

Consulting & Involving Young People in Community Safety

ARE YOUTH POLICIES
CONSTRUCTED MORE TO
MEET THE NEEDS OF YOUNG
PEOPLE THAN ADULTS?

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KEYWORDS:

POLICY

CONSULTATION

PARTICIPATION

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POLICY IS A: -

Plan of Action adopted by a person, group, or state

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CONSULTATION:

ONE FORM OF COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION WHEREBY GOVERNMENTS AND PUBLIC BODIES FORMALLY SEEK OUT THE VIEWS AND OPINIONS OF INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITY GROUPS ON SPECIFIC ISSUES

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PARTICIPATION

THE RANGE OF FORMAL AND INFORMAL ACTIVITIES WHEREBY INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS CONTRIBUTE TO GOVERNMENTAL DECISION-MAKING AND THE PLANNING AND/OR MANAGEMENT OF COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS, RESOURCES AND SERVICES (www.caah.nch.edu.au).

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1. CONTENT:

The content of discussions needs to be relevant and accessible to young people

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BURY YOUTH ISSUES SUB-COMMITTEE PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES:

7. The history of each issue will be explained before the sub-committee begins discussion on it.
8. When jargon is used and not explained, young adults and councillors will be able to hold up a yellow card to show that the person speaking has to stop and explain what is being said (Taylor, 996,2)

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2. POWER:

Young people need some real power

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“The fear that adults in general and practitioners in particular seem to have is that their power is being diminished or compromised and that young people couldn’t possibly make key adult decisions” (Campbell,2000,21).

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The reality is that young people do not want to take all the decisions and indeed, adults with their power and expertise would not allow them to.....I want to see a scenario where adults lower the threshold of power and young people can impart their expertise and knowledge in an environment where they can take part in the decisions on an equal footing

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3. REPRESENTATIVE:

The diversity of young people needs to be represented

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“the group is touring Watford’s youth centres in the hope of setting up a truly representative youth council....A good way of achieving this is to focus on one area of concern, and then invite views on similar issues...the young people are making a video about bullying...which they will screen to youth groups in the area” (Beebee,2000a,26).

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4. SUSTAINABLE:

Participation and Consultation need to be sustainable over time

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“Delegated Decision – That arrangements be made to help the young adult members of this Sub-Committee understand the formal decision making procedures of the council”(Taylor, 1997c,6).

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5. RESOURCES:

Participation and Consultation need dedicated resources

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Obstructions to successful consultation and participation include :

- policy making structures that are highly inaccessible to young people.
- a reluctance by adults to give young people the power required to change policy
- a fundamental lack of resources at all levels
- preconceived perceptions of young people by adults and vice versa of adults by young people

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