



**Play Your Part**  
**The Voice of a Child: Participatory Methodologies**  
(Secondary Research)

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# The Voice of a Child: Participatory Methodologies

## Introduction

'Play Your Part' is a one-year pilot project led by PlayBoard and funded by the Education Authority. The project aims to support youth groups to embed a culture of effective participation and practice with children aged 4 to 8 years. The project goal is to develop a training framework alongside a set of participatory tools to support youth workers to create an environment that ensures the views, opinions and the voices of children aged 4-8 years are heard within Youth settings.

The secondary research necessary to develop the programme has been compiled in this literature review which explores various methodologies that allow for children's participation in decision-making, as well as the conceptual underpinnings surrounding participation and children's participation in youth settings.

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC 1991, article 12.1), establishes that:

*'States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child'.*

While progress has been made in enabling children and young people's participation in decision-making, 'young children's voices are often still unheard and there are limited means through which to channel their views and experiences to influence change' (Davies and Hamblin 2016, p.4).

The Office of the Children's Commissioner for England (2013) states:

*'There are many different ways children and young people can be involved in influencing thinking, including initiating their own ideas and projects, shaping policies and services, supporting commissioning of work, contributing to specific projects and evaluating and sharing ideas about their own experiences. How children and young people are involved can depend on many factors, such as the stage of a project that their views and experience can inform and influence; and/or the children and young people's readiness and ability to take part; and/or an organisation or adult's preparedness and ability to involve children and young people'.*

## Conceptual Clarification

Before diving into the participatory methodologies and their theoretical underpinnings, it is necessary to reflect in some of the concepts that are built upon in this literature review.

### *Children's Participation*

The concept of participation is both a process and an outcome. It can refer *'to taking part in an activity, or specifically to taking part in decision-making'* (Thomas 2007, p.199). Nevertheless, participation should not be understood as *'limited to children saying what they would like to happen'*, but rather it is about *'enabling them to decide for themselves, wherever possible, what they would like to happen and then being able to make it happen'* (Miller 1996, p.35).

Within the scope of the Play Your Part toolkit, participation is understood in its broad terms as a process in which children voices are listened to even if that takes place in different degrees of participation/involvement. Participation, thus, can be child-led when children and young people come up with an idea and lead the process of participation; it can be collaborative, in which adults (on our case youth workers) and children and young people share responsibilities on the decision-making; or consultative, through which adults want to know what children and young people think about a particular topic. On a process of consultation, although children and young people may not 'participate at the stage where decisions are actually made' (Shier 2001, p.113–4), they do in some other levels of a participation process.

### *Listening*

Clark (2011) defines listening as *'an active process of receiving (hearing and observing), interpreting and responding to communication'* (2011, p.1). This process is not limited to the spoken word, but rather should be understood as a holistic process that includes all senses and emotions (Lundy 2007). Building on this, "listening" ought also be understood as providing with the right environment *'in which all young children feel confident, safe and powerful, ensuring they have the time and space to express themselves in whatever form suits them'* (Clark 2011, p.1).

Young children *'know about themselves – how they feel, what is important to them, how they work things out and make sense of the world'* (Miller 1996, p.31). Within a process of participation, therefore, they are given the opportunity to reflect on their lived experiences (MacNaughton, 2003 in Clark 2005, p.17). Listening to children's experiences becomes more than just a methodological approach for receiving information; it becomes *'a reflective process for children to consider meanings, make discoveries and new connections and express understandings'* (Clark 2005, p.17).

## What is participation?

### **Participation...**

- ... is a right.
- ... applies to all children without discrimination of any kind.
- ... is both an end and a means.
- ... can be at an individual level or as a group or collective.
- ... is regarded to all matters in children and young people's lives.
- ... requires different methods for different contexts/environments.
- ... can take place online or offline, directly and indirectly.
- ... empowers children and young people.

Children and young people's participation is a core principle in the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which declares that all children who are capable of forming their own views have the right to express them freely in all matters affecting their lives (Art.12). The CRC General Comment further clarifies that simply listening to the child is insufficient, stating that those need to be taken into consideration seriously. It is important to acknowledge that participation is a right not an obligation. Children are entitled to choose *'whether or not to express their views or participate in decision making on issues that affect them or their communities'* (Crowley et al. 2020, p.15).

Participation refers to the range of opportunities available for children and young people to express their views and be involved in decision-making with peers and with adults. There are many different ways children and young people can be involved in influencing thinking. This may include initiating their own ideas and projects; being consulted for policy and service development; contributing to specific projects; and evaluating and sharing ideas about their own experiences. In seeing participation as a way of supporting children in communicating their views we will be encouraging them to understand their wants, needs, and emotions, as well as giving them a space to express them.

Nevertheless, listening to children is not enough. Participation ought to be meaningful, that is, it has to be safe, ethical, inclusive and impactful. Children and young people that take part in a participation process must be approached and treated respectfully throughout. In a process of meaningful participation, children and young people are well informed, in an accessible and child friendly manner, about the specificities of the activity, as well as the intended/expected outcome of the participation process. They must be given the choice to decide whether to participate, for which is key that adults seek their consent. Finally, adults need to provide child-friendly feedback on how the evidence is used and, where appropriate, the developments of a programme or policy.

In a process of participation, children and young people will take part in different degrees on different stages, but it is crucial that they are kept informed and understand every step of the process.

To ensure that children's participation is safe, ethical, inclusive and impactful, *UN General Comment 12* identifies nine basic requirements, according to which participation needs to be (General comment No. 12 2009)

- **Transparent and informative:** children and young people must be provided with full, accessible, diversity-sensitive and age-appropriate information about their participation and about how this participation will take place, purpose and potential impact.
- **Voluntary:** children and young people should be informed that they can cease involvement at any stage and should never be coerced into expressing views against their wishes.
- **Respectful:** children and young people must be listened to, taken seriously and their views treated with respect.
- **Relevant:** opportunities must be available for children and young people to express their views on issues that are relevant to their lives.
- **Child-friendly environments and working methods:** approaches to children and young people participation should be adapted to their capacities. Children and young people will need differing levels of support and forms of involvement according to their age and evolving capacities.
- **Inclusive:** participation must be inclusive, avoid existing patterns of discrimination, and encourage opportunities for all children to be involved. No assumptions should be made about what specific groups of children and young people can and cannot do.
- **Supported by training:** adults need preparation, skills and support to facilitate children and young people's participation effectively, to provide them, for example, with skills in listening, working jointly with children and young people and engaging them effectively in accordance with their evolving capacities.
- **Safe and sensitive to risk:** Adults have a responsibility towards the children and young people with whom they work. Staff need to recognise their legal and ethical obligations and responsibilities (e.g. safeguarding issues). In certain situations, expression of views may involve risks. Children and young people

should feel confident that they can criticise or challenge any aspect of the services they receive without being punished.

- **Accountable:** following up and acting on any proposals by children and young people is key. They are entitled to be provided with clear feedback on how their participation has influenced any outcomes. Monitoring and evaluation of participation needs to be undertaken, where possible with children and young people themselves. There should also be mechanisms in place to enable children to raise complaints and seek redress if needed.

### **What are the benefits of meaningful participation?**

Participation should be understood as being more than just giving children a voice. It is about offering children and young people the means to decide for themselves the things they would like to happen and how. Meaningful participation means giving them the resources, skills and knowledge necessary to carry out a task that has purpose and meaning to them. Meaningful participation is only gained when children and young people develop positive relationships with peers and adults creating a sense of belonging.

Listening is important for all of the agents involved in the process. As is explained in the section below, it is key for the children who are being listened to, positively impacting on their confidence, self-esteem, and reflexivity (Clark 2011). It is also important for the adults involved as it may challenge their perspective on issues directly relating to their children or the children in their community. Listening to children and young people's voice is a reciprocal process, and therefore it is consequently beneficial both from child and adult perspective.

As well as supporting the realisation of children's rights, listening to their views can have a positive impact on their development and wellbeing. Meaningful participation *'improves understanding of children's perspectives, priorities, interests and concerns, supports their safety, development and wellbeing, [and] helps improve the effectiveness of provision, and increases children's stake in the services and settings they access'* (Davies and Hamblin 2016, p.6)

As a result of the process of participation, children and young people may develop new skills. For example, communicative skills (including both child-to-child and child-to-adult); or practical skills (if the participatory process involves the use of props and technologies). Moreover, it gives children the time and space to reflect on their experiences encouraging a process of inquiry and understanding of their environment, and potentially, 'enables them to make positive contributions to their communities' (Davies and Hamblin 2016, p.6).

The table below summarises some of the benefits of meaningful participation.

<b>Meaningful Participation - Positive Impact</b>	
<b>Build confidence</b>	Participation boosts their confidence by being respectfully listened to the children.
	Participation contributes to develop new skills, that, in turn, contributes to boost their confidence on themselves and their capacities.
<b>Talk about their feelings</b>	Participation encourages children to explore and communicate how they feel about themselves, about others and about the environment.
	Meaningful participation leads to the positive acknowledgement and recognition of children's feelings, helping them to find the most suitable platform to express them (e.g. conversation, drawing, pictures or role play).
	By establishing respectful relationships, participation can make children feel comfortable to express their priorities, interests and concerns.
<b>Feeling of belonging</b>	Loneliness and social isolation adversely affect children's short- and long-term mental health. Participatory methods foster inclusion and feeling of belonging.
<b>Healthy coping mechanisms</b>	We can use participation methodologies to create healthy ways to cope with unsettling situations. Working together with children will help to identify what works best for them, and how they would like to do it (e.g. yoga, breathing exercises or mindfulness)
<b>Agency and Ownership</b>	Children's participation in decision-making is seen to be beneficial in terms of increasing sense of ownership and responsibility.



## **How to enable children and young people's meaningful participation**

Participation should be understood as being more than just giving children voice. It is about offering children and young people the means to decide for themselves what things they would like to happen and how. Meaningful participation means to give them the resources, skills and knowledge necessary to carry on a task that has a purpose and meaning to them. Meaningful participation is only gained when children and young people develop positive relationships with peers and adults creating a sense of belonging.

There are many opportunities to engage with children and young people in meaningful participation (times of designing a new project, or during evaluations, among others). Children's voice, experiences and needs need to be given priority in any participatory approach. That means that the 'benefits of participating should be apparent to children, through enjoyable activities and recognition of their efforts' (Davies and Hamblin 2016, p.12). Having a clear focus and purpose for the engagement with young children will ensure that 'individuals understand what is being asked of them; allow relevant, useful findings to be gathered; and support effective working (...)' (Davies and Hamblin 2016, p.11).

It is important to highlight that participatory processes with children should be understood as a long-term process rather than a one-off occasion; 'building familiarity with the concepts, activities and visiting individuals involved in engagement activity will aid children's self-expression (Davies and Hamblin 2016, p.12). Additionally, it is important that the process of participation is carried out with respect 'avoiding patronising or interrupting children when they may need time, support or encouragement to convey what they want to express' (Davies and Hamblin 2016, p.12).

Any interaction with children should be entrenched in their life experiences. The way that 'children interpret and understand something depends on the experiences that a specific child brings with him/her into the situation and how they are put in relation to the prevailing whole' (Thulin and Jonsson 2014, p.14). This way, the statements that children provide reflect on 'their understanding of what they have encountered so far, which spans far less time than for adults and is broadening rapidly' (Davies and Hamblin 2016, p.12).

It is often more realistic 'to focus on what children like or dislike and what is important to them. These are easier concepts for young children to understand and mitigate the risk of confusion or disappointment if ideas cannot be acted on' (Davies and Hamblin 2016, p.13). Practitioners and researchers must 'acknowledge the importance of time and resources to enable children to reflect on their ideas and experiences with their peers and with adults' (Clark 2005, p.20). This is particularly important when interacting with children with different abilities. These children can be encouraged to share their views through a range of multisensory means. These 'visual, spatial and

physical tools should not be seen as a 'creative extra' but offer a challenge to the dominant learning styles that value verbal/linguistic skills at the expense of other means of communication' (Clark 2005, p.26).

In a process of meaningful participation, it is important to give age-appropriate feedback on how the views and experiences of children and young people are being collected and taken into consideration, as well as what are the outcomes of the participation process.

Lundy (2018) recommends a four 'Fs' feedback process for consultations or collective decision-making processes with children and young people.

- **Full:** Provide comprehensive feedback to children and young people outlining which of their views were accepted, which were not accepted and the reasons for these decisions. This feedback should also note who is implementing their views and what is happening next.
- **Friendly:** Feedback or responses given by decision-makers to children or young people need to be in a format and language they understand. They need to be informed about the findings of a consultation or survey and about how their views were given due weight.
- **Fast:** Children and young people quickly grow up and move on from things they are involved with, so decision-makers need to give them feedback acknowledging their contribution, outlining initial progress and giving information on next steps as soon as possible. This applies to all key stages and developments.
- **Followed-up:** Decision-makers need to provide ongoing feedback and information to children and young people throughout the policy- or decision-making process.

In addition to giving feedback on the development of a specific event or programme, it is important to gather feedback from children and young people on how the process of participation has gone. When young children have taken part in the participation process/activity, it may be appropriate to gather their views through playful activities in which they feel comfortable and able to communicate without barriers.

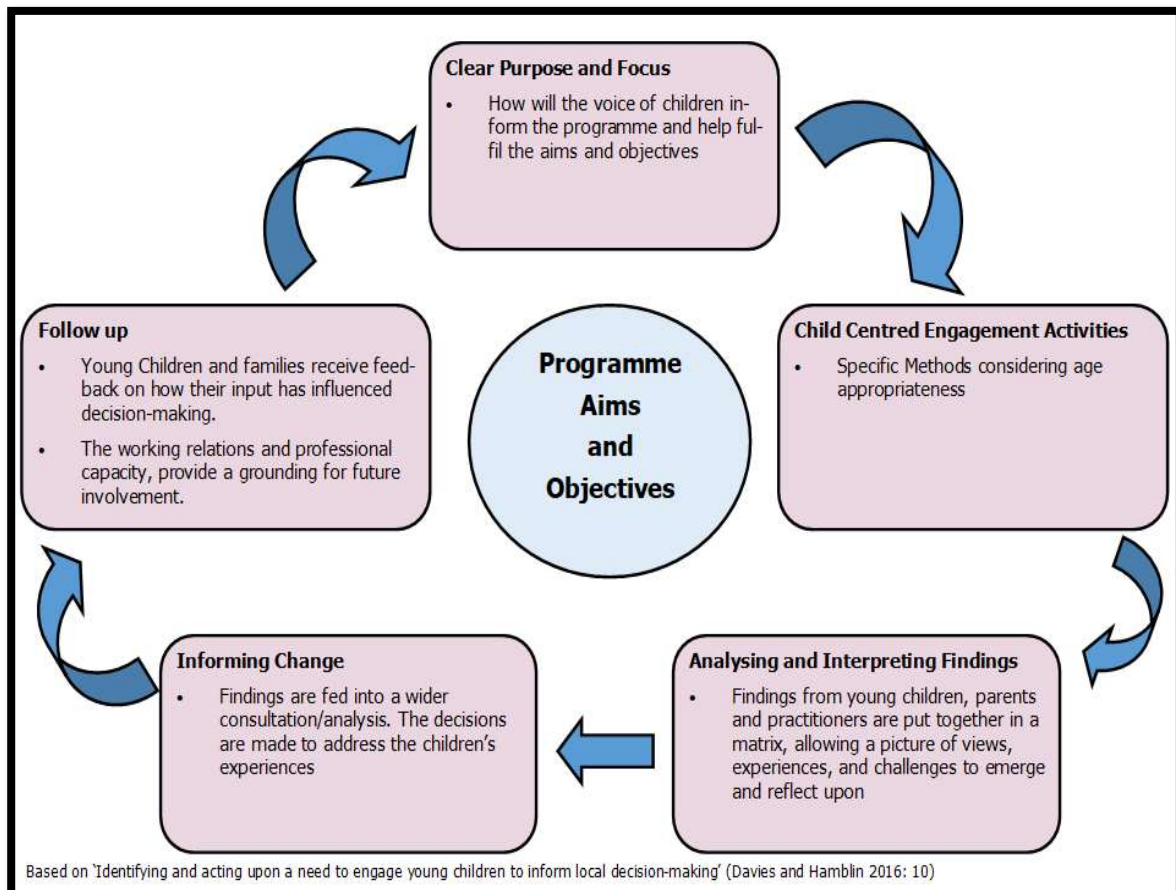
The evaluation of a participatory process requires reflective practice both from the youth workers and the children and young people who have taken part in it. Reflecting together on the participation experience is a very important tool for any team in order to clarify thinking, recognise change and expand understanding.

Reflective practice is a process by which we stop and think about what we do, consciously analysing what we have done and drawing conclusions in order to relate it to our day to day work.

Reflective practice can be carried out by observing how children and young people get on in the process of participation without direct intervention of the adults. When Playworkers reflect during an activity it involves paying attention to thoughts and feelings, while at the same time keeping attention on what is happening. This may involve being conscious of our behaviours, expressions and feelings and checking that they are not having an external impact on the play environment.

It is important that children and young people are given the opportunity to reflect on the participation process to draw conclusions on it. There are different mechanisms to enable reflective practice. It can be done through individual conversations, focus groups, or games. When young children are reflecting on a process of participation, creating a playful space may help them to feel more comfortable to express themselves.

Davies and Hamblin (2016) developed a diagram which traces the process of identifying and acting upon a need to engage young children to inform decision-making in the health sector. The diagram below is an adaptation of it to illustrate its general applicability in any sector.



# Listening to the Voice of Children

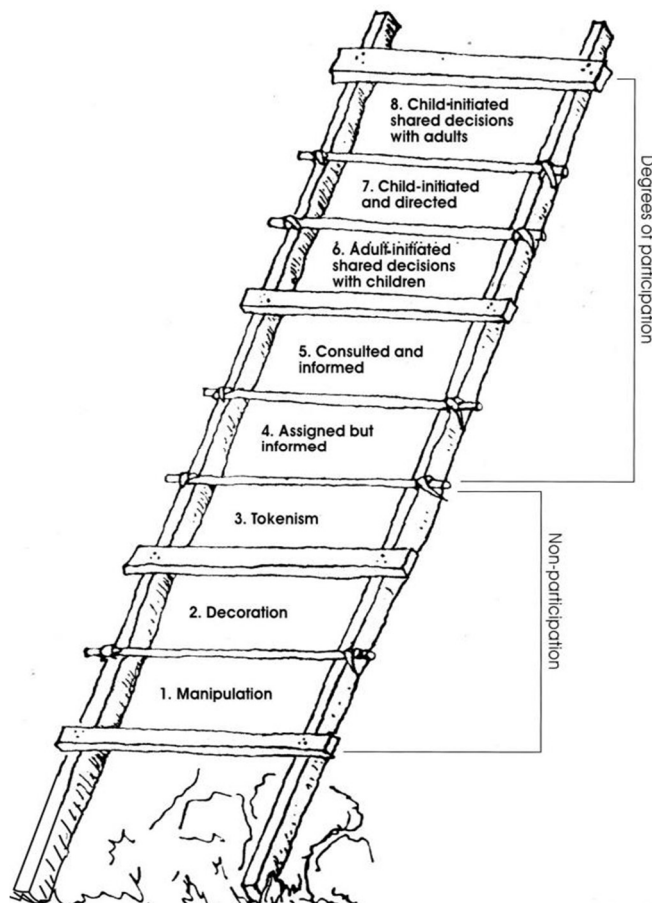
## A Theoretical Approach to Practice

This section looks at various models of children's participation from a theoretical perspective, helping to frame the design of methodological approaches to participation. These models, although developed many years ago, have informed the development and provide the basis of many participatory methodologies.

This literature review has selected the participation models considered relevant for the Play Your Part programme; for further information on participation models see Karsten (2012) "Models of Participation & Empowerment".

### The Ladder of participation:

Hart (1992) designed his model of participation resembling a ladder as a symbol to illustrate the move from the "non-participation" rungs ('manipulation', 'decoration' and 'tokenism') through the middle levels where children are 'assigned but informed' or 'consulted and informed' to the highest rungs ('adult-initiated, shared decisions with children'; 'child-initiated and directed'; and at the top 'child-initiated, shared decisions with adults') representing the challenge for adults working with children and young people, to make their practice truly participatory' (Thomas 2007: 204).



Within the non-participatory section, Hart defines as *manipulation* those instances in which the 'adults feel that the end justifies the means' (Hart 1992: 9). For example, when children have no understanding of the issues in which they are being asked their opinions about. If 'children have no understanding of the issues and hence do not understand their actions' (Hart 1992: 9). Another case of manipulation would be when 'children are consulted but given no feedback at all' (Hart 1992: 9). In this case, children do not know how their opinions and ideas are being used.

The second rung, *decoration*, refers to those cases in which children are asked to wear logos, statements, etc. in their clothing or backpacks, but have not been informed about what the cause is about (Hart 1992). Hart located "decoration" one rung up from "manipulation" because he understands that in these occasions, 'adults do not pretend that the cause is inspired by children[; t]hey simply use the children to bolster their cause in a relatively indirect way' (Hart 1992: 9).

The last rung of the non-participatory stages is *tokenism*. This takes place when 'children are apparently given a voice, but in fact have little or no choice about the subject or the style of communicating it, and little or no opportunity to formulate their own opinions' (Hart 1992: 9).

The next four rungs up the ladder describe various degrees of participation. *Assigned but informed*, stage in which 'the children understand the intentions of the project; they know who made the decisions concerning their involvement and why; they have a meaningful (rather than 'decorative') role; they volunteer for the project after the project was made clear to them' (Hart 1992: 11). In the *Consulted and informed* rung 'the project is designed and run by adults, but children understand the process and their opinions are treated seriously' (Hart 1992: 12). The *Adult initiated, shared decisions with children* it is a true participation stage because, 'though the projects at this level are initiated by adults, the decision-making is shared with the young people' (Hart 1992: 13). In the *Child initiated and directed* stage children find the necessary supportive conditions so that 'even very young children can work cooperatively in large groups' (Hart 1992: 14). Finally, *Child initiated, shared decisions with adults*, in this stage children develop their own mechanisms to express themselves and present adult with their views and opinions (Hart 1992).

In recent years, this model has been criticised as it is seen to build on the assumption that the higher levels on the ladder are the ones that should be present in any process of children's participation. However, this neglects 'the possibility that different levels of participation may be appropriate for different tasks and for different children' (McLaughlin 2015: 9).

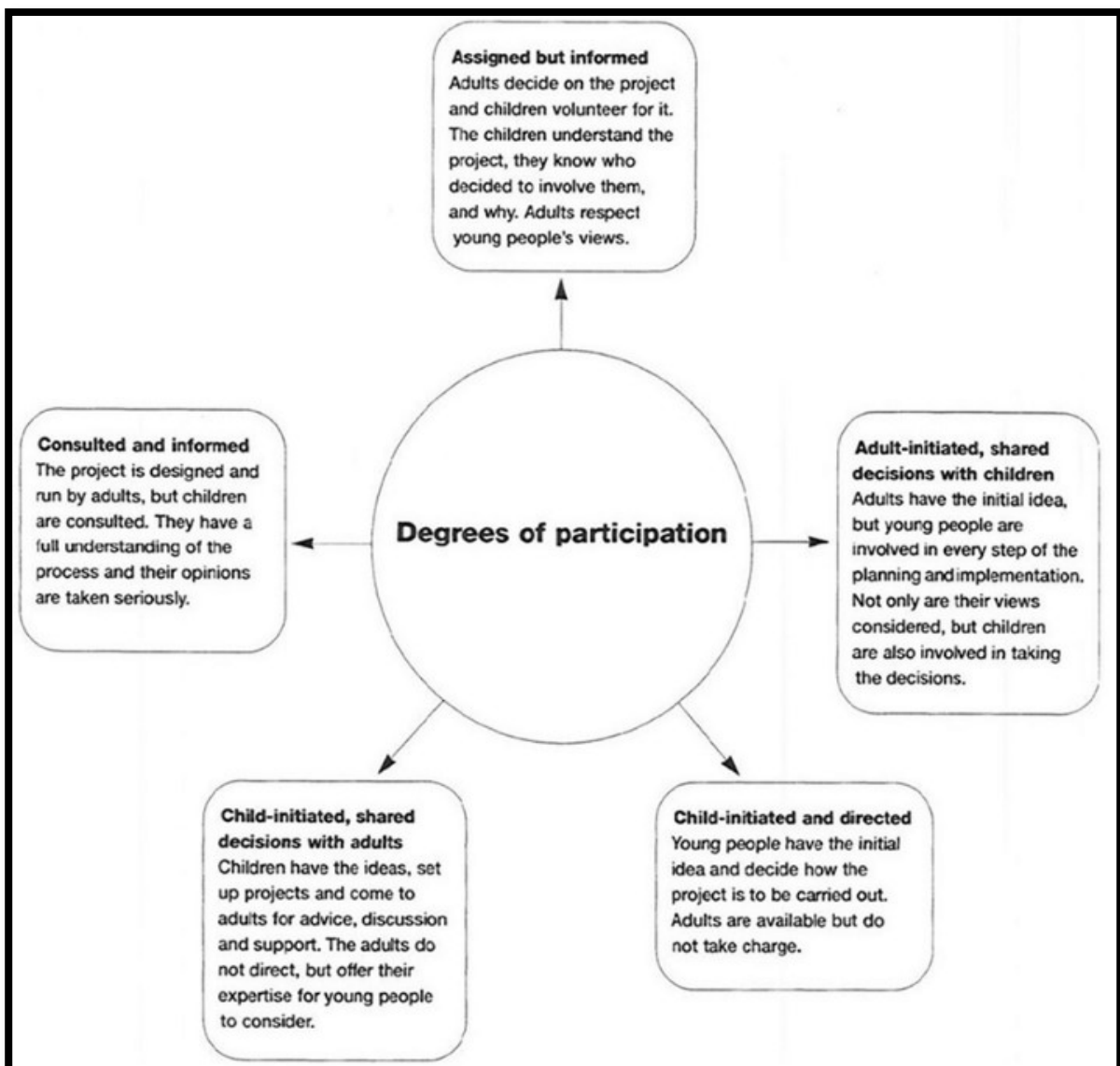
### **The Circular Model of Participation:**

Treseder (1997) identified a number of challenges to Hart's hierarchical model. He adapted Hart's ladder into a circular model omitting the non-participatory stages and distantancing his interpretation of the model from the hierarchical element of "climbing up". Treseder set up 'five types or "degrees" of participation in a circular layout:

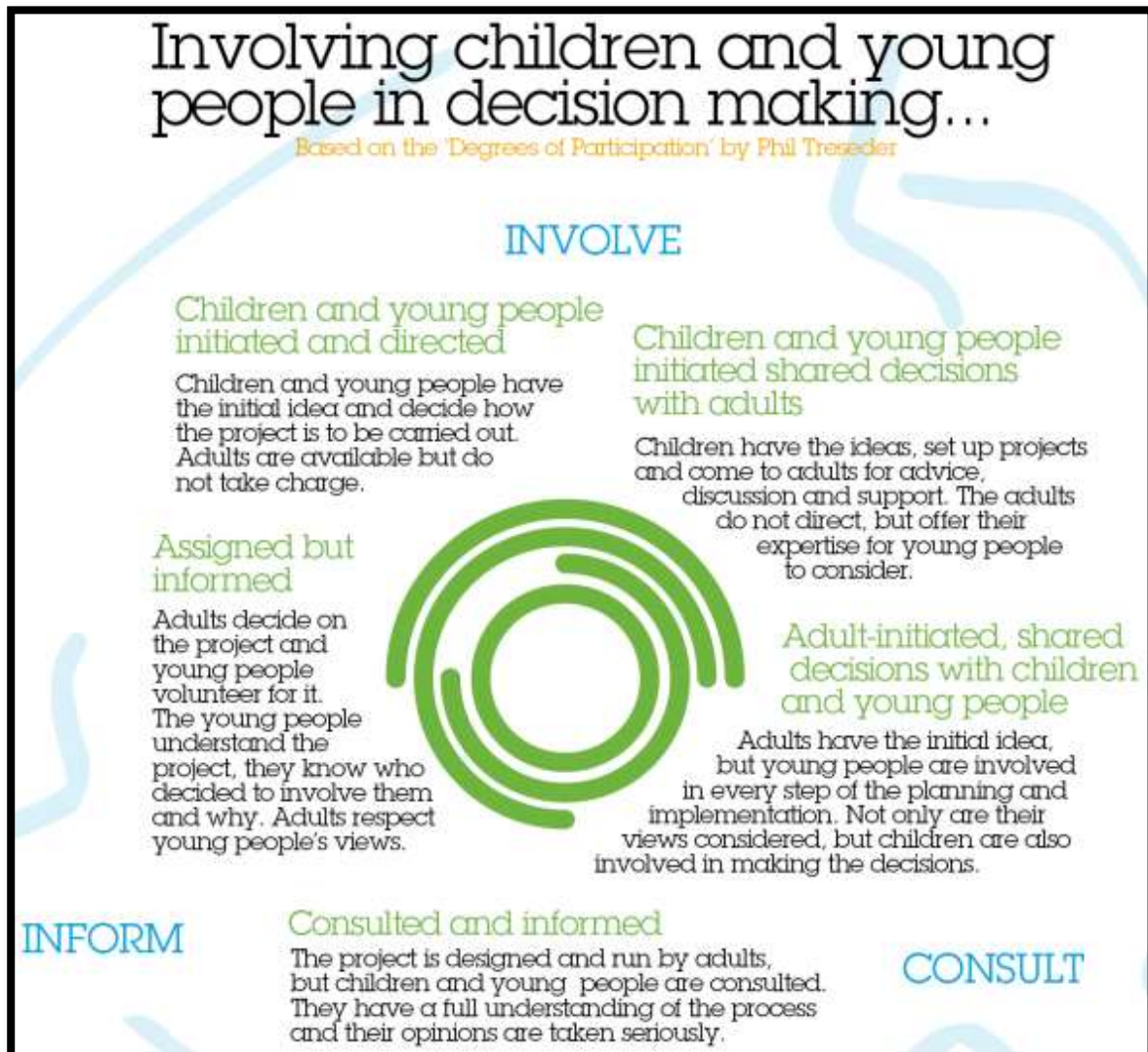
- Child-initiated, shared decisions with adults.
- Consulted and informed.
- Assigned but informed.

- Adult-initiated, shared decisions with children.
- Child-initiated and directed.

The rationale behind the circular design of the levels of participation is that any participatory activity and the relationships that derive from it, ought to be 'appropriated to different settings and circumstances, and practitioners (or indeed children and young people) should not feel that they are in some way failing when they work in ways that involve lesser degrees of power or engagement, or that the aim in every situation should be to achieve the highest possible level of child-directedness or joint-directedness' (Thomas 2007: 204-205).



Treseder's *Degrees of Participation model* was further developed by the Office of the Children's Commissioner in England, building on 'five positions between 'inform', 'consult' and 'involve'. (McLaughlin 2015: 9). This approach allows practioners to identify the different ways in which children may be involved through participation.



(OCC Wheel of Participation June 2014-May 2015: 5)

## Clarity Model of Participation

Clare Gardner (2001), created a grid that brought together five degrees of participation (Treseder 1997) and five conditions for youth participation (Hodgson 1995). The grid was developed to help assess the degree of children and young people participation in different approaches to and methods.

Adult initiated	○      ■	Young people initiated
Adults decide on agenda	○      ■	Young people decide on agenda
Adults make decisions	○      ■	Young people make decisions
Adults have most of information	○      ■	Young people have most of information
Relies on adults to implement action	○      ■	Relies on young people to implement action
Replicates or linked to adult structure	○      ■	Informal structure and links
○ Youth jury      Adults have power      Shared in between      Young people have power ■ Youth forum      ⇄		

(Gardner (2001) in Karsten 2012, p.11)

She proposed six dimensions across what she calls the 'continuum of power' (Karsten 2012, p.11). The grid presents on the one hand the different approaches that adults and young people may take to a participation methodology (see the far right column on the grid for the adult approach, and the far left for the young people). In the middle there is the variation of power from 'adults have power' to 'young people have power' and in the middle there is shared power.

As reflected in other models in this literature review, the grid does not present a correct way of involving children and young people in a process of participation; but rather it offers a tool to identify the degree of such participation.



### **Five Level Model of Children's Participation:**

Shier (2001) designed a model to capture the different levels of children's participation in a decision-making process (2201: 110).

1. Children are listened to.
2. Children are supported in expressing their views.
3. Children's views are taken into account.
4. Children are involved in decision-making processes.
5. Children share power and responsibility for decision-making.

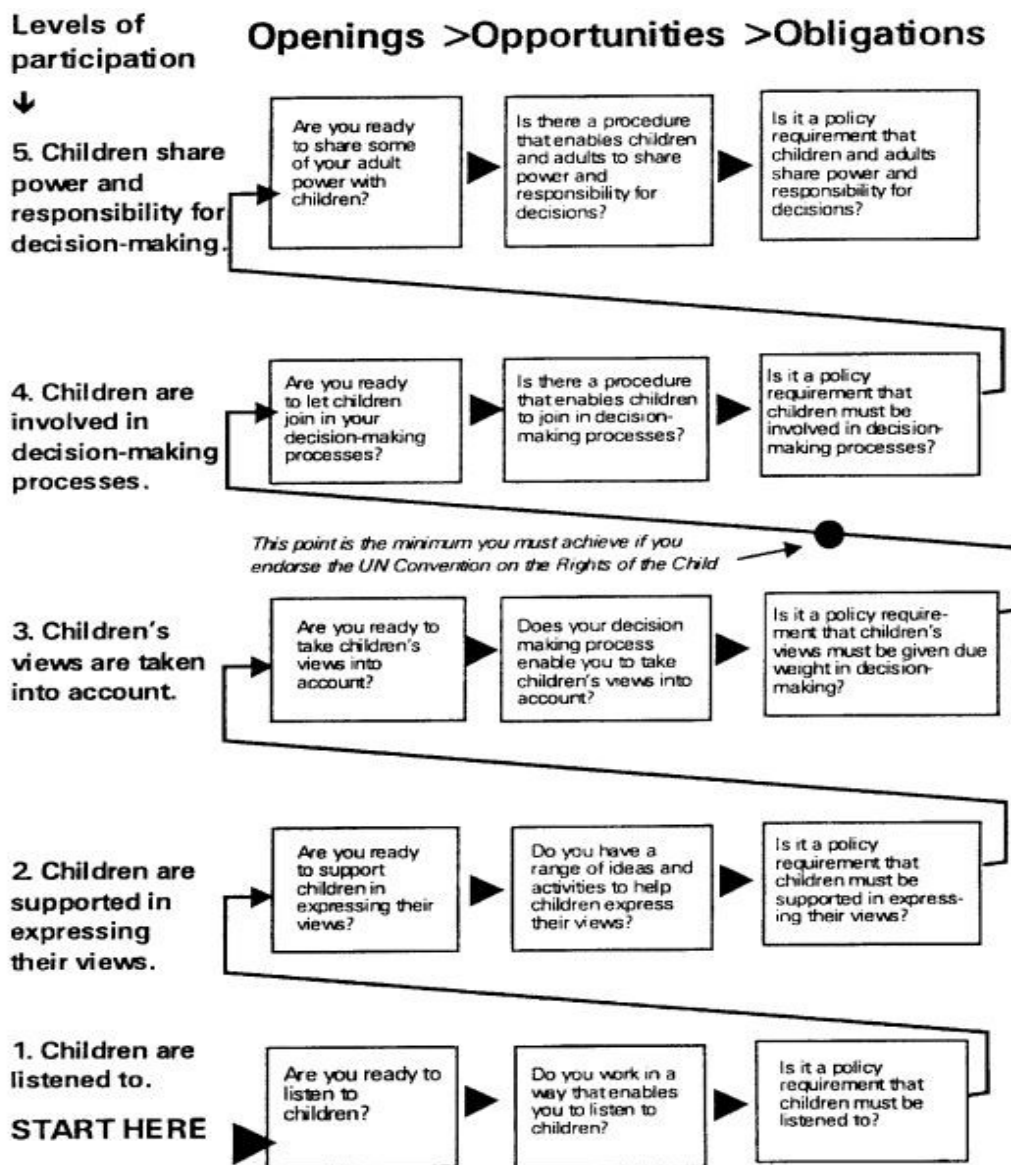
Throughout these levels, Shier points out, 'individuals and organisations may have differing degrees of commitment to the process of empowerment' (2001, p.110). His five-level model is designed to clarify this by identifying 'three stages of commitment at each level: *openings*, *opportunities* and *obligations*' (Shier 2001, p.110).

Openings occur when the researcher or practitioner is ready to engage with the children following a particular methodological approach. Opportunities occur when the requirements are met for that particular engagement to take place in practice; these include resources, skills and knowledge. The obligations are established when the participatory strategy is agreed (Shier 2001). The model, thus, provides with the key questions that researchers and practitioners must ask to determine their positioning and identify the necessary steps to ensure adequate children's participation.

The table overleaf illustrates the 'five level model' (Shier 2001, p.211).

1. At level 1, listening occurs when 'children take it upon themselves to express a view[; that is, there are] no organised efforts are made to ascertain what views they have on key decisions' (Shier 2001, p.112).
2. At level 2, for children to be able to express their views, adults need to provide the right environment and resources to support participation. This includes time, appropriate methods according to age, and relevant training.
3. Level 3 reflects on the need to take children's views into account. That does not mean that 'every decision must be made in accordance with children's wishes' (Shier 2020, p.113); but rather that participatory methodologies need to be embedded into the organisation's policies.
4. Levels 4 and 5 mark the transition from 'consultation to active participation in decision-making' (Shier 2001, p.113). There is a difference between those methods that allow children to give an input and those which make children part of the decision-making process. Children's participation in decision-making (level 5) is seen to be beneficial 'increasing [their] sense of ownership and belonging, increasing self-esteem, increasing empathy and responsibility,

laying the groundwork for citizenship and democratic participation, and thus helping safeguard and strengthen democracy' (Shier 2011, p. 114).



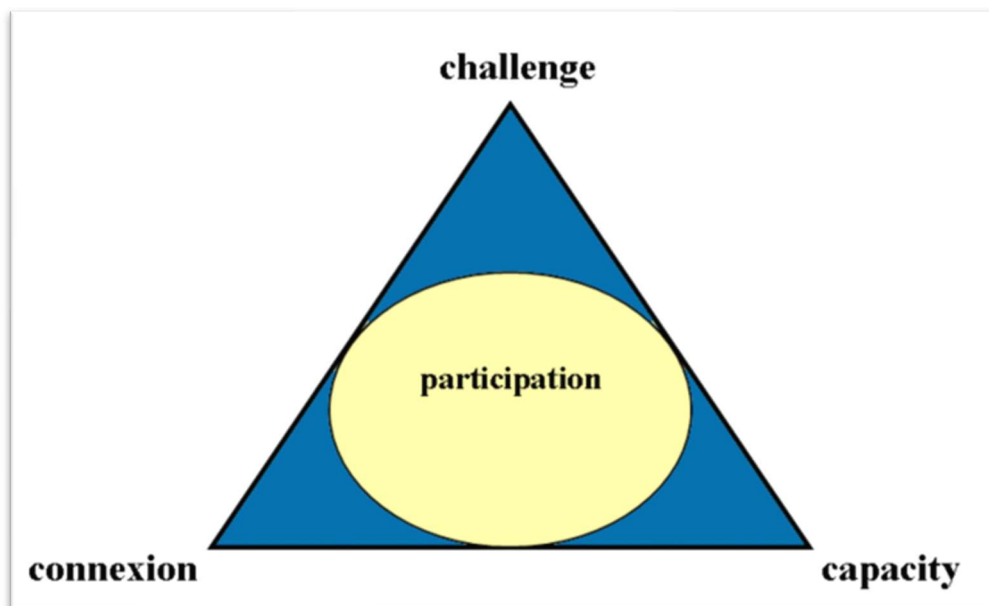
(Shier five level model, 2001: 211)

### Jans and de Backer – Triangle of Youth Participation

Marc Jans and Kurt de Backer created a Triangle of Youth Participation in which the three dimensions of challenge, capacity and connection are balanced in every participative process involving youth. The model understands participation as being the active citizenship of young people characterised as an informal and personal process.

The three dimensions on the model are considered to be the 'three basic conditions' of a participation process, stating that 'young people will actively participate in society

or parts of it when there is a dynamic balance among these three dimensions' (Karsten 2012, p.13).



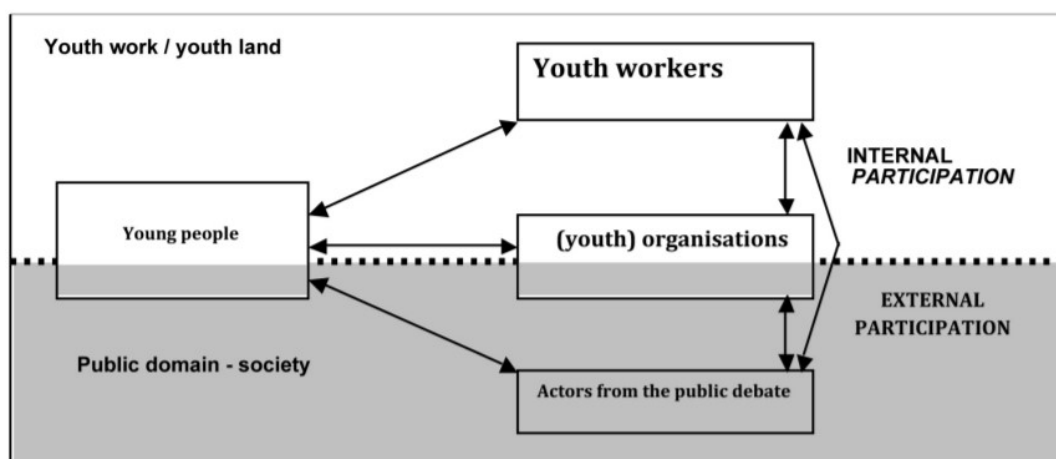
(Jans and De Backer (2002) in Karsten 2012, p.13)

Jans and de Backer relate the *challenge* and *capacity* dimensions in a very concrete way:

'Participation requires on the one hand a need to do something, to change. On the other hand, the necessary competences have to be present. (...) A lack of capacity may lead to feelings of powerlessness and frustration. A lack of challenge can lead to routine behaviour and feelings of meaninglessness' (Jans and De Backer (2002) in Karsten 2012, p.13).

Through the support of adults, young people find a balance between the two dimensions enabling them to feel connected to 'communities, ideas, movements, range of thoughts, [or] organisation' (Jans and De Backer (2002) in Karsten 2012, p.13).

Complementary to the triangle of youth participation, Jans and de Backer developed a participation map that shows the different interactions that youth may have with youth workers, their youth settings (i.e. organisational relations) – what they call "internal participation", and consultations and external activities – which they call "external participation" (see map overleaf).



(Jans and De Backer (2002) in Karsten 2012, p.14)

### The Lundy Model for Participation

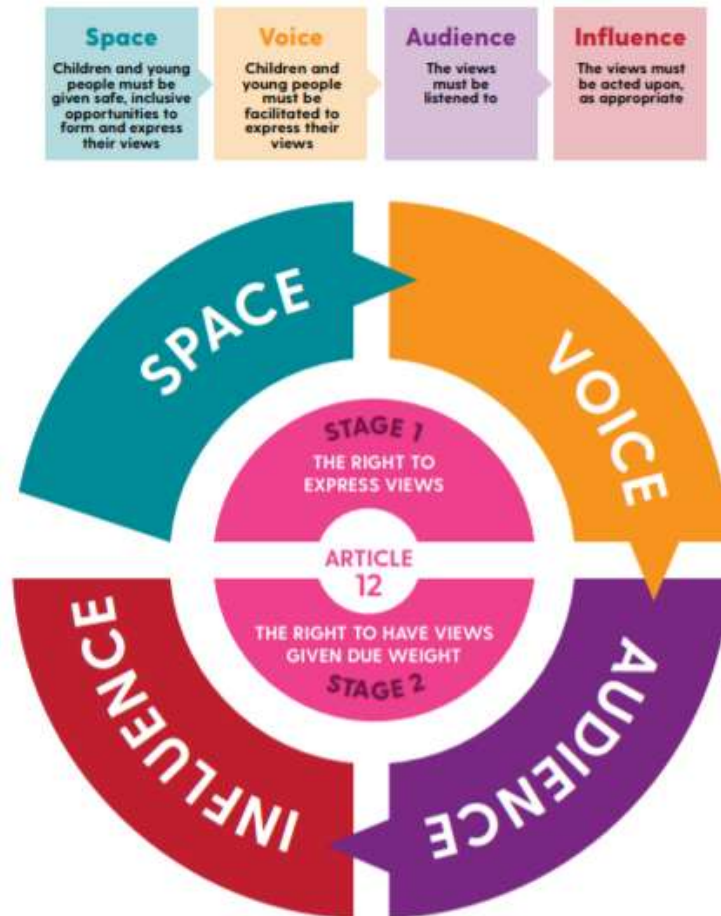
The Lundy Model has four key elements: *space*, *voice*, *audience*, *influence*. All four are based on Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC 1991); aligning with other articles to promote meaningful, safe, and respectful participation. These are non-discrimination (art. 2) and inclusive (art. 2); in the best interests of children and young people whilst protecting them from harm (art. 3); ensuring the right to guidance from adults (art. 5), as well as the right to information (art. 13); and the right to be safe (art. 19).

The Lundy Model of Participation proposes the creation of a safe and inclusive **space** for children and young people to express their views. This is not just a physical space, but also a space in which voice to be heard and appreciated. Safety, in this context, means that children are (and feel) “safe” to express their authentic views without fearing censure, dismissal or reprisal.

In developing opportunities for conversations with children and young people it is important to take into consideration that **voice** can take many shapes and forms. “Voice” should not be limited to the spoken word; any form of participation should take into consideration the multiple means of expression available. Acknowledging voice alone is not enough.

Children and young people’s views and experiences have to be actively listened to by an **audience** and taken into consideration accordingly. The audience can either act themselves, if they are in the power to do so, or open line of communication to the right forum. It is key that in a process of participation, children and young people know who their audience is, why they are seeking their views, and how those will be used. Active listening implies listening with purpose, to enable a process by which the voice of the children and young people **influence** their environment. Within the Lundy

Model, influence is key as it signals that the views of the children are respected and appreciated in accordance with their age and maturity, to inform decision making.



(Child Participation Framework (Lundy Model) – Hub na nÓg: Young Voices in Decision-making 2020, p. 15)

## Ethical Concerns

When conducting a participation activity of any kind (from day to day decision-making to consultations), it is important that the process is ethical and respectful of the rights of the children involved.

Dockett, et al. (2009) reflect on some of the most salient ethical concerns that may appear during the participation process: issues of consent, representativeness of children who participate, the impact of children's participation, and consideration of children's spaces as sites for participation.

To ensure that children's participation is safe, ethical, inclusive and impactful, *UN General Comment 12* identifies nine basic requirements, according to which participation needs to be (General comment No. 12 2009)

- **Transparent and informative:** children and young people must be provided with full, accessible, diversity-sensitive and age-appropriate information about their participation and about how this participation will take place, purpose and potential impact.
- **Voluntary:** children and young people should be informed that they can cease involvement at any stage and should never be coerced into expressing views against their wishes.
- **Respectful:** children and young people must be listened to, taken seriously and their views treated with respect.
- **Relevant:** opportunities must be available for children and young people to express their views on issues that are relevant to their lives.
- **Child-friendly environments and working methods:** approaches to children and young people participation should be adapted to their capacities. Children and young people will need differing levels of support and forms of involvement according to their age and evolving capacities.
- **Inclusive:** participation must be inclusive, avoid existing patterns of discrimination, and encourage opportunities for all children to be involved. No assumptions should be made about what specific groups of children and young people can and cannot do.
- **Supported by training:** adults need preparation, skills and support to facilitate children and young people's participation effectively, to provide them, for example, with skills in listening, working jointly with children and young people and engaging them effectively in accordance with their evolving capacities.

- **Safe and sensitive to risk:** Adults have a responsibility towards the children and young people with whom they work. Staff need to recognise their legal and ethical obligations and responsibilities (e.g. safeguarding issues). In certain situations, expression of views may involve risks. Children and young people should feel confident that they can criticise or challenge any aspect of the services they receive without being punished.
- **Accountable:** following up and acting on any proposals by children and young people is key. They are entitled to be provided with clear feedback on how their participation has influenced any outcomes. Monitoring and evaluation of participation needs to be undertaken, where possible with children and young people themselves. There should also be mechanisms in place to enable children to raise complaints and seek redress if needed.

**Consent:** On the issue of consent, it is important to gain children’s agreement before and throughout the process of participation. There is a risk that ‘the drive to listen to and consult children becomes another invasion of their time, thoughts and spaces, rather than an empowering process’ (Clark 2011, p.6; see also Harcourta and Einarsdottir 2011).

Seeking the agreement of children to proceed should be an ongoing element throughout the length of the process (Flewitt 2005; Hill 2005; Thompson 2002). In order for the children to be able to assent to participate, they need to be properly informed about the nature of the study or consultation, how the participation will take place, what will happen to the data gathered by researchers or practitioners and how it will be used to inform practice and decision making. This can be done, for example, through pictured leaflets, or explaining the intervention to each child individually to make sure they understand it (see Murray 2015).

The youth worker ought to be ready to listen or identify ‘both verbal and non-verbal interactions, noting that children’s body language can itself provide some important cues about their preferred involvement’ (Dockett, et al. 2009, p.288; see also Dockett and Perry, 2007b; Flewitt, 2005).

In the case of external consultations or participation activities that may be link to research, there is a legal ‘requirement to have the informed, written consent of the parent or guardian when seeking to engage children in research’ (Dockett, et al. 2009, p.286; see also (Dockett and Perry 2007a; Einarsdottir 2007; McLaughlin 2015; Murray 2015).

**Confidentiality and Safeguarding:** Sometimes, there may be discussions or activities that touch on matters that may raise safeguarding issues. It is important that youth workers know what can be shared and with whom (Clark 2011).

The safety and wellbeing of the children and young people as they engage in participatory processes must be a priority. There may be times when listening to children may lead to them sharing serious concerns (Clark 2011). When this happens, it is unlikely that confidentiality can be granted. It is necessary that specific consideration is given to make sure that youth workers are familiar and comfortable with the protocols (McLaughlin 2015).

Additionally, in approaches that involve children as co-researchers', adults need to make sure that 'they have the skills to undertake the tasks being requested of them' (McLaughlin 2015, p.21). This involves learning about specific data collections techniques (i.e. interviews, focus groups, photography, among others), but also other ethical elements such as those of consent, confidentiality, safeguarding, and health and safety. Such training 'should take due regard for the maturity of the young people, be interactive and fun' (McLaughlin 2015, p.21).

Organisations, research bodies, and other stakeholders in leading participatory methods that include young children, must provide appropriate training to their staff to ensure the ethics, rigour and quality of the process. Meaningful participation 'requires careful planning and the involvement of settings and services which have established relationships (...)' (Davies and Hamblin 2016, p.11) to acknowledge the needs and experiences of the children. Namely, time to capture children's voice and evaluate their responses; staff training or support on how to undertake participatory strategies; parental/carer consent; participatory methodologies ought to be accessible and inclusive (Davies and Hamblin 2016).

***Risk of Homogenisation:*** Although it is key that children's voices are included in decision-making processes that have an impact in their day to day, 'there are dangers that children are treated as a homogeneous group and diversity among children is masked' (Dockett, et al. 2009, p.289; see also Vandebroek and Bie, 2006; Waller, 2006).

As happens in other consultations involving direct participation targeting specific cultural groups, age range, etc., children's participation may generate uniformed emerging results that overlook the specific realities of each individual child. Moreover, 'attempts to empower and give voice to some children could marginalize others' (Harcourta and Einarsdottir 2011, p.303; see also Warming 2005; Vandebroek and Bie 2006).



Questions to keep in mind (Dockett, et al. 2009, p.290):

- Children are a diverse group – how does our participation process/activity acknowledge this diversity?
- Do you expect some children to speak for all children? If so, do children get to decide who represents them?
- Does your participation process/activity regard children as active social agents? Do all children and young people have the same levels of agency?
- How does your participation process recognize multiple realities of childhood and childhood experiences (Frones et al., 2000)?

“**Tokenism**”: Tokenistic processes refer to those instances in which children’s views are pursued but there is ‘no clear indication of whether their participation leads to any changes in policy or practice’ (Dockett, et al. 2009, p.292; see also Tisdall and Davis 2004). In other words, children’s views are consulted to tick a checkbox of participation but with the intention of pursuing an adult agenda rather than a genuine interest on giving voice to children and young people.

Several researchers have warned about ‘the institutionalization of children’s participation’ (Francis and Lorenzo, 2002) and the potential for participation to become an additional ‘mechanism of control’ (Dockett, et al. 2009, p.292; see also Fielding, 2001, 2007; Arnot and Reay, 2007; Bragg, 2007).

Building on this, it is crucial to have a clear purpose for pursuing participation methodologies that involve children, as it may not be always appropriate.

Questions to keep in mind (MSD 2003, p.8):

- Why do you want children to participate?
- What will they gain from it?
- What will the policy or service gain?
- What will your organisation gain?
- Are you and your organisation committed to effective participation?
- Where in the decision-making process will you involve children?

## Barriers to Participation

A number of potential barriers to participation exist, some environmental in nature, some emerging from ill-informed adult perceptions in relation to children's capacities and some from the children themselves.

- *Environment*: this may include a lack of financial resources, lack of qualified staff or capacity for training, lack of time, lack of consent, concerns about safety and ethics, language and cultural barriers, or it may not be appropriate to involve children in decision-making (MSD 2003).
- *Ill-informed Perceptions about Children's Participation*: these may include thinking that 'children lack the experience to participate, not valuing children's views, assuming that children do not want to participate' (MSD 2003). The belief that 'children are not capable of making informed decisions' (Miller 1996, in Davies and Hamblin 2016, p.13). Additionally, Miller (1996) points to some other barriers including low expectations of children based on 'unhelpful stereotypes of young children as irrational, irresponsible and selfish'; and a 'lack of understanding about children's feelings and preferences' (Miller 1996, in Davies and Hamblin 2016, p.13).
- *Not all children are able to actively engage in participation*: some of the reasons typically provided include a 'lack of confidence, shyness, low self-esteem, previous experience of not being listened to, or that expressing opinions is unproductive, no culture of participation or inadequate communication skills' (language barrier) (Shier 2001, p.112), children do not want or are not capable to engage in participation.
- *Power-relations*: there are power imbalances between adults (in our case youth workers) and children and young people. This is not to say that children are weak, but rather that children often 'lack of knowledge and experience in comparison to adults, but also because of their dependence on adults such as parents, teachers and social workers' (McLaughlin 2015, p.9). One of the mechanisms available to the youth workers to mitigate this is through reverse roles. That is, children and young people are in charge of all or part of the participation activities. For example, becoming documenters, photographers, and commentators; there can also play an active role, taking the lead in developing ideas, events, or activities.

## **Participation within youth settings**

Youth work seeks to widen children and young people's horizons through the promotion of participation and social commitment, encouraging them to be critical and creative in the way they relate to the world around them. Youth work recognises that children and young people are 'part of a wider community and society including family, school, peers and community' (Curriculum Development Unit 2014, p. 7).

The purpose of youth work is to empower children and young people to grow their personal, social and educational level, to 'enable them to develop their voice, influence and place in society and to reach their full potential' (National Occupation Standards Curriculum Development Unit 2014, p.5). It has its foundations on working in association with children and young people, recognising them as partners. Therefore, children and young people occupy a central role on the planning and delivery of youth work and their needs become the essence of youth work.

In order to support and promote personal and social development of children and young people, youth work is built around the three core principles (Curriculum Development Unit 2014, p.8):

1. Preparing young people for participation
2. Promoting acceptance and understanding of others
3. Testing values and beliefs

Within youth work practice, participation is recognised as taking part in different levels of decision-making, creating opportunities for children and young people to be more involved in their organisation. This represents a shift from a situation where children and young people are 'recipients of services towards a situation where they can (if they wish) express their views, make a meaningful contribution to activities and decisions and exert power in a democratic and responsible way' (Curriculum Development Unit 2014, p.18). Every opportunity should be given to young people to participate in all aspects of the youth service in a range of different ways.

Participation may range from taking part in an activity to being involved in the decision making of the youth setting or an external process of consultation. How children and young people are involved can depend on many factors, such as the nature and the stage of a project in which they are taking part; the children and young people's ability to take part; and the organisation or adult's ability to involve children and young people (The Office of the Children's Commissioner for England, 2013).

## Approaches to participation

Participation should be embedded within the culture of youth settings, however involving younger children in decision-making can be challenging as it often requires more creative approaches than those that are effective with older age groups.

When thinking about children's and young people's participation in decision-making in general, and in a youth setting in particular, we think about it as an 'ongoing process, which include information-sharing and dialogue between children and adults based on mutual respect' (Child Participation Framework – Hub na nÓg: Young Voices in Decision-making 2020, p.6). It is by combining children and young people's expertise about their own lives with adult knowledge and experience that enables better decisions to be made.

There are different levels of participation that take may take place on a youth setting. These are, namely, day to day decisions at the club and project level, organisational matters and external consultations (Child Participation Framework – Hub na nÓg: Young Voices in Decision-making 2020).

- *Club and project level (Day to Day decision making)*  
Children and young people are involved in the day-to-day activities and methods of engagement in the club or project.
- *Youth Setting (Organisational decision making)*  
Children and young people participate in the decision-making in organisational programmes, plans, policies and events as well as in the governance of the organisation.
- *External Consultations (One-time participation)*  
Circumstances in which government departments, civil society organisations, research institutions etc. ask children and young people in youth settings for their views and experiences to inform specific policies, research, etc.

Decision-making involves effective engagement with children and young people at appropriate stages, and therefore, different stages (and contexts) require different participatory approaches. These are consultative participation; collaborative participation and child-led participation (Crowley et al. 2020). The selection of one of these approaches over another will depend on (1) the level of participation (day to day decision making; organisational decision; community/local/national decision); and (2) the age group, abilities and interests of children and young people.

- *Child-led participation*  
Children are provided with the opportunities and space to bring up ideas and initiate their own activities.
- *Collaborative participation*  
Adults and children and young people work together in partnership. It usually occurs when adults identify an issue that needs to be addressed and involve children in helping decide what needs to be done and how.
- *Consultative participation*  
Youth workers seek the views children and young people. The results of the consultation are used to feed into the decision making, project or policy.

It is important to note that these three approaches should not be seen as a hierarchy. Often participation projects or programmes use all three modes of participation. Different stages of the project may require different models. A participation process may move between different approaches or degrees of engagement depending on the activities that have been chosen or the required/expected outcomes.

Some aspects may need to be handled by adults and therefore require a consultative approach; others may require a collaborative approach in which youth workers and children and young people work together in partnership; or there may be some aspects that can be fully led and developed by children and young people on their own.

Youth workers, children and young people should not feel that they are in some way failing when they work in ways that require lesser degrees of engagement; or that every situation should aim to achieve the highest possible level of children and young people participation. Equally, a participation process may start of as a consultation but may also incorporate collaborative and child-led aspects throughout. For example, the youth workers may be carrying out a consultation, but as part of the process, they may collaborate with children and young people in order to determine how to best complete the process. Throughout the activities children and young people may present with an idea that they would like to develop to complement the initial consultation (see case study).

Youth workers must be able to identify what approach suits best to each stage and to each age group involved – as long as it is rights-based and complies with Lundy's elements of space, voice, audience and influence. Equally, it is possible that a participation process that started as consultative may become more collaborative as collaborative as both children and adults become more confident and gain deeper understanding.

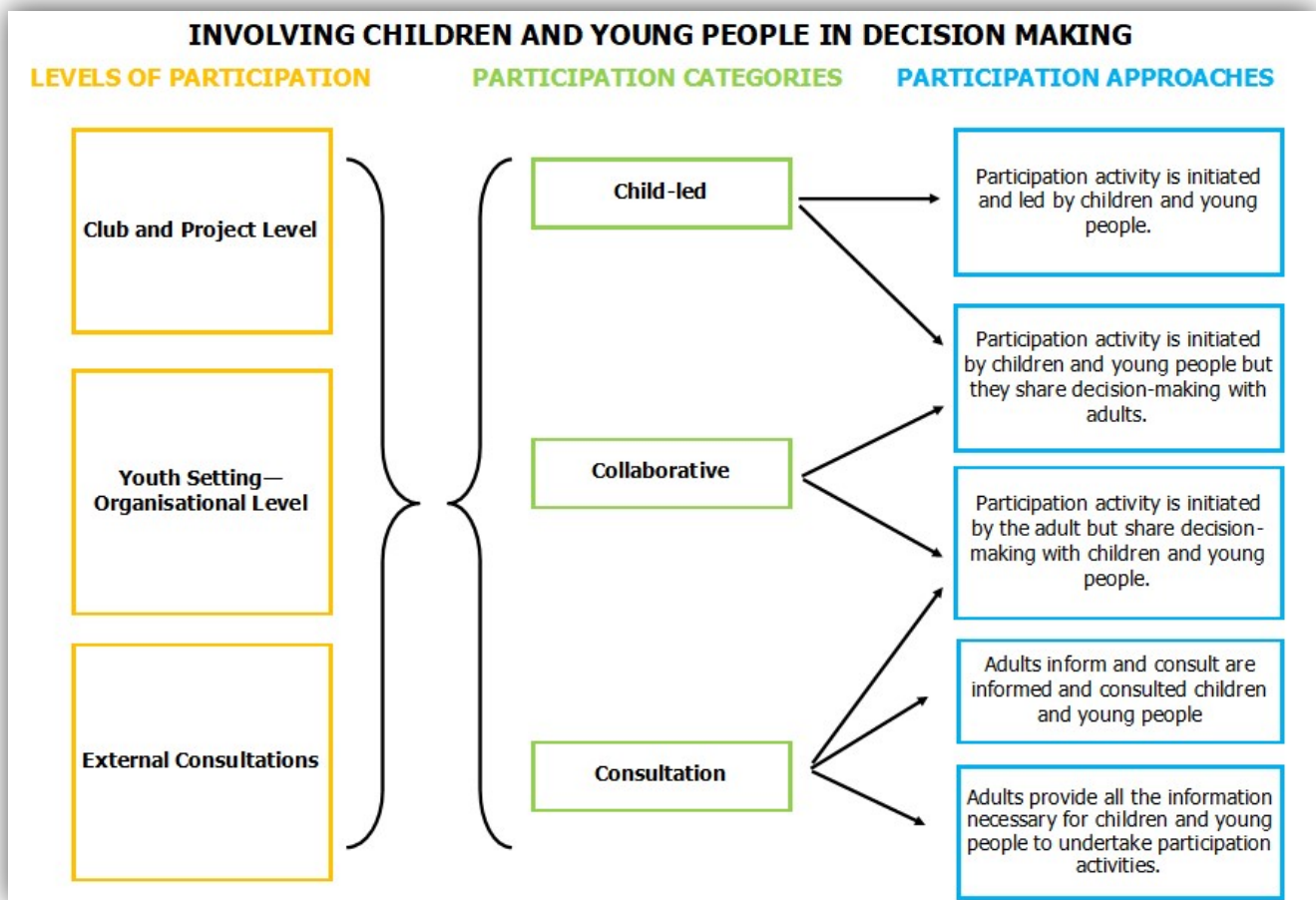
Within these three board categories, there are also various degrees of participation. The *Circular Model of Participation* (Treseder 1997) identifies five types of participation

in a circular layout including (1) child initiated and directed; (2) child initiated but adult led; (3) consulted and informed; (4) assigned but informed; (5) adult initiated but shared decisions with children.

The circular design of the levels of participation offers a non-hierarchical approach in which participation is adapted to different circumstances, different age groups, and different capacities.

- *Children and young people initiated and directed.*  
Children and young people have the initial idea and decide how they would like the project is to be carried out. Adults are available for advice and support but do not direct the process.
- *Children and young people initiate shared decisions with adults.*  
Children and young people bring forward their own ideas and work together with adults to set up the projects. Adults are available for advice and support but do not direct the process.
- *Adult-initiated, shared decisions with children and young people.*  
Adults have the initial idea but involve children and young people on its planning and implementation being fully involved in making decisions.
- *Assigned but informed.*  
In this type of participation, adults decide on the project and ask children and young people volunteer for it. Adults provide all the information necessary for children and young people to understand the project and assigned different tasks or activities for children to undertake.
- *Children and young people are informed and consulted.*  
The project is designed and run by adults, but children and young people are consulted through different means.

In the diagram below, we show how these five types of participation are located within the three overarching categories and levels of participation.



As illustrated, each level of participation can involve one or all participation categories depending on the tasks that are being carried out. To each participation category correspond various participation approaches (see column 2 and 3). For example, Child-led participation can take place when children initiate and lead the participation activity or when the activity is initiated by children, but the decision making is shared with adults. On these same lines, a collaborative participation process can be initiated by children, but the decision making is shared with adults; or it can be initiated by adults, with the decision making shared with children and young people. Finally, a consultative participation can be initiated by the adult with shared decision-making with children and young people; it can take place when adults inform and consult children and young people; or when adults provide all the information necessary for children and young people to undertake participation activities.

## **Getting young children involved! Participation through play**

Children's and young people's lives are playful. Play is how children learn about the world around them, about themselves and each other, and give meaning to the things that happen in their lives (Jans 2004). It enables children to move through each stage of their development naturally, supporting them to make friends, deal with challenges, share and cooperate and feel part of their community. Play forms the basis of their interactions with and influences on their environments. The importance of play needs to be recognised when we involve children in the 4 to 8 age group in participation processes.

Play, by its very nature, is a participative process: play empowers children and provides social tools to participate in decision making. At its most successful, play offers children choice, control and freedom. By observing children at play, responding to children's play cues and reflecting on this experience with colleagues, you can learn much about the quality of their need for any formal consultation (Hughes 1996). By entering the realities of children through play we attempt to understand the child's perspective, and this can be done through day to day observation and interactions. Waters (2009) highlights that 'being aware that everything we say, do, suggest or touch has an impact is enough to be sure that we are being aware of our impact on the participatory process' (2009, p.40).

Youth work and Play work professionals both hold common aims of promoting the personal, educational, creative and social developments of children and young people. Both professional stances aspire to support children and young people to reach their full potential. In play work, this is achieved by providing safe, stimulating and supportive environments and age appropriate opportunities and experiences for children and young people.

Play work supports children and young people to:

- Treat themselves and others with love, kindness and respect
- Participate in exciting initiatives, innovations, activities and experiences
- Have fun, play, laugh, learn, experiment, make mistakes and thrive
- Grow into motivated, positive, resilient and caring citizens

Play work understands that children learn and develop while they are playing; in this construct play has autotelic, as well as developmental value. Thus, the role of the playworker like the youth worker is one of facilitator and enabler. As positive role models, play workers and Youth workers aspire to make a positive impression on children's lives, supporting them to grow, develop and learn.



## **A Playwork approach to Participation**

Children and young people have so much to offer to society, to the communities in which they live and to the organisations they are members of. They know about themselves, about how they feel, and what is important to them.

Participation is more than just asking children and young people for their ideas and views to learn about what they would like to happen. It's an ongoing process of listening, taking them seriously and turning their ideas and suggestions into reality. Within the Play Your Part project, the Lundy Model of Participation (2007) is being interpreted through a Playwork approach. This allows for a more in-depth understanding of the process of participation through a playful lens, which frames the introduction of playful participatory methods to actively engage with the 4 to 8 age group within the youth setting.

As explained in the previous sections, the four dimensions of the Lundy Model offer a comprehensive approach to participation reflecting on the areas that must be taken into consideration when involving children and young people. By applying the playwork principles to the Lundy Model we can achieve child-centred meaningful participation.

Youth workers must tailor participatory methods to the needs and priorities of different age groups recognising children's many languages. As providers of the participatory space, youth workers must 'create an environment which allows children to communicate in as many ways as possible' (Lancaster 2003), including emotional space to support children and young people in expressing their feelings. Providing space also means 'making time for talking and listening, and for children to explore their thoughts and to explore and become absorbed in their play' (Lancaster 2003). Children and young people must be given with a choice of resources, opportunities and daily routines through which they can participate, as well as the choice about whether to participate. Finally, youth workers should subscribe to a reflective practice allowing children and young people to reflect on their participation process and how they have taken part on it.

<b>Child-centred Model of Participation</b>	
<b>Space</b>	Children and young people must be given the space to feel safe and comfortable to express their views and talk about their experiences. Children and young people must be given time for talking and listening, and to explore their thoughts.
<b>Voice</b>	Children and young people are given the opportunity to express their views in as many ways as possible, including non-verbal ways. Child-centred methods ways that are creative and fun.

	Children and young people must be given with a choice of resources, opportunities and daily routines through which they can participate, as well as the choice about whether to participate.
<b>Audience</b>	Children’s views must be listened to and responded to with respect. Audience can be either direct or indirect, meaning that adults can be the ‘direct’ receiving the output of a participation process; but can also be ‘indirect’ when the outputs reach other audiences that may not have access to the participation results.
<b>Influence</b>	Children and young people’s views must be acted upon as appropriate. In those cases in which there is a reason not to, or there is an impediment to doing so it (and the reason) should be communicated to them.

When conducting activities that require children and young people’s participation, it is important that the process is ethical and respectful of the rights of the children involved. The most salient ethical concerns that may appear during the participation process are issues of consent, representativeness of children who participate, the impact of children’s participation.

Children have choices about whether to take part in activities or not, and about how they participate. They need to be properly informed about the nature of the study or consultation, how the participation will take place, what will happen to the data gathered by researchers or practitioners and how it will be used to inform practice and decision making. Seeking children participation’s agreement (consent) should be understood as being ongoing throughout the length of the process. This can be done, for example, through pictured leaflets, or explaining the intervention to each child individually to make sure they understand it (see Murray 2015).

## **Participatory methods and techniques**

Children and young people communicate in many different ways, therefore, a range of fun, interesting and child-friendly activities can be used to enable participation. The rationale behind the methods that will be employed will depend not only on the skills of the children we work with and their ages, but also on those of the youth workers, as well as the time, space and resources available (Clark 2011).

There are various activities in which adults can engage with children that shift from verbal expression. By adopting different methodologies to the participation, the 'children are less likely to try to guess the response they think will please adults' (Davies and Hamblin 2016, p.15). The rationale behind the methods that will be employed will depend not only on the skills of the children we work with and their ages, but also on those of the youth workers, as well as the time, space and resources available.

Children can participate in a range of play activities including arts and crafts, games, photographs, songs, music, dance, poems, pictures, dressing up, climbing, making swings, making dens, using a range of objects creatively, running, skipping, football and games. Small group discussion, circle time and children's panel/committees can also be used with open or guided discussion.

The table overleaf offers some general methodological approaches to children's and young people's participation that can be used to gain a richer picture of what children think and feel about a range of issues.

Method	Strengths	Key considerations
<b>Observation</b>	<p>Contributes to building an understanding about children’s lives, their likes and dislikes and what is important to them. Particularly useful for very young children and those who do not use verbal language to communicate. Observation can be done in person, or via video. Observation can complement other methods to build up a narrative and context for children's voices.</p>	<p>Gives a youth worker perspective on children’s lives rather than actively engaging children in the participation process. By sensitively observing how and where children choose to play, how they use the environment and where they are playing, we can use our knowledge of theory and our experience to reflect on what children need. This will enhance children’s play because they have shown us what they want without limiting or interrupting it.</p>
<b>Talking and listening</b>	<p>Enables children to take the lead in discussions around content that is meaningful to them and within the scope of their understanding.</p> <p>Group discussions are good for sharing experiences, generating ideas, collecting information, solving problems, and for planning. A 10-15 min discussion is appropriate for young children’s concentration span. Maximum group sizes of 8-10 are suitable.</p> <p>Telling stories allow youth workers to introduce ideas and topics in engaging and age appropriate ways; allows children to explore and express their feelings and experiences at one remove. Youth workers can either use stories</p>	<p>Children need to feel comfortable and at ease in a relevant and familiar environment and/or with known youth workers present or close at hand. Practitioners should take time to listen and be sensitive and responsive to children's cues. A flexible approach is required, for example if children prefer to be on the move as they talk.</p>

	(with spaces for children to interject, or act them out) or have children make and tell stories to them.	
<b>Scrapbooks and maps</b>	Builds a picture of a child's experience, or how they feel about something that can then be talked through. Could include drawings, cut-outs, photos, stickers, dictation, likes, dislikes, favourites, things that make them feel certain ways.	Can be particularly effective in gaining a child's perspective on a particular environment or setting, revealing the importance of people and spaces. These can take time to develop through more than one session.
<b>Draw and Tell</b>	<p>Children use drawings as a representational tool to portray objects in the world. The process of drawing is in itself a great communication vehicle. In this methodology, drawings are the platform of meaning-making and the child talks to the adult to explain what is going on in the drawing.</p> <p>Painting and drawing allow for visual rather than verbal expression. Options include inviting the child to tell an adult what to draw, or to invite the child to draw a setting or themselves in a situation/environment.</p> <p>In this process of drawing youth workers and children work together on developing understanding about a particular topic. The discussion is kept open-ended and the child's voice is given room. The adult contributes respectfully by making links between the child's thoughts, experiences and ideas.</p>	<p>This generates most meaningful insights when supported by observation and/or discussion, with youth workers listening carefully. This can be effective in those situations when the child wants to have a youth worker present on the process of drawing; or on those occasions when the drawings are abstract and need of explanation.</p> <p>However, not all children consider drawing to be fun and some children may be inhibited about their drawing capabilities.</p>

<b>Peer Research</b>	<p>This method empowers children and young people by taking ownership of the participatory process. Peer researchers may be tasked with collecting data on a specific issue which would have been identified by them or given by the youth worker.</p>	<p>Can be used in consultative, collaborative or child-led participation processes.</p>
<b>Recording</b>	<p>Photographs can be used as starting points for conversations with children and young people.</p> <p>This methodology can also be applied in a more engaging way by letting children and young people use cameras to take their own images demonstrating what is important to them.</p> <p>Tours can allow youth workers to explore children's perspectives of a particular area, environment or setting. Tours can be led by children who want to take part; for many this will be a new experience and preparatory sessions prior to doing a tour is recommended – if for example cameras will be used, children will need time to familiarise themselves with the equipment over time.</p>	<p>Images from camera work always serve as a basis of further discussion and consideration.</p> <p>During the tours, youth workers can observe, question, listen and discuss during a tour led by one or more children.</p>
<b>Games</b>	<p>Allows children to express feelings and opinions. Using physical activities will increase enjoyment for many children.</p>	<p>This generates most meaningful insights when supported by observation and/or discussion, with youth workers listening carefully.</p>

<b>Music and Movement</b>	Allows children to express feelings and opinions. Using music and physical activity increases enjoyment for many children.	Sounds, spaces and movements can stimulate discussion about particular situations and evoke feelings and responses to issues such as physical wellbeing. Activities should be kept simple, with a clear purpose.
<b>Ranking (Q – Methodology)</b>	This method gives a clear insight on what is important for children and young people. It consists on ranking different statements or pictures in a board and children can identify the ones that they feel most represented by and the ones they do not feel represented at all.	There are two of the strengths of Q methodology, where research with young children is involved. First, it is not limited to written statements, so youth workers can use pictures, objects, foods and other materials. Second, it is not limited to face to face interactions so it can be used on an online session or even using a web-based software.
<b>Role play</b>	Children can express their views on particular experiences via the use of a puppet/doll/toy or use these intermediaries as prompts for acting out scenarios and what they might do/say/expect. This can reveal children’s perspectives on an issue, e.g. how they have made sense of an experience.	Can be structured (children are asked what 'teddy' would do, say or feel in a particular scenario and how they might also feel) or open (children are free to act out their experiences of a particular scenario) using props to support their play.
<b>The Mosaic Approach</b>	Multi-method approach that recognises the different ‘voices’ or languages of children. Useful mechanism to encourage listening at different levels and in different contexts. This methodological approach combines the traditional methodology of observation and interviewing with the addition of participatory tools – for example, cameras, drawings, etc.	Can be applied in a variety of contexts as it focuses on children’s lived experiences. Embedded into practice, this approach has the potential to be both used as participatory tool or evaluative tool.

Below there are some real-life examples in which some of these methodologies have been applied. These are namely the mosaic approach (Clark and Moss, 2001), investigations of the everyday lives of children (Cobb et al., 2005); children's engagement in art experiences (Darbyshire et al., 2005); children's experiences of school and child care (Eide and Winger, 2005; Kinney, 2005) and engaging young children in documentation of their learning (Carr et al., 2005).

There are some relevant questions to consider at the time of designing a participatory strategy (based on Davis and Hamblin 2016):

- How are young children currently involved in sharing their views?
- How would you like to engage with young children?
- What steps do you need to take to achieve this?
- Are there partnerships with other organisations that can be helpful for the process?

**The Mosaic Approach:** The Mosaic Approach was developed as a mechanism to include 'the voices of young children in the evaluation of early childhood services' (Clark 2005, p.13), to encourage 'listening at different levels and in different contexts' (Clark 2005, p.27). This process of listening should also include adults' perspectives (i.e. from parents or carers and practitioners).

The Mosaic Approach comprises different elements (Clark 2005, p.13):

- Multi-method: recognises the different 'voices' or languages of children;
- Participatory: treats children as experts and agents in their own lives.
- Reflexive: includes children, practitioners and parents in reflecting on meanings, and addresses the question of interpretation.
- Adaptable: can be applied in a variety of early childhood institutions.
- Focused on children's lived experiences: can be used for a variety of purposes including looking at lives lived rather than knowledge gained, or care received.
- Embedded into practice: a framework for listening that has the potential to be both used as an evaluative tool and to become embedded into early years practice.

This methodological approach combines the traditional methodology of observation and interviewing with the addition of participatory tools (Clark 2005) – for example, cameras, drawings, etc. In order to illustrate the operational of this method, this section refers to Clark (2005) case study in which children were inquired about the uses of their outdoor space.

On the collection stage, children equipped with cameras took the researcher with them on a tour to their community. The pictures reflect what elements of the surroundings are more important to the children. In addition to those, children may want to give

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the researcher some drawings. The researcher 'interviewed children individually or in groups outside or on the move. Four practitioners and four parents were also interviewed for their perspectives on how the children used the outdoor space' (Clark 2005, p.14). All these elements become part of the mosaic that will map the uses of the outdoor space. During the second stage, the data collected by the children was discussed with parents and practitioners to form the basis of dialogue, reflection and interpretation, a process involving children and adults' (Clark 2005, p.13).

**Draw-and-talk Methods:** Children use drawings as a representational tool to portray objects in the world. Although the end product 'is regarded as the standard to assess children's ability to reflect accurately on visual realities', the process of drawing is in itself a great communication vehicle.

The "Draw-and-Talk" method it is a very useful tool to record the process of construction of meaning from the start of the activity, which gives practitioners and researchers 'a more complete and comprehensive account of children's perceptions on the research issue at hand' (Tay-Lim & Lim 2013: 70). Scholars have advocated for 'the "draw-and-talk" method, which they see as more promising as a research tool than the "draw and followed by talk" method' (Tay-Lim & Lim 2013: 69. See also Brooks, 2005; Coates & Coates, 2006; Cox, 2005; Hopperstad, 2008, 2010; White et al., 2010).

One of the key elements is to do not place too much emphasis on the final result, and rather focus on the 'relationship between children's narratives and their drawing (Coates and Coates 2006). In this methodology, drawings are the means of discourse of meaning-making, in which the practitioners and researchers 'focus on the drawing process and the children's accompanying narratives in order to listen attentively to children's voices' (Tay-Lim & Lim 2013, p.69).

**Co-construction Drawing:** Jordan (2004) used co-constructivist drawing as a method for 'participation of children, on their own terms, in adult-created research agendas' activity' (Tay-Lim & Lim 2013, p.70). He emphasised that in the process of drawing adults and children share understanding about a particular topic. In this process, 'the discussion is kept open-ended and the child's voice is given room for expression and exploration as the adult contributes respectfully by making links between the child's thoughts, affirming the child's ideas, and extending the child's views' (Tay-Lim & Lim 2013, p.70).

By applying a co-constructivist method of drawing the adult allows for 'the fluidity of the child's ideas to emerge, to develop, and to be shaped and defined in the process' (Tay-Lim & Lim 2013, p.70). It places the child at the centre of the process as an active agent. In the framework of co-construction drawing, the 'interview dialogue

moves beyond the traditional procedure of extracting facts from participants' (Tay-Lim & Lim 2013, p.70) to become a joint process of constructing meaning.

However, the success of the method depends on the capacity of the facilitator (practitioner or researcher) to conduct the activity effectively. Hence, appropriate training and practice is indispensable. When researchers fail to unlock the children's potential as communicators of their realities, there is a risk that 'children [become] disempowered and their agentic status tokenized' (Tay-Lim & Lim 2013, p.79). This may take place when practitioners or researchers are not equipped to undertake such methodologies or undermine a child's capacity or competency (Tay-Lim & Lim 2013).

Fargas-Malet et al. (2010) identified some disadvantages in using drawing techniques with children (2010, p.13).

- 'Not all children consider drawing to be fun and some children may be inhibited about their drawing capabilities'.
- When using drawing methodologies in groups 'drawings can be easily seen and copied by peers, and thus may illustrate socially constructed rather than individual ideas' (Leonard, 2006 in Fargas-Malet et al. 2010, p.13)

**Photovoice approach:** Darbyshire and MacDougall (2005) explore the methodological approaches taken in 'a study that investigated children's experiences and perceptions of physical activity and places and spaces in their lives in relation to the broader topic of childhood obesity' (2005, p.418). Children aged between 4 and 12 years. The methodologies used were focus groups interviews, and the use of photography to map their 'local, social and recreational spaces' (2005, p.417).

- Focus groups: the main goal of this methodological approach 'was to enable and allow the children to discuss and articulate in their own words' their perceptions, understandings and experiences in relation to play, exercise, sport and physical activity' (2005, p.421). The focus groups were child-oriented in the sense that they were interactive conversation with and between children. Additionally, the researchers 'incorporated activities into the groups to provide both variety and interest for the children and to stimulate their thinking and discussion about the focus on physical activity and its associated people, places and spaces' (2005, p.421).
- Mapping: children were invited 'to draw and discuss a map of the social and physical environments where they were most likely to participate in physical activity' (2005, p.422). Mapping 'encouraged free responses and individual interpretations' as well as enabling 'children to portray graphically play, activity, places and spaces in their lives, to visually site themselves within their families and social environment and perhaps expand on their verbal accounts' (2005,

p.422). Maps and photographs have been widely used in research related to children and their environment (Aitken and Wingate 1993; Dodman 2003; Morrow 2001; Percy 1995; Rasmussen and Smidt 2003; Young and Barrett 2001).

- Photovoice: children from the focus groups were asked to further participate 'by taking photos with a disposable camera that we provided' (2005, p.423). This methodological approach was seen as a mean to encourage children who may have not felt comfortable participating in the focus groups. Photography allowed children 'to depict people and places that were important to them within their home, school and wider community (2005, p.423)'.

For a more details theoretical approach to this methodology see Booth and Booth 2003; Killion and Wang 2000; McIntyre 2003; Wang and Burris 1997; Wang and Redwood-Jones 2001).

Focus groups, mapping and Photovoice provided complementary information about the children's activities on a similar approach to the mosaic methodology. An important element to keep in consideration when applying the photovoice approach is that it involved photography as well as the narrative of the children on the photos taken. This is key to produce an accurate interpretation of the gathered data.

Similar methods have been used by Dockett and Perry (2005) in which they asked 'children to take photographs in small groups (2-3) around the school [and then create] a classroom book was created with the pictures and the children's comments' (Fargas-Malet, et al. 2010, p.11). Another application is the photo novellas by Kirova and Emme (2006) who used the photographs 'not only used to elicit discussion and dialogue, but are manipulated and organized in a narrative format' (Fargas-Malet, et al. 2010, p.11).

Fargas-Malet et al. (2010) identified some disadvantages in using photography when researching young children (2010, p.12):

- 'Giving children freedom over their cameras means that the researchers do not have any idea or control over what photographs might be taken';
- 'Children might be tempted to take photographs of what they would like to keep as a picture afterwards';
- 'It may pose ethical challenges concerning issues of confidentiality, since informed consent from all those who are in the photographs is nearly impossible to gain';
- 'There might be photographs that the interviewee regrets taking and that the researchers might have already seen when developing them'.

**Q-Methodology:** This approach uses ranking exercises to different statements drawn in a board (Fargas-Malet, et al. 2010, p.15). In turn these are 'sorted by participants onto a grid designed to represent a normal distribution curve' under the direction of the children signalling the "most representative" or the "most unrepresentative" of their opinion. For added depth, 'it is customary to discuss and record participants' choices with them as they sort, thus providing a valuable source of qualitative information' (Fargas-Malet, et al. 2010, p.15).

There are two of the strengths of Q methodology, where research with young children is involved (Fargas-Malet, et al. 2010, p.15):

- The researcher is not limited to written textual statements and can use pictures, objects, foods and other materials.
- 'It is adaptable to different modes of delivery, including face-to-face interview, postal sorts (...) and using computer/web-based software'.

## **Collecting evidence**

The evidence collected through children's participation processes needs to be assessed accordingly in order to be used to inform the decision-making. There are different qualitative methods of data collection that can be used to gather the necessary information, namely note taking from observations, interviews, focus groups or discussions; drawings; posters; pictures; and/or recordings, both audio or image, among others.

The evidence collected will sometimes need to be interpreted in order to generate meaning to enable decision-making or feeding back to management or external stakeholders, or assess an activity, programme, event, among others. There are some concerns in relation to how adults interpret what children contribute, that is, the efforts to understand the meaning behind children's comments and other contributions.

This is especially important in younger years, as it is the case of the 4 to 8 age group, because in some cases they may not be as articulate as older age groups and therefore there is more room for interpretation. It is crucial that the youth worker remains as truthful to the evidence gathered by the children as possible, and in those cases in which is possible, ask the children to explain why they have drawn a particular picture, taken a photo, shared certain experiences, etc., so the youth worker can ensure that the voices of the children and young people are rightly represented.

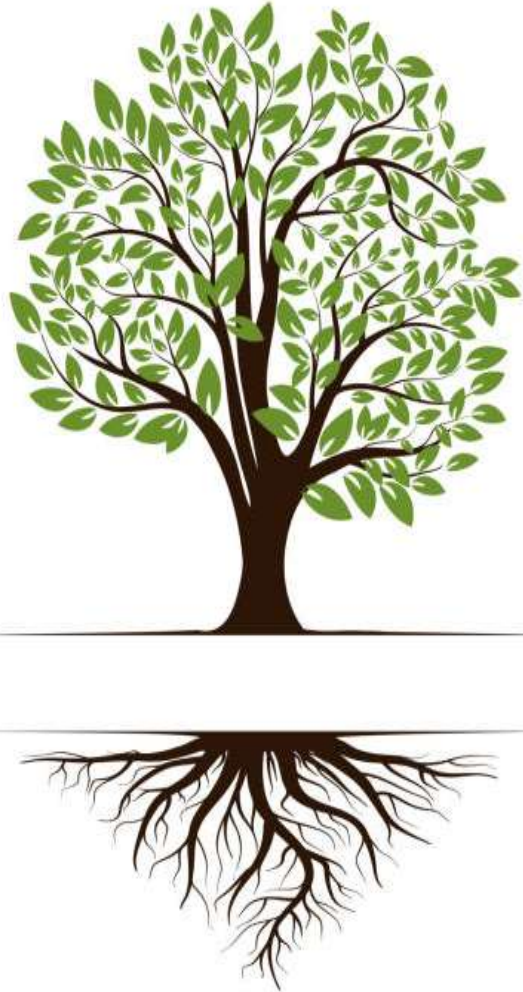
## **Concluding Remarks**

Participatory methods give youth workers and other practitioners the opportunity to include children and young people in decision-making processes through listening to their experiences, opinions, suggestions, needs and wants.

It is important to highlight that the use of participatory processes requires 'great responsibility on each of the adults involved and requires skill, understanding, time and space' (Clark 2011, p.6). Children's and young people's opinions and views must be taken seriously; adults must take time to listen, recognise that children's and young people choice on whether to take part respecting children's privacy and silence as well as their expressed opinions' (Clark 2011, p.6).

Youth work and youth settings offer children and young people the necessary personal skills to develop their voice, understand how they can advocate for change and reach their full potential within society. Children and young people occupy a central role on the planning and delivery of youth work and their needs become the essence of youth work.

By enabling processes of meaningful participation in which children and young people feel respectfully listened to and empowered to advocate for change in issues that concern their lives; we will be striving for a deep cultural change in which children and young people are widely recognised as public actors, capable of influencing development. The tree overleaf represents this cultural change (adapted from Harry Shier (2010). "Pathways to Participation Revisited: learning from Nicaragua's child coffee-workers").



**Fruits:** respect, equality, inclusion, children's rights.

The **leaves of the tree** represent children and young people empowered. Children and young people as...

- active community members;
- defenders of children's rights;
- active in education policy and planning;
- leaders in their own groups and organisations;
- advocates and leaders of social change.

The **branches** are the various activity groups and spaces in which children and young people gradually develop their active and pro-active participation in tune with the growth of their knowledge and experience

The **trunk** holds the tree and it is made up of all the learning activities through which children and young people gain awareness of their rights, raised self-esteem, awareness of themselves as members of society and right holders, as competent and capable of achieving anything in life, and able to express themselves and to organise.

The **seeds** represent the first setting where the child learns to participate and be part of the community.

## Review of participation frameworks and guidelines

### Participatory frameworks

"Participation Framework: National Framework for Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-making". (2020). *Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth*. Ireland.

[https://hubnanog.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/5587-Child-Participation-Framework\\_report\\_LR\\_FINAL\\_Rev.pdf](https://hubnanog.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/5587-Child-Participation-Framework_report_LR_FINAL_Rev.pdf)

The Framework is underpinned by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)<sup>1</sup>, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)<sup>2</sup> and the National Strategy on Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-making (the National Participation Strategy)<sup>3</sup> and was developed in collaboration with Professor Laura Lundy of Queen's University, Belfast.

'The Framework focuses on children and young people's individual and collective participation in decision-making, whether that takes place in person, online or both'. It's 'vision and guidance includes both adult-led engagement of children and young people and child and youth-led participatory initiatives in face-to-face and online settings' (p.3).

Dr. Crowley, A.; Prof. Larkins, C.; Manuel Pinto, L. (2021). "Listen – Act – Change, Council of Europe Handbook on children's participation for professionals working for and with children". *Council of Europe*.

<https://rm.coe.int/publication-handbook-on-children-s-participation-eng/1680a14539>

This handbook is directed to people who work with children in a professional capacity in schools and other education settings, or other services. Its objective is to assist professionals in understanding and supporting children's right to be heard.

It offers 'practical approaches to support professionals to "do" children's participation and make it work. It explains what the term "children's participation" means and demonstrates how professionals can support the children they work with – both as individuals and as groups – to participate in decisions that affect them' (p. 11)

Manuel Pinto, L. (2020). "We Are Here: A Child Participation Toolbox". *Eurochild* (Belgium) and *the Learning for Well-being Foundation* (Netherlands)

[https://eurochild.org/uploads/2021/01/We\\_Are\\_Here\\_Toolbox.pdf](https://eurochild.org/uploads/2021/01/We_Are_Here_Toolbox.pdf)

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The toolbox is designed to support children and adults who advocate for the rights and well-being of children, through children's participation. The document contains a theoretical approach to participation and a broad range of activities for practitioners to explore different aspects of participation with children and young people (e.g. children as participants, as facilitators, importance of reflecting practice, etc.); as well as guidelines to plan the activities.

"Play Quest" (2006) *PlayBoard NI*. Northern Ireland – United Kingdom.  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uUO0a-Zcvkk> (Hardcopy of the booklet).

This document contains training and guidance aimed at creating meaningful participation in a range of settings including schools, childcare providers, community organisations. It focuses on practical advice on how to involve children in decision-making around issues that affect their lives; help to increase children's opportunities to participate through play; and offering creative and practical ideas to support children's right to participate.

"Involving Children in Decision Making: Your Quick, Practical Guide". *Commissioner for Children*. Tasmania.

<https://www.childcomm.tas.gov.au/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/Guide-to-making-decisions-booklet.pdf>

The toolkit is directed to children under the age of 12 years to ensure that best practices are in place when children are involved in decision making. It contains 'contains information for effective participation for service organisations and government agencies as well as practical ideas that organisations can apply to their services to better meet the needs of the children in decision making'.

"The Future of Childhood: Raising children's voices about the future. Activity Pack"  
*Save the Children*.

The document emerges from a research with 4-11 year olds in schools and community groups across the UK to explore what they think childhood should be like in the future. The toolkit offers different activities to teachers to address the topic under investigation.



Dr. Keenaghan, C. and Dr. Redmond, S. (2016). "Tusla - Child and Youth Participation Toolkit". *Tusla*.

[https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Tusla - Toolkit \(web version\).pdf](https://www.tusla.ie/uploads/content/Tusla - Toolkit (web version).pdf)

The document is developed to support Tusla staff and funded projects to engage with children and young people in decision-making acting their lives at the individual and at the collective level.

The Tusla Child and Youth Participation Toolkit is a 'quick reference' document to support skilled practice both within both Tusla and funded agencies. It is designed to be used after attending the Tusla standardised Child and Youth Participation Training Programme and in the context of relevant laws, policies, procedures and guidelines that govern staff practice. Activities are offered as prompts for staff to use to support their practice and while some might be similar to activities in a therapeutic context that is not their intended purpose here. Professional judgment should be applied in the use of any of the activities.

Vicky Johnson, V.; Nurick, R.; Baker, K.; Shivakotee, R. S.. "Children and young People's Participation (CYPP) Training Workshop Guide". *Child Hope and Development Focus*.

<http://research.gold.ac.uk/id/eprint/22908/1/Childhope-CYPP-Toolkit-FINAL.pdf>

This manual is designed to support organisations to promote children and young people's participation and inclusion in project planning, implementation and evaluation. The training was piloted by ChildHope with their partners Organisation for Child Development and Transformation (CHADET) in Assela, Ethiopia and with Street Child of Sierra Leone in Makeni, Sierra Leone.

The document presents with a set of activities to undertake during staff training.

"Consultation Toolkit: A practical guide to consulting with children and young people on policy related issues". (2009). Scottish Executive's Action Programme for Youth.

[https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/7816/pdf/consultation\\_toolkitpdf\\_1.pdf](https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/7816/pdf/consultation_toolkitpdf_1.pdf)

The document aims to encourage and facilitate children and young people's participation in the decision making process at these different levels.

It includes the 'principles of participation, ways of including people, planning and preparing for a consultation, the main approaches and methods of consulting, techniques and tools that can be used, methods of recording, ways of transferring ideas and information, guidance for policy makers

followed by a general checklists and suggestions for good practice. A number of case studies are used to illustrate different approaches and methods and there is a list of further references and resources' (p.2).

The document is directed to a broad audience, from people with no experience of group work or consultations to those with extensive experience, such as community workers, youth workers, etc.

"Consulting Children About Play" (2006). *National Childhood Network*.  
[http://www.ncn.ie/images/Play-Tab/factsheet\\_consultingplay\\_cpis\\_20060728.pdf](http://www.ncn.ie/images/Play-Tab/factsheet_consultingplay_cpis_20060728.pdf)

Factsheet about conducting consultations with children.

### **Youth Service Guidelines**

Play Your Part has been developed based on the existing guidelines of youth work, namely Priorities for Youth (DfE), Engagement framework (EA), and the Quality Assurance Framework (QAF) for the youth work sector in Northern Ireland. The analysis of these guidelines have served as the foundations for the development of both the Facilitator's guide and the Participation toolkit.

*Engagement framework (EA)*

<https://www.eani.org.uk/sites/default/files/2019-01/6.%20Engagement%20Framework%20Guidance.pdf>

*Youth Work Core Principles (CDU)*

<http://www.youthlink.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Core-Principles.pdf>

*Priorities for Youth (DfE)*

<https://www.education-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/de/priorities-for-youth.pdf>

*Quality Assessment Framework (EA)*

<https://www.eani.org.uk/publications/youth-service/quality-assurance-framework>

*Ask First (CiNI)*

[http://www.ci-ni.org.uk/DatabaseDocs/nav\\_3175978\\_ask\\_first.pdf](http://www.ci-ni.org.uk/DatabaseDocs/nav_3175978_ask_first.pdf)

## Youth Work Principles

**1. Youth-led:** Young people's voices are central to the provision offered to them. They can choose to attend a variety of services on a voluntary basis, building a sense of autonomy and trust in practitioners that encourages engagement with further work where needed. Provision is structured around the needs of young people locally, offering both universal, open-access provision wherever possible, with targeted support for those considered more at-risk, disadvantaged or with higher need.

**2. Inclusivity, equality and diversity:** Young people feel included in their local area and can access the support they need as they progress towards adulthood. No young person feels marginalised or isolated as a result of disability, sexuality, nationality, socio-economic status, special educational needs, mental health issues, religion or any other characteristic. The local youth offer helps to improve social mobility for young people from all backgrounds by offering support to develop the skills, knowledge and networks they need to access and take advantage of opportunities.

**3. Respect:** Young people are a valued and respected part of the community whose needs and wishes are considered equally with those of other groups. They are actively encouraged to participate in their communities and to enjoy opportunities in their local area without fear of judgement or negative stereotyping.

**4. Quality, safety and well-being:** Good quality services are provided by staff with appropriate safeguarding training, linked to a wider network of support. Ideally this includes professionally qualified youth workers with the skills, expertise and competencies to support safe, quality services with appropriate levels and types of intervention. The youth offer helps to keep young people safe and supports their mental, emotional and physical health, improves their social and economic wellbeing, and makes sure they can access education, non-formal learning and recreation.

**5. Empowerment:** Services empower young people to progress and engage in employment, education and training, and to take an active role in their local communities. Young people are listened to and can make positive demonstrable changes to their communities, and understand how to engage with the democratic process.

**6. Positivity:** Services are strengths-based and focus on developing the skills and attributes of young people, rather than attempting to 'fix a problem'.

## **Playwork Principles** (*The Playwork Principles Scrutiny Group, Cardiff 2005*)

1. All children and young people need to play. The impulse to play is innate. Play is a biological, psychological and social need, and is fundamental to the healthy development and well-being of individuals and communities.
2. Play is a process that is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated. That is, children and young people determine and control the content and intent of their play, by following their own instincts, ideas and interests, in their own way for their own reasons.
3. The prime focus and essence of playwork is to support and facilitate the play process and this should inform the development of play policy, strategy, training and education.
4. For playworkers, the play process takes precedence and playworkers act as advocates for play when engaging with adult-led agendas.
5. The role of the playworker is to support all children and young people in the creation of a space in which they can play.
6. The playworker's response to children and young people playing is based on a sound up to date knowledge of the play process, and reflective practice.
7. Playworkers recognise their own impact on the play space and also the impact of children and young people's play on the playworker.
8. Playworkers choose an intervention style that enables children and young people to extend their play. All playworker intervention must balance risk with the developmental benefit and well-being of children.

## **Linking Principles, Standards and Models**

The conceptual framework, together with the Participation Toolkit, is designed to support youth workers on their fulfilment of high-quality service for young people which can demonstrate effectively demonstrate the contribution to the engagement outcomes of youth work. In particular, it addresses the Active Participation indicators of the Engagement Framework.

As described in the framework, active participation involves assessing needs of children and young people; involving them in decision making, and 'planning and problem solving either around a single activity or within the club, unit or project generally' (Engagement Framework Guidance note, p. 2). This dimension advocates for participation in planned, long term, group work programme which will enhance children and young people's capabilities, develop interpersonal skills and personal relations, as well as improved health and wellbeing.

The table below shows how the Play Your Part project link the different principles, models and standards to reflect both the youth work and Playwork principles at the time to enable meaningful participation under the 4 dimensions of the Lundy Model.

<b>Youth Core Principles</b>	<b>Lundy Model</b>	<b><i>Ask First – Standards (s) 1 to 8</i></b>	<b>Youth Work Principles</b>	<b>Playwork principles</b>
Preparing youth for participation  Promoting acceptance and understanding of others  Testing and exploring values and beliefs	Space	(s1) appropriate methods; (s2) Support; (s5) Inclusion; (s6) Respect.	1 (C&YP led); 2 (inclusivity, equality and diversity); 3 (respect); 4 (Quality, safety and well-being); 6 (positivity).	3, 5, 7, 8.
	Voice	(s2) Support; (s3) Knowledge; (s4) Feedback; (s5) Inclusion; (s6) Respect; (s8) Timing.	1 (C&YP led); 2 (inclusivity, equality and diversity); 4 (Quality, safety and well-being); 5 (respect); 6 (positivity).	2, 3, 5.
	Audience	(s2) Support; (s6) Respect; (s7) Senior people	2 (inclusivity, equality and diversity); 3(respect); 6 (positivity).	5, 6, 8.
	Influence	(s2) Support; (s6) Respect; (s7) Senior people	3(respect); 4 (Quality, safety and well-being); 5 (empowerment); 6 (positivity)	3, 6, 8.

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