



Are we shutting kids out: A Review of Government Community Engagement Advisory Material

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With thanks to Andrea Cook and Kelvin Walsh

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- Where we're coming from
- Our hypothesis
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- Some approaches

Where we're coming from. . .

- Always try to include children in our processes
- Try to include young people (often seem to fail)
- Been refining processes for these groups for some time
- Wonder why we seem to be shutting children and young people out of the consultation processes — and consultation discourse



Children at the centre of things...



A typical Sarkissian Associates Planners consultation process

Poster for a recent event for young people in Sydney



The Participation Circle



UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Ratified by Australia, 16 January 1991

Article 12

States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.



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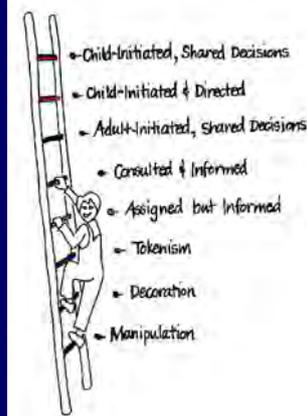
KidScape

- DESIGN FOR SUSTAINABILITY
- DESIGN FOR COMMUNITY
- DESIGN FOR SAFE LIVING
- DESIGN FOR CHILDREN AND PLAY

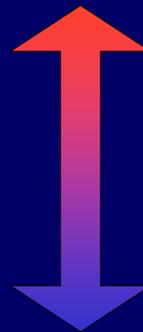
Urban and Regional Land

GUIDELINES FOR DESIGNING SUSTAINABLE RESIDENTIAL ENVIRONMENTS FOR CHILDREN

A Ladder of Children's Participation (Hart, 1997)



Results: ladder of participation



- ✓ No consideration
- ✓ Adults rule
- ✓ Adults rule kindly
- ✓ Manipulation
- ✓ Decoration
- ✓ Tokenism
- Invitation
- Consultation
- Joint decisions
- Children's lead, adults help
- Children in charge

Freeman, C. et al (1999). *Planning with children for better communities: the challenge to professionals*. Bristol: Policy Press.

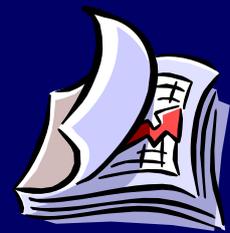
Our Hypothesis

Government consultation manuals in Australia are ignoring children and young people as groups to be consulted in participatory processes related to planning an design (and probably other things too) . . .

Our Preliminary Research

Searched for government community participation documents (mostly on the Internet)

- o Manuals
- o Guides
- o Frameworks
- o Checklists
- o Protocols
- o Policies
- o Advisory materials
- o "How-to" material
- o Volumes and appendices of techniques



Children: defined as 0 to 12 years

Our Preliminary Findings

Reviewed 108 publications/documents:

- Mention of United Nations Convention on the Rights of a Child: 14
- Mention of children's participation techniques: 30
- Little mention of young people
- Little mention of children in any way in a participation context
- Little consideration of intergenerational equity issues

Summary of the documents reviewed

Country	Number searched	Mentions the Convention on the Rights of the Child	Techniques for children
Queensland	9	0	2
Other Australian State and local govt.	39	2	7
Australia federal govt.	1	0	0
New Zealand	7	5	1 (the rest involved youth)
Canada	10	0	4
United Kingdom & Europe	16	1	3
United States	9	0	1
Non-Government Publications	17	6	12
Total	108	14	30

Scottish Parliament Information Centre for the Education, Culture and Sport Committee

Found that children:

- are able to express thoughtful, clearly held opinions on relevant matters
- are generally willing to give their views
- become disillusioned if consultation is ill-considered or tokenistic



Source: Taylor, P. (2001). *Involving Communities A Handbook of Policy and Practice*. Scottish Community Development Centre.

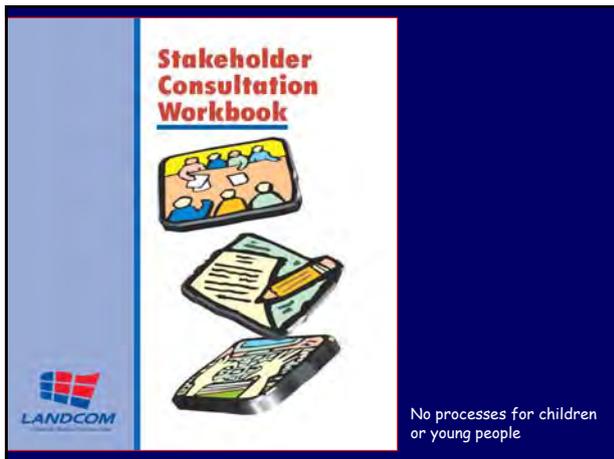
Most common complaint among children about consultation

They had no idea what happened after they were consulted.

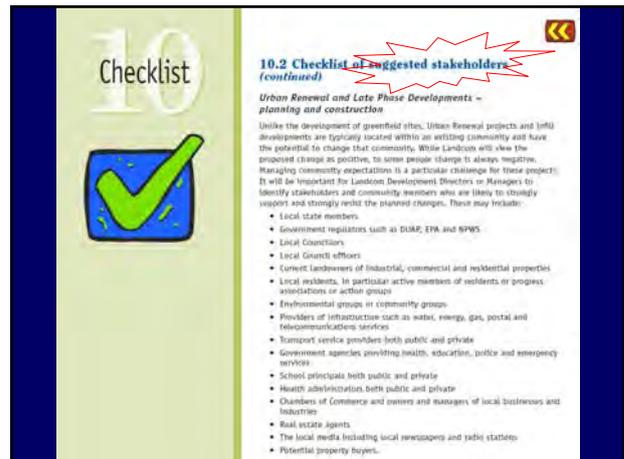


Thumbs Down
for these examples of Australian government consultation manuals

Australian Government

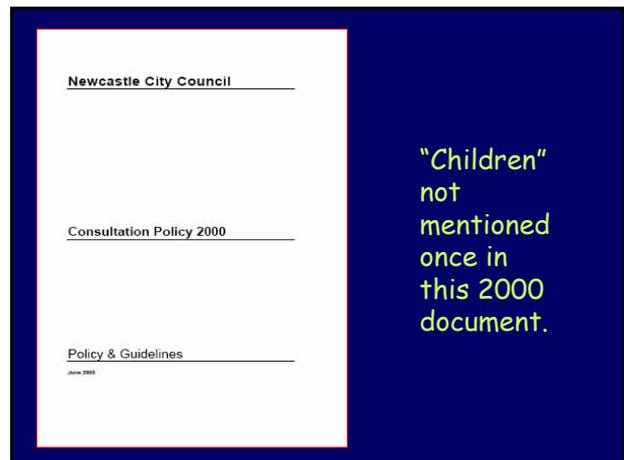


No processes for children or young people



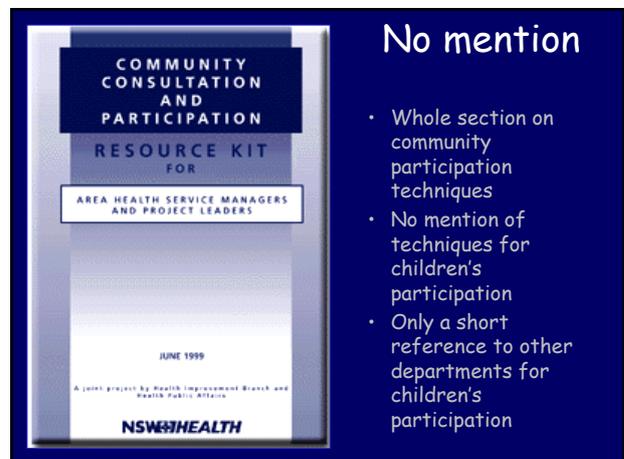
2001

One mention of children



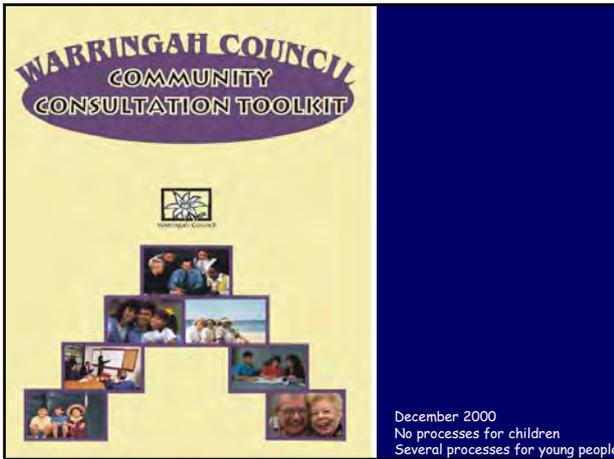
"Children" not mentioned once in this 2000 document.

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No mention

- Whole section on community participation techniques
- No mention of techniques for children's participation
- Only a short reference to other departments for children's participation



Victorian Local Government Association (VLGA) online update of this publication:
one page dedicated to the importance of including young people (not in publication)

bestvaluevictoria 2001
Community Consultation
Resource Guide

No specific mention of children even on website.
www.vlga.org.au

Melbourne 2030

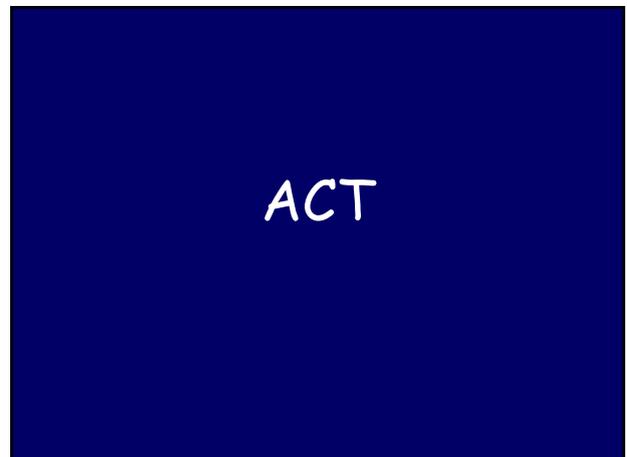
A Youth Forum mentioned, but no particular emphasis on children

Diagram of public consultation strategy

2000

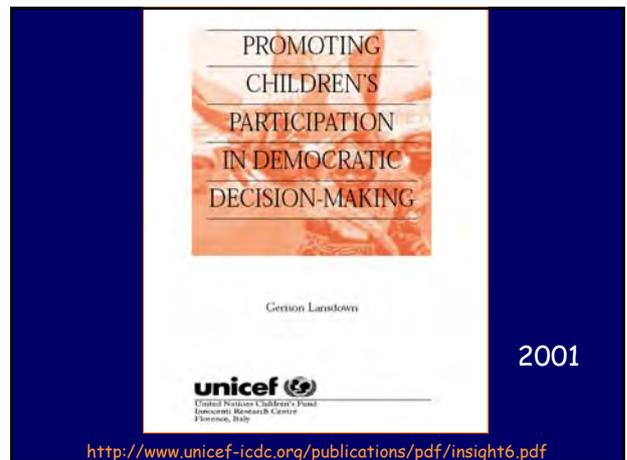
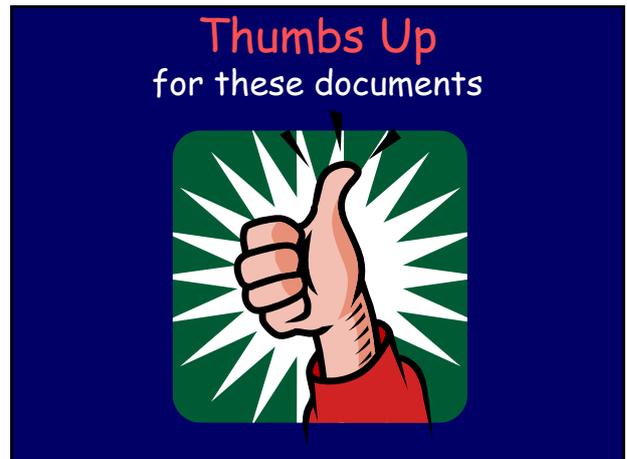
- Mentions children as an important consultation group
- Suggests no child engagement strategies
- Mentions children's participation only to get parents' participation

<p>Who Will be Consulted</p> <p>Consultation mechanisms will be chosen that will take into account the primary groups impacted, will ensure an equitable spread in the range of groups being consulted.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All groups/persons who are impacted will be consulted. Stakeholders will vary according to the issue, but could include: residents, employees, businesses, those who visit or work in the municipality, other service providers/agencies, community groups, other levels of government, peak bodies etc. It could also include particular groups within the Community e.g. older people, families, children, youth, different ethnic groups, traders, people with disabilities etc. • Stakeholders will include primary groups, those who are directly impacted and secondary groups, those who are indirectly impacted.
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Children not mentioned



<http://www.unicef-icdc.org/publications/pdf/insight6.pdf>

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- Why children want to be involved in issues that affect them**
- It offers them new skills
 - It builds their self-esteem
 - It challenges the sense of impotence often associated with childhood
 - It empowers them to tackle abuses and neglect of their rights
 - They have a great deal they want to say
 - They think that adults often get it wrong
 - They feel their contribution could lead to better decisions
 - They feel it is right to listen to them when it is their life at issue
 - They want to contribute to making the world a better place
 - It can be fun
 - It offers a chance to meet with children from different environments, of different ages and experience

Characteristics of effective and genuine participation

THE PROJECT

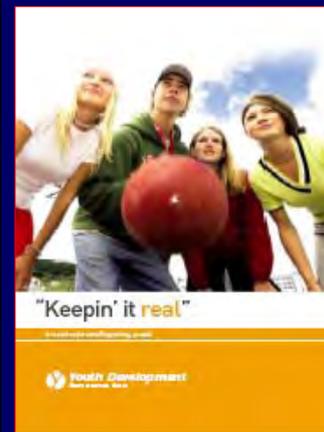
- Issue is of real relevance to children themselves
- Capacity to make a difference - where possible produce long-term or institutional change
- Linked to children's direct day-to-day experience
- Adequate time and resources made available
- Realistic expectations of children
- Clear goals and targets agreed with children
- Addresses the promotion or protection of children's rights

VALUES

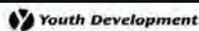
- Honesty from adults about the project and the process
- Inclusive – equal opportunity for participation by all groups of interested children
- Equal respect for children of all ages, abilities, ethnicity, social background
- Information is shared with the children to enable them to make real choices
- Children's views are taken seriously
- Voluntary nature of children's involvement
- Decision-making is shared

METHODOLOGY

- Clarity of purpose
- Child-friendly meeting places, language and structures
- Involvement of children from the earliest possible stages
- Training provided to help children acquire necessary skills
- Methods of involvement developed in collaboration with children
- Adult support provided where needed
- Strategies developed for sustainability



New Zealand has some great youth participation models



Youth Participation Case Studies

A collection of six case studies highlighting the benefits of youth participation to organisations across sectors.

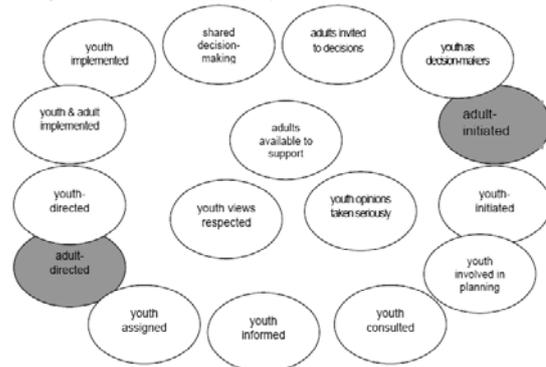
By Cathy McGhie and Kirsten Smith
August 2002



Published by
Ministry of Youth Affairs
PO Box 18-500
Wellington
New Zealand

Ph (04) 471 2155, Fax (04) 471 2233
Email: info@youth.govt.nz
Website: www.youth.govt.nz

Diagram One: Elements of Youth Participation

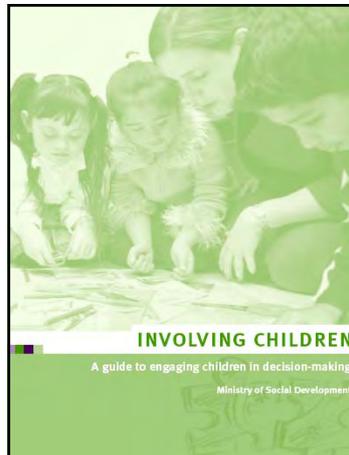


Shaded elements must be teamed with non-shaded elements for meaningful youth participation.

New Zealand: Hard to Reach Youth Waitakere City Council 1993

Youth Consultation - Video Interviews at Hip Hop Nation and Battle of the Bands

- Over the period of three nights Te Roopu Rangatahi and Youth Council attended 2 Hip Hop Nation events (organised by Council) and the Battle of the Bands finals (organised by Tear Fünd).
- They took along video cameras and interviewed approximately 90 youths on their views on what Waitakere City needed for youth and what was good and bad about Waitakere City. Three clear issues emerged: the need for youth events and a place for youth to hang out and safety concerns.
- The last issue was a result of specific questions from the interviewers on the perceived safety they saw Waitakere. The need for more youth events was strongly supported in the interviews.
- Many comments noted that it was a key way to get the youth of the streets and keep them out of trouble.
- Following on from this was a need for a centre or place for youth to be able to hang out and do what they like to do.



New Zealand
www.msd.govt.nz
agendaforchildren@msd.govt.nz

Western Australia

Citizenship: Building a Shared Future

A Voice for All: Strengthening Democracy

Western Australian Citizenship Strategy 2004-2009

Making Western Australia an Even Better Place to Live

New strategy to seek greater community involvement

Mentions children as an important community group

Western Australia



"The issues that confront society often impact most severely on young people. Providing creative opportunities for young people to participate and contribute is essential. This is particularly important given that the more traditional modes of participation often fail to include young people."

<http://www.citizenscape.wa.gov.au>

2.4 Identifying the Stakeholders

The following questions may aid in identifying stakeholders.

- > Who is responsible for the issue?
- > Who might be affected by the issue (negatively or positively)?
- > Who are the representatives of those likely to be affected?
- > Who can make a contribution?
- > Who is likely to mobilise for or against the issue?
- > Who are the "voiceless" for whom special efforts may have to be made?
- > Whose absence from participation would detract from the final results?

After identifying the stakeholders, it is beneficial to relate each stakeholder to the issue by identifying:

- > Stakeholder expectations
- > The benefits to the stakeholder
- > What resources (and risks) the stakeholder will bring to the issue
- > The relationship between various stakeholders.

Considering Community Groups

Identification of community groups and the initiation of communication may be aided by liaising with other departments, consultative and advisory councils, peak bodies and relevant representative organisations. Consideration must be given to groups who may feel excluded from poorly conceived consultative processes, for example ethnic, Indigenous and remote communities, people with disabilities, seniors, women, youth and others. While on occasion these groups feel that they are "over-consulted", they also often feel that they are never listened to. Care must be taken to include them in appropriate ways.

The issues that confront society often impact most severely on young people. Providing creative opportunities for young people to participate and contribute is essential. This is particularly important given that the more traditional modes of participation often fail to include young people. Some individuals may be restricted in their participation without special assistance. Their participation may be aided through the provision of travel assistance, payment for child-care facilities or through the provision of interpreters or audio-visual aids.

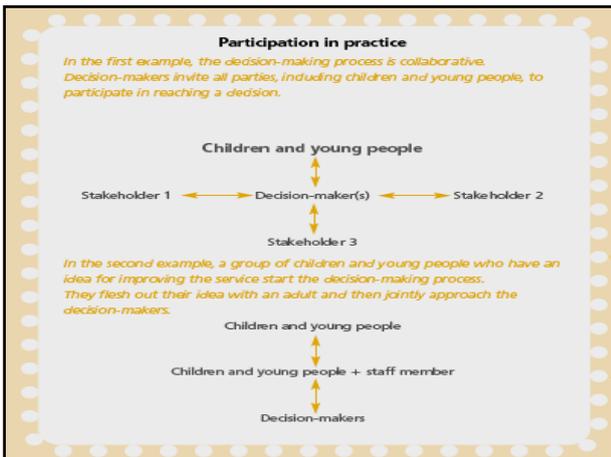
Similarly, in a state as large and sparsely populated as Western Australia, special consideration must be given to remote and regional communities to avoid these citizens feeling isolated and marginalised. Innovative methods may need to be developed to ensure the participation of remotely located citizens.



2003

- "a unique opportunity to contribute to the creation of a planning vision that will guide Perth's future growth over the next two or so decades."
- random survey of 1700
- on-line discussion groups
- school drawing competition
- listening sessions with young people, Indigenous Australian and people from culturally diverse backgrounds
- Involved children via an essay and paintings on *Perth 2030: The Kind of City I Want to Live In.*

The pièce de résistance...



- ## Vancouver CityPlan (1992-2000)
- Developed with input from over 20,000 people, over 3 years (1992 to 1995)
 - In 1992 City of Vancouver population: 471,000
 - City aimed to accommodate another 160,000 over next 30 years
 - CityPlan gave citizenry greater involvement in local governance and influence on controversial planning projects
 - Involved at least 700 children and young people

Vancouver CityPlan

- One of many documents on participation of youth and children
- Includes many techniques on children
- "Kids in City Hall", "Build Your City"

Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

- Manitoba Professional Planning Institute and Beaumont Elementary School
- grade 6 class
- made a plan to redevelop a downtown waterfront site
- final plans displayed at the City Re-emerging Exhibition, 2002

www.mppi.mb.ca/events/kidscanplan/info.pdf

Contents of the Workbook

PRE-TOUR WORKBOOK

Introduction

- What is City Planning?
- Definitions, Word Search and Crosswords

Part 1: Mapping Your Community

- Worksheet #1 Mapping Your Community
- Getting to Know Your Community
- Scale Analysis

Part 2: Community Land Uses & Zoning

- Land Use Exercise

POST-TOUR WORKBOOK: Developing Your Neighbourhood Plan

- Game #1 - Brainstorming
- Game#2 - Designing Your Plan

POST-TOUR WORKBOOK: Applying Your Knowledge

Part 3: Reflecting on Your Neighbourhood Walk of downtown

Part 4: Communicating Your Ideas

Part 5: Appendices

- Aerial Photographs
- Maps
- Model Materials

WORD DEFINITION EXERCISE

How to Play:
Draw a line from the dot on the right side of the word to the dot on the left side of the definition that best fits the meaning of the word.

WORD	•	•	DEFINITION
CARTOGRAPHY	•	•	TO EXCHANGE THOUGHTS, FEELINGS OR IDEAS THROUGH SPEECH, WRITING, OR GESTURES
CITY	•	•	WHERE PEOPLE BUY THINGS OR SERVICES. CONNECTED WITH THE TRADE OF GOODS AND SERVICES, MERCHANTS, STORES.
COMMERCIAL	•	•	A LARGE TOWN OR POPULOUS PLACE. AN INCORPORATED URBAN CENTRE WITH ITS OWN GOVERNMENT AND ADMINISTRATION.

Part 1: Mapping Your Community



BE A CITY PLANNER

You are getting ready to make a map. Before you begin, think about the some things that city planners think about when they help to plan the city. Where should different industrial land uses go? Should houses be next door to a factory where things are made? How will people get from their home to work, to stores, or to school? How can I find out what people want in their neighborhood?






Initiatives in some other countries

Italy (Horelli 2001)

- Youth and children's councils

Barra Mansa, Brazil (Guerra 2002)

- 18 girls and 18 boys elected as Child Councilors
- Have a budget equivalent to \$US 125,000 to spend on addressing children's priorities
- Its child councilors are also involved in other aspects of government

Norway (Horelli 2001)

- Has Municipal ombudsmen for children
- Building Act requires registration of children's track maps before zoning can take place

Good Reads

Solely about Children

ROGER A. HART

Children's Participation

THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF FOSTERING CHILDREN'S SUCCESS IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL CARE

Why involve kids?

Adapted from Driskell, David (2002).
Creating Better Cities With Children and Youth: A Manual For Participation

Some people say...

Adults are here to take care of children and young people

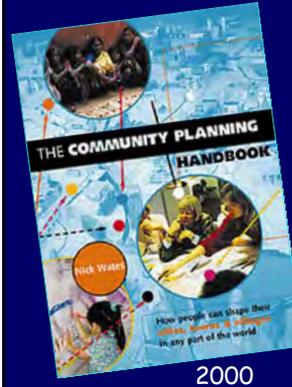
We should not expect children and young people to shoulder our responsibilities.

Their participation should complement adults' participation. It is not a replacement.

Adults are not giving up their responsibilities.

Adults are taking their responsibilities more seriously when they seek to discover what is truly in the best interests of young people in their communities.

Excellent Manual



- Nick Yates
- UK activist and participation specialist
- www.communityplanning.net

Some Approaches



Some Principles

- **Authentic representation:** a range of kids - not just the "good kids"
- **Working at "kid level":** directly with children - from their perspectives, not adults' perspectives
- **Developing skills and assets:** "two-way learning" - learning from kids, passing on skills and developing assets
- **Celebrating kids' 'savviness':** acknowledging, celebrating and validating their experience

Authentic representation



Developing skills and assets



Participatory Processes with Children

Key lessons

- Be prepared to listen to children's priorities
- Be clear about what you are trying to achieve
- Be clear about the boundaries of the proposed activity
- Do the necessary research
- Be willing to consult with children on methods of involving them
- Remember that children are not a homogenous group
- Be prepared to make the necessary time available
- Make available the necessary resources
- Remember the importance of working with adults as well as children
- Be prepared to be challenged
- Don't underestimate children
- Develop indicators or goals for effective participation in collaboration with children
- Be prepared to make mistakes and get it wrong

<http://www.unicef-icdc.org/publications/pdf/insight6.pdf>



Four Success Factors

1. Match process to age group
2. Be clear about objectives and brief facilitators to achieve objectives
3. Resource the process thoroughly
4. Analyse and integrate results into broader process and findings (report)

Three Techniques for Children's Participation

- Face painting
- Week with a camera
- Edible model

Face Painting



Wildness in the neighbourhood



Face Painting and Questioning



Q. What sorts of things did you think kids would do around here if there was a nice bit of bike path?

Ride.

Q. Is that all they'd do?

Na, walk.



Q. Walk? Oh, that's cool. Are you interested in the environment?

No, not really.

Q. Not really? Oh. If there was one single thing that you'd like to change about living around here, what would that be?

Ah, the toilets.

Q. The toilets, why is that?

They're not in very good condition.

Q. Oh, so you want the toilets to be in better condition? OK.

A Week with a Camera



(re)Visioning Footscray
"Targeted Consultation" Ideas
"WEEK WITH A CAMERA" EXERCISE

WHY TO USE THIS EXERCISE:
 This exercise helps us understand the "natural beauty" (people hold in their heads) about their neighbourhood. We get to see what is important to people through their own pictures of the places they like and don't like.
 It allows people to take pictures of the places they like and to tell us what they want for that environment. Significant landmarks, where people like to hang out, interesting events, gathering places and "secret places" can all be identified.

WHEN TO USE THIS EXERCISE:
 This exercise is best used when you need photos of people's view of their local and natural environment and an idea of what they like and don't like in their neighbourhood. It can be used alone or with other techniques.
 This can be a great technique to start with as the images can be used as other exercises like so:

WHO CAN TAKE PART IN THIS EXERCISE?
 In the technique images come understanding of photographs - although the disposable cameras are easy to use - it is best used with other children, young people and adults.

HOW TO DO THIS EXERCISE:
 The idea here is that people are given a 24 exposure disposable camera (with a flash if possible). They are also given instructions and a log sheet (see the example on the next page). They then spend a few days to a week taking photos of places they like and don't like and (where they don't) return to change.
 The following gives an idea of making the exercise an activity.

- The exercise is best used when you need to find out what people like (like) or don't like (dislike) in their area.
- Use a flash of either good brand or some (cheap) cameras are difficult to process.
- Remember to label all camera before handing them out. It is best to label the bottom processing and to label all maps and log sheets with the names, addresses, postcode numbers, size (angle) and gender of the person taking the camera.
- Provide examples for the cameras. Remember to tell them to have the flash on behind them. But there needs to be adequate light and that makes photographs generally don't turn out.
- Participants need to be given a copy of this guide also (directions).

WHAT YOU NEED:

- 24 exposure disposable cameras with flash
- instructions sheet
- log sheets
- pre-printed or hand-drawn map of the area

Resources

- Disposable cameras with labels
- Log sheets
- Pre-printed A3 sheets for drawing maps
- A3 paper, crayons, pencils, glue and scissors
- Magazines (choose carefully!)
- "Post-it" notes, markers and note paper
- Polaroid camera and film
- Digital camera
- Arrangements to laminate the A3 collages
- Permissions for working with children and photographing children



Photographic Analysis Instructions for Children

- **SELECT PLACES:** Select places that are important to you that you wish to **KEEP** or **CHANGE** within your community.
- **DRAW A MAP:** Draw a map showing where the places are (roughly). (Please use the attached map.)
- **TAKE A PHOTOGRAPH OF YOURSELF.** (Your parents could help you with this.)
- **TAKE PHOTOGRAPHS:** Take a photograph (or more than one) of each of these places (up to 24 photographs in total).
- Indicate on your mud map where each photograph was taken (this need not be to scale but just is an indication of where the place is located.)
- **NOTE DETAILS:** Write the number and any relevant details of each photograph on the attached LOG SHEET. Make sure you explain why it is important to you.
- **KEEP OR CHANGE?** Fill out the column 4 about whether you wish to keep or change the things shown in the photograph.
- **HOW IMPORTANT?** Mark the column 5 at the far right to indicate the importance of this place.
- **RETURN CAMERA:** Return the camera and the attached sheets before **Tuesday** to **YOUR TEACHER**.
- **ANY PROBLEMS?** If you have any problems with this, your camera breaks, etc., please ring David Lowerson on 0438 121 594.

Mud Map and Log Sheet

Map

LOG SHEET Student Name: _____

Photo No.	This shows	It's important to me because...	Teacher's Comments	Teacher's Comments	Family Report to be filled in
1					
2					

↑
N



A classroom with one facilitator for every four children



One set of photos is cut up for the collage

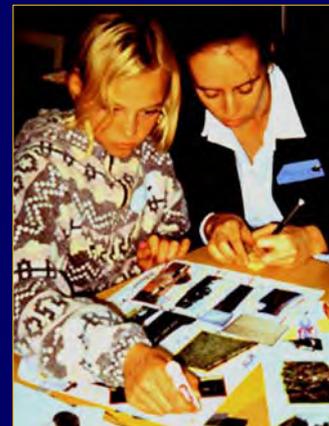


Magazines for those without photos

Appropriate Magazines



Careful facilitation and recording



Post-it notes are later removed

Annotations by the facilitator on Post-it notes



Kasey's Collage

To save the time of drawing a self-portrait, use a Polaroid camera for those who forget to photograph themselves

Children's projects displayed, Rockingham, WA, 2003

It was great that you actually gave kids a chance to have a say.... They felt like they'd been consulted and that was good.

We've been involved with local community groups and sports groups - but nothing like that... no one has ever come in and actually asked the kids for their opinion...

I was surprised how much the kids came up with which was the same as what was being put forward by the community.

I was a bit unsure what the finished product would be like.... But when I saw the pictures and what the kids had actually said about them, that made it meaningful... I thought it was interwoven really well.

Brian Borlini, Principal,
Port Kennedy Primary School



Stages

- ❑ Training and purchasing materials
- ❑ Preparation and set-up (in secret!)
- ❑ Getting started
- ❑ Visualisation exercise
- ❑ Design and documentation
- ❑ Explaining the models
- ❑ Celebrating the hard work
- ❑ Photographing (including Polaroid)
- ❑ Professional report

Training of Facilitators



Suggested materials for food modelling



broccoli	ice-cream cones
carrots	tube of condensed milk
parsley	peanut butter
bread rolls	jelly babies
spaghetti (cooked)	chocolate drops
Spiralli shells (pasta)	chocolate frogs
bow-ties	musk sticks
jelly crystals	fruit jellies
bright cake tops	fruit jelly rings
100s & 1000s	bananas
round biscuits	strawberry creams
square biscuits	etc., etc. . . .
Salada biscuits	
Vita-Wheat biscuits	

Preparation

- ❑ Carefully hide the food
- ❑ Element of surprise is important



Getting Started

- ❑ Discuss ideal environment - creative visualisation
- ❑ Give each table a tray of previously prepared food



Surprise!!!!



Design

- Ask participants to construct their "ideal" environment
- Facilitators question, discuss the model and record responses



Giving permission is important at the start



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