

Engaging with children and young people

10 top tips



EMAHSN top tips when engaging with children and young people

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Top tips

1 Environment

Consider your environment. Always use a space which meets the needs of your audience. Consider the size of rooms and resources available; including breakout rooms, physical accessibility, food and refreshments. Also choose meeting rooms which are centrally located or close to good bus routes.

2 Learning styles

Consider using a range of different learning styles. For example people may have an 'Activist' approach to their learning and will need to actively take part. This can help encourage and facilitate creative and stronger outcomes, particularly when developing co-produced projects.

3 Ownership

Ensure your audience is able to have full ownership. Consider how you engage and use local champions to drive work forward.

4 Access

Make sure meetings are accessible and consider your language and the terminology you use to ensure everyone is able to fully take part. This may include workshop times and where workshops take place as many children and young people will need to meet either after school or evenings and weekends.

5 Creative

Be creative and use a full range of tools and resources to ensure you engage with your audience. Examples can include; Graphic Recording, photos and films, ground rules, meeting cards, icebreakers, group work, PATHWAYS and action logs. PATHWAYS are a visual tool which can be used to project plan better.

6 Listen to your audience

Use active listening skills to ensure you get the correct feedback and views from your groups. You can also use feedback forms or 'dot voting' to gather the facts.

7 Be organised

Where possible plan your work in advance to ensure its correct focus. This is particularly key if you are organising transport.

Always think about your evidence, what people need and outcomes which need to be met.

8 Clothing

Where possible ensure you make your audience feel comfortable, so match your clothing with your groups however be clean, smart and presentable.

9 Common ground

Build relationships from "common interests" and use this to create conversations and develop your group.

10 Evaluate your journey

Ensure all members of your group are able to comment on their experiences as a way to gather views and ideas. Adding a debrief to the end of a session also helps you to consider Health and Safety, Safeguarding as well as "what worked" and "what didn't work".