

ANNUAL REPORT

2023-24



Somerset
Council



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What is CYP SA?

CYP SA is a forum for young people (0-25 years old) with special educational needs and/or disabilities in the South West region, helping young people have their voices heard.



Letter from the NHS commissioner

CYPSA (children and young person self-advocacy) group was set up nearly a year ago as it was clear within health and the world of SEND that the voices of children and young people are not being heard. At the beginning of this piece of work Myself as SEND manager reached out to local self-advocacy groups for children and young people with SEND to find out what they would like to see from this sort of group. The voices of the children and young people I met with were used to shape the final specification for the group.



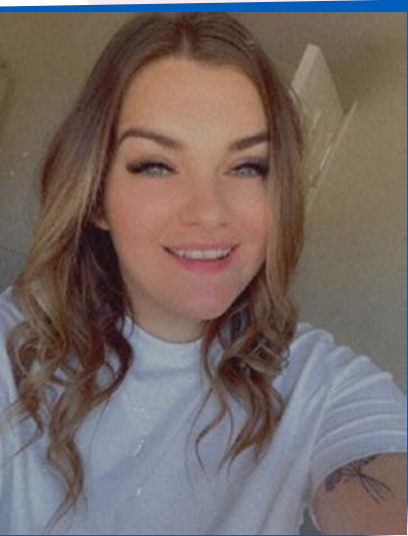
Within the first year of having the project established a wide range of outcomes have been achieved which contribute to raising the profile of children and young people's voices with SEND in health. This includes setting up of the group which is growing month by month, the topics and discussions the group have covered and the ideas they have come up with to make services more CYP focused. Alongside this health professionals have been provided with many opportunities to share their concerns and worries with listening to the voices of children and young peoples at a system level which we were able to support them with on an individual and regional basis.

The CYPSA team have gained huge recognition at a regional and national level for the work they are doing to raise the profile of CYP voice in health. As a result of the work, they are doing the team have received requests to attend and present at events, to sit on boards and as part of projects to represent the voice of CYP and work in coproduction with system leaders across multiple agencies.

*Gemma Blackmore
NHS SEND Manager*



Who works on the CYP SA project?



Sian Smiley

SEND Engagement & Participation Officer | Project manager for CYP SA

Sian supports the Unstoppables Forum in Somerset and works alongside the SEND Young Person's Champion to advocate, advise and influence the Special Educational Needs & Disabilities sector. She has nearly 8 years' worth of experience working with children and young people, including working in schools - mainstream and specialist support.

Sian wants to change the world one step at a time but wishes to start at getting pineapple permanently removed from pizza!

Sian enjoys spending her weekends in muddy fields with her family and friends watching Autograss racing, which is a form of motorsport, that she has been going to since she was 2 weeks old. She also likes to spend time with her husband and their dog Mabel exploring beaches around the UK.



Gabriella Sorgente

Young Person's Champion - CYP SA

Gabriella is our Young Person's Champion for children and young person's self-advocacy group (CYP SA). She feels safe sharing her thoughts within the CYP SA group, including such subjects like co-production in local areas. Gabriella is an advocate for SEND in the southwest include.

Gabriella wants to help young people struggling with SEND in health, throughout the southwest. This is so young people don't feel the strain of waiting lists and diagnoses. Gabriella is the voice for young people with SEND, she provides a safe place and someone to trust. Gabriella's goal is to see young people with SEND enjoy their life, in and out of health. Gabriella has Dyslexia and slow learning processes.

In her spare time, she loves photography which she has a degree in. Gabriella is a keen artist and dreams of bringing her creativity into working with children with SEND in the future. If you dream big and push through, you will achieve great things.

In January 2024, Gabriella started her new job as the CYP SA Engagement & Participation worker. This has given Gabriella an opportunity to widen the voice of SEND within health.

If you'd like to contact the CYP SA team, please contact CYP SA@somerset.gov.uk

Background to the project

The project was planned based on the following:

- **Parent carer voices are heard better than children and young people's in the health system.**
- **Children and young people's voices are lacking in the health system and this needs to improve.**
- **Engagement with children and young people with SEND was gathered in order to write the project specification.**
- **This highlighted that more co production with children and young people in local areas was needed.**
- **Policy, legislation and guidance supports a need for this project.**



Research took place across the region to see what was happening in terms of advocacy and where there were strengths and weaknesses, which informed the project. NHS England SW SEND Team had £60,000 of non-recurrent money for 2023 and with this they wanted to set up a children and young person self-advocacy group for those with special educational needs and disabilities across the region. The overall outcome of this group would be to support improved health outcomes for children and young people along with parent carers across the Southwest but more specifically to achieve the following outcomes:

1. Develop co-production regionally with children and young people- to develop a regional forum to support co-production within the regional SEND team with the aim of improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND.
2. Develop children and young people's co-production within local systems- the regional forum will support improvements in co-production within the 15 regional SEND systems with the aim of improving health outcomes of children and young people with SEND.
3. Develop children and young people's co-production within national systems- the regional forum to support the voice of children and young people in national representation with the aim of improving the health outcomes of children and young people with SEND.
4. Support local self-advocacy groups within the South West to develop co-production within the SEND systems through grant funding them development monies.



Somerset got the bid

Before we applied to host the southwest regional project, we did a mapping exercise to find out how many SEND youth voice groups there are in the southwest. This would inform what membership recruitment was required if we were successful in gaining the project. When we were awarded the bid, we were able to get going because of the initial research; however, we needed to recruit an Engagement & Participation worker and Young Person's Champion to run the project. A mobilisation group was set up to assist with the implementation of the project which included representatives from the Council, the Young Person's Champion, NHS England commissioner and the project finance / contract advisor from NHS Devon. From the information we gathered about the self-advocacy groups in each area of the 15 that makes up the southwest region (whether it



was a local authority group, or a charity run group), we then began contacting the worker of each group to promote the new forum - 'CYPSA'. Whilst research was happening about where we could recruit from and what already existed for self-advocacy, we were also developing branding and the logo which our Young Person's Champion - Gaby - created with the help of Paul in our team. Once we had the contacts, our logo and promotional flyer we began meeting professionals who work with SEND young people.

Membership recruitment

With our initial contacts, our flyer (see appendices) and excitement we reached out to the professionals we had found during initial research. We sent more than 15 emails, as we found multiple groups to contact regarding young people membership in some areas. For the areas that were interested and had young people in mind, we held introduction meetings with the worker to discuss the forum and the steps needed to engage the young person to take part. This included the Wellness Action plan that each member undertakes - we use this to know what support needs to be put in place should there be a difficult topic and who to contact in an emergency, as all meetings are mainly via Teams.

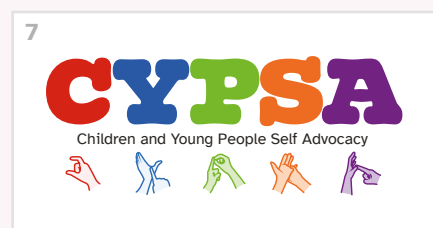
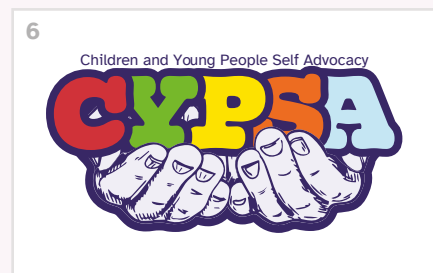
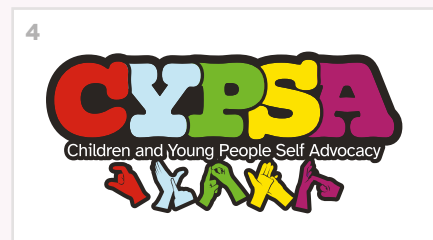
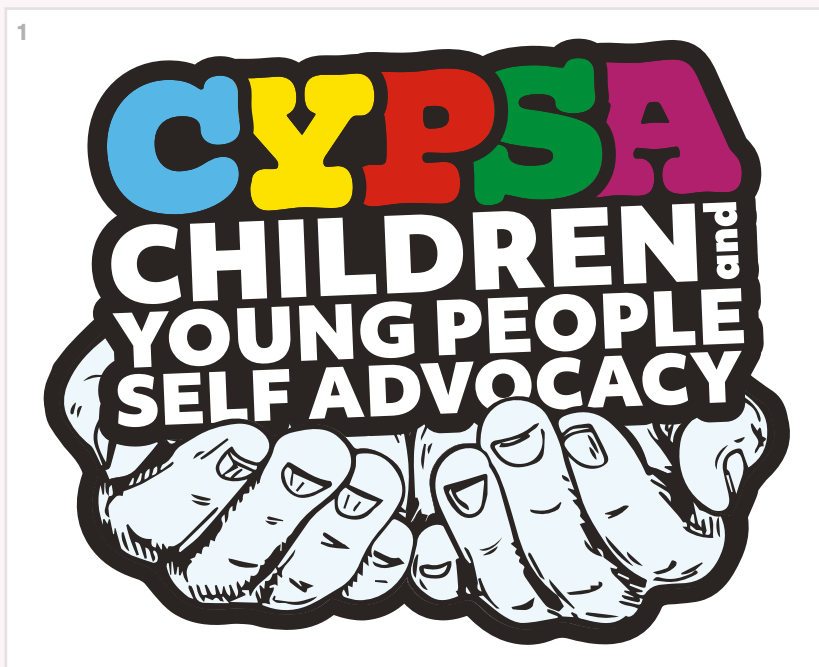


Young People's Champion

Logo

The way in which I started the drawings for the hands was by me and Paul sharing ideas on how the logos should look. We discussed drawing different hand positions because we came to the decision that hands would look the most meaningful with the concept of CYP SA. Before I started drawing the hands, I found inspiration from Google, and I created mood boards from the Google images. This gave me the opportunity to gather ideas and then be able to create drawings from my inspiration from these mood boards. Overall, I drew up four different hand drawings and Paul took these and created draft logo ideas.

Logo designs were taken to the mobilisation group to the NHS leads and they had a vote on which design they wanted for the CYP SA logo out of the options below.



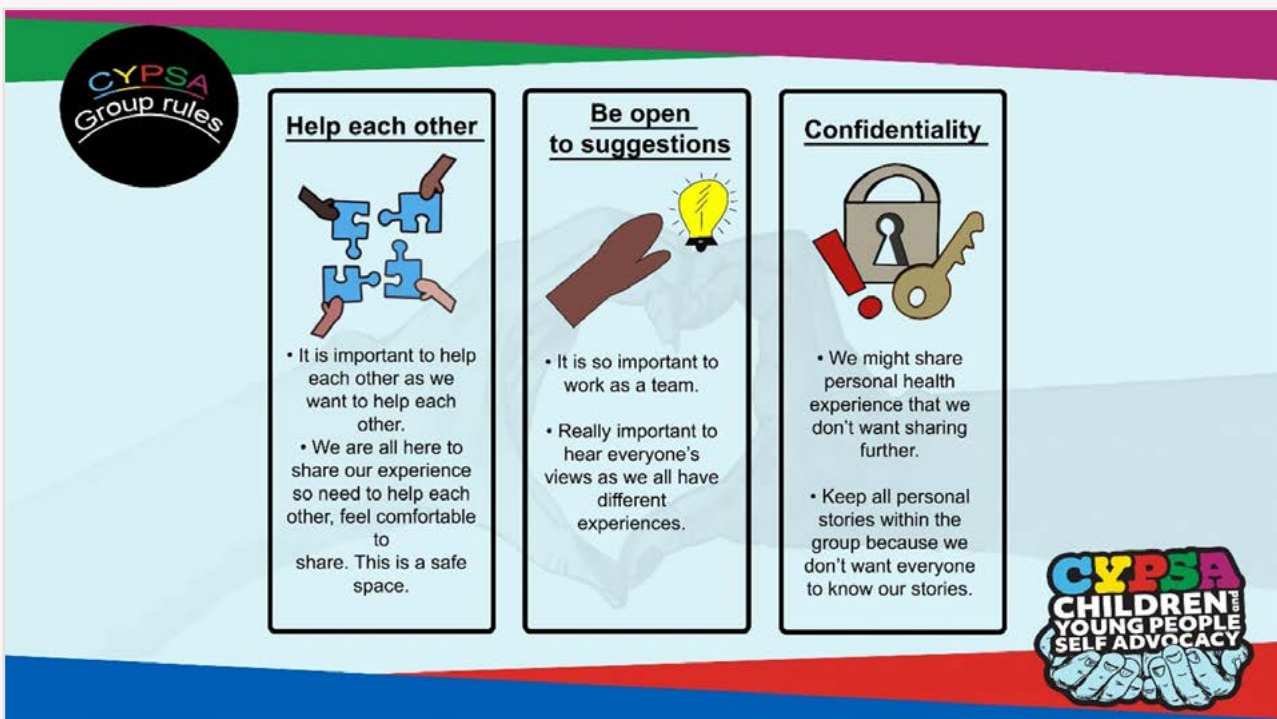
1 The final chosen logo | 2-7 Logo design options

The forum ground rules

The group rules were put together by CYP SA members and the CYP SA YPC. These were rules members felt they could relate to and were important for the work we wanted to achieve.

I started the CYP SA group ground rules by making diagrams to show the rules in a visual way, which can help people who are visionally impaired or struggle to read. Doing the diagrams helped to show the young people how I was thinking about displaying the rules. I then made a rough plan which was presented to the CYP SA members to get their views on it and ideas.

Once I presented my plan to the group, I asked them their views and what the rules meant to them. Once I gathered the groups ideas and thoughts, I then put it into an action plan and got to work creating the poster. I used a poster layout format that we already had for CYP SA; this was so that the ground rules can visually link the CYP SA layout.



1



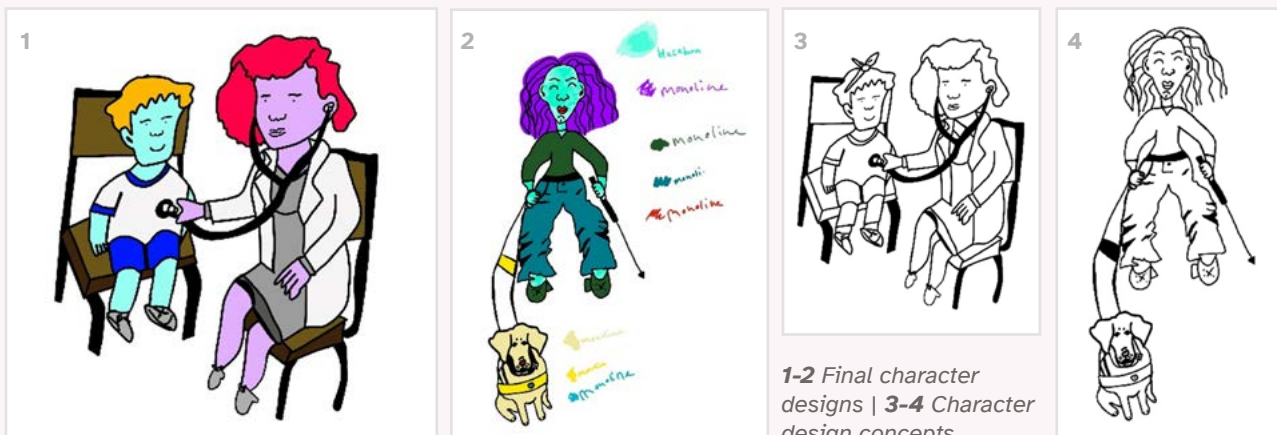
2

1 Final Group Rules | 2 Concept for the Group Rules

Characters

I started the characters by doing simple, drawings (doodles) of people, animals, and facial features. I would do these drawings into a sketch book. These drawings were anything that came to mind. I would then take photos of the drawings and send them to my tablet. I would do this so I could trace my images. I needed a format that was digital, so I used a software/app that is called Procreate.

I then was able to change parts of my drawings, change the colours and sometimes I would change the design of the drawing. I wanted my characters to show equality, I have done this by showing disabilities. I have also made the characters different colours avoiding specific skin tones. I have also done drawings of health professionals; this includes doctors and nurses.



Newsletter

The monthly newsletter is a written interpretation of the topic covered at the CYP SA monthly meeting. The newsletter also has imagery from Mentimeter, which is the interactive presentation platform that the CYP SA group uses to interact and gather the findings on the chosen topics.

The CYP SA meetings have findings that consist of honest comments from the members about their experiences and their thoughts on certain topics. Some of the topics that have been worked on within the group include co-production in your local area and, one of the most recent ones, has been transitions from children's services into adult services.

The newsletters are used as a way of showing the service leads what we have been up to and by sharing our information with the NHS leads we can inform them on what our members have brought to our attention. The newsletter also helps the group to widen the CYP SEND voice within health and education. The newsletters also get sent to those who are keen to follow the work taking place – such as staff across the region. Newsletters examples can be found in the *appendices*.

CYPSA Member Q&A

Why did you join the CYPSA group?

I joined the CYPSA group, as I become involved in my local council's SEND Department and Co-Production, and after delivering joint training with Gemma I heard about the opportunity, and wanted to become involved with Co-Production on a more regional level.

Why do you think it is important that voices are heard?

I think it is important that voices are heard as although it make not make an impact on us it will make an impact on the next person in a similar situation. I also think that in large organisations people become a number, and by sharing our lived experience we are decreasing them.

Do you think the CYPSA group is making a difference?

Yes. A massive difference, it is nice to see the feedback from points we have made, and also I have seen how people are more willing to ask questions that they wouldn't normally get to.

Do you think that you are listened to within the services?

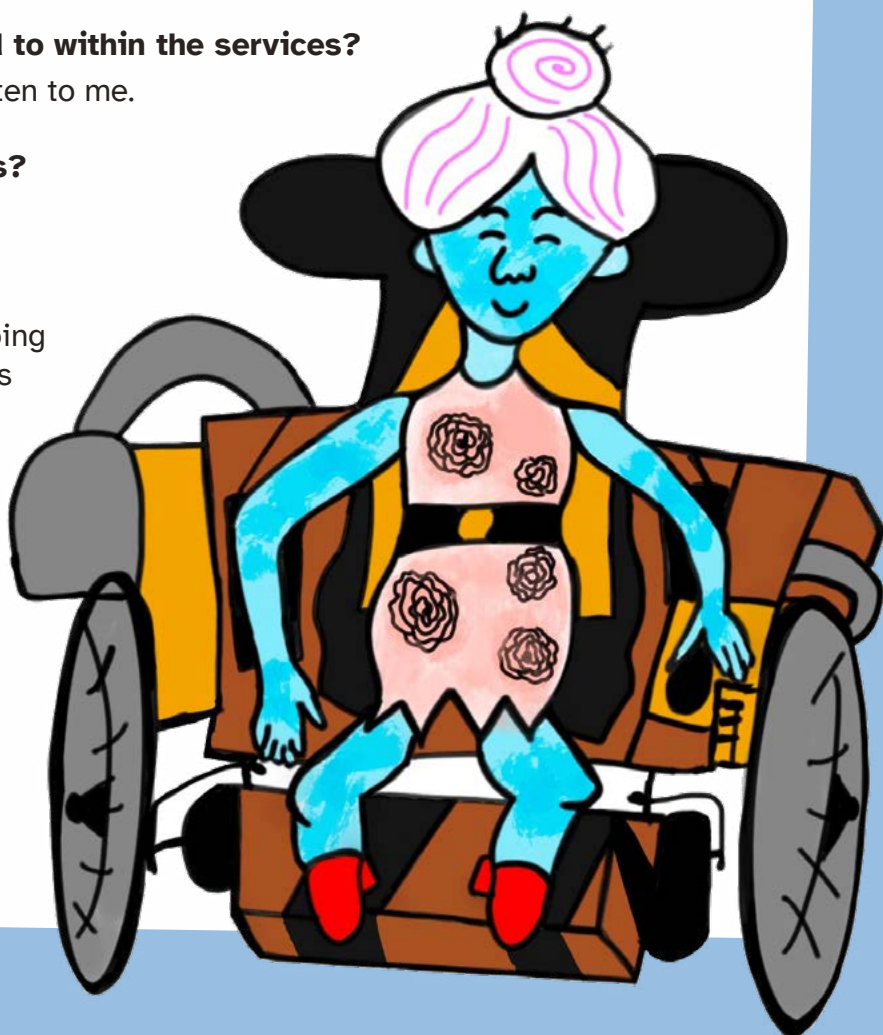
Yes, the majority of professionals listen to me.

Do you enjoy the CYPSA meetings?

Yes! Love the sheep 😊

Any other comments?

I think the work that you both are doing is and will make major impacts for us and the future young people in a similar position.



Baseline questionnaire results

We created a questionnaire to gain evidence on what was in place at the beginning of the project. This went out to all links we found across the 15 areas, we had 16 responses across the 15 areas.

The 15 areas in the southwest region are:

- Somerset
- Cornwall
- Isles of Scilly
- Devon
- Bristol
- Dorset
- North Somerset
- Bath and North East Somerset
- Wiltshire
- South Gloucester
- Gloucestershire
- Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole
- Swindon
- Torbay
- Plymouth

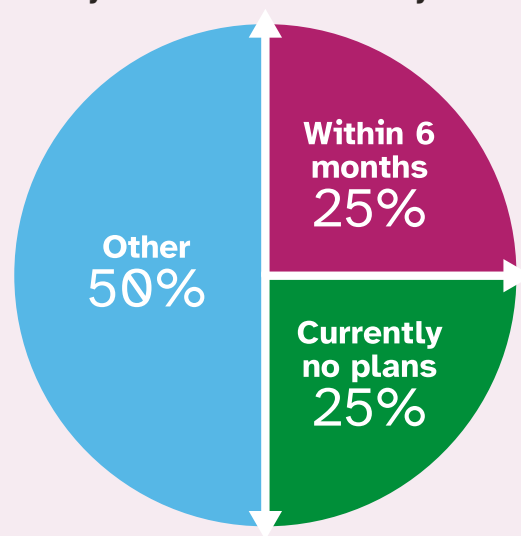
Across the next couple of pages are some of the key responses from the MS forms that went out, all answers will remain anonymous.

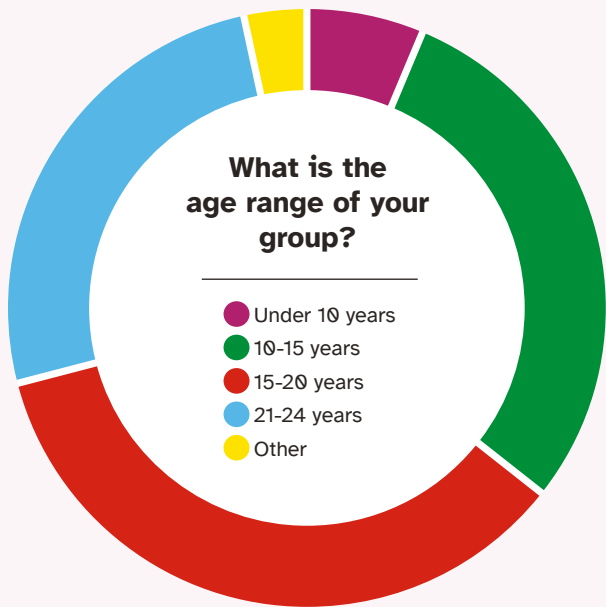
What are your plans for forming a Children and Young People's SEND self-advocacy group in your local area/authority?

- Currently we know we have a gap, and we are looking at the options
- We are in the very beginning stages of our planning for this. We initially wanted to ensure that we are not taking away from the Academy's Student Council or duplicating similar work. We currently receive feedback from young people after every SEN activity and also at youth hub (however this covers all young people, not just those with SEND) this informs our next activities and future planning. Again, this is the very beginning of the process. We would like to have a CYP self-advocacy group in our LA that can report/feedback to our Council members and inform and contribute to our planning at a strategic level.
- We are currently looking at different models to replace our existing model which ceased in Aug 22
- These decisions are required by our local council.

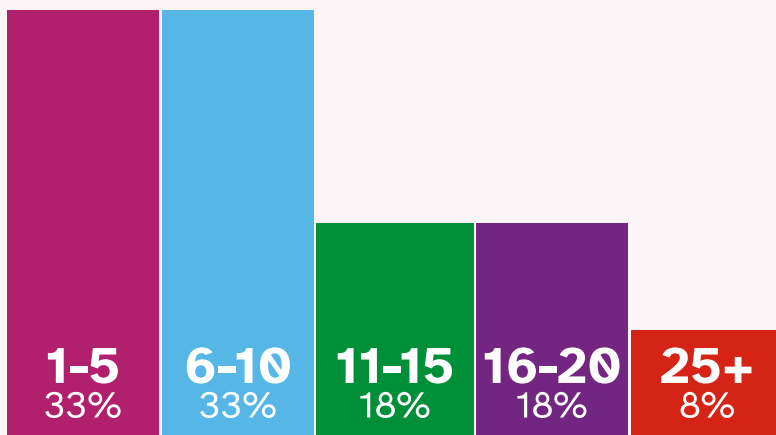
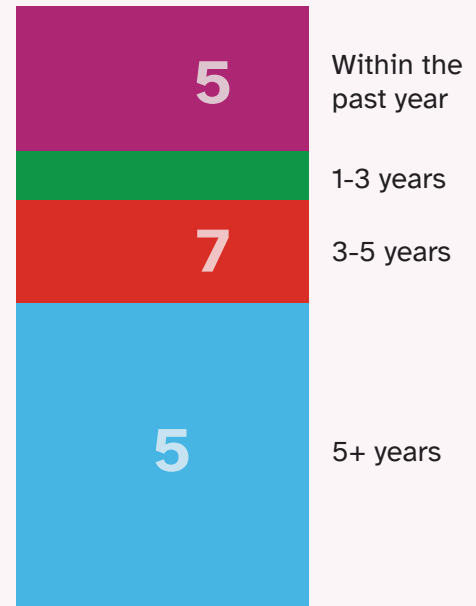


Within what time-scales are your plans for forming a children and young people's SEND self-advocacy group in your local area/authority?

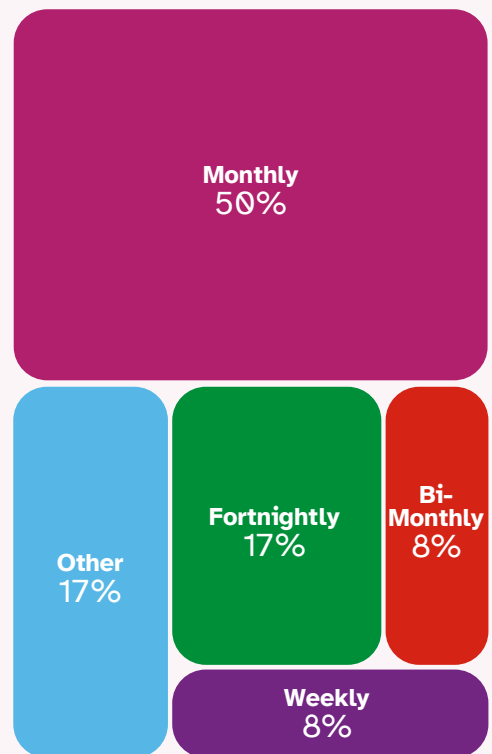
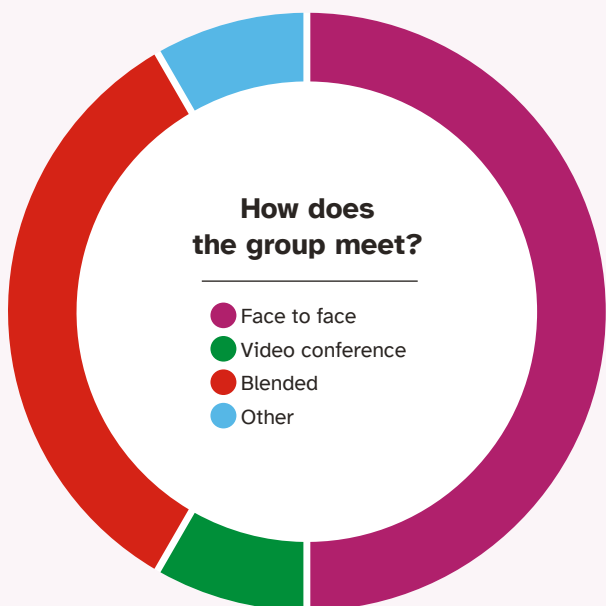




For how long has the group been established?



How many children and young people regularly attend the group?



How often does the group meet?

What's working well for the group?

Getting together for fun, social activities.

We have shaped the content of our Local Offer, making it more young person friendly and accessible.

Championing the voices of other young people with SEND

Engagement work is delivering an impact locally and nationally

Being well known to the Local Authority and being included in strategic meetings

A group of young people coming together and sharing experiences, whilst being listened to the Assistant Directors of North Somerset Council, and our Head of the SEND Department.

What would be even better for the group?

Better feedback from people who come in to consult with the group as a lot of time they consult, and we don't hear what difference their consultations have made.

More members for the groups – younger, older, widening the voice etc

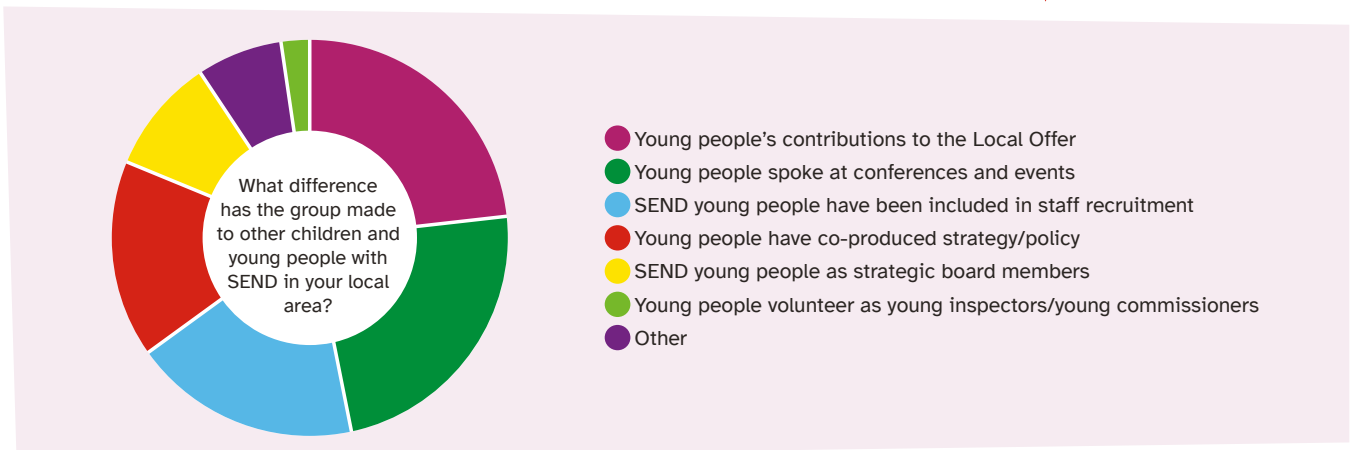
Increased diversity within our SEND youth voice work – we are looking at ways of working with those young people who are not represented in our currently groups; those that are least heard

Funding

More accessible transport, additional funding, a base for our charities work

More engagement from young people

Professionals to attend the meetings more often to speak directly to the young people



Note: full results can be found in the appendices

Feedback from professionals we have worked with *anonymous feedback*

Which of the following best fits your current role when working with CYP SA Forum?

Commissioner

What work have you done with CYP SA Forum?

Worked alongside this fantastic team from the very beginning to make an idea into a reality. I have supported them at many events and behind the scenes with planning presentations, meetings and recruitment of young people to the group.

What do you believe are the strengths of CYP SA so far?

- Ambitious staff
- Effective working practice with young people with SEND
- Great understanding of SEND
- Passionate about getting the voices of children and young people with SEND across the region head
- Hard working
- Effective communicators
- Create healthy challenge
- Proactive

Can you identify one area of development for the forum in year two?

To have a huge drive on recruiting young people from other areas which are under represented and maintaining communication with the group between meetings to ensure they don't lose momentum or passion for the work we are trying to achieve



Feedback from professionals at a regional event

“Really powerful presentation which highlights how important the voice of children and young people is and how it is needed to make the required changes.”

“Really interesting subject and the way it is set up is quite inspirational.”

“It is important for young people to have a voice in all matters that directly affect them. G and J were great.”

“Fabulous to hear from the young people in the self-advocacy group – take away to ensure local ICS systems actively engage in advocacy,”

“Good to hear from the young people. Interesting to see it roll out across the region.”

“It was so helpful to hear from the young people today. They were confident and informative - Thank you.”

“Great presentation from young people reinforcing the importance of self-advocacy and children and young people voice. Challenge accepted to ensure we have the right young people in Dorset engaged and ask DCO in the ICB what work is already underway.”

CYPSA Member Q&A

Why did you join the CYPSA group?

I joined the group because having been involved with several projects in Somerset I wanted to be able to make a difference on a wider regional scale. Also I wanted to be able to help other young people by preventing them from having to go through the same experiences that I have.

Why do you think it is important that voices are heard?

It is important that voices are heard to be able improve services as much as possible. Too often service changes are made by senior leaders without the consultation of service users and this often leads to the changes having a negative effect for service users.

Do you think the CYPSA group is making a difference?

Yes, having been to some of the regional events and hearing the feedback from the people attending these events I do feel that the group is making a difference.

Do you think that you are listened to within the services?

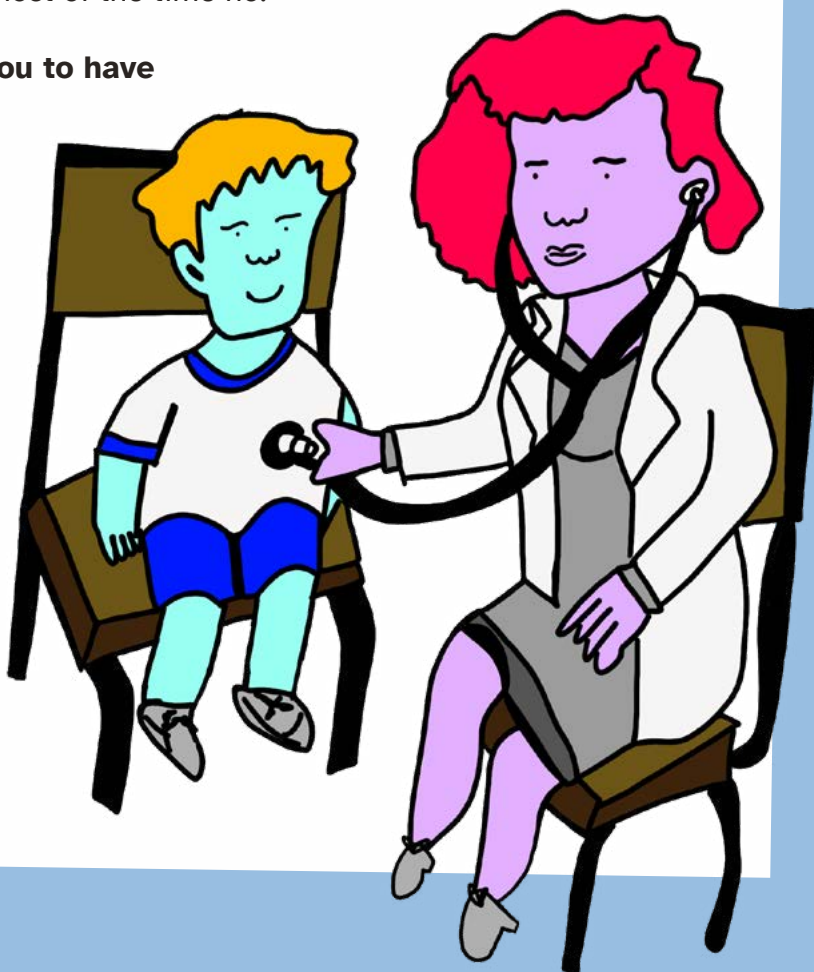
In some very rare cases yes however most of the time no.

If no, does the CYPSA group help you to have a voice?

Yes by being part of the group we are able to directly challenge those at the top and hopefully make positive changes for service users in the process.

Do you enjoy the CYPSA meetings?

Yes

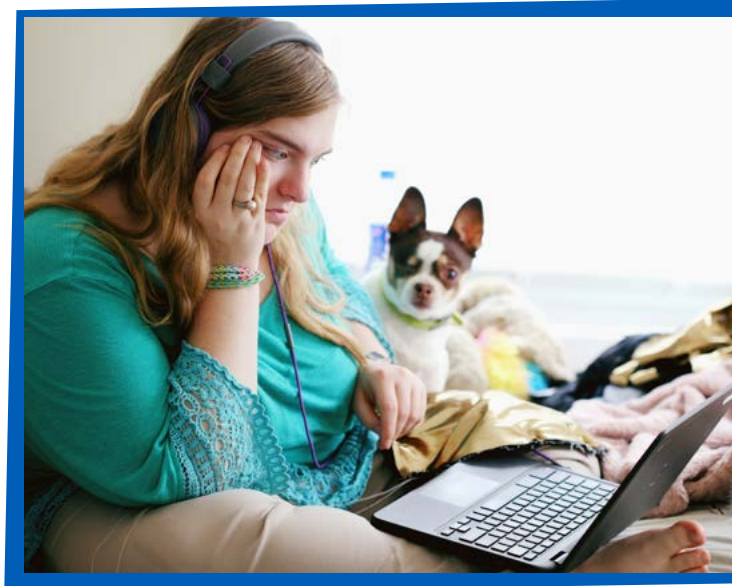


Outcomes/successes of the first year

- We're really beginning to raise profile of the project across the region, we're spreading word on who we are and what we want to achieve. Professionals across the region are hearing about what CYP SA are working on and want to meet the forum or invite us to events to speak at / share our voice.
- 6 members across 5 Southwest areas at the time this report was written.
- All 15 areas have engaged and completed initial questionnaire.
- We have attended various regional events to share the work we are doing and challenging the professionals in the room on topics that are relevant.
- Regular slot on the SW SEND Network to provide local professionals updates on the work we're doing.
- Supported the photography and graphics for the SW SEND network website working with the regional co-ordinator and web designer.
- Report progress of our work and share the voices of CYP at SW Learning Disability and Autism Board Meeting
- Spoke at NHS Conference in December 2023
- Asked to be a part of the Paediatric Regional Hospital Passport work.

Challenges in the first year

- One of the initial challenges we faced was a lack of trust in the project from some professionals across the region. We think this was because the premise of CYP SA was very new. Although areas across the region already had existing youth forums there wasn't anything regionally, and for health outcomes specifically. We overcame this by using a 'show and tell' approach about the project - we wanted to show that it was an important project and that we meant what we planned to do, we were not just trying to tick a box! We continued conversations about CYP SA to raise our profile and this was in a variety of meetings that included us reaching out to professionals or mentioned in health board meetings by our project commissioner. By the work we were doing and the presentations we gave at various events word of mouth quickly began to spread and we were having positive conversations.



- There were concerns raised by participation workers across the region to how we would ensure all voices were being heard if each area sent 2 or 3 young people (as stated in the specification). Because the project was so new this wasn't an immediate issue to us, and we knew that not every area had young people to send to CYP SA. However, we already had a plan in case we did get a large membership and we would find ways to work with the numbers - this might mean splitting up the meetings to ensure no one became overwhelmed but we would ask members first and foremost to find out what works for them, as they are at the centre of all we do. We also use Mentimeter for our work we do in meetings which means each member can vote/comment on topics and we can capture all voices in attendance.
- Membership numbers could be better - we have 6 members across 5 out of the 15 areas in the region. We continually promote CYP SA and the work taking place to ensure that word of mouth is getting out about the work we do. The missing areas are becoming more interested at the end of year 1, so the beginning of year 2 conversations are taking place to get membership from those areas.
- Once our initial MS Forms had gone out requesting baseline information regarding youth voice groups across the southwest we then used the contacts given as our initial starting place to recruit members. However, in some cases we were met with no responses from some areas in terms of recruitment or we'd have initial conversations, and no young people were identified. We tried a few times with these contacts, but we then decided to try a different route for that area. In year 2 we have started looking at different ways to recruit such as contacting schools - mainstream and SEND specialist.



- Some areas do not have a current youth voice group through their local authority, and some don't have any plans of setting one up for various reasons. To overcome this, we have either spoken to other youth groups in that area or we have been supporting those areas about the importance of young people sharing their lived experience and how we can help them to set one up in their area, possibly using the grant funding through this project.
- The grant funding process has started off slowly due to factors out of our control however we have this sorted and are excited to keep offering this out to the relevant groups across the region in the hope to make an impact.

National SEND award for children and young people co-production award - runners up!

In March we were invited to London as finalists for a National SEND Award for the work we were doing on CYP SA; this came as a delightful surprise and a shock considering we had been established for less than a year.

We were one of two finalists, and deservedly so 'Voices of the East' were announced as winners. It was an honour to be runners up against the fantastic work the Youth Service SEND & Multi Schools Council are doing throughout Essex.



CYP SA forum with NHS professionals who fund the project with the runner up scroll.



Sian and Gaby with CYP SA members.

From the left: Josh, Sian, Lachlan, Gaby and Owen.

Feedback from professionals we have worked with *anonymous feedback*

Which of the following best fits your current role when working with CYP SA Forum?

NHS England

What work have you done with CYP SA Forum?

CYP SA have been involved with our SEND Awards - helping us with the working group and panel judging; CYP SA have presented at our meetings.

What do you believe are the strengths of CYP SA so far?

The views of your YP are paramount; but also the relationship you all seem to have with each other while working is both endearing and positive.

Can you identify one area of development for the forum in year two?

It would be nice to see CYP SA collaborate with other stakeholders such as CDC, Multi Schools Council, NNPCF, DfE and social care - I am aware these connections are in the making so not so much a development area but more a further nurturing one. It might also be beneficial to have a list of sorts of what support or collaboration you can offer so we are able to include you in more work going forward.



Asking challenging questions at events for professionals

When attending events, we have been presenting on what CYP SA is and the work we are doing. At the end of each presentation, we present the audience with 6 questions to make professionals think about their SEND practice. These questions were decided by the members of the CYP SA forum - the members want these questions asked to as many SEND professionals from as many different areas as we can.

The six questions are as follows:

1. Are young people involved in key decision-making processes within your systems?
2. Do you hear the voices of children and young people (CYP) at board meetings?
3. Do you have CYP involved in the recruitment process for new staff?
4. Do you gather feedback from CYP on the services they have received?
5. Are CYP voices truly embedded into your local SEND system?
6. Are CYP voices valued and not just a tick box exercise?

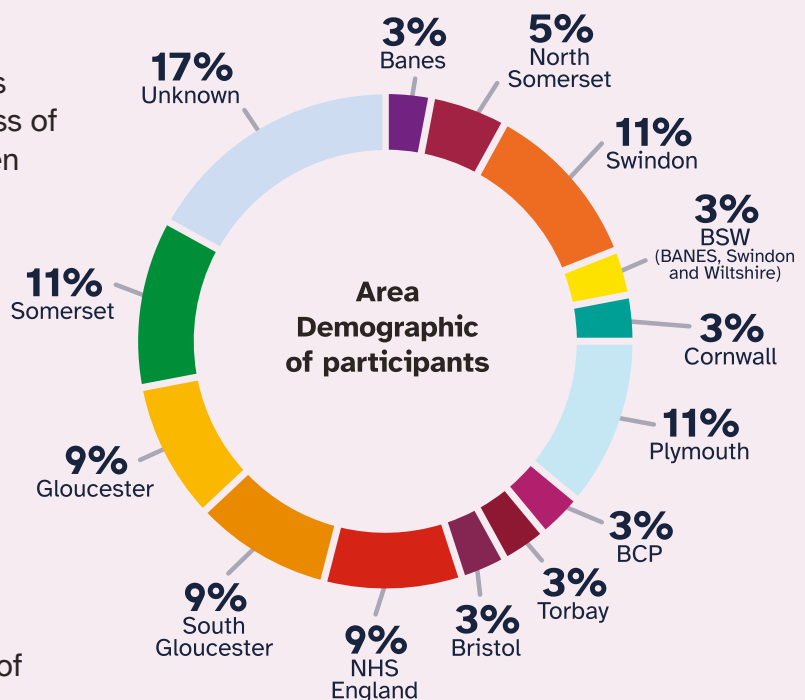
NHS Conference

In December 2023, we were invited to the NHS Conference in Exeter to give a presentation on the work of CYP SA so far and why hearing the voices of young people with SEND is vital for professionals. The conference was well attended by a variety of professionals from across the Southwest (image to the side shows area demographics of participants)

We had 4 CYP SA members attend with the two CYP SA workers. In this presentation we shared our progress of the forum, what topics we have been sharing our voice on and then we asked the six thought provoking questions (as shown above) and asked each attendee to fill it in.

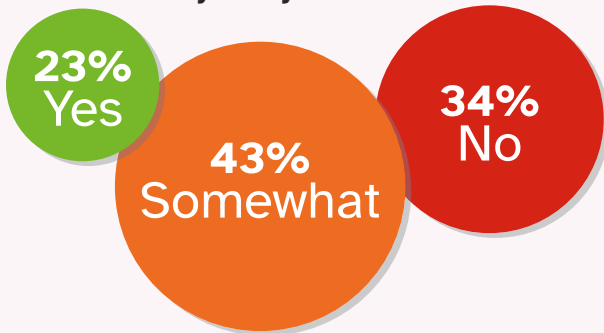
A copy of the presentation we gave can be found at the end of this report in the Appendices section.

Below are the results from our thought-provoking questions we asked professionals in attendance of the conference.

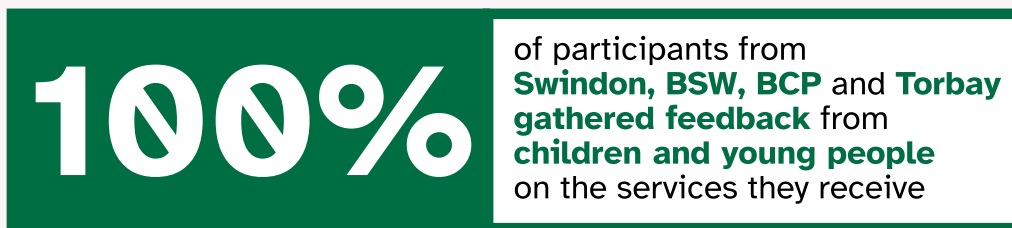
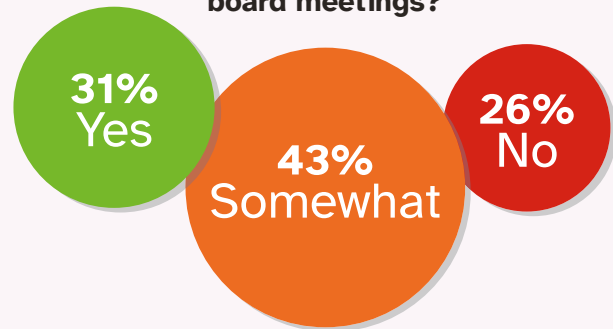




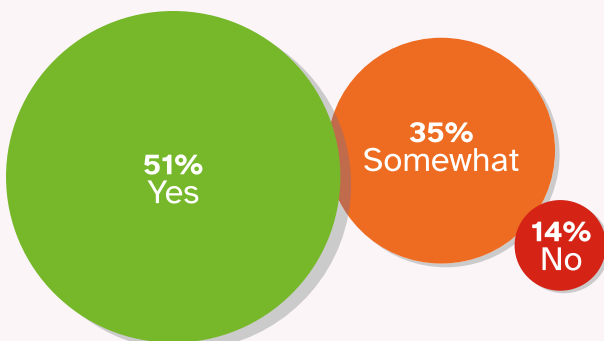
Are young people involved in key decision-making processes within your systems?



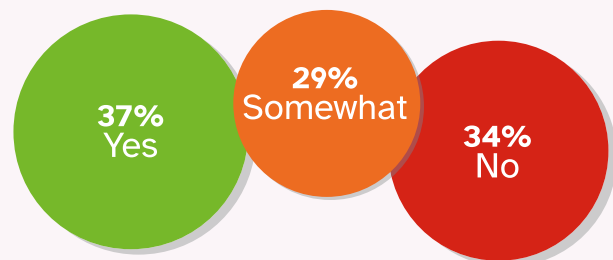
Do you hear the voices of children and young people at board meetings?

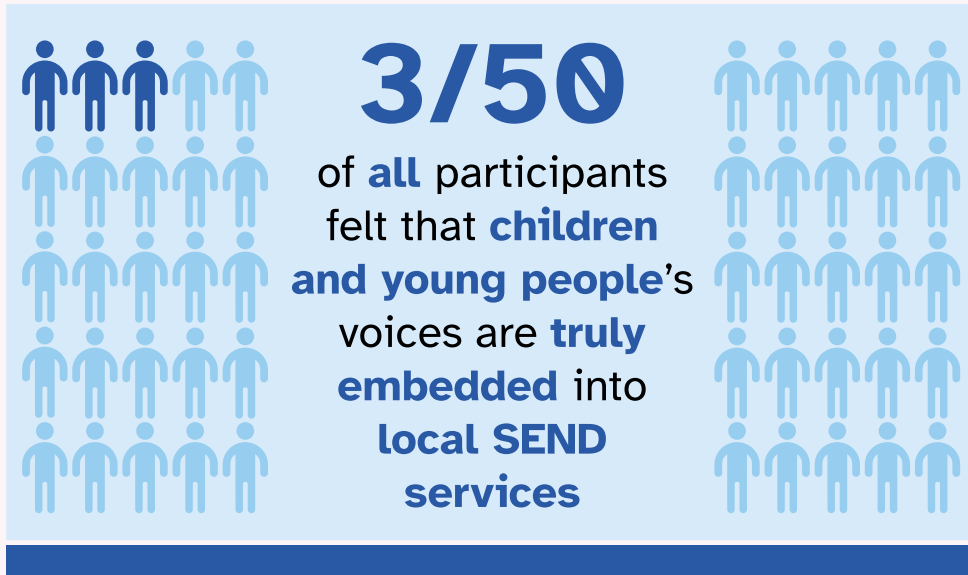


Do you gather feedback from children and young people on the services they have received?

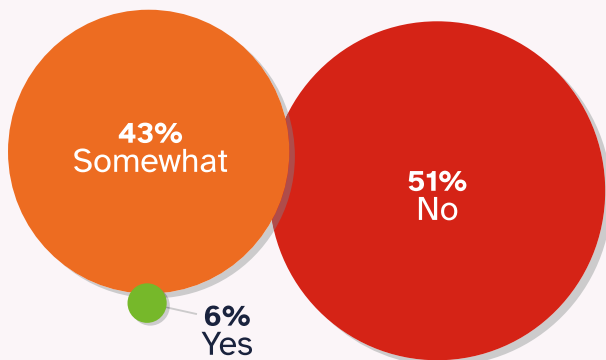


Are children and young people involved in the recruitment process for new staff?

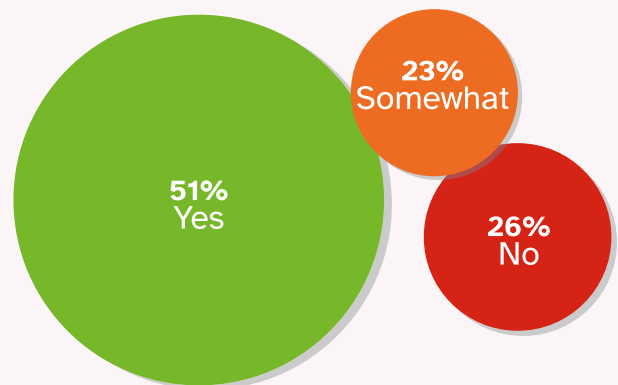




Are children and young people's voices truly embedded into your local SEND system?



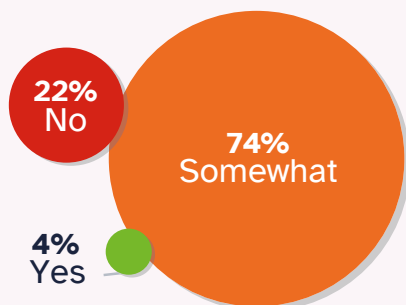
Are children and young people's voices valued and not just a tick box exercise?



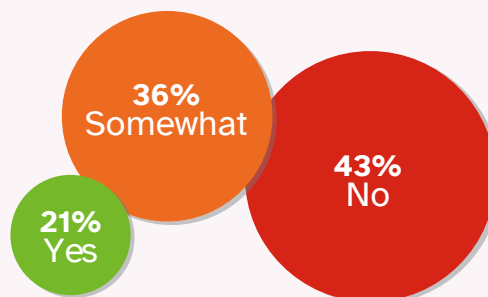
National SEND leadership training

In January 2024, we were invited to give a presentation at the National SEND leadership training. We were asked to share what our forum does, what self-advocacy means to young people from the opinion of our members and shared some of the topics we had done so far. We asked the 6 provocative questions to the room, there were approximately 28 professionals.

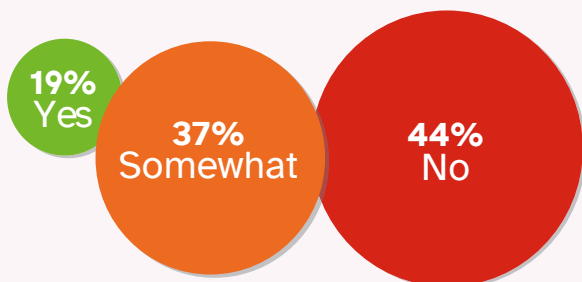
Are young people involved in key decision-making processes within your systems?



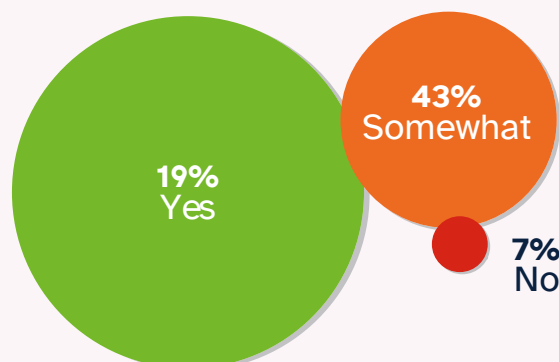
Do you hear the voices of children and young people at board meetings?



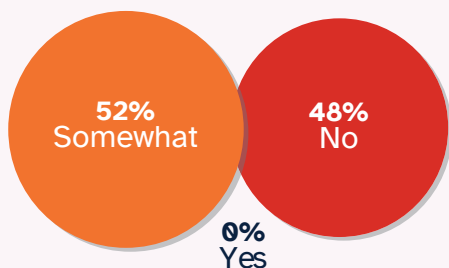
Are children and young people involved in the recruitment process for new staff?



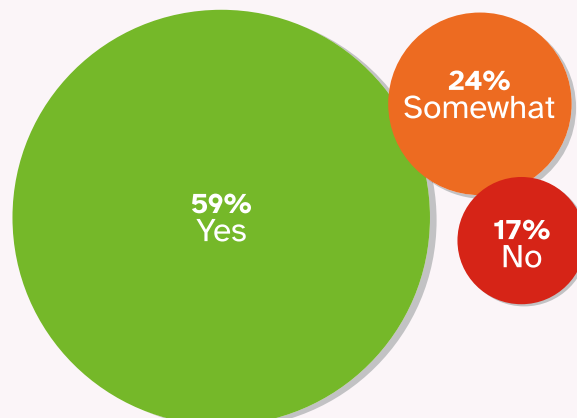
Do you gather feedback from children and young people on the services they have received?



Are children and young people's voices truly embedded into your local SEND system?



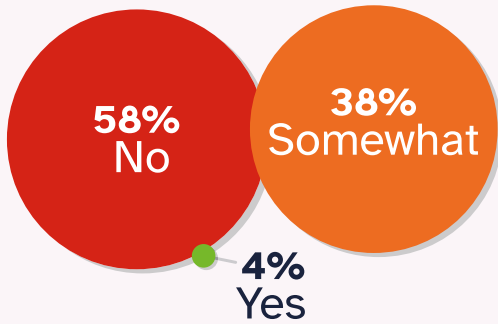
Are children and young people's voices valued and not just a tick box exercise?



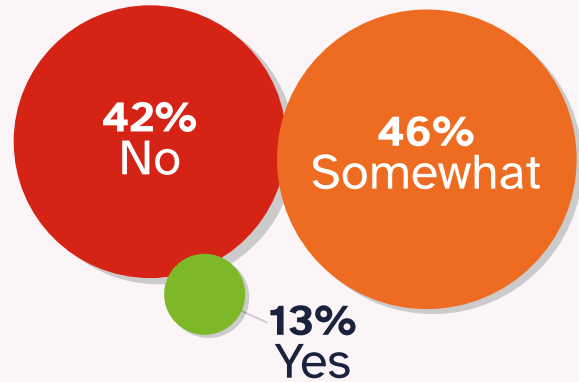
Results from Department for Education away day

In March 2024, we were invited to give a presentation at Department for Education/NHS England national Away Day. We were asked to share what our forum does, what our members think self-advocacy means to young people and shared some of the topics we have covered so far. We asked the 6 provocative questions to the room - there were approximately 60 professionals who responded.

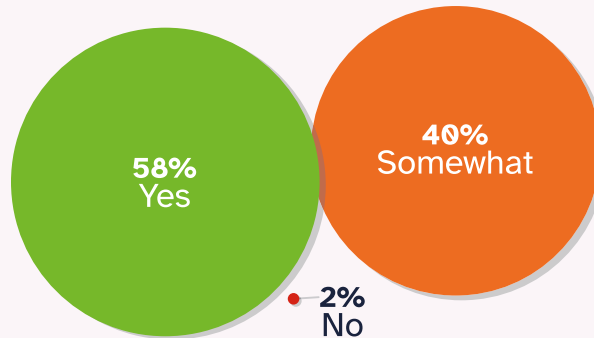
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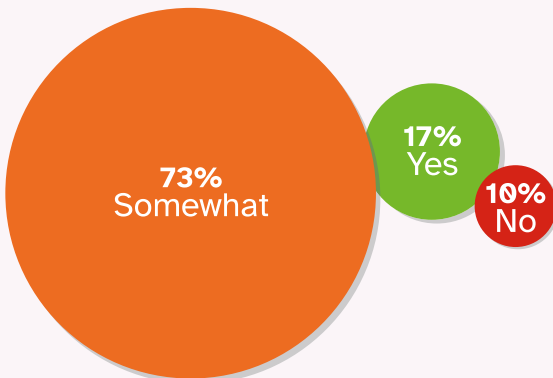
Do you hear the voices of children and young people at board meetings?



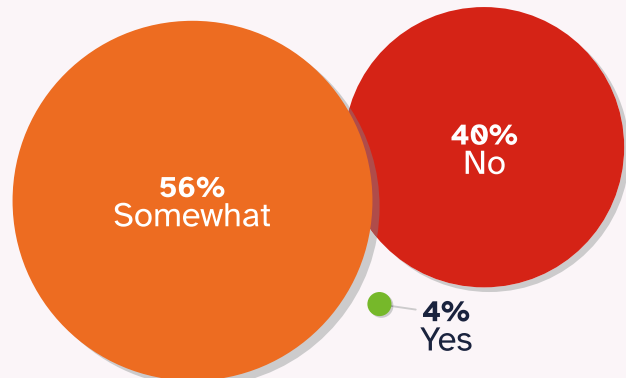
Do you gather feedback from children and young people on the services they have received?



Are children and young people's voices valued and not just a tick box exercise?



Are children and young people's voices truly embedded into your local SEND system?



CYPSA Member Q&A

Why did you join the CYPSA group?

My mum found out about the CYPSA group and asked me if I would like to join to help with my social skills and confidence alongside having my voice and opinions heard.

Why do you think it is important that voices are heard?

I think it is important that children and young people like me have their voices heard as we need to tell professionals what we need and what we want. Too often professionals think they know what we want without speaking to us which leads to them making the wrong choices or not providing us with the support we need.

Do you think the CYPSA group is making a difference?

Yes, I think the group is making a huge difference. We have gone from being a small group to gaining new members each month. We are having our voices heard not only within the South West but also being invited to bigger national events which shows how much people are wanting to listen to us and work with us.

Do you think that you are listened to within the services?

Within my local area where I live I think there is still work to be done on how they listen to our voices, but I think within this group we are listened to and our opinions and thoughts are taken seriously.

Do you enjoy the CYPSA meetings?

The meetings are well planned out and I enjoy them. There is a mixture of talking and listening to each other which I like. It makes me feel like I am not alone in my journey with autism.



Feedback from professionals we have worked with

Which of the following best fits your current role when working with CYP SA Forum?

Regional - National Network of Parent Carer Forums.

What work have you done with CYP SA Forum?

Been at regional meetings with CYP SA.

What do you believe are the strengths of CYP SA so far?

Being the voice of children and young people at a regional level.

Can you identify one area of development for the forum in year two?

Strengthening the voice - all LA areas in the SW should be part of it.

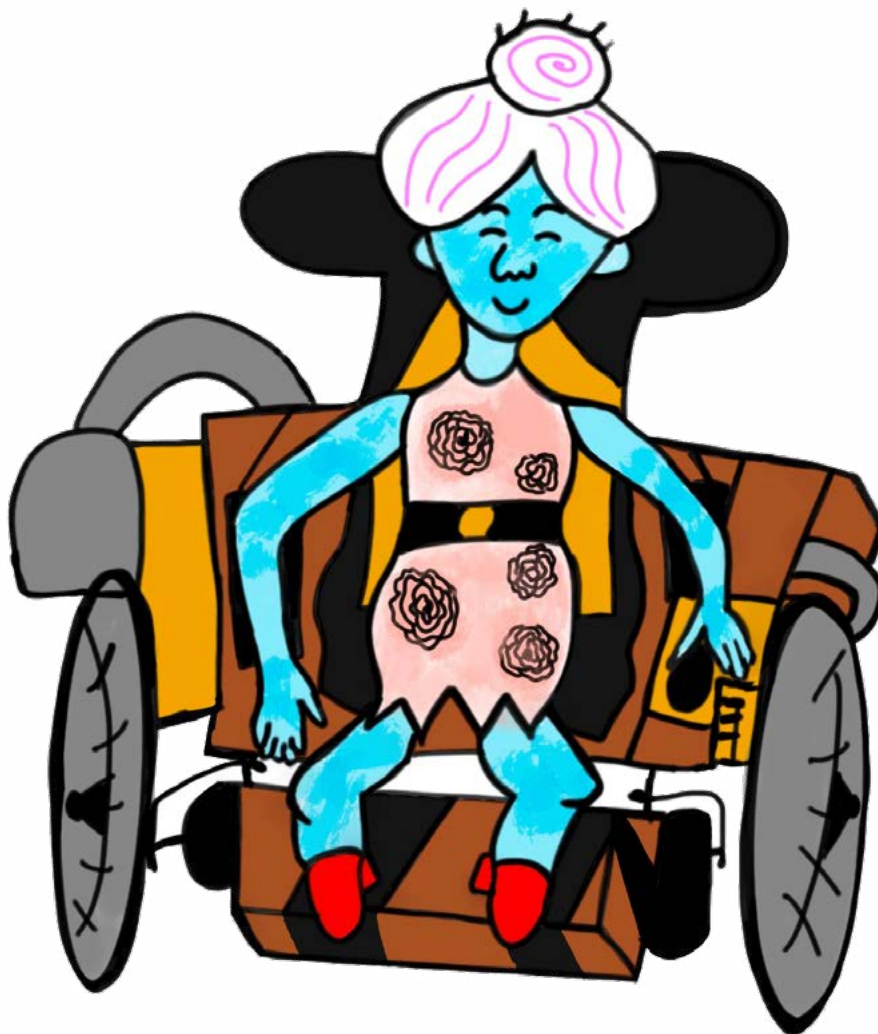


Next Steps - year two plan

One of our main priorities for year 2 of CYP SA is to continue our membership recruitment from the areas that are missing, these include:

- Bristol
- Bath and North East Somerset
- Cornwall
- Dorset
- Isles of Scilly
- North Somerset
- South Gloucester
- Swindon
- Torbay

Another priority for us as a forum is to grow the forum stronger, including stronger feedback for the members and the lived experience they share with us. We want to close the loop on the feedback cycle by being able to show the 'so, what?' element, using evidence of what has changed because of the young people involved in the CYP SA forum. We plan to keep raising the profile of SEND voices being heard and challenging professionals in the hope of making a difference across the region. Through doing this we hope that the members involved will be able to develop their skills further, growing in confidence, being able to negotiate and comprise, public speaking skills and so much more.



Appendices



We are a forum for young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities in the South West region, helping you to have your voices heard.

Who are we?
We are young people aged 0-25 with special educational needs and/or disabilities. We make our voices heard to help make changes and improve health outcomes across the South West of England.

What do we do?
We help services to do their job better
We help services to understand our needs better.
We make posters, leaflets, and other things to help professionals help us.

We want to hear your views on things that matter to you, so come and join us!


To find out more, please email the team
CYPSA@somerset.gov.uk



CYPSA Flyer

CYPSA Newsletters


1



September CYPSA meeting

We started the meeting with everyone introducing themselves, this was done by saying our name, age, and preferred pronouns. Then we did an icebreaker where you say what sheep you are today and then you have 5 different funny sheep to pick from. This gives the members a chance to say how they are feeling without going into detail if they don't want to.

On this sheep scale, how do you feel today?




The first question to start off


Sian asked the group, 'have you heard of 'co-production' before today? This was in the form of traffic lights and the group had the options, no, unsure and yes. The overall answers were 4 votes for yes, this means that the group have an idea what co-production means. Then the conversation leads onto this question, 'what does co-production mean to you?' from this question there was some key points. For example, one of the members said, 'working together as a team to get work done and to work with other groups or organisations. This creates the sense that the group have demonstrated co-production in the past.'

Co-production definition

Co-production is a solution-focused way of working to find the best possible outcomes and solutions for local families, with the resources that are available.



2





October CYPSA meeting.

We started the session by introducing ourselves by sharing our names, ages, preferred pronouns, and what sheep we are feeling today. The sheep activity is very popular with the group members as it makes everyone laugh.

In your local area what type of SEND meetings occur?

This session was an opportunity to learn about what the group have been involved in, in their areas. The first question was 'in your local area what type of SEND meetings occur?' This gave the members a chance to relate on topics like 'CO production groups, Youth Access Plymouth, Youth champions, Parent care forum'. After this, the question involved the group members on a personal level by asking, 'Do you attend meetings in relation to SEND? (Yes, or no?)' Everyone voted for yes. This means that our members are being involved with meetings that might help to widen the voice of SEND. The next question was asking the members to give an example of a SEND meeting they have been involved in. Some of these meetings were, 'inclusion champions, NHS conference somerset, a regional SEND conference'. This topic started conversation on what the meetings were about and why we attend them. This gave the members the opportunity to share and discuss what they have been involved in.

3



CYPSA Newsletter – February Edition

Mabel images

We started the meeting with going through some introductions and this gave us the opportunity to introduce the Mabel scale. This gave the members the opportunity to tell us how they are feeling.



2024 priorities

The 2024 priorities were a discussion and the opportunity for the members to vote for what they want the next topic to be for upcoming meetings.

The priorities are for the members to understand what the topics are and if they have felt their voices have been heard involving these topics. This could be through experiences, good or bad. Working with topic within their local groups and authorities.

The top 3:

- Transitions (children to adults) making sure services overlap.
- Benefits - PIP/DLA/Universal Credit + other.



4



CYPSA Newsletter
March edition

This month's meeting was on Transitions from childhood to adulthood. This subject gave an insight into how the members have experienced transitions within their local areas whether that is what they have already experienced, experiencing now or what they're apprehensive about in the future.

Do you know what transitions is?

The first two questions were questions that needed a yes/no/unsure/somewhat answer. The first question that was discussed was if the members knew what transitioning into adult was. This question told us that all the members know about transitions. Leading on from this the second question was, 'have you experienced transitions, child into adult?' This answer was 100% yes. This told us that the members have experiences when it comes to transitions.


If you had to say a feeling towards transitions, what would it be?

If you had to say a feeling towards transitions, what would it be?


15 responses



The next question was in the form of a word cloud asking, 'if you had to say a feeling towards transitions, what would it be?' This question sparked up some comments from the members. The words that were being brought up was on a negative side with one of the members




5



CYPSA Newsletter **Thursday 25th April 2024**

Self-Care, Wellbeing & Mental Health support services



April's meeting was about 'Self-Care, wellbeing & Mental Health Support Services'

Today's Agenda	Page number
Introductions	1
Group rules	1
Self-care wellbeing mental health support services	2.5
Ice Breaker	6
Vote: next Topic	10
Feedback about today	11


Just like every month we started the session off with introductions and the overview of the group rules.

Introductions are kept quick and easy. Simple just name, age, preferred pronouns and a personal update.

We then do a quick refresh of the group rules just to ensure everyone is on the same page.

Our three rules are:
 Help each other
 Be open to suggestions
 Confidentiality

Your mind is a garden. Cultivate positivity and let the flowers of joy bloom



- 1 September Newsletter
 - 2 October Newsletter
 - 3 February Newsletter
 - 4 March Newsletter
 - 5 April Newsletter
- (Click on image to download)

Baseline Questionnaire Results

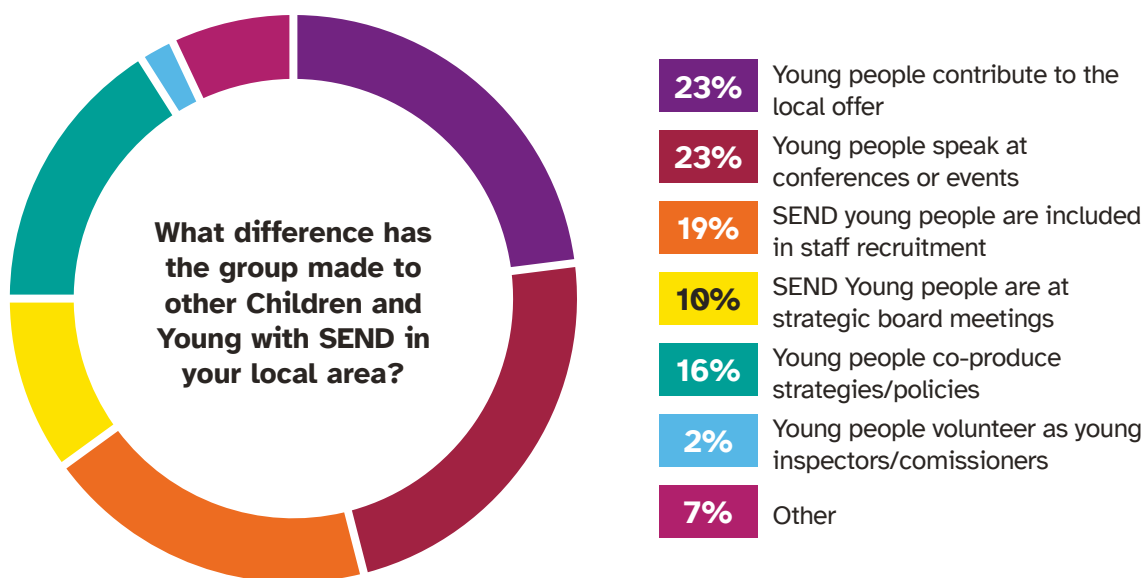
Further responses to the questionnaire from pages 11-13.

What's working well for the group?

- The group are well known within the Local Area, being asked their views on pieces of work. Their voice is being heard at strategic level. The group are good friends as they are long time members.
- Being involved in strategy meetings with the Local Area
- Well established group that follows the youth work participation model – we have a variety of different consultations and campaigns as part of the group which deliver an impact both locally and nationally.
- We haven't met yet, it's in the very early stages.
- A group of young people coming together and sharing experiences, whilst being listened to the Assistant Directors of North Somerset Council, and our Head of the SEND Department.
- Getting together for fun, social activities.
- We have shaped the content of our Local Offer, making it more young person friendly and accessible. This has included hosting our own radio show/podcast series and making useful videos. We produce quarterly reports to our Local Area Partnership board, championing the voices of other young people with SEND across ...
- As a group, the young people are all from different educational backgrounds and bring a range of ideas from these
- Being able to offer a range of youth voice opportunities through different groups is working well. One of the groups takes place during school hours to enable young people to be supported by school staff. One of our other groups is for older young people and takes place after school, these young people are keen to undertake focused pieces of work.
- Group under development.
- Our group is currently in the design stage. I have been working with a group of young people to co-design the concept. We have created a role profile for SEND Ambassadors, this is currently with our branding team, in the hope to be sent out this month for circulation and applications. Once the SEND Ambassadors have been recruited, we will work more closely with them to design the group in accordance to their views and wishes. Champions will then be recruited, their role will be to speak with young people on the ground, in schools, youth groups and communities to gain the voice and the views of young people. These views will be collated and analysed by the Ambassadors and then presented to those who have the power and opportunity to act upon them to make positive changes.

What would be even better for the group?

- To have more members, currently members are reaching the 25yr age and that is when they move on from the group.
- Reaching out to more young people and promoting the group
- Better feedback from people who come in to consult with the group as a lot of time they consult, and we don't hear what difference their consultations have made.
- Additional funding to capture the wider voice of children and young people.
- Unable to answer as yet.
- Occasional trips / incentives, more attendees
- More accessible transport, additional funding, a base for our charities work
- It would be great if we could improve regular engagement to our bi-monthly meetings, which are really helpful for co-production. Recruiting into this group takes time and patience, but we are getting there. We are establishing if/how a young person can sit on our Local Area Partnership Board in Future, but there are short-term barriers to overcome.
- To improve the group even more it would be great to have more guests attending the meetings to discuss and gather young people's voices for their own work.
- Access to a young person friendly meeting place after-school. Increased diversity within our SEND youth voice work – we are looking at ways of working with those young people who are not represented in our currently groups; those that are least heard. This project is in its early stages, but we hope this will enable a wider representation of youth voice within the area.
- Would be useful to hear about models of good practice in other areas Strategic development and operational.
- At the moment we are early stages so we cannot say what would be even better. Something around training and reward for the ambassadors and champions would be great.



Presentations at events and meetings

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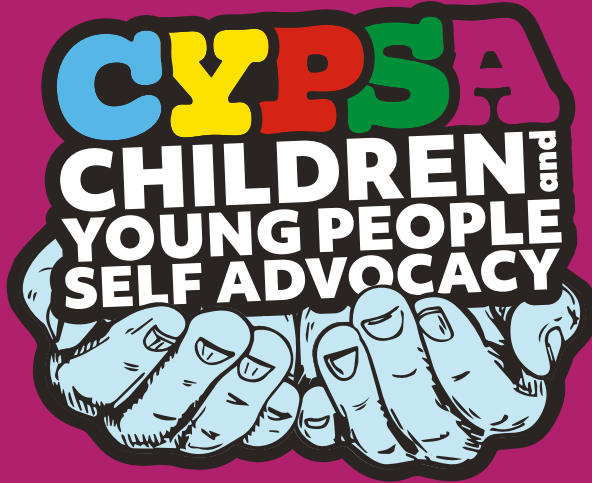
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- 1 National SEND Conference
 - 2 October NHS Board Meeting
 - 3 January NHS Board Meeting
 - 4 January Board Meeting
 - 5 March NHS Board Meeting
- (Click on image to download)



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