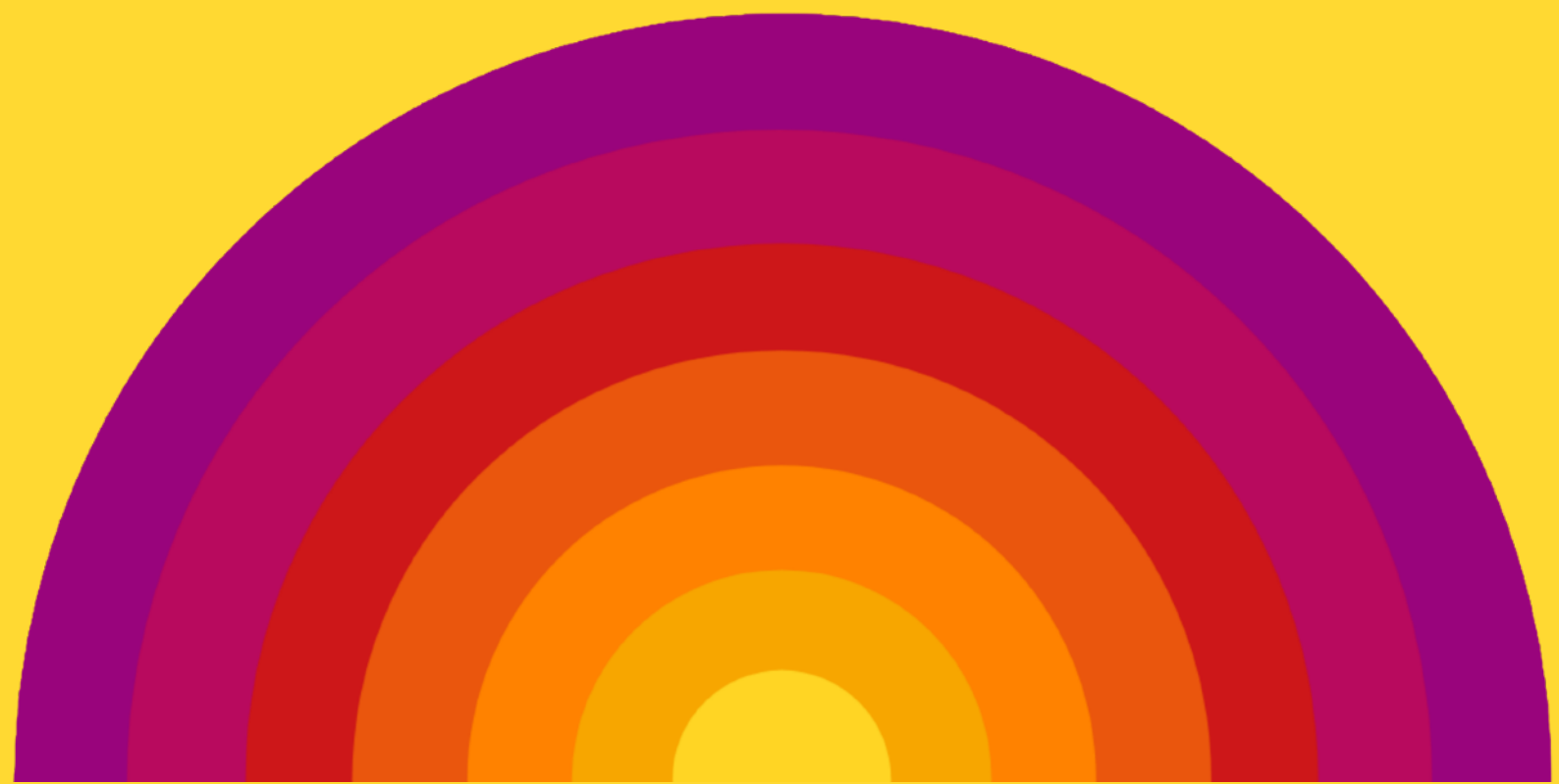




CHILD SAFEGUARDING AND WELLBEING PROTOCOL

CHILD CONSULTATIONS TO INFORM THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COUNCIL OF
EUROPE STRATEGY FOR THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD 2022-2027



This paper has been prepared by Defence for Children International Italy as the consultant consortium mandated to coordinate and support the child consultation process around the drafting of the CoE Strategy on the Rights of the Child 2022-2027.

The opinions expressed in this work represent only the views of the authors and are their sole responsibility. They do not necessarily reflect the official policy of the Council of Europe.

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PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS

The present child safeguarding and wellbeing protocol aims at providing minimum standards relating to child safeguarding and wellbeing during the child consultations - to be carried out by ten national delegations - to inform the development of the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child 2022-2027.

This protocol does not aim to impose rigid rules, which may hinder the dynamic and trust between the facilitators and the participating children. Rather, it may be useful as a framework which can help defining the work of the facilitators and all adults present in the consultations, while empowering and promoting children's rights. Hopefully, this will contribute for a fruitful and constructive exchange for all the persons involved.

Firstly, it seems important to recognize that the current cultural paradigm connects childhood almost exclusively with vulnerability. A child-centered approach - based on children's rights - requires on the one hand, the recognition of the inherent resources, capacities and aspirations of each child and the impact the surrounding context can have in each one of this dimensions, on the other.

In fact, childhood is in many occasions rhetorically considered as a resource for the future but rarely as a resource for the present. This could be read as a way to understand why the adult world tends to exclude the recognition of the capacities and the resources that children have and that they could express, if they were allowed to. In other words, children seem to be forced to wait to grow up and become adults, so they can exercise or claim their rights.

While it is undeniable that we have to consider a situation of vulnerability related with the evolving capacity of a young person, it is also true that a rights-based approach and the principle of participation should lead us to consider their resources as key elements of recognition to enable appropriate responses. In addition, for sure we have to prioritize our attention on children which are placed in particular circumstances of vulnerability, but always in the context of an approach actively open to recognize capacities, while avoiding inappropriate and stigmatizing categorizations.

The participation of children and adolescents in all matters that concern them is one of the basic principles of the Convention on The Rights of the Child (CRC) and an essential condition for children and adolescents to fully exercise their rights and full potential.

The concept of rights, means, spaces, opportunities and support, as referred to in the "Listen - Act - Change: Council of Europe Handbook on children's participation for professionals working for and with children"¹ and other documents of the Council of Europe, are directly related to the capacity of adults and the adult world to create appropriate contexts, conditions and dynamics for consulting with children. They require relevant stakeholders and facilitators to be generally willing and ready to keep the process of consultation open to unexpected contributions by the children. Additionally, the CRC as a comprehensive and open multidisciplinary system that can help in redefining the approach toward the child as well as the relation between the world of adults and the world of children. Children and adolescents will only be effectively protected and see their rights fully realized if prevention, protection and response are considered to be continuous and interrelated dimensions within an environment that should be considered through a systemic perspective.

¹ Council of Europe, Listen - Act - Change: Council of Europe Handbook on children's participation for professionals working for and with children, 2020 <<https://www.coe.int/en/web/children/-/listen-act-change-launch-of-a-new-council-of-europe-guide-on-children-s-participation>>.

WHY A CHILD SAFEGUARDING POLICY?

A child protection policy - or protocol - provides a set of directives and guidelines to be implemented at organisational and staff management level to promote the highest standards of personal and professional behaviour and practice, in order to create safe environments and prevent harmful situations from occurring for children during their involvement in activities, projects or programmes.

It is a tool designed to safeguard both the children they - directly or indirectly - come into contact with and staff, by clearly defining what actions need to be taken in order to create a protective and safe environment and to ensure the adoption of immediate and uniform procedures and practices.

Adopting a child protection policy is an indication of an organisation's commitment to the younger generations and can represent a vehicle through which the institution consolidates and strengthens the trust of its citizens.

It is clear that the mere fact of having a child protection and wellbeing policy does not mean that all harm to children is automatically eliminated. Rather, it means that the institution does its utmost to minimise risks and address any concerns in a serious, appropriate and effective manner.

CONTRIBUTING TO A SAFEGUARDING CULTURE THROUGH WELLBEING

During child consultations many child safeguarding concerns may arise. These concerns may depend on the context, modality and participants. In order to ensure informed, safe and complete participation it is key to consider all the elements that may present risks to children during the whole process of child consultations, in order to integrate procedures that prompt the three dimensions - prevention, protection and response - to be consistently considered and applied.

Child consultations ought to be well designed, with clear objectives and a transparent methodology, which should be shared with the participating children and their parents or guardians. The right to data protection and privacy and the right to opt-out from the consultation at any given moment should be explained to children in a language they understand prior to obtaining their informed consent for the participation. Consultations should be inclusive, providing opportunities for children from different backgrounds to be actively involved and to share their thoughts on issues that concern them.

Although we would welcome children to share their direct experiences all along the exchange we have to remember that their exposure should be proportionate to the aim and the limited framework of our consultation exercise. In other words, we should recognize and gently avoid situations where the exposure of children is going beyond our possibility to deal with it in an appropriate way and/or could determine unpleasant feeling for the child even for the fact of having exposed publicly possible traumatic or difficult personal experiences.

Of course we would rely on the facilitators experience and competences expertise to apply this delicate balance and refrain from inappropriate solicitations. If cases of this kind will emerge along the exchange it will be necessary to address them, outside the consultation process, by referring to appropriate context and expertise. It would be ideal if the National Delegations preventively identify a specific point of referral if safeguarding concerns should arise.

FORMAT OF THE CONSULTATIONS

In countries where the consultations take place face-to-face, it will be important to consider the venue, accessibility issues (for example, fulfilling the needs of children with physical disabilities, such as ramps, accessible toilets or other) and transport for the children and their accompanying parent or chaperone(s). The venue should be as child-friendly and comfortable as possible, enabling the participants to feel at ease.

In what regards safety of children in the digital environments, the recent General comment No. 25 (2021) on children's rights in relation to the digital environment² emphasizes the necessity to protect and promote children's rights in an environment that despite playing a significant role in children's lives, was not originally developed for them.³ In particular the Committee affirms that:

States parties are encouraged to utilize the digital environment to consult with children on relevant legislative, administrative and other measures and to ensure that their views are considered seriously and that children's participation does not result in undue monitoring or data collection that violates their right to privacy, freedom of thought and opinion. They should ensure that consultative processes are inclusive of children who lack access to technology or the skills to use it.⁴

HUMAN RESOURCES

National delegations are requested to choose partner organisations or experts supporting them in reaching out to children, to identify children who are available and willing to take part in the consultations, and implement the child consultations. It is the responsibility of each national delegation to identify adequately trained, experienced and trusted facilitators who – based on the overall methodological proposal – will conduct the activities while adapting them to the national context.

PARTNERS

National Delegations may contract partner organizations to assist in the consultations with children and reporting. In all partnership relations, strong attention must be given to issues related to Child Safeguarding and Wellbeing. In selecting partners, consideration should be made with respect to the potential partner's suitability for working with children – including if they have their own Child Safeguarding and Wellbeing Policy

³ Committee on the Rights of the Child, General comment No. 25 (2021) on children's rights in relation to the digital environment, CRC/C/GC/25, 2021, par. 12.

⁴ *ibid*, par. 18.

and procedures and how they apply it. As good practice, specific reference to child safeguarding measures should be included in partnership agreements and contracts.

ROLE OF THE FACILITATORS

The consultations with children should be led by one facilitator who is experienced in holding consultations with children and creating a pleasant and positive atmosphere during the sessions. The facilitator should feel at ease when interacting with a diverse group of children, be sensitive to specific needs of individual participants and feel confident about leading the discussion with the children, even when this requires handling sensitive issues, differing opinions or even conflicts between the children.

The facilitator should be able to engage the children in a trust-based conversation, treating them with respect, showing empathy and being non-judgemental about the statements children make. Facilitators should feel responsible for recognising boundaries when behaviour or communication of individual children or other participants become offensive or hurt the dignity of an individual or a group of persons and ensure that such boundaries are respected.

The national delegations and facilitators should be aware and prepared that children might express critical views and speak about negative feelings or aspects they feel not particularly happy about regarding a specific thematic issue, aspects of their lives or their countries. It will be important to consider how to seriously value the more concerned, doubtful or negative notes by children and to give them due weight, whilst protecting the children against any possible reprisals. The facilitators should be able to create a safe space where children can speak openly and feel confident that they can criticise or challenge specific aspects without incurring in any negative consequences.

Facilitators have to be familiar with national laws and regulations concerning the reporting in cases of risks, threats or violence against a child and the relevant referral mechanisms for children.

The facilitator is supported by a note-taker who is present during the session and is appropriately trained to document the consultation and prepare minutes. When taking notes or recording the interview, its necessary explain this to the child in a child-friendly language and ask their permission to do so, both verbally and in writing.

ACTIVE LISTENING

Active listening is a key element in recognizing and respecting the child and encouraging their participation, playing a crucial role in child consultations, either on or offline. Children have different ways of expressing themselves and many essential non-verbal communication can be lost during online consultations, thus active and empathic listening can help in minimizing misunderstandings, while promoting children's sense of empowerment and ownership of their views and words.

INFORMED CONSENT

The enrollment of children in the Child Consultations is entirely voluntary and informed consent must be asked before starting the activity. Informed consent means that children are told, in a language they can understand,

what is requested from them, how the National Delegations and the Council of Europe may use their views, information or image/film and that they are under no obligation to agree to their use.

Consent must be obtained by completing and signing the relevant Informed Consent Form. It must contain comprehensive, child-friendly and sensitive language and procedures and be adapted to the age of children and their development capacities. The Informed Consent is also required from the child's parent/carer or guardian or, where this is not possible, from the organisation fostering the child, who must countersign the form.

RESPECTING THE RIGHT TO SAY NO:

Ensure the child understands her/his right to withdraw/stop at any time without the need to provide a justification.

MEDIA

Sometimes it may be appropriate to use photographic material, graphic images or drawings to ensure that the message reaches the recipient and to show the activities and / or participation of children.

The use of photographic images or videos must be thoroughly assessed and the choice must be very careful. Photographs and videos should never depict minors in a state of need or physical distress. The Delegations should promote, in all circumstances, a positive - but never falsified - and non- discriminatory image of children. The images and stories must provide an authentic representation of the life and circumstances of the child or children, balancing the negative aspects with images that enhance their potential and show their progress. It is therefore necessary to always put the issue and vulnerability in context, while at the same time trying to indicate responsibility and propose a possible solution. Moreover, the integrity and dignity of the minor should be respected and preserved in any media, photographs, interviews and publications. This means never using discriminatory, victimising or degrading language towards or in relation to children.

Journalists, photographers and film crews must be informed in detail about this Safeguarding and Wellbeing Protocol before meeting underaged persons. They must read the document in advance and sign the appropriate declaration of commitment, and shouldn't be left alone with a child.

Recorded images should focus on the activities conducted and, where possible, on groups rather than individuals. Children, young people, parents or guardians should be informed of how filmed, photographed and interviewed material will be used and give their consent to its use.

PRIVACY

The Delegations should act in accordance with the laws and regulations applied in their regions regarding data privacy. For example in the EU Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data and repealing Directive 95/46/EC (General Data Protection Regulation), but also with the guiding principles of the CRC.

In accordance with the applicable law, National Delegations will only collect data that is relevant and limited to what is necessary in relation to the purposes for which it is processed and will only retain it for as long as necessary, deleting it when no longer in use. It will also respect the principle of integrity and confidentiality, guaranteeing "protection against unlawful processing or accidental loss, destruction or damage". Information obtained both formally and informally will always be handled with the best interests of the child in mind and a commitment to the highest standards of safeguarding and welfare.

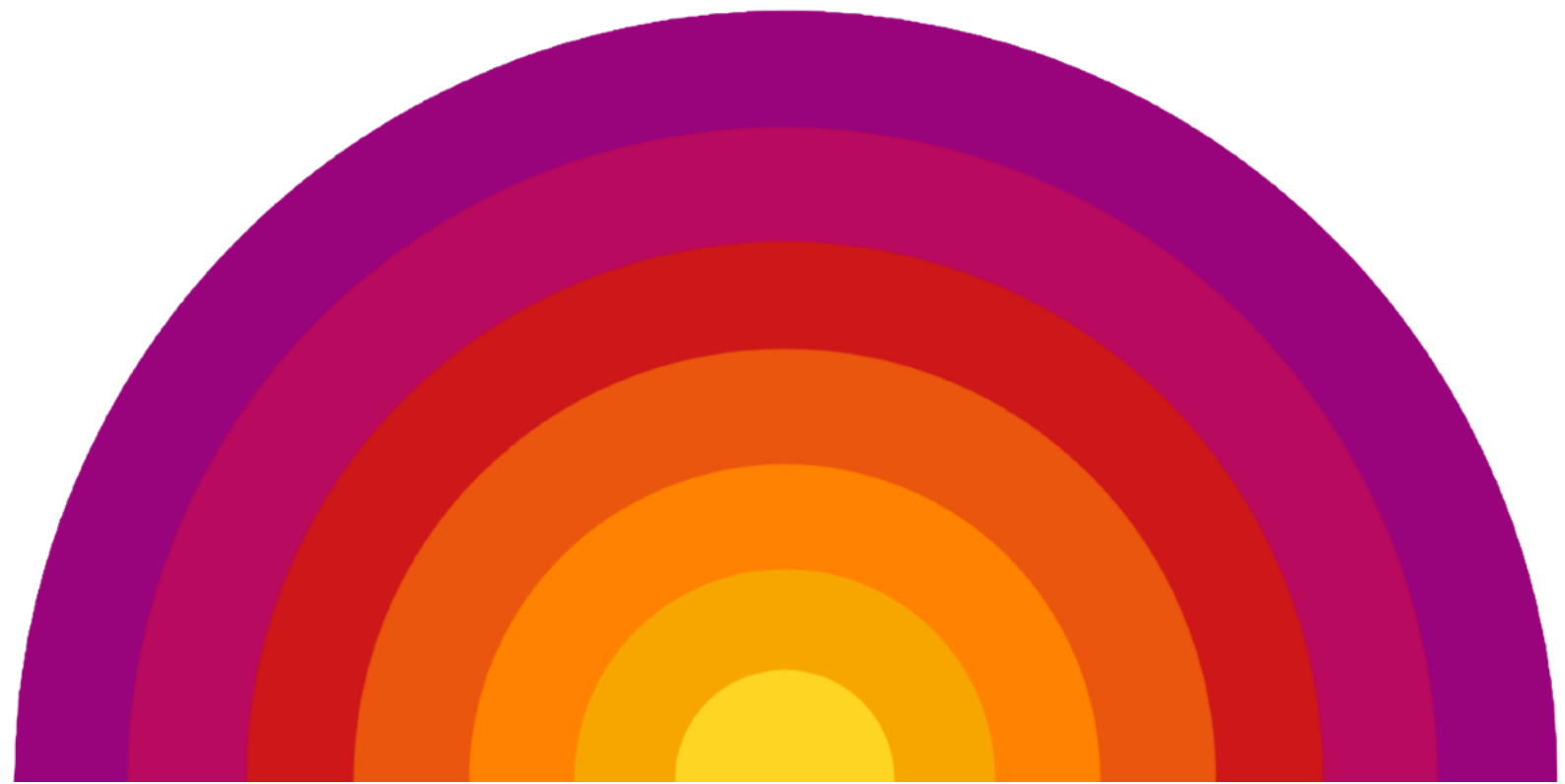
No information will be used that could identify the underage person or put them at risk. The names of children must never be made public in any report, publication or document. It is good practice to ask minors to choose an alias.

REPORTING AND RESPONDING TO CHILD SAFEGUARDING CONCERNS

Although we welcome children to share their direct experiences through the exchange, we have to bear in mind that their exposure should be proportionate to the aim and the limited framework of our consultation exercise. In other words, we should recognize and gently avoid situations where the exposure of children is going beyond our possibility to deal with it in an appropriate way and/or could determine unpleasant feeling for the child even for the fact of having exposed publicly possible traumatic or difficult personal experiences.

Concerns about suspected, potential or witnessed abuse, either sexual, emotional, bullying or neglect can be identified by everyone present in the activities - either staff, partner, volunteer, visitor or another child/children. These should be immediately brought to the attention of the facilitator, without putting the child at any further danger and avoiding the risk of reiteration. In case the concerns regard the facilitator they should be brought to the attention of the National Delegation's focal point. The National Delegation's focal point should act in a transparent and ethical manner regarding any raised concerns, prioritizing the safety and wellbeing of the child and referring the case to the relevant authorities.

APPENDICES



THE NINE BASIC REQUIREMENTS FOR EFFECTIVE AND ETHICAL PARTICIPATION: THE IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE⁵

1. PARTICIPATION IS TRANSPARENT AND INFORMATIVE

Children must be given information about their right to participate in a child- friendly and accessible format.

This means in practice that:

- ➔ Children's participation has a clear purpose.
- ➔ Children understand how much impact they are able to have on decision making.
- ➔ The roles and responsibilities of those involved are clear and well understood. f Children agree with the goals and targets associated with their participation.

2. PARTICIPATION IS VOLUNTARY

Children must be able to choose whether or not they would like to participate and must be informed and able to withdraw from activities at any time.

This means in practice that:

- ➔ Children are given time to consider their involvement and are able to provide informed consent.
- ➔ Children are aware and are able to withdraw at any time they wish.
- ➔ Children's other commitments are respected and accommodated (e.g. work and school).

3. PARTICIPATION IS RESPECTFUL

Children should be treated with respect and provided with opportunities to express their views freely and initiate ideas. Staff should also respect, and gain an understanding of, the family, school and cultural context of children's lives.

This means in practice that:

- ➔ Children are able to freely express their views and are treated with respect. f Where children are selected as representatives, the process will be based on principles of democracy and avoid discrimination.
- ➔ Ways of working build self-esteem and confidence, enabling children to feel that they have valid experience and views to contribute.

⁵ Council of Europe, *Listen – Act – Change*, Council of Europe Handbook on children's participation, For professionals working for and with children, Building a Europe for and with Children, 2021.

- ➡ Support from staff should be utilised to gain respect for children by other key duty bearers.

4. PARTICIPATION IS RELEVANT

Participation should build on children's own knowledge and focus on issues which are relevant to their lives and the local context.

This means in practice that:

- ➡ Activities that children are involved in are of real relevance to their experiences, knowledge and abilities.
- ➡ Participation approaches and methods build on local knowledge and practices.
- ➡ Children are involved in setting the criteria for selection and representation for participation.
- ➡ Children are involved in ways, at levels and at a pace appropriate to their capacities and interests.

5. PARTICIPATION IS CHILD-FRIENDLY

Child-friendly approaches should be used to ensure children are well prepared for their participation and are able to contribute meaningfully to activities. Participation approaches and methods should be designed or adapted based on children's ages and abilities.

This means in practice that:

- ➡ Time and resources are made available for quality participation and children are properly supported to prepare for it.
- ➡ Methods of involvement are developed in partnership or in consultation with children.
- ➡ Adults have the capacity to support and ensure child-friendly approaches and ways of working.
- ➡ Meeting places and activity locations are child-friendly.
- ➡ Children are given accessible information in child-friendly formats.

6. PARTICIPATION IS INCLUSIVE

Children's participation must provide opportunities for children in vulnerable situations to be involved and should challenge existing patterns of discrimination.

This means in practice that:

- ➡ Children are not discriminated against because of age, race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic or social origin, property, disability, birth or other status.
- ➡ Children's involvement aims to include children from all backgrounds, which could mean reaching out to children in their local community.

- ➡ Participation is flexible enough to respond to the needs, expectations and situations of different groups of children.
- ➡ The age range, gender and abilities of children are taken into account.
- ➡ Staff must be sensitive to the cultures of all children participating.

7. PARTICIPATION IS SUPPORTED BY TRAINING

Staff must have the knowledge and capacity to facilitate meaningful children's participation.

This means in practice that:

- ➡ All staff and managers are sensitised to children's participation, understand its importance and the need for commitment to it.
- ➡ Staff are provided with appropriate training, tools and other opportunities in participatory practice.
- ➡ Staff are effectively supported and supervised, and participatory practice is evaluated.
- ➡ Staff are able to express any views or anxieties about involving children, with the expectation that these will be addressed in a constructive way.
- ➡ Specific technical skills or expertise is built up through a combination of recruitment, selection, staff development and practice exchange.
- ➡ Relations between individual staff, and between staff and management, model appropriate behaviour, treating each other with respect and honesty.

8. PARTICIPATION IS SAFE AND SENSITIVE TO RISK

Adults working with children have a duty of care. Staff must take every precaution to minimise the risks to children of abuse and exploitation and any other negative consequences of participation.

This means in practice that:

- ➡ The protection rights of children are paramount in the way children's participation is planned and organised.
- ➡ Children involved in participation work are aware of their right to be safe from abuse and know where to go for help if needed.
- ➡ Skilled, knowledgeable staff are delegated to address and coordinate child protection issues during participatory processes.
- ➡ Safeguards are in place to minimise risks and prevent abuse.
- ➡ Staff organising a participatory process have a child protection strategy that is specific to each process. The strategy must be well communicated and understood by staff.
- ➡ Safeguards are in place to minimise and prevent abuse.

- ➡ Staff recognise their legal and ethical responsibilities in line with their agency's Code of Conduct and Child Safeguarding Policy.
- ➡ Child protection procedures recognise the particular risks faced by some children and extra barriers they face in obtaining help.
- ➡ Consent is obtained for the use of all information provided by children and information identified as confidential is safeguarded at all times.
- ➡ A formal complaints procedure is set up to allow children involved in participatory activities to make complaints in confidence. Information about the procedure is available in relevant languages and formats.
- ➡ No photographs, videos or digital images of a child can be taken or published without that child's explicit consent for a specific use.
- ➡ Responsibilities relating to liability, safety, travel and medical insurance are clearly delegated and effectively planned for.

9. PARTICIPATION IS ACCOUNTABLE

Following their participation, children must be provided with feedback and/ or follow up regarding: how their views have been interpreted and used; how they have influenced any outcomes; and where appropriate the opportunity for them to be involved in follow-up processes and activities.

This means in practice that:

- ➡ Children are involved in the work of relevant organisations at the earliest possible stage.
- ➡ Staff and partners are accountable to children for their commitments.
- ➡ Children are supported to participate in follow-up and evaluation processes.
- ➡ Children are supported to share their experiences of participation with peer groups, their local communities and other organisations.
- ➡ Children are given rapid and clear feedback on their involvement, impact, outcomes and next steps.
- ➡ Feedback reaches all children involved.
- ➡ Children are asked about their satisfaction with participatory processes and their views on how they could be improved.
- ➡ Mistakes identified through evaluations are acknowledged and commitments given about how lessons learnt will be used to improve participatory processes in the future.

FOLLOWING UP ACTIONS⁶

Feedback about action taken and further follow-up is a crucial element of children's participation since it demonstrates that the views of children are being heard and respected. Professionals should feedback regularly and as soon as possible what has happened as a result of listening to children's views (see Annex 2 for ideas on how to provide accessible feedback). Whether or not children are present during decision making, they should have opportunities to discuss any decisions as soon as possible. Professionals should provide information and opportunities for children to discuss any decisions they have tried to influence. For example, if a child is trying to challenge a decision to exclude them from school, teachers should let the child know whether their challenge has been accepted, and if not why not.

Decisions are not set in stone, and information is needed about possibilities to review and challenge these. Children should be provided with advice and information about how they make a complaint or seek redress if they feel that their rights have not been upheld (see Section 2.5 on complaints mechanisms). To enable children to take follow-up action they should receive continued support from the adult who has been hearing their views, or from another organisation if this is not possible. One option for children to challenge decisions may be through collective participation activities (see Section 4 on collective participation).

Relationships with children (and their families) need to be maintained so that children can continue to express their views and feed these into further decision-making opportunities. The process through which a child is heard and has influence on decisions that affect their own everyday life can be very emotionally charged. When things go well, regardless of whether children get the outcome they seek, they may build a positive relationship with person who helps them express their views. To promote children's well-being and their confidence in future participation processes it is important to ensure that the ending, or transformation, of these relationships are well managed. As already stated, this involves informing children of timescales from the very beginning. It also involves, wherever possible, meeting with the child to say goodbye in person. A physical marking of such a process ending can be useful, particularly in longer or more intense processes.

⁶ Council of Europe, *Listen – Act – Change*, Council of Europe Handbook on children's participation, For professionals working for and with children, Building a Europe for and with Children, 2021.

KNOWING, DOING, BEING: CODE OF CONDUCT

The aim of this overarching map of conducts and behaviours is to help all the stakeholders in the application of the principles of the CRC the safeguarding and wellbeing standards.

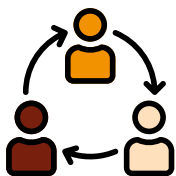
The proposed methodology, based in a resumed division of the four dimensions related with Prevention, Protection, Response and Participation considers a series of key elements relating them to the “knowing”, “doing” and “being” of the professional and respective work team.⁷



Knowing

►"Knowing", understood as a reasoned series of theoretical references and guidelines on knowledge, theoretical skills, general information, as well as specific information about the child and the context that one must have.

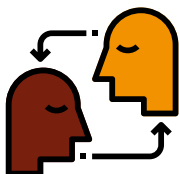
- Know and keep informed.



Doing

►"Doing", understood as orientations on direct or indirect activities that one must undertake and facilitate in order to comply in a manner appropriate to his duties by adopting a systemic and planned perspective.

- Be proactive and consistent with your responsibilities.



Being

►"Being", understood as guidelines on relational activities and on the personal attitudes necessary to establish a relationship with a child or young person. Moreover, on behavioral, cultural and gender issues that may interfere in the relationship and with the duty to identify, promote and protect the child's best interests, promote child's rights and to listen without prejudices.

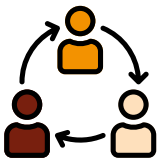
- Deal with children with empathy and a genuine listening attitude!

A RIGHTS-BASED APPROACH

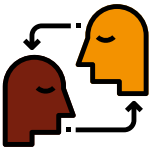
How Can I Translate Into Practice the Rights Already Recognised to Children by National and International Law?



- ✓ I am aware of the relevant legislation on children's rights and the standards and procedures of the Child Safeguarding and Wellbeing Protocol in order to implement them.
-



- ✓ I act within the context of the Child Safeguarding and Wellbeing Protocol and its Procedures based on a referral strategy, focusing on the best interests of the child and aimed at her/his wellbeing.
-



- ✓ I relate with children through empathy and a genuine listening attitude aimed at understanding the diverse situation of each child.
- ✓ I am collaborative towards colleagues and I oppose situations that can jeopardize the rights of children.

PREVENTION

How Can I Contribute to Guaranteeing Children the Highest Standards of Safeguarding and Wellbeing?



- ✓ I understand the importance of applying an integrated and holistic system of substantive prevention, sustained protection, sustainable response while at the same time promoting and advancing the rights of each child.



- ✓ I act within a child-centered system of protection based on the four key principles of the CRC: non-discrimination (Art. 2 CRC), best-interests of the child (Art. 3 CRC), survival and development (Art. 6 CRC) and right to be heard (Art. 12 CRC).



- ✓ I recognise, respect and protect the concept of dignity attached to each child as a rights holder and as a unique and valuable human being with an individual personality, distinct needs, interests and privacy.

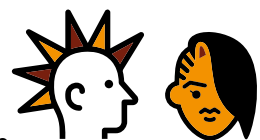
How Can I Ensure and Promote the Principle of Non-Discrimination?



- ✓ I am conscious of the principle of non-discrimination and the zero tolerance policy to abuse or discrimination within the Council of Europe.



- ✓ I treat all children with respect, regardless of race, sex, gender, colour of skin, language, religion, political or other conviction, nationality, ethnical or social background, disability, or any other grounds.



- ✓ I assume a respectful attitude and never use language or make suggestions in an inappropriate manner, that can provoke, harass or degrade the child or show disrespect for cultural practices.

How Can I Ensure I Have an Appropriate Behaviour Towards Children?



- ✓ I am aware of all the behaviours which constitute inappropriate physical contact with children, including hold, fondle, kiss, cuddle or *touch* children, young persons or other vulnerable persons and I will in no occasion behave in such a way.



- ✓ I don't act in ways intended to shame, humiliate, belittle, stigmatize or degrade children, or otherwise perpetrate any form of emotional abuse.
- ✓ I never react judgmental, negative or rejective towards the child, insinuate things or openly question the credibility of the child's story.
- ✓ I will not spend time alone with a single child or young person with whom I have a work relationship with, away from others, behind closed doors or in a secluded area, without the knowledge of other staff members and without appropriate justification.



- ✓ I always use non-violent and positive behaviour methods when supervising children.
- ✓ I am attentive to how children feel during activities and I create the necessary conditions for them to voluntary withdraw from the activities or raise a complaint at any time.

How Can I Contribute to the Development of Positive Peer-To-Peer Relationships?



- ✓ I recognize the importance of the peer relationships for the development of children.
- ✓ I understand the importance of work 'for' and 'with' the peer group as a fundamental pedagogical dimension.



- ✓ I carefully observe the peer relationships during activities and act to prevent negative, violent or abusive dynamics.



- ✓ I am aware of the influence that relationships with peers can have on children's behaviour, role models and lifestyles and of the dynamics deriving from relationships with peers.

PROTECTION

How Can I Ensure a Sustained Protection to Children?



- ✓ I am well aware of the situations which may present risks to children and I know how to manage these and how to report my concerns.



- ✓ I empower children to see themselves as rights-holders on a continuous basis.
- ✓ I inform children of their rights, while trying to explain to them, in a child-friendly and non-intrusive manner, what is acceptable behavior of adults towards them, what not and the mechanisms of complaint.



- ✓ With my behavior I promote the empowerment of children so that they are in a position to better protect themselves.

How Can I Improve Protection Through my Behaviour?



- ✓ I am mindful of the power balance that is needed between adults and children.
- ✓ I commit myself to never abuse the power and influence that I have by virtue of my position over the wellbeing of any child.



- ✓ I treat all children with respect and take notice of their reactions and adjust my tone of voice and manner.



- ✓ I adopt a culture of support, respect and tolerance, being attentive to children's needs and responding to them in a positive manner.
- ✓ I am a positive role model. For example, I treat every child equally and I always apologize for mistakes made.

How Can I Ensure That the Privacy Rights of Children Are Respected?



- ✓ I am well aware of the sensitiveness of the information gathered in some projects and activities and the relevance of privacy life to children's rights.
- ✓ I am cognizant that every person has a private life and I recognize this dimension also to children.



- ✓ I respect and protect the privacy of the child both during the activity and/or project as well as after that, according to the principle of the best interests of the child.



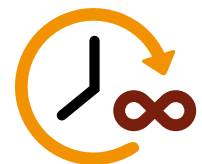
- ✓ I have a non-intrusive attitude towards children and I welcome any confidences with respect and discretion, following the respective procedures according to the best interests of the child.

RESPONSE

How Can I Ensure a Sustainable Response to Child Safeguarding Concerns?



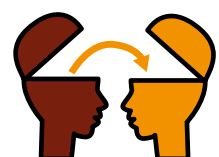
- ✓ I am aware that a sustainable response in view of avoiding reiteration and towards re-establishment of the adequate conditions of safety, security and wellbeing of the child is part of an holistic system for protection and should never be isolated.



- ✓ I raise any Child Safeguarding concerns with the National Delegation's focal point which is responsible to referring the matter to the appropriate authorities.



- ✓ I commit myself to create a culture of openness and mutual accountability in the workplace to enable all child protection issues to be raised and discussed, and to make sure possible violations do not go unchallenged.



PARTICIPATION

How Can I Contribute to Children's Effective Participation?



- ✓ I know that careful and effective listening are essential elements for protecting and promoting the rights of every child as well as informing her/him of the choices and decisions concerning her/him.



- ✓ I favour moments and spaces for listening and confrontation between children and adults while asking them open questions.



- ✓ I am attentive to my listening skills and I am ready to improve them when necessary, actively contributing to the creation of more participative contexts.

How Can I Make Sure That Children Are Adequately Informed?



- ✓ I know children must be informed, in a language that is understandable to them, about their rights, the existence of a Child Safeguarding and Wellbeing Protocol and its procedures.



- ✓ I make sure children fully understand the meaning of the communications and information provided regarding all projects and activities.



- ✓ I inform children of their right to report any situations and how they can raise a concern or make a complaint.



- ✓ I am aware that adequate information is essential to guarantee an effective and real participation of the child.
- ✓ I am available anytime the child or her/his family wants to speak with me and I encourage them to do so.

How Can I Contribute to Seriously Taking Into Account the Needs of the Children?



- ✓ I know that children's access to safe and reliable complaint mechanisms is an essential element to ensure that their rights are safeguarded and promoted.



- ✓ I ensure that there are no reasons why children may be afraid of negative consequences or retaliation from the staff following a complaint.



- ✓ I am aware that the existence of these complaint mechanisms can act as a deterrent and as a prevention against violations and abuses.
- ✓ I respect the right to confidentiality throughout the course of the complaint procedures.



How Can I Contribute to Children's Autonomy and Empowerment?



- ✓ I am aware of the resources and capacities of each child.
- ✓ I am conscious that all are responsible to create an enabling environment where children are encouraged and able to express themselves, and raise issues affecting them for discussion.



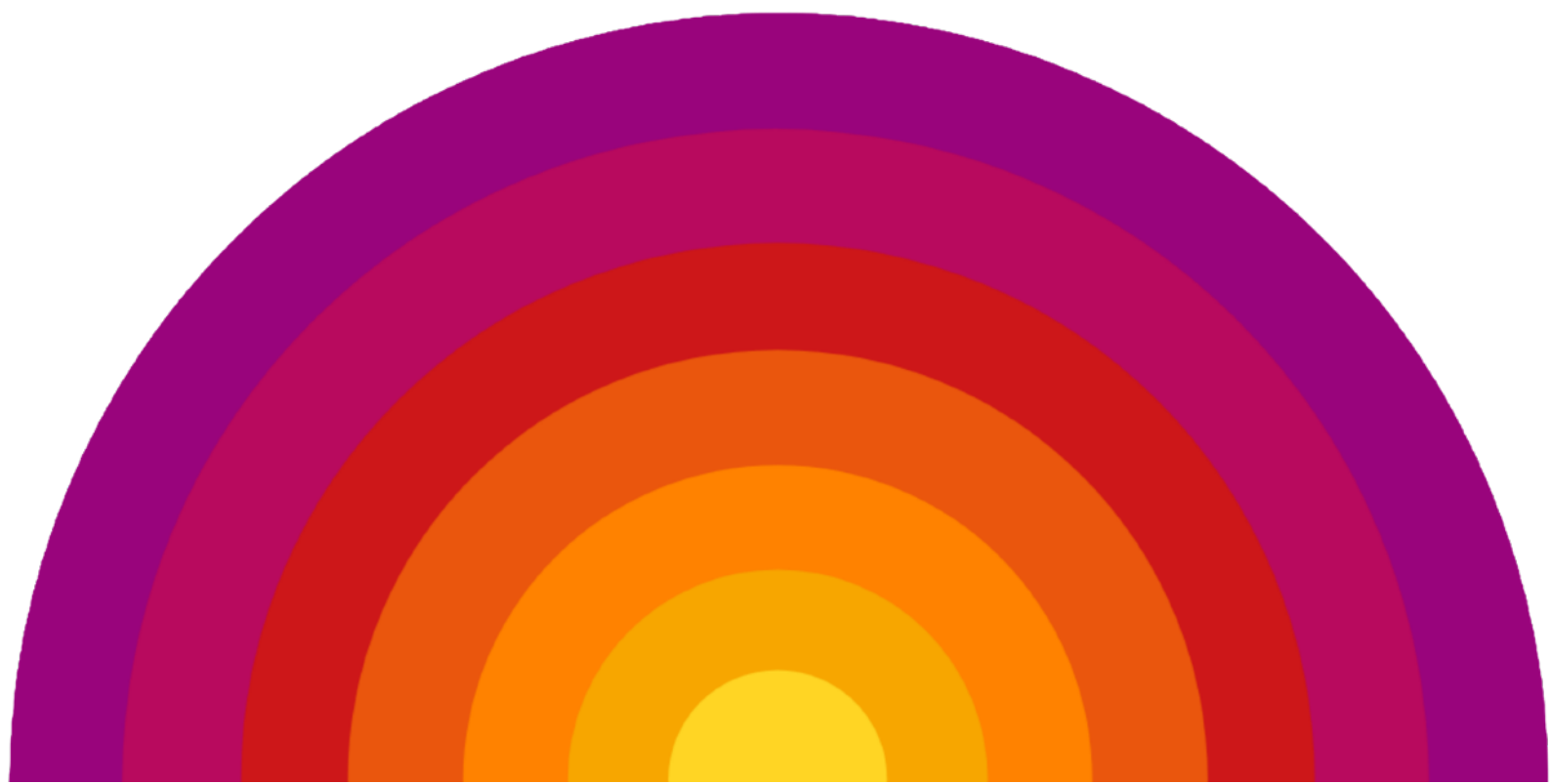
- ✓ I try as much as possible to always involve children in decision-making.
- ✓ I allow children to make their own decisions, particularly about their own lives. I have frequent exchanges with the child about his wellbeing, and I invite him/her to promptly communicate any concerns in a culture of openness and transparency.



- ✓ I try to preserve the child's autonomy and I make sure that I do not do things that a child can do for herself/himself.
- ✓ I contribute to create and/or uphold an environment where children are listened to and respected as individuals.



ANNEXES



Statement of Commitment to the Child Safeguarding and Wellbeing Protocol in the Child Consultations to inform the development of the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child 2022-2027

Staff, facilitators and volunteers

“I, _____, have read and understood the standards and guidelines outlined in this Child Safeguarding and Wellbeing Protocol.

I agree with the principles contained therein and accept the importance of implementing child protection procedures in all my direct or indirect activities during this child consultation process. Moreover, I undertake to embrace continuous and systematic framework of protection, being guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Lastly I commit myself to the Knowing, Being and Doing Overarching Map of Conducts and Behaviours.



DATE ____ / ____ / ____

NAME _____

JOB TITLE / ROLE _____

Informed consent form for children participating in the Child Consultations to inform the development of the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child 2022-2027

Thank you for being here with us, your participation is very valuable not only for you but also for children all across Europe! Before starting we need to make sure you understand what is expected of you.

	 Yes	 No
Someone explained to me the objective of this consultation in a comprehensible language and I understand what is expected of me.		
I have been given the opportunity to ask questions regarding the activities and the facilitator answered to all my questions in a manner that I could understand.		
I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may quit at any time without explaining why.		
I understand that any information given by me may be used in future reports, articles or presentations by the research team and the Council of Europe.		
I understand that my name will remain secret and will not appear in any reports, articles or presentations. I can choose an alias.		
I don't mind that activities are recorded, in writing or audio, in order to write the reports.		
I want to take part in this consultation.		



If you crossed all boxes 'yes', you are ready to sign below and start the activity!
If not, you can ask the facilitator for clarifications, help or you can leave this activity.

I UNDERSTAND WHAT IS REQUIRED OF ME AND I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE PART IN THIS ACTIVITY.		
_____ NAME/ALIAS	_____ SIGNATURE	_____ DATE
CONSENT FROM PARENT / GUARDIAN		
_____ NAME	_____ SIGNATURE	_____ DATE
FACILITATOR CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITIES		
_____ NAME	_____ SIGNATURE	_____ DATE

*[name of the organization] acts in conformity with the Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data (General Data Protection Regulation). We keep your personal data safe and protected against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction or damage. We will use your data only for the purpose of this project and we will delete it when the project comes to an end.

Informed consent form for recording / media use for children participating in the Child Consultations to inform the development of the Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child 2022-2027

Thank you for being here with us, your participation is very valuable not only for you but also for children all across Europe! Before starting we need to make sure you understand what is expected of you.

	 Yes	 No
Someone explained to me the objective of this consultation in a comprehensible language and I understand what is expected of me.		
I accept that the facilitator records this consultation and use the recording for documentation purposes.		
I consent to original materials created by me in the framework of this consultation, such as artwork, drawings, poems or essays, may be used, shared and published in a report by the Council of Europe.		
I accept that the facilitator or someone from his/her team takes group photos of me and other participants during the activity.		

I UNDERSTAND WHAT IS REQUIRED OF ME AND I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE PART IN THIS ACTIVITY.		
_____ NAME/ALIAS	_____ SIGNATURE	_____ DATE
CONSENT FROM PARENT / GUARDIAN		
_____ NAME	_____ SIGNATURE	_____ DATE
FACILITATOR CONDUCTING THE ACTIVITIES		
_____ NAME	_____ SIGNATURE	_____ DATE

*[name of the organization] acts in conformity with the Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data (General Data Protection Regulation). We keep your personal data safe and protected against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction or damage. We will use your data only for the purpose of this project and we will delete it when the project comes to an end.



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