

Site

YJA(NI)

Name of project / initiative

Participation Initiative

Overview

We are committed as an organisation to full compliance with Child First principles, and are working towards accreditation by UNICEF as a Child Friendly organisation. At the heart of our approach is the Lundy Model of Child Participation (developed by Laura Lundy, Professor of International Children's Rights at the Queen's University of Belfast). We have a dedicated social worker Participation Officer who oversees all aspects of our participative practices in the community, as well as Youth Participation staff champions who co-ordinate Youth Forums in each of our five area teams. Through this set up, recent former service users are consulted on, and actively contribute to, all aspects of our policy and practice, as well as helping to draft our child-focused leaflet and communications, write our values, mission and vision statements, and design our programmes and other interventions.

As well as the young people themselves, we also include parents and victims in our participative approach, who provide valuable additional experiences and perspectives.

Longevity

Launched in 2021

Benefits

We believe this approach helps ensure that we are a truly child friendly service, and that everything we do benefits from the input of the young people, as well as parents and victims.

Uniqueness

We think we are the only youth justice service in the UK to involve young people – and parents and victims – in everything we do, and the only one working towards UNICEF Child Friendly accreditation.

Applicability

We believe this approach could be of benefit in all YJ settings.

Requirements

Full implementation of this model does require funding for a full time participation lead – however, we also believe that many of the principles underpinning this approach could be implemented without that.

For more information:

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See also: [KnowX.uk/YJA\(NI\)-KBT22.pdf](https://www.justice-ni.gov.uk/knownx/knownx-projects/yja-youth-justice-act-2018/yja-2018-2022/yja-2018-2022.pdf) [The Lundy Model]

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