



GWYNEDD CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION STRATEGY

Draft for Second Consultation

**Closing Date for Consultation:
December 19th 2006**

A second consultation is being undertaken following information received stating that full circulation had not been achieved during the first period of consultation-July 2006.





Gwynedd Children and Young People Participation Strategy

The Purpose of the Strategy is to;

1. Recognize the importance of the views of children and young people.
2. Declare the willingness of agencies in Gwynedd to acknowledge this importance.
3. Establish principles of good practice.
4. Demonstrate the relationship of various participation elements throughout Gwynedd.
5. Create a “Brand name” so that everybody else is able to buy in to the idea.
6. Raise the participation profile of children and young people throughout Gwynedd.

Context

The National Assembly Government has shown a commitment towards developing the participation of children and young people in some of its policy documents, most notably the *Framework for Partnership (2002)* and *Extending Entitlement (2001)*.

These developments are set within the Assembly Government’s commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child which has now been adopted as a basis for all their work on behalf of children and young people (*Implementing the Entitlements, Welsh Assembly Government, 2004*)

2004 Children’s Act

What is participation?

The literal definition of participation is “*taking part*”. Participation implies that every child and young person is entitled to take part in the decisions, planning and monitoring to do with an activity that could impact on them.

Participation involves a spectrum of extent of power in participation, of expressing a view on a question set already for adult to decide on (consultation), to get young people to select their agenda and make their own decisions (full participation).

Participation is a process and not an event, and the outcome is empowerment.

Why participation?

Every child and young person is entitled to participate. Article 12 of the United Nation's Convention on the Rights of Children states that children are entitled to express their view and comments on every question to enable people to appreciate those comments and to give them consideration. Participation is part of a process of appreciating, respecting and involving children and young people in a democratic society. Services and policies will be more effective and efficient when they are planned, presented and evaluated based on the specific needs of those who use them, enabling them to participate.

Participation provides an opportunity for the personal, social and political development of children and young people, that in turn supports their development as active citizens in their community. Participation may offer practical experience and education to undertake responsibility.

What needs to be in place so as to enable Participation to occur.

The Partnership Framework and all the agencies in Gwynedd will need to commit themselves to the following:

All agencies and partnerships in Gwynedd involved with children and young people have pledged to support children and young people to participate in all aspects of the evaluation of those services which they receive and when establishing new schemes and services.

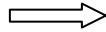
In so doing, agencies recognise the importance of participation and accept that promoting participation promotes services and schemes which are more likely to meet the actual needs of children and young people in a manner that is respectful of them.

As a starting point, the entire agencies need to make a commitment to these 10 statements.

1. Every child or young person in Gwynedd is entitled to participate in the services that they receive and in all the partnerships which are involved in the planning of future services.
2. Every agency should ensure that every child or young person has the opportunity to participate. Every agency and partnership should provide children and young people with information on how they encourage participation
3. Every agency should ensure that their workers possess the resources and skills to assist children or young people to participate.
4. Every agency should ensure that their employee is willing to listen to what every child or young person has to say.
5. Every agency should ensure that their employees are willing to include what children and young people have to say when developing services and that employees implement schemes which take into account the views of children and young people.
6. It has to be understood that both resources and time are required to ensure that any participation process works well. Children and young people are happy to participate in interesting, and/or fun activities.
7. The time and commitment of children and young people in participating in any participation process should be recognised.
8. Every agency and Partnership should designate a responsible person to ensure that every child or young person has an opportunity to participate.
9. It needs to be recognized that certain children or young people have a greater interest than others in participation and that therefore there should be various levels of participation.
10. Children and young people understand that changes need to be sought in an informed manner and they seldom ask for unreasonable changes to be made. No participation process should raise unreasonable hopes that cannot be achieved.

Every agency will work with the Clywed Scheme as a means of monitoring and evaluating their participation schemes.

1. Information

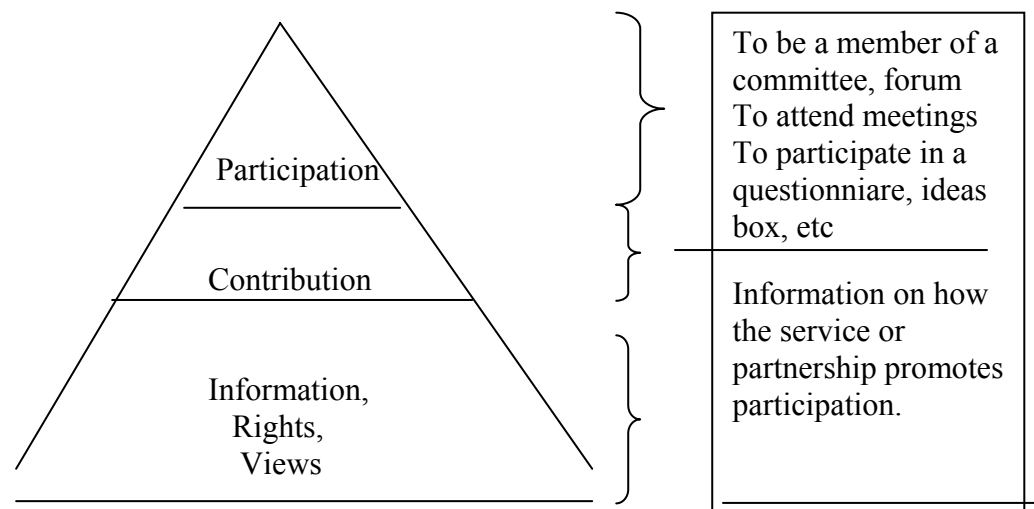


Participation

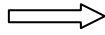
Ensuring that children and young people receive information on how to participate is an important part of participation. The agencies and partnerships need to state that they see participation as being important and that they are willing to assist children and young people to participate. Every service or partnership should produce a leaflet for children and young people to explain what the participation process for that service entails.

Children and young people can then decide whether they wish to contribute towards activities so as to encourage participation.

Certain children and young people will wish to devote more time than others to the participation process and there should be an opportunity for them to have as much or as little participation as they wish.



2. Individual Service



Strategy Planning

The process encourages children and young people to participate in individual services.

The process encourages children and young people to participate in the process of creating schemes for services and multi-agency strategy plans.



Eg Framework Partnership Children and Young People's Partnerships Health and welfare Strategy, Community Safety etc Children and Young People's Plan
Club, school, clinic, etc

3. To provide information for children and young people on participation

So as to be able to contribute, children and young people require information on how to go about it. As part of this strategy, we encourage every agency and partnership to create a leaflet for children and young people regarding the participation process and to note the designated individual responsible for participation.

Example of Information Sheet on Participation, for an individual service

Ysgol Bron y Foel

This school has made a commitment to the Gwynedd Participation Strategy which means that we will encourage children to participate in participation activities.

The designated person responsible for this is Mr Dewi Jones.

Any pupil may use the ideas box which is located outside Form 5.

A morning to voice views is held on the first Friday of every term.

Classroom representatives will be able to talk on behalf of any individual in the School Council which is held on the first Monday of every month. Everybody will have an opportunity to put their names forward to serve as classroom representatives.

Example of an Information Sheet on Participation, for Partnerships.

Young People's Partnership

This partnership has committed itself to the Gwynedd Participation Strategy which means that we will encourage young people to participate in participation activities.

The designated person responsible for this is Mr Rhys Parri.

The partnership will produce a monthly information leaflet for distribution to the opinion groups, Youth forums, clebran etc.

There will be a partnership representative available to attend every Opinion Group meeting. There will be an opportunity at the start of every meeting to hear an item from the Opinion Group. The partnership holds a children's/young people's conference annually. An article "Right to Say" appears in the local papers every three months.

Strategic Planning Services and Information Requirements.

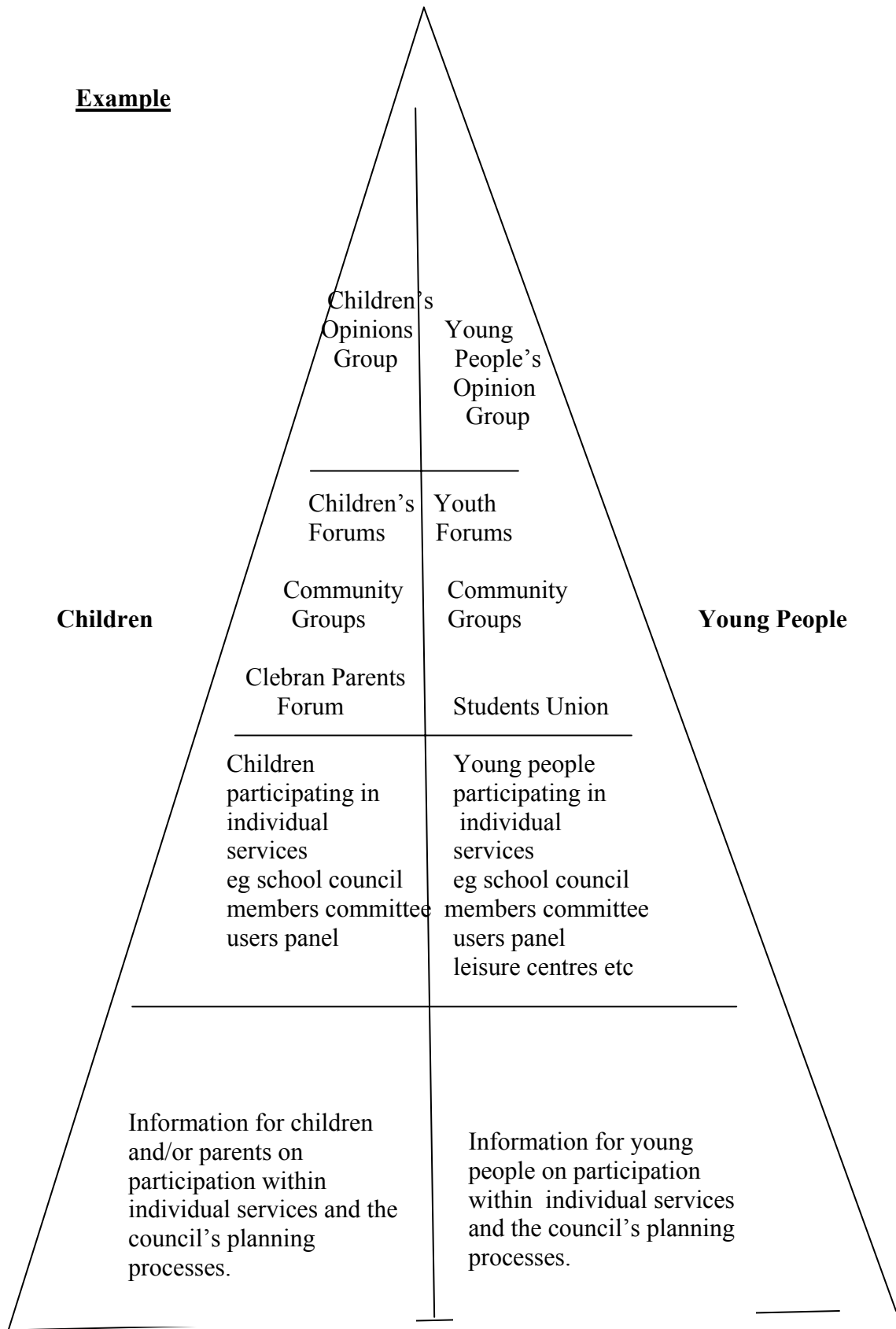
Each child and young person, as part of this strategy, will have received an information leaflet on participation will have had an opportunity to contribute and participate in each individual service provided for them.

As part of this strategy, every child and young person will have received an information leaflet on participation; will have had an opportunity to contribute and participate in all planning processes.

A clear communication process needs to be established between children and young people and the agencies and partnerships. Those children and young people who are interested in participation within the individual services should have the opportunity to be involved in the planning and strategy preparation participation process.

It is likely that the formal link between the strategic partnerships and the participation of children and young people is the Children's Opinion Group and the Young People's Opinion Group. The Youth Forums, Community Groups, Children's Groups, Students Unions, Clebran etc should be represented on the Children and Young People's Opinion Groups.

In order to continue the information sharing process, it is essential that School Council members, Club Membership Committees, Users Panels etc have the opportunity to serve as members of the Youth Forums, Community Groups, Children's Groups, Clebran, Students Unions etc.



Links between Clywed Scheme and Participation.

The Clywed Scheme was established in 2001 as a means of evaluating Gwynedd agencies' commitment to secure the participation of children and young people within the services provided for them. Agencies which bear the Clywed logo will have demonstrated that they regard participation as important and part of their agency's ethos.

Possible Action Plan

What	Who	How	When	Measure
Approve the strategy	Agencies and Partnerships			
Name for the Strategy	Gwynedd Young People's Opinion Group	Through competition	As soon as possible	Offer an appropriate name and use it
To produce information on participation for children and young people	Agencies and Partnerships			
Produce practical guidelines on participation	Clywed/Gwynedd Children and Young People's Opinion Group			
Establish a Children's Opinion Group	Children's Partnership			
Establish Children's Forums	Children's Partnership			
Designate people with responsibility for participation	Agencies and Partnerships			
Establish a database of details on primary and secondary School Councils, Community Groups, Clebran, Students Union etc.				
Appropriate training	Agencies and Partnerships			
Identify resources to promote participation	Agencies and Partnerships			
Communication processes for the partnerships	Agencies and Partnerships			



You are invited to offer comments on the draft Participation Strategy. Some questions are noted below:

Do you have any comments on the 10 statements and the need to commit to them?

What is your opinion on the requirements to provide information?

Any Other Comment?

Name:

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Organisation/Establishment

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Please return to Elin Wyn Hughes by December 19th 2006

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