

## What's Changed Participation Outcomes Tool



The What's Changed Participation Outcomes Tool is a framework for demonstrating and evaluating the commitment of organisations providing services to children and young people to having a dialogue with young people that leads to change. For many services the involvement of children and young people in decision-making is well established. For others it will mean changes to the way things are done.

## **Dialogue**

Dialogue is an interactive, ongoing process, not a one off event. A distinction needs to be made between 'consultation' where powerful people consult the powerless, and 'dialogue' where young people are seen as partners with a valid contribution to make to the design and delivery of services. What's Changed seeks evidence from services that the involvement of children and young people has been an inclusive process and that young people have not been prevented from making a contribution.

## **Research Planning**

Although the dominant discourse on childhood may say otherwise, children and young people do have a valuable contribution to make to public policy debate. Children and young people have a right not only to be consulted but to have a seat at the table when decisions are made. In order for children and young people to act as partners and share in the process of decision making they will often need to gather information, finding out for themselves solutions to a particular issue, exploring what has been done by other people, organisations/counties and even in other countries.

## **Change**

Dialogue should not be seen as an end in itself, dialogue must lead to change. Children and young people will be asked to comment on how services are provided and what influence they have had in its development. In recording evidence for the What's Changed tool organisations will need to demonstrate that dialogue has led to real improvements in services.



<b>4. How did you engage in consultation/dialogue</b>	<b>5. How were young people involved i.e. research based planning</b>	<b>6. What's changed according to the children and young people i.e. direct feedback/quotes?</b>

## How to use the What's Changed tool

The tool helps to record what's changed as result of children's and young people's participation. How were children and young people consulted or engaged in dialogue? Were young people involved in helping adults to understand what solutions might look like? Are children and young people able to identify actual changes resulting as a direct result of their involvement?

The most important evidence of change is that which is identified from the children and young people involved – only children and young people can therefore provide the evidence that a positive change has occurred as a result of their involvement.

### Completing the tool

- Please write the name of the organisation involved and the contact details of lead person
- Put the issue that children and young people raised/have been involved with
- Give the dates of the period covered by children and young people's engagement in addressing a specific issue
- Provide the evidence of how children and young people were involved in the process of change either via consultation or dialogue.
- Provide any evidence on how children and young people were brought together to explore issues, how information was gathered, i.e. canvassing the views of other young people, finding out how other people have approached the problem etc.
- Record children and young people's views on what is now different (evidence of change). Try and include any direct quotes from young people involved to demonstrate agreement that change has taken place.

The Participation Team is developing a database of good practice and evidence of change that can be utilised in Annual Performance Assessment and Joint Area Reviews and to provide ideas for others. If you have something you wish to celebrate and share with others please send a copy of your completed form to:

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