The background of the slide features a silhouette of several children running along a beach at sunset. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and purple, with the sun low on the horizon. The children are in various poses of running, their forms dark against the bright sky.

# Involving Children in Decision-Making: the Lundy Model

Professor Laura Lundy

Centre for Children's Rights

[www.qub.ac.uk/child](http://www.qub.ac.uk/child)

@CHILDRIGHTSQUB

# The UNCRC provides a powerful frame for understanding child participation

“States Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child.”

Article 12(1) of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Who does it apply to?

A RIGHT OF INDIVIDUALS  
AND  
A RIGHT OF GROUPS OF  
CHILDREN

# What decisions does it apply to?

*‘A wide interpretation of matters affecting the child and children helps to include children in the social processes of their community and society. Thus, States parties should carefully listen to children’s views wherever their perspective can enhance the quality of solutions.’*

Committee on the Rights of the Child (2009)

# A disconnect between law, children's experiences and adults' understanding

The legal text  
of Article 12



A boy not getting a say in a  
Conversation.

Adults' focus  
on the 'voice  
of the child'



The Voice of the Child?

The Right to be Heard?

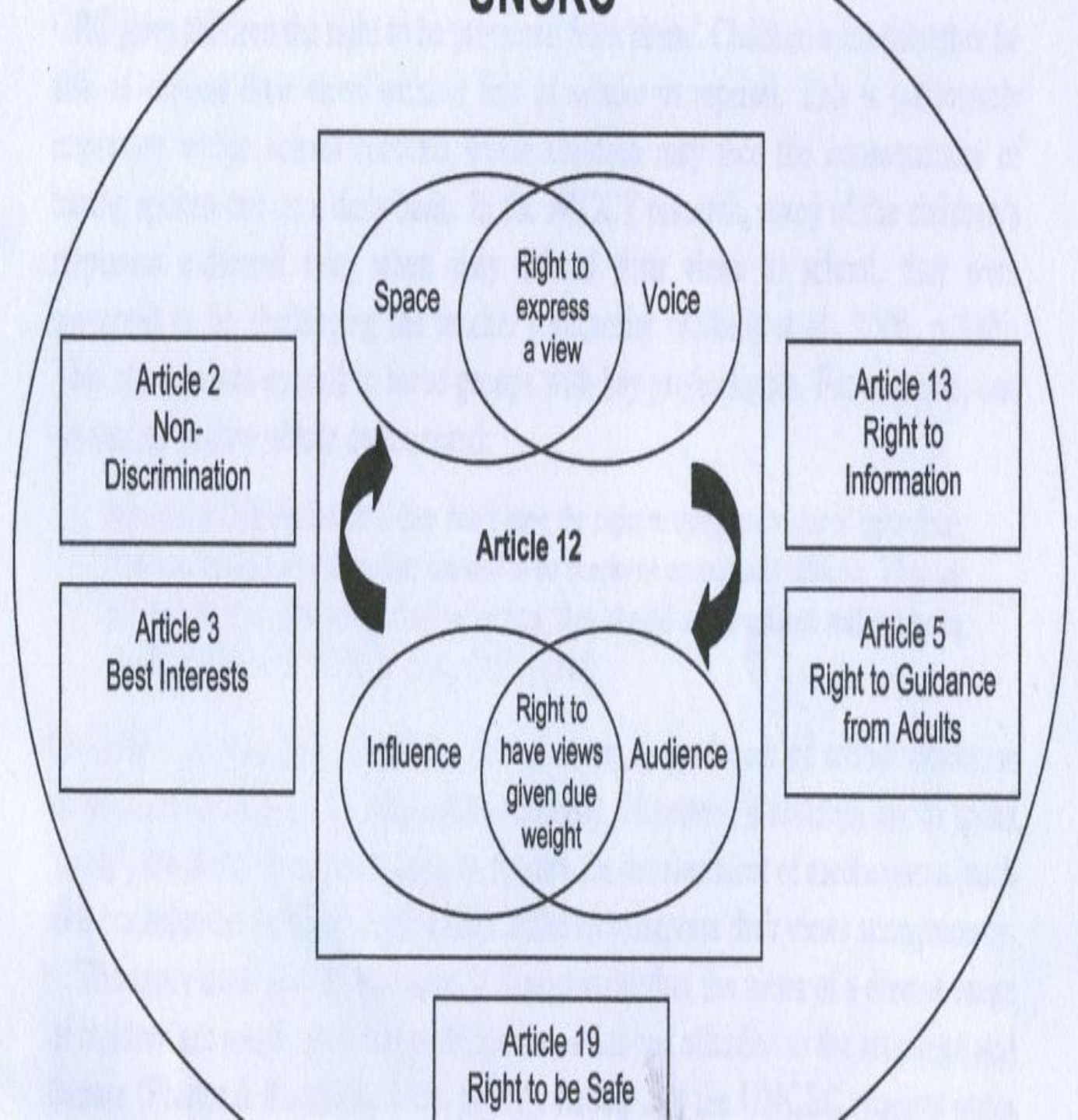
The Right to Have a Say?

*“Each of these abbreviations is an imperfect summary and can potentially undermine its implementation.”*



# Voice is not enough...

Lundy (2007)



# “Voice” is not enough

- **SPACE**: Children must be given the opportunity to express a view
- **VOICE**: Children must be facilitated to express their views
- **AUDIENCE**: The view must be listened to.
- **INFLUENCE**: The view must be acted upon, as appropriate.





# SPACE

## “assure to the child”

Needs to be actively  
created – the  
obligation is to  
“assure” the right to  
the child...

Needs to be a “safe”  
space (Art. 19)

Needs to be  
inclusive (Art. 2)

# VOICE

"the right to express a view  
freely"

A right not a duty

Choice in the mode  
of expression

Afforded to all  
children "capable  
of forming a view"

May need to be  
helped to both form  
and express their  
views





# AUDIENCE

“the views of the child being given due weight”

More than just the  
“right to be heard”

Need to be actively  
listened to

May need formal  
channels of  
communication - a  
right of audience.



# INFLUENCE

“due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child”

Ensure there is a formal response

Should be given feedback about the extent of influence they have had.

“Create the conditions where it is uncomfortable for adults to solicit children’s views and then ignore them”.

The background of the slide features a silhouette of several children running along a beach at sunset. The sky is a mix of deep purple and orange, with the sun low on the horizon. The children are in various stages of motion, running from left to right. The overall mood is peaceful and hopeful.

# The Lundy Model in practice.

Professor Laura Lundy

Centre for Children's Rights

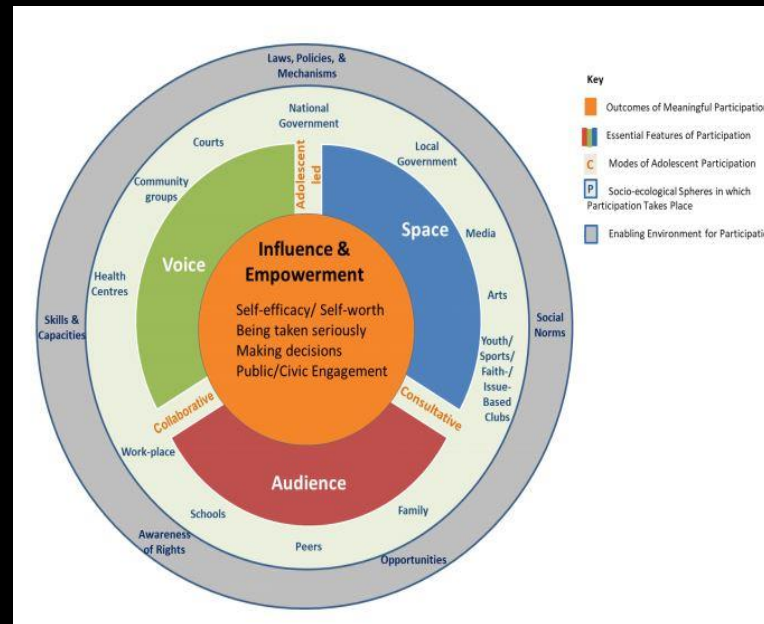
[www.qub.ac.uk/child](http://www.qub.ac.uk/child)

@CHILDRIGHTSQUB



# ITS APPEAL

- “Legally sound and user-friendly”
- Intended to capture the qualities of rights-based participation rather than different forms or levels of participation
- Concepts are fluid and flexible: can apply to any form of participation for all children in any arena of decision-making



UNICEF

WORLD VISION



## Space

**HOW:** Provide a safe and inclusive space for children to express their views

- Have children's views been actively sought?
- Was there a safe space in which children can express themselves freely?
- Have steps been taken to ensure that all children can take part?

## Voice

**HOW:** Provide appropriate information and facilitate the expression of children's views

- Have children been given the information they need to form a view?
- Do children know that they do not have to take part?
- Have children been given a range of options as to how they might choose to express themselves?

## Audience

**HOW:** Ensure that children's views are communicated to someone with the responsibility to listen

- Is there a process for communicating children's views?
- Do children know who their views are being communicated to?
- Does that person/body have the power to make decisions?

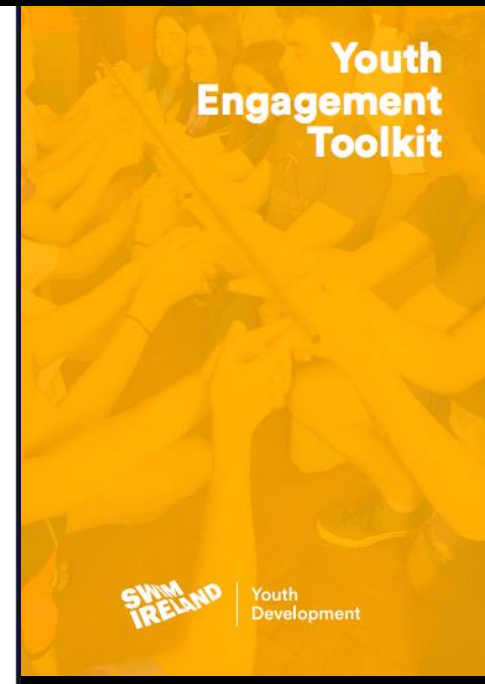
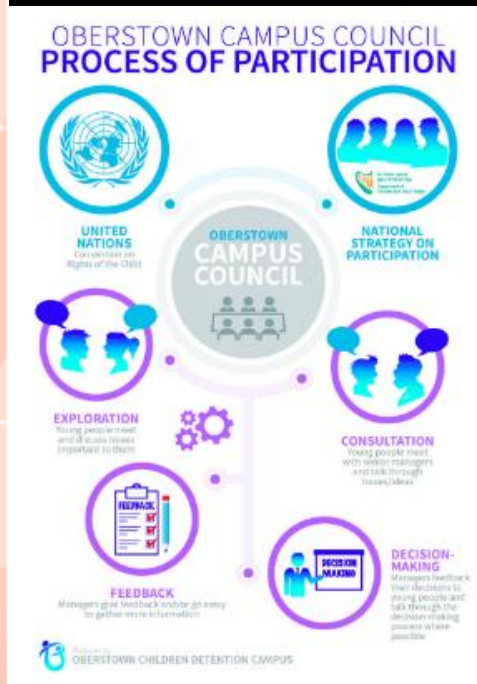
## Influence

**HOW:** Ensure that children's views are taken seriously and acted upon, where appropriate

- Were the children's views considered by those with the power to effect change?
- Are there procedures in place that ensure that the children's views have been taken seriously?
- Have the children and young people been provided with feedback explaining the reasons for decisions taken?

# Ireland's National Child and Youth Participation Strategy (2015)

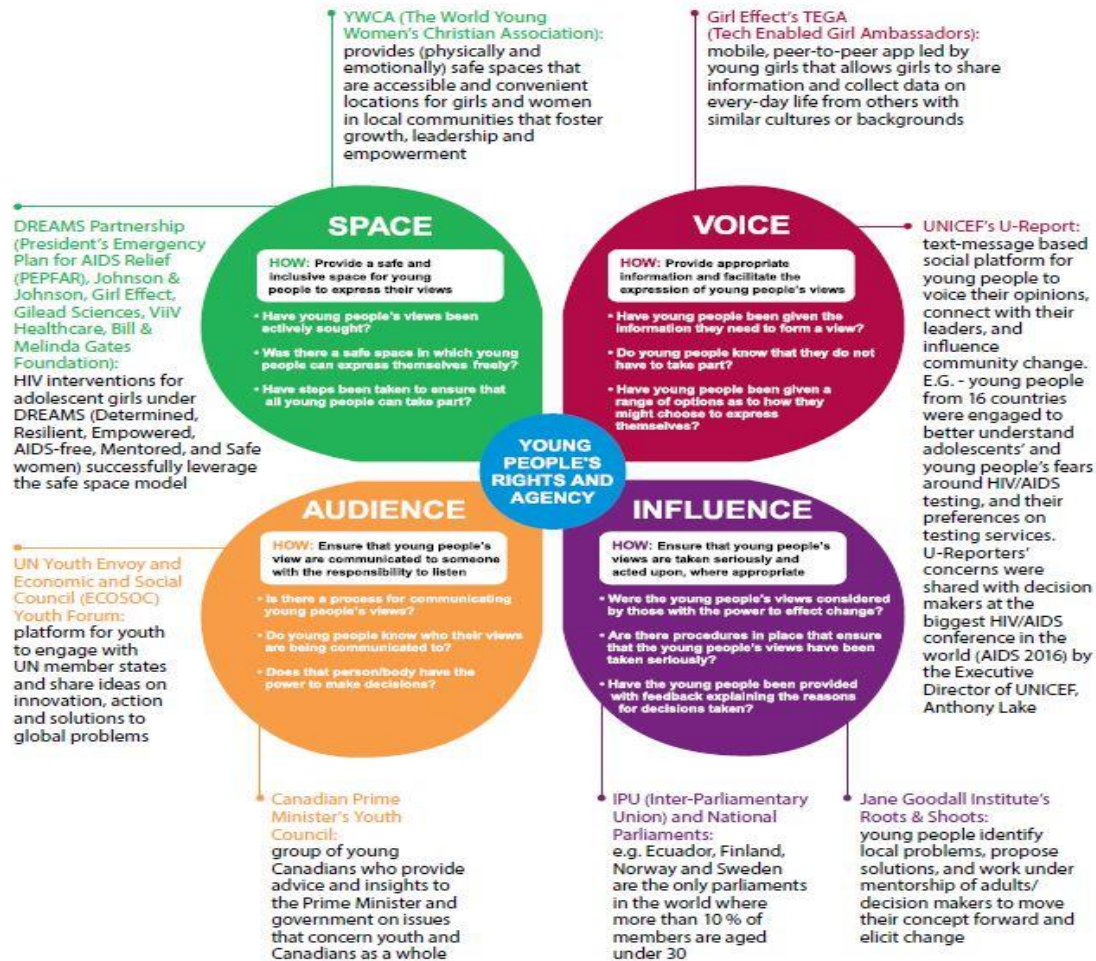
<b>2.8</b> (14.5)	All bodies responsible for the delivery of Local Area Plans (LAPs) will be required to ensure the direct participation of local children and young people in the aspects of the LAP relevant to their lives.	Local Authorities		✓	✓
<b>2.9</b>	The participation of local children and young people in the development of play spaces and play facilities will continue to be included as a criterion of funding for DCYA Capital Grant Funding for Play and Recreation.	Local Authorities	DCYA	✓	✓
<b>2.10</b> (14.8)	All national initiatives for children in library services will continue to be designed to incorporate effective ways of obtaining children's feedback on their experiences of those initiatives.	Local Authorities DRCD	DCYA	✓	✓
<b>2.11</b> (14.12)	The views expressed by children and young people on the services provided to them under the Smarter Travel and Bike Week programmes will be monitored and recorded, and used to inform policy on these services.	DTTAS		✓	✓
<b>2.12</b>	Commence planning to develop a toolkit for consulting with children and young people and make it available to all national governing bodies of sport for implementation at club level in 2021.	DTTAS Sport Ireland			✓





**FIGURE 2**

Examples of young people's engagement from the organizations interviewed, using Lundy's model (space, voice, audience and influence). Adapted from Lundy L. British Educational Research Journal; 2007.<sup>20</sup>



Mapping good practice.



World Health Organization

# City Councils



ARTICLE 12: I HAVE THE RIGHT TO BE LISTENED TO, AND TAKEN SERIOUSLY


Have you remembered...

SPACE | VOICE | AUDIENCE | INFLUENCE

**We want every young person in Leicester to have:**

<b>A safe space</b>	- somewhere to talk and where you can think about and share your ideas
<b>A Voice</b>	- so you can tell us your feelings and wishes in a way that suits you
<b>An Audience</b>	- so that what you say is listened to by the right people at the right time
<b>Influence</b>	- we want your ideas to be used where they can
<b>Impact</b>	- we want you to know how your ideas will make a difference

**#ThisIsParticipation** - have your say





# Tash, 17 from Leicester.

Personally – the concept of space, audience, voice and influence can make a massive impact. Alone, they are relatively small things, easy to implement but collectively making a world a difference. To be able to make choices within this group for not only myself but for other young people in care is so incredibly liberating and important and for me this perfectly represents voice. But voice doesn't have to be this profound or difficult – it can simply consist of having someone to talk to and being heard and considered. Space is feeling safe and steady – having a 'home' or a safe place to be able to connect with yourself and your feelings in a way that is productive and honest. Audience is the idea of being able to communicate the ideas to someone who can help and make a difference. Living in care is hard but having no one to talk to is harder. A foster carer, social worker, member of the council or even a teacher can make all the difference – it again links to the idea of voice and being heard. Influence is not always about seeing change but also knowing why things may not be able to change. The way that is communicated is so important so regardless of the outcome, being able to know that you were able to have your say and even have the ability to have some type of influence is so powerful. Despite all these stages being separate, they are also inextricably linked – to be able to satisfy one, is the ability to eventually satisfy all.'

# Involving children in governance







THERE IS NO ONE RIGHT WAY



# SOME MYTHS

MYTHS THAT ARE BELIEVED IN  
TEND TO BECOME TRUE

GEORGE ORWELL

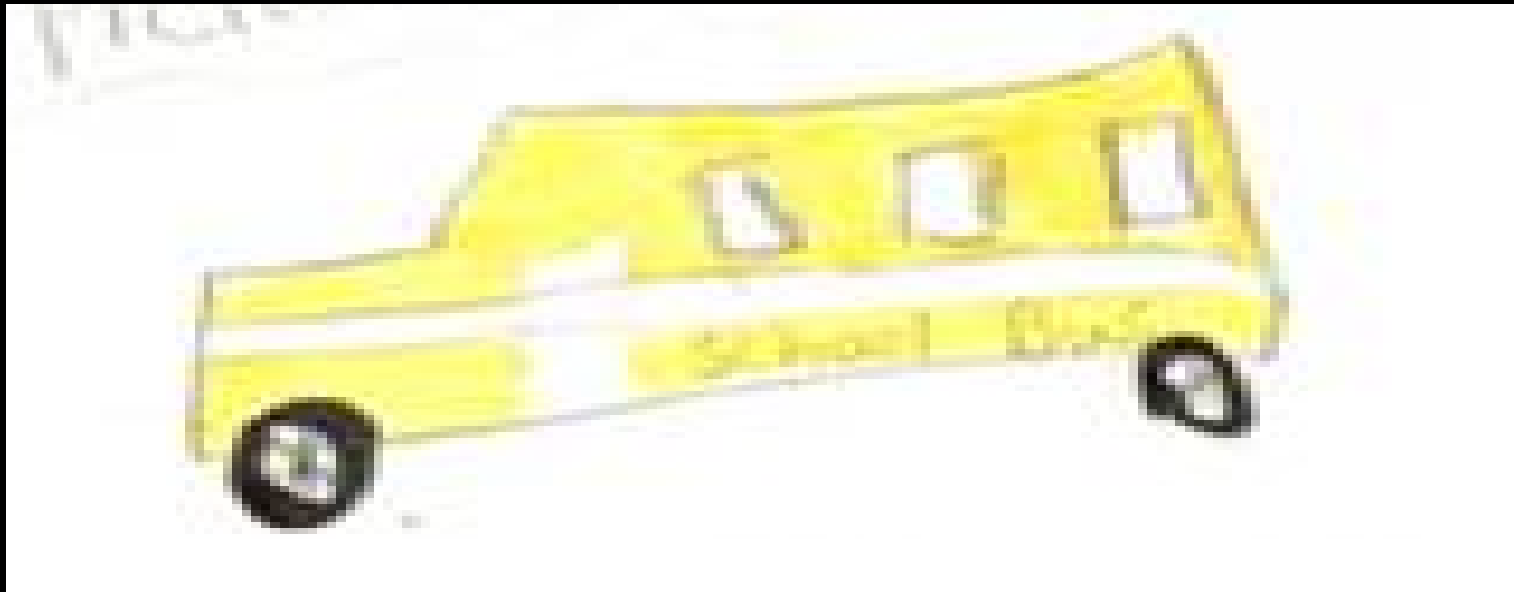
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# ADULTS KNOW BEST

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CHILDREN ARE *THE* EXPERTS  
IN THEIR OWN LIVES

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The child should not be allowed to opt out of something that will 'undermine life choices or impair life interests in an irreparable way.'  
(Freeman, 1996)

IT UNDERMINES ADULT  
AUTHORITY

**YOU MEAN TO TELL ME**



**THAT SPOONS DONT ACTUALLY  
SOUND LIKE AIRPLANES**

zipmeme

**"THEY ARE TOO  
YOUNG"**

---



"THEY ARE NOT  
REPRESENTATIVE"

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IT WOULD TAKE TOO MUCH  
TIME/ COST TOO MUCH  
MONEY

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# The Reality of Participation?

Good  
Fast  
Cheap

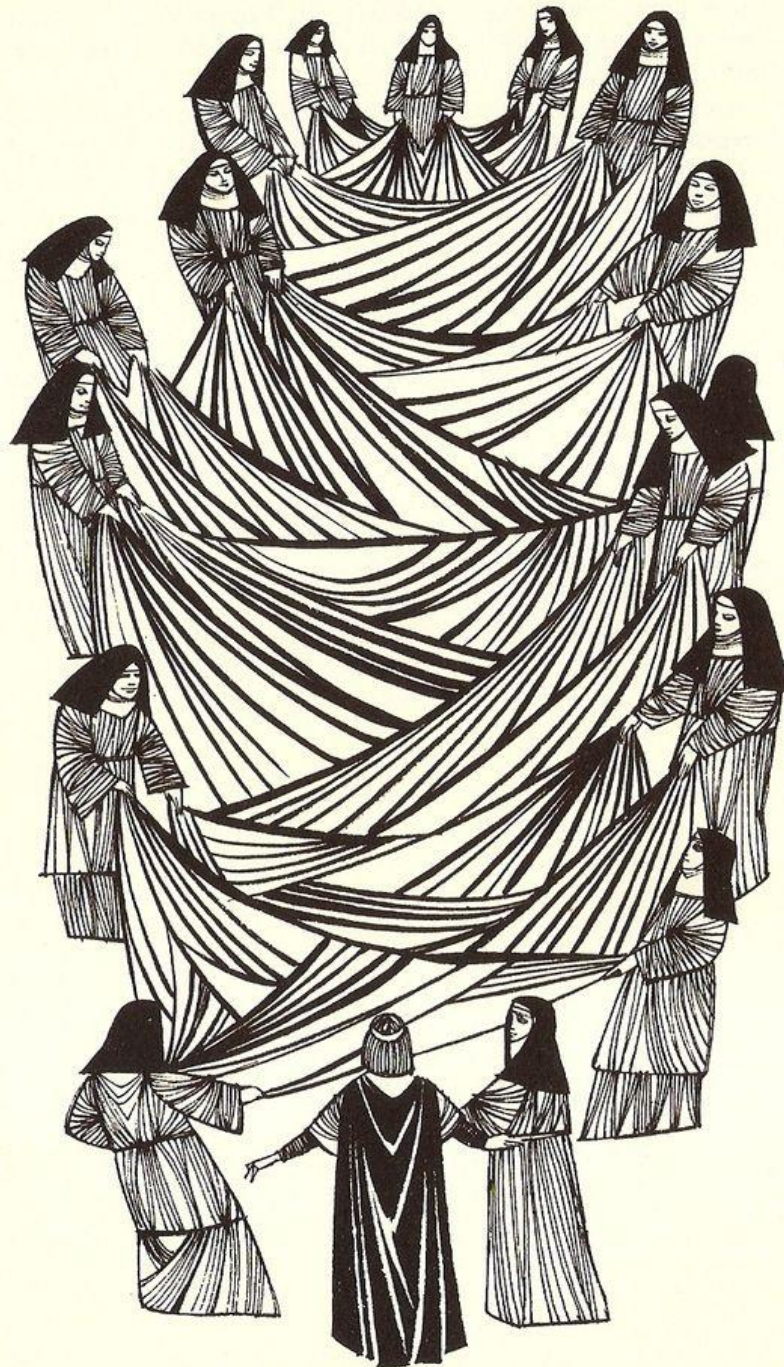
Choose TWO!



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IT WOULD BE  
TOKENISTIC...

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**Participation is always imperfect**




**‘Tokenism’ may be a start.**



*“It’s not the gift of adults. It’s  
the right of the child”*

(Lundy 2007)



**What strategies can be  
deployed for securing (the  
greater likelihood) of  
influence?**

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# Making 'meaningful engagement' a meaningful term

In 2007, trying to articulate the concept of influence, I settled, as others do,  
on *feedback*:

*“... make it uncomfortable for adults to solicit  
children’s views and then ignore them...”*

Lundy, 2007



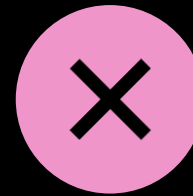
# A PROPOSAL?



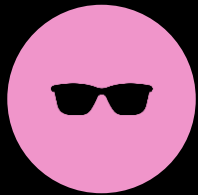
What did you agree with that I said?



What, if anything, surprised you and why?



Did you disagree with anything? If so, what and why?



Has it influenced your views in any way? If so, how?



What have you decided?



What is happening next and when will it happen?