

CWDC Hear by Right staff development programme

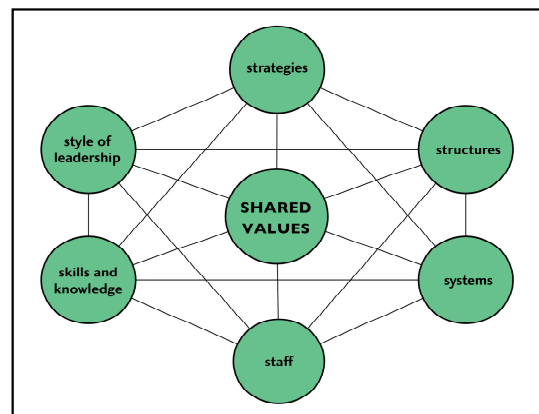
In partnership with Investing in Children, Practical Participation and NYA

Overview, February, 2010

- 121 staff have taken part to date across 10 sessions in Leeds and 2 in London.
- Participants' rating of the staff development programme is an average score of 4 out of 5, with 3.6 for usefulness.
- Barnardo's Willows Young Carers Project took part in 6 sessions, Investing in Children in two and London Borough of Richmond Looked After and Leaving Care young people in 1. Each group contributed as experts by experience, offering their own evidence of their positive impression of the receptiveness and commitment of CWDC staff to the active involvement of children and young people in its work.

Breakdown of attendance (1 person did not complete attendance register)

Post	Length			Length		
	Perm	Fixed	Temp	<6	<1yr	>1yr
11	0	0	0	2	2	7
8	1	1	1	2	1	7
9	2	1	1	2	3	7
11	1	1	1	2	4	7
6	2	0	0	2	1	5
9	0	0	0	0	3	6
5	0	0	0	0	0	5
8	3	0	0	0	3	8
9	1	2	2	4	2	6
7	0	0	0	0	0	7
9	0	0	0	0	3	6
11	2	0	0	2	3	8
103	12	5	16	25	79	



Mapping participation progress

- 77% said it is very important to involve children and young people in the work of CWDC and 23% said it was important to do so.
- 2% said participation activity was in place and effective, 35.5% in place and needing improving, 60.5% currently being established and 2% not yet begun. The mean score is 2.64 out of 4, where 1 is the highest score.

"A score of 3 is fine and not a criticism; it's where I would expect we would be at as a relatively young organisation; we need to learn and are learning from our experience and our mistakes. I'm not at all pessimistic about progress to date or for the future."

"We've come along way but we have a long way to go; we need to have the courage to be clear when it's not appropriate to involve children and young people in a meaningful way; we need to be tough on ourselves about the impact - what difference would or has it made? What do children and young people say the difference is?"

"It's underway: we're on the road and driving the need for participation and how important it is. We're increasing the number of participative projects in the field. I'm not sure how far or well we are sharing learning. There is some traction externally because of what we do, but for some they can hear but don't listen."

Participants explored what hinders and what helps participation activity across CWDC, all comments being entered on an Excel spreadsheet, giving a comprehensive and constructive view.

Of factors that hinder participation, nothing was costly or problematic to resolve. Most frequently mentioned hindrances were issues relating to some internal systems and lack of skills and resources, including lack of time.

Of the factors that help participation, validation was given to all of the 7 standards. Shared Values and Style of Leadership figured most strongly, with frequent mention of the Chief Executive, the Participation lead and Participation Champions. Further strengths included the wide range of structures and approaches used, broadly supportive systems and resources and staff belief and skills.

Comment

Shared values on the participation of children and young people are embedded across CWDC and staff, new and longstanding, front line and support staff. All own this central tenet of CWDC's work and position. This is supported by the young people from Willow who took part in the training. On their first day at CWDC they walked the building, introduced themselves to a range of staff and to the Chief Executive and found everyone welcoming and interested, including the internal auditor! This should not be taken for granted by CWDC and is a testimony to the central commitment, sustained activity and supportive approach taken.

Mapping participation activity

To map the amount of activity, participants drew out a range of participation activity they knew of across CWDC, now entered on the Hear by Right website. It indicates wide ranging practice across all standards at operational and strategic level.

Mapping the quality of participation activity

11 examples of participation practice were written up by colleagues and discussed, commented upon and scored by group participants. These were very popular.

Participation practice example	Hear by Right indicators	Av score out of 4 (1 is high)
CAF/LP leaflet	6.3, 3.2	2
Young people and research	4.3, 5.5	2
DVD DCS programme	3.2, 6.6	2
Connexions postcard	4.4, 6.3	2
Disability project	3.3, 3.7, 2.3	1.5
Youth Leadership and management training / fpm	6.6	1.3
CWDC website	6.3	2
Recruitment & selection	5.2	2
Disability tender	4.7	2
Youth Board scoping	2.3 , 3.1	2
Learning Mentors information	3.2	2
Overall average score across all examples, with 1 being the high		1.89

Planning participation priorities (numbering links to Hear by Right indicators)

Improvements across CWDC were seen as most evidently requiring:

- **Shared Values:** make more confident assertion with partners of CWDC's central commitment to participation and its expectations of partners (1.6 / 1.7)
- **Strategy:** establish clearer and more consistent requirements of staff across CWDC from SMT in building in the voice and influence of children and young people at the earliest stages of a project or in the wider expectations of a programme (2.4)
- **Structures:** build on the excellent project partnership activity to establish a wider network of children and young people who are representative of the priorities of CWDC (3.4)
- **Systems:** build in more systematic expectations of monitoring, review, feedback and sharing learning of participation activity both in projects and within central services across the organisation (4.3 and 4.4)
- **Staff:** recognise the value of the Champions' role and review with clearer function and task so that those in post are able to act effectively with the necessary knowledge, skills and authority (5.1 / 7.1)
- **Skills and knowledge:** ensure bespoke and timely consultancy to programme teams, specific projects and central teams (6.7)
- **Style of leadership:** build on strong brand and internal coherence and be bolder in strategic leadership from SMT externally with key partners (7.6)

Conclusion and next steps

The staff development programme has demonstrated many strengths to the participation of children and young people in CWDC's work and the means to build in greater rigour in design, delivery and evaluation. The process to date has drawn out some key recommendations for SMT action as above.

The current annual planning cycle allows for greater consistency of expectation across programmes, projects and central teams, ensuring early opportunities and challenges are identified and responded to, drawing upon available resources, support and consultancy.

The Big Event in February allows for a visible and strategic engagement of managers and children and young people directly, leading to agreed participation priorities for action in the coming year, with identified accountabilities, action plans and resources.

The resources and skills of the Participation Lead and central team, Participation Champions, consultancy and training the trainers programme all support the sound, sustainable and effective approach being taken.

The quarterly reporting on the Balanced Score Card enables regular monitoring and review of progress against agreed action.

The summer and winter staff conferences provide a wider forum for review and appraisal of progress.

Bill Badham
On behalf of Practical Participation, Investing in Children, NYA
February 2010