

# Participation and Listening

with

Children and Young People



## Getting Started

Edited material from Year of the Child 2009

Children, Young People and Families Team 2015

Jesus placed a child in the middle of the adults and said that we must be like children if we are to enter the kingdom of heaven. It is right that we seek to teach children and young people the stories that have been passed down to us, but it is also important that we listen to what they can tell us about their understanding of God and the kingdom of heaven.

# An opportunity to transform lives and communities

This resource gives people a chance to listen, to celebrate and to be challenged by the insight of the children and young people who are part of the church, so that we can learn and move forward together.

We hope that by listening to the children and young people the church can learn and develop so that we can be ready to serve God faithfully now and into the future.

Think about what you can do with the information and how you might share it with the wider church and community.

If there are challenges and/or suggestions for the church or group, how will you take them forward?

Please do not make promises you can't keep, rather think about the opportunities to move forward together.

***There are three ways to explore each activity...***

# Questions

These can be answered individually or as a group, in writing or by discussion. There are no right or wrong answers and you do not need to answer them all! The children and young people can interpret the questions as they wish. It is more important to listen to what they want to say than to stick rigidly to the questions.

# Creative

Look at the questions and have a discussion around the topic. You do not need to cover all of the questions!

Using the questions as a starting point then be creative in response to the discussion, maybe thinking about a specific question, either individually, in small groups or as one group!

## ***This could be done in many ways...***



Provide a range of art and craft materials for collage. Create a collage reflecting responses to the questions. It could be on the theme of giving or gifts. It could be a diary showing the activities which you think could happen each week.



Shoot a video, or take photographs or record interviews on a sound file.



Draw, paint or make pictures to show how your church uses people's gifts.



Make a model of how your church uses gifts, or how you would like it to be.



Create an article or an advert that could be used in a school newspaper, or a local newspaper to show people what gifts are and what you do in your church.



Create a service sheet for a service about gifts that you would like to lead or be part of.



Be creative about gifts in any other way you can think of

# Play

Look at the questions and have a discussion around the topic. You do not need to cover all of the questions!

Then in the response to the discussions let the children or young people play!

- ☺ Allow the children or young people to play as freely as possible and explore the topic for themselves. When given time to play their imagination will often be all they need, finding their own props from the things around them!
- ☺ Providing some toys and resources for the children and young people to play with, may stimulate their imagination, though this is not always necessary, children have amazing imaginations!

## ***For example;***

- ☺ some lego or other building blocks to build with
- ☺ play dough for modelling
- ☺ some dolls or action figures
- ☺ things to dress up in for role play
- ☺ things that maybe used at meal times, to think about the last supper and communion,
- ☺ items which may be used during a baptism, like a bowl, a jug or shell, a baby, a towel and a candle.

Observe them quietly while they play

Give the children and young people the opportunity to tell you about what they are doing.

As they play, notice the things that they notice, observe and note the way they explore.

Questions are available for a variety of topics which can be answered individually or as a group, in writing or by discussion.

*There are no right or wrong answers and you do not need to answer them all!*

*Encourage the children and young people to interpret the questions as they wish. It is more important to listen to what they want to say than to stick rigidly to the questions.*

*It might be helpful to have a discussion as a group even if questions are answered individually, it's not a test!*

**The Children, Young People and Families Team**

**Diocese of Leeds**

**[www.leeds.anglican.org/children-youth](http://www.leeds.anglican.org/children-youth)**