

# Making Child Rights Real Webinar



WORLD CHILDREN'S DAY  
20 NOVEMBER

# Setting the Scene – How to Deliver for Children and Young People



**Chris Quinn**

Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and  
Young People

# What are the Concluding Observations?



# General measures

- **Legislation**
- **Co-ordination**
- **Comprehensive Policy and Strategy**
- **Independent Monitoring (Role of NICCY)**

# What the Concluding Observations say...

**Alex Tennant**

Head of Policy & Participation

NICCY

# Participation

- Ensure the **right of all children**, including younger children, children with disabilities and children in care, to **express their views** and to have them taken into account in **all decisions affecting them**, including in courts and relevant judicial proceedings and regarding domestic violence, custody, placement in alternative care, health, including mental health treatment, education, justice, migration and asylum.

# Training and Awareness

- Ensure **systematic training** on children's rights, the Convention and the Optional Protocols thereto for **all professionals working for and with children**, in particular those working in education, social work, law enforcement, immigration and justice.

# Non-Discrimination

- Take legislative and other measures to ensure the **protection** of all children below 18 years of age from **discrimination** on the grounds of their **age**, particularly in England and Northern Ireland; address discriminatory stereotypes against children; and promote a positive image of children as rights-holders.



# Poverty

- Develop or strengthen existing policies, with clear targets, measurable indicators and robust monitoring and accountability mechanisms, to **end child poverty** and ensure that all children have an **adequate standard of living**, including by increasing social benefits to reflect the rising costs of living and abolishing the two-child limit and benefit cap for social security benefits.

# Health

- Develop a strategy to address health **inequalities**, including the underlying causes, and in particular in respect of children in **disadvantaged** situations including children with disabilities, children belonging to ethnic minorities, socioeconomically disadvantaged children, children living in rural areas and transgender children.

# Mental Health

- Develop or strengthen strategies, with **sufficient resources**, for ensuring the availability of community-based therapeutic mental health services and programmes for children of **all ages**, and for providing comprehensive mental health promotion, screening for mental health issues and **early intervention** services in schools.

# Education

- Strengthen measures to address **inequalities** in educational attainment and **improve educational outcomes** for children in disadvantaged situations, including children in socioeconomically disadvantaged situations, children belonging to ethnic minority groups, asylum-seeking, refugee and migrant children, children with disabilities and “young carers”.

# Play and Leisure

- Strengthen measures to ensure that **all children**, including children with disabilities, young children, children in rural areas and children in disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds, have **access** to accessible, safe, public outdoor play spaces.

# Looked After Children and Young People

- Invest in measures to **prevent and reduce** the number of children placed in alternative care, including by allocating **sufficient resources** for early intervention and preventive services, including for infants and toddlers, increasing and strengthening the number of **trained** social workers, and improving multiagency **coordination.**

## Climate / Environment

- Ensure that national policies and programmes on addressing environmental protection, climate change and disaster risk management are developed and implemented in accordance with the **principles** of the Convention and **take into account** children's needs and views.

# Asylum-seeking, refugee and migrant children

- Strengthen measures to ensure that **all** asylum-seeking, refugee and migrant children have equal and prompt **access** to education, health services, housing, psychosocial support, and social protection including benefit entitlements.



## Youth Justice

- Develop **early** intervention for children and actively promote **non-judicial measures**, such as diversion, mediation and counselling, for children accused of criminal offences, and, wherever possible, the use of non-custodial measures for children, such as probation or community service.
- **Raise** the minimum age of criminal responsibility to **at least 14 years** of age.

## Protection

- Ensure that child protection systems take a **child rights-based approach** in preventing and addressing cases of abuse and neglect, including psychological violence; that social services and other mechanisms for identifying and supporting children at risk of violence as well as child victims of violence are adequately **resourced**; and that child victims are fully recognized as victims and have **access** to community- based, trauma care and child-sensitive support services.

## What can we do?

- Share of resources - rates setting and budgets process, needs based assessments – CSCA 2015
- Plan development – Service Plans, Corporate, Sustainability, LDP
- Consultation processes and participation
- Assessment - Section 75 duties/CRIAs/CRIEs
- Community Planning, PCSPs, Good Relations
- Communication and access

*“Be prepared to put into action what people have said so that it is not just a box ticking exercise.”*

***NICCY Youth Panel member***

**Rachel Woods**  
Senior Policy Officer  
NICCY



**CHILD FRIENDLY  
CITIES &  
COMMUNITIES**

**unicef**  
UNITED KINGDOM



# In a Child Friendly City all Children and Young People

- ✓ Have a **say about decisions** that affect them
- ✓ Are encouraged and supported to **express their views** freely
- ✓ Can access **good** health, education, transport and other support **services**
- ✓ Feel **safe and protected** from discrimination and harm
- ✓ Can **enjoy** public areas and meet other children freely
- ✓ Enjoy a **clean and safe environment**



If you want to go fast go alone,  
If you want to go far go together



# Our Partners



## CANDIDATE



PROMOTING THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

Child Rights  
Awareness  
"YOUR SAY  
CHILD  
RIGHTS"



# Everyone feels safe, heard, welcome and included



YOUR  
SAY





# Lundy Model of Participation & Evaluation (Participation Framework – Gov. of Ireland)



## Children and Young People's Feedback Form (for groups)

Boy     Girl     Other     I don't know     Age \_\_\_\_\_

**Tick the number of stars you would give to everything below. Five stars is the best.**

SPACE	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
I have been listened to from the start									
I felt comfortable giving my opinions									
I felt safe giving my opinions									
A lot of different voices were included									

VOICE	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
I got the chance to give my opinions									
I got enough information to help me give my opinion									
I got support to have my voice heard									
I understood what was being discussed									
I could give my opinions whatever way I wanted									
I had enough time to talk									

AUDIENCE	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
I know who wants to hear our opinions									
I know why they want the opinions of young people									
They were honest about what they would try to do with our opinions									

INFLUENCE	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★	★
I know where our opinions are going next									
I know how we will be told about what happens to our opinions									
I think what we said today will be taken seriously									

What were the best things about today?

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What would you change about today?

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.....

The FOOD was...

☹️     😐     😊

The ROOM was...

☹️     😐     😊

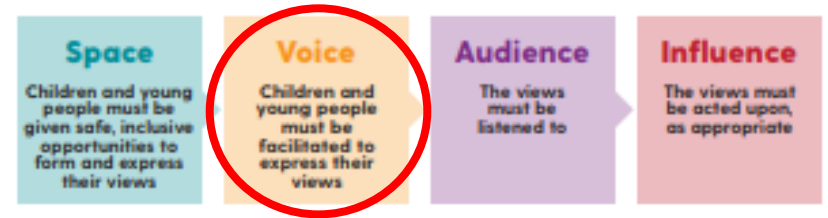
THANK YOU!

# SPACE

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- 28 groups across the district supported young people in their safe place, with people they had good relationships with to.
  - Learn about Child Rights
  - Form an Opinion
  - Express their views
  - Develop Child Rights statements
- Different options/ resources provided to allow children with different learning styles to take part
- Targeted work with Care Experienced Young People, Young People with a Learning Support Need in their safe environment.





# VOICE

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- Young People supported to identify where their rights are/ are not respected
- UNICEF UK & NICCY jointly delivered a Child Rights briefing session to Youth Workers
- CVS, UNICEF UK & NICCY provided resource options/ session plan to aid with the delivery of the remote sessions with young people
- Child Friendly Information provided in advance, so young people fully understand
  - How they will be involved
  - How the information they share will be used
- 170 people attended the Your Say Child Rights event at the Guildhall
- Option to share Child Rights statements at the event or through remote group work
  - At podium
  - At table
  - On post it notes



## Space

Children and young people must be given safe, inclusive opportunities to form and express their views

## Voice

Children and young people must be facilitated to express their views

## Audience

The views must be listened to

## Influence

The views must be acted upon, as appropriate

# AUDIENCE

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- Decision makers were involved
- NI Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY)
- Mayor for Derry and Strabane
- Senior Staff from Statutory Organisations
- Local Politicians from each Political Party
- Youth Workers and CYP from across the District
- Representatives from lead organisations on UNICEF UK Child Friendly Cities and Communities
- UNICEF UK representative.



# INFLUENCE

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- Immediate follow up meeting with Politicians and lead organisations after the event to agree key high-level commitments
- Child Friendly follow up written to communicate next steps with young people
  - NW Ministry of Youth will have direct link to politicians – minimum of once per quarter
  - Child Rights will be added to Council Committee meetings to ensure it remains a key focus
  - Youth Mental Health & Wellbeing event will be held in 2024
  - Political Parties, Decision Makers and Youth Sector will meet to review the specific CR statements in more detail.



# Example/ Summary - Child Rights Statements

## **Article 4. Making Rights Real. Article 42. Everyone must know children's rights**

“More awareness building and education of the adults who are working directly with young people, so they are aware of these rights”  
Children also need to know their rights “how can we make sure we're getting these rights if we don't know them”.

## **Article 2. No Discrimination**

“Everyone should have access to transport” financial poverty leads to an even bigger imbalance for those living in rural locations in comparison to urban locations

## **Article 30. Minority Culture, Language and Religion. Article 8. Identity. Article 2. No Discrimination**

“Everyone has the right to their own identity, no one should take this away from them, but it is being taken away from some of us here”  
a young person explained his right to be Irish and have an identity/ speak in Irish without this being viewed as sectarian.

## **Article 12. Respect for Childrens Views. Article 20. Children Looked After.**

Foster placement living conditions, how young people in care feel like their voice is lost in decisions being made about where they will live “adults make the choices for our future”.

## **Article 34. Protection from Sexual Abuse. Article 36. Protection from Exploitation**

“We shouldn't feel shame or guilt, it's not our fault.....we need to talk about this more, so we don't feel like this” the silence and negative perceptions of children who are sexually exploited makes those who have experienced this fearful to talk about it.

# Feedback from Young People – best thing

“This was a really big event for us as young people because it allows us to engage directly with decision makers and they can hear some of the issues we face as young people when it comes to our rights. And it challenges them to take some action to help address the issues.”

“Talking to the official dude about my experiences and being listened to”

“Speaking our truth”

“Having the chance to talk to the people to make changes”

“The people, room, and speeches”

“Circus people”

“Meeting other young people and Councillors and having a platform to voice my concerns”

“Learning new things”

“Giving the statements and the questions being answered by politicians...and the entertainment”.




“Getting to meet and have proper conversations with politicians and people in power – really beneficial”

“The company”

# Your Say Child Friendly Follow Up



Thank you for taking part in the 'Your Say' Child Rights workshops and event. It was great to see so many taking a stand on Your Rights. We said we would do some work after the event. Here's an update.

What we said we'd do	Update
 <p>Have a meeting with politicians and senior leaders to discuss actions for improving Child Rights.</p>	<p>Agreed at meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NW Ministry of Youth recruitment will take place from 23<sup>rd</sup> Oct – 16<sup>th</sup> Nov. The new group will have new links to Politicians.</li> <li>Child Rights will be added to Councils Committee meetings so it will remain a key focus.</li> <li>Volunteers from the youth groups will be supported to present to Council Committee.</li> <li>EA Youth Service will lead on a Youth Mental Health conference in 2024 – your feedback will be used to shape this.</li> <li>Political Parties, Local Decision makers and Youth Sector will meet to review your child rights feedback in more detail and feedback back to you before Christmas.</li> </ul>
 <p>Use your feedback from the Evaluations to make improvements for future.</p>	<p>An online survey has been created and your evaluation responses are being input online. We will run a digital report to understand the feedback and use that to make improvements for the next event.</p>
 <p>Arrange feedback from lots of partners about the questions you submitted at the end of the event.</p>	<p>You can expect an update by the 20<sup>th</sup> of November 2023. Thank you for your patience.</p>

**What Next?**  
World Childrens Day is on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2023. This is the anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC).

Every year, around this date Children and Young People all over the world raise their voices on the issues that matter to YOUR generation and call for adults to create a better future. From climate change, education, and mental health to ending racism and discrimination. Collectively we can MAKE.CHANGE.HAPPEN.

**What YOU can do**

1. Visit the UNICEF UK <https://www.unicef.org/uk> webpage and join voices across the world in a topic you're interested in.
2. Use your social media platforms and groups you are linked in with to join or create a movement.
3. Ask your youth worker to take part in World Childrens Day Celebrations. This could be delivering a Child Rights Workshop, Event, Kids Take Over Day or helping to create a Social Media Campaign. It can be done on any date around the 20<sup>th</sup> November.
4. Consider how we can create a community where everyone feels safe, welcome, heard, and included.

If you'd like more info on the UNICEF UK Child Friendly Cities and Communities Journey visit

[www.derrystarabane.com/community/children-and-young-people/unicef](http://www.derrystarabane.com/community/children-and-young-people/unicef)



HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THE YOUR SAY UPDATE?



Absolutely!



Not at all!



IF YOU WANT TO EXPLAIN YOUR ANSWER, TELL US HERE

HOW LIKELY ARE YOU TO TAKE ACTION ON OR AROUND WORLD CHILDRENS DAY (20<sup>TH</sup> NOV)



Very likely



Very unlikely

