing risks with children and young people** – Once the risk assessment has been completed by staff from facilitating organisations you can discuss risks with children and young people (see below)

**Likelihood:** To determine the likelihood of this risk ask yourselves 'How likely is this risk?' or 'How often is this likely to happen?'

**Scoring: 1= low likelihood, 2 = moderate likelihood, 3 = high likelihood**

**Impact:** To determine the impact or severity of this risk ask yourselves 'How severe is this risk?' or 'Will it result in distress/injury or trauma/death' and think about physical and emotional impact.

**Scoring: 1= low impact, 2 = moderate impact, 3 = high impact**



Risk	Likelihood	Impact (if not addressed)	Score	Actions to minimise likelihood and impact of risk	Actions to respond if risk occurs
Add 1 risk to each row	Add likelihood score (1-3)	Add impact score (1-3)	Add overall score (likelihood multiplied by impact)		
Example: Children and young people's data is misused at an event without their consent i.e. photos, videos and audio of them are uploaded onto social media.	2	2	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» Children and young people sign consent forms on sharing their data online.</li> <li>» Participants are informed of ground rules and the need to ask for consent from children and young people before they take photographs.</li> <li>» Reporting procedures are developed for the event.</li> <li>» Staff are briefed on how to provide support to participants or children and young people.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» The person who has misused the data is contacted and asked to remove the data (photo, video or audio)</li> <li>» The youth advocate is offered support</li> <li>» An action plan is developed if the data has caused harm to the youth advocate</li> </ul>
Example: A child/youth advocate is triggered by an audience member who asks insensitive and inappropriate questions about sexual violence and their sexuality.	3	2	6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» All audience members are briefed on asking sensitive questions and sign an event agreement.</li> <li>» Children and young people are trained on managing difficult or insensitive questions</li> <li>» A moderator is appointed for the event who can intervene to manage insensitive questions</li> <li>» Reporting procedures are developed for the event.</li> <li>» Staff are briefed on how to provide support to audience members and/or children and young people.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>» The moderator reminds audience of rules about asking sensitive questions (outlined in briefing and event agreement) and moves on to the next question.</li> <li>» The audience member who asked insensitive questions is given a verbal warning. If they continue, they are removed from the event.</li> <li>» The youth advocate is immediately offered support and reassurance from support staff.</li> </ul>



# 3. SELECTING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Creating a safe process means considering and planning for the potential risks that talking about sexual violence in groups of young people can present. These will vary depending on the individuals taking part but may include stigma; retribution for speaking out; conflict between group members; hierarchies of oppression; being 'triggered'; somatic responses; and vicarious trauma.

It's important to consider and take these seriously while not letting them feel overwhelmed or even prevent organizations trying to undertake participatory work with young people. Young people have a right to be involved in informing responses to these issues and our role is to find ways to support them to do that safely.

## 1. Who is the project aimed at?

Engaging young people starts with a decision about who can (and possibly can't) take part. What criteria will you use? Is your approach restrictive or inclusive? Is it targeting specific groups? There's no right or wrong way but deciding your criteria and being clear about the rationale is a crucial first step. This involves considering what needs you can manage and respond to and those you can't.

## 2. Individual relationship-based needs assessments

Everybody is different and will have different needs. Taking time to consider whether an organization has resources in place to enable an individual to safely take part in group work or an advocacy project is important. It's often useful to consider these questions in partnership with a professional (social worker, youth worker) who knows a child/young person well and can assess if it is appropriate to invite a child/young person to participate\*. For some children/young people it may simply be that the timing of a project or activity isn't right. For others there may be specific risks associated with working in groups.

*\*if these discussions involve sharing confidential information about a child/young person, without their consent, think about whether there's a way of doing this anonymously/without identifying them*

See Tool 2: Individual Needs Assessment

## 3. Setting Boundaries

For participatory initiatives it's important to facilitate children and young people's involvement in decision making as much as possible but there will probably be some aspects of the project that are non-negotiable and it's important to be honest and open about this with all children and young people.

Setting or identifying clear boundaries about what children and young people can (and can't) influence from the outset is much more valuable than giving children/young people vague messages that they are in control before they find out that's not true.

**See Exercise 4: Mapping the Project** - a good time to explore these boundaries is when children and young people meet for the first time.

#### 4. Informed Consent

We define consent as a person understanding and giving permission and agreeing to participate and or share information and data about themselves. (For people below the age of 18, consent to participate in the project is often also needed from parents/carers of the child/young person taking part).

**Informed consent** consists of the following processes:

- A) Sharing information** – Before children/young people agree to take part in a project it is important that they know as much as possible about what they are agreeing to. Expectations should be managed, and risks pointed out clearly. Being honest and transparent about the subject matter they will explore and the decision-making they will be involved in helps children/young people to make an informed decision.
- B) Consent to participate** – There is often a focus on children/young people's initial consent to participate in a project (and signing of consent forms). Although this is important, gaining consent should be a continuous process (rather than a one-off event) as participatory activities, by their nature, often present unanticipated events or activities that children and young people may or may not want to engage in. This means children/young people should be consulted about their comfort or readiness to take part in every new activity once they have understood the risks (so is connected to risk assessments). Gaining consent regularly can be as simple as 'checking-in' with children and young people to ensure they are comfortable to continue participating.
- C) Comfortable opting with** – it is important that children and young people understand they have a right to opt out at any time (i.e. not take part in an activity or not allowing use of their data), without feeling guilt, anxiety or that this decision will jeopardise their future participation. Their wellbeing and recovery is paramount.
- D) Data Consent** – children and young people's consent must be captured for any data that will be used or shared by facilitating organisations. Data includes but is not limited to personal information (their name, age, location, personal story), a case study based on their 'story', or any photographs, video recordings or audio recordings where they are identifiable (their face is shown).
- E) Consenting** – After every risk assessment a staff member should verbally ask if children and young people are happy to continue participating. Here children and young people will need to make an informed decision as to whether they consent.

See Tool 3: Consent Pack for Facilitators

## 5. Individual Support Planning

Once children and young people have agreed to take part, it is helpful to offer them opportunities to identify and share any specific needs they have or adaptations they require either directly with adult facilitators; in writing (See Tool: Getting to Know You Form); or indirectly with support from another professional.

This is about planning with children and young people what could enable them to contribute most fully and safely. For example:

- » Do they need support with travel or childcare?
- » Do they need to take regular breaks?
- » Do they have any needs associated with their religion or culture?
- » Are there any issues for them with literacy or writing?
- » How do they like to be addressed?
- » Do they have any dietary requirements or feel okay about eating with others?
- » Do they have any disabilities or learning needs they'd like those organising activities to know about?
- » If they've experienced trauma, do they have any particular triggers and, if so, are there any strategies that they find useful for facilitating organisations to know about in response to this?
- » What else gets in the way of them feeling safe?
- » Is there anything else that they think would be helpful for facilitating organisations to know about them?



## TOOL 2: INDIVIDUAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT

Points to be covered in an initial conversation with a worker who knows the child or young person (prior to the child or young person being formally approached to join project)

Please note that this form is for reference and should be adapted for use in your project context –for example you may wish to add further questions or identify those which are not relevant.

DISCUSSION POINTS FOR ASSESSING INDIVIDUAL POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS	
Child or young person's initials	
Gender identity & age	
Key or lead workers name	
Estimated time the child or young person has been supported by the project?	
Significant communication needs/ preferences? (e.g. needs for translation of materials or use of sign language)	If YES – can these be met by the project?
Specific needs for support with transport to the project venue	If YES – can these be met by the project?
Potential need for third party to be present during workshop	If YES – can this be managed?
Is there significant potential for emotional distress? If YES – could this be adequately minimised? (explain how)	
Are there any known specific risks of the child or young person being 'triggered' that facilitators should be aware of?	
If answered YES to above - does the child or young person have any strategies for responding to being triggered they would be happy to share with facilitators? (details only to be shared with the child/young person's consent)	
Is there any known specific risk of someone finding out about their involvement in this project and this leading to potential harm?	
Are the project activities likely to have a negative impact on any therapeutic treatment?	
Are the project activities likely to impact on any current legal processes?	
Is the child or young person likely to have any difficulties working in a group environment and/or due to other members of the group?	

Can a worker identify potential benefits of the child or young person's involvement in project?	
Is the child or young person assessed as able to provide informed consent if information is given in appropriate format?	
Is there anything else facilitator should be aware of to ensure the child or young person can participate meaningfully and safely?	
Which worker will agree to actively 'check in' with the child or young person at agreed points in the project to check they are okay and get feedback.	(Write name of worker)
<b>ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS ON THE PART OF THE WORKER?</b>	
Agreed next steps to approach the child or young person	

## TOOL 3: EXAMPLE CONSENT PACK

**Note:** *this example comes from a participatory advocacy project on sexual violence against boys<sup>2</sup>*

[name of organisation] is a not-for-profit organisation that is working with [survivors of sexual abuse] to advocate on the issue of sexual violence and make changes to the system. We are conducting a project named [project name] that aims to improve the support received by boys and young men who experience sexual violence.

We would like to invite you to take part in this advocacy project as a 'youth advocate' This project will last [add time frame] to complete.

### Project Aims:

- » To bring together boys and young men [add ages] who have lived experience of sexual violence to develop your own advocacy campaign to improve the response/support services for boys and young men who have experienced sexual violence in [add communities].
- » To give you opportunities to advocate for your rights and the rights of your peers.
- » [add/edit as appropriate]

### Activities you will undertake:

- » [add activities or tasks children and young people will undertake as part of this project i.e. participate in a 2 day workshop, include dates and locations if possible]

### Key Principles

**Wellbeing:** Your wellbeing is the **MOST** important thing in this project, this means your mental, physical, emotional and spiritual health is strong throughout this project.

- » **Us:** We will train you and have support staff available to you. We will organise regular times to 'check-in' with you to make sure you are okay. We will organise therapeutic support or other kinds of support if you need it.
- » **You:** it is therefore very important that when you realise a project activity is making you feel uncomfortable or unhappy, you feel confident to inform others such as the facilitators of this project, a friend, a family member and feel comfortable taking time away from the project activities to restore your wellbeing or say "no" to taking part in an activity if you do not want to do so.

<sup>2</sup> This example is from the initiative 'Hidden Figures' delivered by Family for Every Child member organisations in Latin America and involved young men (aged over 18) as youth advocates.

**Risk:** Everything in life has a risk, for example, crossing the road requires you to make an assessment about whether it is safe to cross. For this project you will be participating in many different activities and events. We would like you to help us to understand the risks involved in these activities and events FOR YOU and to explore the strategies we can use to reduce these risks (called mitigation strategies).

- » **Us:** It is our role to explain fully all the activities you will be participating in, to involve you in examining the risks to you and to work together to identify mitigation strategies for these risks. We will also inform you when changes take place to project activities.
- » **YOU:** We ask you to assess if the project activities align with your desires and any recovery or support plans you already have in place. We all live unique lives and it is important that we know the risks posed to you and those supporting you, and that you feel comfortable with the strategies in place to protect you.

**Consent:** Is defined as a person understanding and giving permission and agreeing to take part in something (an event or an activity) or agreeing to share information (a story, a photograph or film footage) about themselves.

- » **Us:** During this project, we will regularly ask for your consent – for example, after a risk assessment or before you take part in an event so that we know you are happy to take part.
- » **You:** During this project, you will need to decide if the activity is something you would like to be involved in (i.e. you are comfortable with the risks and mitigation strategies in place) and you agree to participate. It is important to us that you feel able to say “no” and to opt-out if you are not comfortable with something.

## Your Aims and Desires

Write as **many or as few things** you would like to achieve in this project, this is for your reference (you do not need to share this with others)

Experience or knowledge I would like to gain	Things I would like to educate people about	My desired outcome
<b>Example:</b> I would like to gain confidence in public speaking	<b>Example:</b> Educate health workers on biased health practices	<b>Example:</b> Health workers ask more neutral questions when I visit them



## General terms of participation

Your participation in this project is voluntary and you will not receive any financial payment for being part of the project. However, you will receive [add in the type of compensation or in-kind payment provided here] for being part of this project.

It is up to you to decide to take part, you can withdraw at any time without giving us a reason. This will not affect your relationship with us in a negative way. If you are under the age of 18, we also need your parent or guardian's permission for you to take part in the project.

If you have any questions or concerns about your participation or you would like to withdraw from participating in the project you can contact [add name] from [organisation] on [Add telephone number and email].

## Your Consent

I have understood the aims and principles of the project

I have understood the general terms of participation (by reading it or having it read to me) and I agree that I would like to participate in this project: **Yes/No**

I understand that my consent is voluntary and I can withdraw my consent at any time **Yes/No**

Printed Name: ..... Signature: .....

Telephone number: ..... Date: .....

## Parental/ Guardian's Consent – for participants under the age of 18

I confirm that I am the parent/guardian of .....

- » I understand the information above and I consent for my child to take part in the project.  
Yes / No
- » I understand that my child's consent is voluntary and they can withdraw their consent at any time. Yes / No

Printed Name: ..... Signature: .....

Date: ..... Telephone: .....

Email: .....

# 4. STARTING GROUP ACTIVITIES

Collective participation involves bringing together children and young people in a group to inform and influence change. Working in groups is therefore a key mechanism for collective participation.

Although there are many examples of collective participation with children and young people on a range of issues, bringing together children and young people to discuss and engage with issues such as health, education, housing and the climate, there have been less examples of collective participation in initiatives that aim to influence child protection or address issues like sexual violence.

There are lots of youth work resources available that explore group work and the different stages of group formation. It may be useful to refer to these alongside this toolkit. Many of the suggestions here are not specific to work on sexual violence but include additional reflections on specific considerations for responding and addressing sexual violence with children and young people. The list is not exhaustive but will hopefully prompt facilitating organisations to think of more strategies to support safe working practices.

## Applying a Trauma-Informed Approach

Talking about and working together to address CSEA can be extremely positive but it can also be difficult; CSEA can be a sensitive and challenging topic to talk about or work on. This project may raise emotions or affect children and young people's thinking on personal issues. If they have experienced trauma, there may be known or unknown triggers for them in the work you plan to do.

Acknowledging this at the beginning of the project is important. It helps:

- » children and young people make informed choices about taking part
- » communicate your commitment and confidence to respond to these challenges
- » offer children and young people an opportunity to share any strategies they use for coping, and
- » provide an opportunity to remind children and young people of support networks available to them.

## Safety Protocols

Having a safety protocol that you explain during ground rules is an important start. A safety protocol can be as simple as asking the facilitator to stop activities for a while and have a break. This can be a way for children and young people to feel under control again. Nobody likes to be shut down, but the facilitator can explain that it is for the wellbeing of the group.

## The first meetings

In the first few meetings together, there are a few different things you will want to cover:

- » Welcome
- » Why we are here?
- » Getting to know each other
- » Talking about consent and confidentiality
- » Agreeing how we work together and setting the tone
- » Building trust
- » Setting hopes and fears
- » How are we feeling?

## Welcome

All of the children and young people should be aware of the aim of the group or the activities they are engaging in, and be aware of the practical details (e.g. when, where and for how long they will be meeting).

In the welcome it is important for facilitators to introduce themselves and engage in the getting to know each other exercises

### Things to consider:

- » The set up of the room – how can you make the room warm, friendly and inviting, think about how chairs are set up?

### Things to go over in the welcome session:

- » Share practical points – where are the toilets, how long is the session, when will breaks be, if people are recording notes why and how.
- » Introduce yourself as facilitators are and why they are interested and looking forward to the sessions
- » Remind the group that the project will be focussing on issues related to child sexual exploitation which can be a difficult topic to talk about and discuss
- » Explain that if anyone finds it difficult, does not want to engage in certain activities or discussions that is ok and that if they need to pause and take some time out, or talk individually to one of the facilitators they can indicate that in different ways.
- » Reassure them that they will never be expected to share any personal details when discussing different topics
- » Explain that if they are unsure of how to draw on their own experiences, they may find it helpful to talk in the third person, e.g. 'I think a young person who might have experienced this may feel ...'

## Why are we here?

Even if children and young people have received information about the project and spoken to facilitators about the project it can be helpful to go over the key points again. Rather than communicating this verbally you could engage the group in picture mapping to explain the process, people involved and who has 'power' to make decisions at different points in the process. **(See Exercise 4 Mapping the Project)**

In participatory projects it is hard to predict what will happen as sessions will evolve in response to the interests and decisions of the group. It is therefore important at this point to be open about this and explain that although the facilitators have an idea of how the project might develop and the different activities that are likely to be involved, nothing is set in stone. It is therefore important for the group to 'check in' regularly to ensure that individuals are still happy to participate and that is important for children and young people to know that they can choose to 'opt out' of different activities and sessions and this will not lead to problems.

## Getting to know each other

Depending on how the group was formed, some children and young people may know each other but others may not. In this first session together think about including some fun activities that allow children and young people to get to know each other.

## Talking about consent and confidentiality

Although you will have been through consent processes, it is important to return to this throughout the process.

We know that confidentiality is a very important principle when asking children and young people to share thoughts and feelings that might be difficult. It is particularly important for children and young people who have experienced situations where very personal information about them has been shared with others without their knowledge or consent.

It is important to be very clear with children and young people about what confidentiality means and the limits to this.

The two messages that it is important to clarify in discussions about confidentiality are:

1. That as you are in a group, and even if within the group agreement group members agree to not share what people say outside of the group, as facilitators you cannot guarantee that information that is shared during the sessions will not accidentally slip out. **(See Exercise 3 The Toothpaste Activity)**
2. That as facilitators you may keep what is shared confidential to the project, if certain information is shared that makes you concerned about a child/young person you would need to pass this on.

Although it may be possible to keep conversations confidential there will be cases where confidentiality will need to be broken for example in cases where:

- » A child or vulnerable person is in immediate danger
- » A court order requiring information to be shared is received
- » A crime has been committed

As part of conversations about confidentiality, you may wish to encourage the group to ask you questions so that they understand more about what would happen in different scenarios:

- » Will you tell my parents or carers what I say during the sessions?
- » Will you tell other staff at the organisation what we discuss?
- » Will you take notes about the discussions and if yes what will you do with them and who will see them?
- » If I tell you I am being hurt what would you do?
- » If I tell you I know someone else who is being hurt, or may be in a bad situation what will you do?
- » If I tell you about any romantic or sexual relationship with others will you tell anyone?

## Agreeing how we work together and setting the tone

Once the main issues and core concepts have been discussed it is helpful to consider as a group how everyone will work together during the project. The first session is a good opportunity to agree on some ground rules so that everyone is clear on what they can accept and what is appropriate when working together

Before the meeting it will be important for the facilitators to discuss from their perspectives what is important to communicate from the organisations side during this exercise. e.g. what will need to be explained around core concepts related to safeguarding such as limits on confidentiality and approaches to maintaining engagement. (See Exercise 1: Group Agreement or Ground Rules).

It will also be important to ensure that everyone is on the same page when it comes to understanding the language and key terms that will be used during the project (See Exercise 2 Terminology and Setting the Tone).

## Trust building activities

There are a range of 'icebreakers' and activities that you could select to build trust between members of the group. For example:

- » Human knot (<https://youtu.be/1EIEP0w64s4?si=QpFByZepn3G-QrLo>)
- » Blindfold
- » Spaghetti and marshmallow building

## Setting hopes and fears

It can be helpful in the early meetings to get a sense of what children/young people hope to gain from being involved in the project and what are some of their key worries or concerns. This can help the facilitators be attuned to the group's expectations and provide an opportunity to reassure or communicate openly if certain hopes are not expected to be met for example **(See Exercise 5 Hopes and Fears)**

## How are we feeling?

At the end of the welcome session/s it is important to check in and see how everyone is feeling. Here you could use the mood meter or other tools to get a measure of how the activities and discussions have gone.



## EXERCISE 1: GROUP AGREEMENT OR GROUND RULES<sup>3</sup>

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**Type of exercise:** Group discussion

**Aims:** Ensure children/young people have defined and understand how they want the group to operate

**Time:** 30 minutes

**Materials:** Post-its, pens, flip chart paper

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- » Explain that when we're doing group work we make a simple agreement to help everyone feel safe. This is based on how we want the group to run; how we want people to behave towards each other; and how we will manage any difficulties, if and when they occur.
- » In pairs or individually give everyone a few minutes to think or discuss statements they'd like to include in the 'group agreement'. Give an example such as 'to listen when another person is talking'. Explain that these can include rules for facilitators.
- » Ask people to share their ideas in turn. After each idea is presented, check:
  - Does everyone understand what this rule means?
  - Does everyone agree that it should go into the group agreement?
- » Keep asking for ideas that have not been discussed yet. Encourage the group to clarify statements or concepts as they could mean different things to different people. E.g. 'Respect – What is this? What are people doing if they are being respectful? How would we know if someone is being respectful? Finally check if any key ideas are missing and suggest any you think they should consider. For example, if people's energies are low how could they signal or request for a break?
- » When complete, ask everyone (including facilitators) to sign or mark the agreement.
- » Inform the group that this is a safe space and everything will remain confidential however if someone discloses they are in immediate risk of harm or that someone else is in immediate risk of harm, facilitators have a duty to follow up to make sure the person is safe.
- » End the session inform group that during the next few days/weeks the group will explore sensitive topics, if people are triggered by any of the content, it is okay for them to take space, talk to a facilitator and take time out.

Facilitator notes Any discussion about confidentiality should include an acknowledgement of the limits of this – both in terms of the legal duties of facilitators and the limits of control within a group setting. Legal duties and their interpretation vary in different countries, but a standard approach is that professionals such as youth workers, social workers have a duty to pass information on if something makes them worry that someone is at a 'significant risk of harm'.

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3. SOURCE: Billingham (2016) as cited in Warrington, 2020



## EXERCISE 2: TERMINOLOGY AND SETTING THE TONE

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**Type of exercise:** Group Discussion

**Aim:** To ensure the group have a shared understanding of the words and terminology used over the course of the training

**Time:** 20 minutes

**Materials:** Flip-chart paper

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### Steps

- » Explain that every person in the room has different experiences and exposure to the topics we will cover over the next few days. The purpose of this discussion is to ensure that we all have a “common” or “shared” understanding of words and terms we will be using throughout this project.
- » On the flipchart paper write the key words or terms that will be used in this project (listed below). Add a title to the flipchart paper such as ‘our dictionary’ or ‘our glossary’
- » Ask the group if they know the definition or meaning of each word or term.
- » Try to gain agreement from the group on each of the words or terms and write these on flipchart paper.
- » Explain to the group that we can refine and add to our definitions of key words and terms during the training.
- » Keep hold of the dictionary/glossary page and bring it to all training sessions.
- » **Finally explain to the group that during the next few days the group will explore sensitive topics, if anyone is triggered by any of the content, it is okay for them to take space, talk to a facilitator or take time out.** (Explain that we will explore coping mechanisms in one of the later sessions)

**Note:** key words and terms should be identified by facilitators beforehand

Example key words and terms used in a participatory advocacy project:

- |                      |                    |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| » Advocacy:          | » Risk:            |
| » Campaigning:       | » Consent:         |
| » coping mechanisms: | » Sexual Violence: |
| » Trigger:           | » Participation:   |
| » Wellbeing:         | » Victim:          |
| » Child Rights:      | » Survivor:        |
| » Welfare:           | » A disclosure:    |

## EXERCISE 3: THE TOOTHPASTE ACTIVITY<sup>4</sup>

### Background:

It is important that children and young people are clear that it is not possible to guarantee that other children and young people won't speak about their experiences (including other people's experiences) to other people not involved in this project (their family and friends). This should inform children and young people's decisions to share personal experiences – particularly if these experiences are about sexual abuse (often called a 'disclosure'). It is important, however, to emphasise that group members can share personal information about themselves if they want to, particularly if they want help. There may also be issues group members want and need to speak about, but they do not want to make a personal disclosure. Encouraging children and young people to talk in the third person and avoid using real names can help them speak about personal experiences in a way that feels safe.

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**Type of activity:** Group Activity

### Aims:

- » To support children/young people's understanding of confidentiality in a group setting
- » To help children/young people make informed choices about what they share in a group

**Time:** 10 minutes

**Materials:** A tube of toothpaste, a sheet of coloured paper/card

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**Task:** Ask a participant to squeeze out a toothpaste tube's contents onto a sheet of paper. When they have emptied as much as they can, ask them to hand the empty tube to another participant and ask the participant to put all the toothpaste back into the tube. Explain the following rules:

- » They are not allowed to tamper with or damage the tube in any way
- » They must get every last 'smear' of toothpaste back in the tube

The group will soon conclude that it is impossible to put all the toothpaste back

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<sup>4</sup> SOURCE: Billingham (2016) as cited in Warrington, 2020

**Discussion:** Ask the group to reflect on what this exercise represents in relation to confidentiality and disclosure of personal information. Key reflections to draw out include:

- » Once they say something in the session, they cannot take it back.
- » Once a facilitator has heard information from children and young people that raises concerns, they cannot pretend they have not heard it, they must act on it. In some cases, facilitators may have to break confidentiality.
- » Emphasise that each child/youth advocate is in control of what they choose to disclose in the session, but they should make their decisions regarding sharing personal details based on the knowledge that there are boundaries to this confidentiality.
- » You should also assure them that you can and will hear what they want to tell you, should they want to share difficult experiences.
- » Discuss different options and opportunities for children and young people to share personal experiences – these could include:
  - one-to-one briefings/discussions with facilitators before or after a session (these are useful if children and young people want support or help;
  - a ‘comments box’ (an email address or a physical box) where children and young people can share information anonymously.

**Learning point:** During group work, if children and young people share personal experiences, it’s normal for others to compare these to their own experiences and this may evoke strong feelings. Anticipating, acknowledging, and responding to these feelings is important and is one way of minimizing distress. For example, in a UK project that explored the criminal justice process with children who had been sexually abused, participants who had very poor experiences often found it difficult to hear from others whose cases had resulted in a prosecution.



## EXERCISE 4: MAPPING THE PROJECT<sup>5</sup>

**Facilitator notes:** In a project focused on children/young people's participation it is important to think about power. One way of doing this is by trying to explain the relationships of power that exist between different stakeholders. It's an opportunity to clarify that some parameters for the project have been set prior to children/young people getting involved.

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**Type of exercise:** Group discussion

### Aims

- » To help participants understand the project
- » To clarify the power relationships in the project, and the limits and potential for participants influence the project.

**Time:** 20 minutes

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**Materials:** Picture/symbols of stakeholders and/or diagrams on flip chart paper; pens

- » Ask the group to explain their understanding of why they are there and what they will be doing in this project. At this stage you do not need to correct them, just capture all their ideas on flip chart paper. Once they have finished, explain the project in more detail. Explain which decisions they will have influence over and which decisions have already been made by others.
- » Using hand drawn pictures or symbols create a map or diagram of the project to help explain who the stakeholders are and the relationships between them. Some questions it should address are:
  - Who is funding the project?
  - Whose idea was the project?
  - Who is 'in charge' (locally, nationally, internationally)? And what does 'in charge' mean?
  - Who has a say in how things are run?
  - What is their role?
- » This should provide an image that you can return to repeatedly to remember and reflect on the project. If you take a photo of the diagram, you can give everyone a copy.

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5 SOURCE: Warrington and Billingham (2013) Gangs Film Project workshops cited in Warrington, 2020

## EXERCISE 5: HOPES AND FEARS<sup>6</sup>

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**Type of exercise:** Group discussion

### Aims

- » To identify and address children and young people's concerns about the project in the group setting
- » To begin to identify individual and shared hopes for the project to shape its direction

**Time:** 20 minutes

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**Materials:** Flip chart paper and pens, post-its

### Steps

- » Ask children and young people to work in pairs. Ask them to talk about what they hope to get from the project. This could be anything – little or small. It could be hopes for themselves, for the group, for children and young people in general, for wider society. They can write their ideas on post-its.
- » Using flip chart paper draw two columns, one titled 'hopes' the other titled 'fears'. Ask the group to give feedback on their ideas from their discussion on their hopes. Go around each pair and ask them to stick their post-its in the 'hopes' column. You can ask them to elaborate on their post-its if more detail is required. Once everyone has shared their hopes, reflect on the complete list. Are there any similarities between the hopes?
- » Next ask them to work with their partner again and this time to discuss any fears they may have about the project. Again, these could be anything: that they are worried they may not be able to make every session; that they find it difficult to trust people; that they aren't very good at speaking in groups; that they don't want children/young people to continue to be stereotyped or their efforts to go ignored.
- » Once the pairs have had five minutes to discuss this, repeat the feedback session. ask them to share their post-its once again. As much as you can, use examples from the project to address any concerns they have about the project. Where a concern needs a more thoughtful answer, you may need to explain that you will go away and get more information before you can address it.

**Facilitator notes:** children and young people may have similar fears, and it can be useful to highlight this and make it clear that they are not alone with their fears, and that it is ok and reasonable to be worried about new experiences. Assure the group that, even if they haven't expressed their concerns, they can do this at any point and that they may find this easier as they get more comfortable in the group setting.

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6 SOURCE: Billingham (2016) as cited in Warrington, 2020

## TOOL 4: GETTING TO KNOW YOU FORM<sup>7</sup>

**Note for facilitators:** Information collected on this form is requested from children and young people on a voluntary basis. It should form part of a process of ensuring all reasonable adjustments to meet individual needs have been considered and, where possible, responded to.

We want to make sure that when you're involved with us you are safe, and we can plan the work in a way that feels comfortable and supportive for you. You do not have to answer all the questions below and you may prefer to talk to us in person about these questions.

**\*FACILITATING ORGANISATIONS TO ADD A NOTE ABOUT HOW INFORMATION WILL BE STORED AND SHARED\***

Name of Child/Young Person: .....

Date of Birth: .....

Address: .....

Contact number: .....

Email: .....

### Introduction

Why would you like to be involved in ..... [NAME OF PROJECT] .....

Do you have any hopes or concerns about joining the ..... [NAME OF PROJECT]? .....

Meeting with other people

Is there any preparation or support we can give you before or during your involvement in the project to help you feel at ease? (e.g. being in a group with other children and/or young people).

Being involved in ..... [NAME OF PROJECT] ..... means that you will be sharing your views and hearing from others. Sometimes you might hear information that you disagree with or you might find upsetting. What could we do to support you if this situation happens? (e.g. you could talk to someone, we can give you some time alone).

<sup>7</sup> SOURCE: Adapted from NSPCC Participation Team 'Getting to know you' form, cited in Warrington, 2020

We would like to make sure that your involvement in the \_\_\_\_\_ [NAME OF PROJECT] \_\_\_\_\_ is a safe and positive experience. If you think it is useful for us to know about any health needs you have please complete the following questions.

HEALTH NEEDS	YES	NO	COMMENTS
Are you on any medication?			
Do you have any allergies or medical requirements?			
Have special dietary needs?			

Are there any other difficulties or challenges that you are having that you would like to share and think it would be helpful for us to know about (you can write these here – or talk to us about them).

Do you need us to provide any resources to help you attend project activities? (e.g. halal food, prayer mats, information in large font etc.)

### What happens now?

Before we can invite you to take part in a project, we need to ask you to share details of one or two helpful adults in your life –people we could contact in an emergency. At least one of these people should a 'care/welfare/rights' professional (e.g. a support worker, social worker, teacher, therapist).

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact number: \_\_\_\_\_

If you can send this back to \_\_\_\_\_ [insert email address] \_\_\_\_\_ then we can get started.

Thank you!

# 5. MAINTAINING A SAFE SPACE

Once children and young people start activities, the priority for facilitators is still to maintain a safe space for children and young people.

**Managing risks in the campaigning environment** – children/young people who publicly associate themselves with the issue of sexual violence (for example, as an advocate, a survivor or a researcher) need to consider the implications for themselves in the present – and in the future.

Balancing children/young people's right to be credited for their work with their potential needs for anonymity can be hard and this needs to be discussed with children and young people. Is there a way of properly acknowledging and celebrating children and young people's achievements without adding to a risk of stigma?

There are many different ways that children and young people can share their contribution to advocacy work – each offering different levels of anonymity. Some children/young people may be comfortable sharing in person, but others may prefer to contribute more anonymously by producing written, audio or visual materials and through pseudonyms or nicknames.

Facilitators need to consider whether there may be tensions between different children and young people's wishes: if one child/young person wishes to identify themselves as a survivor of sexual violence – will this have implications for other's identities and how can two equally important needs be managed? Can you find ways to describe a group that do not implicate all members as having a shared experience?

See how tools such as **World's Worst Advocate and Scenario Planning & Risk Assessment** are used

Audiences are often extremely curious about the backgrounds of children/young people involved in projects addressing sexual violence. Considering ways to manage this is important. We often spend time preparing children/young people and forget about the need to prepare other adults who come into contact with a project.

See how the **Protection Shield** tool is used for an idea of how children and young people can develop a 'group identity' for an advocacy campaign.

**Feedback and review:** Given the unpredictable nature of group work, it is vital to build-in mechanisms for regular feedback, debrief and review with children and young people, with staff, and with management. Key tasks might include:

- » Regular structured debriefs after each session
- » Activities to enable children and young people to reflect on and feedback about the workshop process and content
- » Chances for children and young people to help revise and plan future workshops



- » Ways of recording the ongoing learning that emerges from group processes
- » Collaborative planning and risk assessment between facilitators before each session
- » Structures in place to enable shared decision making between facilitators when/if difficult issues or dynamics arise
- » Regular staff supervision
- » Regular individual 'check in's' with each participant after each session – providing children and young people with an opportunity to feedback anything that they didn't feel able to share in a group context.

**Games:** Sometimes it is easy to forget the importance of games and to avoid them if you're running out of time and want to get on with the 'real' work. However, games are very important – they help to bond the group, energize people when they're feeling down, and perhaps most importantly 'ground' individuals if they have been triggered and are experiencing flashbacks or dissociating. They can diffuse tension; raise spirits; bond a group and teach new skills. Always have a few games prepared that you can do easily if you need to, and ask young people to teach you more!

**Grounding strategies:** It is well worth giving 5-10 minutes at the end of every session for some grounding exercises that bring back physical awareness after a session that may have been focused on emotions. This could be a guided meditation or an exercise like 'group counting' or group juggling.

See **Feedback Activities** such as **Mood Meter**, **Evaluation Person**, **Graffiti Wall** and **Suggestion Box** in **Tools for Participatory Advocacy**



# TOOL 5 RESPONDING TO STRONG EMOTIONS IN GROUP SETTINGS

Groupwork can often catalyze strong emotions in individuals. Even when time and thought has been dedicated to creating a safe and calm space, conflict and unpredictable feelings or behaviours may arise. It is important to expect this and to plan how you will respond.

## Tips for responding

- » **Remain calm and confident** – this will help contain participants' anxieties and ensure participants continue to feel safe.
- » **Document the incident** – keep a written record of any key details and actions taken
- » **Group problem solving** – support participants where possible to be at the centre of the decision-making on how to respond to challenges or difficulties.
- » **Ensure there is follow-up for all concerned** – give participants an opportunity to reflect, challenge or share their views on what has happened, this could be part of a group problem solving exercise (as above). Facilitators can be involved in a debrief discussion at the end of the session.
- » **Ensure there is support from management** - regarding any key decision making or onward referrals.

Response plans should connect to risk assessments.

## TOOL 6: RESPONDING TO DISCLOSURES OF HARM OR ABUSE

If a participant discloses that they or another participant is at risk of significant harm, or you as a facilitator have concerns for the welfare of a participant – please follow the reporting/response procedures at [add name of facilitating organisations]:

**ADD KEY REPORTING / RESPONSE PROCEDURES HERE FROM FACILITATING ORGANISATION'S SAFEGUARDING/CHILD PROTECTION PROCEDURES:**



### Tip's for managing disclosures of harm and abuse<sup>8</sup>:

DO	DON'T
Remain calm, accessible and receptive	Allow your shock or distaste to show, or panic
Listen carefully, without interrupting, and take what you hear seriously	Probe for any additional information (inappropriate questioning may influence how the allegation is received by others later).
Give time to allow them to say what they want to say	Do not make assumptions. Do not paraphrase or offer explanations or justifications for actions.
Acknowledge their courage and reassure them that they are right to talk to you.	Make negative comments about the alleged abuser.
Let them know that you will do what you can to help.	Promise that everything will be okay.
Explain that you will need to share what they have told you and explain what may happen as a result.	Agree to keep the information secret or promise that complete confidentiality can be maintained.
Act immediately in accordance with the procedures of the local organisation.	Delay in getting emergency help if needed.

<sup>8</sup> SOURCE: Adapted from NSPCC: Dealing with a disclosure as cited in Warrington, 2020

## EXERCISE 6: ME MAP

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<b>Type of exercise:</b>	Group activity and/or individual reflection
<b>Aims:</b>	To ensure that children and young people have reflected on triggers and understand their support systems and coping mechanisms
<b>Time:</b>	20 minutes
<b>Materials:</b>	flipchart paper, pens, plain paper

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### Activity

Explain that during the project there might be high points and low points, there might be times when people trigger us. This could be within the group, at an event, or during your activities. **It is therefore important for children and young people to reflect on their coping mechanisms.**

### Step 1:

Ask children and young people to take a blank piece of paper and draw themselves in the center and think about and map out all the support networks that they have. Examples include:

- » Me!
- » My family
- » My friends
- » My school/college
- » Community leaders
- » Work colleagues
- » Support services/organisations providing support to you - counselling etc.
- » Other institutions – sports club, youth club etc.

**Note:** State that these are completely unique to each youth advocate and we will not be sharing them with the wider group.

### Step 2:

Ask children and young people what support they can gain from these networks if triggered. For example:

- » Me - I listen to music, read, play computer game, go on social media and watch funny videos - these all help me cope when triggered
- » Family - I talk to my mother and sister
- » Friends - I go and hang out with them or share my experience and they listen and give me advice
- » Supporting organisation - they can advise me on how to manage difficult people

### Step 3:

Once everyone has completed their maps, ask the group if they would like to share some of their individual coping mechanisms with the wider group?

### Step 4:

On flipchart paper write these down, if the group is hesitant give a personal example yourself i.e. - my coping mechanism is listening to music, doing sport and cooking.

### STEP 5:

**ONCE THIS HAS BEEN COMPLETED, REMIND THE GROUP THAT WHILE THERE MIGHT BE HIGHS AND LOWS DURING THIS PROJECT BUT THEY ALL HAVE SUPPORT NETWORKS AND COPING MECHANISMS. IF EVER THEY FEEL LIKE THEY NEED SUPPORT, FACILITATORS AND [ADD NAME OF FACILITATING ORGANISATION] ARE HERE TO SUPPORT THEM AS THEY ARE HERE FOR THEIR SUCCESS.**

## TOOL 7: PROTECTION SHIELD<sup>9</sup>

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**Aim:** A tool to explore children and young people's support structures and protect them from potential negativity after an advocacy event/activity. The Protection Shield can also be used during the set-up phase to identify children and young people's support structures and strategies.

**Materials:** sample protection shield on flipchart (see below). Empty protection shield forms (2 per participant), coloured pens.  
Time: 15 minutes

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### Activity

#### STEP 1:

Distribute two protection shield forms and pens to children and young people

#### STEP 2:

Display/present the sample protection shield (on flipchart) and explain that children and young people should complete their blank protection shield by answering one question for each segment of the shield.

#### STEP 3:

Go through the five questions and point to the relevant section on the sample protection shield

- » Most beautiful event:
- » Two people I love most:
- » I am best at:
- » If I had power:
- » My Life Motto:

**Note:** If children and young people don't understand what a life motto is, please explain.

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<sup>9</sup> SOURCE: Starbuck L and Warrington, C (2013) AYPH Be Healthy Project as cited in Warrington, 2020

Sample Protection Shield:

The image shows a shield-shaped form with a thick blue border. The shield is divided into five sections by thin blue lines. The top-left section is a square containing the text 'Most beautiful event:'. The top-right section is a square containing the text 'Two people I love most:'. The bottom-left section is a square containing the text 'I am best at:'. The bottom-right section is a square containing the text 'If I had power:'. The bottom section is a larger trapezoidal shape containing the text 'My life Motto:'.

<b>Most beautiful event:</b>	<b>Two people I love most:</b>
<b>I am best at:</b>	<b>If I had power:</b>
<b>My life Motto:</b>	

## TOOL 8: SCENARIO PLANNING<sup>10</sup>

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**Type of exercise:** risk assessment

**Aim** To help children and young people collaboratively anticipate risks and develop a response plan for a specific element of the advocacy project (this example focuses on the risks associated with a public engagement event)

**Time** 45 minutes

**Materials** Small (index) cards

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### Steps

- » Present the scenario children and young people are facing and ask children and young people to write down their key worries or concerns about this scenario.
- » Place all the 'scenario cards' in a pile.
- » Read out each card, and with the group, organise the cards into groups that address the same or similar concerns.
- » For groups of similar concerns, choose one card that represents the group.
- » Sit in a circle and ask children and young people to take turns to pick a card.
- » Ask the child/young person to read it out and the whole group discuss possible responses or ways of avoiding this happening. Try asking 'What do you do if....and reading out the concern on the card (see below example)
- » Make sure one of the facilitators records the group's ideas for responding. Later and this can be written up and turned into a 'planning/risk assessment tool' by facilitators.

**Example scenario cards:** children and young people are speaking at an advocacy event for the local community

"What do you do if...."

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<sup>10</sup> SOURCE: Warrington, C & Factor, F (2013) Dissemination planning tool for Gangs and Sexual Violence Film Project. Unpublished as cited in Warrington, 2020



## **You feel like the audience is looking down at you**

- 1.** You have a strong emotional response (for example, you are upset, shocked, angry) to something that is said at the event.
- 2.** Someone asks you directly if you, or others in the group, have ever had direct involvement in criminal activity.
- 3.** You start sharing a very personal story and then regret it. You wish you hadn't shared so much with people that you don't know.
- 4.** Someone asks you a question that you don't feel you can answer (or you don't want to answer).
- 5.** After you speak or present your work there is a big silence – no one asks you any questions or responds.
- 6.** Someone in the group or audience says something that you disagree strongly with.
- 7.** Someone else in your group starts talking and won't stop – they are saying things that YOU had planned to say OR they are taking up the time allocated to you.
- 8.** You feel like someone is giving you accusatory looks – or you are picking up 'bad vibes' from someone.
- 9.** Someone makes a negative comment about your work or presentation.
- 10.** Someone challenges you about something you have said – they don't agree with it and they tell you why they think you are wrong.
- 11.** You see someone you know in the audience who you didn't expect or want to see. You don't want them to know you've been involved in this project.
- 12.** You feel very nervous in front of the audience and forget what you were going to say
- 13.** A disagreement or argument starts up between two other people present at the event

## TOOL 9: WORLD'S WORST...<sup>11</sup>

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<b>Type of Activity:</b>	Group risk assessment
<b>Aim:</b>	To create a collaborative risk assessment
<b>Time</b>	45 minutes
<b>Materials</b>	Flipchart paper, pens

### Activity

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- » Explain to the group (adults/facilitators and children/young people) that you're going to imagine the world's worst version of an activity that you are planning in the project. You can emphasize that this is supposed to be fun (not an attempt to raise anxieties!!)
- » You might want to split into groups to do this – separating children and young people and adults works well. Ask each group to spend 15 minutes imagining a version of the event or activity planned where everything goes wrong - the 'world's worst version'. Ask the group to list or draw all the things that they fear might happen onto flip-chart paper.(NOTE: It is OK for people to have some fun and go into the realms of fantasy during this conversation – talking about monsters; earthquakes etc. – but remind people to focus on realistic things that could go wrong!)
- » After 15 minutes bring both groups together again and ask them to share their ideas. Let each group take a turn to share one of their thoughts. This is interesting if you have divided the group into children/young people and facilitators – often there are many shared fears – but also some that will be specific to children/young people and others for adults. Usually this will provoke lots of laughter as people describe crazy scenarios – but remember behind every crazy scenario there is usually a legitimate fear.
- » Once the group has listed all the different fears on one piece of paper go through each fear and list ideas of how the fear could be reduced. For example, ask:
  - How could this be avoided? How could the chance of this happening be minimized?
  - What could be put in place to help people respond if it did happen?

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<sup>11</sup> SOURCE: Warrington, C: Used during planning for young people's attendance at Council of Europe meeting about Lanzarote convention in Rome. Unpublished as cited in Warrington, 2020

**Facilitator notes:** Doing this activity with children/young people and facilitators together provides an opportunity for everyone to share concerns or anxieties – including those associated with facilitators' professional responsibilities that children/young people might not be aware of. Similarly, it is an important opportunity for facilitators to recognize the issues that might preoccupy children/young people – that might otherwise be overlooked or minimized.

After the discussion facilitators can write-up the discussion and share copies with all children and young people (as a reminder of the mitigation strategies). The risks and mitigation strategies identified can be included in a risk register for the project.





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