

When listening to the voice of children and young people

There are endless ways of listening to the voice of children and young people. However, it is vital to choose a method that is age appropriate and best suits those you are listening to. You will need to plan well, obtain relevant permission and follow all safeguarding procedures.

To help listen you could:

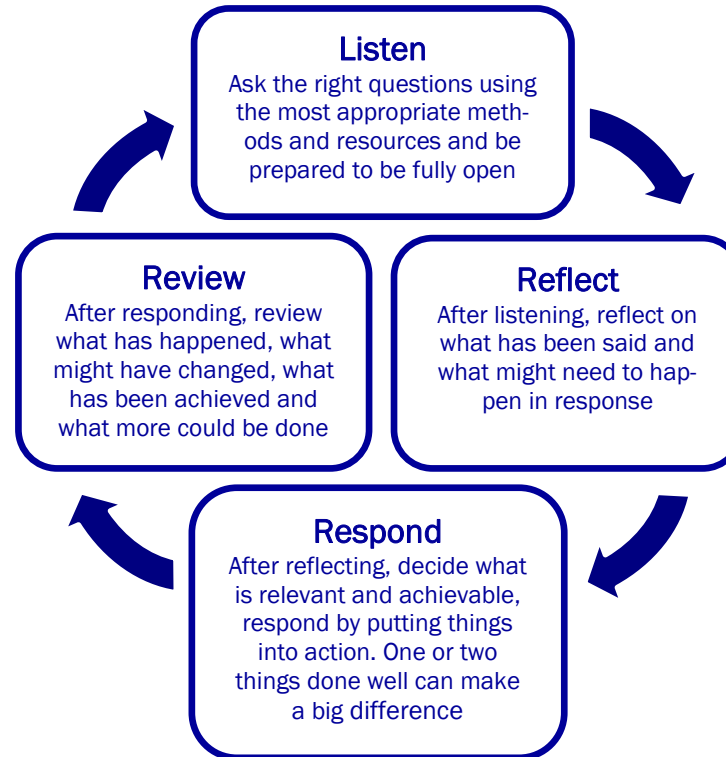
- Have an informal discussion
- Conduct a formal consultation
- Have an open meeting
- Set up a focus group around a particular issue
- Have youth reps on the church council
- Set up a youth or children's council
- Conduct a questionnaire or online survey
- Use social media, tweets, blogs and texts
- Ask relevant questions in creative ways
- Play a variety of decision making games
- Children to stand where they agree/disagree
- Make a model or sculpture
- Paint a picture
- Use music, drama or role play
- Have a circle time sharing views and ideas
- Use photographs or other images
- Use charts and stickers
- Use post-its
- Make coloured paper chains
- Vote by putting beads in a jar

For more information, advice, ideas, resources and useful links on listening to the voice of children and young people visit

www.going4growth.org.uk

It may not be possible to change everything overnight, that would not be right. One small thing at a time can make a big difference.
Young people, Being Part 2010

Do not let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity. 1 Timothy 4:12





H | E | A | R
say

An introduction to Participation and Listening to the Voice of Children and Young People



Having a voice, having a choice


 CHURCH OF ENGLAND
 ARCHBISHOPS' COUNCIL
 EDUCATION DIVISION


 THE NATIONAL SOCIETY

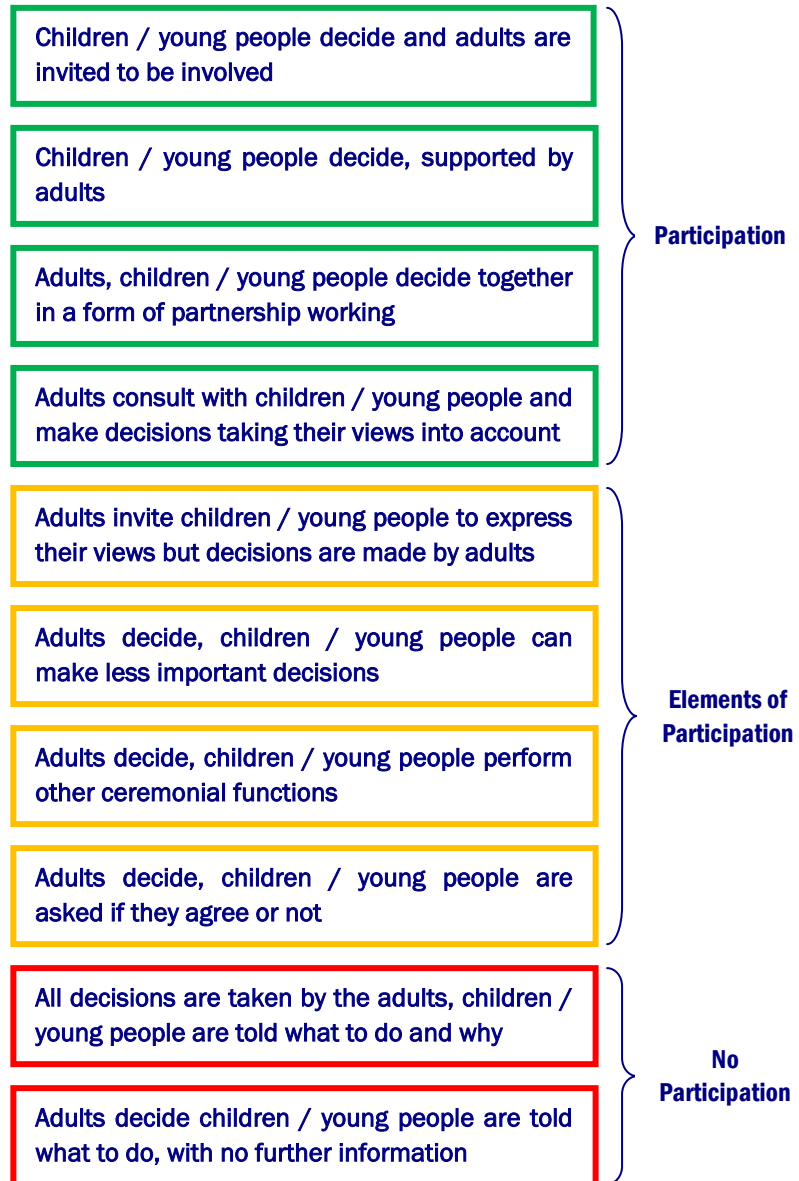
Going for Growth

Transformation for children, young people and the Church

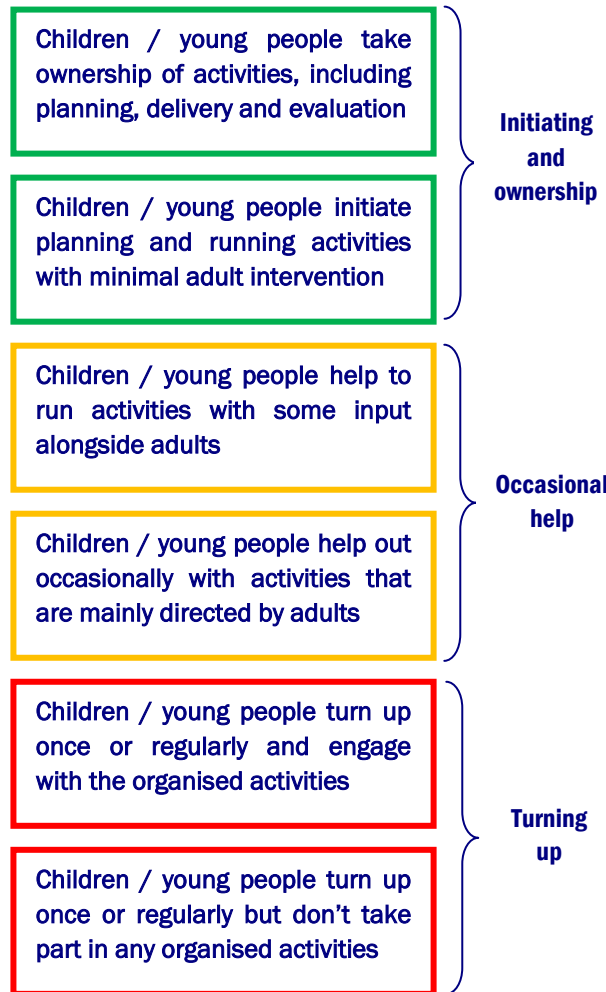
Participation in youth and children's work enables children and young people to have their say in making decisions, in planning and in reviewing any action that affect them. **Article 12 UN Convention**

Decision making ← The Participation Spectrum → Active involvement

The chart below is adapted from Dr Roger Hart's Participation ladder and helps to explain different stages of participation in **decision making** and how children and young people can be empowered or dis-empowered. This involves listening to their views



The chart below is an original by Tony Cook 2013. A further dimension of Participation is to involve children and young people in the planning and delivery of activities. This is often known as **'active involvement'**. Both parts of this spectrum are important in empowering children and young people to help shape the Church, today and in the future.



Listening to the voice of children and young people

Helps to avoid implementing things they don't want or need.

Creates a greater ownership. They are more likely to be interested in things they helped to shape.

Offers a different and fresh perspective even if their voice is occasionally challenging.

Enables adults and children to work together in finding solutions that meet different needs.

Offers the voiceless a voice to share their opinions.

Offers them the opportunity to develop valuable interpersonal, communication and listening skills.

Helps them gain confidence in making decisions.

Values them for who they are and what they say.

Creates a greater sense of belonging.

Promotes understanding across generations.

Enables them to realise their responsibilities as well as their rights.

Offers them the opportunity to get actively involved a variety of levels.

Enables their prophetic voice to be heard afresh in each generation.

May help to shape how church and worship looks in the future.

Enables them to negotiate and agree actions, also to monitor impact and change alongside adults

"In working with children / young people, do not try to call them back to where they were, and do not try to call them to where you are, as beautiful as that place may seem to you. You must have the courage to go with them to a place that neither you nor they have ever been before." **Vincent Donovan**