

National Standards for Community Engagement

What should they mean for young people?

What is community engagement?

It is how organisations that provide services like youth work, housing, social work, sports and recreation, meet with and learn from the people that use their services.

So what are the standards?

They are rules for making community engagement work better. But these are not rules that are forced on you but ones that everyone involved in community engagement can look at together and decide to use if they agree they would be helpful.

Here are the standards and what they should mean for young people:

1 Involvement: *we will identify and involve the people and organisations with an interest in the focus of the engagement*

This is about making sure that everyone who is interested can be involved. For young people it should mean:

- What is talked about will matter to young people
- If it affects young people they will have a right to be involved
- Young people will be involved

2 Support: *we will identify and overcome any barriers to involvement*

This is about removing things that get in the way of involvement and providing resources. For young people it should mean:

- Practical problems won't stop any young people getting involved e.g. transport, expenses, disabled access
- Young people will be able to get advice to support them to represent themselves

3. Planning: *we will gather evidence of the needs and available resources and use this to agree the purpose, scope and timescale of the engagement and the actions to be taken*

This is about making sure we respond to what matters to people. For young people it should mean:

- Young people will be involved in identifying and defining what is important to them
- Adults will be open to seeing things from the view point of young people
- Young people will be involved in deciding what should be done, how and when
- What is done will be worthwhile and achievable

4. Methods: *we will agree and use methods of engagement that are fit for purpose*

This is about using imaginative ways of working. For young people it should mean:

- Community engagement will use things like: drama, arts, games - not just meetings
- The methods used can involve everyone
- The different views and interests of different types of young people will be heard

5. Working Together: *We will agree and use clear procedures to enable the participants to work with one another*

This is about making sure we can all work well with one another. For young people it should mean:

- Ground-rules will be discussed and agreed
- Discussion will be open, honest and respectful
- Young people will be listened to and listen to others

- Ordinary language will be used
- Everyone will be clear about what has been agreed
- What is promised will be done

6. Sharing Information: *we will ensure necessary information is communicated between the participants*

This is about good communications. For young people it should mean:

- Information is really relevant
- It is provided when it is needed
- It is understandable
- Information is provided in ways that young people choose e.g. text messages

7. Working with Others: *we will work effectively with others with an interest in the engagement*

This is about co-operating with other people. For young people it should mean:

- Interests of young people that affect others will be recognised and those people will have a voice
- Young people talk to other young people or adults that could be affected
- We will all find out what other people are doing and see what we can learn from them

8. Improvement: *we will develop actively the skills, knowledge and confidence of all the participants*

This is about having the tools for the job. For young people it should mean:

- Young people will be helped to get the skills they need
- Those that work with young people will be helped to get the skills that they need
- Everyone will share their skills knowledge and experience with each other

9. Feedback: *we will feed back the results of the engagement to the wider community and agencies affected*

This is about keeping the community and services informed about what is going on. For young people it should mean:

- Young people will know what is happening or what has happened
- Decisions that have been taken will be explained
- Feedback will be given in an understandable and interesting way
- Other people will get to know about good involvement of young people

10. Monitoring and Evaluation: *we will monitor and evaluate whether the engagement meets its purposes and the national standards for community engagement*

This is about examining and deciding whether we are achieving what we set out to do. For young people it should mean:

- Young people will be involved in judging whether we have succeeded in what we set out to do
- Young people will be involved in deciding what has been learned from what has been done
- The lessons will be acted upon