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Local Youth Transformation Pilot

Your right to be heard

A young person's guide to meaningful participation

Developed with Anna Freud

ISLINGTON
For a more equal future

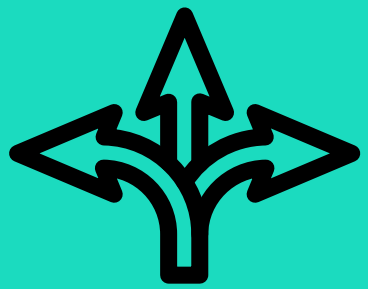


You have the right to have your views taken seriously.

This guide helps you check whether that's really happening.

We have adopted the Lundy Model to make sure all young people we work with are supported to be heard. You don't need to know the 'Lundy Model' to use this guide, it's about what good participation should feel like.

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Space

Do you feel able to take part?

You should:
- Know why you are being asked to take part
- Feel safe, respected and comfortable
- Be able to say no without any pressure
- Know what will happen after you share your views

A good sign to look out for:
- You understand what the session is for and feel comfortable speaking (or choosing not to)

A red flag to look out for:
- You're unsure why you're there or feel pressured to say something.

Ask this if you're unsure:

"What is this for, and what happens next?"



Voice

Can you say what you really think?

You should:
- Have a chance to help shape the topics or questions
- Be able to share your views in different ways
- Get support if you need time or help to think things through
- Not feel talked over or ignored

A good sign to look out for:
- You can share your views in ways that work for you (talking, writing, drawing, small groups).

A red flag to look out for:
- Only confident people speak, or adults already decided the questions.

Ask this if needed:

"Can we add something we want to talk about?"



Audience

Is someone with power listening?

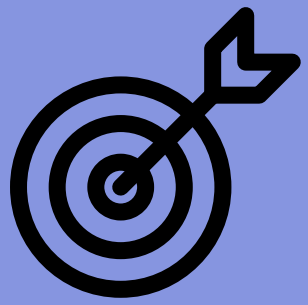
You should know:
- Who will hear what you say
- That they actually have the power to change things
- That your views won't just disappear into a report

A good sign to look out for:
- A decision-maker is there, or it's clear who will read and respond.

A red flag to look out for:
- No one can explain who will see your ideas or what they can do with them.

Ask this if it's unclear:

"Who is this being shared with, and what decisions do they make?"



Influence

Will anything change because of this?

You should be:
- What can change because of your views
- What can't change, and why
- When decisions will be made
- How you'll hear back

A good sign to look out for:
- You get an update showing what changed — or a clear explanation if it didn't.

A red flag to look out for:
- You never hear anything again after sharing your views.

Ask this early:

"What difference can this make, and when will we hear back?"



Influence cont.

Good participation does not mean:
• You decide everything
• Adults promise things they can't deliver

Good participation does mean:
• Adults are honest
• Your views are taken seriously
• You're respected even when change isn't possible
• Being listened to includes being told the truth.

If something doesn't feel right it's okay to say:
• "I don't feel comfortable with this"
• "I don't think our views are being taken seriously"
• "Can you explain how this will make a difference?"

That's not being difficult — that's using your rights.

Quick rights check (for you)
Before or during an activity, ask yourself:
• Do I know why I'm here?
• Can I say what I really think?
• Do I know who's listening?
• Will I find out what happens next?

If the answer is "no" to any of these, it's okay to ask questions. Remember - Your voice matters. Adults have a responsibility to listen, explain, and act where they can. Participation should build your confidence, not drain it.

What to do if this isn't happening. If something doesn't feel right, trust that feeling. You have options.

Ask a question (this is often enough)
You can say:
• "Can you explain how our views will be used?"
• "Who will hear this?"
• "When will we find out what happens next?"

Asking questions is part of participation — not being rude. Talk to someone you trust. This could be:
• a youth worker
• a facilitator
• a teacher
• another adult supporting the activity

And finally...

You can say:
"I don't feel like our views are being taken seriously."

That's useful feedback.

Use feedback or complaints routes. If your organisation has:
- feedback forms
- youth reps
- a complaints process

You have the right to use them — even if the activity is "well-meaning".

Choose to step back - You always have the right to:
- stop taking part
- take a break
- say no

Participation should not cost you your wellbeing.

Remember this - If young people are invited to share views:
- adults must listen
- adults must explain decisions
- adults must follow up



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For more information and support contact
Steven.Hunt@islington.gov.uk

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