

THE YOUTH PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 2024

FOR SCOTTISH BORDERS



Youth **E**ngagement **L**isten to **L**earn

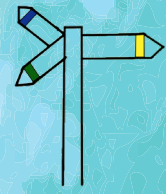


We are delighted to introduce the new Scottish Borders Youth Participation and Engagement Strategy otherwise known as and referred to from here on in this document as **The YELL Strategy - Youth Engagement Listen to Learn Strategy**.

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"This strategy is directed to the people in power, and the people making decisions and it's from the youth. It's the voice of over 1000 young people in the Scottish Borders. It's captures how we want to be involved in decisions that affect us. It's important to keep children and young people at the heart of all decision making as it affects the world we are going to inherit. If you read our strategy, you'll learn that we want to be involved and feel comfortable about making decisions. On page 22 there is our checklist which can be used to gain feedback to continually improve. You have to provide the information we need to answer your questions and make it interesting. This is your chance to get this right!"



THE STRATEGY ITSELF, WHAT IS IT? WHO'S IT FOR? AND WHY YOU NEED IT!

The YELL strategy is a '**How to Guide**' written by local young people to support agencies in the Scottish Borders, to involve young people in their work. The guidance includes information on participation and engagement, why it is important, and how to facilitate this using the YELL group's strategy toolkit. The views of over 1000 young people have shaped the development of this strategy. It is important to use this guide to improve opportunities for children and young people in line with **Article 12 of the UNCRC**.

The strategy toolkit is for young people, professionals and decision makers to use. The strategy sets out the young people's ambitions for the future, the ways in which young people aged 12 – 25 can currently get involved and guidance for any person looking to engage with young people in Scottish Borders- being particularly mindful of the need to engage with those who have quieter or seldom-heard voices.

The strategy toolkit is based on the Lundy model - a helpful guide for understanding a child's right to participation, as laid down in Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. of participation and highlights young people's ambitions for how they would like us to involve them in decision making going forwards. It also comprises a one-page checklist which can be printed out as a standalone document on pg 22. The YELL strategy has been co-produced with young people local to the Scottish Borders and supported by professionals working within the Children and Young People's Planning Partnership (CYPPP).

Involving young people in the development and review of priorities, plans and services, and including young people in the decision making related to services that affect them is a clear expectation of all public bodies in Scotland. Involving young people more consistently will allow our local services to focus on outcomes that shape the future and improve the wellbeing of citizens within the Scottish Borders, making our region a more sustainable place to live, work and visit.

Using the YELL strategy and checklist described below to help plan your work with young people will help you make a positive impact and get it right for everyone.

Listen to learn and make Scottish Borders a place where every child grows up feeling listened to, loved, safe, and respected.

"Use this when consulting young people or asking them to share their views to make them feel comfortable. You'll get more from people when they don't feel awkward."
Katie

"We developed this to help adults who work with young people to communicate and gather their ideas and stuff in the best way."
Amelle

"To help adults interact and get kids opinions without making it weird"
Darcy



A BIT ABOUT THE YOUNG PEOPLE INVOLVED.

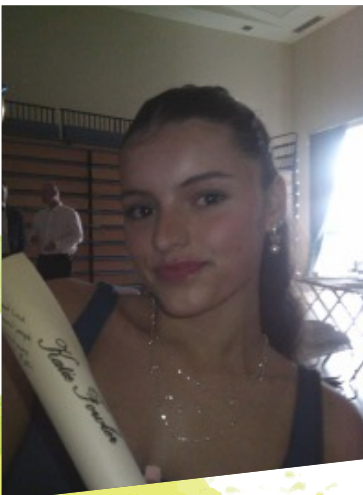


Amelle: I'm Amelle Milligan, I'm 14 years old. I'm super-duper into music and cringe things, I like cats because they're totally tubular and I wanted to be a part of this group to help elders understand younger!!

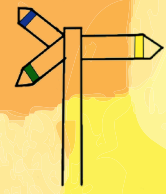
This experience has been fun, thinking about things and saying them out loud without struggling has been cool. Understanding all of it at times has been hard, there has been so much I didn't know about like UNCRC. We should know but I didn't really.

Darcy: My name is Darcy, I'm 14 years old. I'm told I have an initial persona that is intimidating like I might eat you but I'm actually really funny, friendly, and passionate. I love fashion which is my biggest passion. If I was a 'Monster High' Doll I would be Cleo because she is sassy and has a fringe. I joined this strategy to support Amelle and because I care about change.

Being part of this I have learned patience.



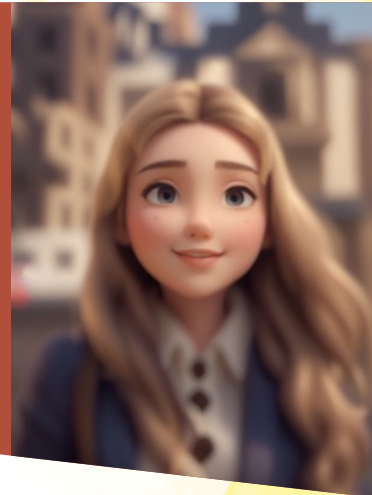
Katie: Hey, my name is Katie, I am 17 and I am going to university this year to study primary teaching. I am currently a lifeguard and swim teacher loving helping younger ones develop and learn new skills. This is the reason I joined this group because I like to help ensure that everyone is being given the best opportunities to set them up for their future.



Deon: I'm Deon I am 18, I have left school, I work in a café, love art and I joined this group because I want young people to have a better future and more opportunities than me, I feel a bit let down by what I was offered and want it to change.

Lily: My name is Lily, my main hobbies are horse riding and training dogs, but I also enjoy everything to do with the countryside. One interesting fact about myself is that I want to be a gamekeeper when I am older.

I joined the group because I thought it was interesting and it would give me some different skills, and something to add to my CV. While participating in this group, I have developed my social skills by working with other people. Overall, I have really enjoyed being part of this group and taking part in fun activities.



Jacky: One hobby I like doing is tennis. An interesting fact about me is I was born in Aberdeen, all the way up in the North of Scotland. I am very quiet and have good ideas. I have become a bit less shy than before I started the YELL group.

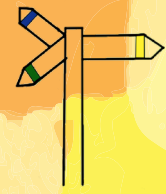


Eli: Eli likes athletics and messing with engines. He enjoys building custom models. He is a kind and thoughtful member of the group and a good listener. He has enjoyed meeting new people.

Ella: I am sociable, friendly and full of ideas. Some may say I'm confident and sarcastic, but that's not always a bad thing! I'm described as joyful, funny, bright and bubbly! I'm called great to work with and kind. I love many different motorsport disciplines and other sports and activities.



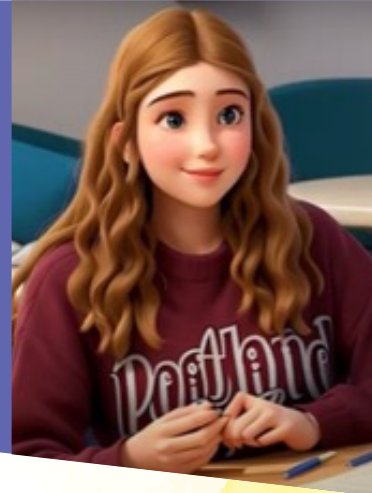
Reece: I'm a very funny member of the group and always try to make everyone laugh! I always make sure I am engaged in all the activities we do and make sure others get involved. I always bring conversation to the group and love a good chat! I have a very fast wit about me. I'm the resident DJ of the group. I have enjoyed meeting new people at YELL.



Edith: Hello, my name is Edith, I am 16 and have just left high school to start an apprenticeship with Nat West. I am really excited! I love water sports and reading. I came to this group to help create ways for young people's voices to be heard and to meet new people. I felt I was able to be open with my thoughts and opinions and views on different topics.

Iris: My name is Iris. My hobbies and interests are doing athletics, drawing/painting, and cooking. An interesting fact about me is that my favourite movie/book is Harry Potter. I joined the group because one of the adults who knew me before the group asked if I would do it. She thought it would be a good thing for me to be part of and I agreed to do it.

I think from being part of this group, I have learned more communicating/teamwork skills and more confidence. I have enjoyed meeting new people.



Nat: I am Nat (they/he) and I'm interested in art, craft, community and film. I have enjoyed my time in the group and seeing how many other young people care about and want to change things for the better.

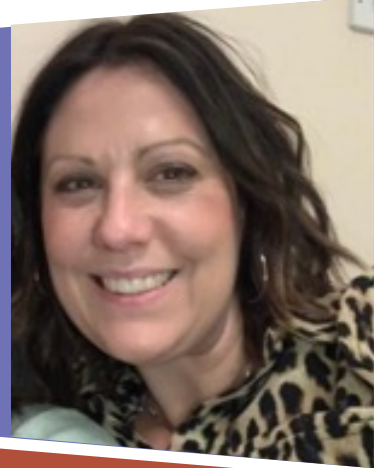


A BIT ABOUT THE STAFF INVOLVED.

The YELL group wanted to include staff bios too which they wrote for the team.

Shona, Youth Participation and Engagement Lead, SBC

Shona is funny and friendly. She always brightens up the group with her cheerfulness. Shona is a teacher. We always notice her pretty nails and nice jumpers. Shona a multi-tasker and is always busy with different jobs but also very organised.



Hannah, The Promise Lead Officer, SBC

Hannah is kind and cheerful. She loves dangly earrings and cardigans. She also loves hiking and her son. She is generous, good at improvising and listens very well. Hannah loves the outdoors. She works with children across the Scottish Borders.

Lizzie, Health Improvement Specialist for Children and Young People, NHS Borders:

Lizzie is a running coach who also works with NHS Borders. She is friendly and makes sure we all eat healthily. She listens to everybody and makes sure their voices get heard.



Pam, Youth Engagement Worker, SBC:

Pam knows a lot about politics and likes sharing knowledge with young people. Pam is Welsh, although she doesn't sound it! She is funny and includes everyone in sessions.



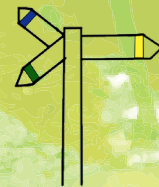
THE AMBITION OF THE PROJECT.

Our Young People's vision for this strategy is to see their work in action. For it to become embedded, easily identified, a change in practice that makes a significant difference by doing it the #YELLWay.

Click here to hear directly from them about their ambitions.

[Video link](#)





PARTICIPATION, CONSULTATION, AND ENGAGEMENT- YOUNG PEOPLE'S PERSPECTIVE.

What does it mean to participate in something?

"Participating it's like turning up to something, being present and maybe contributing something to it. It's joining in but you can participate without being interested."

What does it mean to be consulted on something?

"Consulting is putting in ideas and sharing opinions and questioning. If you ask us, we are advising you, it means we are the experts. We might want to answer your questions but then we might not, we need to know why, what's the point, we need to be taught. How? Show us how to do this from a young age!"

What does engagement mean?

"Engagement is People enjoying it, that's the difference between being engaged and just participating, it's the passion, caring about it, being interested. If you engage us you'll see it, you'll get more out of us".

"Meaningful engagement brings meaningful insights to make meaningful changes."

THE POLICY CONTEXT

This page outlines a breakdown of where our approach, outlined within this strategy fits in with local and national policies, strategies, priorities and legislation.

NATIONAL

Children and Young People Scotland Act 2024

[The Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act 2014](#) brought the UNCRC into a Scottish statute for the first time. It encourages Scottish Ministers and public bodies to consider children's rights and requires them to prepare reports on what they are doing to progress children's rights- this includes developing ways of working that ensure rights are understood by children and young people.

Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC)

[Getting It Right For Every Child \(GIRFEC\)](#) is the national approach to how services work with children, young people and their families to make sure they are involved, informed and at the centre of decision-making and planning. The SHANARRI well-being tool includes 8 indicators including:

- Respected – being involved in and having their voices heard in decisions that affect their life, with support where appropriate.
- Responsible- having opportunities and encouragement to play active and responsible roles at home, in school and in the community, and where necessary, having appropriate guidance and supervision.
- Included – having help to overcome inequalities and being accepted as part of their family, school and community.



CURRICULUM FOR EXCELLENCE

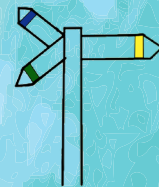
[The Curriculum for Excellence \(CfE\)](#) is the national curriculum framework that helps our children and young people gain the knowledge, skills and attributes needed for life in the 21st Century. The CfE has 4 main ambitions, which are for children and young people to become:

- Successful Learners
- Confident Individuals
- Responsible Citizens
- Effective Contributors

NATIONAL YOUTH WORK STRATEGY

[The National Youth Work Strategy](#) outlines the Nature and Purpose of Youth Work in Scotland with one of the main aims being to progress young people's rights and participation.

An ambition of the strategy is to put young people at the heart of policy with a requirement for Youth Work providers to develop and support participative approaches that empower young people to engage in decision making.



THE PROMISE

[Scotland's Promise](#) to care experienced children and young people is that they will grow up to feel loved, safe and respected. To keep the Promise, Scotland must bring about the change demanded by its Independent Care Review published in 2020. Five key foundations underpin the Promise and Voice is at the heart. Children must be listened to. They should be meaningfully and appropriately involved when decisions are made about their care. And it means everyone involved in their care should listen properly to them and respond to what they want and need. Scotland's culture of decision-making must be compassionate and caring.



The UNCRC (Incorporation)(Scotland) Act 2024

Please see next section of the strategy for [more information](#).

LOCAL

Integrated Children's Plan

The Integrated Children and Young People's Plan 2023 – 2026 has a clear vision that through working in partnership, local agencies '*will ensure all children and young people have a sense of belonging, self-worth and self-confidence to achieve their own unique potential.*'

Engagement with children, young people and families is a fundamental feature of the Integrated Plan, and the development of this multi-agency Youth Participation and Engagement Strategy is a key action within the plan. You can find the plan [here](#).

Community Engagement Strategy

The YELL strategy will compliment and align to other local engagement strategies, such as Scottish Borders Council's Community Engagement Strategy. This strategy is about putting people at the core of everything the Council does, and wrapping systems, processes, and investment around the core principle to deliver what communities need and want – by listening and acting on what they tell Council officers. You can access the strategy by clicking [here](#).

The Children and Young People's Planning Partnership (CYPPP)

The Children and Young People's Planning Partnership is a multi-agency strategic forum for the development of services and approaches to working with children, young people and families in Scottish Borders.

There are three key policy drivers that underpin the CYPPP's work: The Promise and the Plan 24 – 30, the Integrated Children and Young People's Plan 2023 – 2026, and the Scottish Borders Community Plan. Children's rights are at the heart of the CYPPP's approach, and they are developing a multi-agency approach to UNCRC incorporation in Scottish Borders.



OUR RIGHTS, YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES – THE UNCRC

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child (UNCRC) sets out the fundamental rights for children. It's a complete statement of children's rights and outlines the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights that all children are entitled to.

These rights can be categorised as:

- **Survival rights**
- **Protection rights**
- **Developmental rights**
- **Participation rights**

The UNCRC is the most ratified treaty in the world and its 54 articles cover all aspects of a child's life and take into account the best interests of children. We should make sure everyone knows about children's human rights! (Article 42) and help make rights real for all children (Articles 43 – 54)

All of the rights are:

- **Universal:** everyone under the age of 18 has rights under the UNCRC
- **Unconditional:** rights are automatic - they are not 'earned'
- **Inalienable:** rights cannot be given or taken away.
- **Inherent:** rights are permanent.
- **Indivisible:** Children's Rights are dependent on each other for their effectiveness. You cannot pick and choose rights - you must uphold them all.

New legislation has been introduced to incorporate the UNCRC into Scots law. The United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Child (incorporation) (Scotland) Act came into force on 16 July 2024. The Act aims to ensure that:

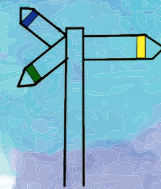
- Children's rights are respected and protected by law in Scotland.
- Public authorities are legally required to respect and protect children's rights in the work they do.

The ambition is to deliver a proactive culture of everyday accountability for Children's Rights across public services in Scotland. This means:

- Public bodies in Scotland must take proactive steps to ensure the protection of Children's Rights in their decision-making and service delivery. It is unlawful for public services to act incompatibly with the UNCRC requirements.

The Act gives children and young people access to the courts if they feel their rights have been breached. To find out more about what is happening in Scottish Borders to implement the Act, [please click here.](#)





What does the UNCRC have to do with this strategy?

Our young people have identified which rights are supported by using this document. The rights are described as articles and **Article 12 'The right to give their opinions freely on issues that affect them, adults should listen and take children seriously'** is at the core of this project. Our young people identified other rights in addition which are upheld, supported, or promoted simply by embedding this strategy. The Standards of most relevance to involving young people in decision making include but are not limited to:

Article 2 Right to be free from any discrimination - Requires all of the rights in the convention on the Rights of the Child to be implemented for every child, without discrimination.



Article 3 Right of best interests of the child - When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect children. All adults should do what is best for children.

Article 5 Right to guidance as children develop - governments should let families and communities guide their children.



Article 12 Right to share experiences, opinions and ideas - children and young people have the right to say what they think should happen, when adults are making decisions that affect them, and to have their opinions taken into account.



Article 13 Right to express myself - children and young people have the right to get and to share information, as long as the information is not damaging to them or others.

Article 15 Right to join groups - children can join or set up groups or organisations, and they can meet with others, if this does not harm other people.

Article 17 Right to information - children and young people have the right to receive, seek and give information.

Article 23 Right to special care and education - disabled children and young people have the right to active participation in their community.



Article 29 Right to an education – that helps them fully develop their personalities, talents, and abilities. It should teach them to understand their own rights, and to respect other people's rights, cultures, and differences. It should help them to live peacefully and protect the environment.



STRATEGY CONSULTATION FINDINGS.

Do young people in Scottish Borders want to participate? **YES!**

We often hear the term 'consultation fatigue', from people speaking on behalf of young people about how they are growing increasingly tired of being asked their views. To better understand this, our YELL group produced a short video about the project, and created a questionnaire which was shared with schools and youth groups locally. The feedback young people shared has helped the YELL group and the team understand the issues and generate possible solutions.

In a sample of over 1000 young people, including those with quieter voices the results showed.

- > **Over 80%** of young people want to be asked, involved, engaged by people making decisions on things in the community like parks, spending money, services.
- > A mixed response to being given the opportunities to share their views was identified.

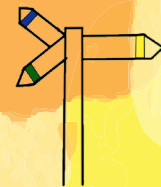
Do you feel Scottish Borders services and partners give you enough opportunities to share your views?



- > What young people are consulted on shouldn't be limited- but it's important to clarify that the young people you are engaging with have knowledge of the topic you are asking them to comment on.

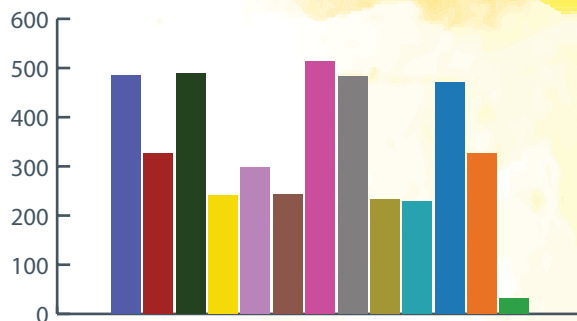


- > When asked to identify topics of interest the response was varied. Outside spaces – parks were seen as most important but schools, NHS, leisure activities, roads and transport were also of most interest to our young people.



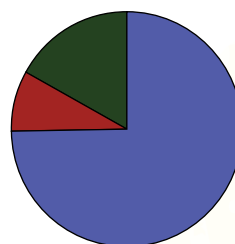
What things would you give your opinions on?

● Education Services	485
● NHS services	326
● school designs	488
● council plans	241
● community plans	298
● anti social behaviour plans	242
● parks	514
● leisure and sports facilities	482
● council spending	233
● wellbeing services	229
● transport	471
● roads	326
● Other	31



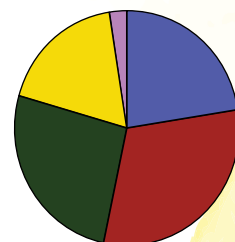
Before giving your views, do you want information about the topic?

● Yes	758
● No	85
● Maybe	169



How would you like this information presented?

● In person, an informative talk	294
● PowerPoint Presentation	404
● Video clip	340
● Poster with information	235
● Other	30



What's important is.

- Giving children and young people enough information about the topic, and ensuring they have experience of it before asking their views.
- Making sure your approaches to presenting information and gathering feedback are tailored to the needs of the group/individual young people.
- Giving feedback on what is going to happen with the information shared in a timely manner.

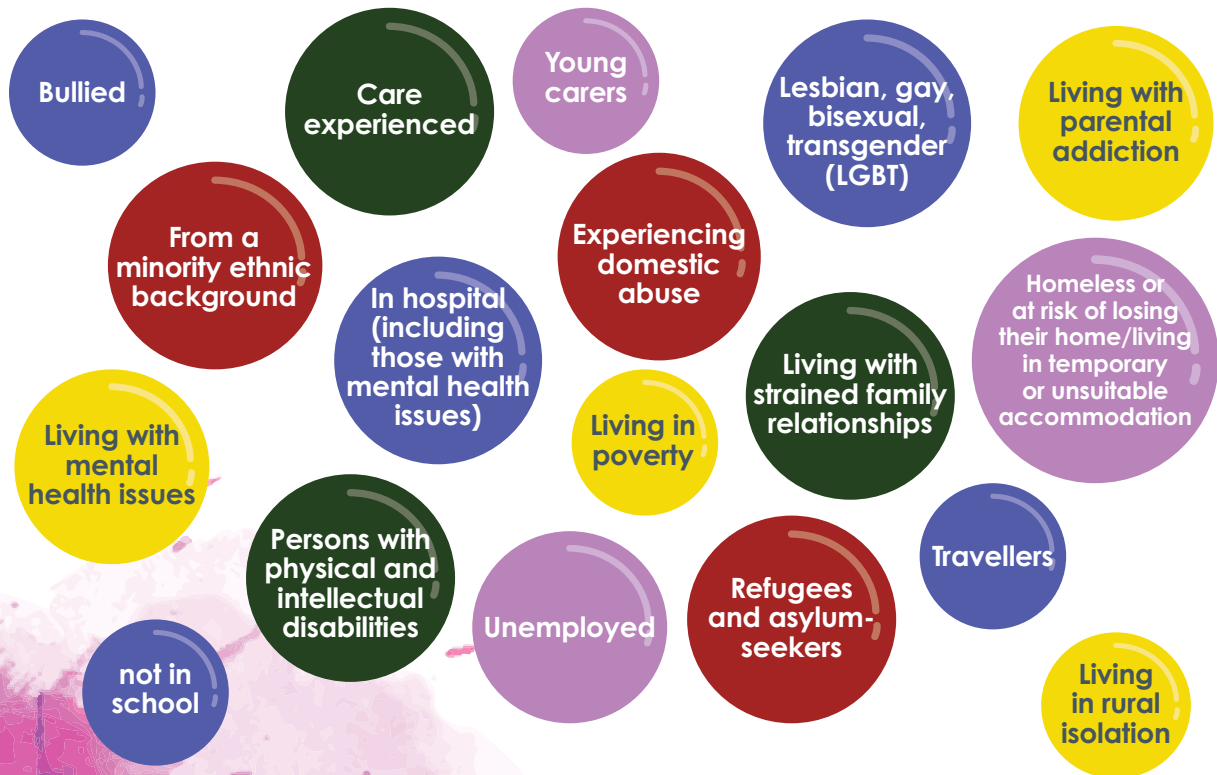
THE YELL WAY

a) How to consult with young people

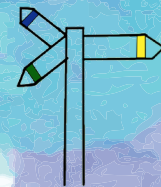


b) Removing barriers to participation

It is vital that participation and engagement work is informed by children and young people with a range of different experiences of life and services. Some groups of children and young people may have fewer opportunities and/or encounter more obstacles when trying to participate, including but not limited to children and young people who are¹ :



¹ McEvoy, O. (2015) A Practical Guide to including seldom-heard children and young people in decision making. Dublin, Government Publications.



Try to ensure these groups of young people have the opportunity to participate, in ways that are comfortable for them.

c) The YELL Strategy toolkit

The YELL strategy toolkit comprises a 'How to' guide based on the Lundy model of participation and a one-page checklist.

The model was developed by Professor Laura Lundy, Queen's University Belfast. The Lundy model provides a helpful way of understanding a child's right to participation, as laid down in Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. It provides guidance for decision-makers on how to give children and young people a meaningful voice in decision making.

'Participation with purpose' means that children are given genuine opportunities to influence outcomes. Their views are listened to and taken seriously, with the aim of it leading to an outcome or change.

The 4 elements have a rational chronological order:

Space: children must be given safe, inclusive opportunities to form and express their views

Voice: children must be facilitated to express their views in a way that works for them

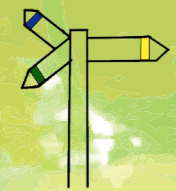
Audience: their views must be listened to

Influence: their views must be acted upon, as appropriate.



The table below is populated with guidance from the YELL group and children and young people who shared feedback via the survey.

² Figure 1 Lundy's Model of Participation as included in Ireland's National Strategy on Children and Young People's Participation in Decision-Making 2015-2020



SPACE: Provide a safe and inclusive space for children and young people to express their views.

- The timescales for an engagement process should be realistic.
- There should be sufficient resources (staff, time & money) to support an effective engagement process.
- You should use a group agreement to lay out how we should all treat each other during consultations.
- Children and young people should have the opportunity to develop their skills and confidence during engagement activities
- Make it easy for children and young people to get involved by finding out what their particular needs are and meeting them (e.g., transport, accessibility, knowing what makes them feel safe etc.)
- Different and inclusive methods should be used to get children and young people's views, so that everyone can have their say.
- Creative methods of working with young people should be used to encourage lots of conversation.
- Consultation methods should be regularly reviewed to make sure they are still fit for purpose.
- Check if having a trusted adult come along would make children and young people feel more comfortable about getting involved.

VOICE: Provide appropriate information and facilitate the expression of children and young people's views.

- You should ensure a clear and agreed engagement plan is in place from the start.
- Ensure you approach young people with an open mind- don't come with pre-conceived ideas about what we might want or say.
- Children and young people can be involved from the outset and help agree what the outcomes of the engagement process are, what indicators will be used to measure success, and what evidence will be gathered.
- Everyone should know what you are doing and why.
- Information should be given to children and young people before they complete consultations, so they know what it is about.
- Listen to children and young people's voices and make sure a range of views are represented (e.g. quieter voices, loud voices, disagreeing voices, and voices given in different ways etc.). No one should be left out!
- Make sure those who are most affected by any consultation are made contact with first.
- The questions asked are very important- think about the language you use and run the questions past a group of young people before you start gathering views.

AUDIENCE: Ensure that children and young people's views are communicated to someone with the responsibility to listen.

- Children and young need to know what is going to happen to their views, and what effect any changes will have on them.
- the people with the power to make change are the ones that need to meet and listen to young people, not just teachers! The problem is children and young people don't actually know who the people are who make decisions and can make changes for them!
- You should take young people seriously and honour article 12 of the UNCRC
- You should actively listen to young people and encourage more in-depth answers by asking questions

INFLUENCE: Ensure that children and young people's views are taken seriously and acted upon, where appropriate.

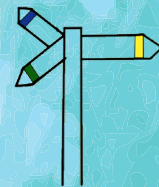
- Children and Young people should be involved from the beginning on what they are consulted on and how their voices are heard.
- They should always be at the heart of decision making and let you know how they want to be engaged with.
- Feedback should be given to young people in full in a timely manner. You should ensure the write up of views expressed young people are true to what was said, and are given in different ways so everyone can understand.
- Feedback should include information on the engagement process; options that have been considered; decisions and actions that have been agreed, and the reasons why.
- You should involve children and young people as part of the ongoing evaluation process to help shape any future engagement.

The YELL group wanted to develop a one-page checklist which practitioners could print off and put on their wall and/or carry with them when they are working with young people. It can also be used on completion of participation and engagement activities to evaluate young people's experience of their work with you.

GOLDEN RULES FOR PARTICIPATION WE NEED YOU TO...

- o Involve us from the start and not as an afterthought or a tick box exercise.
- o Allow time to get to know us and build relationships.
- o Start with ice breakers.
- o Bring refreshments such as fruit platters. These can help create a comfortable environment and offer easy going talking points.
- o Make sure we know what you are asking us about – we need to understand or have experienced the topic to give our views.
- o Provide information before meeting with us/sending us a survey in a variety of ways, e.g. video clips, presentations, posters.
- o Give options for how to engage with you – every group you approach will have a diverse set of needs. Be flexible and do your homework!
- o Ask us multiple choice questions but give room at the end for us to add our own thoughts and ideas.
- o Keep questions short – no more than 15 questions max, but do not limit our answers.
- o Make sure your questions are age appropriate – check them with a group of young people before using them more widely.
- o Let us know what you are going to do with the information we give you.
- o Let us know what impact sharing our views has had afterwards. Do what you say you are going to do or tell us if you can't and explain why.
- o Treat us with the respect you expect from us.
- o Make sure you don't talk down to us!
- o Consider rewarding us for our time if the process is lengthy or ongoing.





A MESSAGE FROM SCOTTISH BORDERS CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLES PLANNING PARTNERSHIP

"Through the work of the CYPPP and listening to the voice of young people across the Borders, we understand how frustrating it can be when decisions are made that impact them without being involved in the process.

Youth participation and engagement in decision making is more important now than ever before as young people's right to be heard and involved is now in Scots Law. Gathering the voice of ALL young people permeates through the work of those directly and indirectly working with children.



The YELL strategy is a tool to support how you may gather Young People's opinions, needs and voices of young people from the onset of any projects. It is important that this work is recognised, embedded and practised through all our organisations, services and third sector partners.

We at the CYPPP are committed to ensuring that the voices of children and young people are at the heart of decision making in line with the recommendations in the YELL strategy."

Carol Hamilton Elected Member and CYPPP board member.

[Video link](#)





BENEFITS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE INVOLVED IN DECISION-MAKING

The young people who participated in this project identified a range of benefits they gained from being involved with the YELL project. These include enjoying new opportunities, developing new skills and knowledge, and increased confidence.

Public speaking

Growth in self-confidence

Team working

Engaging with others

We must get better at supporting our young people to understand what they will gain from involvement with participation and engagement projects.

Empowering young people to share their views on different topics needs to be encouraged from a young age. Encouraging youth participation and engagement should be embedded into our education within the Borders- it is everyone's responsibility to ensure we are respecting Article 12.

Campaigning

Relationship building

Leadership qualities

Time management

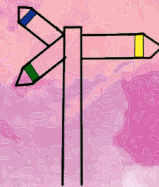
Young people would like to hear directly from the organisations that want to engage with them. Communication by social media is important, but needs to be via the media platforms young people prefer to use.

Effective listening

Taking responsibility

Effectively contributing

Understanding rights



WHAT CAN PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT LOOK LIKE IN SCOTTISH BORDERS?

Below are some of the ways that young people can get involved in Scottish Borders, within organisations across our Children and Young People's Planning Partnership. A key feature of meaningful participation and engagement is that it is voluntary with children and young people having a choice on taking part.

INDIVIDUAL PLANNING

Involvement in decision making directly or with support from a trusted adult. In 2024/25 the CYPPP will be commissioning an Independent Advocacy Service which will support children and young people when it comes to decision making around their life and personal circumstances, i.e. health (incl. mental health), education and housing. We also have an Independent Advocacy service for children and young people involved in Children's Hearings.

COMPLIMENTS AND COMPLAINTS

Using organisation compliments and complaint procedures or completing pre/post evaluations. Although this is mostly re-active, it is a mechanism for young people to become more involved and have their say on experiences with service providers directly. The Scottish Public Services Ombudsman published guidance in Summer 2024 on creating child-friendly complaints processes, and local organisations are working hard to ensure their complaints processes are aligned to these guidelines. Compliments and complaints are important and can result in changes in how services are delivered, promoted and evaluated.

CONSULTATION AND FOCUS GROUPS

Contributing to consultations (surveys) or focus- groups, for example the Health and Wellbeing Census (school pupils), Community Conversations, Bright Spots Survey (care experienced children and young people), the YELL survey, etc. These enable professionals or groups to get a clear picture of the issues affecting young people that should then inform the development of policy, strategy or priorities.

EVENTS

Events are a key way to engage with young people in Scottish Borders, events can be put on in order:

- Identify issues affecting young people
- Generate discussion and actions that would help to reduce the barriers faced by young people
- Communicate with decision makers directly.
- Develop their skills for community action.



An example of this is the work of young people involved in the Borders Additional Needs Group Branching Out group who regularly deliver workshops at local and national conferences and participate in Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment Work.

EXAMPLES OF EVENTS THAT COULD BE HELD

- Political literacy cafes
- Speak out Days
- Take over Days

PANELS AND VOTING

Voting and youth representation on scoring panels are a regular opportunity for participation in the region too through CYPPP organisations. For example, in Scottish Youth Parliament Elections MSYP's, or through participatory budgeting projects such as the Youth Local Action Group, education executive representatives.. There are also opportunities to sit on recruitment panels for staff within different organisations, e.g. Scottish Borders Council and Children 1st.

FORUMS, BOARDS, COMMITTEES, COUNCILS - REPRESENTATIVE ROLES

Establishing or getting involved in a forum, group or organisation that aims to represent the opinions, needs or aspirations of people (or young people specifically) on issues relevant to their community. This could be a campaign for improvements, advocating on behalf of a marginalised group highlighting a particular issue, taking action or becoming involved in a decision-making process.

Examples of this include Scottish Borders Champions Board, Borders Additional Needs Group's Diverse Perspectives Group, Pupil Councils, Student Associations, Community Councils, as well as Trusts, Initiatives and Organisations and Organisations with steering groups, boards or user-forums, etc.

These are always voluntary, with people signing up to participate, being nominated to participate or being elected to participate.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are many people we need to thank for their support and involvement in developing this strategy.

Firstly, we'd like to thank our fabulous YELL group and their parents and carers. This piece of work has involved a massive commitment in terms of time, creative energy, ideas and enthusiasm from them all. We genuinely could not have created this without them.

We are also hugely grateful to the 1000+ young people who took the time to complete the YELL survey and share their views with us. This was the biggest response to a consultation exercise with young people we have ever seen in the Scottish Borders (so far!).

We would also like to extend our thanks to the following organisations and teams who supported us by disseminating the survey or allowing us to visit and speak to young people attending their projects:

- Borders Additional Needs Group
- TD1 Youth Hub
- Rowlands
- Jedburgh Champions Board Hub
- Peebles Champions Board Hub
- Beyond Earlston
- Youth Borders
- Connect Berwickshire Youth Project
- Scottish Borders secondary schools
- Community Learning and Development and the Community Engagement Team at SBC
- Jedburgh Grammar Campus Primary and Eyemouth Primary p7 classes 2023-24

USEFUL RESOURCES

- Understanding Children's Human Rights- A Guide for the Public Sector in Scotland. Access [here](#).
- Scottish Government Guidance on Taking a Children's Human rights Approach. Access [here](#).
- Children's 1st – What are children's rights? Access [here](#).
- Children's Human rights- Information for Families leaflet. To request a pdf version, please contact: cypdp@scotborders.gov.uk
- UNCRC (Incorporation)(Scotland) Act 2024. [Access here](#).
- 'Introduction to Children's Rights' e-learning module, accessible [here](#). *(Our local training reviewers found sections 5 to 7 to be the most helpful. Additional training developed from the new Knowledge and Skills Framework will be available later in 2024)*



Youth Engagement Listen to Learn

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