

Evaluation & Reflection Techniques

It is important to review and reflect on the activities we do with children and young people - although many of our activities are fun, we are looking for other benefits/outcomes from our activities/interactions with groups.

As part of the NCS programme we are looking for the following outcomes:

- Effective collaboration and team working across diverse groups of young people
- Increased understanding of self and others
- Commitment to social action and equality
- Increased responsibility and independence
- Improved communication skills and the ability to influence others
- Ability to think critically and solve problems

Questions to ask could include:

1. How well do you think you communicated your views?
2. How well do you feel you contributed to the team?
3. How well do you think team members worked together?
4. Do you feel your understanding of others has increased?
5. How well do you think the team listened to each other's views and opinions?
6. How well do you think the team worked together to find a solution?

The Cabinet Office would also like us to support young people to reflect on the following questions - What – So what – So now what?

- 'What' ask people to recount what happened in their experience. For example: How did your team do? Where did you go wrong? Who came up with the ideas? Who took the lead?
- 'So What' ask people to identify the learning. For example: Is that important? Did you know you could do that? Can you see why that worked? How would you do things differently?
- 'So Now What' ask people to make a commitment to change. For example: What will you do differently in future? Can you make a promise to the group? What support are you going to get?

The evaluation activities below have been designed to capture feedback after different activities during all phases of the NCS programme.

List of activities:

- Timelines
- Bananas
- Talk like a pirate
- Aeroplanes
- Washing line
- Slum dunk
- Target evaluation
- Chuff charts
- Hand evaluation
- Post-it notes
- A simply go round
- Graffiti wall
- Warm backs
- Question hat
- Prisoner, participant, passenger, pilot & protestor
- Question time
- Playing card roulette
- Vox Pop
- Photo story
- Facebook Wall

Timelines

Ask participants to draw a timeline in the middle of a piece of paper, listing the key points of the day/activity e.g. workshop titles, events....

Then ask participants to draw a line reflecting what they thought of the activity – above the line for positive, below the line for negative. It should be wavy, as they may have enjoyed some things more than others.

Participants should be encouraged to add additional feedback and key points.

Bananas

Give participants a banana (real or paper) and ask them to show them curve up or down to represent happy or sad faces. Participants can then write on the skin in biro any additional comments they might have. If you use real bananas participants can still eat them at the end...

Talk like a Pirate

Standing in a circle ask participants to share something that made me go:

- ooh (as in I really liked that)
- aaargh (I didn't like it)
- ooohaahaargh (that's new and interesting - you can use aha)

Aeroplanes

Ask participants to write comments on paper to key questions e.g.

- What have you learnt?
- What could have been better?

Then ask participants to fold the paper in to paper aeroplanes and throw into a bucket or similar.

Washing lines

Put up a piece of string (tied to trees or on the floor). Identify one end of the line as 0/10 and the other 10/10 (the middle is obviously 5/10).

Ask participants to move along the line in response to scoring activities. Either note their response or take a photo.

You can ask other questions, such as:

- “Did you work as a team during the activity?”
- “Did people listen to your ideas?”

Slam dunk

Ask participants to write comments on paper to key questions e.g.

- What have you learnt?
- What could have been better?

Then ask participants to make their paper into a ball and slam dunk it into a bucket or similar.

Target evaluation

Draw a dart board on to flipchart paper. Divide into sections.

Ask participants to score activities, the best being closest to the bullseye, the worst being furthest away.

These don't need to be task focused, but can include reflection on the outcome of an activity e.g. we worked well together.

Chuff charts

This can be done in a number of ways, and simply involves participants drawing happy, sad, angry, surprised faces.

The best way to do it is give participants a paper plate (a piece of paper works just as well) and some pens. Ask them to draw a face on the plate and on the reverse write what the emotion the face is displaying and what made them feel that way.

Hand evaluation

Give participants a piece of paper and access to pens.

Ask participants to draw around their hand, and record the following on the fingers of their hand:

- Thumb – something good, something they enjoyed
- Index finger – something they would like to point out (could be good or bad)
- Middle finger – something bad, something they did not enjoy
- Ring finger – something they will treasure from the activity/event
- Little finger – something little they want to add (could be good or bad)
- Palm – A prediction for the future - What they are going to do next?

Post-it notes

Each participant gets 3 post-it notes. They write something:

- They've learnt
- They would like to learn more about
- They already knew that was discussed well

They put them on a wall in three columns. You then ask for people to read out ones they agree with or ones they wrote themselves and explain why they've read that one out.

A simple go round

Just go round in a circle and people comment on the session.

It is important to stress that they should say something positive as well as something critical.

Can end up in long non-evaluation related discussions quite easily, so maybe useful to combine this with a "car park" where issues raised can be put to be discussed later. (Car park can just be a piece of paper on the wall that can be written on.)

Graffiti wall

Put up some paper on a wall.

Ask participants to write their thoughts on the wall. It is often helpful to start by writing some key questions to get the group going e.g.

- What did you enjoy?
- What do you want to do next?

Warm backs

Stick a piece of paper to the back of each participant.

Ask everyone to wander round the room, in silence, and stop to write positive comments on each other's backs. For example:

- Tell someone you had a good chat with them
- Tell someone a skill you noticed them using
- Tell someone they cheered you up or helped you with something difficult
- Describe what someone brought to the group with their attitude or actions

You could ask people to reflect on something more specific to the project / activity you've just done, for example how has each person changed as a result of working together on the project.

Everyone should try to comment on as many people's backs as possible. Keep it anonymous if you can. Stop when everyone has a few nice comments on their back, and invite everyone to take off their piece of paper and have a read.

Question hat

Give each team member a small piece of paper and a pen.

Ask participants to write down a question they have. The question could be related to what they have learned today, or something that came up, an idea they have for reflection or otherwise. The team leader may choose one theme specifically, or can leave it open to individuals to pose any questions that they feel are relevant.

After a few minutes, the team leader collects all the questions in the hat/box/bucket or whatever they have to hand.

The facilitator then gives the hat to one person, who will pick a question randomly.

The person who picked the question will try and provide an answer to the question. The facilitator may wish to open up a discussion.

The hat gets passed round the circle until everyone has picked and answered a question.

Participant, Passenger, Protestor, Prisoner, Pilot

Team leaders can discuss with the group that a team is typically (and very generally speaking) comprised of 5 different roles:

- Participant: someone who gets involved and participates
- Passenger: someone who is happy just along for the ride
- Protestor: someone who tries to go a different way
- Prisoner: someone who feels trapped and wants to escape
- Pilot: someone who guides and leads

Place 5 signs (Participant, Passenger, Protestor, Prisoner, Pilot) in different corners of the space

Describe the day, asking participants to place themselves in one of the corners depending on the role they played in the team during that activity.

Each time they are in their respective corners discuss what them playing that role at that time meant for the team dynamic;

- Was this helpful and beneficial?
- Did it detract from team spirit? Why or why not?
- What does it mean to be a passenger, versus a prisoner, when the team is about to embark on a particularly difficult challenge, for example?

Question time

Instruct the group to sit in a circle with their chairs, with one person in the middle. The facilitator can volunteer to sit in the middle for the first round, or one of the team members can volunteer. The aim of the speaker in the middle is to be able to sit down.

The speaker in the middle makes a statement that he or she believes team members may be able to relate to, such as “anyone who likes Pepsi, move”

The last person to find a chair sits in the middle.

For the first round the questions can be anything, but after a few tell the team to ask questions about the day, e.g. “anyone who was scared rock climbing today”, “anyone who liked my cooking today”.

Playing card roulette

In advance, write a number of sentences on card (minimum 15 cards).

Standing or sitting in a circle, ask participants to draw out a card (including the facilitator or group leader). In whatever order you choose, everyone should complete the sentences on their card.

Example sentences:

- Something I feel I contributed to the group...
- My thoughts are...
- I feel frustrated when...
- The hardest thing for me was...
- The easiest thing for me was...
- What surprised me was...
- Something I knew would happen was...
- Nobody listened when...
- I'm really pleased I...
- I wish I had...
- I felt like going home when...
- If I had a camera...
- If I could do it again I would...
- I wish I had been asked...
- I was annoyed when...
- My motivation when down when...
- I was helped by...
- I helped...
- I appreciated...
- I'd like to complain about...
- I'd like to tell the group...

Vox Pop

Create a set of evaluation questions for the young people to ask each other. Using simple video equipment such as a Flipcam or mobile phone, ask the young people to record the interviews.

If the young people are uncomfortable with being filmed then you can film away from their face and film hands or feet instead. It's very important to make sure the audio is recorded well. Also highlight that the film will only be used for evaluation and no other purpose.

Photo story

This can be done in two ways:

1. Ask the young people to take pictures to answer evaluation questions and write up notes to support each picture including why this answers the question. Ideally the pictures can be printed onsite and notes can be added to the photos using post its. If this isn't possible then ask the young people to create a list of the photos, which questions they answer and any notes.
2. Photographs can be taken over the event and printed out for the evaluation session, and then the young people will be asked to add comments on them to answer evaluation questions.

Facebook Wall

Create a set of "posts" that make evaluation points for the session or event with spaces for dislikes and likes around the post. Then get the young people to like or dislike the post. This can be added to by allowing people to make comments below using post-its.