

Appendix 16



Declaration of Purpose March 2003

C4Y aims to improve the quality of life of children and young people in Brighton & Hove by:

- **ENCOURAGING** a co-ordinated approach to children and young people's participation and consultation in Brighton & Hove
- Actively **PROMOTING** children and young people's participation in their communities, neighbourhoods and across the city.
- **INFORMING** them about their rights and the strategies and decisions that affect them
- **CHAMPIONING** their views, issues and rights to decision-makers and service providers.

C4Y believes that in order for young people to be heard and listened to and for their views to make a difference we need to work with young people, front line workers and decision-makers who are prepared to make a commitment to action. We rely on the active involvement of everyone we work with to create real opportunities for children and young people to get involved, have a voice, influence local decision-making and see change.

- **These are the values that inform all our work at C4Y**
- We believe that the needs, issues and aspirations of children and young people should be at the centre of our work
- We believe in advocating a bottom-up approach to children and young people's involvement where they are supported and encouraged to set their own agenda for change
- We believe that participation means children and young people taking an *active* part in a project or process – from planning through delivery to evaluating and changing services
- We believe in providing genuine, meaningful and action-focused opportunities for the involvement of children and young people, and are committed to change
- We believe in creating safe, inclusive and comfortable opportunities for the involvement of *all* children and young people in Brighton & Hove
- We believe that children and young people will benefit from creative, innovative and interesting methods of involvement and will work in this way wherever possible
- We believe that C4Y should be an open, reflective and influential organisation that promotes good practice locally and nationally
- We respect that children and young people have the right to *not* participate or be involved if this is their choice
- We believe in the principles as laid down by Article 12 of the UNCRC and work towards ensuring that they are put into practice.

The UK Government is obliged to make sure that the views and needs of children and young people inform policy development.

The principles of Article 12 are:

A young person is a fully-fledged person who has the right to express their views and have those views heard and taken seriously.

That young people have the right to participate in decision-making processes affecting their lives, as well as to influence those decisions.

Commitments

- We will produce an annual team plan with clear tasks and outcomes
- We will organise an annual creative event for young people from across the City
- We will make sure C4Y activities are interesting, respectful, safe, fun and accessible to all young people and other interested parties.
- We will encourage organisations we work with to take action to ensure they are listening to children and young people's views, taking these views into account when planning and delivering services and feeding back to children & young people and workers about any changes that have resulted.
- We will educate local decision-makers about children and young people's rights and young people's issues
- We will celebrate young people's achievements and ideas and challenge negative stereotypes
- We will produce regular fact sheets, newsletters, web pages and Young People's Pages in the Argus to disseminate children and young people's views widely to other children and young people, service providers and decision-makers
- We will develop C4Y tools and techniques based on our own learning and experiences to share with others.
- We will develop our systems to monitor and evaluate to ensure that the work we are doing is meaningful and gets results for children & young people
- We will involve children and young people in the planning and delivery of C4Y's work programme

Consultation

We recognise that consultation often takes place in reaction to national and local policy, service planning and development – it is largely restricted to mechanisms that bring children and young people's views to adult-led initiatives – 'top-down'.

We also recognise and take on board the feedback from those working with children & young people, and young people themselves, that certain groups have been overly consulted and have seen little or no results of their involvement.

While C4Y is willing to take on commissions for consultation on behalf of other agencies, the model that we are developing involves consultation with children and young people around their needs and concerns rather than around existing service structures or policy targets. We support and promote a 'bottom up' approach to children and young people's consultation and involvement (see Consultation, Some Do's and Dont's and Background to C4Y for more detail.)

Participation

Participation means children and young people taking an active part in a project or process. Participation also means children and young people getting actively involved in planning, delivering and evaluating projects and services.

Levels of children and young people's participation will vary from project to project from young people leading with little adult support, to young people contributing to decisions but not taking an active lead. We aim to involve young people in a genuine, meaningful way at a level that they feel comfortable with and using approaches that are fun and inclusive.