

Top tips for involving children and young people in research

1

Involve us early on in as many parts of the research as possible, so that we can truly get involved in shaping the project.

2

Show respect for our contribution – please help to make us feel included and like an equal part of the team.

3

Find ways to ensure we can all contribute as much as we want to; whatever our age, needs or abilities.

4

Provide training and support opportunities so that we are better equipped to get fully involved in research.

5

Use words and phrases that we can understand, but without trying to sound young and cool!

6

Make sure our involvement benefits us too, such as by learning new skills, receiving vouchers, payment, meals out, references or simply by having fun!

7

We have busy lives and our circumstances, interests and availability might change. Reassure us if we have to miss a session and fill us in afterwards.

8

Organise meetings at times and places that are easy for us to get to and where we feel comfortable.

9

Communicate with us in different ways such as online, text, social media, phone and post. Ask us what we prefer as we do not all use social media or email.

10

If there is a gap between meetings, **keep in touch and give us updates**, even if it's such a simple 'hello, here's what has been happening...'

11

Give us feedback on what happens after our involvement – show us what difference we are making, so we know our involvement is worthwhile.

12

Try not to make assumptions about what we are interested in or what we are capable of – please ask us.

13

If you're able to, please provide decent refreshments for events and meetings we attend – it can sometimes be the deciding factor as to whether we attend, or not!

*“Patient and public involvement with children and young people is a self-evident benefit that fair and equal partnerships in research require. **Everyone with a legitimate interest in research should be able to contribute to its design, review, conduct and dissemination**, otherwise our venture with children and young people in the driving seat will fail to thrive.”*

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