

Involving Young People with a Disability:

Effective Practices for Engagement, Participation & Consultation



**A Resource Guide to Involving Young
People with a Disability in Youth Services
December 2011**

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Involving Young People with a Disability: A Resource Guide for Engaging Young People with a Disability in Youth Services

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How to use this resource

This resource aims to support youth organisations in increasing participation, consultation and inclusion of young people with a disability into their service. Young people with a disability can experience a range of barriers to community inclusion and can be excluded from important community activities, resources and services that promote decision making, citizenship, leadership and influence. All youth organisations need to consciously and systematically ensure their inclusion strategies the direct provision of services are appropriate for clients with a disability.

This resource outlines current thinking and practices on youth participation and consultation. It creates a guide for youth service organisations to effectively, professionally and safely engage young people with a disability in the work and operations of community organisations. It covers critical areas of consideration in the development and implementation of youth participation and consultation activities, with practical frameworks and tools to inform practice. Each section of the resource is an essential component in the overall framework of meaningful youth participation and consultation practices.

Section One is concerned with defining terms such as young people, participation and consultation, and the role of youth services. This section provides background information, identifies myths commonly held about young people with a disability and explores strategies to ensure effective participation or consultation activities.

Section Two initially explores access and equity issues through a questionnaire and then presents three models of youth participation as they relate to community organisations. Using the checklist in this section will assist in determining the context for young people's participation, at what level you desire participation and what is important to consider in relation to processes, tools and risk management.

Section Three explores youth participation, consultation and governance mechanisms and activities, and provides practical tools and checklists are provided for use when engaging in youth consultation processes. A broad risk management framework is outlined, bringing together essential considerations around risk management, duty of care and ethics when engaged in youth participation and consultation activities. A range of potential risks have been identified along with strategies to alleviate or reduce risk that may be used when planning and implementing youth participation and consultation processes.

SECTION 1: Young people and disability; participation, consultation and the role of youth services



Young people with a disability; participation, consultation and the role of youth services

“Participation refers to the process of sharing decisions which affect young people’s lives and the life of the community in which young people live. It is the means by which a democracy is built and it is a standard against which democracies should be measured” (Broadbent, 2006).

Some Statistics

In Australia about 9% of young Australians aged 15–24 are estimated to have a disability, with proportions of young men and women being the same. The Australian Bureau of Statistics defines a disability as the presence of one or more of 17 restrictions, limitations or impairments that has lasted for six months or more and restricts everyday activities (AIHW 2007 p15).

The largest subtypes of disability for young people are intellectual, behavioural or developmental disabilities (19%). This category is gendered with twice as many males as females. The next two largest subtypes are psychiatric conditions (18%) or musculoskeletal disorders (14%) (AIHW 2007 p7).

The most commonly reported activity restrictions were limitations in the ability to undertake schooling or employment, followed by limitations in mobility, communication and self-care. Young people with a disability are less likely to have completed Year 12 schooling than those without a disability (67% compared to 83%) (AIHW 2007 p16-7).

About 7000 young people are estimated to have some form of hearing impairment and about 9000 have a visual impairment (AIHW 2007 p17).

Young People with a Disability and Youth Services

Young people with a disability have far more in common with other young people than they have differences. They share similar interests, dreams and desires.

“Equity, not special treatment – (Young people) Need.... acceptance and belonging within (their) social circle(s) – young people with disability need to feel (they are) ‘normal’ -just one of the girls/boys”. (National Disability Strategy Youth Roundtable 2008 p7)



All youth-orientated services have the capacity to offer opportunities to young people with a disability in the development and provision of their service, along with broad avenues for social inclusion. Young people with a disability don't necessarily expect youth workers to be experts or have specialist training; in fact many will intentionally use your service because you are *not* a specialized disability service. (YAPA 'Opening the Doors')

Young people with a disability may face a range of barriers to broad social inclusion and social connection. Youth orientated services can offer opportunities to young people with a disability to broaden their social interactions and participation in the community.

Key Drivers for Inclusion of Young People with a Disability

- Under the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991*, it is unlawful to discriminate against a person on the grounds of their disability in the provision of goods and services, education, sports, access to public facilities and accommodation.
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 23 (Children with Disabilities) states children who have any kind of disability have the right to special care and support, as well as all the rights in the Convention, so that they can live full and independent lives.
- Active engagement and participation of young people in a range of systems and structures in Australia is driven by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 12. This UN convention has been a catalyst for considerable work to ensure that children and young people are involved in decisions that affect their lives (Committee on Children and Young People, Inquiry into Children, Young People and the Built Environment Issues Paper 1 2005)

Defining Young People

Throughout much of contemporary literature, “young people” are defined through an age range, generally 12-25 years and this is consistent with the provision of youth services in Australian society today. It is worthwhile briefly exploring the notion of young people defined through age as several authors raise question marks about the limitations and social constructs of an age-determined definition of young people (Bessant, Sercombe, & Watts 1998; Wyn & White 1997).

Defining a significant proportion of the population through age has inherent limitations. Stewart argues that stratifying factors in most young people's lives, such as gender, disability, social disadvantage, race, sexuality and geography can be lost through the aged based definition. It is important to also consider here that not all cultures measure or even acknowledge "youth" the same way. While "Western" or contemporary cultures see this as a period of time or developmental phase quite distinct from both childhood or adulthood, some indigenous cultures may not recognize adolescence at all; and through community preparation and specific ritual or "rites of passage", the child becomes the adult with all of the recognition, responsibilities and privileges that is implied within that culture.

It is particularly relevant to community organizations, not to limit the participation and consultation of young people to topics that can be defined specifically as "youth" issues such as skate parks, the use of social media or the presence of drug use in our society. These stereotypes can genuinely limit young people's capacity and potential as human beings, and diminishes their right to participate fully in society. It is important to recognize that young people have similar needs, issues and dreams as the whole community, and their ability to contribute to broader topics that affect them as members of society should not be devalued.

Another common definition of youth is that of a period of storm and stress, instability and unpredictability. This definition aligns with young people, delinquency and crime, young people and anti-social behavior and is also a common definition used within media for the portrayal of young people. Indeed it can be argued the term 'youth' is aligned with this definition of volatility e.g. youth crime, youth gone wild and negatively defines a significant proportion of the population.

Young people are defined in numerous ways and can be defined in several ways at once. Young people can be associated with social problems and crime or young people can be associated with a successful future. Young people are a political force, and through definition and the use of language they can be demonized or portrayed as our future hope.

Defining Disability

The question of definition becomes further complicated when describing/defining disability. In the Youth Affairs Network of Queensland's, *The Case for a Youth Disability Advocacy Service in Queensland* (October 2009), it finds inconsistencies

surrounding the meaning of the term disability and how it should be appropriately measured. According to section 11 of the *Disability Services Act 2006* (Queensland),

(1) A disability is a condition that:

(a) is attributable to -

(i) an intellectual, psychiatric, cognitive, neurological, sensory or physical impairment; or

(ii) a combination of impairments mentioned in subparagraph (i); and

(b) resulting in -

(i) a substantial reduction of the person's capacity for communication, social interaction, learning, mobility or self-care or management; and

(ii) the person needing support.

(2) For subsection (1), the impairment may result from an acquired brain injury.

(3) The disability must be permanent or likely to be permanent.

(4) The disability may be, but need not be, of a chronic episodic nature.

The disparity in services and sectors' interpretation of this definition of disability has led to recurrent confusion in its application. This problem is particularly evident in the assessments required for young peoples' education support and the various systems' recognition of mental disorders as disabilities (Bor and Dakin, 2006 p49). Unlike several other states, a mental disorder in Queensland is not uniformly acknowledged as being a disability, although some exceptions do exist such as the recognition of Autistic Spectrum Disorder (Bor and Dakin, 2006 p50).

It is important for organisations to consciously define young people for the purpose of achieving effective and inclusive service delivery. It is reasonable for organisations to define young people through age, however the dialogue should not stop there and continue to more fully describe young people in the context of their experiences, and the context and intention of the participation and consultation strategy.

Myth 1: People with a disability (or all disabilities) are the same - People with a disability are individuals and no two individuals are the same. Not all disabilities are the same. For example, two people with a visual impairment may literally have only that impairment in common. The effects of disability differ from person to person. Even if you know someone else with the same disability don't assume that you know how a person thinks, feels or is going to act.

Myth 2: People with a disability require ongoing help - It is important to ask someone if they are requiring assistance and not simply impose your assistance. Don't assume that someone with a disability needs your help. A focus on ability rather than disability fosters inclusion.

Myth 3: People with a physical disability also have an intellectual or learning disability - Just because someone has a physical disability doesn't mean that they have an intellectual disability as well. Less than one third of people with a physical disability also have an intellectual disability. Just because someone has difficulty speaking to you does not mean that they have difficulty *understanding* what you say.

Myth 4: You need to talk differently to a person with a disability - Some people raise their voices or communicate quite unnaturally when talking to someone who has a physical or even an intellectual disability. When communicating with someone with a disability, speak clearly in a normal tone of voice unless they ask you to speak louder or your style of communication appears to be ineffective.

Myth 5: You will be able to see a person's disability - Not all disabilities are obvious; in fact it is likely that young people using your service have a disability that you don't know about. Don't assume that you know, or need to know if someone has a disability.

Myth 6: People with a disability mostly want to hang out with each other - The reason most of us make friends with particular people is because we get along well with each other and have common interests. People with a disability are no different. Most young people like to have a range of friends including those with and without a disability, and may only associate more with others who also have a disability due to limited socially inclusive services or activities.

Myth 7: People with a disability aren't interested in or cannot have sex - Adolescence is a time when young people develop an interest in sex and become



more aware of their sexuality. This is normal for all young people, including those with a disability. Many people (and some parents) treat young people with a disability like children, and are shocked when they are interested in or have a girlfriend or boyfriend. There is no reason why having a disability means that someone does not have an interest in relationships or sex!

Myth 8: People with a disability are generally conservative - This is a stereotype. People *in general* have different values, tastes and styles; some are conservative and some are not and just like people *with* a disability, a conservative attitude will more likely stem from social, rather than developmental factors.

Myth 9: People with a disability are unable to work or achieve real career goals - The majority of workplaces will have employees with a disability that is either not obvious or that is so effectively managed by that person that it is unnecessary for them to disclose this information to colleagues or their employer, as it holds no bearing on their ability to interact socially or perform required tasks.

Myth 10: People with a disability require you to have specialist knowledge or skills – depending on the complexity or severity of the disability, most people would prefer you not focus on their disability at all. Having specialist knowledge and skills can potentially limit the way a worker may approach, communicate or work with a person with a disability, and therefore work with the disability before the person themselves.

Participation and Consultation – What is it?

- The term participation refers to the process of sharing decisions which affect young people's life and the life of the community in which young people live. It is the means by which a democracy is built and it is a standard against which democracies should be measured (Broadbent, 2006).
- The National Youth Research Schemes report titled 'Rewriting the Rules of Youth Participation: inclusion and diversity in government and community decision making' identified a broad range of approaches to participation to engage young people in decision making processes (2008 p23).

Formal participation - the use of structured and usually longer-term approaches to involving young people in decision making which are typically executed through formal policies. For example, youth round tables, youth advisory groups, youth parliaments and structured consultation such as surveys or focus groups.

Informal participation - the use of mechanisms that have no or a 'loose' structure, are 'casual' in their tone, require limited planning and resources, are quite often short-term and are usually not executed through formal policy. For example, casual chats between service providers and service users, one-off discussion groups and youth-led participation.

Targeted participation - approaches that are designed to involve young people from a particular background, or who have shared experiences.

Universal participation - approaches that are designed to involve the general youth population in decision making.

Consultation is a primary reason for engaging young people through youth participation. Genuine and credible consultation can contribute significantly to deliberative democracy, building trust and confidence in people and unleashing their potential as citizens.

- There are many models of consultation. These range from public meetings, forums and workshops, to more extensive processes such as summits, state-wide consultations and parliamentary committees as well as informal processes of conversation and dialogue. Each is suited to different issues and objectives.
- Consultation should be considered an essential tool for policy makers, project developers and service providers, implementers and evaluators.
- Participatory consultation done well carries with it potential medium to long term benefits however when done poorly it carries medium to long term costs.
- Often youth participation and consultation is viewed positively but the mechanisms to enable this to actually occur in a consistent, reliable and safe way are either too complex or indeed non-existent.
- The aligning of organisation values, strategies and practices and youth participation and consultation processes is an underlying principle for effective consultation.

- Having clear intention with clearly articulated consultative planning processes that have considered duty of care and managing risks is at the front of effective and ethical practice consultation.
- Participation and consultation is as much about the outcome as it is about the process, and the success of participation and consultation will be judged on both.
- Difficulties arise when there is a difference in expectations and criteria about what makes a successful consultation and public participation process. For example, community organisations may view a successful consultation based on the numbers of people participating whilst the community may view the success of the consultations on whether their views clearly influence decision making. This stresses the importance of clearly articulating intention, expectations and limitations of participation and consultation at the start, during and at the end of the process (*Brackertz, N, I Zwart, D Meredyth & L Ralston 2005*)

Practice questions for consideration

- ✓ **What definition of young people are you currently using and how does this include and exclude different groups of young people?**
- ✓ **When you embark on youth participation and consultation activities, how does your definition of young people positively or negatively affect the intended outcome?**
- ✓ **How do your youth participation and consultation activities align with your organisation?**
- ✓ **Is there a readiness in your organisation to respond to the outcomes of the activities?**
- ✓ **Are realistic outcomes of the youth participation and consultation activities clearly explained to the participations?**

The Role of Youth Services

Youth services provide an important role for young people through their broad aims for social inclusion and social capacity building, and this is equally important for

young people with a disability. As the literature suggests, young people with a disability can experience a range of social *exclusions* and may have limited opportunities across a range of essential aspects of societal life; barriers from transport to housing, education, training, employment and avenues for social networking. Youth services play a vital part in empowering young people to identify their goals in these areas, and equip them with the skills to independently achieve these over the course of their lives.

Working with young people with a disability is not solely the domain of specialist disability services; most young people with a disability do not want or require specialised services that separate them from opportunities readily available to other young people. Young people with a disability have views and opinions that are certainly not limited in scope *by* their disability, and require institutions, mechanisms and processes in the community to provide equal access to participation, consultation and citizenship.

Youth services that *do* provide opportunities for participation and consultation to clients with a disability not only benefit by having truly inclusive processes for these clients, but the culture of the organisation itself; from management to staff who gain new knowledge, skills and the capacity to facilitate genuine community inclusion.

What do some young people with a disability say about their experiences with youth services?

"Centrelink referred us and when we got there, it was for normal people; they just called mum over and asked if I was disabled and mum said yes, and the lady said she thought so and that we were at the wrong place – I was so embarrassed"

19yo male, Cornelia de Lange Syndrome

"I don't like to tell people I am disabled - so I don't, but I still don't understand them"

19yo female, Intellectual Impairment

"I went to this place for kids with my friend and they gave me lots of papers to read, even my friend couldn't get what the papers said and he doesn't even have a disability"

16yo female, Asperger Syndrome & Dyslexia, Anorexia

My Story.....

My name is Alison and at the age of 24 I feel that I have enough experience to last



me a lifetime already. Up to this point I have experienced life with a mental illness and a disability. In grade 10, I was diagnosed with Major Clinical Depression and Generalised Anxiety Disorder which had a significant effect on my final years of high school. Whilst being treated for my mental illness it was identified that I had a previous undiagnosed learning disability and filtering impairment; this diagnosis answered so many questions for me in terms of my frustration with my below average academic performance despite my passion and love of learning. Even after the diagnosis in Grade 12 the school could not provide me with the resources and assistance that I needed as they did not have them.

I graduated high school with an OP of 17 and a general frustration for education which had evolved through continual bad marks despite my efforts. This below average achievement devastated my self esteem and I withdrew from my dreams of further academic pursuits post school. For a year and a half after school I held down casual jobs and continued battling with depression and anxiety with very little direction in my life. I eventually decided to return to study as my love of learning was far stronger than my fear of failing.

I enrolled at TAFE in a Community Services Certificate III. When I enrolled I visited the Disability Support Officer at TAFE and whilst I was not considered serious enough to receive full support she did provide me with some basic assistance. The result of the extra assistance became increasingly apparent when my teachers started to tell me that I was doing really well and barely passing as I had feared. This support and encouragement as well as the access to extra resources spurred me on and I enrolled in the Certificate IV and then Diploma after that. In the Diploma the grading system went from pass fail to a numbering system, and it became evident that I wasn't just doing well but I was achieving Distinctions and High Distinctions and my graduation from the Diploma was with 6 High Distinctions.

This growth and achievement inspired me to return to my original dream of attending and completing a Bachelor degree at university. I am now completing a Bachelor of Social Work with a GPA of 6 (Distinction) and I average Distinctions and High Distinctions for my assessments. My success at uni is in part due to my determination and love of learning but also due to the commitment of my Disability Support Officer to provide me with considerable access to resources and services that support me to study despite my learning and hearing impairments.



SECTION 2: Engaging young people in community organisations with intention and authenticity



This section is about engaging young people with a disability in your organisation, particularly in respect to participation and consultation. We will explore models and frameworks that are essential in the development and framing of participation and consultation activities for young people, including those with a disability.

Before we unpack these models it is critical organisations have analysed how accessible and equitable their services actually are. The following is a checklist from the Youth Action and Policy Association NSW (YAPA) Opening Doors Resource Kit. A “YES” response to a question indicates good practice; a “NO” response indicates an area for improvement. This checklist is about generating awareness and encourages organisation to implement strategic plans and goals to improve access and equity.

Checklist: How accessible is your service?

Use this checklist to identify how you can improve your service for young people with a disability

Physical access to your venue

People can be dropped off and picked up from your venue, close to the entrance of your venue

☐ Yes ☐ No

There is a clear path to your venue, which is well maintained, free of hazards and lit at night

☐ Yes ☐ No

There are designated accessible car spaces located close to the entrance of your venue

☐ Yes ☐ No

Designated car spaces are marked with the international access symbol

☐ Yes ☐ No

Your service ensures that the designated car spaces are only used by people with a disability

☐ Yes ☐ No

Your venue is wheelchair accessible

☐ Yes ☐ No

The main entrance or the accessible entrance is obvious or clearly signposted

☐ Yes ☐ No

Hand rails are provided on all ramps and stairs

☐ Yes ☐ No

Ramps and stairs are well lit at night

☐ Yes ☐ No

Ramps are built according to disability standards, ie. not too steep

☐ Yes ☐ No

Stairs are slip resistant

☐ Yes ☐ No

Doorways are a minimum of 850mm in width

☐ Yes ☐ No

Your venue and venue entrance is free of hazards that block pathways (such as bikes, school bags, brochure stands, pot plants)

☐ Yes ☐ No

Floor surfaces are even and slip resistant

☐ Yes ☐ No

Your venue uses colour differentiation between ceilings, walls, doors and floors

☐ Yes ☐ No

Door handles, door bells, brochures and promotional material are at the right height for wheelchair users

☐ Yes ☐ No

There are designated accessible toilets and change rooms

☐ Yes ☐ No

Accessible toilets have a grab rail next to the toilet and there is enough room for a person to maneuver themselves from the wheelchair to the toilet. Taps and handrails are within reach of wheelchair users

☐ Yes ☐ No

Signs indicate all important features such as the reception, toilet

☐ Yes ☐ No

Signs use symbols rather than words whenever possible. For example a symbol of a woman, rather than the word "women" on a toilet door.

☐ Yes ☐ No

Signs use dark writing or symbols on a white background. Any writing is in a plain font such as Arial and is in a large point size

☐ Yes ☐ No

If people need to wait for your service, seating is provided

☐ Yes ☐ No

You use warning signs for entertainment events that use strobe lighting or smoke machines

☐ Yes ☐ No

Your service has transport arrangements for young people who have difficulty in getting to your service

☐ Yes ☐ No

Making your service more accessible is likely to make it safer and more accessible for other people who visit your service such as young parents with prams, or people who cannot read English. It could also help you meet your public liability and workplace safety responsibilities.

Promoting your service

Promotional flyers use a dark coloured print on a light background, pictures, symbols and diagrams, a plain font such as Arial, at least 12 point font size (minimum for people with a visual impairment)

☐ Yes ☐ No

Promotional flyers are easy to read, use basic English and no jargon

☐ Yes ☐ No

Photos and drawings of young people in promotional material feature a range of young people, including young people with disabilities. Consider including graphics designed by a young person with a disability.

☐ Yes ☐ No

Promotional flyers state if you have wheelchair access

☐ Yes ☐ No

You network with, and provide promotional material to, a wide range of services, including disability services

☐ Yes ☐ No

Young people can phone, SMS (text), email or fax your service, or your service has a TTY phone system. (A TTY phone system is designed for people who have a hearing or speech impairment. TTY works by sending typed messages between two people who have TTY phones).

☐ Yes ☐ No

Your website meets disability standards

☐ Yes ☐ No

Staff and volunteer awareness

Staff and volunteers have been trained in basic disability awareness

☐ Yes ☐ No

Staff and volunteers know how to communicate with a young person who has a:

☐ Yes ☐ No - hearing impairment

☐ Yes ☐ No - visual impairment

☐ Yes ☐ No - speech impairment

☐ Yes ☐ No - learning difficulty or intellectual disability

☐ Yes ☐ No - brain injury

☐ Yes ☐ No - mental health issue

Staff and volunteers have strategies in place for promoting friendships among young people attending programs, such as group and team activities

☐ Yes ☐ No

You consider employing a specialist disability worker

☐ Yes ☐ No

Partnerships and networks

You have a referral list of disability services for young people and their families

☐ Yes ☐ No

Your service works in partnership with disability services to make your service accessible

☐ Yes ☐ No

You provide information about your service to disability services

☐ Yes ☐ No

Participation in decision making

Young people with a disability are involved in decision making, such as having input about how services are run, being involved in informal consultations, the youth committee or management committee

☐ Yes ☐ No

After answering this questionnaire you now have some guidelines for what you are doing well (your **YES** responses) and some goals for how you can improve (your **NO** responses). Prioritise each of your **NO** responses and choose three-five goals to work on and write a plan of how and when you will achieve them. It is important to embed these changes so including them into work plans or organisational strategic plans is important.

Engaging Young People with a Disability in Community Organisations

One of the two primary documents guiding the development and delivery of Disability Services in Queensland is the **Disability Services Act 2006**. This legislation provides the strongest foundation Queenslanders have ever had for promoting the rights of people with a disability, increasing their wellbeing and encouraging their participation in the life of the community. Links to this legislation and an excellent overview published by the Department of Communities on their website may be found in the “Useful Links & Resources” section of this kit.

The other key document guiding the operations, delivery and continual improvement of disability services in Queensland is the **Disability Service Standards**. Developed by the Department of Communities-Disability Services, these 10 Standards form the basis and quality systems of disability specialist organisations funded by the Department. They are extremely relevant however for *any* community organisation wishing to provide more inclusive services for people with a disability as part of their core values and practice, and are easy to understand and utilise as the basis of discussion, training, service review or the implementation of new programs or processes.

Disability Service Standards

- 1. Service access**
- 2. Individual needs**
- 3. Decision-making and choice**
- 4. Privacy, dignity and confidentiality**
- 5. Participation and integration**
- 6. Valued status**
- 7. Complaints and disputes**
- 8. Service management**
- 9. Protection of legal and human rights and freedom from abuse and neglect**
- 10. Staff recruitment, employment and development**

(See “Useful Links & Resources” for the link to the full Disability Service Standards plus tools for implementation)



Key considerations when engaging young people with a disability in your organisation

Accessibility and capacity of your service

- How “user friendly” is your building? This includes your street access, parking, main entrance, internal layout such as the location of furniture and office equipment, bathroom facilities etc. Also, the design expressing the culture and service itself - visible posters, promotional materials, staffs personal effects etc
- Are your staff suitably trained with adequate knowledge and skills, and display appropriate attitudes towards young people with a disability?
- Are your programs/services genuinely inclusive and appropriate? Are there any disabilities you cannot support effectively on site or in off-site activities?
- Do your funded programs/services effectively cater for the inclusion of young people with a disability? Does the funding criteria subtly *exclude or discourage* this group of young people from engaging with those programs/services?
- Do your organisations policies and procedures limit the genuine inclusion and participation of young people with as disability?
- What are your services current avenues for feedback from and consultation with young people in the review and development of service provision?

The historical/current networks and profile of the young person

- Did they/do they currently attend a Special Education Unit in a mainstream school, or a Special School specifically for disability support?
- Have they ever engaged with, or currently engage with a Disability Employment Service (DES) or Job Service Australia (JSA) provider?
- Have they ever engaged with, or currently engage with a specialist health or clinical mental health service? Is a diagnosed behavioural, health or mental health issue present along side their disability?
- What do you know of the young persons’ family, peer or other organisational networks and their influence?
- How does the young persons’ location and geography, or access to transport impact upon their ability engage in an ongoing way with your service?

- How do the young persons broader profile factors such as gender, culture, sexuality etc in conjunction with their disability impact upon their ability or suitability to engage with your service?

Models of Participation

Below are three models of participation that are useful guides in the framing and development of participation and consultation activities.

1. International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum

This model offers an excellent framework for organisations to map their participation activities with the level of public participation and public expectations.

Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Public Participation Goal 1	Public Participation Goal 2	Public Participation Goal 3	Public Participation Goal 4	Public Participation Goal 5
To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problems, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
Promise to the Public:	Promise to the Public:	Promise to the Public:	Promise to the Public:	Promise to the Public:
We will keep You informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for direct advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
Example Techniques to Consider:	Example Techniques to Consider:	Example Techniques to Consider:	Example Techniques to Consider:	Example Techniques to Consider:
Fact sheets • Web Sites • Open houses	• Public comment • Focus groups	Workshops • Deliberate polling	Citizen Advisory • Committees • Consensus	Citizen juries • Ballots • Delegated



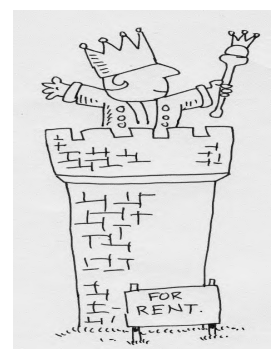
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys • Public meetings 		building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participatory decision making 	decisions
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(Source: <http://www.iap2.org.au/sitebuilder/resources/knowledge/asset/files/36/iap2spectrum.pdf>)

- The table above outlines the discreet stages within participation that are available to organisations wishing to engage the public
- The model allows organisations to be clear on their intent and manage expectations
- The IAP2 Spectrum is particularly useful for local authorities as it clearly describes the goals of public participation coupled with the implicit promise this approach holds for the community, this assists organisations to analysis the public expectation of their participation processes
- Offering a continuum of options for community engagement, organisations can choose from simply informing the public of decisions and programs that have been made on their behalf to the other end of the spectrum where public make the decisions
- The IAP2 Spectrum can assist organisations in deciding the level of participation and decision making needed and required and to be clear about the intention and expectations
- The model also provides some techniques that can be used, depending upon the level of involvement required of citizens

Questions for consideration

- ✓ **Have the goals and purpose of the participation or consultation activity been articulated in a clear and thorough way?**
- ✓ **Do the participation activities adequately meet the intention of the stated goals?**
- ✓ **Is the goal and participation activity consistent with intended or anticipated expectations from the public?**
- ✓ **What considerations need to be taken for young people with disabilities?**



2. Model of Participation

This model was developed by Sheir (2001).

	ATTITUDE <i>Are staff in your organisation committed to youth participation, and do they...</i>	ACTION <i>and does your organisation have a range of strategies and processes that...</i>	ACCOUNTABILITY <i>and does your organisation policy...</i>
Level 1 Listening	listen to what young people have to say	enable it to listen to young people's views	require processes for young people to be heard
Level 2 Facilitating	ensure young people are able to have their say	provide opportunities for, and assist young people in having their say	require that young people be given assistance so they can be heard
Level 3 Consideration	seriously consider what young people have to say	ensure young people's views are seriously considered	require that young people's views be seriously considered
Level 4 Involvement	encourage young people to have a real role in decision-making	provide young people with a real role in decision-making processes	require that young people have a role in decision-making processes and receive feedback

- This matrix provides levels of participation from listening to involvement; this is similar to other models of participation where participation is placed on a continuum based on the degree of participation of the participants
- The model discusses the necessary attitude, action and accountability required by services in engaging each of the four levels of participation
- The table illustrates how the model can easily be applied to youth services current participation activities, to review past or current participation and consultation processes and to provide insight into the level of participation by young people. The model can also be applied to future strategies by considering what outcome is being sought and if the planned process is being pitched at the right level.

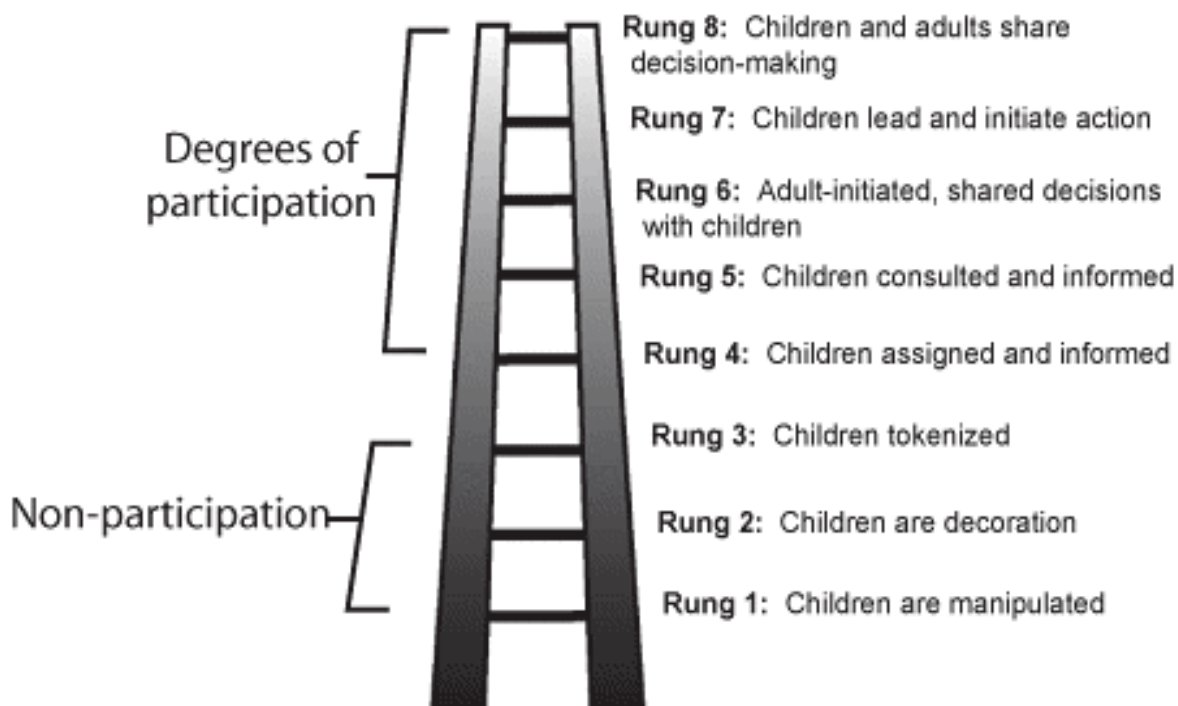
Questions for consideration

- ✓ **Do the type of participation activities planned accurately reflect the level of participation desired by youth services?**
- ✓ **Does your service share a similar definition and commitment to participation?**

- ✓ **Do the required policies and risk management procedures exist to support higher levels of participation?**

3. The Ladder of Participation

This model was adapted from an earlier participation model by Roger Hart to apply to children and young people (1992). Hart's ladder details eight levels of participation from manipulation through to youth initiated, shared decision making with adults.



Adapted from Hart, R. (1992). *Children's Participation: from Tokenism to Citizenship*. Florence: UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre.

Level 1: Manipulation is where adults use young people to support causes and pretend that the causes are important to young people.

Level 2: Decoration is where young people are used to help or 'bolster' a cause in a relatively indirect way.

Level 3: Tokenism is where young people appear to be given a voice, but in fact have little or no choice about what they do or how they participate.

Level 4: Assigned but informed is where young people are assigned to a specific role and informed about how and why they are being involved.

Level 5: Consulted and informed is where young people give advice on projects or programs designed and run by adults. The young people are informed about how their input will be used and the outcomes of decisions made by adults.

Level 6: Adult initiated, shared decisions with young people are where projects or programs are initiated by adults but the decision-making is shared with young people.

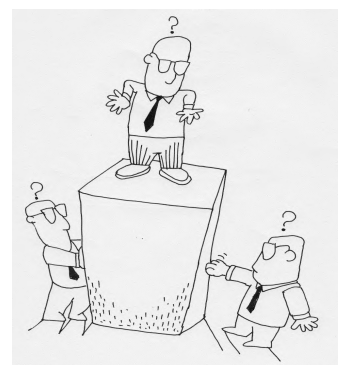
Level 7: Initiated and directed by young people is where young people initiate and direct a project or program. Adults are involved only in a support role.

Level 8: Youth-initiated, shared decisions with adults are where projects or programs are initiated by young people and decision-making is shared among young people and adults. These projects empower young people while at the same time enabling them to access and learn from the life experience and expertise of adults.

- The Ladder of Participation is a useful tool for ascertaining the nature and quality of the participation for a particular activity or strategy.
- Debate about the last two levels 7 and 8 exists concerning which is the preferred or most meaningful levels, some believe that shared decision making is the most beneficial to young people and adults whilst others suggest that young people are most empowered when they are making decisions without the influence of adults. Sufficient to say both levels have merit and ultimately depend on the intention of the participation strategy.
- The first three levels described in Hart's models are not participation strategies but describe the use of young people for the promotion of an organisational agenda.

Questions for consideration

- ✓ **Is the participation strategy a genuine and transparent attempt to engage young people into service activity or is there an alternative agenda to engaging in participation activities?**



- ✓ **Does the level of participation chosen align with the whole organisation intention and goals in its engagement strategy?**

Consulting Young People

In 'Two Way Street - How Governments can engage young people through consultation' the Office of Youth Affairs Qld (2002) states that engaging with young people through consultation brings a number of benefits to Government, young people and the broader community. They suggest that consultation provides services with the opportunity to:

- Demonstrate respect towards young people through open, transparent, and accountable processes
- Promote goodwill and understanding, both between young people and government, and between young people and other community members
- Build relationships with young people
- Become more accessible to young people
- Become more responsive to the needs and interests of young people
- Provide opportunities for young people to develop skills, information and experience in decision-making processes
- Recognise diversity and that, like all members of the community, young people have preferred ways of working
- Provide ongoing opportunities for involvement in decision-making processes, and recognise the importance of this involvement
- Build cooperative partnerships between government, young people and the community
- Build a sense of ownership, pride and involvement in government decision-making within the community
- Improve government efficiency by targeting government policy and expenditure to reflect the needs and issues of importance to the community.

Working with young people with intention and authenticity

Young people will be the first to tell you, through their words or actions (or inaction) if they believe you are not genuinely interested in them or supporting them in getting what they need. Just as important, they will communicate with you in the same ways if they believe you have the right intention, but not the skills or knowledge *required* to achieve this.



An organisation (or worker) who clearly *has* developed some of these skills to the degree that they are evident in how the service operates or the workers personal initial approach, will find a young person far more receptive to receiving assistance.

Young people with a disability, including their advocates (often parents) are finely tuned to the subtle factors in service provision; from promotional materials to the building itself, how staff operate to other organisations the service works with. If these obviously *exclude* consideration of disability, this awareness will be a driver in how they communicate and cooperate with you; or don't.

Working with young people specifically in consultation, it is most important to remember that tokenism stands out the most when you are the token. One young person with a disability in a group, like one "Indigenous" young person, one "multicultural" young person etc says this loud and clear. They are there to represent their "category", and not themselves or even "young people" - an appropriate and more inclusive category in this context.

Authenticity is simply being honest in who you are and what you are doing. Changing your interpersonal style to suit a client's disability does not do them as a person any favours. A service putting more disability awareness posters on the walls will have the opposite effect if the building or staff show no evidence of disability awareness.



Always be straight with a young person, including any gaps in your own knowledge and skill; they will be the first to assist YOU in strengthening your capacity to work with them more effectively and will respect you more for your honesty.



SECTION 3: Participation, consultation and governance mechanisms



In this section we will explore the mechanisms used for youth participation, consultation and governance. Participation can range from broad formal structures e.g. national youth peak bodies and national youth activities to young people being members of the organisations board of management with governance responsibilities, to informal conversations between workers and young people.

Youth Participation Mechanisms

- All Australian state and territory governments, and the Australian Government, tend to have some form of *formal* youth participation strategy and mechanism. These are generally formal structures such as youth round tables, youth parliaments or youth advisory committees.
- Youth Week is an overarching event that occurs each year in April (it commenced in 2000) and includes a broad range of youth specific events rather than formal participation initiatives (see www.youthweek.com/about.html#). Events include activities such as exhibitions, dance parties, forums, sporting activities, and localised community events. Youth Week is a wholly inter-governmental event but is auspiced by the Australian Government Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR).
- At the federal level a new Minister for Youth, the Hon Kate Ellis MP, was announced subsequent to the 2007 election. There had not been a minister for children and young people since 2004. Presently the Hon Peter Garrett MP is the Minister of Youth.
- In some states youth affairs is part of broader community service portfolios (for example, Western Australia, Queensland, South Australia and Victoria)
- In several states there are also independent Commissions for Children and Young people (for example, New South Wales, Queensland, Tasmania).
- Most states and territories have majority government funded, independent youth peak advocacy bodies (for example, YANQ in Queensland, YAPA in New South Wales, YACVic in Victoria, YACWA in Western Australia, YACSA in South Australia, YNOT in Tasmania and the Youth Coalition of the Australian Capital Territory)
- There is also a funded youth peak body at the federal level the Australian Youth Affairs Coalition (AYAC).

- In the Australian context, some literature suggests that traditional approaches to youth participation such as advisory committee structures like Junior Youth Councils, are exclusive and attract well-resourced young people who have been encouraged to become leaders within their communities and therefore do not effectively represent “young people” as a whole.
- There are two key events occurring each year in Queensland that highlight the contributions and achievements of people with a disability in particular, and regularly include events and activities *run by and for* young people:
 - * **International Day of People with a Disability (December 3rd)**
 - * **Disability Action Week – QLD (September)**

These 2 dates are often celebrated through a state-wide range of events and activities funded by Department of Communities – Disability Services, plus community organizations or collaborative partnerships involving these types of services. They can often attract the interest and support of many local Councils as well.

- One initiative local Councils *do* take the lead in is the development of Youth Advisory Councils (YACs). These groups draw from young people of diverse profiles and backgrounds and aim to represent local youth needs and issues with the support of local Government.

Concerning youth governance, the dilemma faced is the same that adults face with the existing social leadership structures; only the most motivated, qualified, connected or supported are able to obtain leadership positions that inherently over time, shape them into a leader who no longer reflects or represents people on mass.

Recognising this is a key to developing true models and strategies for youth leadership that *organically* inspire genuine and inclusive youth participation among the wider population of young people; feeling represented by their leaders and not only an admiration of their achievements as an individual.

While this remains difficult to implement at a Federal level, initiatives on a local or state level by community *and* political bodies (Councils and Qld Government) have a greater capacity to review their models of youth engagement, participation and governance with the specific aim of finding the right balance of *representatives first*

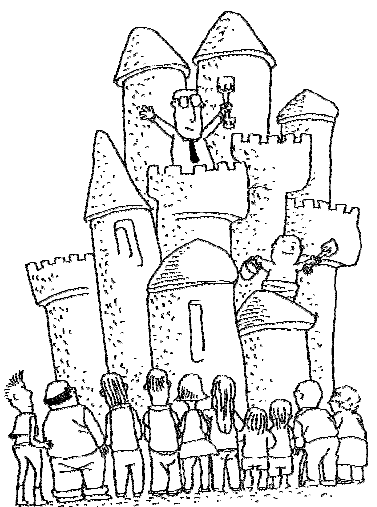
(perhaps community nominated), and then focussing on the development of leadership skills while maintaining their representation of core community values.

Participation and Consultation Options

Adopted from Kristy Abbott's paper 'If you want to know what we think, just ask us' (2004)

Consultation Method	Advantages	Disadvantages
Surveys <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be time intensive to develop the survey instrument. • Good for quantitative information but less good for generating 'depth' data. • Inexpensive, particularly if conducted as a web survey. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can provide quantitative data that can be generalised. • An effective way of getting information from a lot of young people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people may not be as receptive as older people to written information. • May be difficult to get surveys back – questionnaires typically have a low rate of return. • May disadvantage young people with limited literacy skills.
Focus Groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be time intensive to coordinate, plus up to 2 hours per focus group to conduct. • Can provide detailed insights into behaviour, lifestyle, language etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interactions between participants can generate ideas that would not be raised in one-on-one interviews. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can't draw definitive conclusions about the target population unless you do large numbers of focus groups. • Data produced may be difficult to analyse.
Individual Interviews <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be time intensive if interviewing large numbers of young people, but length of interviews can vary. • Can obtain good, in-depth information. • Requires well designed questions as a framework for interviews. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be used with all young people, including less confident, less literate and less articulate. • Personal experiences can be explored in great detail. • One-on-one interviews provide a level of confidentiality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relies on the skills of the interviewer, particularly in building rapport. • Training interviewers can be expensive and time consuming. • Interviewer bias is possible.
Workshops/Public meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people often feel their views will be taken seriously if they are expressed via a large group. • Focus is on the one issue for an extended period of time allowing for detailed information from participants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time efficient – gains information from a large number of young people in a short time frame. • Easy to set up and conduct. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less articulate and less confident young people may feel overwhelmed by the large group process. • Can be difficult to recruit young people to attend.
Informal Chats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be a time and cost efficient method of getting a 'feel' for issues. • Depth of information obtained depends on the quality of the interaction. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be used with all young people, and is particularly good for 'hard to reach' young people. • Can be done at any time. • Non-threatening. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relies on the coordinator's skills in developing trust and rapport with young people. • Can be difficult to contextualise the information. • Unable to draw conclusions about general population due to ad-hoc nature of the consultation.

Online Technology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can be effective in reaching a large and diverse number of young people with out the discrimination of people or barriers to accessing a physical environment. • Responses can often be more honest and in-depth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overcomes barriers of mobility/geography, speech, visual or hearing impairment, or social aversion. • Is generally a medium most young people are receptive to and capable of engaging with. • Can be used with all young 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires a moderated structure to maximise the quality of input. • Can quickly turn into a forum of agendas and non-specific (or too specific) criticism. • Feedback can vary greatly between the medium being live (ie; chat) or static (email)
Youth Advisory Groups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allows you to gather information from a group of young people already meeting to discuss youth issues – little time required to coordinate the meeting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The young people involved in youth councils are experienced at giving their opinions on issues. • Requires little preparation time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tend to be composed of young people who are articulate and confident – may exclude shy and less confident people. • Your issue may not be given much time/priority if the meeting agenda is full.
Youth Parliament <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A formal structure by government to encourage youth participation and citizenship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The young people involved in youth parliament are experienced at giving their opinions on issues • Solid leadership experiences for young people 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tend to be composed of young people who are articulate and confident – may exclude shy and less confident people if strategies are not used to target young people from diverse backgrounds
Board of Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some organisation encourage young people to be members of their board of management to promote a youth perspective in the governance of the organisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can provide fresh perspectives and approaches and assist organisation to maintain a youth focus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term commitment and levels of responsibility can be a negative



Consultation Checklist

The following consultation checklist is adopted from the Youth Affairs Council of Victoria and Office for Youth Department of Victorian Communities (2004), *Consulting with young people about their ideas and opinions: Taking young people seriously*.

Setting Goals and Objectives

- Have the goals and objectives of the consultation been defined?

Which Young People

- Have you decided which young people should be consulted?
- Do the young people who will be consulted need to be representative sample?
- Have you decided how to recruit participants

Who Should do the Consultation?

- Has an appropriate person been chosen to lead the consultation or facilitation?
- If a facilitator is used, have they had an appropriate police check prior to working with young people?

Supporting Participation

- Have support mechanisms for participation been considered and strategies put in place?
- How will young people reach your venue safely, for example will you cover the costs of transport? If it is a late night meeting, how will young people be getting home?
- Is the venue accessible? For example is it close to public transport
- Does the time of the consultation of the consultation suit the participants?
- Are the participants to be reimbursed for expenses?
- Is your consultation process sensitive to the diversity of young people if required?
- Is your consultation process sensitive to the cultural practice of the young people involved



- Does your consultation promote gender equity and support?
- Is an accessible language being used for consultation and all related information?
- Has a strategy been planned to provide feedback and outcomes to participants?
- How will you acknowledge/thank participants for their contribution?
- If the consultation process is to take a long time have strategies been planned to keep participants engaged?
- Will debriefing be available to participants if necessary?
- What will happen with the information gathered?
- Have strategies been considered to make young people feel comfortable in the consultation?

Privacy and Consent

- Have you thought about what will happen with the information gathered? Does this relate to young people?

Evaluation

- Has an evaluation technique been chosen and scheduled into the process?

Strategies for Working with People with a Disability

Adopted from the Youth Action and Policy Association NSW (YAPA) 'Opening Doors' Resource

The most important thing to remember is to show respect, acceptance and dignity to all young people you work with, regardless of ability or disability. Here are some tips to help you communicate and work with people with a disability.

Be supportive

Be supportive and welcoming. Remember that the young person may be feeling nervous if it is their first time in visiting your service. Try and reassure them and get them involved in group or team activities or introduce them to some of the other young people using your service.

Remember young people in general are responsive to a range of mediums that will make them feel welcome; this includes the pictures on your walls, your promotional materials, even the layout and fit out of your building including the table at which



you meet. Engage with young people directly in consultation to ensure you are a “youth friendly” space.

Be informed

Disability awareness may be evident in all aspects of your organization and young people with a disability will be receptive to these and more likely to engage with you and your service. This includes the accessibility and fit out of your building, the appropriateness of your services or programs to all types of disability, and training provided to staff that is observable through their knowledge and attitudes. Knowing the appropriate language to use (disabled, disability or handicapped?) and the best approach in consideration of the type of disability (from a handshake to physical contact in general) will go a long way in building rapport and trust.

Be open minded

Like all people, those with a disability will differ greatly from individual to individual. While general knowledge of disability is useful, no 2 people with the same disability should be limited by a standardized approach. Strive to focus on the strengths of individuality and uniqueness, with consideration of the young person’s safety, social inclusion and personal development.

Ask before you assist

If you think someone needs help, ask them, don't assume that they need your help. If they say yes, ask them what they want you to do before you act. If they say no, accept their answer, rather than keep asking them, eg. "Are you sure? I don't mind."

Focus on the person

When speaking with a young person with a disability who is accompanied by a parent, carer or friend, speak directly to the young person with the disability. If you have a conversation for more than a few moments with someone in a wheelchair or sitting down, pull up a chair or squat down so you are communicating at eye level.

Don't bombard them

Don't overload young clients with too much information or questions; this includes intake and assessment forms. Pace yourself according to their level of comprehension and confidence and provide as much or as little support as is necessary.

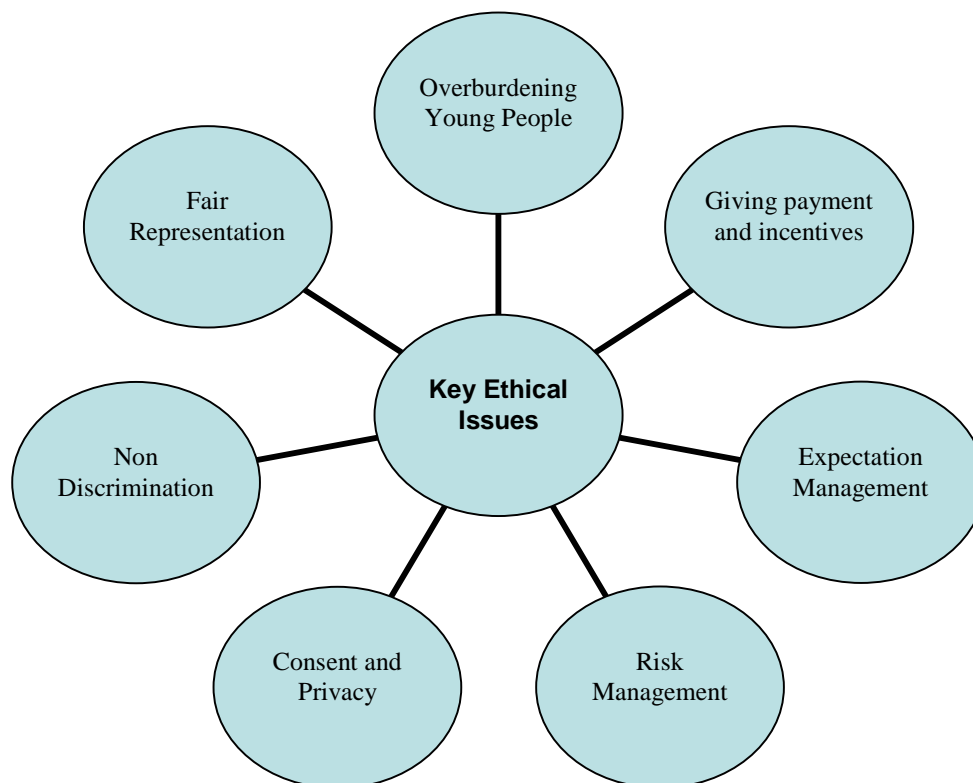
Respect personal space and property

Never lean on a wheelchair as it is the personal space of the owner. Never move

personal property such as a wheelchair or walking aid away from a person with a disability, as they will usually feel more comfortable if it remains within their reach. Don't offer to hand their equipment to them unless they request it.

Understanding and working with risk management, duty of care and ethics

- Risk management and the ethics of consultation and participation processes pose interesting dilemmas for those engaging with young people. In the report commissioned by Save the Children, 'Children and Young People as Citizens: Partners for Social Change' (2003), O' Kane identifies key ethical issue for consideration in engaging young people.



- **Overburdening Young People** - an understanding of competing demands of young people's time such as study, work, recreation, sport need to be balanced with participation and consultation requests. O'Kane (2003) raises the question of

should we request young people to work on a participation initiative if they will miss school? And if they miss work due to this involvement should they be compensated? This also does not take into account the increasing level of responsibility placed on many young people to care for family or engage in other activities as a result of family expectation or pressure.

- **Fair Representation** - engages the issues about the repeated participation of the 'same' young people in consultations, events or processes at different levels. The issue is raised of how mechanisms can be developed to ensure fair and meaningful representative processes among young people and the need to avoid certain young people becoming a 'new elite', over-exposed and no longer representative of their peers. In addition we must beware of a lack of democracy resulting in certain young people being given opportunities for wider exposure.
- **Non Discrimination and Inclusion** - Attention is required to ensure that participation processes provide opportunity for groups of young people to engage and participate regardless of socio-economic, geographic, disability, religion, race and culture. Reviews of some participation initiatives have revealed that the most vocal, articulate or photogenic children tend to have more opportunities to participate or to represent their peers.
- **Consent and Privacy** - Attention is required in participation process to provide clear information to young people regarding the intended objectives and scope. Further this information needs to be in reader-friendly formats (for different abilities and cultural backgrounds) so they can make informed choices about whether, and to what degree, they want to participate. Young people need to be given clear information regarding issues of anonymity and confidentiality. If young people participate in the development of resources of any kind, (e.g. book, video, drawings), an agreement about the use of that material is required.
- **Minimising Risk** – A clear understanding of risk is essential in working with young people. A documented risk management framework that provides a comprehensive identification, analysis, assessment and treatment of risk in participation process is critical.
- **Expectation Management** - While encouraging children and young people to express their views, likes and dislikes and ideas for change, we need to ensure that we are not raising false expectations.



- **Giving Payment and Incentives** - Many ethical concerns are raised about providing payments to young people for their participation. However, increasing numbers of children and young people are being invited to take on the roles of facilitators and resource persons in a variety of contexts. Ethical choices about payment or incentives must therefore be made with all relevant factors taken into consideration.

Useful Links & Resources

Resource Centre for People with a Disability

<http://www.disabilitiesinfocentre.org/>

QLD Government Site for People with a Disability

<http://www.qld.gov.au/disability/>

QLD Department of Communities

<http://www.communities.qld.gov.au/disability/disability-and-community-care>

QLD Disability Service Standards – Factsheet for Implementation

<http://www.communities.qld.gov.au/resources/disability/publication/quality-factsheet-1.pdf>

QLD Disability Service Standards

<http://www.communities.qld.gov.au/resources/disability/publication/quality-disability-service-standards.pdf>

Implementing the Disability Sector Quality System

<http://www.communities.qld.gov.au/resources/disability/publication/quality-5-steps-implementation-poster.pdf>

QLD Disability Services Act 2006 (An Overview)

<http://www.communities.qld.gov.au/resources/disability/publication/disability-services-act-2006.pdf>

QLD Disability Services Act 2006

<http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/legisln/CURRENT/D/DisabServA06.pdf>

QLD Blind Association – Visually Impaired

<http://www.qba.asn.au/>

Deaf Services Queensland – Hearing Impaired

<http://www.deafservicesqld.org.au/>



Speech Language Impaired (Education QLD)

<http://education.qld.gov.au/student-services/learning/disability/generalinfo/speech-language/index.html>

Autism Queensland – Autistic Spectrum Disorder

<http://www.autismqld.com.au/>

Cerebral Palsy League of Queensland

<http://www.cplqld.org.au/>

Down Syndrome Association of Queensland

<http://www.dsaq.org.au/>

Education Queensland – Special Education and Disability Learning Support

<http://education.qld.gov.au/student-services/learning/disability/index.html>

National Disability Coordination Officer (NDCO) Program

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/Skills/Programs/Support/NDCO/Pages/default.aspx>

Brain Injury Association of Queensland

<http://synapse.org.au/>

Spinal Injuries Association QLD - Paraplegia & Quadriplegia

<http://www.spinal.com.au/>

Disability Resources (General/National)

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/Skills/Programs/Support/NDCO/Pages/Resources.aspx>

Disability Employment Services

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/Employment/Programs/DES/Pages/default.aspx>

Youth Affairs Network of Queensland

www.yanq.com.au

Rewriting the Rules of Youth Participation: inclusion and diversity in government and community decision making

http://www.deewr.gov.au/Youth/Programs/NYARS/Documents/InclusionandDiversity_report.pdf

Engaging Queenslanders: Managing Community Engagement

www.onlinelearning.qld.gov.au/materials/ce/online/ce/info/learning/index.htm

Youth Participation (VIC)

<http://www.youthlaw.asn.au/about/participation.html>



UN Youth Australia
<http://unyouth.org.au/>

Simon McLean Artworks
www.simonink.com



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