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11/2024 - 05/2025



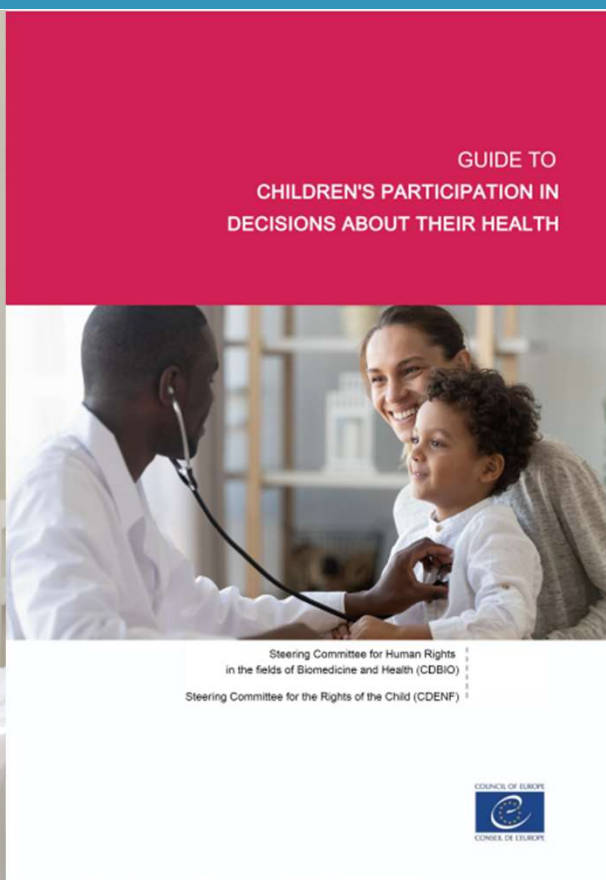
Andrew Clarke

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Steering Committee for Human Rights
in the fields of Biomedicine and Health (CDBIO)
Steering Committee for the Rights of the Child (CDENF)





Why?

Recognition of child participation as a **right** – reflected in legal instruments.

Many **benefits** of child participation in healthcare – the right thing to do and also more effective

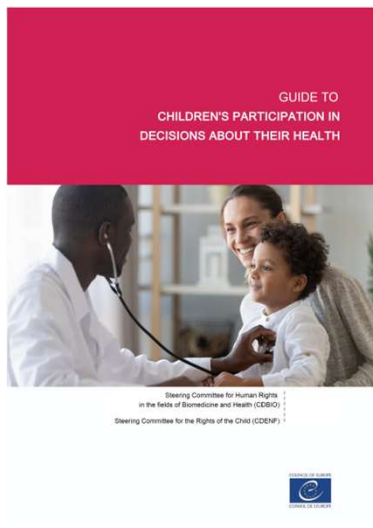
But **implementation** is inconsistent and a challenge

- Lack of practical guidance and training

- Regional differences in Europe about the interpretation of these rights in domestic laws; policies, knowledge and practices of professionals

- = A lottery for children....

Can sometimes be **complex**





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Objectives

Help professionals

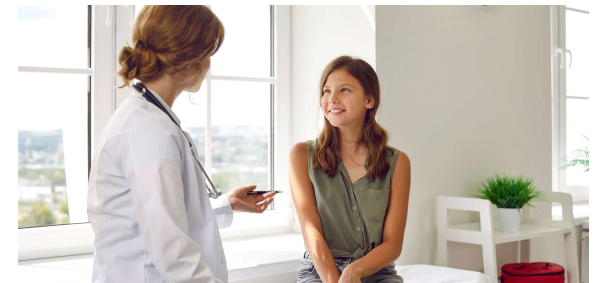
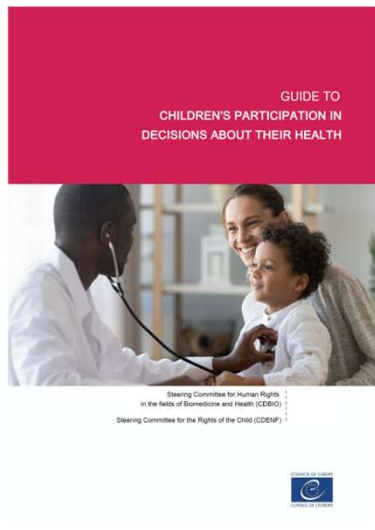
- Understand their role in supporting children to participate in decision making
- Develop their practice in this area

Share existing guidance and practices

Respect rights

Improve healthcare

Focus: individual healthcare decision





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Legal and conceptual frameworks

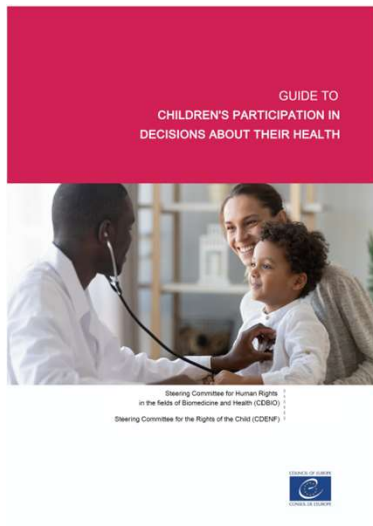
Main provisions under international law

- General principles
- Specific situations

Domestic legislations in Member States

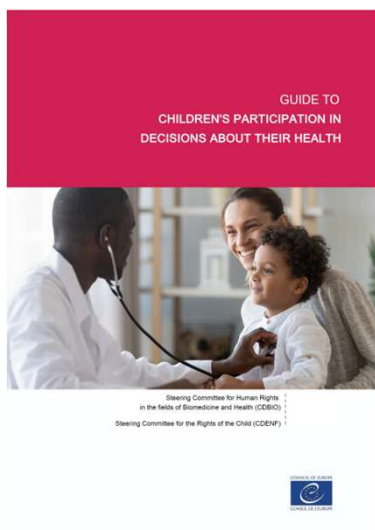
- Consent
- Right to receive information / Right to express a view

Principles of meaningful participation





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Supporting the participation of children in the decision-making process

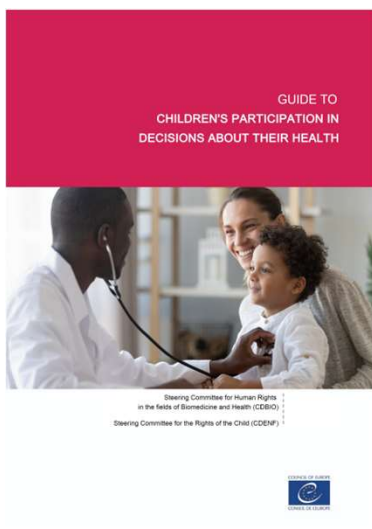




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Supporting the decision making process



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Provide
information

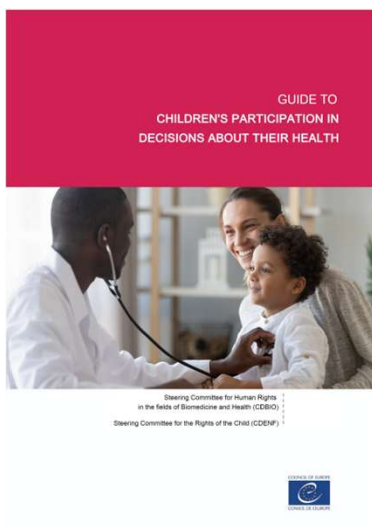
Help children
express view

Consider
children's
opinions

Reaching a decision



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Reaching a decision

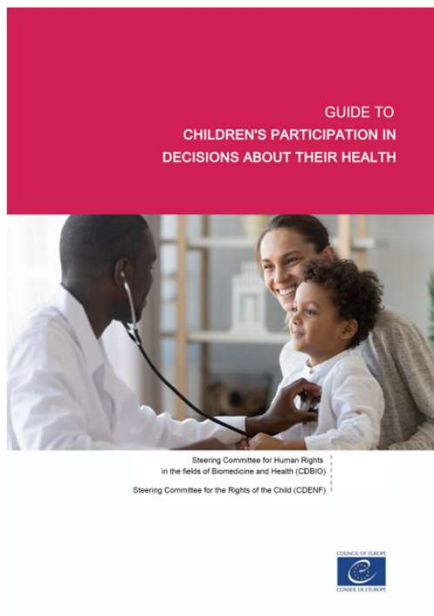
Determining a child's best interests
Consent, assent, dissent



Managing disagreement and conflicts



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Follow up work

Guide available in:

English, French, Armenian, German, Hungarian, Lithuanian, Polish, Romanian, Spanish
+ Latvian and Portuguese (coming).

YOUR HEALTH, YOUR SAY!

KEY MESSAGES FOR CHILDREN
from the Council of Europe's
Guide to children's participation in decisions about their health



02

You will read and learn about some important aspects of the decision-making process, including:

YOUR RIGHT TO BE HEARD

INFORMATION IS KEY

EXPRESSING YOUR VIEW

OPEN AND SAFE COMMUNICATION

THE ROLE OF PARENTS

MAKING DECISIONS

DISAGREEMENTS

At the end of the document, you will find **additional information**, including **useful definitions**, if you wish to know more about this topic.



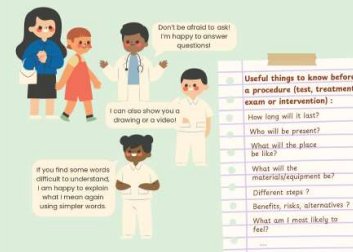
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INFORMATION IS KEY

It's very important that you **understand your health situation as best as possible** before you can decide what to think about it.

Adults, especially doctors and nurses, must explain what's wrong, how they can help you feel better, and what will happen next. They should explain it in a way that makes sense to you. Every child is different, so the way they explain things may change. You can get this information by talking to your parent or nurse or doctor.

Adults must make sure that you have understood things well. They should also explain to you who is who, and who does what, especially in a hospital, where you may meet with many different people.



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DISAGREEMENTS

A good decision requires that all people concerned speak together and listen to each other to find the best solution.

But there can be situations where persons involved in making a decision about a child have **different opinions**. For example, you may disagree with your parents, or your parents may disagree with the health professionals.

Taking your opinion seriously doesn't always mean that the final decision will be what you wanted or everything that you would want. Sometimes that won't be possible. But when looking for the best possible solution for you, **health professionals should have your preferences in mind**, they will know what they must absolutely avoid and try to do the best to respect your wishes.

In all cases **you need to be told exactly what was decided and why**.



- <https://www.coe.int/en/web/human-rights-and-biomedicine/promoting-children-s-participation-in-decisions-about-their-health>



Child-friendly summary of the guide