



Commissioning Skills Training

Service User Engagement in
Commissioning

Co-production

- Produce: to make something or bring into existence
- Co: together, with



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Engaging with children and young people in commissioning

1. Why do it?
2. What are the potential benefits?
3. What are the main drawbacks or challenges (for service users and/or commissioners)?

Why do it?

- The government strongly supports the effective involvement of children, young people and their families in commissioning.

However, not just a duty...

- Effective engagement activities can lead to better service outcomes and improved implementation of change.

Involvement in commissioning

“Service user involvement is not an end in itself, but a means of effecting change... in the outcome of services and the behaviour of workers.”

Davies, Finlay and Bullman (2000) Changing Practice in Health and Social Care

“There is still work to be done in ensuring that participation is... effective about bringing about change and is sustained... Much participation activity is one-off, isolated rather than embedded.”

Kirby et al. (2003) Building a Culture of Participation, London DfES

“To develop meaningful participatory practice organisations have to change, so that they are willing and able to listen to young people and then act on what they say.”

Wright et al. (2006) Participation Practice Guide. SCIE



Commissioning engagement matrix

- A framework to help us design appropriate arrangements.
- Activities and tools vary at different stages of the commissioning cycle.
- Four types of engagement:
 - Communication: providing information
 - Consultation: ideas, suggestions and feedback
 - Negotiation: securing agreement
 - Participation: working together

Exercise

- Give examples of specific activities, methods of involvement you have used in your organisation.
- What approach or approaches to involving CYP or families might you introduce or improve within your organisation, and why?
- Describe how this approach will fit within your overall commissioning framework.

When designing activities

- Clarity about the objectives of any engagement activity.
- Clarity of process. Service users should know:
 - how their views will be used
 - when decisions will be made
 - how much influence they will have
- Honesty about limitations.
- Results recorded and made public... and acted upon.

Conclusions

- Be prepared to be challenged
- Commissioners' task is to manage an effective balance of activities. The form of engagement should follow its function
- Design the activities to meet your aims.
- Draw in people with the right skills to help you deliver - consider external facilitation.
- Involving others means sharing power.

Involvement means giving up power

“Increasing children and young people’s participation within organisations is a political process about shifting power relationships.”

Kirby et al. (2003) Building a Culture of Participation. London. DfES

“Integral to this agreement between staff and young people about where the boundaries (of involvement) should be: which decisions and actions are actually open to change.”

Wright et al. (2006) Participation Practice Guide. SCIE