

# TEN WAYS TO CAPTURE FEEDBACK

It is important to find out what your participants think about the discipleship approach being trialled within your Messy Church.

Who are your participants?

For discipleship approaches 'Faith Conversations', 'Messy Extra' and 'Social Action', your participants are the families who engage with these additional activities.

For discipleship approaches 'Maturing Teams', 'Young Leaders Development' and 'Mentoring', your participants are your Messy Church leaders.

How do we do it?

There are many ways to capture feedback from your participants. This pack suggests ten ways that may work in your Messy Church context.

Choose the way or ways which suit:

- Your participants - How well do they know each other? How confident are they? Is it best to ask for individual feedback or group/family feedback?
- You and your team - What skills do you already have within your team? Which of these excites you?
- Your discipleship approach - When is the best time to capture feedback?

Things to remember:

- Let everyone taking part know what the feedback exercise is for
- Taking part needs to be voluntary – if someone doesn't want to take part, is there something else for them to do whilst others are giving feedback?
- For some of the ideas below, feedback can be confidential. This means not using people's real names. Encourage your families and leaders to make up 'code names' to be used with their feedback – these can be as creative as they like!

Top tips

- When asking children for feedback, come down to their eye level
- When asking children for feedback and they're happy to take part, gently come back to them a few times to ask them what they think/feel in case they need thinking time or are shy at first
- Remember, when working with families in this stage of life, you will have their short attention spans and busy family lives to contend with!
- Questionnaires and surveys can be helpful, but response rates can be low and they can feel a bit impersonal – give one of the creative methods below a go
- Try not to use desks/clipboards or anything that suggests a power dynamic
- Take advice if you have refugees/asylum seekers or children/adults with disabilities
- Be brave! Think about what approach would work best in your setting - you might want to try more than one approach

Got a question or need some advice? Contact Claire on: [claire.dalpra@churcharmy.org](mailto:claire.dalpra@churcharmy.org)

## 1) Brainstorming group feedback on flipchart

- An easy, simple way for leaders to gather and record positives and negatives
- Could helpfully strengthen a sense of 'group' identity
- Watch dominant voices don't drown out quieter voices
- Younger children might not sit still for long



## 2) Group feedback with 'hands up' or coloured cards to specific questions

i.e. *'Put your hand up/show me a green card if you've learnt something today?'* and/or *'Put your hand up/show me a purple card if you've learned something today that will change some aspect of your life?'*

- A simple way to gather feedback on what people think they're learning
- Could helpfully strengthen a sense of 'group' identity
- Younger children might need help applying teaching to everyday life
- May work best for short-term feedback rather than long-term reflection
- Would need two leaders to facilitate – one to lead and one to note down number of hands/cards
- Could enable more feedback if followed up with some deeper questions: *'So Tommy, you put up your hand. I wonder – would you be willing to tell me/us what you learned today?'*

## 3) Group feedback to specific questions involving movement

*Participants give feedback by standing on a line or grid marked out by masking tape on the floor. Use scaled, rather than yes/no questions e.g. how enjoyable did you find the social action activity?*

- Needs physical space
- Might suit children who struggle to sit still
- Requires adults who are happy to take part in an active exercise
- Might need two leaders to facilitate, one to lead and one to note down where people stand
- Might not enable you to access *why* attenders found aspects helpful or unhelpful without individual follow-up - perhaps try this alongside another approach?

## 4) Group feedback in focus group interview

- Would work well with young people/adults who are happy to give some time and thought to a group discussion
- Might need to happen without children or with childcare
- Would need two leaders to facilitate - one to lead and one to take notes
- With appropriate permissions, you might want to record discussions with an audio device if it is hard to take notes
- Would need a bit of facilitation to encourage quieter people to share
- How would you capture views of younger children to complement this approach?



## 5) Asking individuals to write comments on scratch art stars or paper leaves to be placed on a tree

- Feels creative as well as practical
- Doesn't have to be trees or stars – could use another analogy
- Younger participants could express themselves through pictures as well as words
- Not everyone might participate – how would you ensure feedback was reasonably representative?
- Might work well in a celebration time? As part of an act of worship? But you would need to make it clear it was research feedback.
- Represents individual comments at the same time as communicating they are part of something collective
- If using a tree, check no eyes are in danger of being poked out!



## 6) Asking individuals to write a poem of their experience/viewpoint

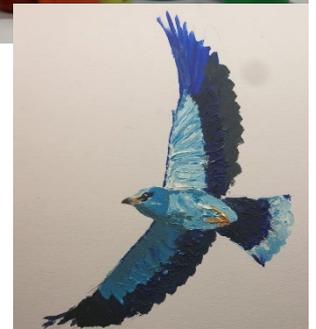
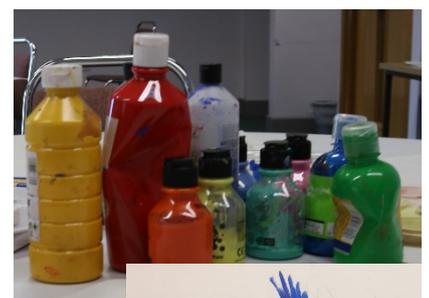
E.g. 'In light of the things we've been trying this year in Messy Church, write a poem expressing your feelings and thoughts on Messy Church beginning with "My Messy Church is..."'

- Would need a fair degree of confidence around literacy, so would suit older children/young people/adults more than younger children
- Might suit an arty crowd!

## 7) Individual feedback through a creating a piece of artwork that symbolises their experience/feedback

*This is much like the Playfully Serious attenders research day with questions like: 'How has Messy Church helped you on your journey of following Jesus this year?'*

- Needs resources
- Needs time – not something to be rushed. Needs the feeling of 'spiritual retreat'.
- Allows for individual responses, but also works well with child/adult pairings
- Suits the Messy Church value of creativity
- Helps express feelings that are difficult to put into words
- Would probably need a bit of explanation beforehand
- Would probably need a brief interview process to accompany artwork



## 8) Individual/pairs feedback through video booth interviews

- An exciting approach if you have technical equipment and know-how!
- Might suit young people and older children
- Feedback would be public
- Make sure there is document consent for audio or visual recording

## 9) Interviewing during a Messy Church craft time/meal

- Could work if your team are shy and prefer to chat over a cup of tea
- Can be hard to get round everyone – how would you ensure you’ve talked to most people?
- Can be noisy or conversations interrupted
- Some people might be conscious of being overheard by others
- You need to be transparent that the purpose of the conversation is to gather feedback
- How would you capture views of younger children to complement this approach? What about using a puppet to ask the questions?
- If your participants are leaders, what about interviewing them before or after a planning meeting?



## 10) Interviewing participants on home visits

- Would work well if home visits are something the team are keen to do anyway for pastoral care
- A chance to get beneath headline answers
- Could be time-consuming
- Would only work in a culture/context that is comfortable with home visits i.e. are people okay with having visitors in their homes?