When listening to the voice of children and young people

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

To help listen you could:

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

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

www.going4growth.org.uk

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

Young people, Being Part 2010

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

Listen

Ask the right questions using the most appropriate methods and resources and be prepared to be fully open



Review

After responding, review what has happened, what might have changed, what has been achieved and what more could be done

Reflect

After listening, reflect on what has been said and what might need to happen in response



Respond

After reflecting, decide what is relevant and achievable, respond by putting things into action. One or two things done well can make a big difference





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



Having a voice, having a choice



Going for Growth

Transformation for children, young people and the Church

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

Decision making <



The Participation Spectrum ————

Participation

Elements of

Participation



Active involvement

Listening to the voice of children and young people Helps to avoid implementing things they don't want

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

The chart below is an original by Tony Cook 2013 A further dimension of Participation is to involve

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

Children / young people decide and adults are invited to be involved

children and young people in the planning and delivery of activities. This is often known as 'active involvement'. Both parts of this spectrum are important in empowering children and young people to help shape the Church, today and in the future.

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

Children / young people decide, supported by adults

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

or need.

Offers the voiceless a voice to share their opinions.

Adults, children / young people decide together

Children / young people take ownership of activities, including planning, delivery and evaluation

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

in a form of partnership working

Initiating and

Helps them gain confidence in making decisions. Values them for who they are and what they say.

Adults consult with children / young people and make decisions taking their views into account

Children / young people initiate

Creates a greater sense of belonging.

Adults invite children / young people to express their views but decisions are made by adults

planning and running activities with minimal adult intervention

Promotes understanding across generations.

Adults decide, children / young people can make less important decisions

Children / young people help to run activities with some input alongside adults

are mainly directed by adults

with the organised activities

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

Adults decide, children / young people perform other ceremonial functions

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

Adults decide, children / young people are

help Enables their prophetic voice to be heard afresh in Children / young people help out each generation. occasionally with activities that

asked if they agree or not

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

All decisions are taken by the adults, children / young people are told what to do and why

Children / young people turn up once or regularly and engage

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

"In working with children / young people, do not try

to call them back to where they were, and do not

try to call them to where you are, as beautiful as

that place may seem to you. You must have the

courage to go with them to a place that neither you

nor they have ever been before." Vincent Donovan

No Children / young people turn up **Participation** once or regularly but don't take part in any organised activities

Adults decide children / young people are told what to do, with no further information

Turning up

ownership