



Aims:

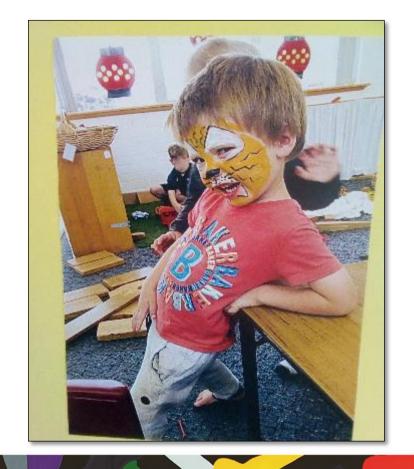
- Promote understanding of the importance and value of the child's right to be heard.
- ➤ Look at how the right to be heard is being implemented in early childhood education and care.
- Consider some common barriers and enablers of the right to be heard.
- ➤ Encourage you to think about how you include children's voices and opinions in your work.

Role of CCYP (Tas)

Commissioner for Children and Young People Act 2016 (Tas), s8

- Systemic advocacy for *all* children and young people <18 years in Tasmania
- Individual advocacy for young people detained under the Youth Justice Act 1997 (Tas)
- Researching, investigating and influencing legislation and policy on matters relating to children and young people
- Promoting, monitoring and reviewing the wellbeing of children and young people in Tasmania generally
- Assisting in ensuring the State satisfies its national and international obligations in respect of children and young people generally
- Promoting and empowering the participation of children and young people in the making of decisions or the expressing of opinions on matters that may affect their lives
- ➤ Encouraging organisations to create appropriate mechanisms for children and young people to participate in matters that affect them.

The concept of the child as rights holder is anchored in the child's daily life from the earliest stage.



General Principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

- The child's right to **non-discrimination** (Article 2)
- The child's right to have their **best interests** taken into account as a primary consideration in all actions and decisions that affect them (Article 3)
- The child's **right to life**, **survival and development** (Article 6)
- The child's right to have a say in all matters affecting them and for their views to be taken into account (Article 12).

Article 12 – the right to be heard



Article 12 – the right to be heard

'To achieve the right of participation requires adults to adopt a child-centred attitude, listening to young children and respecting their dignity and their individual points of view. It also requires adults to show patience and creativity by adapting their expectations to a young child's interests, levels of understanding and preferred ways of communicating.'



The challenge



'Appearing to "listen" to children is relatively unchallenging; giving due weight to their views requires real change.'

Barriers



Barriers

- Scepticism about children's capacity (or a belief that they lack capacity) to have meaningful input into decision making.
- Worry that giving children more control will undermine adults' authority.
- Concern that truly listening and giving weight to children and young people's opinions will require too much time and effort.

Lundy L, "Voice' is not enough: conceptualising Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child', *British Educational Research Journal*, Vol 33, No 6, December 2007, pp. 927-942

Special considerations

'While difficulties are experienced by many children, the Committee particularly recognizes that certain groups of children, including younger boys and girls, as well as children belonging to marginalized and disadvantaged groups, face particular barriers in the realization of this right.'



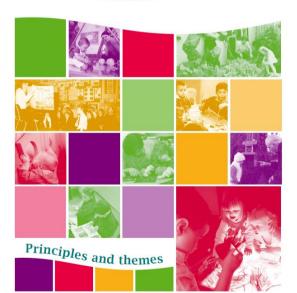
Enablers





Aistear – Ireland's Early Childhood Curriculum Framework









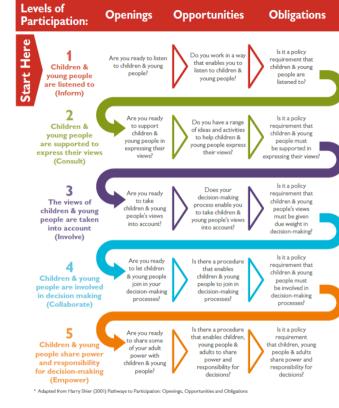






Hart's Ladder

(Ladder of Participation (1992), Children's Participation: From Rung 8 - Child and Young Person Initiated Shared Decisions with Adults: Child and young person tokenism to citizenship, UNICEF) led activities in which decision making is shared between children and young people & adults working as equal partners. Rung 7 – Child and Young Person Initiated and Directed: Activities led by children and young people with little input from adults. Rung 6 - Adult Initiated and Shared Decisions with Children and Young People: Adult-led activities, in which decision making is shared with children and young peopl Rung 5 - Consulted and Informed Adult-led activities in which children and young people are consulted and informed about how their input will be used and the outcomes of adult decisions Rung 4 - Assigned, but informed Adult-led activities, in which children and young people understand the purpose, decision making process and Rung 3 - Tokenism: Adult-led activities, in which children and young people may be consulted with minimal opportunities for feedback Rung 2 – Decoration: Adult-led activities, in which children and young people understand the purpose, but have no input in how they Rung I - Manipulation: Adult-led activities, in which children and young people do as directed without understanding of the purpose



Shier's Pathways to Participation

(Harry Shier (2001) Pathways to Participation: Openings, Opportunities and Obligations)

Source: Youth Matter: A Practical Guide to Increase Youth Engagement and Participation in Tasmania, Department of Communities Tasmania



Adapted from Roger Hart's Ladder of Participation (1992), Children's Participation: From tokenism to citizenship, UNICEF.

Lundy's Model of Participation



Source: Lundy, L. (2007) 'Voice is not enough: Conceptualising Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child', British Educational Research Journal, Vol. 33, No. 6, pp. 927-42.





https://www.childcomm.tas.gov.au/ccyp-ambassador-program/



https://b4.education.tas.gov.au/



Challenging Questions

- How can we purposefully seek out and embed the views of children and young people in the review of the National Quality Framework?
- How can each of you purposefully seek out the views of children and then, and most importantly, how can you give their views due consideration and potentially change your practice? Do you need to change your practice?
- How can the voices and views of children and young people play a larger role in the assessment of early childhood education and care?



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