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Barnardos Hear 4 U

Children's Rights and Advocacy



Introduction

The right to participation is underpinned by a range of policy and legislation including:

The Children (Scotland) Act (1995)

Standards in Scotland's Schools etc Act (2000)

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989)

Protecting Children and Young People: The Charter

The Mental Health (Care and Treatment) (Scotland) Act 2003

Article 12 of the UNCRC 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 range and maturity of the child."

"Mental health is the capacity of each and all of us to feel, think and act in ways that enhance our ability to enjoy life and deal with the challenges we face. It is a positive sense of emotional and spiritual well being that respects the importance of culture, equity, social justice, interconnections and personal dignity"

International Workshop on Mental Health Promotion 1997

Heads up Scotland indicate that emotional well being in children and young people might be promoted by ensuring that they

Are able to express their views freely in matters that affect them regardless of age, ethnic origin, race, religion, gender, social class disability or sexuality.

Have their views heard and taken into account by decision makers

Have access to information about their rights and how to ensure these are put into place

Have access to support advice and advocacy services to ensure that their views are listened to and acted upon

Are provided with opportunities to express their views about their individual experience of using services and to participate in decision making about their own treatment/care

Are provided with opportunities to participate in the planning and design of services that impact on their mental health and well being

Have a choice in how they participate including the right not to

Have their participation valued through regular feedback, access to accredited programmes and forms of payment for their time.

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Hear 4 U Service

The aim of the service is

To provide an independent accessible service for children and young people ensuring that they are aware of their rights as defined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Children (Scotland) Act 1995 and related legislation

To provide a community based advocacy service for children and young people with a mental disorder in South Ayrshire and or live in the Ayr North Area.

The model of work adopted by the project draws from the three underlying principles of the UNCRC, Participation, Provision and Protection and the following table outlines how the service is delivered and the outcomes that it aims to achieve.

Rights Issue	Role	Service Provision	Outcomes
Right to Participate	Advocacy	Volunteer Advocate	Children and Young People <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enabled to express their view about the decisions being made that affect them • experience increased visibility /ability to use their own voice • have been supported in their choices • have an improved sense of wellbeing
	Consultation Awareness Raising	Advisory Group Support facilitate Participation /	Increased capacity of Children and Young People to positively influence community circumstances

		<p>Consultation processes</p> <p>Group Activities</p>	<p>Children and Young People are involved and influence services in their community</p> <p>Children and Young People report increased awareness of rights and how to access services</p> <p>Children and young people participate in consultation processes</p>
Right to Provision	Advocacy	Volunteer Advocate	<p>Children and Young People</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have been enabled to achieve acceptable resolutions to issues that they have identified as requiring advocacy support with • Report being involved and feeling able to influence their lives • Report feeling less isolated have increased self esteem and demonstrate more coping strategies • Have a sense of being heard and having control over what happens
	Representation	Support to access appropriate information and representation	<p>Children, Young People and Parents have been able to identify and access appropriate representation</p> <p>Children and Young People have received a service that has boosted their confidence in being able to assert their rights</p>
Right to Protection	In the best interests of the child	<p>Safeguarding and Protecting Policy and Procedures</p> <p>Local Authority Child Protection Policy and Procedures</p>	<p>Children and Young People are safe from harm</p>

		Protecting Children and Young People Framework for Standards	
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