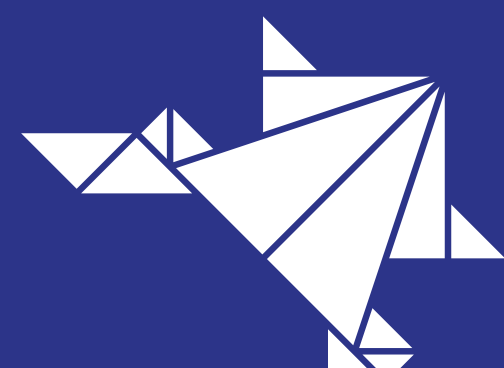


# The Inspirer



The young designers showing their approval of a Leapfrog workshop at Child Action Northwest in Blackburn.

## Young people make tools to ensure adults in authority hear their voices

A group of twelve to seventeen-year-olds from Lancashire came together to think of new creative ways to fix their problems as part of a co-design weekend run by the Leapfrog Research Project at Lancaster University.

The young people, our "young designers" were key to the design process of this project. When they came together for a residential weekend in November 2015, they were sharing the frustrations and challenges they face when they meet with social and youth workers, and other adults they work with on a daily basis and trying to think of new ways to fix the problems they face.

The young people were either in care, on the edge of care or young carers and therefore had plenty to say about how they felt about their experiences.

The Leapfrog project aimed to increase the confidence of the young designers and empower each one of them to do something about the things identified as problems, as well as have better conversations with the adults that they work with.

What followed during the weekend was a series of intensive processes in which the young people were supported to design and to test new ways to address this challenges. On the Leapfrog project, we refer to these new ways to fix things as 'tools'.

Dee Hennessy, an experienced facilitator, began the trust building process with the group by focussing on their individual responses about what annoyed them in the wider world. Sharing these responses in a safe way provided a solid basis on which to create a greater understanding of and increase their confidence to address the issues they were experiencing much closer to home. At the end of day one, the group agreed on four overall problems that we would try to fix, which included control in meetings, identity badges, 'loudmouth adults' and respect.

The next day, they got to work refining and testing ideas for tools that would tackle the group's four most frustrating problems.

**The group came up five diverse and flexible tools, which they named themselves; BADGE, Sound Advice, Topic Tally, Storyboard Contract and Target Control.**

The five tools aim to do the following, BADGE aims to make adults stop and think about labelling young people in care, Sound Advice aims to make sure that their real voices are heard and the other three give young people more control in meetings that focus on the young person but they have little control of.

**The five tools were refined further by Leapfrog, while staying true to the young designers' ideas.**

Details are contained inside this newspaper, which was edited and approved by the young people. Each tool appears alongside reasons to consider using it, tips for use and the thoughts from the young designers.

**You can use the tools straight away; just grab a pen or pull out a page to get started.**

If you love the tools and want to use them again, they are all available (with the exception of Sound Advice because all you need is sound recorder) to print from the Leapfrog website [www.leapfrog.tools](http://www.leapfrog.tools). Some of them are simple enough that you could sketch out the basic tool yourself.

**Keep your eyes open for updates on this project in the future because Leapfrog has big plans to share these tools across the country so that other young people can benefit from better encounters with the adults they work with and the services they represent.**

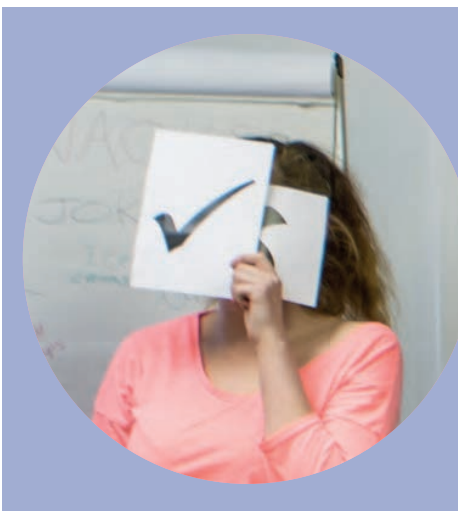
Download these tools and others at:  
[www.leapfrog.tools](http://www.leapfrog.tools)

We would love to hear about how you used the tools. Email us at:  
[leapfrog@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:leapfrog@lancaster.ac.uk)



**Young Designer:**  
 Doing the residential gave me more confidence.

I did things that I wouldn't have dreamed of doing with anyone else. I put all my ideas in and it was a good experience. I'm now friends with quite a few of the others that went to the residential.





# Contents

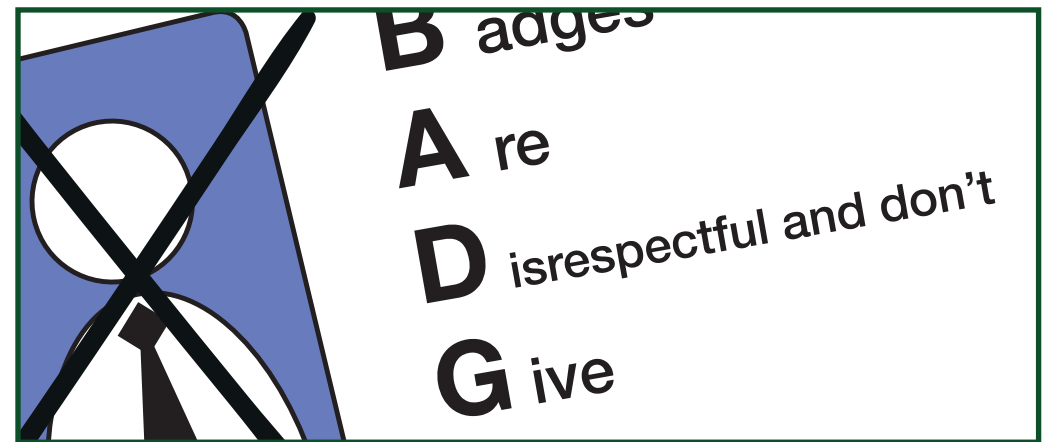
## Five tools for better engagement between young people and adults

**Page 4**

### BADGE

Identity BADGES that carry messages written in an acrostic poem style by the Leapfrog group of young designers to help support workers to think about why badges make young people feel uncomfortable.

Use BADGE when you want to show how stigmatising a badge can be, make people see things from your point of view, help your support workers to be more sensitive and prove your point in a way that people will understand.



**Page 5**

### Storyboard Contract

Young people can use the Storyboard Contract to help communicate ideas for better meetings to their social workers.

Use Storyboard Contract when you want to visualise what you want or how you feel, encourage someone to understand your experience, show - not just talk - about important issues or challenges and agree between you what can be changed.

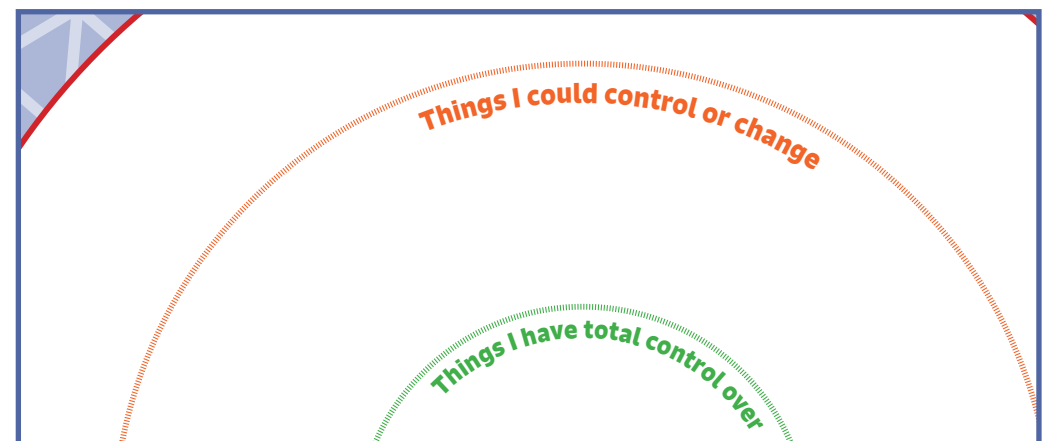


**Page 8**

### Target Control

Target control is a way to get young people to think about how they can gain more control over the things that frustrate them and make changes in their life.

Use Target Control when you want to get things in perspective, know what you can do something about, accept what you can't and concentrate your energy on the things you can change and improve.

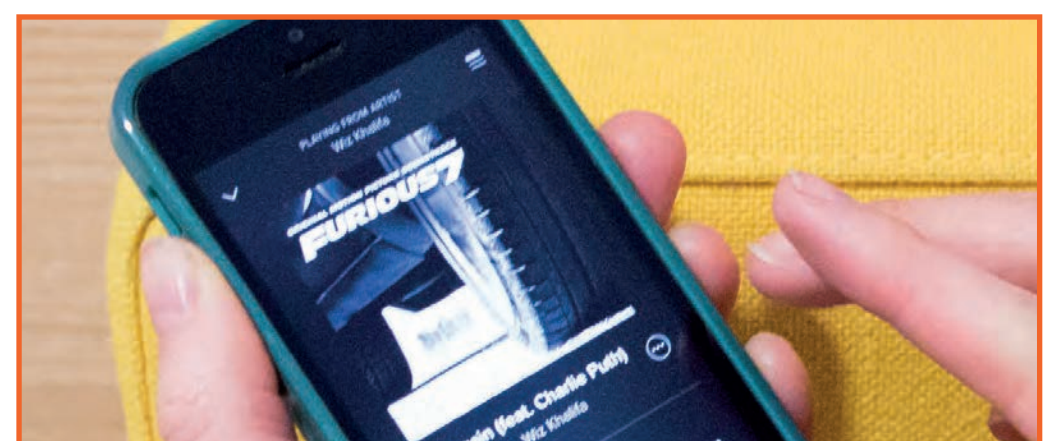


**Page 10**

### Sound Advice

Sound Advice is a simple way of capturing and recording the voices of young people giving real advice to other young people on a sound recorder or mobile phone app.

Sound Advice is an opportunity for young people to give advice to a younger person or someone going through something they have already experienced.



**Page 11**

### Topic Tally

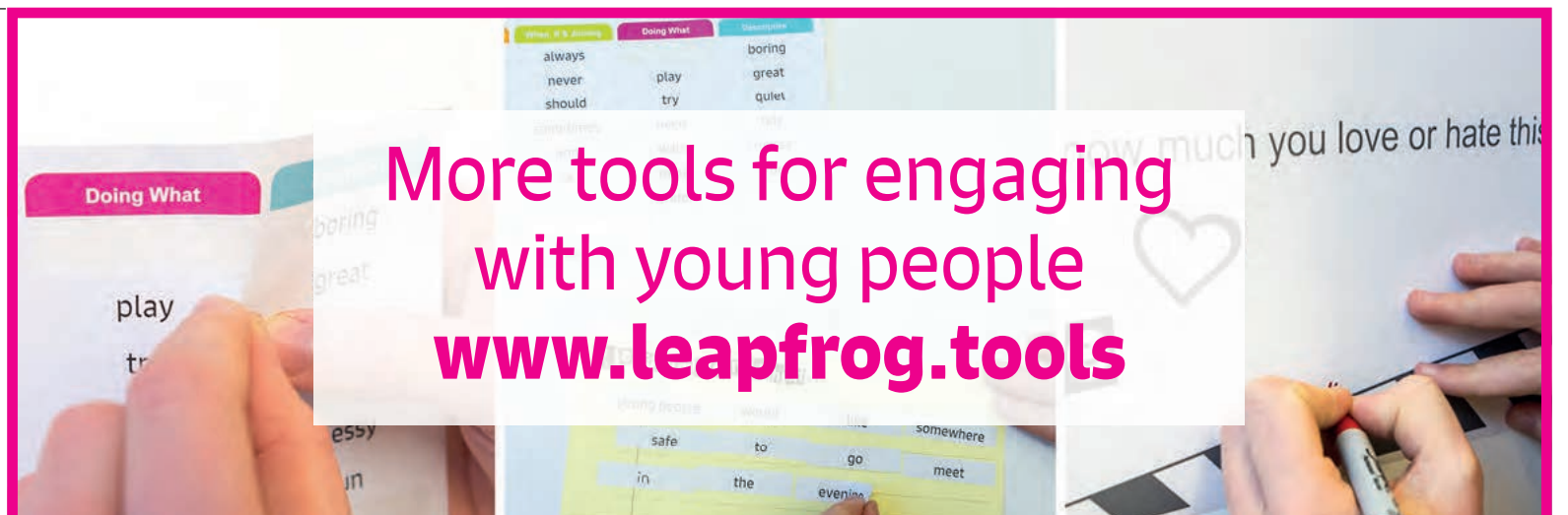
Young people take an active role in meetings about their lives with Topic Tally.

Use Topic Tally when you want to put your issues and concerns on an agenda, know what's important to the people you are meeting with, not run out of time when you're discussing everything and be really clear about what has been agreed.



## Who funded this project?

Leapfrog, a research project at Imagination Lancaster at Lancaster University is a £1.2 million 3 year Arts and Humanities Research Council funded project, part of the Connected Communities Programme. Connected Communities is designed to help us understand the changing nature of communities in their historical and cultural contexts and the role of communities in sustaining and enhancing our quality of life. Leapfrog would like to thank our partners Child Action North West and Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council for their contribution of time, resources and a team of committed Support Staff made this project possible.







Words written on the blackboard in the LICA building by the young designers throughout the weekend illuminated at night.

# Who are the Young Designers?

**The eleven young designers who took part in this project.**



**Christy Walsh**

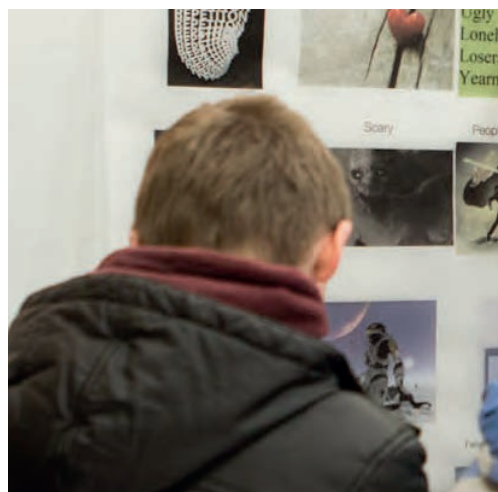
**Young Designer:**

## CANW

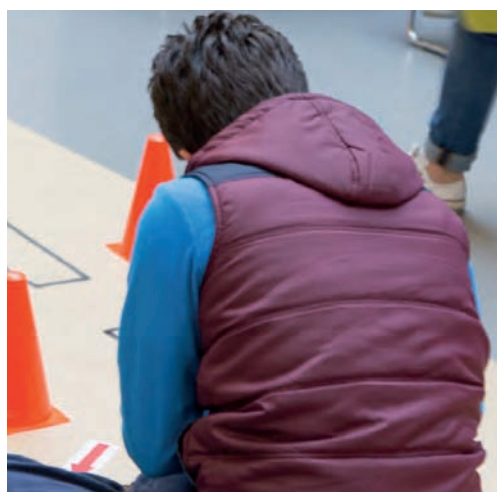
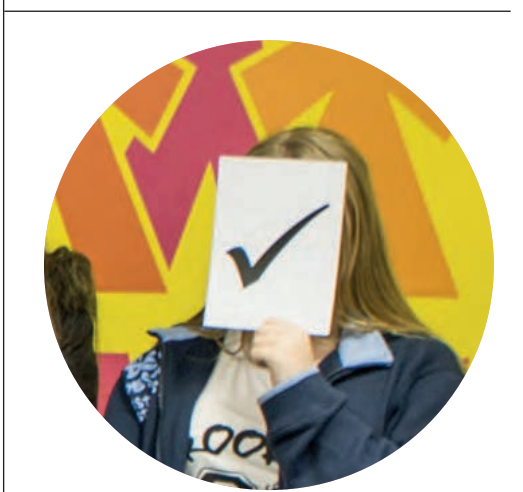
## This newspaper is fun

Christy Walsh, Resource Development Manager at CANW writes about the brilliant young people and their involvement in the project.

I don't really read newspapers but this isn't a newspaper to be me, it's not boring, it's more fun. You know everyone's points of view, so it's good.



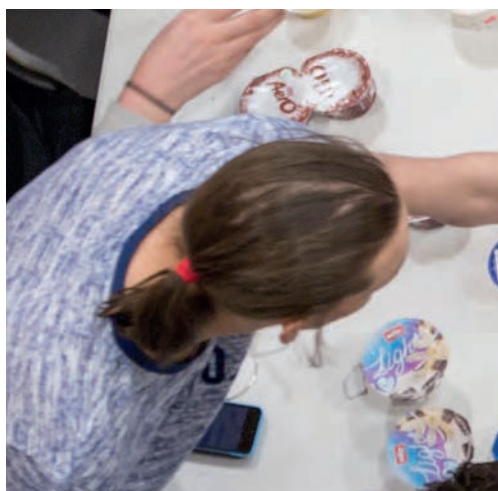
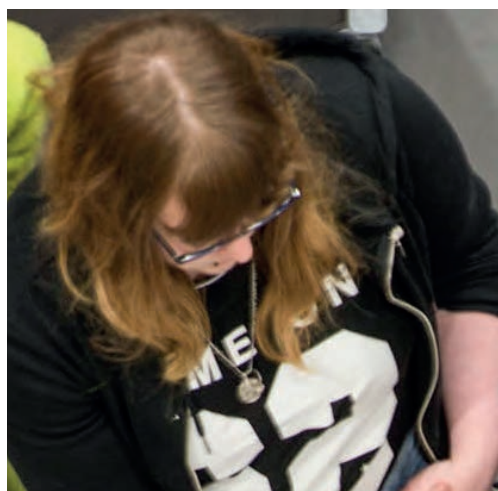
As part of the staff team at CANW, I have the privilege of working alongside some inspirational young people. The youngsters that access our services can face a range of challenges on a daily basis that others couldn't start to comprehend. Some provide an essential caring role, managing household chores and the daily care of a relative alongside the demands and expectations of being a typical teenager. Others, despite being placed in a nurturing foster family still manage a myriad of feelings and emotions that stem from being separated from their own birth families. Nevertheless, these youngsters on a daily basis show a level of courage and strength that I have much admiration for.



**The Leapfrog co-design project has provided young people with a unique opportunity to work alongside staff within a university-setting.**

**Young Designer:**

## What surprised me



They have harnessed their experiences of working with professionals to develop this creative toolkit that can be used to improve the communication between adults and young people. This is an impressive legacy and I hope that the young people involved in the project are as proud of themselves as the staff team that have supported them along the journey are!

**It surprised me how actually engaging it was with us**

...and not all sitting down. When most people do things like this they just make you sit there and look at sheets but this was games and boards and sticking and gluing and colouring, and everything! So yeah, it was good.





**BADGE**

# It's people in care versus the entire world

These identity BADGES carry messages written in an acrostic poem style by the Leapfrog group of young designers to help support workers think about why badges make young people feel uncomfortable.

**Why should you use them?**

All of the young designers had very strong feelings about their support workers wearing identity badges when they are out with young people in a public spaces, such as school.

**Referring to the discomfort, and alienation this can trigger, they talked about how "it draws attention to them, it makes them feel labelled and it undermines their confidence". It gives them the sense that it is "young people in care versus the entire world."**



**Young Designer:**

**I like the new badge because...**

I like the new badge because the badges we have now give everything away.

**People can see who you're out with and know about your life - they think they do anyway.**

I would give the badge to a social worker and tell them I don't like them wearing an identity badge.

**Do you really need to wear your identity badge all the time?**

By giving BADGES to a support workers, the young designers want to encourage them to think about about how wearing badges makes the young people feel labelled and consider if they really need to wear their badges all the time. Just looking at the BADGES the young designers created could spark an interesting conversation between the support worker and the young person.

The young designers and the support workers present at the residential discussed that sometimes there are situations where identity badges are necessary. Together, they compiled a list of exceptions, which are printed below to go on the reverse of the BADGE.

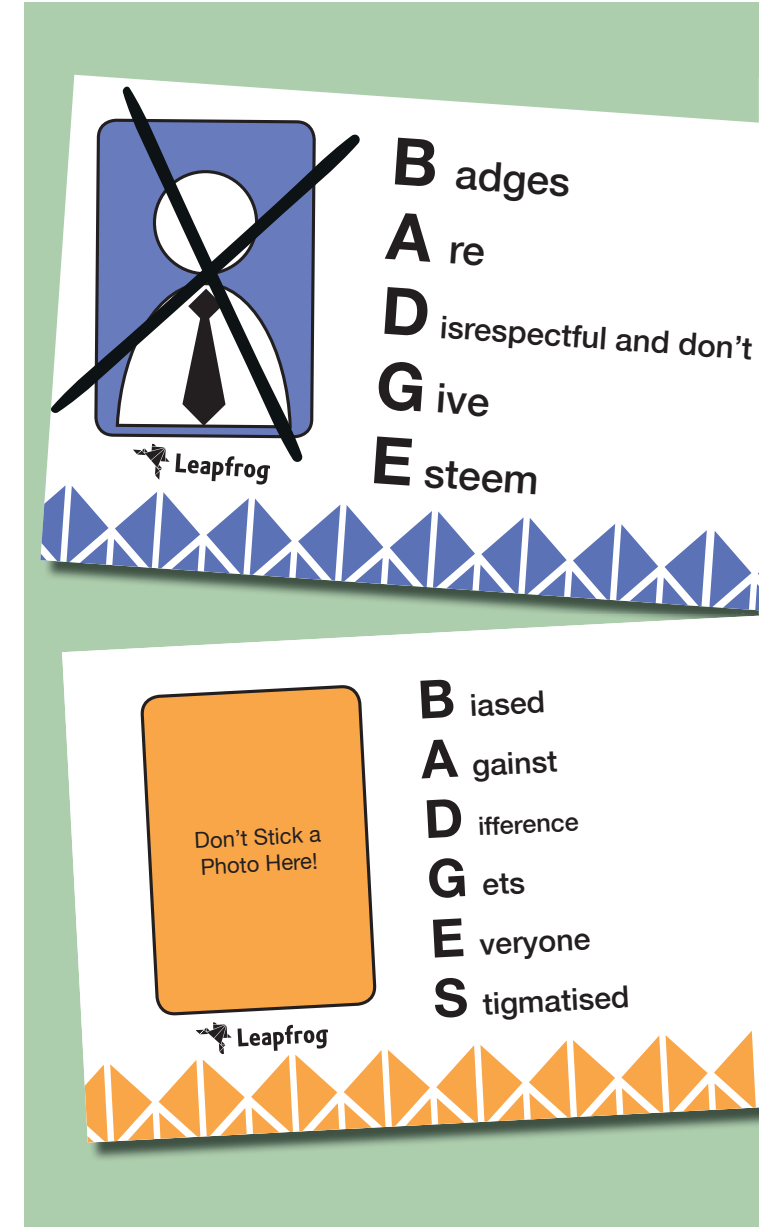
**Cut Along the Dotted Line**

Anyone can cut one out of this newspaper page to show people.

Our two designs are printed here to use but if you would like more, they can be printed from the website [www.leapfrog.tools/badge](http://www.leapfrog.tools/badge)



Groups selected images of things that 'do their heads in'.



The BADGE designs.



Individuals work on acrostic poems for the word badge, which described how they feel about identity badges.

## Cut Out and Use BADGES

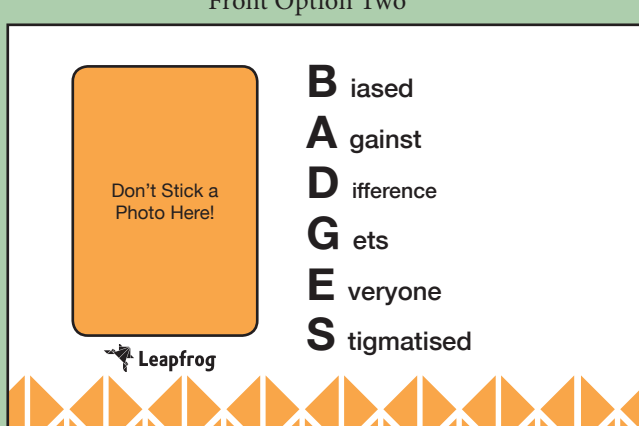
The young designers chose their two favourite designs, which can be cut out and used or downloaded from the website.



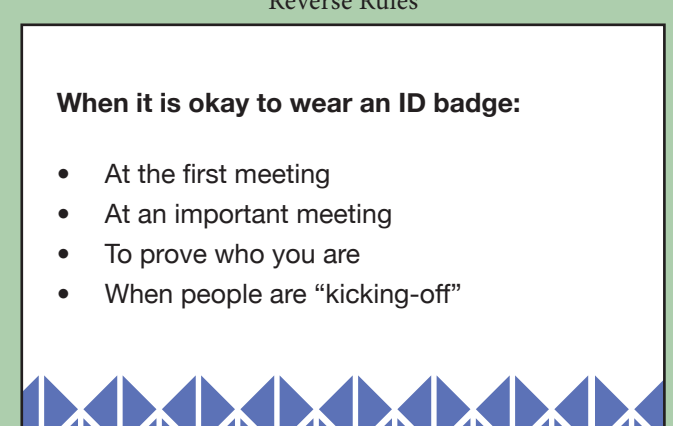
Front Option One



Front Option Two



Reverse Rules



**When it is okay to wear an ID badge:**

- At the first meeting
- At an important meeting
- To prove who you are
- When people are "kicking-off"



# Dream and Nightmare Meetings with Social Workers

Young people can use the Storyboard Contract to help communicate ideas for better meetings to their social workers.

### Why should you use it?

Our young designers talked about how they are the centre of attention in their meetings with adults such as social workers, teachers and foster parents but they all agreed that in those meetings they are the centre of attention but they do not feel involved and as a result, often feel both isolated and also bored.

They would like to have more control over their own meetings, therefore we came up with and tested an idea for a storyboard. The storyboard acts as a way for young people to tell a story about how they feel about their meetings and explore ideas they have for how they could be made better.

Young people can use the storyboard to bring their experiences and ideas to life and use it to help them have a discussion about improving meetings with their social workers. Hopefully some of the ideas can be made real for the young person and therefore it can act as a contract, a visual promise and this is why the young designers decided to call it the 'Storyboard Contract'.

### What we found

We found that even the quietest of the young designers were able to put together an interesting storyboard about their ideas for better meetings and there were many different and creative ways that they did this. We collected together examples of the different ways our young designers filled in their Storyboard Contracts and put them together over the page as inspiration.

It was great to get the young people to talk through their creations, the meaning they had given to the chosen icons and emojis and the ideas they had. The facilitator Dee Hennessy described these presentations as

**Strong, confident, lucid, coherent, passionate, moving and the sum of all their experiences and hurts.**

Our young designers really enjoyed using a selection of stickers to bring their storyboards to life so we asked them to think of the perfect selection of emojis and symbols for a set of stickers. They made suggestions that included devils and angels, ticks and crosses, a bomb and a peace sign, so we made two sheets of stickers especially to use with this tool.

**The stickers are included free in this newspaper!**



**Young Designer says:**  
**I think the Storyboard is good...**

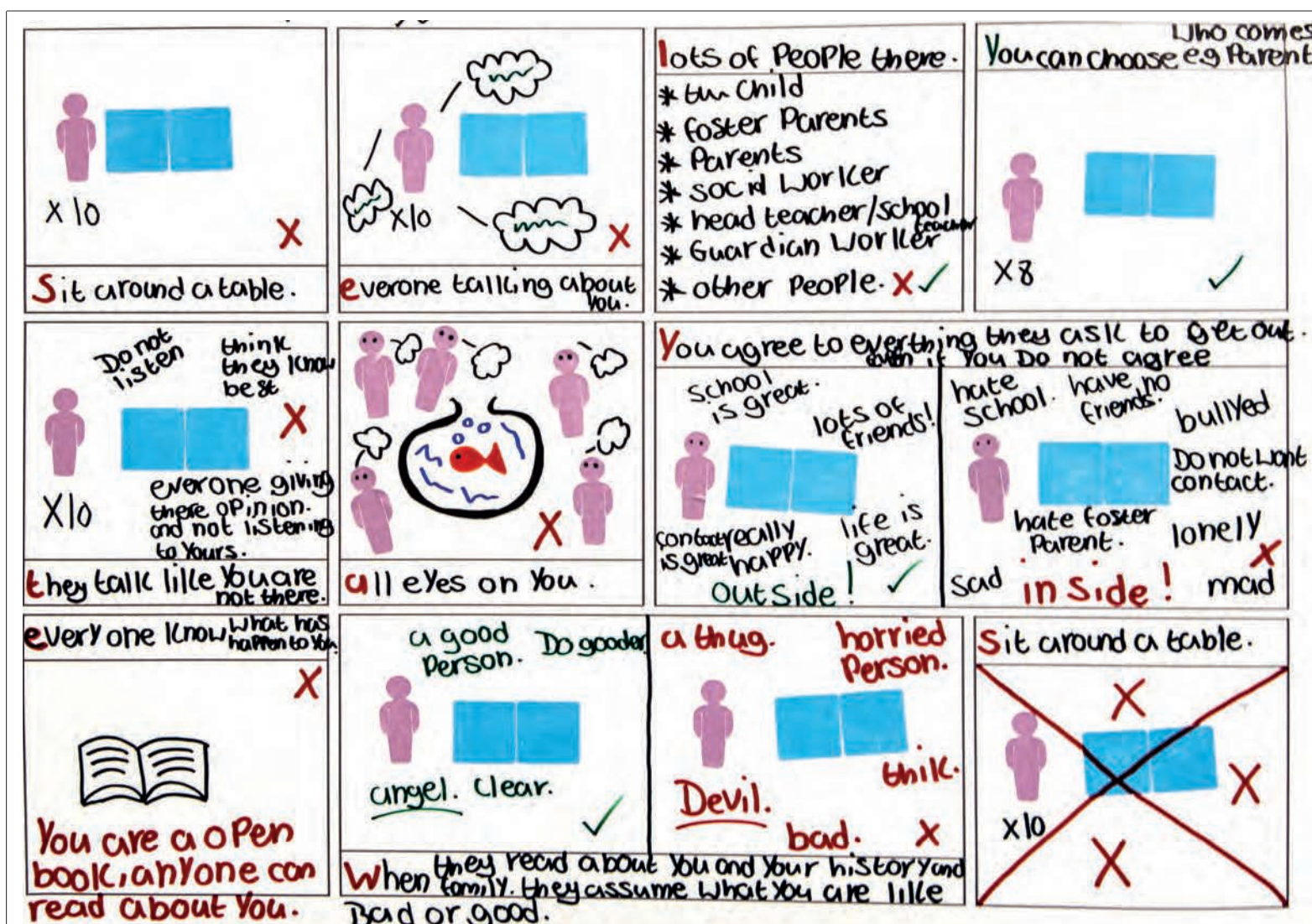
...because you can show your emotions in different ways. You can use bad emotions about how you feel. We used stickers. If you're not good at writing about yourself you can use the stickers in your own imaginative way, so it can emotionally help you. If you don't like speaking, it could also be useful.

**If you're having a hard time at school, you could use an angry face so the teacher will understand you're not happy about something.**

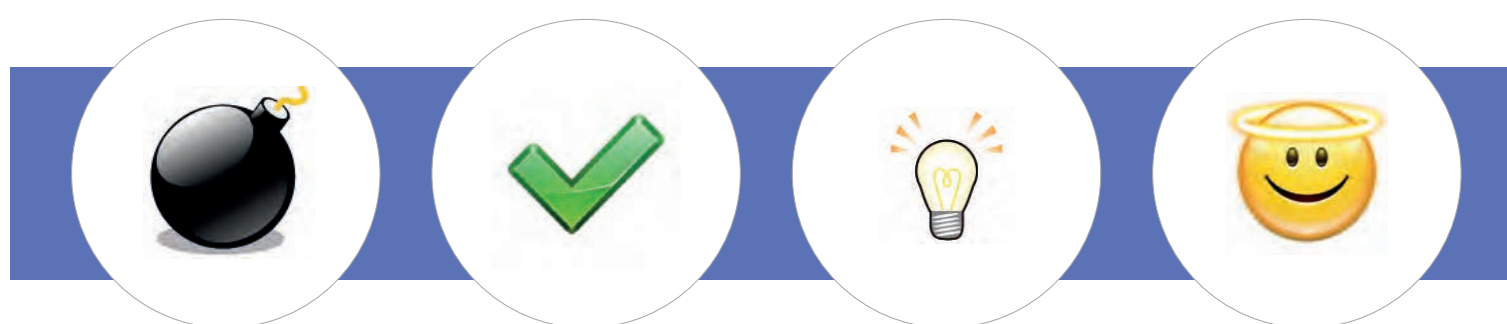
You can use it however you want, there's no right or wrong answer. You could do it about anything you want really. It doesn't have to be about being in care, it could be about what you like to eat, how you feel today, what you have done at the weekend, anything really!



Each young designer explained their storyboard to the rest of the group



A particularly detailed example of the Story Board Contract by one of our young designers.



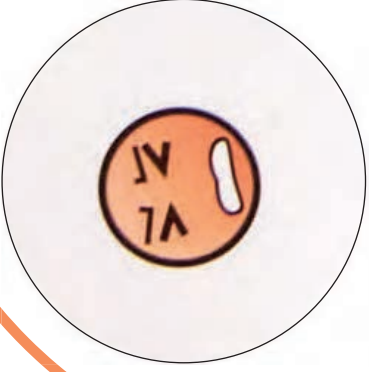
Some examples of the icons the young designers decided they would like to have on the stickers.

**Try it yourself over the page...**



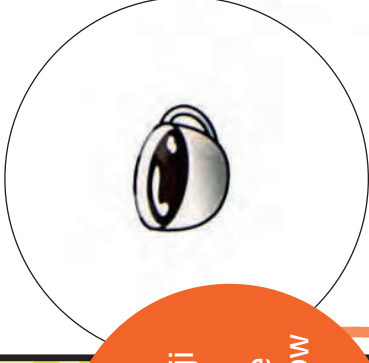
# Some Ways to Fill It In...


You could start by describing what's bad about current meetings and then describe your dream meeting




You could choose emoji stickers to describe the meeting or how you felt.




My review makes me cringe because it is boring and my worries repeat things.







1-1 @YC (1 meeting 2 months)


Do not think they know best   

EVERYONE GIVING THEIR OPINION AND NOT LISTENING TO YOURS.


X/0

They talk like you are not there.

Meeting Room




School







Conc. Casey




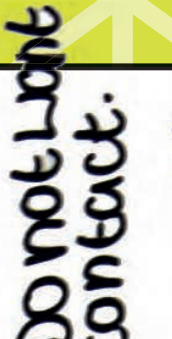

Me




Make you feel invisible

You agree to everything they ask to get out of it if you do not agree.

School's great. lots of friends!   life is fantastic!  life is great. 

OutSide!   hate foster parent.   Do not have contact.  lonely


hate School. Friends: bully

sad inside!  mad


You could give lots of detail and show the bad versus the good.


HAVE YOUR OWN SAYINGS IN DECISIONS

I want this to happen!



You could do your own drawings instead of using the stickers.





Happy with a voice

You could end on a high note!

You could ignore the structure and create your own mind map of a bad and good meeting.

the right to reply

chooses the order as they go

chooses who to talk to

chooses who to talk to

chooses who to talk to



You could draw on fruit to show how you felt!



Try  
Me




## Target Control



Working on individual target controls

# It's Time to Get Control

Target control is a way to get young people to think about how they can gain more control over the things that frustrate them and make changes in their life.

#### Why should you use it?

The designers could think of lots of things that frustrated them about being in care but it was harder for them to think of ways to fix the problems.

**Target Control helps young people to think about how much control they have over each of their problems**

...and it also challenges them to think about

if there is anything they can do to fix the problem for themselves.

For example, if social workers wearing identity badges really annoy them, they could decide to talk to the support worker about it and show them the BADGE tool.

#### How it works

Target Control is based on an idea called 'The Control and Influence Model' in Stephen Covey's book; 'The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People.'

Covey talks about using three circles to show what you have complete control over, what

you can influence or change, and things that concern you but you cannot do anything about it.

**The idea is to help anybody do more about the problems they can change and worry less about the problems they cannot do anything about.**

We recommend that the young person write the problems into one of the three circles depending on how much control the young person thinks they have on each one.

When we did it, we collected all the words from the work the young people had done and printed them onto the Right Words sticker sheet tool that is free from our website but it's easy to just write them onto the circles with a pen.

Below we've made a word cloud of some of the words generated our designers generated and used. Try it yourself with the Target Control on the opposite page

Download more at [www.leapfrog.tools/](http://www.leapfrog.tools/)



An example of how one of the young designers used Target Control



#### Young Designer: My future meetings...

One young designer said the weekend had actually given him ideas about things could do in meetings with support workers.

He said he would...

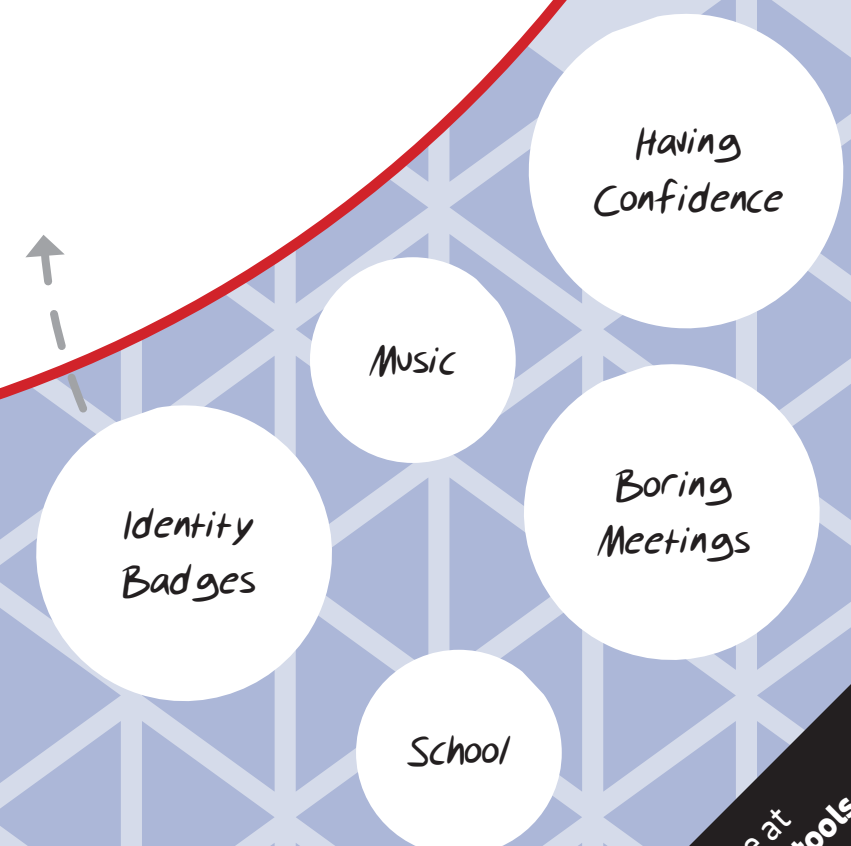
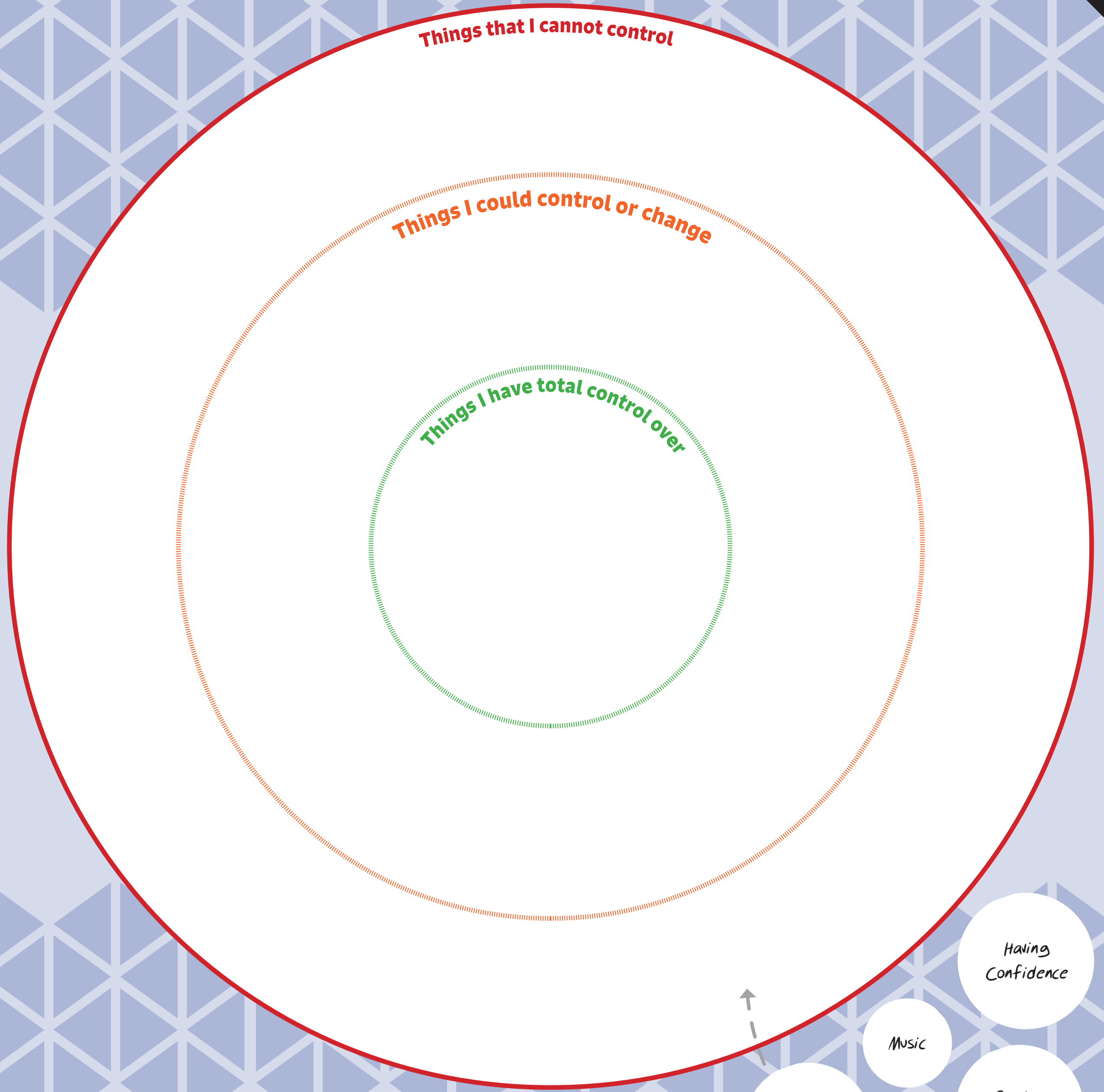
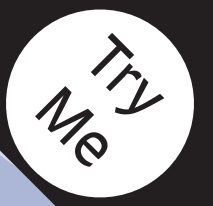
**Say what I want to happen and be more confident towards them.**



A selection of the words generated by the young designers in a word cloud created on wordle.net, which they used on their Target Controls



# Make a change to make a difference...



How much control do you have over the things that annoy you?  
Can you write your problems into the three circles above depending how much control you have?

Are there are things you could do something about to get more or less control?  
Would you be able to then move any between the circles?



## Sound Advice



Young designers write words describing how they are feeling on the blackboard.

# Some Sound Advice

**This is an opportunity for young people to give advice to a person younger than themselves or someone going through something they have already experienced. Or even to give advice to someone who is working to support young people.**

#### Why use Sound Advice?

Sound Advice is a simple way of capturing and recording the voices of young people giving real advice to other young people on a sound recorder or mobile phone app.

**These real life experiences and ways of coping become messages of support that can be listened to over and over.**

#### Why should you use it?

When young people have something to say or think sharing what they know would help someone else. Even a short recording lasting a minute or two can have an impact when played to other young people or to support workers.

**Young people, like our designers, have lots of ideas about what they believe could be different and better.**

Sound Advice is a fun way to capture the ones that are most relevant to other young people or to the workers who support them.

#### How would you prepare your own?

**Have a conversation about what people have learned from their experiences and don't judge because anything positive will be helpful to someone.**

The messages could be made by finishing sentences such as 'Try and...', 'I Wish I had...' or 'What I think you should know is...' but they can also come directly from young people's experience, of course.

Decide whose statement will be recorded first and last (for a big finish!) and then the order of the ones in between. Write the order down so everyone knows who goes next and try and include as many different voices as possible.

Think of a song that will begin and end the messages and that can be played on someone's mobile phone.

#### How do we actually do it?

Play the song for about 10 seconds as an introduction, reduce the volume slowly to fade out the music and each person says their message in the agreed order.

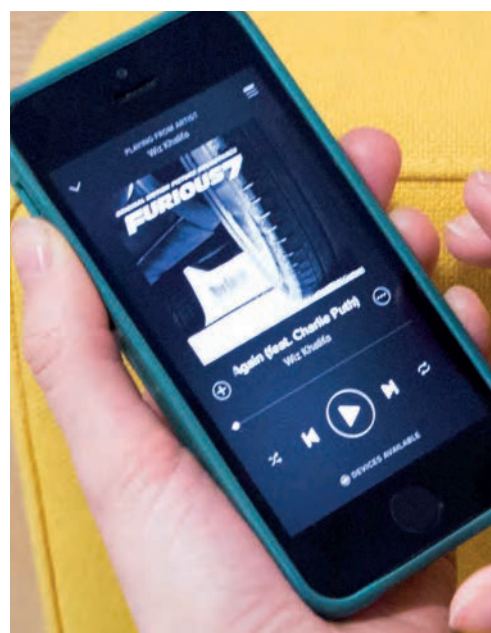
After the last message, bring the volume up again on the song and leave it playing for about 10 seconds before fading it out again. Make sure you play it or send your Sound Advice to someone else.

**And don't worry if you giggle on the recording because you're human!**

If no-one has a mobile phone to do this with, you could try a free voice recording app, such as *Audio Recorder* or *Titanium Recorder* or use a sound recording machine if someone has one.

If you're really stuck for music, our young designers recommend *See You Again* by Wiz Khalifa featuring Charlie Puth. Use that.

Listen to our example on the Leapfrog website at [www.leapfrog.tools/sound-advice](http://www.leapfrog.tools/sound-advice)



'See You Again' Streaming from a phone app.

## Young Designer's Example

(Introduction of music plays)

**"It's been a long day without you my friend, and I'll tell you all about it when I see you again. We've come a long way from where we began, oh I'll tell you all about it when I see you again, when I see you again."**

(The volume of the music is turned down)



**"To keep your head up and be happy."**

**"To keep your head down in school and don't mess up."**

**"There is always someone worse off than you."**

**"To remember that things get better eventually."**

**"Stay in contact with your friends and family."**

**"They only want what's best for you."**

(The volume of the music is turned down)



Some of the young designers made sound advice in the style of 'The Voice'



# The end of boring meetings?

## Young people take an active role in meetings about their lives with Topic Tally.

### Why should you use it?

The young designers talked about the meetings they attend about their lives with social workers, teachers and foster parents. While it is their lives other people are discussing, they do not feel involved or in control, which can lead to boredom, confusion and feeling put on the spot if they are asked a question.

Topic Tally is for both the young person and the support worker to fill in what they really want to talk about in the meeting and what would be nice to talk about if there is time. Both sides can see and talk about what's important to include, and also create shared topics together.

### It's Really Easy to Do

The young person can fill it in inside the newspaper or print it out from our website [www.leapfrog.tools/topic-tally](http://www.leapfrog.tools/topic-tally) and ask the support worker to fill in their bit before they agree on what will happen in the meeting.

If Topic Tally is used regularly, the young person and the support worker should learn what is most important to each other.

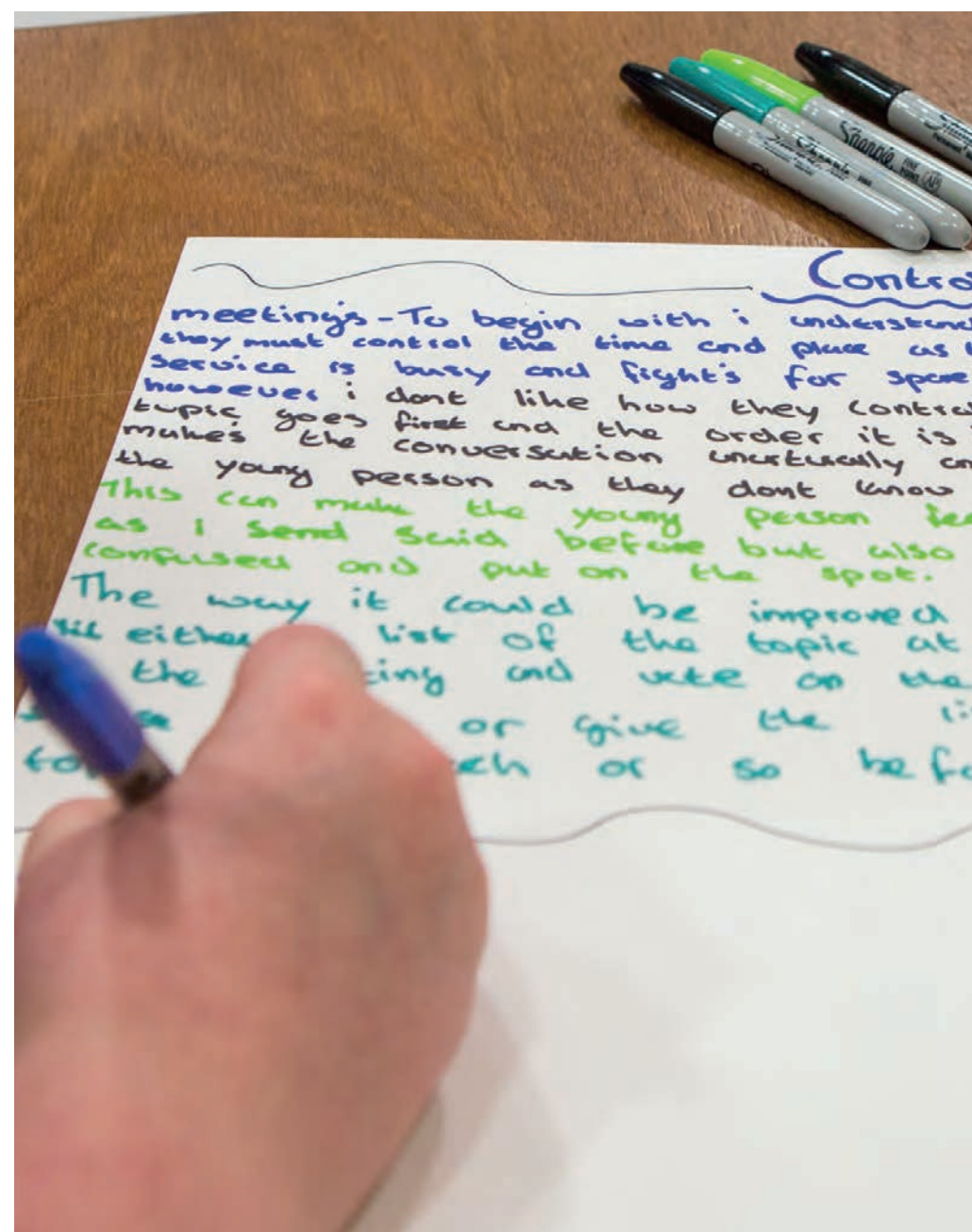
There is a Topic Tally tool below to try out with a support worker.



### Young Designer: Thoughts on control in meetings..

To begin with I understand they must control the time and place as the service is busy and fights for spare time. However, I don't like how they control what topic goes first and the order it is in, as it makes the conversation uncertain and isolates the young person as they don't know the order.

This can make the young person feel isolated as I said before but also, bored, confused and put on the spot. The way it could be improved is if we got either a list of the topic at the beginning of the meeting and vote on the order of the topic or give the list of the topics a week or so before the meetings.



The young designer explains her idea for Topic Tally.

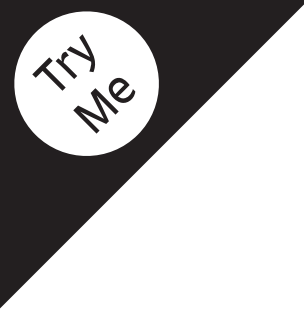
One of the designers had the brilliant idea of viewing the meeting topics before the meeting and then discussing the topics with her support worker and she wanted to give the idea the name Topic Tally.



### Young Designer: Controlling my meetings

I'm going to try and pick where I go and so all my votes are not all public. I'm going to just try and control my meetings because it's about me not them.

## Our Meeting: Topic Tally



Things I would definitely like to talk about

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_

Things it would be good to talk about

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Things we have decided together



Things I would definitely like to talk about

- ★ \_\_\_\_\_
- ★ \_\_\_\_\_
- ★ \_\_\_\_\_

Things it would be good to talk about

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_



# Tool Tips and Final Thoughts



**Dr. Dee Hennessy,  
Professional Facilitator**

## Facilitator's thoughts

This was a fantastic project but it wasn't easy for anyone involved. The powerful sharing of experience during the co-design process produced emotional highs and lows on a scale we could not have predicted.

**The young co-designers were inspired, inventive, brave, generous and funny, as they offered their feedback to each other at key stages of the co-design process, in ways that frankly stunned us.**

Working really hard on these very challenging issues that were often difficult for them to acknowledge or to face up to has enabled our co-designers to

generate practical new tools to support the experiences of other young people like them - and to identify accessible and incisive names to describe the tools.

What is still to be done is to make sure that young people who didn't design the tools understand just how easy (and useful!) they are to pick up and use.

That's why we are including simple and straightforward prompts for use on each tool page and on page 2 to demonstrate this and to encourage confidence in their use.

These prompts will be helpful for both young people and the workers who support them. The key things to remember are that there are no wrong or indeed right ways to approach the tools.

**In the pages of this newspaper you will see a range of fantastic suggestions from our co-designers, but the tools can also be adapted and tailored to particular needs and purposes.**

Have a go! Try them! We all think you'll be really surprised at just how much can be discovered, revealed, learned and changed as a result of their use. And when you've used one or more of the tools, let us know how it worked for you by contacting us at [leapfrog@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:leapfrog@lancaster.ac.uk)

At the session following the residential, a further challenge was discussed by the young co-designers and a solution proposed. The suggestion was that bead or gunge timers could be used alongside the tools, or on their own, when, in discussions, it would be helpful to calm the situation down, create a bit of breathing space, be clear about how long someone can speak for and of course

know how long you need to listen to them. Recognising and offering ways to overcome the challenge of staying focused in this way that they did demonstrated to us just how co-operative and collaborative our young co-designers wanted to be in promoting the use of the tools.



Young people using the bead timers in the workshop.

**Working with these young people has been a great experience for the Leapfrog project team and the young people tell us they feel more confident as a result. Excellent!**

They should feel very proud of themselves and very much more confident as a result of what they've achieved. We can't acknowledge them by name, but they know who they are, and they know how great they have all been.

Thank you all so much.

Stay focused on your future!

Dee

## Who made this happen?

We would love to name all of the young people who contributed so many great ideas in the Leapfrog co-design sessions but they must be kept anonymous. However, we can tell you that there were twelve young co-designers, aged between twelve and seventeen from different places in Lancashire. Within the group there was a mix of young people in care, young carers and young people on the edge of care. The group were recruited by the charity CANW who provide services to support children, young people, families and communities and Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council.

The sessions were facilitated by Dee Hennessy who used her experience of working with young people to listen carefully to the co-designers and bring out the best ideas in them. Dee was supported by Gemma Coupe, the Design Manager for Leapfrog and Laura Morris the Research Associate for Leapfrog at Lancaster University. Laura also led on the tool and newspaper design and production.

We could not have run the sessions without the support of a team of youth workers from CANW and Blackburn with Darwen Council who were there for the young people at all times and sacrificed a good nights sleep to stay over with them at Borwick Hall in Carnforth.

We would also like to thank our partners Christy Walsh, Resource Development Manager at Child Action Northwest and Gavin Redhead, Children and Young People's Participation Officer at Blackburn with Darwen Council who helped make the sessions possible.

Thank you again to everyone who was part of this project.



Youth workers write down words generated in a game.



## Young Co-Designers Say What we liked about the residential and why...

Two of the young people who attended the residential have written about what they liked about the residential and why.

One of the young people talked about why he enjoyed the mood board activity at the beginning of the residential and the activities run by Borwick Hall, where they stayed overnight -

**Making the mood boards, because we found out what others didn't like, whilst telling them what we don't like. This was good, as we got to know the others a bit at the beginning of the residential.**

Indoor caving and climbing, because we had the opportunity to challenge the others during the games and races that took place. This provoked friendships.

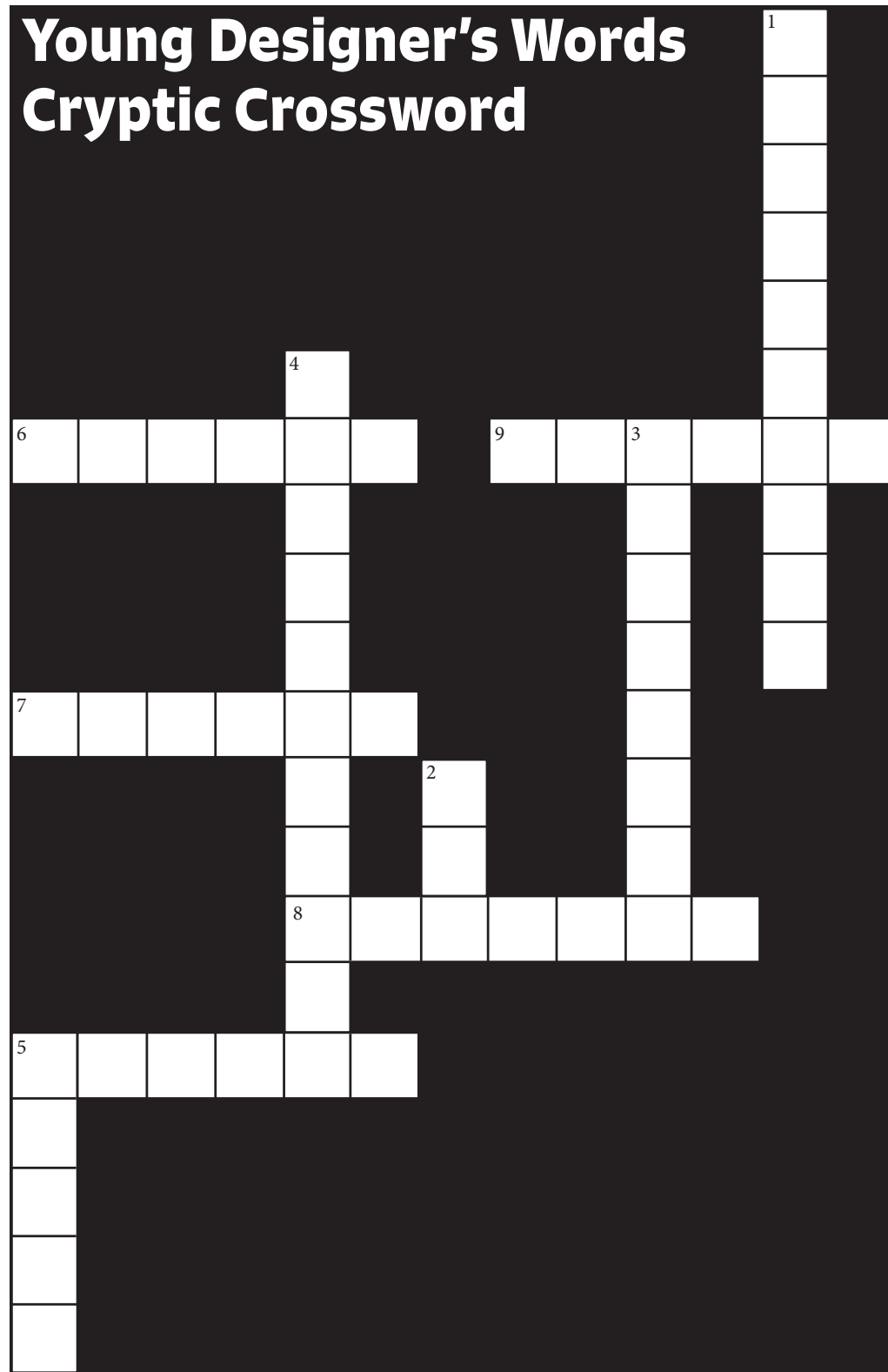
The other young person also chose to write about the mood boards and caving activities, as well as the experience they with using the digital tool on the iPads to find things that did their heads in -

The mood boards because we showed each other how we feel about certain things such as murder.

The indoor caving because it was a really fun challenge and tested our skills so finding where to go.

**Finding photos online because it was clever how we related them to things we want to change.**

## Young Designer's Words Cryptic Crossword



### Questions - Down

- Helping you leap forward to other things
- In the affirmative
- How you want to solve things
- Helping to understand each other's \_\_\_\_\_
- Solid and also sometimes musical

### Questions - Across

- How you want to feel
- Something to do with ears
- On top of a church, but not outside
- Not worse
- Put into groups or fixed

(Answers are in the bottom left of the page)

**Used the tools?**  
What did you think?  
Email us and tell us all about it!

[leapfrog@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:leapfrog@lancaster.ac.uk)

Crossword Answers:  
1. Inspire  
2. Confidence  
3. Valued  
4. Better  
5. Yes  
6. Together  
7. Listen  
8. Perspective  
9. Sorted  
10. Sound

CC BY NC SA