

# KESCA Do's and Don'ts of Care Leaver Engagement

## VIDEO SUMMARY

In the KESCA practitioner learning video on the Do's and Don'ts of Care Leaver Engagement, Ruth Wacuka discusses what makes engagement meaningful for Care Leavers and what makes it tokenistic, and in the worst cases, exploitative. Ruth makes a number of concrete suggestions throughout

the video of practices organizations should encourage and those they should avoid. This covers a range of aspects of engagement including agenda setting, agreements, use of images and identity.

## ABOUT THE CHECKLIST

This checklist has been compiled to:

- a** Provide you with a summary of the do's and don'ts organised around the key aspects of engagement discussed in this video;

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- b** Pose questions that will help you reflect on your organization's engagement practices and how they aid or inhibit meaningful engagement;

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- c** Encourage you to identify some priority areas where Care Leaver engagement practices could be enhanced and brainstorm ideas.

Work through the checklist, first discussing and identifying what your organization's current practices are with respect to the questions posed. After discussing each question, tick the most appropriate answer and briefly summarise the practice using the space provided. Once you've worked through all the questions, review your answers and identify areas where changes or improvements could be made and brainstorm new ideas you could adopt to enhance the quality of Care Leaver engagement in your organization's work. Write down some of your ideas using the space provided and think about the immediate next steps to work towards implementation.

## CHECKLIST

### 1. Agenda Setting

- Don't limit participation to story telling
- Don't present Care Leavers with ready made plans

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- Do ensure Care Leavers are at the decision-making table
- Do involve Care Leavers in agenda setting
- Do engage Care Leavers in bottom up planning processes

Reflecting on Practice:

Does Care Leaver participation extend to involvement in key decision-making processes?

- Consistently       Sometimes       Rarely

Describe your practice:

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Are Care Leavers involved in setting the agendas of events, initiatives, programs or forums in which they participate?

- Consistently       Sometimes       Rarely

Describe your practice:

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Are bottom-up planning processes facilitated to ensure Care Leavers are able to meaningfully engage in the design and organization of events, programs or other initiatives they participate in?

- Consistently       Sometimes       Rarely

Describe your practice:

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## 2. Agreements

Don't put unreasonable pressure on Care Leavers to sign agreements stipulating the terms of participation

Do give ample time for Care Leavers to consider the terms, seek support, ask questions, provide feedback on any agreements that require signing.

Reflecting on Practice:

Are Care Leavers given ample time and support to consider the terms of any agreements they are asked to sign and opportunities to provide feedback or request changes?

- Consistently       Sometimes       Rarely

Describe your practice:

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Is participation conditional on signing agreements?

- Yes       No

Describe your practice:

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### 3. Use of Images

- Don't use images of Care leavers without their consent
- Don't make participation conditional on giving consent for the use of images

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- Do respect all Care Leavers' right to privacy
- Do seek informed consent for the use of images and contributions
- Do give Care Leavers the option of stipulating the terms of use of their images and contributions
- Do seek consent for each engagement. Consent given today is not consent for forever

Reflecting on Practice:

Is informed consent sought before using the images or stories of Care Leavers?

- Consistently       Sometimes       Rarely

Describe your practice:

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? Is participation conditional on consenting to the use of images and sharing of information?

Yes  No

Describe your practice:

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? Are Care Leavers given the opportunity to stipulate their own terms regarding how and when their images are used, under what conditions and with what limitations applied?

Consistently  Sometimes  Rarely

Describe your practice:

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? Are Care Leavers given the opportunity to stipulate their own terms regarding how and when their images are used, under what conditions and with what limitations applied?

Consistently  Sometimes  Rarely

Describe your practice:

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## 4. Identity

- Don't assume care experience is the sum total of a Care Leaver's life experience or expertise
- Don't limit Care Leavers' contributions to their care experiences, assuming that is the only contribution they are able to make.

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- Do recognise other skills and expertise held by Care Leavers
- Do frame care experience as a basis for expertise, not a lifelong identity
- Do be mindful of labelling. Discuss preferred use of terms 'Care Experienced' or 'Care Leaver'.

Reflecting on Practice:

① Does your organization actively encourage Care Leavers to contribute in a diversity of ways, utilising the full range of skills and experiences they may have? (i.e. not limiting participation to bringing a care experienced perspective or storytelling?)

- Consistently       Sometimes       Rarely

Describe your practice:

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② Does your organization regularly consult with Care Leavers and seek input on preferred terms, language and framing to avoid labelling or stereotyping?

- Consistently       Sometimes       Rarely

Describe your practice:

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## Identify priorities for enhancing meaningful engagement of Care Leavers in your organization and practice

① Areas where we could change our practice/s

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② Areas where we could improve our practice/s

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③ New ideas we could adopt or include in our practice

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