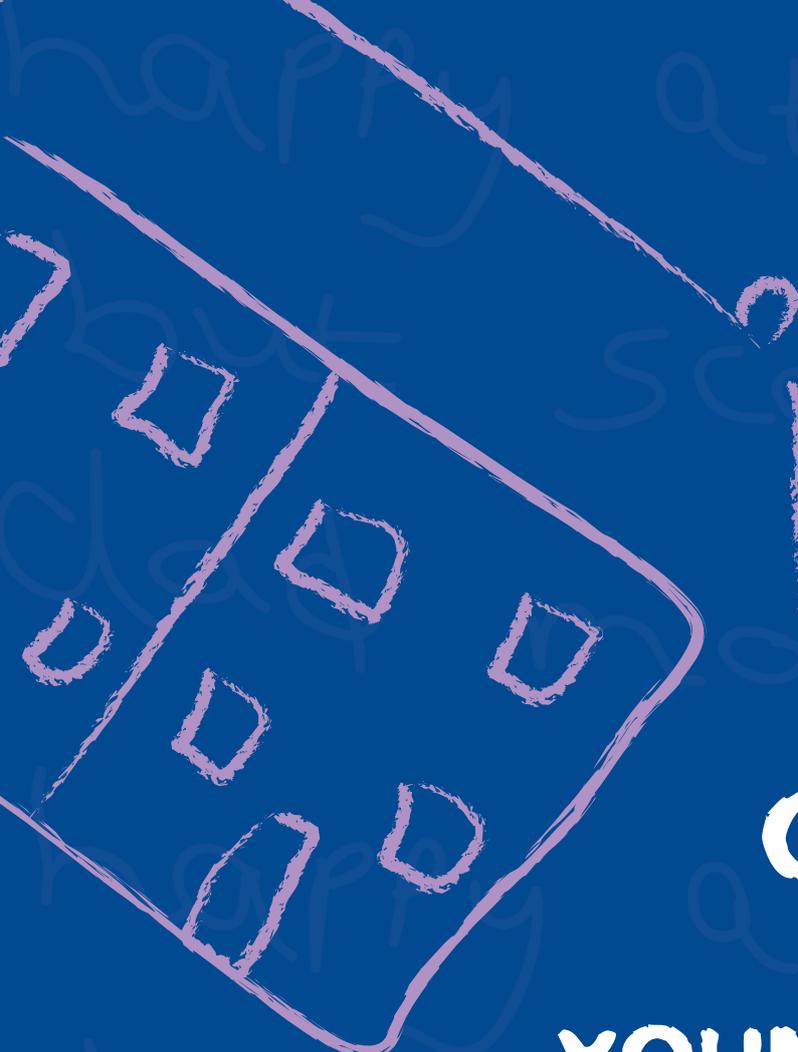"You can forget that young people have got a really good grasp on things"

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AS PARTNERS IN THE DESIGN AND COMMISSIONING OF RESEARCH

Scottish **Women's** Aid

for women, children & young people

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

CONTENTS:

1 INTRODUCTION

Scottish Women's Aid (SWA) commissioned the University of Edinburgh's Centre for Learning in Child Protection (CLiCP) to research the views, experiences and support needs of children and young people who have to move home following domestic abuse. The research report 'The Support Needs of Children and Young People Who Have to Move Home Because of Domestic Abuse' (Stafford et al) was published in September 2007. One of the unique features of the research project was the extent to which children and young people contributed to its development. This paper discusses how SWA involved children and young people in the commissioning, design and dissemination of the research, and provides insights into how those involved experienced the process.

2 BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH PROJECT

'The Support Needs of Children and Young People Who Have to Move Home Because of Domestic Abuse' research was funded by the then Scottish Executive's Development Fund and had evolved from the earlier study commissioned by SWA 'Sustaining Tenancies Following Domestic Abuse' (Edgar et al, 2003).

Edgar et al's study focused predominantly on the needs of women when moving house because of domestic abuse. The report included mothers' accounts of the support that children needed when they had to move, but it recommended that further research was needed to fully examine children and young people's own views. It was envisaged that, once complete, the research focusing on children and young people's perspectives would complement the existing study on women's perspectives.

Before developing the children's study, SWA decided to adopt a participative approach to the research project. This decision meant that we would actively try to involve children and young people as partners in the design, commissioning and dissemination of the research. The next section discusses our rationale for involving children in these processes.

Stafford, A., Stead, J., Grimes, M. (2007). The Support Needs Of Children And Young People Who Have To Move Home Because Of Domestic Abuse. Edinburgh: Scottish Women's Aid.

Edgar, B., Williams, N., McMahon, L., McAvoy, S. (2003). Sustaining Tenancies Following Domestic Abuse. Edinburgh: Scottish Women's Aid.

3 WHY INVOLVE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE?

Traditionally, domestic abuse literature relating to children has been adult-generated from mothers' and professionals' accounts. However, a growth in understanding that children are able and willing to share their own perspectives has led to a 'new wave' of literature that examines children's own views and experiences of domestic abuse.

In keeping with this understanding of children and our commitment to a child's right to influence matters that affect them, we actively sought to involve children and young people in the design and the development of the research project. This meant having children and young people participate in a meaningful way that went beyond participating in the study as respondents. We anticipated that involving children and young people in this way would result in the research being more informed and more reflective of their experiences.

4 HOW WE INVOLVED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Children and young people were involved as partners in the design and development of the research project through three key processes: setting the research agenda; as members of the advisory group; and in the dissemination of the research findings.

As this was the first time that SWA had approached research in this way, we were keen to evaluate the process. By documenting the experiences of children, young people and adults involved in the advisory group we wanted to assess how well our approach had achieved the following objectives:

- Children and young people set the research agenda (i.e. identified key issues to investigate)

- Children and young people are supported throughout the consultative process (including the advisory group meetings)

- Children and young people are empowered to contribute to the research design and dissemination process

- Children and young people should have the same status with respect to decision-making within advisory group meetings

5 THE PROCESS OF INVOLVING CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

The next part of this paper explores in more detail how we involved children and young people during the project:

5.1 SETTING THE RESEARCH AGENDA

Children and young people who had experienced moving home because of domestic abuse helped to influence the scope and focus of the research. Before defining research questions and objectives, focus group discussions were held with children and young people about the issues important to them when moving house. By applying this approach, we established from the outset some of the issues that were most pertinent to both current and future follow-on support services.

Participants were recruited to these focus groups through existing Women's Aid and Barnardo's children's domestic abuse support services. Once established, the participants' priorities were fed into a wider advisory group and incorporated into the design brief for the research.

Please see Appendix 1 for a copy of the focus group report.

5.2 RESEARCH ADVISORY GROUP

Members

The research advisory group oversaw the development of the research project. It was comprised of five adults and two young people; the two young people had been involved in the initial focus groups and were invited to represent their age cohorts in the development and dissemination of the research by being active advisory group members. We anticipated that having young people as advisory group members would ground the research in the experiences of children who had to move home because of domestic abuse. The adult members were from a variety of organisations; the Scottish Executive, Barnardo's, Angus Women's Aid, and Scottish Women's Aid.

As full advisory group members, young people were involved in all aspects of the research advisory group's work.

Key tasks that the advisory group was responsible for were:

- Developing the research design brief
- Short listing and interviewing researchers
- Providing assistance and direction to the researchers, once employed
- Promoting and disseminating the research findings

Meetings

To help make the advisory group meetings inclusive for the different members, we decided to facilitate them as workshops rather than as 'traditional' meetings. The less formal style of meeting was intended to create an unthreatening and relaxed environment where members found it easy to contribute equally to the discussions. During the workshops we used a variety of existing participative tools and developed new ones, which were designed to assist the members (both young people and adults) to learn and develop new skills.

Please refer to Appendix 2 for an overview of all the research advisory group meetings and Appendix 3 for an example of the facilitator's notes, demonstrating how the meetings were facilitated.

5.3 DISSEMINATION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

Research advisory group members had a key role in the dissemination of the research findings. Young and adult members co-presented the research findings to the Scottish Government's National Domestic Abuse Delivery Group for Children and Young People and at a homelessness conference.

6 KEY FACTORS FOR A SUCCESSFUL ADVISORY GROUP

At the beginning of the project we identified factors that we thought would be critical to the success of the advisory group. These factors influenced how the advisory group was organised and how the meetings were facilitated.

6.1 SHARED VALUES

It was crucial that all members saw the value in having a participative approach to the research. Members of the advisory group who were invited to take part were invited on the basis of their varied skills, experience and their motivation for approaching the research in this way. Their commitment to using a participative approach was demonstrated through their willingness to meet outwith normal working hours, contribute to workshop style meetings, and actively seek the views of members who were less vocal.

All members showed a strong commitment to the project from an early stage through the time they spent at meetings and in preparing for meetings. The advisory group met over a period of 18 months. The meetings normally lasted a few hours and were held on a Saturday morning or after school to ensure that young people were able to attend. They were more frequent for the first six to nine months until the researchers were appointed.

Once the advisory group was established, members spent time building relationships and agreeing how they would work together. For example, the first meeting of the advisory group was dedicated to 'ice breaking' exercises and establishing ground rules for the group. We hoped that by spending time building relationships members would feel involved and help to develop their sense of ownership of the group.

6.2 FINDING WAYS FOR EVERYONE TO CONTRIBUTE

As with any group, the members had varied levels of confidence, skills, expertise and experience. The group facilitators spent time in planning and developing activities that would increase members' knowledge about research methodology, and in commissioning research, while at the same time acknowledge and build on individuals' different areas of expertise.

At different stages throughout the project, the skills and expertise of particular members were drawn on. For example, when developing the research design brief, members who had research experience facilitated the sessions to help develop others' knowledge and skills about research methodology. At other points the young advisory group members' expertise was drawn on; for example, when they had a greater role in proofing the content and language used in the leaflets and the final report.

The young advisory group members were supported throughout the process by a 'young person's facilitator'. This support extended to some 'pre-meetings' where the young members could become familiar with particular processes and complete tasks that adult advisory group members may already be familiar with or would do as part of their normal work. By supporting the young people in this way, we felt that the young people would be more confident contributing to larger advisory group discussions and in voicing their opinions when decisions needed to be made; for example, when short-listing and interviewing research candidates.

6.3 VALUING MEMBERS' CONTRIBUTIONS

We used a participative approach because we recognised that too often young people, although asked to take part in research or to sit on advisory groups, aren't given an equal voice in the discussions and decisions about research that concerns them. Our approach to organising and preparing the meetings, supporting the young people, and disseminating the research findings was based on the belief that all advisory group members' contributions to the project are valid and should be valued equally.

Making sure that all group members' contributions were valued equally was challenging, especially given the range of expertise within the advisory group. As noted previously, we used a variety of approaches to encourage advisory group members to participate in group discussions and decisions. Throughout the project the facilitator also reminded advisory group members that they all had the same responsibilities for voicing their opinions and 'voting' when decisions needed to be made. For example, when short-listing the research candidates each advisory group

member was given the same power to score candidates' proposals. The young people were supported throughout this process to ensure they felt confident about their decisions, but had the same responsibility for scoring proposals as the other advisory group members.

In addition, we felt it was important that all advisory group members were compensated for their contribution to the project. The adult members of the advisory group were all professionals whose participation in the project was considered part of their paid work by the agencies that employed them. The young members' participation was voluntary. In recognition of this disparity, all the young people's out of pocket expenses were paid in advance. In addition, as a token of appreciation, the young people were given gift tokens of their choice. At the end of the project, members of the advisory group and the researchers had a lunch to celebrate the project's completion and thank the members for the considerable amount of work and time they had given.

The next part of this report explores advisory group members' experiences of our participative approach to the research project.

7 EVALUATION OF THE RESEARCH ADVISORY GROUP

We decided to document the advisory group members' experiences as a way of assessing whether or not we actually achieved our objectives. After the researchers were appointed, six members of the research advisory group were interviewed about their experience of being part of a group with a mix of adults and young people. We wanted to know whether or not our original objectives had been achieved. In particular, we wanted to know:

- whether the research advisory group members found the experience empowering or disempowering

- whether they were listened to and felt that their contribution was valued equally

- whether they felt that the process was worthwhile and that their participation made a difference

- what learning could be used to inform future projects

The six members were interviewed by a Scottish Women's Aid staff member who had not been directly involved in the research project. They gave their views through a one-to-one interview and by completing a short questionnaire (Please see Appendix 4 for copies of the tools used and Appendix 5 for the responses to the Self-Complete Questionnaire). Their responses are summarised on the next few pages.

7.1 SHARED VALUES? MOTIVATIONS FOR BEING INVOLVED

Research advisory group members had a range of reasons for being involved in the project. Motivations included the project fitting with their work priorities and having experience, either working in a participative way, or doing research. The majority of members said that they had a particular interest in being part of a research project where adults and young people worked together and had wanted to be part of a project that was inclusive.

All the members interviewed considered that their participation had been an opportunity for skill development either in relation to participating in a research project or in working with a mixed-age advisory group. For one adult member, this was the first opportunity she had had to work with young people. For the young people, this was an opportunity to develop their interview and communication skills, learn more about research and *'to help others and get my view in as well' (YP)*[1].

Some members reported that before embarking on the project they had not had a clear idea of what working in a mixed group would be like. Others had had a clear sense of the potential benefits and challenges, and of the time and support that would be required to make the process meaningful for all the group members.

> *'Didn't really imagine what it was like, but it was good working with people who were older and younger' (YP).*

7.2 WAS EVERYONE ABLE TO CONTRIBUTE EQUALLY?

The original objective was that young members have the same status in the advisory group as adult members. It was clear from the interviews that this objective was realised.

> *'[I thought] My opinion wouldn't be listened to, but it was, so I was proved wrong there' (YP).*

What was equally apparent was that SWA provided a crucial support/mentoring role to young people involved in the project.

> *'I think the young people were listened to as much as everybody else and I was quite impressed the way that Fiona would really take the time to go through things with them before each meeting otherwise it would have been a bit of tokenism' (AM).*

It was noted that there were occasions where some members got 'lost' during particular discussions. When this occurred group facilitators acted to ensure that concepts were explained or tried to re-engage members.

> *'There was a lot of respect round the table for everyone's views' (AM).*

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[1] YP and AM have been placed in brackets after each quote to indicate whether it was a young person (YP) or an adult member (AM) of the group speaking.

The tendering process was identified as being particularly difficult for those with no previous experience, as it was quite technical, covering areas such as costing and research methodology, complex scoring systems and interview skills and techniques.

During meetings, there was an attempt to use language that was not 'jargonistic', and those invited to tender were asked to submit their proposal in an accessible format. However, the proposals submitted were not always easy to read or understand. As a result, a sub-group was set up and intensive support was provided to the young people to enable them to participate in this part of the process.

7.3 WAS IT WORTH THE EFFORT?

Most of the members had expected there to be a high level of involvement, though for some the project required more than they had anticipated. Two areas were identified as more challenging for the group:

- Amount of time needed to prepare meetings (workshops) and to support members so that they could participate fully in meetings

- Making the meetings accessible to all members

One member felt that perhaps a little less time could have been spent in developing the group as it was such a small group: however this did not detract from their overall view that the group needed to go at a pace that allowed everyone to be supported in order to participate fully.

> *'I was listened to a lot and had my opinions taken seriously '(YP).*

The timings of the meetings was an area where a great deal of flexibility was required. The young people were available only in the evening or at weekends and this resulted in the majority of the meetings being scheduled for a Saturday morning.

Regardless of these issues, there was no doubt among members that the process had been a positive one that was worthwhile. Members did not resent having to meet on Saturdays and occasionally in the evening, as the nature of the project and the content of the meetings were innovative and fun. For most members, it did not feel like *'having to work on a weekend'(AM).*

All research advisory group members interviewed recognised that the time taken to prepare for the meetings and facilitate the full participation of all the group members was a fundamental component that contributed to the project's success.

> *'Would like to be part of another process if there is one. It has increased my confidence'*
> *(YP).*

Unsolicited feedback from one of the candidates whose research team submitted a tender for the project was extremely positive. The candidate contacted the research advisory group members after the interview to compliment SWA on the process, which it (the research team) had found stimulating and inclusive. The candidate said the research team had to think about the language it used when developing the tender and the way in which it presented the information at the interview. The process had been a challenge that the research team enjoyed and would use what it had learned when approaching work with young people in the future.

7.4 DOES A MIXED GROUP OF YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS WORK?

The mixed group worked well and, for some, was the key component in the process. One question was whether or not everyone had to be involved in all aspects of the project. It was suggested that there may be scope to identify areas of expertise for individual members and that rather than try to include everyone in every stage, perhaps one could utilise these areas of expertise instead.

One advisory group member suggested that it may have been better if there had been a reference group consisting of several more young people rather than only two. There was also a suggestion that a young persons' group should be established to work with SWA to support the development of their work with children and young people. A further suggestion was that there should be equal numbers of young people and adults in mixed groups.

> 'I think there was a limitation on the number of young people that could be identified to be involved… maybe if there was a natural grouping of youngsters that could have been used as a sounding board.' (AM).

7.5 WHAT DID WE LEARN FROM THE PROCESS?

Two very clear lessons consistently came through from the interviews:

- Intensive support is required to enable the full participation of the young people or the members who have had no previous experience of being part of a research advisory group.

- For a research advisory group with a mix of young people and adults, it must be recognised from the outset that the process will require a substantial time commitment and flexibility about when meetings are held.

There must be clarity at the outset about the role of each advisory group member; about what participating in the group involves, what is expected of each member and what support will be provided. Members need to know whether they will be expected to participate in every aspect of the project or be involved only in the areas where they have particular expertise.

All the participants were very positive about the process. They had found the whole experience valuable and worthwhile, and felt that they had achieved their objectives. There were a few suggestions about how this model of participation could be improved; for example, using a reference group and ensuring that there is equal representation of young people and adults on the group.

Several members of the group felt that it was important to recognise the contribution of everyone, but particularly the young people, who were giving their time and energy for 'free'. One suggestion was to try and to link participation to an award system or to a formal training and development opportunity. For example, it could be linked to the Duke of Edinburgh Award or an SVQ.

7.6 RESEARCH TEAM FEEDBACK

In addition to interviewing the research advisory group members about their experiences, we conducted a brief telephone interview with a member of CLiCP (the research team that carried out the children's study). We asked for feedback on any challenges of working in such an inclusive way with young people and on how this approach impacted on their work relative to the following areas:

- tendering process
- fieldwork/research process
- producing the report

Overall, the feedback was positive. The researcher was particularly impressed by the fact that the young people had been integral to the process, from the design to the dissemination of the research. In her view, this integration had enhanced the project and added an extra dimension; she indicated that the young people brought a lot of clarity to the process, particularly in relation to the use of accessible language. Furthermore, she noted that the young people's input and support in developing the materials for the fieldwork was invaluable and had saved the researchers time; because they did not need to pilot the materials.

She also highlighted that the support for the young people was an area where the process had been particularly successful and where positive results were obvious.

> *'It was evident that they [young people] had been supported to be full participants. [It was] obvious that their confidence was developing as they were more confident with each meeting' (Research Team).*

The researcher said that she had enjoyed working with the research advisory group members and with the young people in particular, and that it had been a privilege to be involved in this innovative project.

7.7 SUMMARY

All members of the research advisory group who were interviewed felt that their involvement had been worthwhile, that they and the other members were valued and respected and that their contributions were valued equally. They felt that having the opportunity to learn and develop skills had been central to the process, and that the pace of the project had achieved the required balance of supporting members' participation while getting the best out of the project.

'I'd certainly give a hearty tick to the inclusion of young people from start through to finish' (AM).

8 CONCLUSION

Children and young people were our partners in the design and commissioning of this research project because we felt it was important for them to be active participants in research about their lives. We were aware that much of what we currently know about children's experiences of domestic abuse is based on mothers' or workers' perspectives and that children and young people rarely participated in the development of research about them.

We also knew that involving children and young people would introduce us to a unique set of challenges and opportunities, and encourage us to use an innovative approach to designing and commissioning the research. A substantial time commitment from research advisory group members was essential to the process as well as a commitment from members to acknowledge each other's skills and expertise and recognition that each member had a unique contribution to make to the project.

Our goal was to ensure the approach was empowering, worthwhile and provided opportunities for each member's contribution to be valued equally, despite their age or status within the advisory group. The evaluation of the process demonstrated that we achieved our goal. Although members felt the process had been time consuming and had taken longer than anticipated, there was an overall agreement that the process had been worthwhile. All the research advisory group members felt that they had been respected and their views had been valued. They enjoyed the process, had fun, worked hard and learned from each other in an environment where they felt safe and supported.

APPENDIX 1 FOCUS GROUP REPORT

INTRODUCTION

Scottish Women's Aid is planning research to find out the best ways to support children and young people who moved house because of domestic abuse. This research will be used to help give children and young people the kind of help that they want and they need.

We think that children and young people are the most important people to ask about what help they want or might need. So, we decided before we start the research, it would be important to ask them about what they think.

This is a summary of what they thought were the most difficult things for children and young people who have moved house because of domestic abuse.

HOW DID WE FIND OUT THE CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S VIEWS?

Women's Aid and Barnardo's helped us to get in touch with some children and young people who have moved house because of domestic abuse and who wanted to take part in this project.

There were two groups of children and young people who wanted to take part in the project – a younger group (aged 8-11) who had used Women's Aid support services and an older group (aged 12-16) who had used Barnardo's support services.

Workshops were held with each group. The workshops involved a lot of activities which helped us look at these three questions:

1. What did the children & young people find difficult about moving house?

2. What kind of help made it easier when they moved house?

3. What else would have made it easier when they moved?

WHAT DID WE FIND OUT?

1 What did the children & young people find difficult about moving house?

There was a lot of discussion about the problems children and young people have to deal with.

In the older group everyone thought that having to move house because of domestic abuse can affect family relationships. The children & young people said problems could occur with any family member – mum, dad, brothers or sisters. They said that they often felt they had to choose between parents and have different opinions about what has happened.

They said that these problems can make relationships in families difficult. For example, this could make children & young people feel angry or sad.

'I was angry with my mum cos she was leaving my dad and I was angry with my dad cos he was letting her leave.'

'Yeah cos when my mum and dad were together - me and mum hardly argued.'

In the younger group everyone thought that leaving friends and family members behind was difficult to cope with. They spoke about missing close friends and family members. This problem caused them to feel sad and sometimes lonely. The children said this was particularly hard when they had to start a new school.

'I would just be really happy and just talk to them and hopefully meet them again.'

'If I could change anything about when I moved it would be that I could have taken my grandma and my brother with me.'

The other problems that they talked about were bullying, making new friends, changing schools, leaving possessions behind and feeling sad or lonely.

2 What kind of help made it easier when they moved house?

The children and young people talked a lot about the kind of things that had helped them. A lot young people thought that staying in touch with their friends had helped.

Unfortunately, many of the children and young people were unable to keep in touch with their friends. Those who managed to stay in touch felt as though their friendships were still affected.

The majority of the children & young people thought it was helpful to have someone to talk to about their problems.

'The thing that helped me most when I moved house was still going to my old school and being able to talk to my friends.'

They said that having someone to talk about how they were feeling was helpful. It was also good when someone took them on daytrips becuase they could forget about their problems.

'The thing that helped me the most was (someone) taking me out and talking to me about my feelings…like if school had been alright, And if everything was fine. Things like that.'

*'Em, the thing that helped me most when I left was (someone) taking me out and like helping with support and advice…Just like erm, taking me out for the day so I didn't have to think about it (having to leave home).*

3 What else would have made it easier when they moved?

All the children and young people agreed that reducing any upset when they move house would help. For example, help making new friends and staying in touch with their old friends.

They said that help with making friends would stop bullying and help them settle in to the new area.

They also thought it would be helpful if someone could help them get to know the new area they were living in, for example, find out about local clubs.
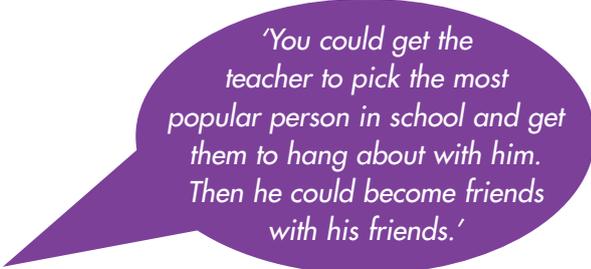
'You could get the teacher to pick the most popular person in school and get them to hang about with him. Then he could become friends with his friends.'

The children & young people thought that things like befriending programmes and extra help with school would help.
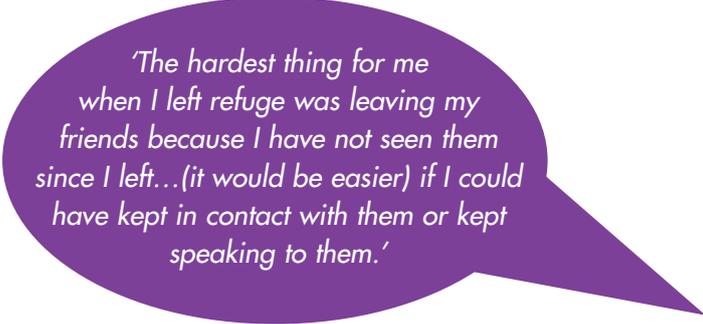
'The hardest thing for me when I left refuge was leaving my friends because I have not seen them since I left…(it would be easier) if I could have kept in contact with them or kept speaking to them.'

THE MOST IMPORTANT PROBLEMS

At the end of the workshops, the children and young people had an opportunity to vote for the problems that they thought were most important.

The tables on the next page show the problems that they had identified and how important the children and young people thought they were.

Group 1: Older group

Problems	No of votes
Bullying	11
Difficulties with relationships with mum, dad, siblings	7
New area	2
School	1

Group 2: Younger group

Topic	No of votes
Leaving family & friends	8
Moving to a run-down, horrible area	5
Changing schools	4
Feeling sad (very unhappy, miserable, devastated)	4
Leaving possessions e.g. clothes	2
Fitting in	1

ROUND UP & THANKS

The information in this report will be used to help the researchers Scottish Women's Aid employ think about what sort of help children and young people who have moved house because of domestic abuse need.

We'd like to thank all of the children and young people who took part in this project. Your views and experiences have been extremely helpful.

If you want to know about how the bigger research project is progressing, please contact me on 0131 226 4678.

Thanks again

Fiona

APPENDIX 2
OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH ADVISORY GROUP MEETINGS

Meeting	Aims of Meetings	Key Products	Who
1	• To introduce the members to the project • To help all members get to know one another and build relationships • To enable the members to decide the ground rules they want to work to	1 Developed rapport and relationships amongst members 2 Ground rules for working together 3 Members introduced to concept of research 4 Began thinking around what we want research to achieve	Whole advisory group
2	• To agree & develop the key criteria that will be used in the research brief • To enable members to develop a better understanding of different research methods • To encourage members to critically assess different research approaches • To agree & develop the assessment criteria for the research tenders	1 Increased knowledge of research methods 2 Develop key components of research brief 3 Agreed assessment criteria for Expressions of Interest	Whole advisory group
Pre-meeting	• To grade Expressions of Interest	1 Young person graded Expressions of Interest	Young person & facilitator
3	• To agree shortlist of Expressions of Interest	1 Sub-group agreed shortlist	Sub-group of advisory group

4	• To agree shortlist candidates for interview
	• To agree interview process
		1 Members familiarisied with research tenders
		2 Agreed format of interviews:
		  a. Researcher's presentation (adult & young people members)
		  b. Interview with young people
		  c. Interview with adults
		3 Agreed criteria to be tested at different stages of interview
			Whole advisory group

Pre-meeting	• To practice interview techniques • To agree interview questions • To agree grading for interviews	1. Increased member's knowledge about interviewing e.g. open questions 2. Agreed interview questions for young people's interview 3. Discussed assessment criteria	Young people & facilitator

Meeting	Aims of Meetings	Key Products	Who
5	• To interview candidates • To agree to appoint researchers	1 Interviewed candidates 2 Appointed researchers	Sub group of advisory group

6	• To agree timelines & approach with the researchers	1 Agreements formalised about:
		    a. Methods
		    b. Age groups
		    c. Ethics
		2 Leaflets for research participants 'young people proofed' (checked content & accessibility)
			Whole advisory group

7	• To monitor progress of the research project	1 Members informed about the research projects progress and interim findings	Whole advisory group

8	• To review the research report	1 Young advisory group members 'proofed' report, with particular reference to:
		    • Language & tone
		    • Anonymity & confidentiality
			Young people & facilitators

9	• To prepare presentations for disseminating research	1 Presentation prepared 2 Design of published research agreed	Young people & facilitators
10	• To launch research	1 Presentation delivered at conference	Young people & facilitators

NB: The young advisory group members took part at all of the meetings.

APPENDIX 3
EXAMPLE OF AN ADVISORY GROUP MEETING

SESSION OUTLINE

Aims of day

- To introduce the participants to the project

- To help all participants to get to know one another and build relationships

- To enable the participants to decide the ground rules they want to work to

Time: 2hrs + up to 30min

SESSION 1: INTRODUCTION (10MIN)

Aims: To introduce participants to each other and about what is happening today.

Description: All participants have to introduce themselves – giving their name and why they are here e.g. was part of the focus groups or from a particular organisation.

Facilitator to then give a breakdown of what is happening today – they should talk to a flipchart timetable of this and give all participants a handout.

Resources: Prepared flipchart, prepared handout blutack and pens.

SESSIONS 2: WHERE ARE WE NOW AND NEXT STEPS (15MINS)

Facilitator to give participants a brief outline of the project including the following key points:

- Purpose – research to find out what kind of support helps cyp when they move

- Cyp participation: 1st step focus groups – what did we find out?

- Advisory groups – breakdown of advisory group meetings with timeline

The facilitator will talk to the handouts listed below

Resources: Prepared handout, report & timeline

SESSION 3: ICEBREAKER: QUIZ (15MIN)

Aims: To help everyone relax and get to know one another.

Description: The facilitator is to give everyone 3 pieces of card each with a different question

e.g. 'who is your favourite band / singer?' Everyone will then have a chance to read out their question and tell the group their answer – the facilitator will try to stimulate discussions around people's answers. e.g. why? what song do you like best? And encourage advisory group members other participants to join in.

Resources: Quiz cards

SESSION 4: HOPES AND CONCERNS (10MIN)

Aims: To help everyone express their hopes and fears anonymously – will feed into the evaluation of the project.

Description: The facilitator gives each participant 6 post-it notes, they are asked to write down 3 things they want to happen during the project and 3 things they don't want to happen during the project. The facilitator will write up the question 'What we want to happen' and 'What we don't want to happen' during the project on the flipchart.

The facilitator will then collect all the wants and all the don't wants in different containers. (During the break they will write them up on a flipchart)

Resources: Post-it notes, pens, flipchart & 2 containers

SESSION 5: BREAK (15MIN)

Resources: Tea, coffee, juice, biscuits, crisps, fruit, water & juice

Facilitator to write up Wants and Don't Wants post-it notes during break

SESSION 6: HOPES AND CONCERNS (5MIN)

Aims: To help all the participants share their hopes and fears anonymously – this will help to prepare participants for the ground rules exercise.

Description: The facilitator will present the wants and don't wants that the participants had identified earlier in the day.

The facilitator will ask the participants to keep these in mind during the next session, and will say that we will revisit these later.

Resources: Flipchart

SESSION 7: GROUND RULES (40MIN)

Aims: To help the young people think about what adults can do to help them participate. To help the adults think how they can help or hinder young people's participation.

Description: The facilitator divides the group into 2 smaller groups. Giving each group 2 sheets of flipchart paper and pens.

The facilitator introduces the concept of ground rules, saying that these are a set of rules about how we will act and treat one another during these meeting. Hopefully, having these ground rules will help us all work together.

Asking them to think about:

- What makes it easier for you to join in? Why?
- What makes it harder to join in? Why?

Ask them to record their experiences by either writing or drawing.

When they have finished the task, each group will present their ideas to the rest of the group – the facilitator will write a list of both things that help and hinder participation.

The facilitator will then ask the group if these are the sort of things that could help this group work together? Are there any things missing from either list? Could we all agree that these are the sort of rules our group could work to?

Resources: Flipcharts & pens

SESSION 8: LUNCH

SESSION 9: RESEARCH BRIEF INTRO

Aim: To introduce the participants to the research brief.

Description: The facilitator explains what a research brief is, why we have one and how they are used in research.

The facilitator then talks to a simplified version of the research brief.

Resources: Prepared handout of research brief and what is a research brief?

SESSION 10: RESEARCH TENDERS

Aim: To enable the participants to set the criteria for the research tenders.

PART 1 (5min)

Description: The facilitator introduces the 2 main sections that you would expect to see in a research tender: Knowledge & Experience & Methodology.

The facilitator gives a brief description of each and explains that we are now going to do 2 exercises so we can establish what we think is most important for each category.

PART 2

A: Knowledge & Experience (10min word storm + 5min feedback)

Description: The participants break into 2 small groups and are asked to wordstorm on the flipchart what they would hope the researchers would have in terms of knowledge and experience. (10min)

Each group then presents their flipchart to the other group.

B: Methodology (20min scenarios + 10min feedback)

Description: The facilitator breaks the participants into groups of 3. She then gives each group 2 sets of cards – 1 scenario and 1 with different types of methods you can use for research. She explains that this exercise is to help us think about the best way the researchers could find out about the topic we want to explore.

Each group is asked to consider their scenario and think about what methods they would use to find out about the topic. Groups are asked to keep a note of their thoughts on flipchart paper.

Each group then presents their flipchart to the other group.

SESSION 11: EVALUATION TARGETS (5MIN)

Aims: To help participants evaluate the session.

Description: The facilitator presents 3 targets to the group. Each target has a different question at the top of each flipchart – 'Was today fun?', 'Did you feel listened to?' and 'Would you come to another day like this?'.

Each participant is given 3 dots & their own 3 targets, they are then asked to stick the dot on each target according to how close to the centre their response would go – for example, if today was so much fun you really enjoyed yourself, put the dot in the middle circle, if today was OK, put the dot in the 2nd circle, if today was so bad you'd rather go to the dentist, put the dot in the outside circle.

Participants can also add any additional comments to stick to the targets.

Resources: Prepared targets, sticky dots.

SESSION 12: PLANNING AHEAD (10MIN)

Aim: To help participants prepare for next meeting.

Description: The facilitator explains to the group that before the next meeting Cheryl & Fiona will finish the design brief, using some of the info we collected today.

The design brief will be given to a list of researchers who want to apply for the job.

The researchers who are interested will then give us a plan (tender) which explains how they would carry out the research if they got the job.

At the next meeting we will be looking at the tenders returned and deciding who looks best for the job and deciding what questions we want to ask them at the interview.

We also want to check out:

Dates, Time & Venues, Contact Info – email / post & Confidentiality of info

APPENDIX 4
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS AND SELF-COMPLETE QUESTIONNAIRE

DOCUMENTING EXPERIENCES
QUESTIONS FOR RESEARCH ADVISORY GROUP MEMBERS ABOUT THE PROCESS THUS FAR:

Starter questions:

What were your main reasons for taking part in the research advisory group?

What did you hope to get out of being a member of the research advisory group?

What did you think it would be like working with young people/adults?

Questions about empowerment:

What qualities, skills and experiences did you bring to the group?

Do you think your qualities, skills and experience have been recognised by the other group members? (give an example)

Do you feel that you were listened to?

Do you feel that your opinions were taken seriously?

What was it like for you when important decisions had to be made (like when deciding the aims and objectives of the research project and choosing which researchers to hire to do the research)?

- Did you feel comfortable giving your view?

- Did you feel that other group members listened to what you had to say?

- Did you feel that your view made a difference to the group's decision?

- Were all group members' views treated the same, or did some group members' views get taken more seriously than others? If different, did you feel your views were taken more or less seriously than other group members?

Questions about the process being worthwhile:

So far, this project has required a relatively high level of commitment and involvement by all group members. We're interested to know whether you feel your level of involvement was worthwhile:

- Was your level of involvement what you had expected it to be?
  (more than, the same, less than)

- Do you think a high level of involvement was needed? (please explain) Why or why not?

- Was your level of involvement worthwhile to you?

Questions about Impacts of having a 'mixed' group:

For the next few questions, we're interested in knowing your thoughts about having a research advisory group member that is a mix of young people and adults.

What are the benefits, for you, of being part of a 'mixed' group?

What are the challenges, for you, of being part of a 'mixed' group?

What impact does having a 'mixed' research advisory group have on the research process?

Lessons learned

These last few questions are about your overall views of the research process so far:

What have been the key strengths of the Follow-On Research Project so far?

What have been the key limitations of the Follow-On Research Project so far?

What could have been done differently/better?

SELF-COMPLETE QUESTIONNAIRE

Activities/meetings getting us ready to choose a researcher:

Please rate, on a scale from 1-5 (1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree) your agreement with the following statements

The activities were fun	1	2	3	4	5
I didn't learn anything new about research	1	2	3	4	5
The activities helped me to learn something new about research	1	2	3	4	5
I felt listened to during the meetings	1	2	3	4	5
The activities were boring	1	2	3	4	5
Other group members didn't seem interested in what I had to say	1	2	3	4	5
The hand-outs we received during the activities were easy to understand	1	2	3	4	5

Activities to help us short-list the researchers

I felt comfortable making a decision about who should be asked to send in a full research proposal	1	2	3	4	5
I felt comfortable making a decision about who should be asked to interview	1	2	3	4	5
My opinions about the researchers were listened to by other group members	1	2	3	4	5
The way researchers were selected to send in a full research proposal was fair	1	2	3	4	5
The way researchers were short-listed was fair	1	2	3	4	5
I agreed with the final decision about who would be interviewed	1	2	3	4	5
My opinion about who should be short-listed didn't count (matter)	1	2	3	4	5

Interview

Other group members listened to my opinion about the interview format	1	2	3	4	5
The interview included questions I thought were important to ask	1	2	3	4	5
I was never given a chance to ask researchers questions I thought were important	1	2	3	4	5
I was never asked my opinion about the interview format	1	2	3	4	5
My views about the interview format were just as important as other group members	1	2	3	4	5
My views about who should do the research were just as important to the final decision as other group members' views	1	2	3	4	5
The researchers we hired valued my participation on the Research advisory group	1	2	3	4	5
I'm confident we chose the best researchers for the job	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX 5
RESPONSES TO THE SELF-COMPLETE QUESTIONNAIRE

Activities/Meetings getting us ready to choose a researcher

Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The activities were fun	1	3	2		
I didn't learn anything new about research				4	2
The activities helped me to learn something new about research	1	4	1		
I felt listened to during the meetings	5	1			
The activities were boring			1	3	2
Other group members didn't seem interested in what I had to say					6
The handouts we received during the activities were easy to understand	2	4			

Activities to help us short-list the researchers

Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I felt comfortable making a decision about who should be asked to send in a full research proposal	2	3			
I felt comfortable making a decision about who should be asked to interview	3	2			
My opinions about the researchers were listened to by other group members	3	3			
The way researchers were selected to send in a full research proposal was fair	4	1	1		
The way researchers was short-listed was fair	3	2	1		
I agreed with the final decision about who would be interviewed	4	1	1		
My opinion about who should be short-listed didn't count (matter)				1	4

Interview

Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Other group members listened to my opinion about the interview format	3	3			
The interview included questions I thought were important to ask	4	2			
I was never given a chance to ask researchers questions I thought were important	3	3			
I was never asked my opinion about the interview format			1		5
My views about the interview format were just as important as other group members		1			5
My views about who should do the research were just as important to the final decision as other group members' views	4	2			
The researchers we hired valued my participation on the Research advisory group	2	1	2		
I'm confident we chose the best researchers for the job	4	1	1		

Summary

Research Advisory Group members felt their opinions were valued by each other and that their contribution to the commissioning process mattered at least in terms of selecting appropriate researchers. Although we didn't do an in-depth analysis of the activities, the responses strongly suggest that the activities we developed coupled with each member's desire to value the other group members' opinions equally, enabled all advisory group members to feel comfortable providing their opinions and valued as equal partners in the process.

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