

# Adults Guide Sheet for Children's Voices Activity

## Why do this activity?

- The purpose of this activity is to get children's voices about any organisation, club, school or ECE centre that they spend time at and take those ideas to the management and see if there are any things that need to change or be updated on the basis of the children's feedback.
- We know that one of the crucial elements of a child safe organisation is listening to and valuing the opinions of children and young people.
- We also know that we need to ask for their opinions about all aspects of our organisations, not just about their safety. When we do this, it sends a message to the children and young people that spend time in our organisation that we want to know what they think about this place and we make changes necessary based on that feedback. It's like getting consumer feedback!
- The double benefit of this activity is that by sending the above message, children who are feeling unsafe or who are worried about something are effectively being told; you can talk to us and we will listen and do what we can to address any worries or concerns you have. This facilitates disclosures of abuse, neglect and concerning behaviour as children feel they will be heard.

## Who can do the activity?

The activity is for children to complete, guided by any of the following:

Parents

Teachers

ECE teachers and staff

After School Programmes and School Holiday Programmes staff

Sports Clubs Volunteers

Recreation Clubs for Children staff or volunteers

Youth workers

Any person involved in providing a service for children and young people

## How to facilitate the activity:

- Staff or volunteers, you are asking children to tell you about the place you work for or volunteer at.
- Parents you can ask child/ young person to do this activity about anywhere your child attends.
- Get children and young people to either sit in small groups and brainstorm ideas and use questions as a guide or complete the worksheets on their own.
- Children to put their names and the name of the place they are doing the activity about on any worksheets they complete.
- Encourage child or young person to draw or write words, or a combination of both to answer the what do you like and what don't you like questions.
- Explain to children and young people these will be used as feedback to management of what things the organisation can do to improve how they work. Ensuring children and young people understand not all the things they suggest will happen!
- Explain to children to be honest and tell us all the good and not so good things, reminding them if they tell you something about their safety, you do have to share that with someone who can help.
- If a child or young person discloses anything that suggests abuse or neglect or concerning behaviour of a staff or volunteer, that needs to be treated as a disclosure and must be followed up on. This is the reason for children to put their names on these sheets. Please follow your child protection policy and procedures for how to follow up, it will most likely be to pass this onto a Child Protection Lead/ Designated Person or to Supervisor/Management for the organisation, making clear this is a disclosure. Most important, pass it on!
- All completed activity sheets to be passed onto management in your organisation so they can take into account children's voices in future plans and reviews of the organisation.
- Have a plan to let children know if any of their ideas for change were put into effect.
- Take photos of your groups doing the activity or any positive examples of the children's ideas or work (in line with your own policies on images, not showing their name and with their parents permission). Post to our Facebook page or your own Facebook page tagging Safeguarding Children New Zealand and using the **#childprotectionweeknz #givechildrenavoic #childsafeforganisations #togetherletsmakeadifference** hashtags.

**Finally ... have fun!!!**

Below is a great example from Hampden Street School in Nelson showing how to do a similar activity with a group of 5 year olds.

