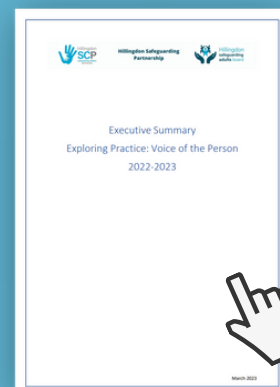


## Voice of the Person

Over the last year the Safeguarding Partnership has been focussed on exploring how well children and adults are listened to when they receive safeguarding support in Hillingdon.

We asked people directly about their experiences, and then co-produced an audit, developing videos and practice guidance to amplify the voices of those with lived experience. You can read the report by clicking on the image, or hear directly from children and adults in the videos linked to below.



### Children and Young People

Some of the children and young people consulted by the Safeguarding Partnership presented key messages they wanted to get across to the Hillingdon Safeguarding Children Partnership Board.



### Adults



This short pre-recorded webinar was delivered jointly by a social worker and two adults with lived experience of safeguarding support. It focuses on the importance of effective communication in Making Safeguarding Personal

#### Also included:

- Good listening - key messages from children and adults
- Useful communication resources to support your practice
- Children's voices
- Impact

# Good Listening: What Adults and Children Say

## Making dedicated time and space

**Named contact:** Ensure service users know who their named contact is and what their role is.

**Prioritise time** to engage with children and adults at risk, as well as their families and other key people in their lives. Creating opportunities to listen increases the chance of people trusting you and sharing important information with you.

**Provide privacy**, and think about how comfortable individuals might be speaking in front of others. For example, children, parents or carers might find it hard to be open and honest in front of the person they need to talk about.

**If someone has legal status as a Lasting Power of Attorney of Deputy** make sure you understand what their role entails and remember you must share relevant information and consult them.

*Asking me questions about my mum when mum wasn't listening would have been so much better.*

*A structured conversation rather than just ad hoc chat. A dedicated place and time to do it... having key players in the room (or video call) at the same time in order to be able to make decisions together and build trust.*

*They sat down and played a game with me. They asked me questions that helped me to speak about my family and home.*

*I will always say I am ok...find a different way to ask me.*

*More follow up - hearing how difficult it is, and not leaving me to deal with it alone.*

*Coming to the house and seeing mum was really positive, and doing so repeatedly, not just getting one off snapshots.*

## Relationship and rapport building

**Multiple visits/conversations** rather than one off contacts, wherever possible, are valuable to build relationships.

**Demonstrate interest and concern for someone's experience.** It is highly likely if you are undertaking a safeguarding intervention, there is a great deal of emotion involved for them.

**Be respectful and patient** and remember that sometimes people can be agitated, aroused and angry when they are experiencing a stressful situation.

## Acting on what people say and communicating what is being done

**Explain what you intend to do** with information provided.

**Provide clear updates about what you are doing** in response to the information you have received, from them or other people, wherever this is safe to do so.

**Explain your reasoning for your actions** in clear simple language. Be prepared to answer questions and disputes about your actions.

**Be clear with people if there are barriers to helping them** in the way they would like. Be honest about any limitations.

*The problems got stuck in the 'safeguarding investigation machine', and just stayed there. Nothing seemed to happen. Hard to find someone who would actually talk to me*

*They told me they would 'look into it' but didn't actually explain what they were doing about the concerns. Feedback about was being done... would have been helpful.*

*More joined up discussions between professionals rather than sending me from pillar to post. I was constantly being told I was calling the wrong person, the wrong service, and directed elsewhere.*

## Tailoring communication to individuals and families

**Use an interpreter** if the person concerned is not fluent in English. Do not use friends or family.

**Use plain English** and avoid jargon. Use words and phrases that you expect the person will be able to understand.

**Check the person understands** what you have said, ask them to explain what they have heard from you, and what they think about it.

**Check you understand** what a person has said to you by summarising and paraphrasing what you have heard and asking whether you have it right.

*Using language I understand - not jargon. I didn't know what 'safeguarding' meant. Lots of words were used that meant nothing to me.*

*Speak slowly, don't hurry. Make sure that there is a shared understanding before moving on in the conversation. Really delve into the discussion to make sure that the service user has understood your questions and the information you have given, rather than just assuming they understand the question.*

**Think about the time of day and location** that is best to speak to someone. Things like dementia, substance abuse and certain physical conditions can impact how able people are to communicate at different times of the day.

**Remember that heightened emotions and stress** can reduce people's ability to process information. Speak slowly, in small chunks of information, and repeat important points if you are not confident you have been understood.

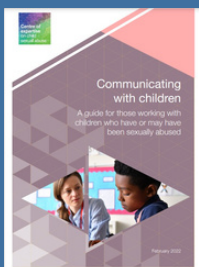
*Being patient when someone cannot hear them.*

*Remember that you are talking to people at times of really high emotion. I felt like they didn't realise how hard it was for me... When people are really emotional it is even harder to process information*

*I could not always follow what was going on and being said. So for me more time could have been taken... But because of my language and English I did not understand everything.*

**Take account of sensory impairment or speech impediment** ask what helps them, consider specialist advice, and ask people who know them what will help.

## Useful communication resources for working with children and adults



Useful information to support children impacted by child sexual abuse



Communication tips for speaking to people with hearing impairment, from the RNID



Guide to support communication with a person with dementia



Guide to support communication with a person with learning disability



"Let children know you're listening" A guide to help adults respond to children's disclosures of abuse

# Children's Voices



"It helps me to know that other people have been through the same kind of things"



Listening to us and doing the things you say that you will do.



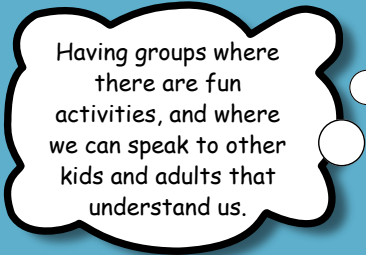
Learning about the things that matter to us!



When adults show us that they care



What is going well?



Having groups where there are fun activities, and where we can speak to other kids and adults that understand us.

What our 6-12 year olds said about being in care:

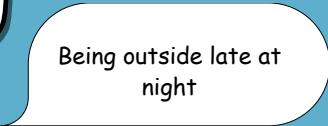
- I feel loved
- I feel cared for
- I have fun
- People are kind
- I get the help I need



Being searched at school...



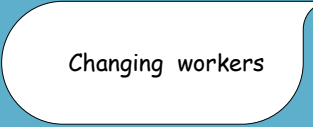
Travel costs



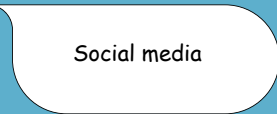
Being outside late at night



Worries



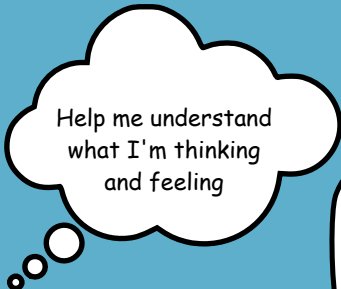
Changing workers



Social media



Schools aren't getting us ready for adult life



Help me understand what I'm thinking and feeling



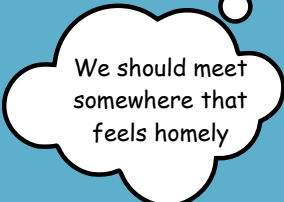
Get to know us by listening to us and doing fun things.



Understand what it's like to be us



What Helps?



We should meet somewhere that feels homely



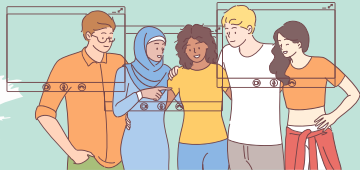
Make it easier to see my social worker



# Impact across the Safeguarding Partnership

## For Children: You Said, We Did event

The Safeguarding Children Partnership Board held a *You Said, We Did* event for children and young people. Click on the image to see the presentation summarising how various safeguarding partners have acted in response to what children and young people told them.



Care experienced young people regularly deliver training called 'Walking in Our Shoes' to professionals across the network. This training is available to book on [Learning Zone](#). If you do not have a Learning Zone account, complete [this form](#). Recently the young people delivered their training at a CNWL site.

A briefing to mark World Mental Health Day was co-produced with people with lived experience and includes their words and language as they reflect on their own experience. Generous and brave people in Hillingdon have shared their stories, art and poetry to help us understand their experiences.



## Stop and Search Youth Panels - Metropolitan Police Service

Police have been meeting with young people in Youth Panels since April 2022 to enhance young people's understanding of stop and search and their rights. This has led to them feeling more positive about it. One young person's comment about being stopped and searched after attending the youth panel - 'I just realised they are doing their job so I was cool about it!'

## Getting the Message to the Executive Leadership Group

In summer 2023 children and young people were invited to present their key messages to the Executive Leadership Group - this includes the Chief Nurse of the Integrated Care Board, the Metropolitan Police Service Borough Command Unit Commander, and the Chief Executive of the Local Authority.

## Reviewing the Quality Assurance Schedule in Adult Social Care

Adult Social Care is developing a new approach to quality assurance, This will include capturing the views and feedback of adults with lived experience, their carers and representatives.

## Patient and Community Engagement in NHS services

The two largest NHS Trusts operating in Hillingdon, [The Hillingdon Hospitals](#) and [Central and North West London](#), both have extensive programmes of patient and community engagement and feedback loops to ensure that the voices of adults and children impact on service quality assurance and development.