

My Rights, My Say | Breaking Barriers: Gathering the Views of Children with Complex Additional Support Needs (ASN)

The Children's Views Service





In today's session:

- > Who we are: The Children's Views Service
- > Activity: Temperature check
- > What do we mean by voice?
- > Activity: Walk in my shoes
- > Reflections



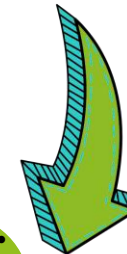
Today's presenters:



Arran Purdie, Children's Views Senior Officer |
My Rights, My Say



Claire Slocombe, Children's Views Project Officer |
My Rights, My Say



What is MRMS?

Partners in Advocacy:

Provides independent advocacy for ASN learners regarding their education rights. Advocacy is always led and instructed by the child

Children in Scotland:

1: Supports children to share their views in formal, adult-led processes like disputes and ASN tribunals.

2: Provides support to education authorities and practitioners on how to involve ASN learners in education and support planning

**My
Rights,
My Say**

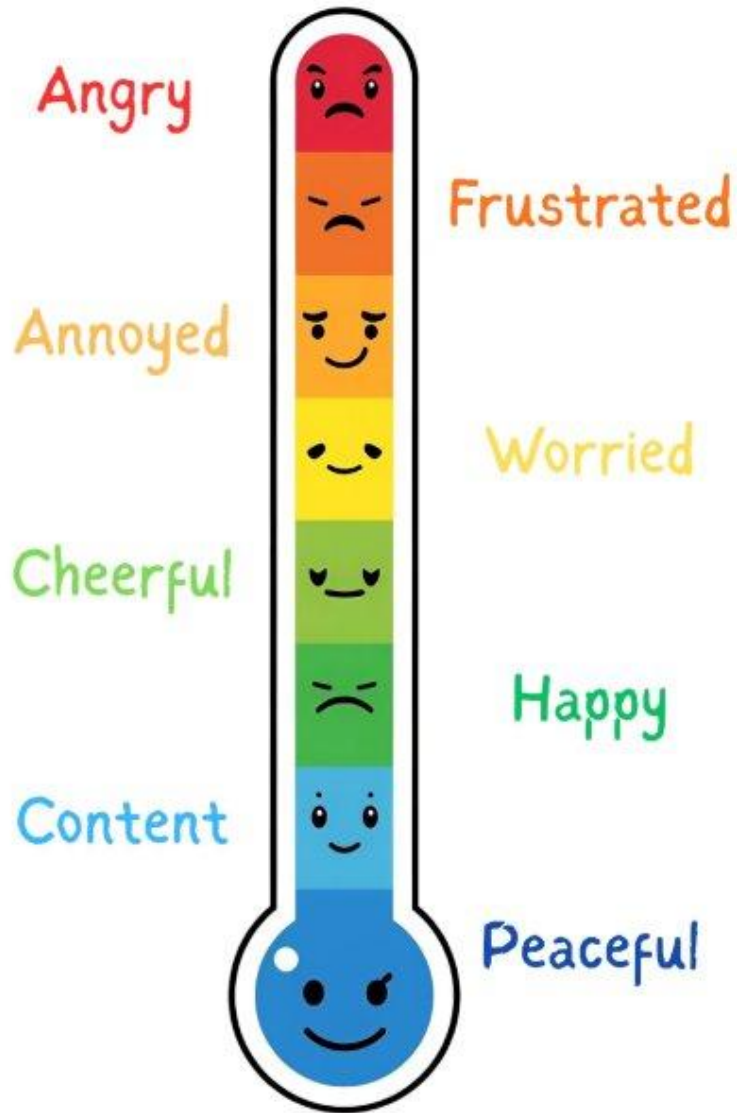
Enquire:

Provides advice around additional support for learning for parents and carers

Cairn Legal:

Provides legal advice and representation for children who wish to make a reference to the ASN tribunal





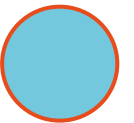
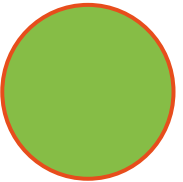
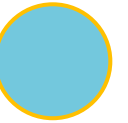
What's your energy level? High-medium-low

Let's bounce- this activates your lymphatic system and provides you with an energy boost to feel present and more regulated

Choose how you move. Relax your body:

- Active-Bounce gently up and down
- Gentle-keep your toes on the floor and lift your heels up and down
- Seated- move your shoulders up and down

Did you notice how the person next to you decided to move, what do you think their energy level is like today? Take a minute to check.



Before we begin...a brief ethics check

Is the environment comfortable and familiar for the child?
Are you the best person to seek their views?
How is the child presenting emotionally?
Has the child given their consent to take part?

Space

Voice

Were known and familiar communication strategies/ aids used to facilitate?
What were the verbal and non-verbal signals?
What do you think the signals mean?

Influence

Audience

Who is interpreting the child's view?
Who should be informed about the child's voice to influence change?
Does the child know who their views are being communicated to?

What is the outcome of collecting the voice?
Has the child been informed about any action?
Was the feedback given consistent with the child's Communication style?

Let's do some mental time travel, cast yourself back to being a teenager...

1. Were you ever been asked for your views on something that affected you, only for it to feel like a box-ticking exercise?
2. Have you ever had a clear opinion about something that affected you but never been asked?
3. Have you ever been asked for your views and seen them lead to real change?
4. How did those experiences make you feel?

Voice – Noticing and capturing the child's voice



- Everyone has a 'voice' - exploring the concept of 'voice' for children with complex needs
- How do we offer more opportunity for participation and engagement
- What are the barriers? Why is their voice often not sought or acted upon?



It should not be a consideration IF the child should be given the opportunity to share their views....

But HOW this can be facilitated in a way that is meaningful for the child.

UNCRC – What this means for children

“...States parties should presume that a child has the capacity to form her or his own views and recognize that she or he has the right to express them; it is not up to the child to first prove her or his capacity”. (Gen. Com 12, UNCRC P: 9)

“...full implementation of article 12 requires recognition of, and respect for, non-verbal forms of communication including play, body language, facial expressions, and drawing and painting, through which very young children demonstrate understanding, choices and preferences...” (Gen Com 12, UNCRC P: 9)

Listening beyond words

Non-speaking ≠ “no views”

When we say ‘VOICE’ we mean communication, in whichever form works best for the child or young person.

- Views can and should be sought from children who have no or limited vocabulary
- All forms of communication valued

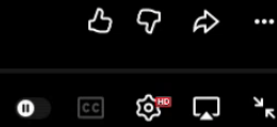


ABOUT US Movie



Claire Slocombe

Claire Slocombe 0:00 / 1:22



Stop, Look and Listen



Notice my individual and unique signals. This is the first step to understanding my views.



Observe my non-verbal signals. Pay attention to subtle communication. Look for signs of engagement



Listen with your whole body; use all of your senses

"Walk in my shoes" - Warm up activity

"Adults are the awkward ones – they only speak with their words – I speak with my whole body, my hands and my eyes – that is why I am way more impressive" (Young Person)

Person A Facilitator: You can use any resources provided.

Person B Responder: When interviewed, you cannot speak or write (you can draw or use your hands).

Step 1: **Person A** Your job is to find out what has happened in **Person B's** day from waking up to now. Take 2 minutes to think of some questions you will ask.

Person B: Write some notes on key moments of your day so far. Keep these a secret from **Person A**.

Step 2: **Person A** interview **Person B**.

Step 3: **Person A** check your answers against the key moments written down by **Person B**.



Reflect: How accurate were your results?

Person A: How did it feel having to ask the 'right' questions? How confident were you that you had?

Person B: How was it not speaking or writing? What emotions were attached to having to be asked the correct question to share your story?

Communication when children have communication needs is a partnership – and mutual respect is key!



Key takeaways:

- Learn about who the young person is as an individual; STOP, LOOK, LISTEN
- Avoid condescending language or tone
- Be mindful of your own biases; don't let preconceptions limit what you ask
- The limits we put on others based on *our expectations* of them can have life-long impacts
- Be brave- the more often you engage in this way the easier it gets

“I should not be left out of conversations or presumed incompetent, simply because I don't rely on spoken language-Young person



“Just because I cannot speak, does not mean I don't hear.” -Young person

Training and development

Learn more about the wide variety of learning opportunities offered by Children in Scotland, from free e-learning resources to bespoke organisation-wide training



Become a member

Explore the benefits of joining the largest national children's sector membership organisation in Scotland



Thanks for listening

David Byrne - "Everybody Laughs" (Official Music Video)

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Claire Slocombe

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Claire Slocombe