YOUTH MAKES MUSIC MAKES

Youth Music Evaluation Toolkit

Using the questionnaires

Each questionnaire you want to use for your project should be completed by participants near the beginning and near the end of the project.

The Early Years tools should be completed by a regular attendee at the sessions (e.g. a practitioner, music leader or parent) at the beginning and the end (ideally the same person will fill it out at the beginning and end). The Music Leader tools should be completed by the music leaders and trainees involved in the project at the beginning and the end.

If you want to demonstrate change that has happened because of your project, it is important that you record the responses near the beginning and near the end so you can calculate the difference.

It is important to use the same ID number on the questionnaire so you can match the responses at the beginning and end of the project. Ask the participants to complete the questionnaire, or spend some time filling it out with them as necessary. Then store the questionnaires somewhere secure before putting the results into an Excel spreadsheet.

All the questions are on 'likert scales' scored from 5 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree) which makes it easy to store the numbers and calculate 'mean scores' (averages) for your sample overall. Each scale has five questions, so the maximum a person can score on each scale is 25 (35 for the scales that also have a ladder question) and the minimum on each scale is 5 (or 6 for the ladder scales). The total number of questions you will ask depends on how many scales you use (which is decided by what outcomes you are looking to measure).

When putting your questionnaire data into Excel, store the ID number in the first row, enter the date of the first survey, and the date of the follow up survey (you can put all the data in at once at the end, or put it in when you get it and enter the follow up data at a later stage - the latter is recommended). The next step is to put the individual score for each question in each of the associated columns. There is also a total score column which will tell you about each scale as a whole (e.g. how have people's musical ability overall changed).

You can work out 'where people are' on each scale by looking at the 'baseline scores' (how they scored early on in the project) - this might be a useful way to know what elements you want to focus on in delivery (e.g. if all your participants are scoring low on the 'opportunities in your area' ladder question, you could encourage music leaders to focus on this in discussions with participants).

Question means

Question means

The next step is to figure out mean (average) scores for each question.

Add up all the scores in a column under a particular question and divide the total by the number of responses you have, this tells you where your participants are overall in relation to each question.

Example – The first question on the musical development scale tells us how participants feel about their musical ability. 'Dougie' rated himself 2 at the beginning, so we can work with Dougie to try and improve his score by the end. There are 24 other people on the project. By adding up Dougie's score with everyone else's and dividing it by 25, the overall score for question 1 (self rated musical ability) is 2.4 at the start of the project. By repeating the same task at the end you can observe change (indicating musical ability).

Scale means

Do the same thing for your 'total score' column and this will tell you where your participants are for each scale overall.

Example - For the musical development scale, you might find that, overall, your participants are scoring around 9 or 10 at baseline (Scale Mean), but after 10 sessions, when you collect the follow up data, the average score is 13 or 14 (don't be scared of decimals - they just tell you whether it's closer to 13 or 14!). This is a really interesting finding - it seems that there is some clear development in overall musical ability as a result of your project. This might not happen, but by looking at question means you will see whether there have been changes in some respects but not others.

N.B. The scores won't always go up. Maybe the participants were overestimating their musical ability in the beginning, and the project has made them realise that they don't think they have much ability overall compared to others or the music leaders. This is completely fine and to be expected. When presenting the results of your surveys you can discuss this as one of the explanations - you'll probably also have lots of juicy qualitative data that will help to explain the findings anyway. The point to remember is that this is a research exercise and there will be results you didn't expect.

If you subtract the baseline scores from the final scores, you will see the difference (this could be + or -), which is a good way to finish the analysis (e.g. overall musical ability for the group increased by 3 points). Again you can present this at a question level or scale level as appropriate.

Early years Musical Assessment Scale

Based on Tuning in to children (Evans/Youth Music 2007) and Young (2003)

For completion by early years practitioners, music leaders or parents:

Children aged 0-2

Please mark on the scale the extent to which your young musician…

1. Is moved or affected by music (e.g. soothed and settled by lullabies)

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		*Neither agree nor disagree*		*Disagree*

2. Enjoys being physically moved to rhythms and beats

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		*Neither agree nor disagree*		*Disagree*

4. Shakes, taps, lifts and drops objects to explore the sounds they make

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		*Neither agree nor disagree*		*Disagree*

5. Explores their voices with single syllable sounds (or more)

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		*Neither agree nor disagree*		*Disagree*

website: network.youthmusic.org.uk
email: grants@youthmusic.org.uk

Children aged 2-3

Please mark on the scale the extent to which your young musician…

1. Participates in play songs and songs sung to them

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree

2. Participates in play songs and songs sung to them

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree

3. Develops rhythmic, large body movements and begin to learn control and coordination

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree

4. Shows responses to music being performed, from intent listening to energetic dancing

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree

5. Imitates the musical action of others

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree

Children aged 3-5
Please mark on the scale the extent to which your young musician…

1. Sings spontaneously in a range of different ways, alone and with others

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		*Neither agree nor disagree*		*Disagree*

2. Begins to match pitch, keep in time, and coordinate their musical ideas with others

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		*Neither agree nor disagree*		*Disagree*

3. Repeats, changes, and develops their own, or borrowed, musical ideas into more complicated structures

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		*Neither agree nor disagree*		*Disagree*

4. Learned to control and coordinate their whole body and finer body movements, increasing their range of dances and instruments

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		*Neither agree nor disagree*		*Disagree*

5. Can be an audience listener to live music for short periods of time

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		*Neither agree nor disagree*		*Disagree*

Young Musicians Development Scale

(for children aged 6-10)

Please circle the face that is closest to how you feel about the following questions…

1. How much do you like doing music?

Very much   Not very much

2. How good at music do you think you are?

Very much   Not very much

3. How much does making music make you feel happy or not so happy?

Very much   Not very much

4. How much do you enjoy learning new things with music?

Very much   Not very much

5. How much do enjoy making music with your friends and other people?

Very much   Not very much

Musical Development Scale

Please rate how far you agree with the following statements:

1. I am pleased with my current level of musical ability

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree

2. I am good at making sense of what other people are expressing through music (e.g. thoughts, feelings and emotions)

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree

3. I can express my thoughts, feelings and emotions through my own music making

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree

4. I am committed to my own music making

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree

5. I feel like music making allows me to be creative

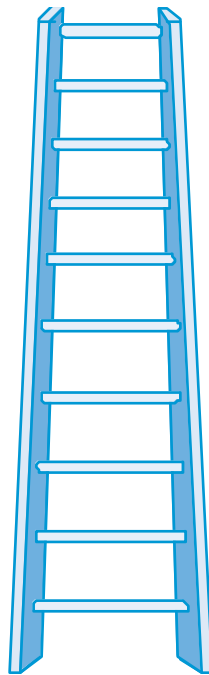| 5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree

6. Here is a picture of a ladder, the top of the ladder means you know lots of places to make music in the community in which you live, and the bottom of the ladder means you don't know anywhere to make music in your community. Please mark on the ladder how much you know about opportunities to make music in your community:

Lots

Nothing

Agency and Citizenship Scale

Please rate how far you agree with the following statements:

1. I feel listened to by the people around me

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree

2. I make decisions that are good for me

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree

3. I feel like what I say and do will make a difference to my life

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree

4. I feel well connected to others in my community

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree

5. If I needed help I would know where to get it

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree

Attitude and Behaviour Scale

Please rate how far you agree with the following statements:

1. I work well with other people

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree

2. I usually turn up to things on time

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree

3. I am respectful of other people

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree

4. I make a positive contribution to my community

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree

5. I am good at committing to things

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree

Wellbeing Scale

(based on WEMWBS 2009)

Please rate how much you agree with the following statements:

In the last month...

1. I've been feeling relaxed

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree

2. I've been feeling confident

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree

3. I've been interested in new things

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree

4. I've been interested in new things

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree

5. I've been feeling good about myself

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree

6. Think about this ladder as picturing your life at the moment. The top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you, the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you. Put a mark on the ladder for where you think you stand at the moment.

Best Possible Life
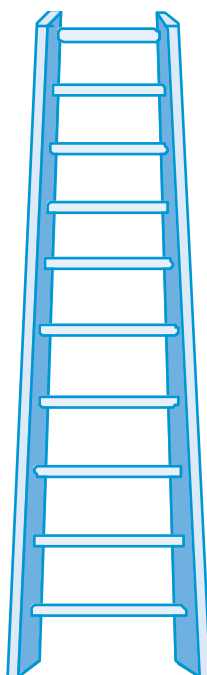
Worst Possible Life

Job Satisfaction Scale

*(based on Illardi et al. (1993) Motivation
and Job Satisfaction Scale)*

Please rate how far you agree with the following statements in relation to your work on this project:

1. I feel I have a lot of input into how my work is done

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		*Neither agree nor disagree*		*Disagree*

2. I am free to express my ideas and opinions about the work I do

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		*Neither agree nor disagree*		*Disagree*

3. I have been able to learn useful new skills on my job

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		*Neither agree nor disagree*		*Disagree*

4. I have developed, musically, doing this job

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		*Neither agree nor disagree*		*Disagree*

5. I get a sense of accomplishment from my job

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		*Neither agree nor disagree*		*Disagree*

Professional Practice Scale

(based on Musicleader Code of Practice)

Please rate how far you agree with the following statements in relation to your work on this project:

1. I am well prepared and organised for my music practitioner work

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree

2. I have a strong sense of responsibility for the safety of myself and the children and young people I work with

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree

3. My music skills are relevant and up to date for the work I am doing

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree

4. I regularly reflect on and evaluate my work

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree

5. I am committed to my own continuing professional development

5	4	3	2	1
Strongly agree		Neither agree nor disagree		Disagree

Presenting your questionnaire findings

Once you have calculated your scores it is important to communicate this effectively. You can put baseline and follow up scores in a table, along with the difference, presenting your findings for each question and for each scale overall. You could also put your findings into a bar or line chart which is a useful way of showing any change. Remember to also write a few lines on what you are presenting. Statistics never speak for themselves and you should be very open and clear about how you have interpreted them.

It's also very important not to overclaim. *Remember that these are indicators of outcomes, not concrete evidence*. You will be presenting these findings alongside all sorts of other evidence and trying to make sense of it all together. It's also tricky to make huge claims about change (and the extent to which your project is responsible for that change) when you might have a very small sample or the way you are delivering changes throughout the project. These are interesting and useful tools for measuring and investigating outcomes – they are not a 'magic bullet'.

Your own analysis can go into the final reports you send to Youth Music and other funders and help you to show the effects of your project to others. Unfortunately Youth Music will not have capacity to conduct analysis for individual projects, but it will contribute hugely to our analysis of projects at a national level.

Focus groups

Focus groups can be a great way to gather evaluation data and keep track of outcomes throughout a project. They can offer an opportunity to gather a lot of data at once, as well as to instigate debate and collect a range of opinions. If used at different times across a project they can also show how things are progressing. Focus groups can be used with participants, practitioners, wider community members, or anyone attached to the project.

Focus groups can be more formal 'separate' activities in a project (i.e. a focus group session held after a main delivery session), or a shorter reflective time at the beginning or end of a delivery session. It is important in both instances to be clear that you are looking to discuss particular questions or topics, and that people are aware that they are contributing to project evaluation. As with interviews, focus groups are guided conversations aiming to focus on particular outcome areas and 'delve deeper' into why certain changes may or may not be taking place.

Focus groups are not solely intended to shape delivery although this is a really useful function and an important way to involve people in how projects are run (i.e. in many projects, participants will be consulted on what kind of musical content they may want, or which music practitioner will lead a particular session). If this type of consultation is already taking place, it is a great opportunity to gather evaluation data relating to your intended outcomes and insert some other questions (e.g. how the group feel they are progressing musically, or how well they are getting on with one another).

Consent, confidentiality, and anonymity are also very important when using focus groups for evaluation. Participants must be clear that they are contributing their thoughts and opinions to the evaluation and their names (or any other identifying information) should be taken off all transcripts and reports. Confidentiality is particularly important, since these are group situations, participants must be made to feel safe and all should commit to honouring confidentiality beyond the focus group situation. This last point should be especially considered if working with a group of young people who don't know each other very well, or are not mature enough to honour confidentiality.

Box 1. Example Focus Group Topic Guide – Making Sounds

Q1. What are the best things about making music?

Q2. List the three things you most want to learn from this project and let's talk about how we can best do that

Q3. What are the best ways for us to improve our music making?

Box 2. Example Focus Group Topic Guide – Making Sounds

In order to explore changes in musical ability over the course of the project we held two focus groups with the same 5 participants (one after the first session and one after the penultimate session). In the first session the group agreed that they most wanted to learn how to play the guitar and keyboard, as well as song-writing, and how to record a track. They recognised that each of these things would take time and dedication, as well as continued learning and practice beyond the project. When asked to reflect on this as a group at the end of the project, every participant noted that they had clearly increased their skills in the three key areas they had hoped to. One participant, Jo (name changed), noted how they had been forced to work together in order to progress musically:

We all spoke about how we would have to practice loads to be good enough to record the track, but it was only when we were all doing our different instruments in the studio that I realised that we had to all be really good, if one person hadn't done their bit, then we would've sounded rubbish.

Interviews

Interviews (whether structured, semi-structured, or completely 'open') are very common in project evaluations. They provide an opportunity to get a large amount of detail about a particular aspect of project delivery, whether from a participant, music practitioner, project manager, parent/carer, member of the community, or anyone else linked to the project.

One common description of an evaluation interview is a 'conversation with a purpose'. In that sense it is useful to have a clear idea of what information you are trying to access before the interview starts. Interviews can be especially useful if used to shed light on the meaning of something that has been observed using another indicator or source of evidence. For this reason it's important to use 'open' questions in interviews (i.e. not questions that are designed to be answered with a yes or no). It's also important that you don't ask leading questions (e.g. 'how much do you love taking part in 'Making Sounds'?).

For example, you have seen that the overall score of musical ability in your group (using the 'Youth Music Musical Ability questionnaire') at the start of the project is 2, but you expected it to be much higher. By using some of the same questions from the questionnaire in an interview situation with a single young person, you are told that, when considering themselves against other musicians in the group, they have actually scored themselves lower than they otherwise would have. By combining methods in this way you have a much clearer indication of how musical ability is changing within the group.

With structured or semi-structured interviews it is useful to use a topic guide (i.e. a list of questions that you want answered) to keep you on track. These don't have to be answered in the same format by everyone you want to interview, but should relate directly to the outcome(s) you are measuring. It is also important to consider where and when you would like to conduct an interview and make sure that you are putting the needs of your interview participant first (they should also be made to feel comfortable throughout).

It is also important to ensure confidentiality to interviewees. If you wish them to be open and honest with you and discuss how they have been feeling about certain aspects of their development, it is important that you honour their trust. You should reassure interviewees that anything they say will not be traced back to them and that you will anonymise their words. It is also important that participants have explicitly consented for their interview to be used in the evaluation.

It is useful to tape record interviews and to take notes throughout to keep you on track if there are any comments or questions that you want to come back to. These can also be used to store the material until you come to analyse and report on it. Tapes, notes and transcripts should also be handled with care to ensure confidentiality throughout.

Box 1. Example Interview Topic Guide – Making Sounds

Semi-structured interview with Meg (participant - week 1)

Q1. How do feel about your current level of musical ability?

Q2. What are the areas of your musical ability that you would most like to improve on?

Q3. Who are the people that are most important for you learning music?

Q4. What are the things that are most important for you to practice your music? Q5. What feelings do you get most from playing music?

Box 2. Reporting Example for Making Sounds – Semi-structured interview

In order to understand how musical ability was developing across the project we interviewed three participants at the beginning and at the end of their involvement (an example topic guide can be seen in attachment 1). When asked how they felt about their current level of musical ability at the beginning of the project, participants were clear that their experiences of music making had been limited to what they did at school. None of the participants were particularly sure of their own musical ability but did show an eagerness to commit to improving musically, due mostly to their interest in listening to music.

For example, Meg (not her real name) suggested:

Since I left school I haven't done anything musical, but I do really like watching the music channels when I can, and it's always on in the background. I do like it, that's why I always think 'it'd be really cool if I could record my own track one day' or whatever.

Observation and diaries

Observation

Observation can be a really useful tool for establishing what skills, behaviour and interactions are like at different stages of a project. It is a subjective measure of intended outcomes (i.e. It is based on one person's or group of people's, perceptions), but taken alongside other methods can be a really useful indicator of change.

Observation can be carried out by a project manager, a music practitioner, a parent/carer, or a young person/participant. It is often useful to have an idea of what should be observed, and to use the same observer at each stage. For example, if you know you are looking for changes in musical ability, you can prepare the person doing the observation to look out for participants picking up certain new musical skills, or their ability to play a piece of music at different times (e.g. At the beginning, middle and end of a project). If you are interested in changes in behaviour, you can ask the observer to look at how people are getting on with each other, whether they are paying attention, or whether they are being helpful in sessions.

Observers can use a diary or topic guide with a set of specific questions (or things to look out for) in it, or they can simply take notes on a blank piece of paper. If it's not appropriate to take notes during a session, the observer can write them up immediately after a session in a reflective diary.

Diaries

Diaries can be a really useful reflective tool at key stages of, or throughout, a project. Diaries can be kept by participants, music practitioners, project managers, or anyone else attached to a project. Diaries are particularly well suited to recording change since people are asked to consider their thoughts about their skills (or other people's skills), attitudes, feelings and so forth at different stages in time.

A very simple approach to using diaries in evaluation is to set three key questions to be answered at the end of each session (or monthly – whatever is appropriate). Diaries can be written or recorded (audio or video – or song?). Diaries can even be built-in as part of a reflective section at the end of a session – meaning the findings can be directly built in to the project's delivery the following week and so forth.

Diaries and observation sheets can also include quantitative scales if that is a useful way of tracking change (nb – these are indicators that, taken together, will indicate change in an intended outcome, so it's great to have both quantitative and qualitative evidence from a range of sources).

Box 1. Method example from Making Sounds – Observation and Diaries

Diaries to be completed by music leaders at the end of each session:

Q1. What did you think of the musical ability of the group at today's session?

I thought Mark and Susie had come on a lot, they were both willing to try the guitar for the first time and were keen to think about how they could start mixing up the composition a bit more by bringing in other instruments. Jen and Gary were more reluctant to try the guitar but spent most of the session working on the keyboard and clearly wanted to master the hook they'd been working on. Overall there was clear progression, but i'll keep an eye on mixing up the instruments as this seems to move people along the quickest in terms of picking one over the other and getting to grips with it.

Q2. How would you rate the musical ability of the group today overall?

5   4   ③   2   1

Q3. What did you think of the behaviour of the group at today's session?

No problems with behaviour today at all. Jen was a little reluctant to join in at the beginning but warmed up after a couple of ice breakers. They seem to be gelling as a group now, which is a big relief.

Q4. How would you rate the behaviour of the group today overall?

⑤   4   3   2   1

Box 2. Reporting example from Making Sounds – Observation and Diaries

In order to identify changes in musical ability and behaviour we asked music leaders to keep a diary of their observations at the end of each session. This focused on four questions: a description and rating of the musical skills of the participants, and a description and rating of the behaviour of the participants. Over 20 sessions the music leader rating of participants' musical ability went from a mean score of 2.5 to 4.5 (based on 5 music leader diaries). Music leaders also noted an improvement in participant behaviour, with the overall score going from 2.2 in the first session to 4.8 in the final session. These quantitative findings are supported by the reflections of the music leaders in the diaries:

ML1 : I saw a real improvement in Jen's keyboard playing today, she had clearly been practicing at home because she could hardly play the three chords together at the end of last week's session and she started off today's session playing the hook brilliantly to get us all started!

Creative methods

Most projects and sessions provided through Youth Music funding will involve some level of creativity. It is therefore important to use creative evaluation methods wherever possible.

Administering questionnaires using creative methods
these are just a few suggestions we have seen presented back to us over recent years:

- use the cross fader or volume control on a mixing desk as a sliding scale when asking certain questions
- use drums to get a response to a scale question in a questionnaire (where drumming very loudly means you strongly agree and drumming very quietly means you strongly disagree).
- Post five happy to unhappy faces at different areas of the room and, instead of using a questionnaire, read a question aloud and asks participants to go the face that most represents how they feel – then count them.

Using music, songs and lyrics in evaluation
Sometimes the musical creations of participants can tell us a huge amount about their development on a project. Comparing a recording of a participant's composition near the beginning and near the end of a project can show clear musical development. Similarly, looking at the lyrical complexity (or subject matter) over the course of a project can show wider social and personal development. These are fantastic sources of data to include in your evaluation and in showing progress towards your intended outcomes.

It is very important that participants have consented to these being used, and extra care should be taken if presenting these to a public audience or in reporting to ensure consent and anonymity.

Box 1. Reporting song lyrics in evaluation – Making sounds

Rob was very shy when asked to participate in the first song-writing session. He wrote a very short composition with his tutor which was lyrically and rhythmically, quite basic. His lyrics were imitative of an American 'gangsta rap' style (the chorus comprising of simply 'uh, uh, yeah bitch'). By week six rob was very excited about joining in with the song-writing sessions and often chose to lead the sessions by sharing his latest compositions. His week six song explored his feelings towards his recent custody experience and he commented that it made him feel better to share

It with the group in this way, rather than just talking about it. The lyrics themselves show an increasing maturity and greater sense of emotional expression. A sample from the lyrics is below:

Whenever I cried, felt like I'd died,
You're son, you're brother,
There's nothing inside

This lyrical and personal development is a clear indicator of how the workshops contributed to the intended outcome of improving participants' expressive and creative ability.

Notes, meeting minutes and emails

Many people are collecting useful evaluation material without even realising it, in the form of notes (in workbooks throughout project planning and development), meeting minutes, or emails exchanged between project workers or partners.

If you have organisational or relationship/partnership focused outcomes, these types of data can provide useful, time-based, reflections and observations. It is important to consider that meeting minutes may be used as evaluation data when setting agendas to ensure that certain questions are being addressed (e.g. an outcome focusing on the development of partnerships should ensure that advisory group meetings spend some time reflecting on partnership development).

As with other methods, short quantitative questionnaires can also be administered at meetings or amongst partners and stakeholders over email.

It is very important to remember consent if using notes, meeting minutes, or emails as evaluation data. You should be clear from the beginning if you are planning to use any otherwise confidential exchanges in your evaluation and seek appropriate permissions. If, on reflection, you see an email or meeting minutes that could be useful to indicate change in your outcomes reporting, seek permission to use these retrospectively.

Box 1. Reporting example from Making Sounds- Notes, Meeting Minutes and Emails

In order to track the development of partnerships between Youth Offending Teams and the host music organisation, an agenda item was added at the end of each advisory group meeting. All meeting attendees were asked to reflect on anything that had contributed to stronger working between project partners. An analysis of this section of the meeting minutes showed three main factors contributed to the strengthening of partnerships in this project:

It with the group in this way, rather than just talking about it. The lyrics themselves show an increasing maturity and greater sense of emotional expression. A sample from the lyrics is below:

Regular meetings – it was important for regular face to face meetings to take place, attendees felt a lot of meaning can get lost in email.

Shared outcomes – attendees felt it was important to have a clear sense of shared outcomes for each organisation from the beginning – highlighting the relevance of the project for each partner organisation.

Honouring commitments and mutual trust – attendees repeatedly mentioned thatthey felt partners should 'stick to their promises' or ensure that they follow through when making commitments, building shared trust across a project.

Ethics and consent

You will have your own consent systems, which you should adapt to let the young people (16+) or the child and parent/carer (0-15) know that you will be doing some evaluation of the project that will involve a short questionnaire (or whatever additional methods you may adopt). You need something signed and recorded that this is ok. Everyone also has the right to refuse to participate in the evaluation process at any point and you must destroy all data relating to that person. People are always more important than data.

You should keep the consent forms, but ensure that no identifying data is stored on questionnaires by using ID numbers. It is important that you assign an ID number to each person and keep a record so you can match up baseline and follow up data.

You also have to take responsibility for the secure storage of information. Under no circumstances should a third party be able to identify which data corresponds to which person (a good tip is to always store your ID system, matching names and numbers, separate from your excel data sheet). The same is true for paper questionnaires; always treat in confidence and store securely.

None of the scales in the tool are asking about particularly sensitive information, therefore it is unlikely that people will feel upset or harmed in any way by participating. However, taking part in any research exercise can be a reflective process and you should be equipped to support the children and young people if they are at all troubled by the process. This is especially true when working with vulnerable children and young people. Make it clear that everyone is free to stop participating at any point, and be prepared to signpost young people to appropriate services if you cannot deal with any issues raised.

Further ethical guidelines are provided by the Social Research Association and can be accessed here: *http://www.the-sra.org.uk/documents/pdfs/ethics03.pdf*