

## Dream Team activity

These are common responses and learning opportunities from our experience of facilitating the dream team activity over the past 6 years. Our experiences are facilitating the dream team in a group setting, but the below points are also applicable if you are doing the activity as part of your 1-to-1 support work.

### “I only have 1 or 2 people in my Dream Team”

Many of us rely on ourselves for a lot of things and that is good that you feel able to do that, but are there times when having support from others may come in handy...?

Discuss different types of people in their lives that they may not have thought of, emphasising that it doesn't have to be people that we are in regular contact with, just people that we know would be there for us if we needed them.

Often, if in a group setting, when the young person has heard others discussing their dream team and by the end of the session they will have come up with several people.

### “Where do I fit into my own Dream Team?”

This is great way to open a discussion around how the young person supports themselves or even others. What strengths do you have that makes you a key player in your Dream Team?

They may also want to put pets, material items or hobbies such as music in their dream team. This is fine too, as it is recognising all kinds of support that we have around us, however, where possible we try and encourage young people to include people in their support networks.

We also try to discourage from using the same person on multiple cards, and instead, ask what are the specific qualities or strengths needed for a particular role?

### “There's no way I can fill out all 8 cards!”

This is common response we've had to this activity, and it's important not to force them to complete more cards just for the sake of 'completing the activity'. Instead, highlight that everyone has a different number of people around them and use it as an opportunity to reflect on how dream teams might change over time.

Alternatively, if you know that a young person is very isolated, maybe don't use any cards at all! Just have a conversation around giving and receiving social support in general. This approach depersonalises the activity and might make it feel less intimidating.

What do you qualities do you associate with someone who is supportive? How do you think people build their support networks?

### “I don't feel comfortable writing down their name”

No problem! Just write give the person and general title, like 'friend', for example.

The **who** isn't important, instead focus on:

**What** their strengths are...

**How** do they support you...

**When** you might go to them for support...

**Why** are they in your support network...

### “I don't feel up to this today, I had a big argument with my friend yesterday”

If this case there's no need to push them to complete the activity. Provide them with a few options, for example: have a sit down and we can just chat about anything, or perhaps we can talk about what happened, or maybe you can have your own space and we'll talk another time.

Supporting the young person to feel like they have a choice will help boost their feelings of control in what may be quite a vulnerable state.

If completing as part of 1-to-1 support work, perhaps complete a grounding activity and then ask if they'd like to choose a different tool instead. It is worthwhile to check in with people when introducing the activity to make sure they are willing to take part.

### “I'm not sure this person in my Dream Team is having a positive influence on me”

Sometimes through completing the dream team activity, young people will recognise that some people aren't providing the most helpful support to them (e.g., being overbearing or a bad influence).

We emphasise that it is a mental strength to become more self-aware and so this should be seen as a strength of theirs.

Work with the young person to discuss how they could respond to the person. If they feel comfortable to do so, they may wish to communicate with this person how they are feeling about their relationship.

Finally, please note this can be a sensitive subject so use this activity with care and adhere to the following principles of best practice:

**Listen, communicate, support.**

**Be mindful of the young person's well-being before, during and after the activity.**

**If you feel a young person is being exploited or taken advantage of it is your duty of care to take the appropriate steps to support them effectively.**