

# Talking about responses

## *Thinkers and Listeners*

# Discussing responses



- Young people give their questionnaire responses, **flagging the things that are important to them.**
- Viewpoint responses offer a unique opportunity for social workers to open a conversation with a young person about the things they are invested in discussing
- They are a tool for creating genuine connection and communication

*View*POINT

In any conversation about a young person's responses following the completion of a **Viewpoint self-assessment** there is:

- a **thinker** 'the person expressing the view' and
- a **listener** 'the person facilitating discussion'.

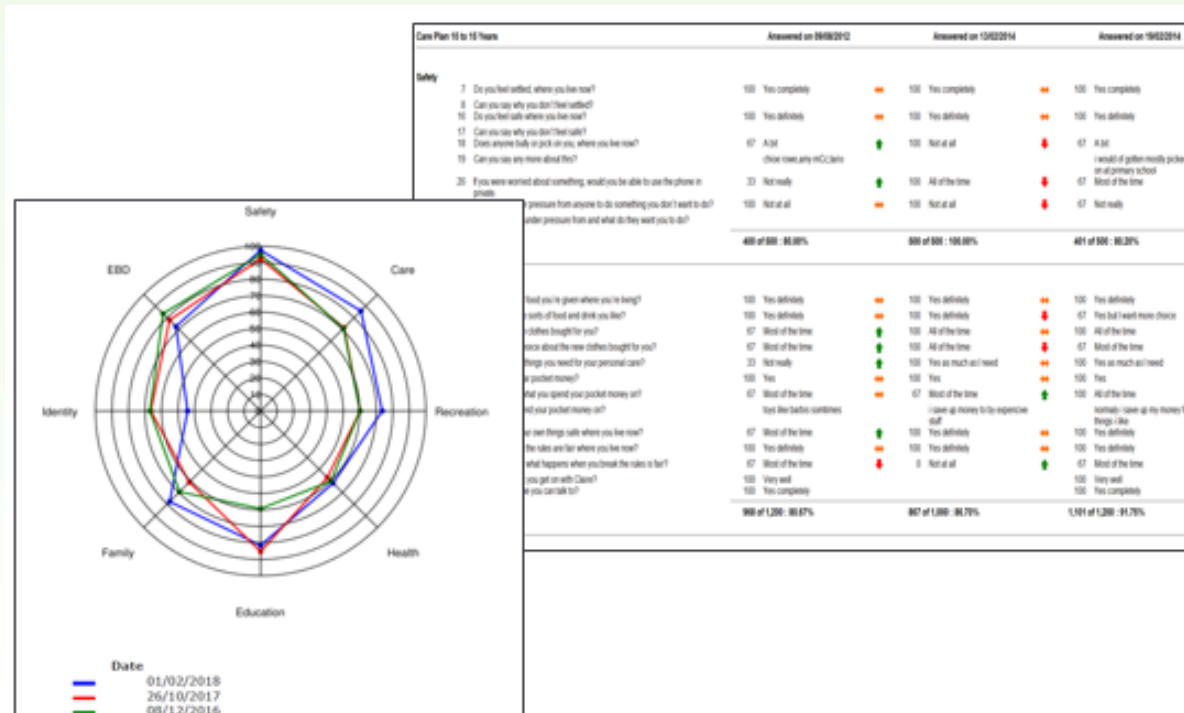
Listening allows people of all abilities to take more control over their lives and identify changes that can improve their wellbeing

# Listening



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# Signalling concerns



The young person's responses will signal what they are concerned about, what's going well and what not so well and what needs to be discussed with them in more depth

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Viewpoint reports support thinking and expression by the **young person (the thinker)** by providing them with the opportunity to:

- think and reflect on their responses
- consider a holistic view about 'what's going well and what's not going well'

# Thinker



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Active listening encourages young people (**thinkers**) to:

- explore their responses in more detail
- develop their understanding of what's going well and what's not going well
- consider desired changes and outcomes
- Identify priorities

## Conversations with young people – **active listening**



- **Active listening is about**
  - **patience** - pauses and short periods of silence.
  - **giving the other person time to explore their thoughts and feelings**
  - **demonstrating concern.**
  - **paraphrasing to show understanding.**
  - **positive reinforcement**
  - **brief verbal affirmations like 'I see' 'Okay' 'Sure'**



By addressing the detail in the responses, genuine concern and respect for the young person's issues is shown.

- In conversations maintain an attitude of **curiosity**. Why was one response chosen in preference to another.
- Be **puzzled** so that young people are constantly having to explain things to you.
- The more young people are explaining,
- the more they are sorting through their thoughts.
- And, **considering desired changes and outcomes**

## Concern and respect



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# The discussion



- This is an important opportunity for young people to learn about setting and reaching their own goals - young people are more likely to feel connected and committed to plans and to achieve the goals and outcomes if they have developed them themselves
- Take the role of a coach, helping them to decide what points they want to raise at the care plan meeting, and what priority they would give each one
- Help them to consider how to present these at the meeting - maybe using notes, a list, a drawing or video, or another sort of presentation

*View*POINT

**There are no short-cuts to genuinely engaging young people in the development of their personal plan**

- **They deserve to have the space, time and attention needed to help them shape and influence their own lives**  
**So plan ahead.....**

**It takes time!**



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**The Viewpoint process provided a space where it was acceptable to encourage discussion about positive and not so positive aspects of life for the children.**

**The process seemed to remove any awkwardness about getting into the space where discussions went down these paths. It is as if the children had permission to talk in detail about themselves. And they did. Information came out that was 'new information'.**

**The legitimacy to the discussion came from both the interviewer and child being involved in a collaborative process, centred around the responses to the questions which made it easier for the child to focus on the sensitive topics with less awkwardness or defensiveness.'**

**Senior Consultant Psychologist**



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