Hackney
Contextual
Safeguarding
Project

All Around Me

A Contextual Mapping Tool

Kayleigh Broughton (2018)

To be referenced as Kayleigh Broughton (2018) All Around Me – A Contextual Mapping Tool

This tool is designed to help practitioners gather information from a young person to build a picture/understanding of the people and places that matter most to that young person in each of the identified contexts. The tool can also be used to identify strengths and conflicts between the parties named, such as a harmonious relationship between parents and peers or conflict between parents beliefs and school ethos and so on. This tool is to be used with children and young people aged 10 and over.

The tool fits on one sheet of A3 paper, though it can be made bigger if desired.

How it's used:

NB. The tool should be folded into 4 so that each context can be filled out in isolation.

Practitioners should identify 2 contexts where there are the most positives first and ask the young person to name the people or places in those contexts that are closest/safest to them in declining order. These names should then be written in the semi-circle closest to "me", with the other names working outwards so that the least safe influences are written in the outer ring or outside of the circles entirely. Initials or 'street names' can be used if this makes the young person feel more comfortable. Ideally the tool should be carried out over 2 sessions; the first to set the outline of the activity and fill out the 2 most positive contexts and the second the fill out the contexts where most difficulties occur. The tool should then be opened out where discussion can be held about relationships/level of influence over the young person within each circle and where there is harmony or conflict across people/places identified. It is important to note that there may be a difference of opinion between the practitioner and young person in terms of 'safety'. Please give the young person's view preference as this is helpful in determining the young person's priorities and understanding of their circumstances. Also, it is possible for people to be identified twice across the tool, for example a close friend in school may not be a close friend/source of support in the community.

Practitioners are encouraged to create a key, which should be agreed with the young person, using different colours to denote child, adult or location and wavy or dotted lines to signify strength or tensions in relationships.