

Children and Young People's Participation Strategy 2008 - 2013



CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION STRATEGY 2008 – 2013

AREA COMMITTEE

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INTRODUCING THE STRATEGY

- A real commitment exists throughout the City in developing the voice of children and young people and engaging them in the design and delivery of the services they receive.
- Many services are routinely involving children and young people in decision making.
- The strategy will build on this and embed participatory practice across all aspects of the Children's Trust.

AIMS OF THE STRATEGY

The strategy will:

- Provide a co-ordinated approach to participation.
- Provide a framework for developing the safe, effective and genuine participation of children and young people across the Children's Trust.
- Embed children and young people's participation into all aspects of the Children's Trust aiming for the highest level of children and young people's engagement.

KEY PARTICIPATION DRIVERS

- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Every Child Matters
- Statutory guidance states that it is a requirement for the Children's Trust to ensure listening and responding to children and young people becomes an integral part of everyday practice

KEY COMPONENTS

Adopting a shared definition of participation. The proposed definition is: 'Participation is the process by which children and young people influence decision making which brings about change in them, others, their communities and the services they use. It is an ongoing process of active involvement in matters which concern children and young people. Genuine participation gives children and young people the power to shape both the process and the outcome.'

Agreeing a set of HBR Standards (or their equivalent)

- Ensure participation is built in
- Promote a culture of openness across Children's Trust arrangements
- Promote partnership working
- Put children and young people at the centre of the services they receive

Adopting shared vision, values and principles

ROGER HART'S LADDER OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION



Rung 8: Children, Young People and adults share decision making

Rung 7: Children and Young People lead and initiate action

Rung 6: Adult-initiated, shared decisions with Children and Young People

Rung 5: Children and Young People consulted and informed

Rung 4: Children and Young People assigned and informed

Rung 3: Children and Young People tokenised*

Rung 2: Children and Young People are decoration*

Rung 1: Children and Young People are manipulated*

INCLUSION – INVOLVING ALL CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- Involving children and young people who are experiencing significant problems.
- Involving children and young people who need additional support
- Involving all children and young people



BUILDING ON WHAT WE HAVE ACHIEVED

- The JAR Review 2007 identified aspects of participation as impressive.
- Evidence of children and young people's participation becoming embedded across the Children's Trust already exists in some services.
- Existing infrastructures to support participation.

PARTICIPATION – CHALLENGES

- Commitment to and understanding of participation
- Different cultures within services
- Ensuring **all** children and young people have the opportunity to be involved in the design and delivery of services
- Identifying resources

BENEFITS OF THE STRATEGY

It will give us:

- Shared involving children and young people standards across all commissioned services
- Measurable outcomes
- A framework for communicating with practitioners and children and young people about participation
- A system to ensure key messages from children and young people feed into strategic planning.

BENEFITS OF THE STRATEGY

It will give us:

- A programme of participation training
- A focus on equality and diversity
- Procedures and protocols for appropriately involving children and young people
- Clear governance arrangements

CONSULTATION PROCESS

- Children's Services Leadership Team
- Children's Services Review Committee
- Children's Services Extended Leadership Team
- Involving Children and Young People Network
- Sunderland Voluntary Sector Youth Forum
- Children's Fund Children's Champions
- Adult and Community Services
- Participation Reference Group
- Disabled Children's Services

CONSULTATION QUESTIONS

- Do you agree with the definition of participation?
- Have the benefits of participation been fully captured?
- Is Hart's ladder a useful model for thinking about participatory practice?
- Do you agree with the vision, values and principles?
- Are there any other plans in Sunderland dedicated to children and young people's participation?
- Are there any other structures in place, not included in the strategy, that support participation?
- Will having a set of standards be useful to promote participation within your service?
- Is the strategy clear enough on inclusion?
- Are the right strategic actions identified?
- Are monitoring, reporting and evaluation arrangements robust enough?

TO CONCLUDE

- Strategic commitment will embed participatory practice across the Children's Trust.
- Excellent examples of participatory practice will be extended across all services for children and young people.
- Endorsement of the strategy for children and young people will demonstrate our commitment to participation and lead to positive outcomes in the lives of children and young people.