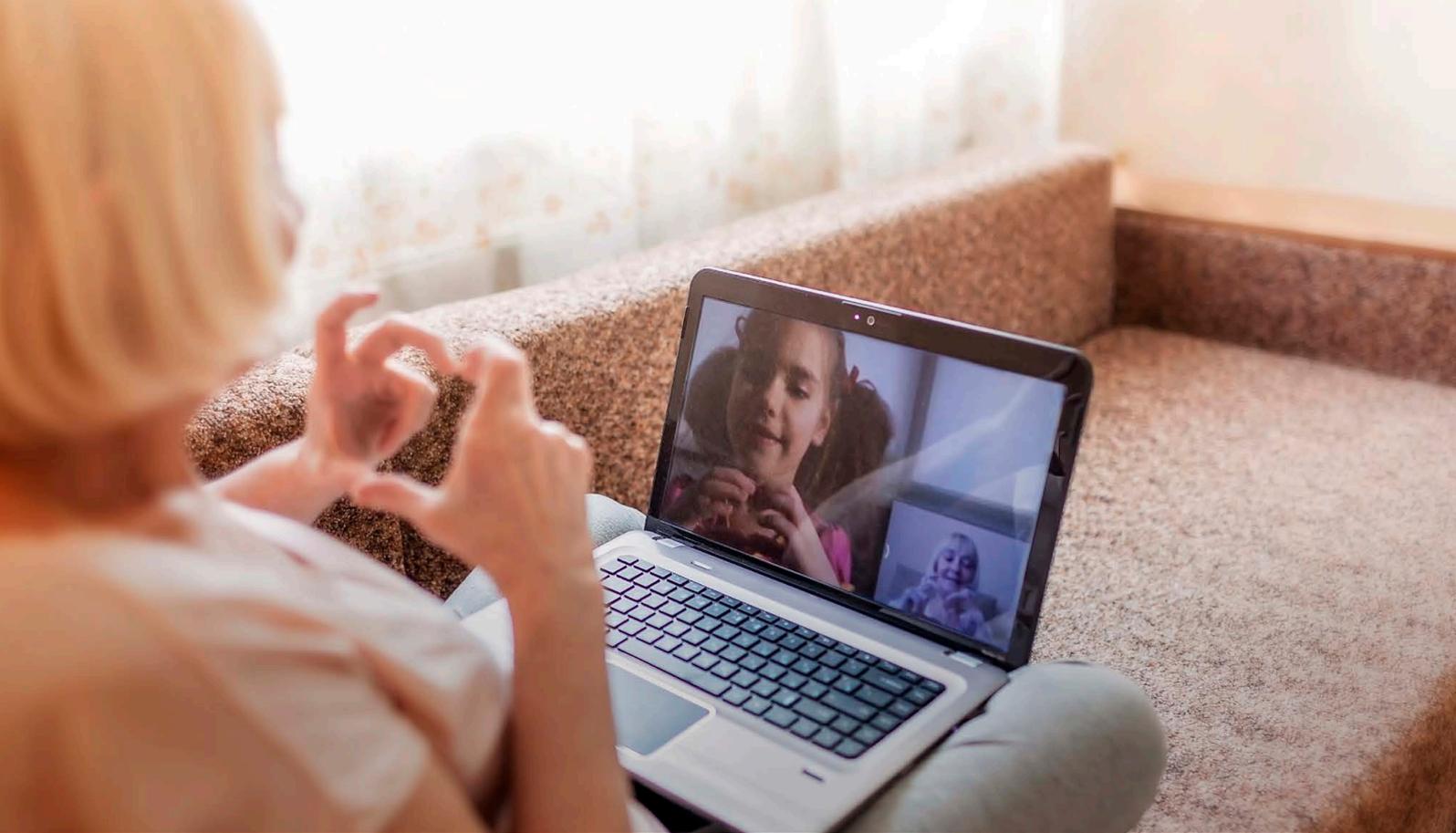


# Words of wisdom

## We connect

Enablers notes



## Enablers notes

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# We connect

## Capturing Words of Wisdom from old people's stories

### Why this session is important

To help your group to:

- Develop the confidence to ask older people the important questions about their lives
- Gain older people's Words of Wisdom from their life experiences to date
- Capture the key themes and messages that come from everybody's Words of Wisdom
- Decide how to share their Words of Wisdom and apply them in their own lives
- Agree an action to work on

### What you will need

- Copy of We Connect Activity for each group
- We Connect Resources
- Cameras, i-Pads etc to capture Words of Wisdom
- Paper/pens
- 30-60minutes (depending on time availability)

# How to do it

This session links naturally to the end of the SMILE Challenge. In exchange for positive acts of kindness, young people can ask older people for their Words of Wisdom based on their life experience to date. Using a set of prompting questions, encourage individuals to capture these Words of Wisdom, explore the key themes and messages emerging and identify ways of applying them to their own lives and sharing them with others.

## We connect

Start by highlighting the purpose of this activity which is to collect Words of Wisdom from older people by asking them a series of questions to reflect on their lives to date. Emphasise how important it is to learn from older people from different background and cultures, and how this learning can be applied to our own lives.

Show the **Words of Wisdom Slide Presentation** (Resources) to give individuals an overview of the process. Give each group the **Words of Wisdom Questions** (Resources) and ask them to practice asking the questions to each other to build their confidence. Feel free to simplify or amend these as necessary.

Before any of these questions are asked it is important that you enable young people to develop a positive and trusting relationship with older people either through their SMILE Challenge or by engaging with them on a one to one or small group basis. We have found that simple activities can break the ice such as playing board games, completing jigsaws and puzzles, as well as joint activities such as making cakes, creating bird feeders, painting together and learning new technology.

Encourage the more confident pupils to take the lead in asking the questions and use the template provided to fill in responses. Less able pupils may need a helping hand or someone asking the questions for them.

Be creative in the way answers are recorded and explore use of iPads, recording devices, filming and photography, as well as simply asking older people to fill out the templates themselves or using stick-it notes placed in a common area.

Explore links with the curriculum and be prepared to tailor the questions accordingly. For example, one whole school interviewed older residents

who had experienced the Second World War and captured their stories since they had been at primary school. Explore creative ways to stimulate memory recognition such as photo books to help with dementia.

Having collected the Words of Wisdom, time permitting, you may find it useful to identify key themes and messages emerging. For example one school identified the 'F' letter to categorise their learning which included Family, Fun, Fitness, Fulfilment, Finance, Faith, and Future. You may also wish to find a creative way of displaying these Words of Wisdom which could range from writing 100 lines in a book through to painting on a display wall. Have a look at the **Words of Wisdom Slide Presentation** to stimulate ideas.

Finally ensure that young people send a thank you note to any older person who has shared their wisdom and encourage them to continue with the relationship either with their family or ongoing school or community activity.

## What other questions to ask/points to make

Make sure you collect Words of Wisdom for yourself – use the prompting questions to ask family members, neighbours and older people in your wider community and see how they apply to your life.

You may find it useful discussing the **Days of the Week Graphic** (Resources) which outlines the idea that our life is like a week, with each day representing 12 years. We are born on Monday morning, 12 years old Monday night, 24, 36 and 48 on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings respectively, celebrate our 60th on Friday night, 84 Sunday and we hopefully all get a Bank Holiday Monday too!

Show how the Words of Wisdom is all about capturing the stories of the 'Weekenders' to help Mondays and Tuesdays enjoy the rest of the week of their lives.

As the session draws to a close discuss:

- What they have learned, or what has surprised or puzzled them?
- What were their favourite Words of Wisdom and why?
- How can they keep the relationship going?
- Who else can benefit from the process?