

8 Steps to Youth Participation

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Activity concept created by Solene Bouyaux

1) Manipulation is where adults use youth to support causes and pretend that the causes are inspired by youth.

My name is Levan. I am 18 years of age. The municipality wants to organise a music festival in our community, this is something we really believe in and we have been asked to go to a council meeting. The organizers have given us lots of really colourful banners.

2) Decoration is where young people are used to help or "bolster" a cause in a relatively indirect way, although adults do not pretend that the cause is inspired by youth.

My name is Janniki. I am 17 years of age. Me and my friends have been asked to attend a demonstration in support of a youth centre being built in our community organized by a local political party. They have told us that they want us to appear in photos taken by journalists.

3) Tokenism is where young people appear to be given a voice, but in fact have little or no choice about what they do or how they participate.

My name is Elisa. I am 21 years of age. The municipality is setting up a youth council for our community of which I am to be a member. They have told us the agenda for the next 6 months.

4) Assigned but informed is where youth are assigned a specific role and informed about how and why they are being involved.

My name is Jakob. I am 22 years of age. My local municipality is organizing a student youth festival and I have been asked to assist specifically in the development of the programme, I have been asked to do this because of my work in project based work with DRONI. I am really proud to be a part of this.

5) Consulted and informed is when youth give advice on projects or programmes designed and run by adults. The youth are informed about how their input will be used and the outcomes of the decisions made by adults.

My name is Ozkan. I am 16 years of age. The local municipality is building a youth centre for my community. Myself and my NGO have been working on developing youth centre for some time so we have been asked to advice and support the municipality in their work, although we will not actually be a part of the work.

6) Externally-initiated, shared decisions with the young people is when projects or programmes are initiated by adults but the decision-making is shared with the young people.

My name is Jose Antonio. I am 27 years of age. The local municipality wants to protect a park in our quarter. Myself and a group of friends are in regular dialogue and meetings with the municipality about this on all aspects of the campaign.

7) Youth-initiated and directed is when young people initiate and direct a project or programme. Adults are involved only in a supportive role.

My name is Dianna. I am 17 years of age. Myself and my friends are developing an information campaign about the prevention of abortion aimed at girls between 13 and 18 years of age in our quarter. The municipality is offering advice and support as we need it.

8) Youth-initiated, shared decisions with local authorities is when projects or programmes are initiated by youth and decision-making is shared among youth and adults. These projects empower youth while at the same time enabling them to access and learn from the life experience and expertise of adults.

My name is Olga. I am 19 years of age. My local organization is developing an art space self-managed by young people. We are working in partnership with the local municipality in order to decide when and where to build it.