

Grownups

yay!!

Kid

Kids
are
cool

Voice
of the
Child



The Project Team – Acknowledgments

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The Centre for Community Child Health Knowledge Translation Team.

Children and young people

Hear Our Voice workshop participants
Aiyana aged 8, Arizona aged 11,
Frederik aged 7, Harrison aged 10, Hayden aged 10, Louis aged 7, Miller aged 7, Summer aged 12, Thibaut aged 7 and William aged 11.

Artwork supplied by Alessia aged 5, Celeste aged 5, Elissa aged 14, and Lorna aged 9.

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Involving Children & Young People

Convention on the Rights of the Child – Article 12:

Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously.

This principle recognises children and young people as actors in their own lives and applies at all times throughout a child's life.



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Involving Children & Young People



ON CHILDREN



WITH CHILDREN



BY CHILDREN

Involving Children & Young People



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Centre for Community
Child Health

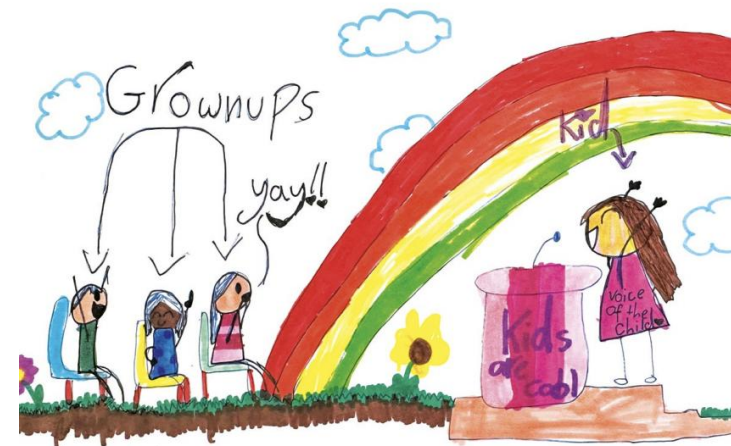
Project Stages:

- Gathering the Evidence
- Creating a Toolkit
 - Values & Principles
 - Approaches
 - Planning, involving, methods
- Testing and Refining the Toolkit

Voice of the Child

A toolkit for involving children and young people
in research and service provision

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The Centre for Community Child Health is a department of The Royal Children's Hospital
and a research group of the Murdoch Children's Research Institute.



The Royal Children's
Hospital Melbourne

Involving Children & Young People

The Voice of the Child Toolkit:

- 1. Foundations for involvement**
 - *Definitions, values, principles*
- 2. Planning**
 - *Readiness, preparation, resourcing*
- 3. How to involve children**
 - *Consent, safety, diversity, power, remuneration, accountability and feedback*
- 4. Activities and methods**



Illustration by Celeste, aged 5.

Involving Children & Young People

The Voice of the Child Toolkit:

Activities and methods

- *Interviews*
- *Focus groups*
- *Surveys*
- *Art-based activities*
- *Photography*
- *Task and activity-based methods*
- *Advisory groups*



Focus groups

Focus groups are a group-based, verbal method for gathering in-depth information from several children or young people at once. They can create a dynamic, interactive atmosphere in which participants exchange ideas, respond to each other's insights and build a shared discussion.^{33,35,60}

The benefits of focus groups

- **Interactive sharing:** Children and young people can bounce ideas off one another, potentially uncovering richer insights than in one-to-one interviews.
- **Peer support:** Group settings may help participants feel more comfortable, validating each other's experiences or normalising certain views.
- **Efficient data collection:** Facilitators can gain perspectives from multiple individuals simultaneously, which may be beneficial when time or resources are limited.



Keep in mind

- **Limited confidentiality:** Because children are sharing in a group, you cannot guarantee privacy. Focus groups are generally not suitable for sensitive or highly personal topics.³³
- **Group power dynamics:** More vocal participants may dominate the conversation, while quieter children's insights risk going unheard if facilitation is weak.²⁵
- **Logistical complexity:** Coordinating schedules for several participants and ensuring child-friendly venues, snacks and breaks can be more involved than planning individual interviews.



Our Core Values for Involving Children

Children and young people have a right to be involved in matters that affect them

Children and young people bring unique perspectives and expertise



Illustration by Lorna, aged 9.

Principles

- **Have a clear purpose**
- **Include all children**
- **Agree on consent**
- **Create safe and comfortable environments**
- **Share power**
- **Use shared language and communicate openly**
- **Support children and young people to participate**
- **Be transparent and keep children and young people informed**
- **Achieve real benefits**

'I'd like to know if my support helped other people.'

Harrison, 10

'Make sure the people that are around are really like nice...'

Summer, 12

'...it's important because it might help make kid's lives better.'

Thibaut, 7

'Not too long, not too short.'

Miller, 7

'Don't forget the kids who have special abilities. No discrimination!'

Frederik, 9

'People have different opinions. And children's thoughts are different to adults and teenagers' thoughts.'

Frederik, 9

SPACE

Provide a safe and inclusive space for children to express their views

- How is the project actively seeking children's views?
- How is a safe space being created to allow children to express themselves freely?
- What steps are being taken to ensure all children can take part?

VOICE

Provide appropriate information and facilitate the expression of children's views

- How is the project ensuring that children are given the information they need to form a view?
- How are children going to know they don't have to take part?
- How is the project giving children a range of options for how they might choose to express themselves?

AUDIENCE

Ensure that children's views are communicated to someone with the responsibility to listen

- What is the project's process for communicating children's views?
- How are children being informed about who their views are being communicated to?
- Does that person/body have the power to make decisions?

INFLUENCE

Ensure that children's views are taken seriously and – where appropriate – acted upon

- How are children's views being considered by those with the power to effect change?
- What processes are being put in place to ensure that children's views are being taken seriously?
- How are children being provided with feedback explaining reasons for decisions taken?



What happens now?