



USING THE 'ABOUT ME' AND 'MORE ABOUT ME' FORMS

SOME GUIDANCE FOR PROVIDERS

The purpose of gathering information is so that children and young people are safe, welcome and able to take part. You are less interested in the detail of the child's condition than you are in what you need to do to ensure that they are ok and have a good time. The key question is usually 'So what do we need to do about that?'

Different parents will want to give you different amounts of information. Talk to them before you give any forms to them! Tell them that you want to know enough about their child so that you can meet any particular requirements they may have and include them successfully in what you are doing. You may want more information about a child who has multiple or complex impairments. No form is exhaustive, and you may want to ask more questions depending on the answers you hear.

However, you should be asking for no more than you need. The purpose of the form is not to fill it! It is to help you ask appropriate questions if you actually need to. We have put prompts on the form to help you think about things you may need to ask. You can share the form and its prompt questions with parents if you wish.

So make sure you find out enough to ensure that children are safe and stand a good chance of being happy. Pretty much everything else you can discover for yourselves as you go along, and you and the child/young person will make more interesting discoveries if you aren't both simply looking to reinforce a pile of written information that has been gathered in advance.

The most important thing you do is not to gather reams of info but to establish a good relationship with mum/dad and with the child/young person. They need to trust you. Many of the most successful bits of work have set up pre-visits to families or from families and/or had advance gatherings of the whole group.

PROCESS FOR USING 'ABOUT ME' AND 'MORE ABOUT ME' FORMS

- 1) Don't just send out the forms!
- 2) Agree with the family when you can have a chat with them about how to include their child successfully. Arrange to have a decent phone conversation, to visit the family, or for the family to visit you. Involve the child/young person where possible.

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- 3) Child/young person/parent needs to complete the *About Me* form. Agree whether they will complete the *More About Me* form or whether you fill it in during or after the time that you speak with them.
- 4) If child/young person needs constant one to one assistance or specialist support that your team cannot provide, discuss with family the best arrangements for you/them identifying a personal assistant.
- 5) Ensure that the *About Me* form and the completed *More About Me* form are signed by parent/s (suggest that they keep a copy for future use too).
- 6) If you need a medical sheet in addition to the *More about Me* form, ensure parent/s write down their child's medical requirements and sign the sheet for you.
- 7) If the child/family don't already use one, one or more of you together may want to create a single sheet of key info about them - sometimes called a Passport or Communication Passport - including a photo, likes/dislikes and any brief crucial info.
- 8) All paperwork you gather should inform your risk assessment processes.