Main Findings

1. Children and young people over 7 years old find hospital spaces too babyish.

2. Children and young people are not generally fearful of hospital spaces.

3. Children and young people want age appropriate recreational facilities and spaces to be readily available and independently accessible.

4. All children and young people value personal space that they can ‘make their own’ and they want the opportunity for privacy when they feel they need it.

5. Children and young people dislike dull, dirty, disordered and crowded spaces and they like clean, tidy, colourful, bright and comfortable spaces that are well maintained.

6. Children and young people experience hospital spaces as social spaces and not just clinical spaces.

7. Children and young people can make practical suggestions about hospital space if we ask them appropriately.

http://www.cscy.group.shef.ac.uk/research/spacetocare.htm
Finding 1: Children and young people over 7 years old find hospital spaces too babyish.

What do children say?
‘I don’t like those curtain things with clowns and balloons. I think it’s a bit babyish’ (9 year old boy)
‘That one’s a kids room so I don’t go in’ (13 year old girl)
‘it was sort of designed, trying to look children.
‘Probably a bit young for me though’ (10 year old boy)
‘The clown border.. Hated it, I hated it. Too childish. I don’t want childish borders’ (15 year old boy)

Questions to ask:
• Is decoration aimed solely or mainly at very young children?
Finding 2: Children and young people are not generally fearful of hospital spaces – what might scare children here?

What do children say?
‘The only thing I hate...the treatment room with the flipping needles’ (9 year old girl)
‘Just so much happens in there, like things that aren’t nice…. Like injections and things’ (14 year old girl)

Questions to ask:
- Are children and young people given appropriate and sufficient information to understand what is happening to them?
- Is there more that can be done to reduce anxiety and pain associated with clinical procedures (especially where needles / I.V.s are involved), for children of all ages?

What is our current situation?

What changes do we need to make?

What are the obstacles we face?

How can we overcome these obstacles?

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Finding 3: Children and young people want age appropriate recreational facilities and spaces to be readily available and independently accessible.

What do children say?
‘It’s all babies’ toys’ (8 year old boy)
‘There’s no grown up toys’ (9 year old girl)
‘It’s all just like for babies and that. All there is for our age is talking, watching TV and reading books’ (9 year old girl)
‘I’d rather have a few PS2s and a few more Xboxes because all there is a drawer full of Play-Station 1s, and 1 Xbox and 1 computer and 1 pool table’ (9 year old girl)
‘computers, some lap tops, next to every bed… with the internet… and have phones as well next to every bed’ (16 year old boy)

Questions to ask:
- Are activities aimed solely or mainly at very young children?
- Are there restrictions on children’s access to recreational spaces and facilities?

What is our current situation?

What changes do we need to make?

What are the obstacles we face?

How can we overcome these obstacles?
Finding 4: All children and young people value personal space that they can ‘make their own’ and want the opportunity for privacy when they feel they need it.

What do children say?
‘You can just close the curtains and be having a space on your own’ (10 year old girl)
‘[i’d like] a really quiet place so you can call someone on your mobile phone’ (11 year old girl)
[a space where] ' you can tell the doctor serious problems that you’ve got, that you don’t like to tell the ward’ (16 year old girl)
‘when you’re in for a long time, you need a lot of space but the nurses kept saying take it home because we can’t get round your bed, you’ve got too much stuff. But if you are living in hospital, you need your stuff don’t you’ (16 year old girl)

Questions to ask:
• Can children and young people personalise space with objects and decorations?
• Are there opportunities for children and young people to be on their own and be private?

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What changes do we need to make?

What are the obstacles we face?

How can we overcome these obstacles?

http://www.cscy.group.shef.ac.uk/research/spacetocare.htm
Finding 5: Children and young people dislike dull, dirty, disordered and crowded spaces and they like clean, tidy, colourful, bright and comfortable spaces that are well maintained.

What do children say?
‘There’s the mess, I don’t like it’ (6 year old girl)
‘It’s packed in, the things just are packed’ (14 year old boy)
‘It looks a tip in the toilets’ (11 year old boy)
‘there’s not enough storage space in the cupboards’ (16 year old girl)
‘It looks uncluttered, clean and nice’ (14 year old girl)

Questions to ask:
• Is there sufficient storage for children’s and young people’s possessions?
• Are spaces tidy and free from clutter?
• Are spaces clean, bright and well maintained?

What is our current situation?

What changes do we need to make?

What are the obstacles we face?

How can we overcome these obstacles?

http://www.cscy.group.shef.ac.uk/research/spacetocare.htm
Finding 6: Children and young people experience hospital spaces as social spaces and not just clinical spaces.

What do children say?
‘It’s really tiny [the adolescent room]…if they bring another teenager in there, you don’t feel like you want to be in there because it’s like their space’ (16 year old girl)
‘(I would like to be able to) email my friends and speak to everyone who can’t make it’ (16 year old boy)
‘there’s no other kids to talk to. If you want to go and talk to someone then you have to move’ (14 year old girl)

Questions to ask:
• Are there opportunities for children and young people to socialise with other children?
• Is there a large enough social space that is open, available, not locked or overly policed?
• Is there a place where children and young people are able to use mobile phones/internet/telephone to keep in contact with family and friends?

What is our current situation?

What changes do we need to make?

What are the obstacles we face?

How can we overcome these obstacles?

http://www.cscy.group.shef.ac.uk/research/spacetocare.htm
Finding 7: Children and young people can make practical suggestions about hospital space if we ask them appropriately – do we ask them?

What is our current situation?

What changes do we need to make?

What are the obstacles we face?

How can we overcome these obstacles?

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