

# Child and youth participation for prevention and protection: The 'Our Voices' project

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# Outline

- The 'Our Voices' Project
- Why involving children and young people affected by sexual violence is critical
- What the Our Voices Youth Advisors say about prevention and participation
- Regional learning and beyond

# What is 'Our Voices'?

Promote the involvement of children and young people in efforts to prevent sexual violence

- Gathering the views and ideas of young people
- Sharing learning
- Promoting safe and ethical engagement



# Why involve children and young people affected by sexual violence?

Common consequences of exploitation	Common benefits of participation
Don't always recognise the harm	Better understanding of healthy relationships (AYPH, 2014)
Lack of power/control (Warrington, 2013)	Voice and choice
Isolation (Reid and Jones, 2011; Taylor-Browne <i>et al.</i> , 2002)	Sense of belonging (Hagel, 2013)
Stigma (Brown, 2004)	Identity and approval (Batsleer, 2011)
Low self worth/ self- confidence	Helping others (Batsleer, 2011, Levy, 2012, AYPH, 2014)

# What needs to change?

Promote-empathy

Education-outside-school

More-awareness-about-services

More-and-better-services

Training-for-professionals

Information-and-support-for-parents

Tackle-social-problems

Change-attitudes

# Talk-about-sex

# Better-education-in-schools

# Why do young people think they should be involved?

We know how to explain things, adults dodge about it, we say it how it is

We know how young people think

We have personal experience to share, it makes it real

We talk the same language

# How do young people think they can be involved?



# What helps and hinders participation?

## What helps

- Give examples
- Provide training
- Use the right language
- Make it fun
- Make it feel safe and comfortable
- Provide incentives

## What hinders

- Too much time involved
- Boring
- Working alone
- Not providing the right information or resources
- Increasing stigma
- Re-traumatising/ reliving experiences

# What's the added value of a European Network?

- Encourages
- Inspires
- Identifies common principles
- Provides a common platform

**Examples: what's happening in Europe?**

**UK**

**The Association for Young People's Health (AYPH), the University of Bedfordshire and three specialist services**  
 Young Health Advisors worked together to research and highlight the current health needs of young people affected by sexual exploitation as part of the 'Be Healthy' project.  
 These Health Advisors:  
 • developed animation films;  
 • created a website;  
 • created leaflets and guidance for young people and project workers;  
 • took to conferences and workshops.  
**BLAST!**  
 This project provides creative support with boys and young men affected by sexual exploitation.  
 The boys and young men of staff facilitate panels and show their stories at conferences and through posters.  
**SOCS (Sexually Exploited Children's Outreach Service), Birmingham's**  
 Workshop prepared two girls to take part in a parliamentary inquiry into sexual exploitation. The girls shared their views and experience for the parliamentary inquiry.  
**SOCS (Sexually Exploited Children's Outreach Service), Birmingham's**  
 Workers supported two young people to help other young people prepare for court proceedings.  
 So far they have:  
 • supported around twenty young people  
 • developed a child friendly leaflet explaining the criminal justice process and what to expect at trial  
 • attended and advised at practitioner meetings  
 • met with solicitors at court to consult on how best to meet the needs of young witnesses.  
**Eighteen And Under**  
 The organisation established a shadow management group consisting of young men and women.  
 This group:  
 • has involved in every staff recruitment  
 • have inputted into development of prevention resources  
 • assist in the delivery of prevention programmes in schools  
 • have made changes to the venue and office environment  
 • are involved in consultation with other young people.  
**PhotoVoice, WNV and four specialist sexual exploitation services in the UK**  
 Practitioners organised participative workshops with young people affected by sexual exploitation. These workshops explored different themes and produced learning in photography and storytelling techniques.  
 The group developed photography and digital stories exhibit, book and website.

**NETHERLANDS**

**Belgium**

**GERMANY**

**Poland**

**Nobody's Children Foundation**  
 The organisation worked together with a group of school children.  
 Together they developed scenarios, which were then performed in educational videos that explored different forms of violence.  
**"You know the way? Do it your own way Man..."** the Youth Initiative Movement founded by the Regional NGO Studio  
 Young people were encouraged to join the movement, in order to raise awareness with their peers.  
 To do this they:  
 • created games on internet safety  
 • acted and scripted into a theatre performance "Blastoff" on walking prevention and internet safety  
 • organised an award-winning photography exhibition.

**UKRAINE**

**The All-Globes Network Against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC)**  
 Youth Movements and their supporters received training and support so that they were able to:  
 • organise training seminars, concerts and awareness raising events  
 • develop games and posters  
 • collect more than 10,000 signatures under the Petition to Stop Child Sex Trafficking.  
**The Ukrainian Women's Fund**  
 Young girls/teenagers are being trained on violence against women and girls.  
 The aim is to enable them to develop training materials, run victim skills, organize poster competitions and produce short videos or web applications for young people that will be gender-based violence.

**SPAIN**

**Like da Dames - Grownup of Women**  
 Young people at schools and high schools will be trained to write and develop a short film about gender violence and how to prevent it. These short films will be screened and discussed with young people.  
**Kalme**  
 The project will facilitate the co-creation and co-production of a video with young people at risk of or directly affected by the issue of "transactional sex".  
**Dilemma and Social**  
 They worked with a small group of vulnerable youth to develop and design an anti-trafficking campaign. The campaign was presented at schools and youth centres within different communities.

**RUSSIA**

**AUSTRIA**

**ECNVE in Germany, the UK, Austria, Netherlands and Belgium**  
 Young people are trained as peer experts on critical incidents as part of the 'Be Safe in your project'. The peer experts prepare tools and give guidance to their peers, schools and communities on online safety.  
**ECNVE Austria**  
 They established a youth network, the Committee for Youth Action. Members have met and vote at the ECNVE board, support ECNVE activities, and design and implement their own projects such as youth training, awareness raising activities and train-the-trainer sessions for young people.

**SWITZERLAND**

**ALBANIA**

# The road ahead...

- Creativity
- Conversations
- Commitment
- Change



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For more information on our work including research publications, short films and outputs from young people please visit

[www.beds.ac.uk/ic](http://www.beds.ac.uk/ic)