



# PLAY WORKS EVALUATION TOOLKIT

A CLEAR AND CREATIVE APPROACH FOR  
PLAY PROVIDERS TO MEASURE IMPACT



Photograph Courtesy of Lady Allen Adventure Playground

# Contents

<b>01. Introduction</b>	<b>04</b>
<b>02. What is Monitoring and Evaluation?</b>	<b>06</b>
<b>03. Overall Aims and Specific Aims</b>	<b>08</b>
<b>04. Objectives and Outputs</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>05. Outcomes and Indicators</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>06. Preparing to Collect Data</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>07. Data Collection Methods</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>08. Analysing Data</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>09. Writing your Report</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>10. Sharing your Findings</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>88</b>

# Introduction

This online toolkit has been designed by London Play especially for Adventure Playgrounds, and has been possible thanks to support from City Bridge. It contains information, step-by-step instructions and tasks to help you understand and carry out monitoring and evaluation in your playground.

Each section contains downloadable guides and worksheets that you can print and complete independently. Examples of monitoring and evaluation in practice have been provided by the eight London-based Adventure Playgrounds who have taken part in Play Works since it launched in 2015, as well as other aligned organisations whose work is relevant. Links to further reading and helpful resources are also included.

By engaging with the toolkit Adventure Playgrounds will be able to:

- Implement better systems for collecting, recording and analysing data
- Generate robust evidence to increase chances of successful funding bids
- Act on their own recommendations to improve their services
- Set the bar within the play sector for effective evaluation
- Share their findings and best practice freely with colleagues in the sector

London Play are keen to expand and improve this toolkit. We'd love to hear about your experience of using it.

Please direct any comments or questions to Nic McEwan  
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## How to use the Toolkit

The resources and guide have been designed to be worked through chronologically, as they follow the steps of monitoring and evaluation in order. However, if you feel more confident in certain areas or are looking for a particular resource, you can also dip in and out of the different sections.

# What is Monitoring and Evaluation?

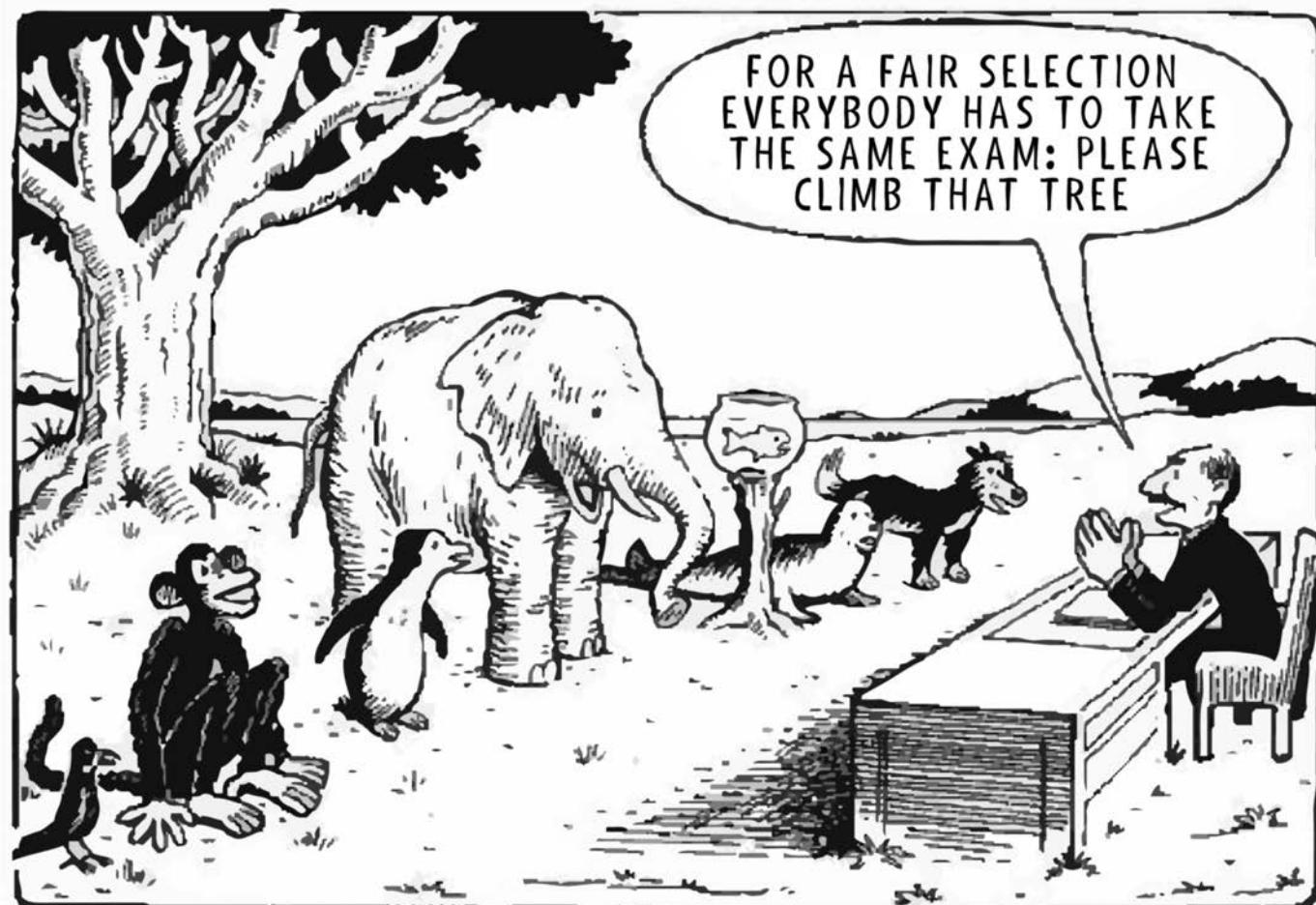
## Monitoring is the planned process of gathering information in the same way over time

Monitoring is about regularly collecting information to track your project. You need monitoring systems in place that help you do this in a planned, organised and routine way. E.g. Monitoring attendance at every open access play session.

## Evaluation is making sense of the information gathered

Evaluation is about using information you collect to make judgements, changes and improvements to your project. If monitoring is more about numbers and figures, evaluating is more about how far this information provides evidence of impact and change.

Every Adventure Playground is unique. What works for one may not work for another, so it is important to be open to amending and adapting the resources and examples in this toolkit. One size doesn't fit all!



# Overall Aims and Specific Aims

## Overall Aim

An overall aim describes the broad difference your AP wants to make. What problem(s) is your AP trying to address? Your overall aim should be ambitious but not impossible. Some organisations refer to this as a vision or mission. It should inspire you because it sums up why your playground exists and it reflects the values you have as an organisation.

## Specific Aims

Aims always describe a CHANGE. The overall aim is likely to be too broad a statement to allow you to plan your work in detail or to provide guidance on what you might monitor and evaluate. It is helpful, therefore, to break the overall aim down into specific aims. These are more precise statements about different aspects of your overall aim. Think about the social outcomes your adventure playground has on children and young people's lives, as well as the wider community.

Keep the following points in mind when agreeing your specific aims:

- Use language that describes change

For example, to increase, to promote, to improve, to reduce, to enable or to develop

- Be clear about your target group

Who are you working with? Which group or groups will change or benefit as a result of the project?

- Be clear about the geographical area you will work in
- Consult your colleagues



Photograph Courtesy of Marble Hill Play Centres

# Use change words to describe aims and specific aims:

*sustain	reduce	improve
increase	extend	lower
raise	decrease	

\*Sustain can also be a “change” word – for example if the situation would have got worse without your project’s intervention, e.g. Children at risk of low mood will be better able to sustain their emotional wellbeing.

## Useful links and further reading

- Examples of visions in the 3rd sector: <https://topnonprofits.com/examples/vision-statements>
- Monitoring and Evaluation Toolkit (a simple approach)  
<http://www.cashbacksmallgrants.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/YS-Cashback-Toolkit.pdf>
- The online Logic Model builder (an extra step)  
<https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/management/effectiveness/logic-model/>



Photograph Courtesy of Marble Hill Play Centres

# Examples

## Lollard Street Adventure Playground

### Overall aim

To improve the wellbeing of children and young people through developing a safe environment for children and their families in Kennington to be more playful.

### Specific Aims

1. Encourage children to manage risk independently
2. Nurture a more inclusive culture of play
3. Sustain and increase play opportunities whilst advocating for play

## Markfield Adventure Playground

### Overall aim

Markfield promotes the dignity, choice, independence, and community inclusion of disabled people & their families.

### Specific Aims

1. To create a fun, playful, inclusive and safe environment, where everyone is supported to be themselves.
2. To focus on the needs of the whole family, to strengthen relationships, and break down isolation.
3. To hear and value everyone's voice and influence change

# **White City Adventure Playground**

## **Overall aim**

Playful Foundations works to maximise the possibilities for the time and space for children's play across the communities in which they reside.

## **Specific Aims**

1. To provide increased opportunities for children to support their own agency and holistic well-being through everyday actions
2. Working to remove barriers that prevent children from securing sufficient playful opportunities for themselves
3. Providing education and training opportunities to ensure an increased tolerance for playfulness across the community

# **The Limes Adventure Playground**

## **Overall aim**

To develop a safe space where disabled children and young people will enjoy, achieve and participate together.

## **Specific Aims**

1. To develop a safe space for all children and young people to enjoy play opportunities
2. To promote participation in all aspects of services at The Limes.
3. To support the social, emotional and educational development of all children and young people in a person-centered way

# Lady Allen APG

## Overall Aim

To develop a happy and open-minded environment for disabled children and young people and their siblings, which allows them to become independent, form lasting friendships and learn to respect themselves and others.

## Specific Aims:

1. To increase opportunities for disabled CYP and their siblings to experience adventurous play in Wandsworth.
2. To improve friendships and respect between and among disabled and non-disabled CYP
3. To create and sustain an open-minded environment, staffed by qualified, creative and happy playworkers, where disabled CYP and their siblings feel valued and accepted.

# Marble Hill Play Centres

## Overall Aim:

To create a unique place for children to experience risk, adventure and freedom within their community, and to develop a better understanding of who they are, what they enjoy and what they can achieve.

## Specific Aims:

1. To increase opportunities for children and young people from Richmond to play freely, following their own interests and for their own reasons.
2. To increase opportunities for a wide range of children and young people from Richmond upon Thames to come together to play as equals.
3. To improve the understanding of the importance of children's play amongst the families and the local community within Richmond.

# **Somerford Grove AP**

## **Overall Aim:**

HarPA believes that play offers CYP the chance to grow and find out who they are, to be accepted and accept others. Our overall aim is therefore:

To improve and increase opportunities, space and time for local children to play, as they choose, for free.

## **Specific Aims:**

1. To increase opportunities for CYP, particularly those from low-income families, aged 6 – 15 yrs to play outdoors all year round for free
2. To sustain enriched play environments, supported by playworkers working within the Playwork Principles
3. Increase adults/other professionals understanding of the benefits that playing outside offers CYP

# **Waterside AP**

## **Overall Aim:**

Our mission is to use our exceptional position as an employee-owned mutual to work alongside communities in providing a fun, safe and challenging environment where Children and Young People can positively develop through play, in their own way, for their own reasons.

## **Specific Aims:**

1. To continue to provide an adventure playground that functions as a safe and welcoming space, where children of all backgrounds can experience a variety of play opportunities
2. To improve CYP's health, wellbeing and resilience by continuing to employ dedicated, qualified and creative people
3. To improve relationship/ attitudes of local residents and businesses to ensure our community feels proud of the service Waterside provides



Photograph Courtesy of Lady Allen Adventure Playground

# Worksheet - Aims and Specific Aims

**What values are rated most highly by your organisation?**

Assertiveness	Security	Education	Creativity
<i>Conformity</i>	<i>Trust</i>	<i>Community</i>	<i>Participation</i>
<i>Relationships</i>	<i>Appearance</i>	<i>Respect for others</i>	<i>Equality</i>
<i>Happiness</i>	<i>Safety</i>	<i>Health</i>	<i>Hope</i>
<i>Collaboration</i>	<i>Unity</i>	<i>Power</i>	<i>Joy</i>
<i>Influence</i>	<i>Friendship</i>	<i>Love</i>	<i>Justice</i>
<i>Success</i>	<i>Integrity</i>	<i>Family</i>	<i>Children</i>
<i>Authenticity</i>	<i>Independance</i>	<i>Excellence</i>	<i>Enthusiasm</i>
<i>Social recognition</i>	<i>Authority</i>	<i>Religion</i>	<i>Honesty</i>
<i>Passion</i>	<i>Risk</i>	<i>Optimism</i>	<i>Caring</i>
<i>Compassion</i>	<i>Leadership</i>	<i>Innovation</i>	<i>Balance</i>
<i>Family</i>	<i>Achievement</i>	<i>Fairness</i>	<i>Decisiveness</i>
<i>Pleasure</i>	<i>Peace</i>	<i>Loyalty</i>	<i>Tolerance</i>
<i>Caring for other</i>	<i>Wealth</i>	<i>Forgiveness</i>	<i>Courage</i>
<i>Kindness</i>	<i>Commitment</i>	<i>Spirituality</i>	<i>Patience</i>

An overall aim describes the broad difference you want your organisation to bring about. What is your overarching goal? Your overall aim should be ambitious but not impossible. It should inspire you because it sums up why your organisation exists and it reflects the values you have as an organisation.

## What is your overall aim?

---

## Specific Aims

### Think about:

How will people change as a result of your playground?

- Wellbeing (e.g. mental or physical health)
- Behaviour (e.g. involvement in crime, drug use)
- Attitudes and feelings (e.g. how people feel about themselves or others)
- Skills and abilities (e.g. communication skills or ability to work under pressure)
- Awareness and knowledge (e.g. awareness of rights)
- Relationships (e.g. with peers, family or at work)

What are your playground's specific aims?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

# Objectives and Outputs

# Objectives

In order to achieve your specific aims (and in doing so, your overall aim), you will need to do something. Objectives are what you will do in order to meet your aims; the practical steps and actions that will enable you to bring about change. If aims are the **WHAT**, Objectives are the **HOW**.

In order to achieve some aims, it may be necessary to carry out several different actions, therefore each aim may have more than one objective.

Equally, some objectives may help you achieve more than one aim.

## Think about

### Words to Describe Actions

Using different words for your aims and objectives will help you keep them distinct from one another. Practise using verbs which describe action when talking about your objectives.

organise	produce	train
run	offer	provide
hold	deliver	arrange
promote	remove	help
enable	encourage	engage

# Outputs

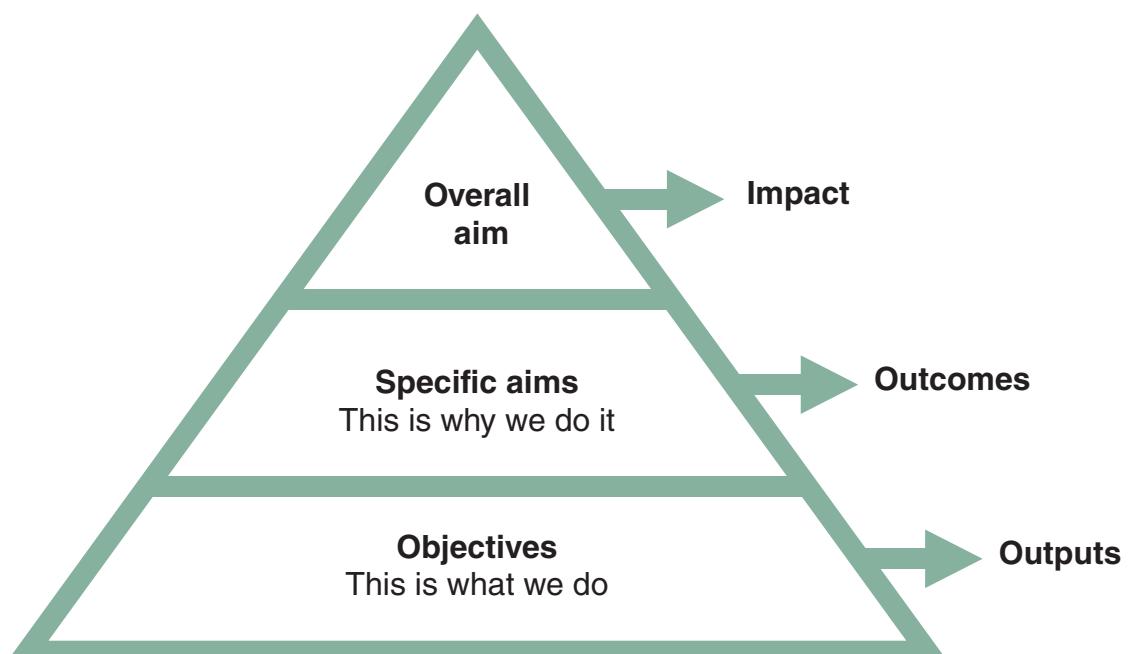
Once you have set your objectives, you will be able to describe the activities, products or services related to this in more detail and in ways that can be evaluated. These are known as outputs. Your outputs should reflect what you do already, though you might want to set some targets for new or planned activities, services or products.

## The term output is used to describe:

- **Activities** e.g. Running a training workshop on loose parts
- **Services** e.g. Loaning loose parts to other APs
- **Products** e.g. A printable guide to using loose parts

Outputs should be identified relating to each objective. To enable your outputs to be monitored you should make them specific, so think about the following questions:

- When?
- How often?
- How many people do you hope will benefit?



# Examples

## Lollard Street Objectives, Outputs, Indicators

### 1. Delivering high quality inclusive play provision

We will provide inclusive play services

- Records will show provision of inclusive services we provide
- Children with SEND will use the playground
- Children will tell us the playground is inclusive
- Staff will demonstrate inclusive behaviour

### 2. Work to create rich and varied play opportunities every day

We will provide opportunities for YP to have new play experiences

- Play services will offer new ways for YP to play
- Children will make use of the playground in varied ways
- Children will tell us there are varied play opportunities at Lollard St.

### 3. Provide decision making opportunities for children and young people

We will provide decision-making opportunities for YP every day

- Children will make decisions themselves
- Records will show each service provides opportunities for child-led decision-making

# Markfield

## Objectives, Outputs, Indicators

1. To provide leisure services based on social interaction for adults with learning disabilities

We will continue to run the following services:

- o a night club
- o an art engine
- o a social group for people 18 – 30-years-old
- Records & evaluations will show the different services being run
- Adults aged 18-30 will attend the services

2. To run a range of play services for children and young people, based on the playwork principles

We will continue to run the following play services:

- o Afterschool clubs
- o Holiday playschemes
- o Open access adventure play drop-in sessions
- o Under 5's stay & play
- Records & evaluations will show the different services being run
- Children (including those under 5) will attend the services

3. To offer family support services

We will continue to provide the following family support services:

- o Advocacy & advice sessions
- o Befriending for families
- o Peer support groups
- o Parent / carer training on the topics of positive behaviour management; development movement play; sensory play; and personalization
- Records and evaluations will show the number of different family support services that we offer
- Parents / carers will access support from the family team services

4. To set up volunteering & work placement opportunities, where young people experience working in our adventure playground.

We will set up new volunteering and work placement opportunities

- Records and evaluations will show the number of different volunteering & work placement opportunities set up
- Young people will volunteer and/or complete a work placement at our AP

# White City

## Objectives, Outputs, Indicators

### 1. To increase and deliver all forms of current play provision

We will continue to run the following services:

- o After-school club (ASC)
- o Open access sessions (OA)
- o Community outreach (CO)
- o SEN provision (SNP)
- o Unstaffed disturbances provision
  - We will keep a record of the total number of quality of sessions delivered (ASC/OA/CO/SNP) to see an increase
  - We will keep a record of the increased total number of children accessing provisions (ASC/OA/CO/SNP)
  - We will keep a record of the sustained (and any increased) levels of children in mainstream education, children with special needs, children not in education who use the services

### 2. To ensure the quality of staffed play provision through innovative practice of observations, reflections and dialogues with children

- o Daily debrief discussions after every service delivery session
- o Written observations of play
- o Online reflective observations of play and teamworking
- o Inclusion of children in consultation on monitoring and evaluation processes
- o Daily dialogue/consultation on everyday environment and practice
- o Engagement in Playground Parliament
  - We will keep a record of the total number of debrief sessions, written observations, online observations, consultations
  - We will record the amount of children accessing the service provisions, the number of staff attending debrief sessions, the amount of children being interviewed
  - We will monitor and record the play engagements of children and playwork development of staff

3. To raise the profile of play and encourage communities to place a greater value on it
  - o Daily debrief discussions after every service delivery session
  - o We will engage with community individuals on an ad-hoc basis through
    - Planned participation on local groups and forums
    - Delivery of large-scale play-based events
    - The dissemination of action research publication
  - We will keep a record of how many increased events we have provided;
  - We will produce publications
  - We will record the increased number of play engagement discussions with local adult individuals
  - We will keep a record of how many children and adults attend events we have provided.
  - We will track the increased play engagement attitudes by parents, residents, local community group representatives, and other local professionals
4. To promote an understanding and knowledge of the critical importance of play to parents and residents, schools and other community groups, whilst championing a playwork approach
  - o We will deliver XXX play training sessions to XXX parents/residents
  - o We will deliver XXX sessions to XXX schools
  - o We will deliver XXX sessions to other organisations whose work impacts on children and young people
  - We will keep a record of how many increased training sessions we have provided
  - We will keep a record of how many people have attended the training sessions
  - We will track play engagement attitudes by parents, residents, local community group representatives, and other local professionals

# The Limes

## Objectives, Outputs, Indicators

1. To run a variety of services where disabled and non-disabled children can play together.  
We will continue to run inclusive services
  - We will keep a record of the number of inclusive services we run
  - We will record the number of disabled children attending
  - We will record the number of non-disabled children attending
2. To tailor activities and services around the interests and needs of the individual children attending
  - We will create one-page profiles reflecting interests and needs of individual CYP
  - We will run tailored activities
  - We will record and update one-page individual profiles
  - We will record enjoyment levels of individuals during tailored sessions
3. To consult children and young people on all aspects of service and service delivery at The Limes and action on the opinions where possible
  - We will consult with young people on all aspects of service and service delivery
  - We will co-produce schedules and activities
  - Evidence of co-produced schedules and activities
  - Record of half-termly focus group meetings with CYP

# Lady Allen APG

## Objectives, Outputs, Indicators

1. Enable accessibility by providing transport for hard to reach disabled children, young people and their siblings
  - o Provide after school, youth club and Saturday transport for 12 disabled c/yp and siblings each day
  - o Arrange access for local special schools to use the playground during term time school hours
    - We will record transport provision
    - We will provide access for school groups.
2. Deliver play sessions with creative and qualified playworkers, who understand the value and importance of play for disabled children, young people and their siblings
  - o Employ staff with personal and work based experience of disability
  - o Deliver in-house playwork training to all staff working at the playground twice a year
  - o Weekly team meetings for reflective practice, generate ideas and share creativity
  - o Run the following sessions
    - Term time: Monday-Thursday for up to 15 disabled c/yp
    - Friday for up to 20 disabled c/yp
    - Saturday for up to 35 disabled c/yp and siblings.
- Holidays: Monday to Friday for up to 50 disabled c/yp and siblings
  - Records will show we employ staff who have experience of disability
  - Records will show we deliver playwork training twice a year
  - Records will show we have weekly team meetings
3. Organise trips and projects which are fun but challenging and require teamwork between disabled children and young people and non-disabled children and young people
  - o Consult c/yp 3 times a year about trips and projects they want to do/go to
    - Records will show we consult with C/yp three times a year

4. Promote disabled children and young people and their siblings as the client and encourage them to take ownership of their emotions and the play space.
  - o Create an information/welcome pack for families explaining the value of play, space ownership, play types etc.
  - o Provide opportunities for c/yp to change and manipulate the playground environment
  - o Enable c/yp to make decisions every time they attend the playground
  - We will create an information/welcome pack for all families who use the playground.
  - Records will show we provide opportunities for C/yp to change and manipulate their environment.
  - We will record how we enable c/yp to make decisions when they are at the playground.
5. Use therapeutic play to reduce challenging behaviour
  - o Create a staff handbook about therapeutic play.
  - o Work on an intensive 1:1 basis with specific c/yp.
  - We will create a staff handbook.
  - We will work on a 1:1 basis with specific c/yp



Photograph Courtesy of Waterside Adventure Playground

# **Marble Hill Playcentres**

## **Objectives, Outputs, Indicators**

1. Provide a wide range of freely chosen play opportunities indoors and outside for children and young people
  - o Run five 3 hour open access play sessions after school each week, one 6 hour Saturday play session every week and five six hour sessions during school holidays between March and October.
  - o Deliver twenty-six fire sessions each year
  - o Complete monthly play audits
  - o Support joined up play at the adventure playground
  - o Deliver an improved playspace
  - 65 after school sessions, 26 Saturday sessions, 45 holiday sessions delivered
  - 26 fire sessions delivered
  - 12 play audits completed
  - 45 team building activities (one each day) throughout each holiday session
  - Deliver 2 formal consultation sessions about changes to the play space with at least 50 users each year for 5 years
  - Build at least 5 new play structures over the next 5 years
2. Engage with adult stakeholders, supporting them to understand the intention and impact of playwork
  - o Hold 12, 6 hour family play session between March and October
  - o Produce 6 e-newsletters
  - o Produce two annual reports, one for the adventure playground and one for the inclusive play project
  - o Hold one, 6 hour Play Day celebration
  - o Organise outreach work to promote the site to a full range of families
  - 12 family play sessions delivered
  - 6 e-newsletters produced
  - 2 annual reports produced
  - 1 Play Day celebration held
  - Deliver 12 play sessions, after school on school sites or community play spaces

3. Enable access to all activities for children with additional needs
  - o Offer seventy-five, 2 hour 121 play sessions for children with additional needs
  - o Run weekly, 2 hour sessions for children with additional needs. Totalling 50 each year.
  - o Produce at least 20 tracking files for children receiving 121 support
    - Seventy-five 121 sessions offered
    - 50, two hour inclusive play sessions delivered
    - 20 tracking profiles created and maintained
4. Offer a community space for local groups to access risk and adventure
  - o Host twelve, 6 hour play sessions for the home school group
  - o Host eighteen, 2 hour sessions for the forest school group
  - o Host three school groups
    - 12 sessions hosted for the home school group
    - 18 sessions hosted for the forest school group
    - 3 sessions hosted for school groups



Photograph Courtesy of Waterside Adventure Playground

# Somerford Grove AP

## Objectives, Outputs, Indicators

1. Provide a safe, free adventure playground
  - o Annual external H&S audit
  - o Monthly H&S checks
  - o Deliver regular free, open access adventure play sessions after school, at weekends and holidays
    - We will pay for an annual external H&S audit
    - Senior play manager will conduct monthly H&S checks of the playground
    - We will run free play sessions
2. Offer a range of outdoor experiences which enhance and extend CYP's confidence and enjoyment of being outdoors
  - o We will run a range of services and activities including:
  - o Healthy Eating Project
  - o Adventure Play
  - o Campsbourne Estate Play
  - o Bike Project
  - o Sisterhood Project
  - o Community events
  - o Stellar House
    - We will record the services we run and attendance
3. Form new connections and maintain existing relationships with aligned organisations
  - o Execute bike track project with Play Equip
  - o Create CSR page on website
  - o Connect with local schools
  - o Meet with aligned organisations
    - We will record our interactions with new and existing aligned organisations (list of partners)

# Waterside APG

## Objectives, Outputs, Indicators

1. We provide a space where children and young people ages 6-13 can experience all play types
  - o We deliver open access play session 5 days a week 48 weeks of the year
  - o We will produce annual play audits of the playground
  - o We will incorporate opportunities for all play types when programme planning
  - We will open everyday
  - Have annual audits of the playground
  - We will produce play programmes
2. We actively promote diversity within our user groups
  - o We actively engage with under represented user groups
  - o We celebrate and recognise key religious festivals
  - o We consider the makeup of our teams
  - We will record our engagement with under-represented groups
  - We will record how we celebrate and recognise key religious festivals
  - We will consider the make-up of our team when hiring
3. We reach out to our community by holding events and offering a space for hire
  - o We hold a street party once a year which is open to the whole community
  - o We consider all requests for hiring the space on a 1:1 basis
  - o We collaborate with local and national organisations and events such as Fields in Trust, Play Day etc.
  - We have a street party
  - We produce data of how many hires are held at Waterside
  - we contact external organisations
4. We provide opportunities for staff and children to be involved in decision making
  - o Before each holiday we consult with the c/yp on programme
  - o We hold quarterly service meetings and weekly play coordinators meetings
  - o Every easter summer c/yp come together and vote on the trips/residential they want to attend
  - We produce consultation material
  - We have meetings
  - C/YP vote on trips

# Worksheet

Objectives are what you will do in order to meet your aims; the practical steps and actions that will enable you to bring about change. If aims are the WHAT, Objectives are the HOW.

1. Look at each specific aim in turn: what activities, projects and services does your adventure playground currently offer to achieve this aim?
- 
- 

Is there anything new planned for the future?

---

Your playground should have no more than FIVE objectives. This means you need to:

- a.) GROUP your activities into broader objectives
- b.) Be selective and realistic about the objectives you will focus on for the purpose of this evaluation

What are your playground's objectives?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

# Outputs

The term output is used to describe:

- **Activities** e.g. Running a training workshop on loose parts
- **Services** e.g. Loaning loose parts to other APs
- **Products** e.g. A printable guide to using loose parts

For each of the objectives you've listed above write down the outputs that will emerge as a result of completing the objective. Try to limit yourself to three or four per objective.

Objective 1:

Outputs:

- |    |    |
|----|----|
| a) | c) |
| b) | d) |

Objective 2:

Outputs:

- |    |    |
|----|----|
| a) | c) |
| b) | d) |

Objective 3:

Outputs:

- |    |    |
|----|----|
| a) | c) |
| b) | d) |

Objective 4:

Outputs:

- |    |    |
|----|----|
| a) | c) |
| b) | d) |

Objective 5:

Outputs:

- |    |    |
|----|----|
| a) | c) |
| b) | d) |

# Outcomes and Indicators

# Outcomes

- Outcomes are the changes or differences you expect your project to make. Having clear, focused outcomes will help:
  - You work out what to measure to find out whether your project is making a difference
  - People know what they can expect to gain if they use your services
  - Funders know the impact their money will have.
- Don't be tempted to set too many outcomes because you'll need to measure them all. Use your specific aims to help you prioritise which outcomes are most aligned to your organisation. Usually 3-5 outcomes are enough for one project

## How to word outcomes

- Outcomes, like aims, need to include change words such as improve, increase, decrease, or reduce.
- Words to describe change:

*sustain	reduce	improve
increase	extend	lower
raise	decrease	

- When writing outcomes, make sure you include the Who? What? and How? of change. NB: "How?" refers to the direction of the change – e.g. increasing, getting smaller, etc. (not to how you are going to make the change happen, i.e. your activities/outputs).

# Indicators

Indicators can help you to measure your progress. They are like targets. There are two basic types of indicators: output indicators and outcome indicators.

Output indicators are simply the fulfilment of your outputs, which are easily measurable because they relate to numbers and figures. If your outputs are specific it's easy enough to see how you'll measure success.

Some outcomes are 'hard' and can be measured in numbers. Hard outcomes usually have straightforward indicators. For example if your outcome is to increase employment, the indicator would be whether your user got a job.

Some outcomes are 'soft' and are more difficult to measure. With soft outcomes you need to think of things that might reasonably show that your outcome is happening. For example, if the outcome is to increase young people's self-confidence, an indicator might be whether a young person is able to participate in group activities or express their views clearly.

## Further reading and resources:

This publication has an extensive list of outcomes and indicators for play and is well worth a closer look:

<http://www.inspiringscotland.org.uk/media/1551/GoPlayOEF.pdf>

Further help with defining and creating aims, outcomes, objectives and outputs:

<http://www.ces-vol.org.uk/about-performance-improvement/about-monitoring-evaluation/planning-for-monitoring-evaluation/aims.html>

# Examples

## Lppard Street Outcomes and Indicators

1. CYP will become more autonomous
  - CYP initiate their own play
  - CYP demonstrate ability to manage risk
  - CYP show/tell us they feel more confident
  - CYP are less reliant on their parents
2. The culture of play at Lppard St. will be more inclusive
  - CYP with different abilities and backgrounds will play together/alongside each other
  - CYP will show/tell us they feel happier
  - We will see CYP being supportive towards one another
  - CYP will make new friends
  - CYP will show/tell us they feel us they feel more confident
3. CYP will improve their emotional wellbeing
  - CYP will regulate their stress and anxiety better
  - CYP will tell us they are happier
  - CYP will show/tell us they feel more confident
  - CYP will show/tell us they feel less stressed/anxious

# **Markfield**

## **Outcomes and Indicators**

1. Service users (SU) have increased opportunities to access inclusive play and leisure activities
  - SU engage in more outdoor and indoor adventure play and leisure activities
  - SU experiences more new forms of play and leisure activities
  - Non-disabled and disabled children play together more frequently
  - Non-disabled children and their families better understand the needs of disabled children
  - Parent/carer has more time to work, pursue employment or education opportunities
  - Parent/carer's well-being and understanding of their child's potential is increased because their child can try out new forms of play, experience new leisure activities and mix with peers that they would not usually
2. SU will have improved relationships and communication skills
  - SU can express their needs / feelings / likes / dislikes more clearly
  - SU feels more confident in speaking or using their communicate system effectively
  - SU is more able to develop and sustain friendships / relationships with their peers, and family
  - Parent/carer is more able to understand and meet their child's needs
  - Family relationships are improved due to SU's better communication skills
3. SU emotional wellbeing and mental health improves
  - SU feels happier
  - SU has a more positive opinion of themselves
  - SU feels more able to talk about their problems
  - SU feels more able to ask for help and support when needed
  - SU is better able to cope under pressure show resilience in challenging situations
  - Family relationships are improved due to SU being happier
  - Parent/carer reports a reduction in the number of times their child displays challenging behaviour at home.

# White City

## Outcomes and Indicators

1. CYP will experience improved mental and emotional well-being
  - Children's expressions, gestures and opinions (direct and indirect comments)
  - Parents' feedback (spontaneous and formal)
  - Feedback from other professional support individuals
2. Adults will develop a progressive attitude towards playful relationships and playable environments (over time these positive relationships will lead to greater community cohesion)
  - Increased positive adult responses towards playful interactions across the community
  - Children will have increased opportunities for playing across their community
3. Adults will understand children's play needs and behaviours
  - Adults' expressions (direct and indirect comments), gestures and opinions
  - Children will have increased time and space for playing across their community



Photograph Courtesy of Waterside Adventure Playground

# The Limes

## Outcomes and Indicators

1. CYP will experience increased autonomy
  - CYP's self-confidence will improve
  - CYP will be better able to manage risk
  - CYP will initiate their own play
  - CYP will be less reliant on parents/carers
  - CYP will experience improved relationships outside of The Limes
2. CYP will experience a more inclusive environment
  - CYP with and without disabilities will play together/alongside each other
  - CYP will support one another
  - CYP will have more friends
  - CYP will have improved self-confidence
3. CYP's emotional wellbeing will improve
  - CYP will be better able to regulate their stress and anxiety levels
  - CYP will feel more confident
  - CYP will feel happier

# Lady Allen AP

## Outcomes and Indicators

1. Reduced stress in families
  - Families receive respite
  - Families identify better sleeping patterns of c/yp
2. C/y lives improved through increased happiness
  - C/yp happier when return home from Playground
  - C/yp are seen by parents/ carers and staff to be happy and more confident
  - C/YP show excitement or verbalise excitement about attending the playground
  - C/yp observed to show less challenging behaviour and aggression
  - C/yp observed to have have better relationships and interactions with other c/yp and staff
  - C/yp are visibly happier and more co-operative
3. C/yp lives improved through increased independence
  - Staff confident to allow disabled c/yp to take risks in their play,
  - Disabled c/yp to test personal boundaries in their play
  - Disabled C/Yp confidently lead on activities
  - Increased opportunities for fire and building activities
  - Fewer staff interventions in C/yp's play
4. Staff have increased knowledge about play
  - Staff confident to allow c/yp to take risks in their play
  - Increased opportunities for fire and building activities
  - Fewer staff interventions in C/yp's play
  - Staff understanding of C/Yp's abilities and strengths when playing increases
  - Staff develops increased skill and ability to work intensively with C/Yp on a 1:1 basis
5. C/yp have increased voice and opportunities to make decisions
  - Disabled C/Yp confidently lead on activities
  - C/yp making own decisions about how, where and who they play with.
  - C/yp adapt their environment
  - C/yp voices heard by staff in decision making, Ideas and choices valued and included when making decisions
6. Improved attitudes among parents and carers about the benefits of play for their C/yp
  - Families confidently allow their c/yp to come to the playground,
  - Fewer complaints by families about dirty clothing and injuries
  - Over time, families who initially showed resistance to the playground demonstrate an improved attitude towards the playground

# Marble Hill AP

## Outcomes and Indicators

1. Children experience greater enjoyment by accessing better play
  - Children will show and tell us they are having more fun
  - Children will engage in a greater range of play opportunities
  - More children will attend more play sessions
2. Children will experience improved physical and emotional well being
  - Children will be more physically active in the playground
  - Children will feel more confident to take on new challenges
  - Children will share achievements and feelings
  - Children will try new things
3. Children will have more opportunities to interact with others
  - Children will develop new friendships
  - Children play with a range of children
  - Staff will enable children to manage their own relationships
  - Staff will support children to develop improved verbal and non-verbal communication skills
4. Children with additional needs will have more access to play
  - Parents of children with additional needs will have more free time
  - Children with additional needs will:
    - Attend more regularly
    - Engage in varied activities
    - Demonstrate increased happiness
5. Parents and carers will be inspired to play more freely with their children
  - Parents and carers will tell us they feel more confident when playing with their children
  - Children will transfer experiences beyond the playground
  - Children and parents will engage in play together
  - Adults will tell us they feel more confident allowing their children to play outside
6. Parents and carers will demonstrate increased support for the playground
  - Parents and carers will share positive opinions and attitudes about the playground
  - Staff will support parents and carers to better understand free play

7. Staff will develop improved understanding of playwork
  - Staff will have increased their confidence with structured and unstructured play
  - Staff regularly change and adapt the environment to instigate play
  - Staff will learn from each other
8. The wider community will better understand the benefits of play
  - More adults will volunteer at the playground
  - Staff will provide consistent response, that promotes the child's right to play to external complaints
  - A greater number of marginalised families will attend



Photograph Courtesy of Waterside Adventure Playground

# Somerford Grove AP

## Outcomes and Indicators

1. CYP, particularly those from low-income or unwaged families, will have more opportunities to play outdoors all year round.
  - CYP, particularly those from low-income or unwaged families, will attend outdoor play sessions in and out of the playground
  - CYP will tell us how they play
2. CYP will face fewer barriers to playing outside all year round
  - CYP will identify what prevents them from playing out and our work will address these
3. CYP will experience improved physical health
  - We will see CYP take part in physical activities during play sessions
4. CYP will experience improved emotional and social wellbeing
  - Staff will observe examples of CYP
  - Sharing their feelings
  - Trying new things
  - Taking a lead on activities
  - Interacting with others
5. HarPA staff and volunteers will have increased skills and confidence to support play and overcome barriers
  - Play staff and volunteers can describe what an enriched playground includes.
  - Play team can understand and apply the Playwork principles to their practice.
  - Staff will engage in additional CPD opportunities
6. Children will engage in more and varied play types & activities
  - Audits of play spaces will show that they offer increased and varied play types & activities (nb. Play Equip)
  - Staff will see CYP trying new things
  - CYP will tell us they have tried something new
7. More primary school CYP will attend the playground during school time
  - Records will show more local primary schools using the playground
8. Parents/carers will better understand the benefits of their child playing outside
  - Parents/carers will be able to identify/recognize positive outcomes of playing outside for their child



Photograph Courtesy of Lady Allen Adventure Playground

# Worksheet

Outcomes are the changes or differences you expect your project to make.

Look back at your outputs. For each one, list the changes that would occur in the relevant stakeholder(s) (the people experiencing the change). Changes might relate to:

- SKILL: “Be able to...” / “Can...”
- KNOWLEDGE: “Know more about...”
- FEELING: “Feel more/less...”
- BEHAVIOUR: “Do more/less...”
- ATTITUDE: “Recognise...”/ “Believe...” / “Understand...”

Overlap is again to be expected, so you’ll probably find that the same outcome relates to more than one aim.

## Outcome Indicators

1. For each outcome ask yourself what it would look like if you achieved it. Allow yourself to imagine all sorts of possibilities and come up with as many as you can think of in a list. These are your potential indicators.
2. Choose from your list of potential indicators those that you think are the most appropriate. You should choose no more than 2 or 3 of the potential indicators. Before you make your final selection, you should give some thought to the feasibility of measuring the indicators (as there is no point choosing ones that would be too difficult to measure).
3. It is a good idea to check out with other stakeholders (such as funders, partners and users) whether the outcome indicators that you have chosen are the most appropriate ones.

Outcome	Outcome indicators

# Preparing to Collect Data

When preparing to collect data you should consider the following questions:

- Transparency: How can I make sure everyone knows why I am collecting data and what it will be used for?
- Access: How will I get hold of the people I want to ask?
- Realistic requests: Am I asking too much?
- Timing: When is the best time for me to ask each stakeholder?
- Influence and ethics: How can I try to ensure people don't tell me what they think I want to hear?
- Place: Where is the best place for participants and me to be when I collect data?
- Storing data: How will I try to ensure I'm keeping the data organised and secure?
- Coding data as you go: How can I make my life easier when it comes to the analysis stage?

It can be useful at an early stage to use a GANTT chart to structure your time and ensure you have the people power and time to do as you plan to.



Photograph Courtesy of Waterside Adventure Playground

# Worksheet

# Preparing to Collect Data: GANTT Chart

This is intended to help you schedule and plan time to design the tools, collect the data and begin your analysis ahead of writing the final report. Colour the boxes according to whether you are **designing the tool**, **collecting the data** or **analysing the findings** (see example below).



# Data Collection Methods

Below are examples of outcomes that your playground might generate and suggestions for the sorts of tools you could use to collect evidence in support of these outcomes. It's important that you consider the time, resource and person power your AP has. You will see that it's possible to collect evidence for lots of different outcomes through the same tool. Try to keep things simple and feasible.

Outcome Indicator	Data Collection Methods
CYP experience a more inclusive play environment Non-disabled and disabled children play together more frequently	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Written reflections/session evaluations/observations</b> from playworkers (prompt for examples of inclusive behaviour e.g. children playing together who might not usually; examples of CYP being open-minded to difference)</li> <li>• <b>Interview</b> CYP about who they play with</li> <li>• <b>Photographs</b> of disabled and non-disabled CYP playing together</li> </ul>
Non-disabled children and their families better understand the needs/potential of disabled children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Interview</b> parents/carers/siblings of disabled users about how their understanding of their child's needs/potential has changed</li> <li>• <b>Informal discussions</b> with parents/carers/siblings about their understanding of the SU's needs/potential</li> <li>• Parent/carer/sibling <b>questionnaire</b> asking them what impact the AP has had on their understanding of their child's/sibling's needs/potential</li> </ul>
SUs and CYP can express their needs/feelings/likes / dislikes more clearly Children will share achievements and feelings CYP have improved emotional intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Participatory games</b> to elicit SU's needs/feelings/likes/dislikes (see Markfield manual)</li> <li>• <b>Art Mural</b> by SUs/CYP that illustrates their needs/feelings/likes/dislikes</li> <li>• <b>Blob Tree</b> to help SUs/CYP identify their mood</li> <li>• <b>Session evaluations/written reflections/observations</b> (prompt for notable examples of SUs and CYP expressing their needs/feelings/likes/dislikes)</li> <li>• <b>Case studies</b> of SUs who have most obviously developed ways to express their needs/feelings/likes/dislikes more clearly</li> <li>• <b>Emoji wall</b></li> </ul>
Disabled SUs feel more confident in speaking or using their communication system effectively	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Interview</b> CYP or their families</li> <li>• <b>Observations/session evaluations/written reflections</b> prompt for examples of CYP demonstrating increased confidence in communications</li> <li>• <b>Case studies</b> of CYP who have demonstrated increased confidence in communication</li> </ul>

Outcome Indicator	Data Collection Methods
CYP engage in a greater range of play experiences (they can try something new)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Map</b> how CYP use the playground in different ways (you could use the Play Types here)</li> </ul>
CYP's lives are enriched	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>CYP questionnaire</b> enquiring into the variety of play experiences CYP engage in</li> <li>• <b>Audio/video recordings</b> of CYP playing</li> <li>• <b>Photographs</b> of CYP playing in different ways</li> <li>• <b>Photo-elicitation</b> Show CYP photographs of the playground and ask them what new things they have tried in each space</li> <li>• <b>Video recordings</b> of CYP engaging in different kinds of play</li> <li>• <b>Interview</b> CYP about their play experiences</li> <li>• <b>Observations/session evaluations/written reflections</b> (prompt for examples of Sus trying something new)</li> </ul>
<p>CYP have more opportunities to make their own decisions</p> <p>CYP voices and ideas have more impact on staff decisions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Observations/session evaluations/written reflections</b> of CYP making decisions e.g. choosing how and where to play/adapting their environment</li> <li>• <b>Audio recordings</b> of CYP making decisions</li> <li>• <b>Dot voting</b></li> <li>• <b>Minutes</b> from consultation meetings with CYP</li> </ul>
<p>CYP feel more confident</p> <p>Children will feel more confident to take on new challenges</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Informal discussions</b> with parents and carers about CYP's confidence</li> <li>• <b>CYP questionnaire</b> asking them what impact the AP has had on their confidence</li> <li>• <b>Observations</b> by playworkers of CYP taking a lead in activities/ testing personal boundaries/taking more risks</li> <li>• <b>Participatory photography</b> e.g. CYP record activities or equipment that has helped increase their confidence levels</li> </ul>
CYP are better able to manage risk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Case studies</b> of CYP for who have most obviously developed ways to assess and manage risk</li> <li>• <b>Written reflections, observations/session evaluations</b> by playworkers (prompt to identify examples of CYP demonstrating increased ability to manage risk)</li> <li>• <b>Map</b> how CYP manage risk in different areas of the playground</li> <li>• <b>Interview</b> CYP about how they manage risk</li> <li>• <b>CYP questionnaire</b> asking them what impact the AP has had on their ability to identify/manage risk</li> </ul>

Outcome Indicator	Data Collection Methods
CYP become more independent CYP will be less reliant on their parents/carers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Case studies</b> of CYP who have most obviously developed greater independence since attending the playground</li> <li>• <b>Map</b> how CYP demonstrate autonomy in different areas of the playground (e.g. when they initiate their own play)</li> <li>• <b>Interview</b> CYP about how independent they feel in the AP compared with other environments</li> <li>• CYP <b>questionnaire</b> asking CYP about how independent they feel in the AP compared with other environments</li> <li>• Parent and carer <b>interview</b> asking about changes in child's independence at home and/or respite time for them as family</li> <li>• Parent and carer <b>questionnaire</b> asking about changes in child's independence at home and/or respite time for them as family</li> </ul>
CYP have increased social skills CYP make new friends CYP have better relationships CYP will be more supportive of one-another Children will have more opportunities to interact with others CYP feel a greater sense of belonging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case studies of CYP who have most obviously improved their social skills or friendships (consider both verbal and non-verbal development)</li> <li>• Written reflections/observations/session evaluations from playworkers (prompt for notable examples of CYP developing social skills or forming/sustaining/navigating friendships)</li> <li>• Map how CYP interact with each other in different areas of the playground (e.g. note incidents of CYP supporting each other)</li> <li>• Interview CYP about their relationships (with staff and peers)</li> <li>• CYP questionnaire asking about their relationships with staff and peers</li> </ul>
CYP better able to manage stress and/or anxiety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Case studies</b> of CYP who has most improved their ability to manage stress or anxiety since attending the AP</li> <li>• <b>Written reflections/observations/session evaluations</b> from playworkers (prompt for examples of effective or improved stress/anxiety management – e.g. a situation that would have caused stress now not)</li> <li>• <b>Interview</b> CYP about their thoughts on how their stress/anxiety management has improved or changed since attending the playground</li> <li>• CYP <b>questionnaire</b> asking about ways in which the AP has helped them better regulate stress or anxiety</li> </ul>

Outcome Indicator	Data Collection Methods
<p>CYP/SU feel happier/experience greater enjoyment</p> <p>CYP will experience improved mental and emotional well-being</p> <p>CYP observed to show less challenging behaviour and aggression</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Interviews</b> with CYP and SU's and/or parents/carers asking how the AP affects their (or their child's) mood</li> <li>• <b>Observations/session evaluations/written reflections</b> by playworkers identifying changes in CYP and SU's mood and examples of happiness, both short-term (before and after each session) and over time, and/or instances of challenging behaviour or aggression (or a lack thereof)</li> <li>• <b>Case studies</b> focusing on CYP/SU's whose mood/emotional/mental wellbeing has improved since attending the AP</li> <li>• <b>Mood scale</b></li> <li>• <b>Photographs</b> of CYP displaying positive emotional wellbeing</li> <li>• <b>Peer-to-peer interviews</b> asking how the AP affects their mood</li> <li>• <b>Audio/Video recordings</b> of CYP displaying positive emotional wellbeing</li> <li>• <b>Written documentation from other professionals</b> such as teachers or social workers, describing how the AP has contributed to changes in CYP's emotional wellbeing</li> </ul>
<p>CYP/SU have a more positive opinion of themselves</p> <p>CYP/SU has increased self-esteem</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Interviews</b> with CYP and SU's and/or parents/carers asking how the AP affects their (or their child's) self-esteem</li> <li>• <b>Observations/session evaluations/written reflections</b> by playworkers identifying changes in CYP and SU's self-esteem, and/or examples of SUs and CYP demonstrating positive self-esteem</li> <li>• <b>Case studies</b> focusing on CYP/SU's whose self-esteem has significantly improved since attending the AP</li> <li>• <b>Written documentation from other professionals</b> such as teachers or social workers, describing how the AP has contributed to changes in CYP's self-esteem</li> </ul>
<p>SU/CYP demonstrated increased resilience when facing challenging situations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Interviews</b> with CYP and SU's and/or parents/carers asking how the AP affects their (or their child's) resilience (their ability to 'bounce back'; or persist following failure)</li> <li>• <b>Observations/session evaluations/written reflections</b> by playworkers identifying examples of CYP and SU's demonstrating resilience</li> <li>• <b>Case studies</b> focusing on CYP/SU's whose self-esteem has improved since attending the AP</li> <li>• <b>Written documentation from other professionals</b> such as teachers or social workers, describing how the AP has contributed to changes in CYP's resilience</li> </ul>

Outcome Indicator	Data Collection Methods
<p>Increased positive adult responses towards playful interactions across the community</p> <p>This was specifically in relation to WCAP's training programme for lunchtime supervisors</p> <p>The wider community will better understand the benefits of play</p> <p>Improved reputation of the APG</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Observations</b> by playworkers of adults responding to CYP playing</li> <li>• <b>Informal discussions</b> with adults and/or CYP about changes in adults' response to playful interactions</li> <li>• <b>Video recordings</b> of adults and children at play</li> <li>• <b>Photographs</b> of adults with children at play</li> <li>• <b>Record</b> of local volunteers</li> <li>• <b>Record</b> staff responses to external queries/questions about play from the community</li> <li>• <b>Questionnaire</b></li> </ul>
<p>Adults better understand CYP play and behaviours</p> <p>Improved attitudes among parents and carers about the benefits of play for their C/yp</p> <p>Parents and carers will demonstrate increased support for the playground</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Photographs</b> of adults with children at play</li> <li>• <b>Interviews</b> with adults asking how their understanding of CYP's play has changed (since AP's training/intervention)</li> <li>• <b>Informal discussions</b> with adults and/or CYP about changes in adults' understanding of CYP's play and behaviours/attitudes to the playground</li> <li>• <b>Observations</b> by playworkers of moments and spaces demonstrating improved adult understanding of CYP's play and behaviours</li> <li>• <b>Questionnaires</b> (before and after) training for adults</li> <li>• <b>Record</b> number of complaints from parents</li> </ul>
<p>Children will have increased opportunities for playing across their community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Informal discussions</b> with CYP and adults to elicit examples of increased opportunities for play across the community</li> <li>• <b>Case studies</b> identifying examples of where opportunities for play in the community have increased</li> <li>• <b>Observations</b> of CYP playing in their community</li> <li>• <b>Map</b> changes in where CYP play in their community</li> </ul>
<p>Reduced stress in families</p> <p><i>NB. This is less appropriate for families of new users, as this outcome will emerge over time</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Interviews</b> with parents/carers asking how stress levels/respite time/sleeping patterns change as a result of their child attending the APG</li> <li>• <b>Informal discussions</b> with parents/carers about their stress levels/respite time/sleeping patterns at home</li> <li>• <b>Questionnaires</b> for parents/carers asking how stress levels/respite time/sleeping patterns change as a result of their child attending the APG</li> </ul>

Outcome Indicator	Data Collection Methods
<p>Staff have increased knowledge about play</p> <p>Staff will develop improved understanding of playwork</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Observations/session evaluations/written reflections</b> by playworkers regarding decisions to intervene and/or allow CYP to take risks (could also be peer:peer)</li> <li>• <b>Questionnaires (e.g. Play Way)</b> before and after training</li> <li>• <b>Workshop evaluation forms</b></li> <li>• <b>Story telling method</b></li> <li>• <b>Playworker diary</b> records CPD (e.g. conferences, collaborative learning)</li> </ul>
<p>Children will be more physically active in the playground</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Voluntary pedometers</b></li> <li>• <b>Mapping</b> physical activities/games around the playground</li> <li>• <b>Photo-elicitation</b> Show CYP photographs of the playground and ask them what physical activities they do in each</li> </ul>
<p>Children will try new things</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Observations/session evaluations/written reflections</b> by playworkers identifying CYP who have tried something new</li> <li>• <b>Informal discussions</b> with CYP about new things they've tried</li> <li>• <b>Questionnaires</b> for CYP asking them what new activities or experiences the APG has provided them with</li> <li>• <b>Map</b> showing play area in AP and 'types of play' it allows</li> <li>• <b>Photo-elicitation</b> Show CYP photographs of the playground and ask them what new things they have tried in each space</li> </ul>
<p>Parents and carers will be inspired to play more freely with their children</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Informal discussions</b> with parents/carers about the way they play with their child</li> <li>• <b>Questionnaires</b> for parents</li> <li>• <b>Photographs</b> of parents/carers engaging in the play sessions with their child</li> </ul>
<p>Improved community cohesion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Photographs</b> of community events at the APG</li> <li>• <b>Interviews</b> with local community members at events</li> </ul>
<p>Staff increase the impact of the playground</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Informal discussions</b> with parents/carers and CYP about the impact of staff</li> <li>• <b>Questionnaires</b> for CYP about the role of the playworkers</li> <li>• <b>Photographs</b> of playworkers engaging and supporting CYP</li> <li>• <b>Case studies</b> demonstrating how playworker/s have increased impact on CYP</li> </ul>

# Worksheet

# Analysing data

**Data analysis** helps you use data to reach conclusions about the impact of your playground and plan future projects. The process involves filtering your information through a number of stages to identify patterns, themes, key messages, and good quotes to use in your report.

## Stage 1: Organising your data

How you do this depends on what you're planning to do with it, and the questions you are exploring. At the first stage digitize your data so it's easy to work with: transcribe audio / video, type up comments and descriptions into Word/etc, and enter survey / interview data (including any audio and video) into a database or spreadsheet.

Sort or code your information in ways appropriate to your interest: this may include sorting by category of observation, by event, by place, by individual, by group, by the time of observation, or by a combination or some other standard.

When possible, necessary, and appropriate, transform qualitative into quantitative data: e.g. count the number of times specific issues were mentioned in interviews, or how often certain behaviours were observed over a month.

# Example 1: The Limes turned qualitative data into quantitative data.

Name	March week 4					April week 1					
	risky play	solo play	tog play	anxiety	managing anxiety	risky play	solo play	tog play	anxiety	managing anxiety	risky play
A											
B											
C	1		1						1		
D	1		1			1		1	1		
E				1				1	1		
F	1	1									
G							2			1	
H										1	
I		1					2				
J								1	1		
K								1			
L							1				
M	1		1				1	1			
N				1	1			1	1		
O			2		1					1	
P											
Q	1							2			
R		1									

Table 8: section of chart showing instances of types of play/ behaviour.

During the course of the month staff observed:

- 57 instances of children playing independently
- 92 instances of children playing with others and collaboratively.
- 61 instances of anxiety or behaviour due to anxiety
- 13 instances of children managing their own risk or engaging in risky play
- 41 instances of children using coping strategies to manage their own anxiety (these were instances of with or without support).

## Stage 2: Identifying patterns and themes

Qualitative information (words, pictures, feedback and stories) needs to be further organized to identify common emerging themes. Here's how to do it:

1. Sort the information into piles according to who gave you it; i.e. young people; volunteers; parents
2. Working on one pile of information at a time, read through all of it to get a general idea of the contents
3. Note down the key themes that emerge (consider your indicators!) such as confidence; enjoyment; new skills, new friends.
4. Then read through the information again and use coloured highlighter pens to categorise statements that fit under your key themes. Re-reading helps you see other themes and you may find some themes are too broad and can be broken down into sub-themes, e.g. 'confidence' might become 'personal growth' and 'becoming responsible'
5. Once you have identified all themes, use them as headings and write a summary paragraph under each. Be sure to include examples and quotations.
6. Repeat Steps 2 – 5 for each pile of information.
7. Then compare the results for each group of people and consider:
  - i. What's the consensus view about the project?
  - ii. If the information lacks consensus, what can this tell you?
  - iii. Are there any surprises?
  - iv. What interesting stories have emerged out of the data?
  - v. Are there any aspects of the project that could be improved?
  - vi. What conclusions can you draw?
  - vii. What recommendations can you make for future projects?

## Example 2: For my MA dissertation I copied and pasted parts of the transcribed interviews into a table organised by theme and interviewee.

Transcribed interviews can then be copied and pasted into a table divided by theme. Once you've read through the interviews to get a feel for the sorts of topics arising, then you can begin to sort them into different columns in a table.

## Example 3: Lollard St mapped staff observations with dates onto a site map.

This data was then read and it became apparent that is showed CYP had opportunities for gaining a sense of independence, for example cooking, tending fires and building with tools. This data was supplemented by staff play diary entries. Quotes in the diary were used to assess the extent to which children learn to manage risk: 'One boy said: "*That's why we come to Adventure – to be more risky*"'



Quantitative data is the information that is collected as, or can be translated into, numbers. Relevant examples include:

- The frequency, rate or duration of specific behaviours or conditions
- Survey results (e.g. reported behaviour, ratings of enjoyment, anxiety etc)
- Number/percentage of people with certain characteristics in a population (diagnosed with diabetes, unemployed, Spanish-speaking, under age 14 etc)
- Simple counting techniques, percentages, graphs and fractions can be used to extract and demonstrate patterns and achievements. You can also calculate the mean (average), median (midpoint), and/or mode (most frequent) of a series of measurements or observations.
- Quantitative data analysis can help us understand:
  - Where responses are similar
  - If there are differences
  - If there is a relationship

Triangulation compares different data-collection methods to overcome the weaknesses or biases that come from collecting data from a single source or using a single tool. For example, if you ask CYP how the playground benefits them, and then ask their parents how they think it benefits their child, your findings can become more robust and trustworthy, particularly if they back each other up. You can triangulate qualitative with quantitative data.

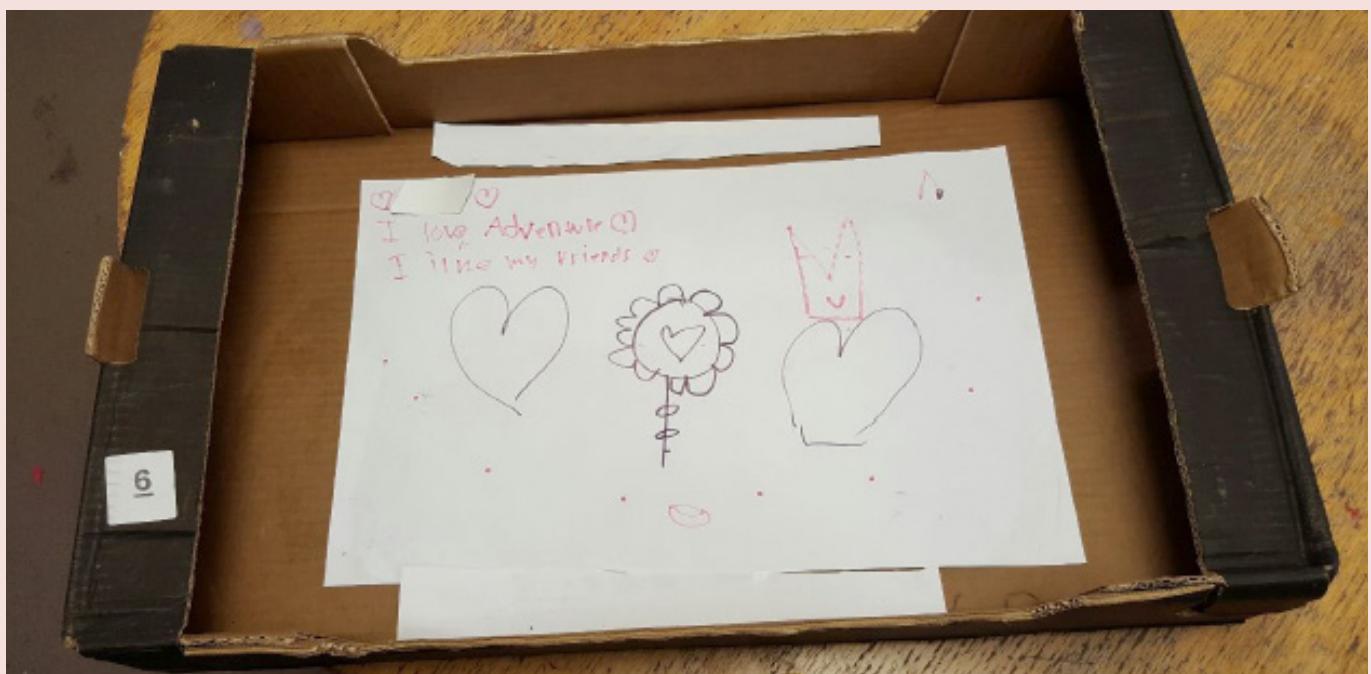
## Stage 3: Presenting data

Presenting your data in creative and engaging ways is a key way to interest your reader and get your message across:

- Writing written accounts of themes emerging, with examples from data.
- These examples can be lengthened to become case studies
- Presenting data visually e.g. photographs and drawings to show activities and interactions or the experiences of service users

### Example 4: Lppard St. asked children to annotate their drawings with what they like best about the AP

- Using tables, as White City Adventure Playground used for attendance below



Photograph 9: "*I love adventure. I like my friends.*" A creation made at the playground by a girl who attends, in 2016

## Example 5: Playworks Report 2016

Attendance Registers 2015 (Jan-Dec)

Type of Play Provision	Number of Sessions	Unique Number of Children	Total Attendance	Average Number of children per session
After School Play Provision	214	44	6080	28
Open Access Holiday Provision	50	245	1968	39
Saturday Play Provision	18	11	186	10
Community Outreach Play Sessions	25	174	706	28
Additional Needs Play Sessions	12	46	168	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>520</b>	<b>9108</b>	<b>24</b>

Table 14: Attendance registers 2015 (Jan-Dec)

- Using simple graphs and charts

# Graph Types

## PIE GRAPHS

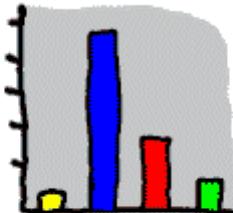
What portion of the total does each part make up?



"like pieces of a pie"

## BAR GRAPHS

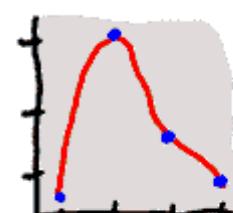
How different are these variables to each other?



"like stacks of coins"

## LINE GRAPHS

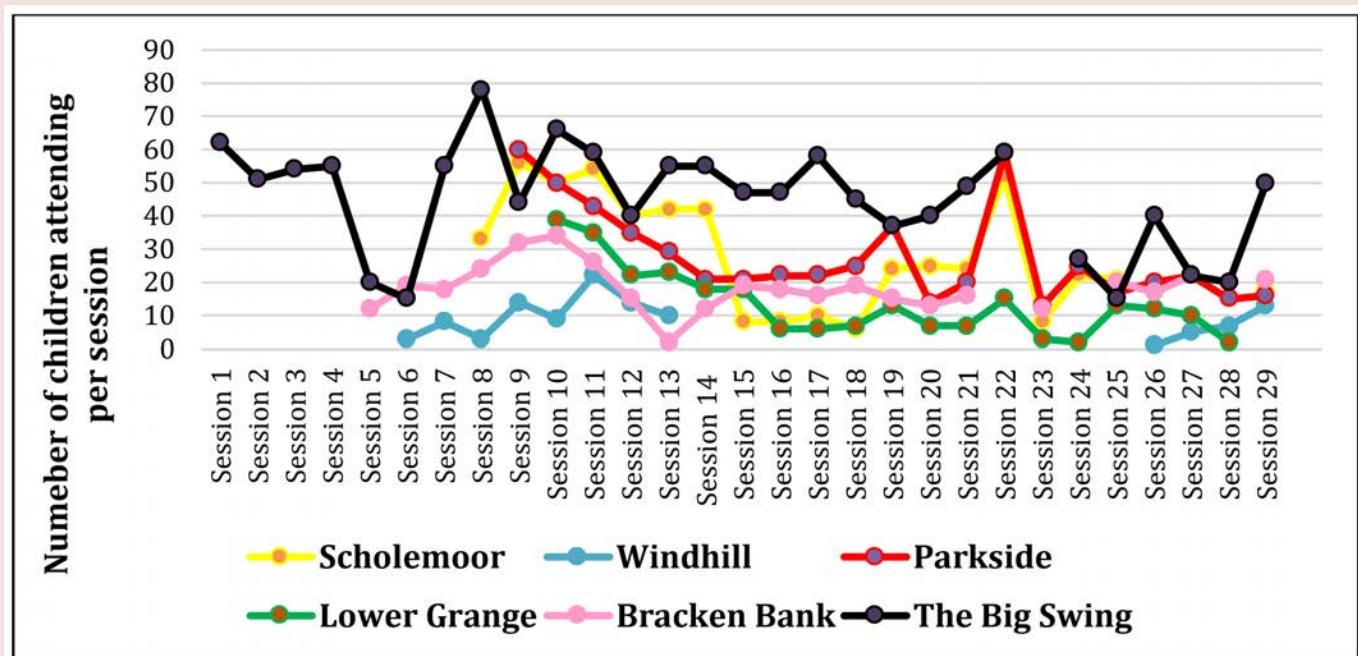
How does this one variable change over time?



"like turns in a road"

# Example 6: Staff at Eccleshill Adventure Playground (The Big Swing) in Bradford plotted quarterly attendance of their mobile adventure play sessions at six sites across the city in a graph.

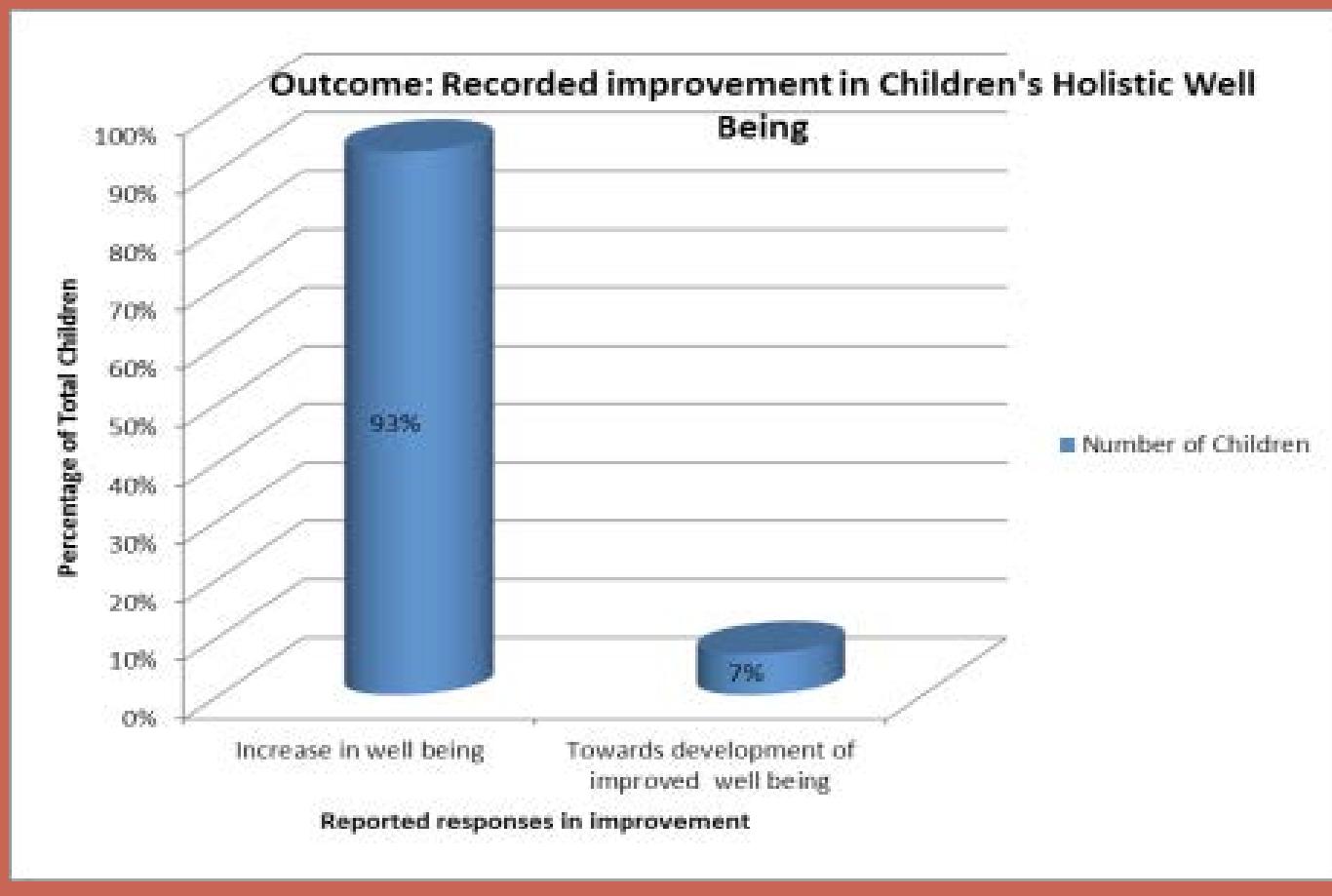
The graph helps show relative frequency of provision in each area as well as attendance. The team also broke attendance down into gender and ethnicity using pie charts for each site.



(Monitoring and Evaluation Report, January 2017)

## Example 7: White City AP use a simple bar graph to show the extent to which users reported improvement in their wellbeing:

*"From the 751 children currently accessing Playful Foundations' play provision, data collection records indicate a 93% reported improvement in overall holistic well-being. Regarding the 7% of children who are classified as not reporting an increase in emotional and mental well-being, we are seeing that they are working towards an increase from our playwork observations. The data have been collected through children's feedback and opinions and professional playwork observations."*



# Example 8: The Limes AP used pie charts to visualise their quantitative data from parent surveys.

Their analysis shows a grasp of their findings because they highlight a difference between groups (disabled and non-disabled).

## Child has friends

Graph 5: Does your child have friends outside of school/ The Limes? ( all children)



This chart shows that 66% of parents asked, answered that their child does have friends outside of school. This was higher than expected, but further scrutiny of the data revealed key differences between disabled and non-disabled children.

Graph 6: Does your child have friends outside of school/ The Limes? (disabled children)



When the answers from parents of non-disabled children were removed, this figure reduces to 41%. This means that 59% of disabled children accessing services at The Limes have no friend outside of The Limes or school.

(Playworks Report 2016)

- Infographics



The following links provide suggestions and online resources for creating your own infographics:

<http://www.creativebloq.com/infographic/tools-2131971>

<https://venngage.com/>

<http://www.makeuseof.com/tag/10-of-the-best-tools-for-creating-infographics/>

# Writing your report

How you present your findings could be of vital importance to your programme's future as your report could be what your funder and stakeholders base future support of your organization on. Consider and list your key audience or audiences to help you decide on the format for your report.

An attractive visual style tends to be more accessible, as does a short punchy style of writing that delivers key messages quickly and effectively. Think about how much time your reader will likely have to read your report and what is most important to get across.

What are your audience needs in terms of language and accessibility? Do you need to adapt or translate your language?

You may choose to create a shorter summary report listing your key findings and recommendations, separate from your detailed longer report. The longer report may be essential for a funder at the later stages of a funding bid, but the shorter report may help you get you to that stage.

Include photographs and visual material to break up text, illustrate key points, and as data sources in their own right. A picture can indeed paint a thousand words.

## Example 1: White City



- 1) Foreword
- 2) Executive Summary
- 3) Introduction
- 4) Aims of Report
- 5) Methodology
- 6) Findings
- 7) Summary and Conclusion

(Play Works report 2016)

# Suggested report structure – long report:

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. Background – explain who you are, what you are trying to achieve and who your service users are.
- 1.2. Need section – this can be brief and is not always necessary. To show why your service is necessary, you could present key local area statistics, baseline or consultation data or the results of previous evaluations.
- 1.3. Aims of report – tell the audience why you conducted the evaluation research.  
Make sure you match the purpose of your report to the requirements of the funder if you are writing in support of a specific grant. Generally speaking, the purpose is to evaluate the extent to which you are meeting your organization's aims, objectives and outcomes, and to improve your impact in the future.

You may also include a foreword from the project leader or a key stakeholder at the beginning of your report – this can give a personal flavour to the report and sets the context for why it has been produced. An executive summary is a shortened summary of your key achievements and recommendations moving forward. This may form the basis of a shorter report.

## Example 2: The Limes AP



### Background

The Limes Play and Participate is an independent children's charity supporting children and young people from birth to 25 years in an inclusive and fun environment in the centre of Walthamstow.

The Limes has run successfully in the centre of Walthamstow for over 11 years; integral to its success and longevity is the emphasis on children and young people shaping the design of services both within the charity and in the borough more widely.

**Our vision** is that all disabled children and young people will enjoy, achieve and participate

**Our mission** is to provide a safe place in which all disabled children and young people are encouraged and enabled to:

- Enjoy opportunities to learn and play
- Achieve their potential socially, emotionally and educationally
- Participate in a range of activities alongside their disabled and able bodied peers

(Play Works report 2016)

## 2. Methodology

This tells your reader how you conducted your research. It should clarify what you tried to find out, from whom and how you went about it. You should also mention who conducted the research – which staff or service users collected data and when. Clearly state the timeframe within which your research took place.

Using your m&e plan, you can share lots of information concisely using a table:

- Table 1: Share your AP's objectives, outputs and output indicators (targets)
- Table 2: Outcomes – share your specific aims, outcomes and outcome indicators

Clearly list all your data. You may want to list this in two main sections: primary and secondary data sources. Primary data includes all the feedback you collected directly from various stakeholders during the research timeframe. Secondary data includes any written sources: previous reports and research data from other sources, for example local statistics, from within your research timeframe.

### Example 3: List of data gathered for the PACE Rebuilding Bridges Pilot report

#### Methodology

PACE commissioned A5cend Ltd to conduct an external evaluation of the pilot project in October 2015. A5cend worked closely with PACE project coordinators to conduct and compile the following research data, which was analysed in order to produce this summary report.

- Interviews with Henry Purkis, strategic manager, and Glenys James, project coordinator, PACE, October 2015
- Survey with 12 key stakeholders (including two PACE staff, plus referral partners including Robson House Primary Pupil Referral Unit, Camden Centre for Learning KS3, plus Camden's Children Schools Families Transformation Team, Youth Offending Service and School Inclusion Team), October 2015
- End of project surveys with 10 parents, October 2015
- Project monitoring data from 21 participants
- End-of-project reporting for eight young people aged 12-15 (Thursday Club), including baseline, mid-way and final SDQ scores, baseline referral notes and final assessment notes. The sample consists of longer-term attendees with whom it was appropriate to conduct end-of-programme data collection
- End-of-project reporting for five young people aged 8-11 (Tuesday Club), including baseline, mid-way and final SDQ scores, baseline referral notes and final assessment notes. The sample is made up of longer-term attendees with whom it was appropriate to conduct end-of-programme data collection
- Notes from a practitioner interview with Camden Centre for Learning staff, October 2015
- Practitioner self-evaluation reports from Thursday and Tuesday clubs, September 2015
- Case studies produced by practitioners exploring more detailed outcomes for four CYP, September 2015
- Practitioner notes from focus group discussion on outcomes with Thursday Club participants (aged 12-14), August 2015

### 3. Findings

This section is most important, as it shares the results of your research. We suggest you give a quick overview of the extent to which you have met your desired outputs and outcomes, before providing a more detailed analysis of the outcomes, as this is what funders are most interested in: what difference has your service made to people's lives.

#### 3.1. The overview – summary of outputs and outcomes achieved

Make this simple to read by creating two summary tables

### Example 4: A5cend summarized key achievements for each outcome, indicator and target measure in a table, before looking more deeply at findings for each indicator in subsequent sections

Overview of achievements in Y1			
OUTCOME	INDICATOR	TARGET	EVIDENCE OF CHANGE
<i>O1: Vulnerable boys and fathers report improved relationship/more secure attachment as a result of spending more quality time together and enhanced communication</i>	1.1 Number of fathers demonstrating improved communication skills	40 by end Y1	This outcome has been achieved: 97% of fathers talk more with their children. All sons said their fathers listen and speak more
	1.2 Number of fathers/children recording spending more than one hour a week together	80 by end Y2	On target: 100% of fathers and sons spend more time together. All sons agreed their fathers make more time for them now
	1.3 Number of fathers and young people reporting improved bonding and relationships with each other	240 by project end	100% of fathers and sons surveyed experienced improvement: on track to over-achieve target
<i>O2: Low-income fathers report an increase in parenting</i>	2.1 Number of fathers reporting learning new skills	40 by end Y1	Achieved: 100% of fathers are engaging with learning; some 91% report gaining new skills

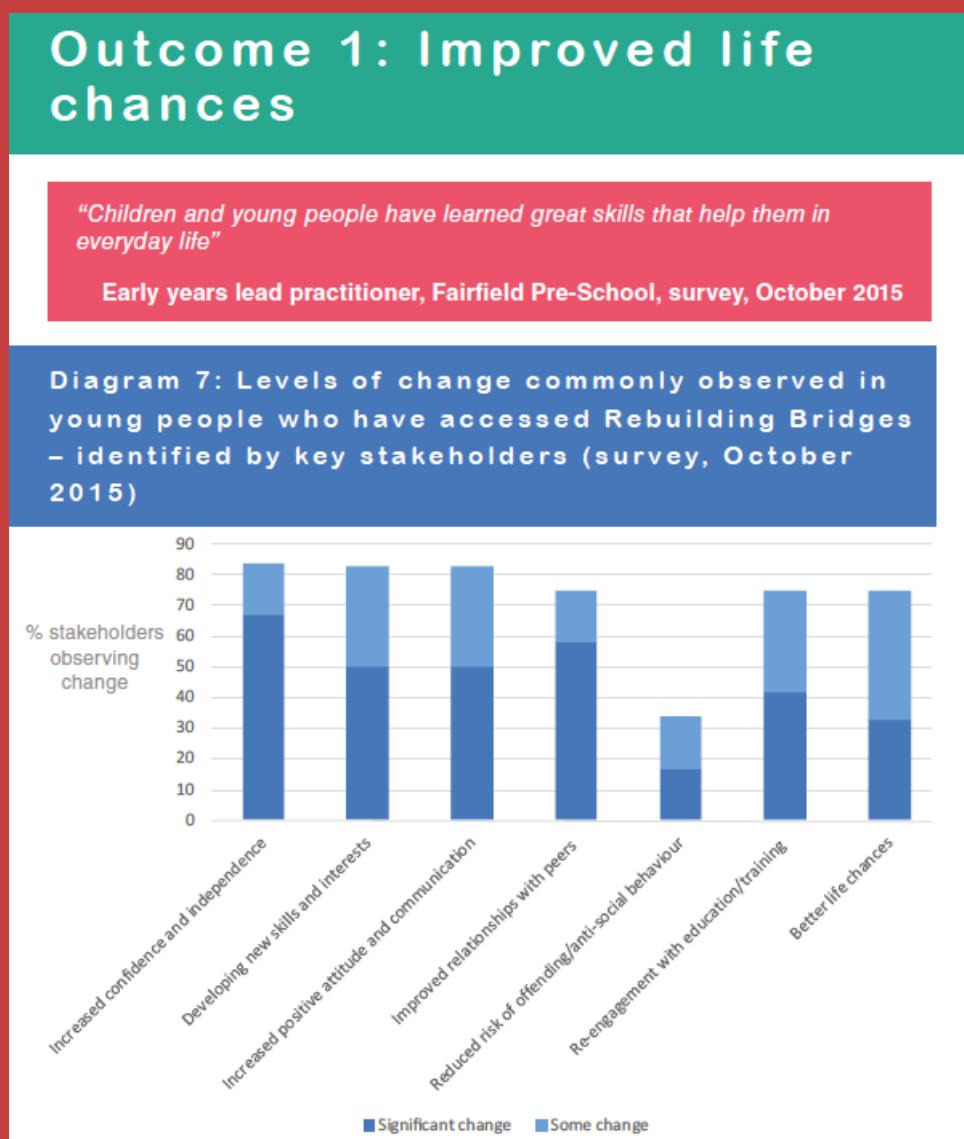
(CC Boys Club evaluation, 2016)

### 3.2. Exploration of outcomes

After your output and outcome tables, use your outcomes as sub-headings and then analyse your findings in more detail. This is where to present your analysed data in graphs and paragraphs of text and show where findings have been triangulated (backed up using multiple data sources exploring the same theme or indicator). Include evidence of positive change as well as evidence of what has not worked or not been or only ambiguously achieved.

You could include: quotes and comments from your stakeholders, graphs and charts, percentages, photos and pictures (numbered and titled) and case studies, as well as explanatory text describing conclusions reached.

## Example 5: Presenting outcomes data in a punchy visual style



### 3.3. Additional outcomes

This is where to list any interesting or unexpected findings that were outside your core agreed outcomes, but still relevant to your stakeholders and organization's development.

## 4. Conclusions

This is your opportunity to clearly sum up the positive impact your service makes, and link very clearly your outcomes to your practice. If you have not achieved all you wanted, this is also where to describe what you are learning and make recommendations for how you will adapt / evolve / improve the service in the future, based on the evidence you have collected.

### 4.1. Areas of achievement

This is where to big up what your research has revealed about what you do well and highlight your amazing work. As well as the success of your current services, describe any improvements you have made to working practices, processes, systems and staff development, especially if they have come from feedback you have gathered from service users / the m&e process in general.



Photograph Courtesy of Marble Hill Play Centres

# Example 6: Concise reporting of key achievements by White City AP

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

### Areas of Achievement

**Specific Aim One - To provide increased opportunities for children to support their own agency and holistic well-being through everyday actions.**

From 751 individuals currently accessing Playful Foundations play provision, 93% report an improvement in their holistic well-being.

We have increased the amount of facilitated staff play provision in 2016.

We have increased the number of children who attend staffed play provision.

We have increased our work with children in non-mainstream education establishments accessing regular play opportunities.

**Specific Aim Two – Working to remove the barriers that prevent children from accessing playful opportunities for themselves**

88% of respondents suggest that, through Playful Foundations, identified barriers to play have been or are in the process of being removed.

In 2016, Playful Foundations have maintained the same level of play events as 2015, and have committed to more events before the end of 2016.

We have increased the number of children and their families accessing play events across the ward of Wormholt and White City.

Although difficult to quantify, through our playwork observations we have noticed an increased degree of engagement by adults in the local community.

(Play Works report 2016)

#### 4.2. Areas for Development

Number these clearly because you'll link back to them in the recommendations section that follows. This is where you talk about what has not worked and why, and where processes and delivery could be developed and improved in the next phase of your work. Don't be afraid to be honest – funders want to see evidence of learning and development rather than perfection. This shows your integrity and adaptation based on evidence and responding to change is also what makes your organization feel dynamic and resilient.

## 5. Recommendations

Close your report with a clear and concise set of recommendation for how you move forward into the next phase of your delivery, addressing any areas for development you identified in the previous section. Number these as you did areas for development and make at least one recommendation for each area.

## Example 7: Key findings included recommendations in the PACE pilot project report

### Recommendations

- 4.1. Fully resource early assessment work in light of what has been learned during the pilot about creating optimal group dynamics from the start of the project, and the need for flexibly meeting individual need rather than placing all young people in the same group (point 5 below)
- 4.2. Pilot a girl-only group or groups, with female practitioners as keyworkers and positive role models
- 4.3. Explore ways to deepen the potential for positive role modelling opportunities among young people. For example, older or pro-social service users helping younger or more vulnerable ones, in order to further embed gains in confidence/skills and maximise impact for all

# **Suggested report structure– short report:**

## **1. Introduction and methodology**

- 1.1. Brief background to organization, project, and project aims and key outcome measures, including dates and timeframes.
- 1.2. Write a short paragraph detailing who conducted data collection and when, and briefly summarizing the key data sources.

## **2. Key findings and recommendations**

Use bullet points and make your sentences short and punchy – these are headlines. The findings and recommendations could be separate sections, or, if your recommendations are closely aligned with your key findings, each recommendation could be presented underneath each key finding point.

## **3. Contact details**

Write a paragraph telling your audience where they can find more detailed information about your research and findings, including contact details.

# Worksheet

1. Who will read your report?
2. What is most important for them to know?
3. What kind of style, length of report and language will be most appropriate for your audience?
4. Which of the following have you used in your reporting?
  - Photographs
  - Punchy headlines
  - Executive summary, or key findings and recommendations summarized at start of report
  - Clear list of data including number of stakeholders consulted, how and when
  - Findings summary tables for both outputs and outcomes
  - Graphs and charts presenting key data visually under outcome headings
  - Discussion of areas for development
  - Recommendations
  - Direct quotes – with name (with permission), date, method of consultation
  - Introduction to organization and project
  - Foreword from key stakeholder

# Sharing your findings

While it may seem obvious, sharing your findings is an incredibly important and often overlooked stage in the M&E process. You want to ensure that your findings are easily accessed and shared, so take the time to use social media, your website, newsletters or other stakeholder correspondence such as phonecalls or AGMs to really emphasise the findings from your research. Use the checklist worksheet to help you do this.



Photograph Courtesy of Marble Hill Play Centres

# Worksheet

## Dissemination Plan for your Report

It's important that you take the time to share what you discovered with your stakeholders. Use this checklist to help you do this

**Adventure Playground:**

**Report Author:**

**Date of completion:**

1. What communication channels have you used/do you plan to use to share the report's findings? (if planned for the future, please include a proposed date)

- |              |                          |                               |                          |
|--------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Website    | <input type="checkbox"/> | • AGM                         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Facebook   | <input type="checkbox"/> | • Training                    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Twitter    | <input type="checkbox"/> | • Posters or displays         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Email      | <input type="checkbox"/> | • Banners                     | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Newsletter | <input type="checkbox"/> | • Other (please give details) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Leaflets   | <input type="checkbox"/> |                               |                          |

2. With whom have you/do you plan to share the report and its findings? (if planned for the future, please include a proposed date)

- |                             |                          |                                |                          |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| • Children and young people | <input type="checkbox"/> | • Council                      | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Parents and carers        | <input type="checkbox"/> | • Funders (please specify who) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Trustees                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | • Local community              |                          |
| • Staff                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | (please specify who)           | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Volunteers                | <input type="checkbox"/> | • Other (please give details)  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| • Schools                   | <input type="checkbox"/> |                                |                          |

- 3. What feedback, suggestions or ideas have you received from those who have read the report?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 4. What new connections, partnerships or contacts has your organisation made as a result of writing/ sharing the report?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 5. What action have you taken/do you plan to take to address the recommendations from the report? (if planned for the future, please include a proposed date)**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 6. How have you/do you plan to use the findings in future funding bids?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 7. What further support would you find helpful in relation to sharing, promoting, or making the best use of the report and its findings?**



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- Supporting organisations such as play associations, local playgrounds and play centres
- Working with playworkers and community groups to increase and improve play opportunities in the capital
- Directly providing more play opportunities through funded projects, working with local play organisations or community bodies wherever possible
- Engaging communities and children themselves to meet the need for play opportunities
- Raising the profile of play with politicians, decisionmakers, parents, schools and other bodies that work with or influence children and young people (eg, the media and by contributing to policymaking)

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<http://www.haringey-play.org.uk>
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<https://www.kids.org.uk/lady-allen-adventure-playground1>
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<http://marblehillplaycentres.com>
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<https://www.awesomelic.co.uk/adventure->

play/waterside-adventure-playground

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