




SIX THINGS

What we want social workers to think about when assessing age.



We are young people from the All4One group.

All of us are in the UK on our own, living in Greater Manchester. We have all had experience of the age assessment process. We want to make positive change and help others going through the age assessment process.

one

Think about why you are carrying out an age assessment.

Don't carry out an age assessment if you don't need to. Sometimes we won't have documents or be able to prove our age, but this does not mean we are older.

“They said they would age assess me because I know how to cook for myself. I didn't. I once tried to make Biryani, but it didn't look anything like Biryani!”

two

Think about the impact an age assessment will have on our relationship.

It's hard to trust our social workers after they questioned our age. We feel like they don't trust what we're saying, so how can we trust them?

“They were smiling and nice but then the things they wrote about you it was like they were your enemy.”

three

Think about how our lives are put on hold.

The age assessment process can take a long time and if we have to challenge it even longer. During this time we miss out on education, our asylum claim is on hold and we cannot move forward. We are left waiting.

“I missed out on school and education. I would have been studying for GCSE’s if they had not have believed my age sooner.”

four

Think about us as children and treat us like we are.

We are all children and find some things more difficult than adults. We want social workers to treat us like children in the age assessment and understand why it might be difficult for us to answer all of the questions. Don’t pressure us into giving an answer if we don’t know.

“They asked me for my siblings’ and parents’ dates of birth, it is common in my culture not to know. They told me to guess and then said I was wrong.”

five

Think about the experiences we have been through.

We have all had different but difficult experiences which meant we had to leave our homes and family. We come from different cultures where age and documents are not always important. We want social workers to understand this when assessing age.

“The hardest thing about the age assessment was talking about my family. I found it very upsetting.”

six

Think about the impact on us if you don’t believe our age.

When our age is not believed we are left alone to look after ourselves. We do not know how to keep ourselves safe or where to get help. We want social workers to realise how difficult it is to be treated as an adult when you are a child.

“I was bullied and my bed was slept in by an adult. I was forced to sleep on the floor in the same room as this person. I was under constant threat from him.”

This advice sheet was created by members of the All4One group who have had experience of the age assessment process.

To find out more about the All4One group or our work on age assessments contact Greater Manchester Immigration Aid Unit (GMIAU) on 0161 740 7722 and info@gmiau.org
www.gmiau.org
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