

Let's Talk

Let's Listen

Asking children and young people for their views and involving them in decision making



Public bodies in Northern Ireland have a duty under law to directly ask children and young people for their views on plans and decisions which affect them. For example, when a public body makes a decision about opening or closing a school; what activities should take place in a leisure centre; or how young people can help protect the environment.

The Equality Commission has written guidance for public bodies to help them listen better to children and young people and how they can more effectively involve children and young people in decisions that affect their lives. This guidance has been issued in a Plain English version and while targeted at public bodies, it will also help young people aged over ten years of age to understand their rights to be consulted and heard on issues which affect them.



This Child-Friendly version of the guidance has been developed to let younger children (those aged ten years and under) and young people with learning difficulties, know about some of the key messages in the guidance.

This version can be used by teachers, youth workers, carers and all those working with children and young people to help deliver aspects of the curriculum including citizenship and participation. It can help discussion with children and young people about how best to make their voices heard by public bodies.

NOTES

- Teachers and youth workers can use this Child-Friendly version in tandem with the Plain English version (which provides further details of the issues and considerations which need to be taken into account when considering consultation, engagement and active participation of children and young people in the development of public policy). Both versions of the Guidance are available on the Commission's website.
- The Guidance together with posters and leaflets will be distributed to schools and youth clubs throughout Northern Ireland. The Commission will also undertake further awareness raising activities about the Guidance.
- Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities to consult directly with children and young people (Further information is available at the Commission's website at: www.equalityni.org).



CONTACT DETAILS

For further information and advice please contact:

Equality Commission

FOR NORTHERN IRELAND

The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland
Equality House
7-9 Shaftesbury Square
Belfast BT2 7DP

Tel: 028 90 890 890
Textphone: 028 90 500 589
Email: information@equalityni.org
Website: www.equalityni.org

May 2008