



Talk with Me - Phase 2



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Feedback report on the Speech,
Language and Communication
Plan 2026-30

A young person's version.



Thank you to everyone who answered our questions about Talk with Me Phase 2.

91

organisations, professionals and parents told us what they thought.

98

children aged 6 to 11 from schools across Powys, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Wrexham and Bridgend, took part.

9

Community Mentors — people who work with communities across Wales — sent us their thoughts too.



What is Talk with Me?

In 2020 the Welsh Government started the Talk with Me programme.

Speech, language and communication skills matter.

How we say words.

The words we understand and use.

How we share ideas, feelings and needs with others.

It helps:

- make sure people spot speech, language and communication needs early
- make sure children aged under 5 have the right support.

Talk with Me Phase 2 is about offering this support to children up to 11

Before making final decisions, we asked people what they thought about the plan.

This report explains what people told us.

Why this matters

What people said about:

The name

Before we tell you what people said about the plan, here's what children and young people told us.

We asked what matters the most to you. Communication runs through all of it. **You told us it helps you:**



➔ stay close to family and friends



➔ ask for help when you're stuck



➔ tell someone when you're happy, sad, worried or frustrated



➔ join in with games and learning



➔ feel safe.

"If you're sad, you can tell a friend and they will help."

"It's important to be able to share your life, like saying 'the party was fun'."

"If you don't get help you will have anxiety."

Almost half of you said communication can be difficult sometimes. When it's difficult it gets in the way of the things that matter most to you — like friendships, or feeling understood.

We asked if **"Talk with Me Phase 2"** was still the right name, now it's for older children too.



62% agreed. Many people wanted to keep Talk with Me because it is a name people already know.

But a few said:

- the title "Phase 2" is confusing for children
- the word "Talk" made some people think it's only about spoken words — but communication also means signing, gestures, pictures, and other ways of getting your message across
- the name didn't make it obvious this was now for children up to 11
- a few new names were suggested, including Talk with Me: Growing Voices and Talk with Me: Ages 0 to 11.



You told us you liked the bright colours and the logo.

Some of you in Year 6 said it might be worth making it look a little bit older for your age group. Lots of you said you'd like to help design that.

What people said about:

Goal 1: Helping everyone understand why communication matters

✔ **87%** agreed this goal is important.

The plan would build on work that is already happening, including tips from Public Health Wales and resources for schools.

People said:

- » everyone needs clear information about how children learn to communicate and how to ask for help
- » families need everyday tips on things like reading together, singing, and taking turns talking
- » families need clear information about how too much screen time can affect communication
- » families also need clear ways to ask for help
- » services need to work together so children get the right support.

Community Mentors said:

- information works best when it comes from people and places families already know and trust
- information needs to be available in languages other than English or Welsh.

⚠ **A concern:** Telling people about communication will only help if support is there when families ask for it.

“If you’re sad you need to tell how you feel so they can sort it out and make it better.”



What people said about:

Goal 2: Spotting when a child needs help, sooner

✔ **84%** agreed this would help.

People liked the idea of having clearer and more consistent ways to check how children's communication is developing. This could help children get support earlier.

People also said:

- » checks need to be in Welsh and English
- » children should get the same quality of checks wherever they live
- » schools, health services and other services need to work together
- » checks must be fair for children from all cultures and backgrounds
- » staff need the right training, time and support to carry out the checks properly
- » more checks could put extra pressure on schools and services unless there are enough staff and enough money.

⚠ **A concern:** People also said specialist help and clear ways to ask for support must be available when a need is found.

Community Mentors said:

- tests and checks must be fair for children who speak languages other than English or Welsh at home
- speaking more than one language is a strength, not something to “fix”.

“You would feel less stressed and be calm if people help you.”



What people said about:

Goal 3: Making sure children get the right support



90% agreed with this goal, which was the highest for any goal.

People said children should get help at the right time. Schools, health services, social care, childcare and family support services need to work together.

People also said:

- » children and families shouldn't be passed from one service to another without getting help
- » finding out what support is available is only a first step — it must lead to real action
- » support should be based on things that are already working
- » staff need to know what their role is and have training.



A concern: People were worried that staff may be asked to do more without having enough time, training or support.

You told us good support looks like:

- listening, and being kind
- giving time, not rushing
- saying “it’s OK”
- explaining things a different way, step by step
- using pictures, drawing, or writing instead of always talking
- sign language, Makaton, or apps that help with communication
- someone noticing, even when a child doesn't say they're struggling in words.



What people said about:

Goal 4: Making sure the people who work with you have the right training

✓ **83%** agreed with this goal.

People said anyone working with children needs to understand speech, language and communication.

People also said:

- training shouldn't happen just once, it should continue throughout their careers
- training should help people in their everyday work
- staff need time to attend training
- services need enough money and staff to make this possible.

⚠ **A concern:** Some people were worried that schools are already being asked to do too much. They said schools need time, training, staff and support to do the work properly.

Community Mentors said: staff need to understand different cultures and languages. This will help staff understand each child and not think that communicating differently means something is wrong.

⚠ **A concern:** Training only works if there are enough staff, and enough time, to actually use it. Several people pointed out that the workforce is already stretched.



“They could help by calming you down and encouraging you.”

What people said about:

Goal 5: Making sure every child in Wales can get support, wherever they live

✓ **83%** agreed this was important.

People supported the idea that support shouldn't depend on where a child lives.

They said children and families should get the right help early, before problems become more serious.

People also said:

- support should be fair across every part of Wales
- support should work well for families from different cultures
- some children will need specialist help
- staff need enough training, time, money and resources to give children the right support.

Community Mentors said: reaching every family means working through people and places they already use and trust. This is important for families who might not usually reach out to services.

⚠ **A concern:** Many people support the plan, but worry there may not be enough money, time or staff to make it work.

“Family could help by teaching you in the house every day.”



Other ideas

Things that could be in the plan:

People shared other ideas:

- » The plan must show what will happen, who will do it, when it will happen and how it will be checked.
- » We will need clear ways to measure if the plan is working.
- » Families and children need ways to help shape the plan as it goes forward.
- » We need better support as children move from early years to primary and from primary to secondary school.

People want us to remember:

- Speech and language difficulties aren't always easy to spot. A child might look like they're quiet, distracted or badly behaved but might be finding it hard to understand things or explain what they mean.
- Communication can get harder as children grow up. Schoolwork, reading and instructions become more difficult. If someone is struggling it might only become clear later.
- Support for older children mustn't stop the help already given to babies and children under 5.

What people said about: The Welsh language

Most people thought the plan could help the Welsh language, but only if Welsh is included from the beginning. They want:

- training, tools and resources to be ready in Welsh and English at the same time
- more Welsh-speaking specialists, so children don't wait longer for help in Welsh
- children to be supported in the language or languages they use at home.

“Sometimes people think nobody understands them or they can't pronounce certain words, if that fits you, I'd get an app that helps you pronounce words or ask an adult.”

What people said about: Children's rights

People agreed communication and being able to talk about what you want is a right. Every child should be heard, in ways that work for them like:

- talking
- signing
- pictures
- home language.

You told us that being listened to matters.

⚠ A concern: Some of you said you'd worried about not being listened to by adults, or about private things being shared.



Recommendations

What people said should happen next to make things better.

There were 23 recommendations. Here are some of the main ones.

About the name: Keep “Talk with Me” but make it clearer this now covers ages 0–11, and that communication means more than just talking.

Goal 1 – Awareness: Share messages beyond schools and clinics — into community spaces that families already use.

Goal 2 – Spotting needs: Build one clear way to check on communication across Wales.

Goal 3 – Support: Make sure spotting a need always leads to the right help at the right time.

Goal 4 – Workforce: Make sure there’s enough money to train and support everyone who works with children. This should include ongoing training, coaching and mentoring, not just one course.

Goal 5 – Every child: Make sure children and families can get the support they need, wherever they live in Wales. Reach families through people and places they already trust.

Across everything:

Build Welsh-language support in from day one, in every part of the plan.

Keep children and young people involved in shaping the plan as it develops — not just now.

Make sure there’s enough funding and staff for each of the new goals.

Keep supporting babies and children under 5 as strongly as before.



Next steps

You told us the right help makes things better.

You want adults to notice when children are struggling, listen carefully and know how to help.

That's what Talk with Me is all about.

Thank you for sharing your views. What you said will help us shape what happens next and the final plan.



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