

Good practice principles and model of participation

The DCEDIY and Hub na nÓg have developed a set of good practice principles (www.hubnanog.ie/good-practice-principles) on how to engage with children and young people in decision-making and ensure that their voices can make a difference or have an impact on decision-making, which are outlined below.

How to engage with children and young people:

- Involve children and young people in decision-making from the start of a project or initiative and in all relevant structures that are established.
- Seek children and young people's blue sky thinking rather than asking them to respond to issues previously determined by adults.
- Give children and young people the age-appropriate information they need to form a view.
- Avoid giving them too much information or information that could limit their thinking,
- Use a strengths-based approach that starts with children and young people's own experience and understanding.
- Use creative and age-appropriate methods to seek children and young people's views.
- Use open consultation questions or easily understood survey questions developed by children and young people (at a pilot or by an advisory group).
- Avoid interpreting children and young people's views during the process of seeking their opinions.
- Ensure that children evaluate their participation in projects, programmes, and processes.

How to ensure that the voices of children and young people have an impact or make a difference:

- Ensure that financial and human resources are in place to support the involvement of children and young people in decision-making.
- Ensure that decision-makers identify and name how children and young people's views will be used.
- Ensure that decision-makers identify and name how decisions that are taken will be fed back to children and young people.
- Document or report on the views of children and young people in a way that avoids adult interpretation of their views.
- Ensure that a child/youth-friendly report or output is compiled and fed back to children and young people.
- Ensure that children and young people play a prominent role in presenting their views at relevant events.