positive participation
consulting and involving young people in health-related work:
a planning and training resource

julian cohen and judith emanuel
Positive Participation was originally commissioned by the Health Education Authority in 1997. On April 1st 2000 the Health Development Agency (HDA) was established, in accordance with the government white paper Saving Lives: Our Healthier Nation, following the closure of the Health Education Authority (HEA).
PLEASE NOTE

Before you use this pack

Please read the Introduction
and work through the planning
activity in Section 1G on page 11
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The Young People's Health Network (YPHN) is based at the Health Development Agency (HDA) within the Schools and Young People's Health team. It was set up in 1996 to encourage the exchange of information, ideas, research findings and examples of good practice in health promotion activities targeted at young people. Since 1999 it has also developed a crucial role in supporting and feeding into the work of the National Healthy School Standard.

The YPHN believes that the involvement and consultation of young people in health-related activities is essential if it is to be effective in meeting the complex health needs of young people today. To support organisations to develop this work the YPHN commissioned Healthwise, an independent health promotion agency based in Liverpool, to develop Positive Participation.

The two main aims of Positive Participation are:
- To raise awareness of the need for, and value of, consulting with and involving young people in health-related activities
- To promote more effective consultation and involvement of young people in health-related activities through provision of resource materials and training.

To highlight the key principles which underpin good practice in the involvement and consultation of young people, eight key projects around the country were selected (see Appendix 7A), reflecting a range of settings and health-related topics. Each of these projects were visited and interviews were conducted with young people and project staff and managers. Examples of their learning and work are an essential part of this resource and add to its accessibility and practical application.

The need to involve and consult young people is enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which places a duty on governments and professionals to seek, and take full account of, the views of young people in the planning and delivery of services. It is encouraging to see that the UK government is now putting policy into practice by engaging with young people and giving them a voice in developing public policy in areas such as drugs and sexual health.

Giving young people a voice in planning and policy development, at both school and local level, is also an integral part of the National Healthy School Standard. Standard 1.3, for example, states that "The local programme must involve young people in planning" and therefore needs to demonstrate that there is a "clear strategy for involving young people in programme planning and that the programme is responsive to young people's expressed needs through existing or new consultation processes, for example, youth groups and young person's forums".

Positive Participation will help you think through the relevant issues and provide you with a range of ideas and tools for successfully involving and consulting young people in your health-related activities.

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Acknowledgements

Lynne Milburn and Judith Emanuel visited the eight key projects and interviewed staff, adult management committee members and young people.

Many other people have contributed their valuable time and ideas to the development of this pack. A big thank you goes to:

Kathryn Ingold and Julie Tierney of Healthwise and Geraldine McCormick and Liz Goodliffe of the Health Education Authority who all provided much needed support and advice throughout.

Members of the project steering group:

Jenny Robson
Alison Hadley
Carole Sturdy
Gill Lenderyou
Chris Cuninghame
Helen King
Teresa Norman
Liz Goodliffe
Geraldine McCormick

Who Cares Trust (Chair)
Brook Advisory Centres
Brook Advisory Centres
Sex Education Forum
Save the Children
Health Education Authority
Health Education Authority
Health Education Authority
Health Education Authority

The young people, staff and management committee members at the eight key projects who gave up their time and provided us with their thoughts and advice based on their experience of consultation and involvement:

CAST Befrienders Project (Sheffield)
Donna Fiddler, Thelma Whittaker, Sue Ford, Pam Rudkin, Winston Campbell and all the young people and volunteers who attended the drop-ins at Park Youth Club and Aldine House on 1 October 1997.

End House (Durham)
Richard Barber, Mandy Taylor, Angela Fenwick, Wendy Parvin, David Messenegr, Alex Vallente, Lee Tempest, Peter Phillips, Jennifer Hartmenn, Mandy Todd, Emma Hunt, Julie Morrison, Claire O'Brien, Sarah Blair and Christine Williamson.
The Life Office, Padgate School (Warrington)
John Hayward, Anthea Ray, Dave Worthy, Sandra Pope, Jade Hall, Sarah Carter,
Rebecca Rylands, Phil Robinson, Joanne Clarke, Aimee Riley, James Wilson,
Anthony Croston, Daniel Wilson, Ben Dobson, Becky Rudd and Alison Brindley.

New Horizon Youth Centre (London NW1)
Hu Clarke, Ajay Patel and all the young people and adults who attended the centre
on 2 and 3 December 1997 and users’ meeting on 3 December 1997.

Respect (Surrey)
Debbie Willis, Lesley Craven, Sue Whitfield, Angela Williams, Shirley Miles, Trudi Martin,
Karen Hewitt, Zarif Loveridge, Shelley Mustill, Lauren Maynard, Emma Spencely,
Clare Rutland and Anna Hitchcock.

Tameside Young People’s Health Clinic and Peer Education Project
Tim Smith, Donna Vickers, Jennifer Lynch, Julie Ash, Chris Dearnaley and Rachel, Claire,
Emma, Stacey, Nick, Danielle and Ryan.

Young People’s Anti-Poverty Project (London SE18)
Mike Bluett, Walter Kabong, Michelle Foran, Faye Witney, Ben Harris and Sam Allen,

Youth Awareness Programme (YAP) (London E13)
Lee Harper-Penman, Richard Whetton, Genevieve Tracey, Colin Cripps, Nick Dann, Fay
Fadayomi, Mark Gladstone, John Harty, Sharon Nelson, Rowena Topliss, Debbie Wardley,
Jem Willis and Natasha Whyte.

The following people also gave us valuable feedback on earlier drafts of this pack:
Marie Armitage (Wirral Health Authority), Mike Bluett (Young People’s Anti-Poverty
Project, Greenwich), Lesley Craven (Respect, Surrey), Eva Elliott (University of Salford),
Angela Fenwick (End House, Durham), John Hayward (Padgate High School), Sian Long
(Healthlink—Worldwide), Diane McNash (Barnardo’s), Elaine Morrison (Mancunian Health
Promotion), Norman Scott (Sefton LEA), Sandhya Sharma (Sameli Asian Women’s
Organisation), Tim Smith (Tameside Young People’s Health Project), Andrew Thompson
(Thames Valley Partnership), Chris Vallence (British Youth Council), Ian Warwick (Institute
for Education), Sue Whitfield (Respect, Surrey), Debbie Willis (Respect, Surrey) and
Carolyne Willow (National Children’s Bureau).
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Healthwise is an independent health information and promotion service providing helpline services, training, software development, educational resource development, publishing and support services for schools (see page 122).
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Introduction and how to use the pack

1A Who the pack is for
1B Reasons to consult and involve young people
1C The rights of young people and the principles behind the pack
1D Definitions of key terms
1E Levels of participation
1F Ways of using the pack
1G Planning how to use the pack
Introduction and how to use this pack

Note. This pack is not intended to be read through from cover to cover. We recommend that you read this introduction and go through the planning activity in Section 1G on page 11 before looking at further sections. This will help you to decide which parts of the pack are relevant to your particular situation and needs and help you to decide how best to use the material in it.

1A Who the pack is for

The pack has been designed to be used by a range of people who are intending to, or have already, set up health-related projects which consult and/or involve young people. This includes:

- project managers
- project staff (including health workers, teachers, youth workers, community workers, social workers, probation officers, hostel or housing workers, police officers and anyone else who is running or working on a health-related project with young people in a paid or voluntary capacity)
- young people who are already involved in planning, reviewing and/or running projects, including those who train other young people.
- other adults working on projects such as management committee members
- commissioning managers and other decision-makers
- trainers or consultants.

It is designed to be used by these people with young people. Wherever possible young people should be actively involved from the earliest stages of a project’s life, including in initial project design and planning. In other words this pack will ideally be used by adults and young people jointly working together.

The pack will be of particular use to people who are setting up a project which consults or involves young people for the first time. However, it will also be of use to people who are already running projects and wish to improve and develop the ways that they consult and/or involve young people.

The pack takes account of the many different ways that young people can be consulted and involved, ranging from gathering their opinions about issues and services through to being involved in decision-making groups or as service providers. It has been designed to be of use to a wide range of projects in a variety of settings who will be at different stages of consultation and involvement and who will wish to consult and/or involve young people in different ways.
1B Reasons to consult and involve young people

'The present and future vitality of our communities depends to a large extent on today’s children and young people. Their sense of being valued or ignored by their communities will powerfully shape their attitudes towards contributing to, or standing aside from, community life.

'Despite the range of community activities in which children and young people are engaged (for example school, clubs for sport, leisure and recreational activities, cultural and religious and friendship groups), children and young people are not encouraged to participate fully in their communities. In particular, opportunities to participate in collective decision-making and scope for independent initiatives by children and young people are very restricted. This is due partly to an unwillingness to change social relationships and partly to the fact that policy-making is dominated by the perspectives and interests of adults. It is absolutely essential to involve children and young people if the alienation of young adults is to be avoided and opportunities to build a dynamic society for the future are to be created.' (Save the Children All together Now: Community Participation for Children and Young People, 1997)

We believe that young people should have the right to be consulted and involved in matters that affect their own lives and the wider community. The benefits of consulting and involving young people are many and varied. The following list is adapted from the work of Tam Tansley of Youth Clubs UK. Consulting and involving young people:

- Helps young people to clarify and understand their own wants and needs and be able to communicate them to people who make decisions which affect young people.
- Improves the effectiveness of services targeted at young people.
- Facilitates the personal development of young people so that they develop confidence, new interests and skills and take on new responsibilities.
- Develops personal, social and political education so that young people can acquire skills in debate, communication, negotiation, group decision-making, accessing support and advice, lobbying, influencing decision-makers and political processes.
- Facilitates the participation of marginalised young people who are rarely involved in decision-making.
- Enables young people to be creators rather than passive consumers of services. Such services are more likely to be agents for social change rather than social control.
- Encourages participation in wider society. If young people have experience of consultation and involvement within safe environments they will be better placed to participate in decision-making processes within wider society.
- Promotes democratic principles and ways of working. If young people experience projects which are open and accountable this encourages democratic principles and respect for democratic ways of working.
Introduction and how to use this pack

Note. Section 2A on page 15 gives more information about reasons for consulting and involving young people and includes a learning activity to help individuals or groups to identify why they are thinking of consulting or involving young people.

1C The rights of young people and the principles behind the pack

This pack adopts the principles laid out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Article 12 demands that all children and young people are entitled to express their views on matters of concern to them and that their views are given proper consideration. The convention also demands that all children and young people have other participation rights including:

- non-discrimination (article 2)
- freedom of expression (article 13)
- freedom of thought, conscience and religion (article 14)
- freedom of association (article 15)
- the right to privacy (article 16)
- access to appropriate information (article 17)
- protection from abuse, neglect and exploitation (articles 19, 34, 35, 36 and 37)
- the right to health and health services (article 24)
- the right to periodic review of treatment (article 25)
- the right to education (article 28)
- the right to enjoy one’s own culture, religion and/or language (article 30)
- the right to leisure, recreation and culture (article 31).

The Convention also highlights the importance of addressing the needs of particular groups of young people including those in State care, those who live or work on the streets, refugees, young disabled people and young people of minority groups.

This pack is based on these principles. It recognises that young people, as a whole, have insufficient opportunities to participate in decision-making in society but that, in addition, many groups of young people are further alienated and excluded, often on the basis of poverty, class, race, gender, sexuality, employment status, educational attainment and/or disability. To be able to empower young people, and to actively consult and involve them, adults need to acknowledge and tackle these issues and to recognise that young people are not a homogeneous group but have varying needs. A strong commitment to equal opportunities, anti-discriminatory practices and respect for the rights of all young people is essential.
1D Definitions of key terms

In this pack:

Young people is taken to include the age range of 11 years to 25 years. However, the pack covers issues and includes materials which will be of use when working with younger children.

Health is defined in a broad sense to include emotional and social wellbeing as well as physical wellbeing. When we refer to health-related work or projects we include those which are not primarily focused on specific medical issues but which address issues central to young people’s wellbeing.

When we use the term adults we are referring to staff or workers, management committee members and any other adults who are working with a project be they professionals or volunteers. We also recognise that some young people may take on staff roles in either a paid or voluntary capacity.

Despite the fact that consulting and involving young people in health-related work has become more common in recent years the terms ‘consultation’ and ‘involvement’ have often not been clearly defined. In this pack we define consultation and involvement as follows:

Consultation means asking the advice of, or seeking the views of, young people and using the information which is forthcoming to inform decisions about matters and services which affect young people’s lives

Involvement means engaging young people in decision-making processes and activities or in delivering services themselves.

1E Levels of participation

Consultation and involvement can include varying degrees of participation by young people. Adapting the work of Arnstein and Hart the ladder on page 8 shows the possible range of participation of young people. The higher the number, the greater the participation of young people.

1. Manipulation – Young people are not given opportunities to understand the issues being addressed, are not actively involved in decision-making and merely go along with what adults require of them without being given a chance to contribute.
Introduction and how to use this pack

2. **Decoration** – Adults involve young people in promoting a cause which the young people have little understanding of and have had little or no say in deciding about. The young people wear the T-shirts with slogans, perform at an event to bolster the cause and often engage in fun, ‘feel-good’ factor activities. Young people are used to bolster a cause which adults think is important.

3. **Tokenism** – Adults organise situations where young people seem to be given a voice but in fact have little choice about the subject and limited opportunities to develop their own opinions or make decisions. Adults set the agenda and young people are expected to fall in line.

4. **Assigned but informed** – Adults set up the framework and processes for a project and young people volunteer to participate when they have understood the intentions of the project, know who makes decisions and appreciate the nature of their fixed roles.

5. **Consulted and informed** – A project is designed and run by adults but young people understand the processes and their opinions are sought and treated seriously. Young people are not expected to reflect adult ideas and opinions but they are encouraged to develop their own ideas and understandings and helped to make informed judgements.

6. **Adult-initiated, shared decisions with young people** – Both adults and young people are involved in developing ideas, planning projects and decision-making. The experience and knowledge of young people is valued and ways are developed for adults and young people to communicate and make joint decisions. Adults are willing to hand over some control to young people and provide a secure framework, support and direction.

7. **Young person-initiated and directed** – Young people take the lead in organising and directing collaborative working groups, supported by adults. Young people develop the confidence and skills to take control and responsibility.

8. **Young person-initiated, shared decisions with adults** – Young people take a lead role in developing ideas and proposals, identifying opportunities and problems and formulating strategies for action, the process being supported by adults.
Positive Participation

Who exercises power and control is a key issue in the consultation and involvement of young people. Who actually makes the decisions and who has power and control over each aspect of the project from initial design to the actual running of the project?

Another term commonly used is empowerment. In his book *Participation of Children and Young People in Social Work* (1995) David Hodgson suggests that five conditions must be met if children and young people are to be empowered:

- access to those in power
- access to relevant information
- genuine choices between different options
- a trusted independent person who will provide support and, where necessary, be a representative
- a means of appeal or complaint if things go wrong.

Different levels and forms of participation are appropriate to different situations. For example, some young people may not want, or not yet feel prepared, to take on responsibility for key decisions or where large numbers of young people are involved they may not all be able to participate to the same extent or in the same way. Projects need to be realistic about where they are starting from and adopt an incremental approach where young people have opportunities to take on additional roles and responsibilities as their confidence and skills develop over a period of time.
Introduction and how to use this pack

In the Bradford area a number of agencies are working together to develop a long-term approach to consulting and involving young people in a range of ways and at a number of different levels. In 1995 officers from the local authority organised a Youth Action day as part of the work of developing a Children's Services Plan. Young people were recruited through schools and consulted about their needs. The day has become an annual event and has developed so that young people themselves now lead it.

Over recent years young people have been involved in a range of health-related projects in the area, including as peer educators, volunteers and management committee members. These young people are in close contact with other young people and also know something about policy issues. As a result they have been identified as a useful network to support strategy development.

Bradford Empowerment Project helps agencies to consult and involve young people. It is independently managed and funded by NCH Action for Children and joint financed for three years. They have recognised the importance of developing a structure and network for consultation and involvement.

Bradford is a Health Action Zone and in 1998 the Empowerment Project launched an initiative to consult young people about sexual health to contribute to the young people's sexual health strategy. A multi-agency group led by the health authority is developing this. From the initial consultation meetings with young people they plan to now involve young people in the actual development of the plan.

Service planners in Bradford have learnt that a variety of ways of working, such as through youth councils and forums, user groups, school councils and detached work, all have their place for different pieces of work and with different groups of young people.

We believe that young people need to be empowered and consulted and involved in ways that mean that they have opportunities to have a real say and to have real influence over decision-making. Wherever practically possible, consultation and involvement of young people in health-related work should aim towards the top, rather than bottom, rung of the ladder of participation. This can be achieved but it does take time, patience and resources and, above all, a commitment to styles of working which maximise young people's participation.

1F Ways of using the pack

The pack aims to be practical, user-friendly and flexible. It is a how to resource which includes:

- good practice guidance and examples
- activities which can be used for planning, learning and training
- useful background information.
Positive Participation

The first step in deciding how you can best use the pack is to go through the planning activity in Section 1G on page 11. This will enable you to take stock of where you are now, clarify your initial ideas about where you want to be and make an informed judgement about which parts of the pack are relevant to you.

It should be noted that:

- Section 2 ‘Getting started’ and Section 3 ‘Key practice issues’ are general and include information and activities which are relevant to all projects which consult and involve young people.
- Section 4 is of particular relevance to projects which are consulting young people and researching their views.
- Section 5 is of particular relevance to projects which are involving young people in continuing decision-making groups or forums.
- Section 6 is of particular relevance to projects which are involving young people as service deliverers, including as peer educators.
- Section 7 includes background information about the eight key projects that were visited to inform the development of the pack, a list of useful publications and a list of organisations that support work which consults and involves young people.

The pack includes many learning activities which are designed to be used in a range of ways. They can be used by individuals as a way of clarifying their own views and practice but most can also be used as a basis for training in groups. Whilst training may be with an adult-only group, or young person-only group, wherever possible we urge you to work through the activities with groups of adults and young people working together. This is an important way to ensure young people’s participation, especially in the initial planning stages of a new project or to review and develop an existing project. Where your project involves outside professionals working with you we also recommend that, if possible, they are also involved in training.

When using the activities for training, individuals, pairs or small groups can work through the initial stages of the activities and then feed back to the whole group. Where adults and young people are working together young people might form their own small groups (and adults form their own small groups) so that during feedback the views of young people and adults can be compared and discussed. All views can then be taken into account and agreement can be sought. Where training is carried out with adult-only groups, a number of the activities require adults to seek out the views of young people, even if the young people are not directly involved in training sessions.

We have not given detailed trainer notes about how to use the learning activities. We are assuming that they will be used by people who have some experience of group work training methods. Further information about developing training for adults and young people is given in Section 3G on page 54.
**1G Planning how to use the pack**

The activity below enables you to take stock of where you are now in your plans to involve and consult young people, where you want to be, and to decide which sections of the pack will be most useful to you. *We strongly recommend that you work through this activity before dipping into the rest of the pack.* This will help you save time and enable you to use the material in the pack in a targeted way to best suit your needs.

1. Have you previously consulted or involved young people in your work?
   
   Yes
   • Which groups of young people did you consult/invoive? (Age, gender, race, class, disability, in care etc.)
   • Why did you consult or involve them?
   • In what ways?
   • What were the positive or successful aspects of consulting or involving young people?
   • What were the negative or less successful aspects?
   • What key things did you learn about consulting or involving young people?

   No
   • Why are you thinking of consulting or involving young people?
   • Which groups of young people are you thinking of consulting or involving? (Age, gender, race, class, disability, in care etc.)

2. How are you thinking of consulting or involving young people in future?
   • A one-off consultation exercise about what they know or think?
   • Ongoing consultation?
   • Developing or working with a decision-making group (such as a youth council or forum, management committee, commissioning group)?
   • As service providers?
   • As peer educators?
   • Other? (Please specify.)

3. Exactly how are you thinking of consulting or involving young people?
   • What are you thinking of asking young people to be involved in doing?
   • How are you thinking of involving young people in decision-making?
   • What could they have influence over?
   • What will they probably not have influence over?

4. Describe your vision of what would have to happen to successfully consult or involve young people.

5. What are you looking forward to about the work?
6. What concerns do you have about consulting or involving young people? What difficulties could arise? What could go wrong?

7. Which topics that the pack covers may be relevant to developing your work?

Look through the contents page and make a list of the sections that you might benefit from looking at.

8. Look through the sections you have selected and familiarise yourself with them.

9. Decide how you can best use the material in the pack. This might include:
   - working through the pack on your own
   - as a basis for discussions between staff and/or other adults
   - as a basis for training staff and/or other adults
   - as a basis for discussions between staff, other adults and young people
   - as a basis for joint training with staff, other adults and young people
   - as a basis for training young people
   - other.

10. Draw up an action plan for your use of the materials in the pack. Consider these questions:
   - Which sections of the pack will you use?
   - Who will you use them with?
   - How will staff and other adults be involved?
   - How will young people be involved?
   - How will you use the materials?
   - When? – timescale
   - Where will it take place?
   - What resources will you need to make it happen?

Further information about training with adults and young people is given in Section 3G on page 54.
Getting started

2A Why consult or involve young people?
2B Equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practices
2C What is in it for young people?
2D Gains and losses for adults
2E Skills and issues for adults
2F Skills and issues for young people
2G Organisational and funding issues
2H Setting targets and monitoring of consultation and involvement of young people
2A Why consult or involve young people?

There are many different reasons that young people are involved in, or consulted about, health-related work. It is important that you are clear from the start why you are involving or consulting young people in your work. Being clear about your motivations will enable you to be more targeted in the work that you do. It will also help you decide whether you have been effective.

Some of the reasons adults have for consulting and involving young people are better than others. Doing it because you have been told to by someone else will probably lead to half-hearted attempts. Using peer educators to deliver adult-defined 'messages', using young people as a cheap form of labour or seeking their views when you have already decided what actions to take can be exploitative. This contrasts with work which actually takes account of young people's needs and is committed to enhancing their skills and confidence and to developing more relevant and effective services. A good question to ask is 'whose agenda is the work really based on?'

There are many possible reasons that adults have for involving and consulting young people about health-related issues. These may include:

• to help plan new, or improve existing, services for young people
• to enable young people to grow in confidence and develop new skills
• to make young people feel valued
• to give young people a sense of ownership
• to cut costs by using young people as volunteers
• to support young people through the challenges of their lives
• to enable young people to get a qualification
• as a stepping stone for future careers for young people
• because it is the trendy thing to do
• because young people have themselves asked to be consulted or involved
• because no one listens to young people
• to find out what young people think and feel
• to give young people a voice and a say
• because funders require it/we have been told to do it
• because young people understand their peers better than adults
• because young people have more credibility with other young people than do adults
• because young people will not listen to adults but they may listen to their peers
• to break down barriers between young people and adults
• because young people are easier to get on with than adults
• because young people would do a better job than adults.
Activity: Why consult or involve young people?

Note. This activity works best with a group of adults and young people working together, with separate groupings for step 3. If it is used by an adult-only group, the views of young people will need to be sought in step 4.

1. Look through the list on page 15 and select any of the reasons that you, or other adults or young people working with your project, may have for consulting or involving young people. Try to be honest about the possible motivations for consulting or involving young people. Also add any additional reasons that are not on the list.

2. From the possible reasons selected make a deck of cards, with one reason written on each card. (Make more decks of cards if you are working with small groups so that each group has their own deck.)

3. Go through the cards and put them into three piles:
   - very important
   - quite important
   - not important.

4. Look through the three piles and consider:
   a. What are the main reasons for consulting or involving young people and why?
   b. How do adult and young people's views about this compare?
   c. What are the implications for how young people will be consulted or involved?

5. Finally summarise by identifying:
   a. What are the main reasons that you are going to consult or involve young people?
   b. What are the implications for:
      - staff and other adults who are involved?
      - young people?

2B Equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practices

Equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practices are about making sure that all young people have access to, can use and work in organisations and projects. Unless effective policies and practices are developed and used young people from disadvantaged groups will find it difficult to participate actively. Equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practices are essential for the effective design and delivery of services and need to be addressed in a practical manner at the earliest stage of a project's life.

Direct discrimination means treating an individual or group of people less favourably than others on the grounds of sex, race, class, disability, sexuality, previous criminal convictions, etc. Examples include:
Getting started

- not accessing, recruiting or selecting people to be involved because of their race, sex, etc.
- being directly prejudicial towards certain people on such grounds whilst they are involved working with the organisation or project.

Indirect discrimination can include:

- asking for qualifications, requirements or conditions which only a few people have and are not really necessary to carry out the task
- ignoring people who may be more difficult to access
- not taking account of the particular needs of certain people when they are being accessed or recruited or are already involved working with the project.

Particular groups of young people are often under-represented in consultation and involvement work either because they are not recruited in the first place or are discriminated against or do not have their particular needs addressed when they are initially involved. These groups may include:

- The younger age range – they may be thought not mature enough or their views, abilities and experience may go unrecognised.
- Gender – for example, young men may be more difficult to involve than young women. Young men may not initially see certain issues as being of relevance to them or feel their friends will make fun of them if they become involved. However, when they are involved they may try to dominate discussions or be sexist.
- Young parents – for example, young parents (especially mothers) may be isolated and not be able to travel easily or commit time without particular support such as child-care provision.
- Young people who care for younger brothers and sisters or family members.
- Young people from black and minority ethnic groups may not feel that the project welcomes them or takes their particular needs into account.
- Young people who have mental health problems – they may feel isolated and lack confidence and need particular support if they are to participate.
- Young people who have difficulties with reading and writing.
- Young people who have difficulties with speaking and understanding English, including those whose first language is not English.
- Class – are poorer, working-class young people under-represented?
- Young disabled people with physical, sensory or learning impairments – are their needs addressed so they can fully participate?
- Where young people live – are young people stereotyped because of where they live and do some have difficulty with travelling to meet up? Are the young people who live in more remote, rural locations supported to become involved?
- Sexual orientation – are young gay men and young lesbians discriminated against and will they have their particular needs taken into account so that they feel able to fully participate?
Positive Participation

- Health status – for example, people who have HIV are often discriminated against.
- Religion – are young people of a particular religion excluded by their particular feelings or needs not being taken into account?
- Young people who are in, or have recently left, care.
- Young refugees.
- Young travellers.
- Young people who have been in trouble with the law.
- Young people who are not very articulate or confident.
- Young people who are homeless.
- Young people who regularly truant or have been excluded from school.
- Young people who have low educational attainment.
- Young people who do not attend youth clubs or projects.

It is useful to think about equal opportunities and equal access in its broadest sense, especially if you are going to consult or involve young people who do not generally get a say. You might also need to consider:

- Information provision – how can you make sure information is accessible to all young people?
- Communication – such as sign language support for young people who have sensory disabilities, interpreters for young people who cannot speak English and sign language courses for everyone if necessary.
- Physical access – provision for disabled young people with mobility impairments.
- Emotional access – properly implemented anti-discriminatory practices will make it easier for all young people to feel they can actively participate.
- Financial access – for example for young people who may not be able to afford bus fares.

The projects that we visited all had a commitment to equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practices. This commitment was demonstrated in a number of ways including:

- Plans to move to new premises which will be more accessible for disabled young people with mobility impairments.
- Work with social services to encourage young women who are in care and in refuges to become involved.
- Project workers and young people putting in a lot of time visiting a wide range of groups to meet young people and encourage them to become involved.
- Adults and young people meeting with young mothers and addressing their needs (especially for child-care) so that they could participate in a residential weekend.
- A worker and a young lesbian woman ran a workshop on equal opportunities where the young lesbian woman offered her experiences of discrimination and the positive aspects of being a young lesbian. Many young women who were involved with the project found this very beneficial.
- Involving a disabled young woman in the planning of a residential weekend to ensure the needs of disabled young people were recognised and addressed.
Getting started

- Strategies to recruit African-Caribbean young people, especially as they were over-represented amongst disaffected youth in the locality. A training course for all young people also covered issues of racism and identity.
- Accessing ‘hard-to-reach’ groups of young people through outreach work on the streets.
- Development of equal opportunities policies and anti-discriminatory practices, ground rules and training for all adults and young people.

Despite this some groups of young people – such as disabled young people and young Asian people – were often under-represented. It takes time, support and a great deal of commitment to actually break down the barriers that some young people face.

It is very important to consider:

1. Which young people are to be accessed, recruited and selected and how this is to be carried out – see Section 3B on page 43.

2. The specific needs of particular groups of young people – see Section 3C on page 46 about support for young people and Section 3E on page 50 about work environments and venues.

3. Training of adults and young people in equal opportunities and anti-discrimination practices – see Section 3G on page 54 about training.

4. The development of an equal opportunities policy – see below.

Activity: An equal opportunities policy

1. Does your project have an equal opportunities policy or need to develop a new policy?
   It should cover:
   - accessing, recruitment and selection of young people, staff and other adults
   - how people are treated whilst working on the project
   - the specific needs of particular groups of young people.

2. What exactly should it say? (See the notes above and the example policy on page 20.)

3. Who should write it?

4. How will adults and young people involved in the project be consulted about it?

5. How can everyone who is involved in the project be made aware of the policy?

6. How can it be monitored and reviewed?
Positive Participation

Example equal opportunities policy, End House, Durham:

The Young People's Centre aims to provide equal opportunities for staff and volunteers and undertakes to ensure that no person or group of persons should be influenced by considerations of sex, marital status, race, ethnic origin, colour, religion, age, sexual orientation, HIV status, mental state, disability or any conditions or requirements which cannot be shown to be justifiable. All staff and volunteers will be recruited, trained and developed on fair and consistent criteria related to the requirements of the work.

Within this framework the Young People's Association aims to provide a centre for the benefit of young people aged under 25 years living or working in Durham City and its immediate locality who consider themselves in need of such facilities by reason of their youth, disablement, poverty or social and academic circumstances.

2C What is in it for young people?

Participation should be a positive experience for young people. If they feel that they are being valued for giving their time, skills and experience, and feel that they are getting somewhere and making a difference, they are more likely to be committed. This is crucial to the success of any project.

The Young People's Anti-Poverty Project (YAPP) has involved a young refugee group in its consultation project. Members of the group have experienced isolation and racism, which they felt was not properly addressed, especially in school. As a result several members of the group stopped going to school even though they wanted to get a good education. With the support of YAPP and their group they started going to school again. One member of the group said that being properly consulted could make a real difference to people in situations like his own. Knowing that adults outside of his community were concerned and wanted to do something to help make his life better made him feel much better about life in general.

All of the projects that we visited did a lot to increase the skills and confidence of young people. Participation and support, friendship from other people who are involved and a sense of purpose and achievement were all important. Some young people found this helped them sort out their own lives and problems in a similar way that counselling or using other services had helped other young people. We heard many stories about how young people who were initially very shy and lacked confidence became speakers at conferences, workshop and training facilitators, recruitment and financial decision-makers, planners and deliverers of services etc. In a number of cases young people were using their experience of participation to help gain a qualification and/or as a stepping stone to a future career.
Activity: What is in it for young people?

Note. Ideally this activity will be carried out by a group of adults and young people working together. If an adult-only group works through it they will need to consult with a group of young people.

1. Consider what is being asked of young people in terms of:
   - time and commitment
   - responsibilities
   - specific tasks
   - input of ideas
   - skills
   - anything else.

Log the main things that are being asked of young people.

2. Consider what young people will want to get out of their involvement and in reality what they are likely to get.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Young people</th>
<th>Young people</th>
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<tr>
<td>will want</td>
<td>are likely to get</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increased confidence.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Increased skills.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Payment.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Rewards in kind (for example record or book tokens).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Something to do.</td>
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<tr>
<td>To feel part of something.</td>
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<td>Increased knowledge.</td>
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<td>To be listened to.</td>
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<td>An opportunity to influence decisions.</td>
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<td>An opportunity to influence service provision.</td>
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<td>An opportunity to do something useful.</td>
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<tr>
<td>An opportunity to help others.</td>
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<tr>
<td>A stepping stone to possible future interest.</td>
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<tr>
<td>A stepping stone to a future career.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Somewhere to go.</td>
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<tr>
<td>To make new friends.</td>
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<td>To meet people from different backgrounds.</td>
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<td>To feel valued.</td>
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<td>Excitement.</td>
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<td>Accreditation/qualification.</td>
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<td>Support with their own problems.</td>
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<td>Better access to services.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anything else?</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Score

Definitely (✓)
Possibly (?)
No way (×)
Positive Participation

Wherever possible describe those items which receive a ‘definitely’ or ‘possibly’ in more detail. For example, in what ways might confidence be increased or what skills might be developed?

3. Ask young people what they will want to get out of their involvement. If you are running this activity with a group of young people ask them to work in small groups to fill in the lists. If not, then seek out the views of young people who are similar to those who might be involved in future.

4. How do the views of adults and young people compare with regard to what young people are likely to want and what they are likely to get from being consulted or involved?

5. Identify any differences between what young people might want and what they might actually get.

6. Make a list of things young people will definitely want out of being consulted or involved. For each of these items identify whether young people are likely to get them and, if so, how they can be provided. If there are any items that young people will definitely want but are unlikely to get identify any problems this might cause and how they can be best managed. (See Section 3H on page 58.)

7. Conclude by summarising the main points of learning that have arisen from the activity.

2D Gains and losses for adults

There are many pressures that can make it difficult for adults to consult and involve young people. As one worker said ‘You’re always aware of deadlines and sometimes you have to take over a piece of work, such as a funding application or a report, to ensure that it gets done on time.’ Another worker said ‘Young people using this project lead chaotic lives which often goes against punctuality, remembering what they have agreed to do, etc. Whilst the project aims to help young people gain some stability workers do have to be prepared to step in if young people don’t fulfil their commitments.’

Despite the fact that workers we talked to knew they could sometimes work faster without young people’s participation they also felt that consulting and involving young people was very important and very satisfying. In particular they highlighted the joy of seeing many young people grow in confidence and achieve so much and the development of services that they knew young people wanted and would use.

Whilst adults may be excited by the possibility of consulting or involving young people and may feel that they will gain a lot from it, they might find certain aspects of consulting or involving young people difficult. Particular difficulties may include:

- loss of power and control
- not agreeing with the ideas that young people put forward
- not being able to do what they want to do
Getting started

- having their views and approaches questioned
- feeling things are moving slowly and that they want to get on with things
- feeling frustrated if young people seem unreliable or uncommitted
- worried that they may not have the necessary skills or confidence.

It is important to anticipate the gains and losses that adults might experience and to make plans for how they can best be dealt with. The activities below are designed to be used by groups of adults but the issues that result from them can be sensitively shared and discussed between adults and young people.

Activity: Adults’ feelings about involving or consulting young people
Ask adults to individually make two lists – one headed ‘I feel good about’, the other ‘I am concerned about’ when considering involving or consulting young people. Ask pairs to share their lists. Bring everyone back together and discuss the main positive and negative feelings about involving or consulting young people. What can adults do to maximise the positive feelings they have and minimise the negative feelings?

Activity: Gains and losses
Ask adults to think about what they might gain from involving or consulting young people. Record their ideas and discuss them. Now repeat the process for what adults may lose by involving or consulting young people. Focus on the losses and ask adults to think about how they might actually respond to possible losses, particularly those related to power and control. Conclude by discussing how adults can best prepare themselves for these changes.

2E Skills and issues for adults

‘When you talk about participation of young people it’s not just in the work, it’s about them as young people. And if you can’t do that as a worker you shouldn’t be working with young people. When you see them move on, start from nothing – no confidence, not talking – to putting their hands up at a public meeting it’s a huge buzz.’ (Project worker)

‘Workers have to have a passion for this style of work. They must be able to instil self-motivation, self-awareness and self-acceptance. They must believe in the skills and capabilities of young people and be prepared to take their ideas seriously. Even if a young person’s ideas seem far-fetched or doomed to failure they shouldn’t rubbish it. Instead they should get the young person to come up with practical ideas of how their idea could be developed and be prepared to enter into a proper discussion about what is and what may not be possible. They should support young people in developing their ideas, not do it for them.’ (Project worker)

‘I’m not being funny. Adults never let us have our say. They complain if we don’t respect adults but we don’t get respect off adults.’ (Young person)

‘We’re not used to being given space and choices and a chance to say what we really think. I think it’s a case of building up confidence and that won’t happen overnight.’ (Young person)
What skills do adults need to work effectively with young people in a collaborative way in your project? During our field work young people suggested that adults needed to have the following skills and abilities:

**Adults should**
- listen
- have credibility
- have time
- be patient
- share power
- be clear what they are asking of you
- encourage young people
- be open to new ideas
- take young people seriously
- be committed to equal opportunities
- be unshockable
- recognise that all young people are different
- have a sense of humour
- be truthful and honest
- keep confidences
- be approachable and enthusiastic
- understand young people's lives and point of view
- know what they are talking about
- allow you to speak freely
- be able to take some stick
- invite opinions
- give you feedback
- be down to earth
- be willing to talk with you
- treat young people as equals
- be able to give young people real responsibility
- encourage you to work with others
- pick out important issues
- give sensible advice
- be polite
- respect you

**Adults should not**
- pretend to be someone they are not
- be aggressive
- nag
- patronise
- use long words
- be a know-all
- go over the top
- criticise other workers to young people
- be judgemental
- treat you as if you don't know anything
- dictate
- ask you loads of questions
- pressurise
- tell you what to do all the time
- get embarrassed
- order you around
- be hypocritical
- be a snob
- be competitive
- put people down
- have favourites
- preach
- talk down to you
- be bothered by swearing
- treat you like kids
**Activity: Skills and issues for adults**

Note. This activity is designed to be used by a group of adults. The alternative method involves consulting a group of young people.

1. Distribute copies of the adults' skills and abilities list.

2. Discuss the list and add any items that participants feel are missing.

3. Ask individual adults to put two headings on top of a piece of A4 paper: 'I am good at' and 'I need to improve at'.

4. Using the skills and abilities list ask individual adults to place items appropriately under the two headings by seriously assessing their own skills and abilities to work effectively with young people.

5. Invite pairs to discuss their lists. Ask them to take turns as speaker and listener. Ask the listeners to be supportive and to help the speakers discuss things they are good at (people often get embarrassed about this) and to explore ways they might go about improving skills they are not so good at.

6. Bring everyone back together and on a flipchart make two headings: 'We are good at' and 'We need to improve at'. Take feedback from the pairs to build a list of the skills and abilities of the adult team and those they may need to improve at.

7. Acknowledge the strengths of the adult team and discuss the way these skills and abilities can be used best in the project's work.

8. Discuss areas that adults may need to improve. Discuss what problems this might cause in the work of the project. Then discuss how adults might go about improving their skills and abilities to work with young people. Consider the role of mutual support and possible training in doing this.

9. Conclude by summarising the main things learnt and any decisions that have been made.

*Alternative method:* You might begin this activity by asking young people you work with what skills and abilities they feel adults should have to be effective. Like the list above you could ask them what they feel adults 'should do' and 'should not do' to work effectively with young people. You might also ask adults to make their own list and compare and discuss the young people's and adults' lists.
Recruitment and selection of adults

It is very important that adults who are to work with young people have a positive attitude to involvement and consultation and have the necessary skills to carry out such work. To recruit and select appropriate adults we suggest the following.

1. Take into account adults' feelings about, attitudes towards and experience of, consulting and involving young people. The activity about adults feelings on page 23 might be adapted to help you do this.

2. Take into account the skills and training adults will need to work effectively with young people. The activity above can be adapted to help you do this. Also see Section 3G on page 54 about training. You might also consider asking applicants to provide a reference from young people they have worked with.

3. Recruit and select adults by taking into account equal opportunities. Similar anti-discriminatory practices to those recommended for recruiting and selecting young people should apply. (See Section 2B on page 16 and Section 3B on page 43.)

4. Involve young people in the recruitment and selection process. Many of the projects we visited did this and involved young people in drawing up job specifications, advertising posts, showing candidates around and informally discussing with them, drawing up interview questions, participating in interview panels and in the selection process. In many cases young people were given training to help them do this. Some young people were also invited by other organisations (such as social services and a secure residential unit) to interview staff for posts involving working with young people.

2F Skills and issues for young people

It is important that you are clear about what you are asking of young people who are to be consulted or involved in your project, the skills and abilities they will need, how they might view their own involvement and what issues may arise for them.

Young people, from one of the projects we visited, gave very definite advice for young people who are thinking of being consulted or involved with a project. They said young people should make sure that project workers knew what they wanted from them and that workers were prepared to give support. They also said young people should ask around and check out whether workers were reliable. Otherwise they felt young people might be wasting their time and energy.
Activity: Skills and issues for young people

This activity works best if carried out with a group of adults and young people working together.

1. Ask adults to imagine that they are a young person who is to be consulted by, or involved in, your project. Ask them to discuss the following questions in turn, logging key points in response to each question.

How would you feel about:
- the project as a whole and what it is trying to do?
- being invited to be involved?
- doing the things being asked of young people?
What skills and abilities do you think you can bring to the work?
What would you want to have a say in deciding?
What would you not want to do?
What help/support might you need?
What might put you off being involved?
What concerns or difficulties might you have?

Some concerns young people expressed included: feeling bossed around, feeling used, not being able to do what is asked of them, not understanding what is being asked of them, too much being expected of them, being set up to fail, not really being listened to or taken account of, not being able to give the required time commitment, confidentiality, facing prejudice or discrimination. Also see the list of what young people said adults should not do in Section 2E on page 24.

2. Ask the same questions of young people who are to be involved in your project or a group of similar young people. If necessary, first explain to them what the project is about, how it will operate and the roles and tasks that young people might be asked to perform.

3. Compare the information you have collected from steps 1 and 2.

4. Now discuss the following points:

What exactly will you be asking of young people? (See also Section 3A on page 39 on clarifying roles.
What do you want them to be able to do/not do?
What decisions will they have influence over/not have influence over?
What skills/abilities do you expect/want from young people? (See the example of ‘Qualities sought in young people’ given on page 28).
Of the skills/abilities young people will need:
- Which might they already have?
- Which might they not have?
- Which may need developing and if so how? (See Section 3G on page 54 about training.)
Positive Participation

5. What concerns do young people have about being involved? What issues might arise for them and how can these be dealt with?

6. Summarise by discussing the main points to come out of the activity and the implications for how the project will need to operate.

Qualities sought in young people

The Tameside Young People's Health Network is a peer education project working in schools and community settings. The staff have produced, in consultation with young people, the following list of qualities they seek from young people who are involved.

1. Reliability
   - That people will do what they say they will do, such as attend a meeting.
   - That people will only agree to do things they can manage and not take on too much.
   - That people will say if they cannot do certain things.
   - That when someone is sick, or some other emergency means they cannot do what they have agreed, they will let us know.

2. Respect
   - For each other's time and efforts – be punctual, don't waste others' time, be prepared to join in and have a go.
   - For each other's views and opinions – listen to each other, no put-downs, respect differences.
   - For the Centre and other users – clear up your own mess, respect for building rules, smoking areas, etc.
   - Respect for others regardless of sex, race, sexual orientation, disability, etc.

3. Awareness of others
   - That people are aware that there are others in the group too and everyone has needs and rights. Try not to take over and dominate. Try not to let personal things dominate the discussion. Show an interest in others' opinions. Involve others, especially if they seem left out.

4. Participation
   - That everyone will come prepared and able to participate.
   - That everyone will get on with the agreed tasks/programme.
   - That people don't hinder others or disrupt the rest of the group.
   - That people will help each other to participate.
   - That everyone mucks in with jobs like washing up, moving chairs, etc.

5. Open to learning and challenge
   - That people feel free to challenge each other's opinions.
   - That people challenge in a constructive fashion, rather than by putting others down or getting aggressive.
   - That people are prepared to be challenged by others.
   - That people are prepared to be open-minded, to look at things from other people's points of view.
Activity: Skills audit with young people

Note. This activity will enable the skills young people will need to be identified, as well as the skills they already have and those they may need to improve at. It works best by facilitating a group of young people who either may be, or definitely will be, involved or consulted.

1. Make a list of all the skills and qualities young people will need to be involved in the work. Do this by describing the main tasks and asking them what sort of things they will need to be good at to do the work well. Add your own ideas if necessary. You might also look at the list of qualities sought in young people reproduced on page 28.

2. Now ask the young people to work in pairs and to support each other to each draw up two lists ‘things I am good at’ and ‘things I would like to be better at’. Go round helping the pairs if necessary.

3. Next discuss the skills and qualities that the group feel they are good at. How can these be best used in the work they are to do?

4. Now discuss the skills and qualities that they feel they need to improve. How can they be helped to do so? Consider possible support mechanisms and training. (See Section 3C on page 46 and Section 3G on page 54.)

2G Organisational and funding issues

Organisational issues

Many of the projects we visited involved more than one organisation working collaboratively together. Collaborative working can be very effective and allow a sharing of knowledge, skills, ways of working and costs and funding. As well as being very beneficial there can be problems. Different organisations often have different ways of working and different policies and practices about the way they work with young people, particularly over issues such as confidentiality. This is covered in more detail in Section 3F on page 52. Apart from working collaboratively with particular organisations there may be other organisations that will affect how you work with young people. This includes organisations that may be funding your project and the wider organisation that you may be part of (such as a local council, school or NHS trust).

Many organisations promote themselves as being keen to involve and consult young people. Is it the case in practice or is it merely talk? How ‘young-person-friendly’ is your own organisation/project in reality? How ‘young-person-friendly’ are organisations that you may be a part of? How ‘young-people-friendly’ are outside professionals who may be working with your project? How might the way organisations work with young people affect, or even possibly block, the work of your project? You will need to consider where the decisions which affect young people and your project are actually made and by
Positive Participation

whom. You may also need to work with other organisations to promote the active involvement of young people.

Activity: Organisational issues

Note. This activity works best if used by a group of adults and young people working together, possibly with young people and adults being in their own separate groups for step 1.

1. How young-person-friendly is:
   - Your own project/organisation?
   - The wider organisation that you may be part of? (Especially those parts that may influence or affect the running of your project.)
   - Other organisations that fund your project?
   - Other organisations/professionals you work with?

   In what ways have they been/are they supportive of consulting or involving young people?
   In what ways have they not been/might they not be supportive of consulting or involving young people?
   How open are they to young people being actively involved in decision-making processes?

2. What possible problems could arise for your project if other organisations are not supportive of young people?

3. What are the implications for your project and what possible work may you need to do as a consequence? Consider work with:
   - adults from your own project/organisation.
   - adults from the wider organisation that you may be part of (including councillors, health commissioners etc.)
   - adults from other organisations that may be funding your project.
   - adults from other organisations you work with (see Section 3F on page 52)
   - young people themselves.

Funding issues

Many projects which consult or involve young people run on a very tight budget. Some have great ambitions but have limited success because they are not well enough funded. It is important that you work out the level of funding you will need and tailor your work to the actual funding available. Insufficient funding may result in raising young people's expectations only to find that the intended work cannot be delivered.

Young people can play an important role in fund-raising. Funders may be particularly interested if young people themselves present a case for funding. Think about how you might involve young people in presenting the case. This might include them attending meetings with funders, putting on a presentation for funders, helping write and design funding applications and/or giving personal testimonies of the need for such work.
Activity: Funding issues

The first questions to consider are what you will need funding for and how much. Consider the following possible costs and the timescale of your project:

- staff salaries and expenses
- recruitment and selection of young people
- resource materials
- premises and environment (including hiring premises for 'one-off' events, residential, etc.)
- equipment
- refreshments
- remuneration/expenses for young people
- support and supervision of young people
- support and supervision of staff and other adults
- training for staff and other adults
- training of young people
- special projects (that may be initiated by young people)
- special events or activities
- publicity
- administrative costs
- monitoring and evaluation.

1. Which of these are relevant to your project and how much will each cost?
2. What additional costs might you have?
3. How is the project to be funded and by whom?
4. What, if any, expectations will funders have about how the project is run? What limits could this put on your work? What implications will this have for adults and young people?
5. Is sufficient funding available?
6. If not how can additional funding be found? You might consider:
   - local councils
   - local businesses
   - health authorities
   - grant-making trusts (your local Council for Voluntary Service should have details)
   - European Union
   - government departments.
7. How can young people be involved in fund-raising?
8. How will project finances be managed and by whom? What role might young people play in this? (See page 32.)
Involving young people in managing finances

Some project workers we met highlighted the need to involve young people in the day-to-day management of project budgets and decision-making about finance. Managing finances can be difficult and complicated and makes many adults anxious, especially if they are not used to it. Some adults seem to not trust young people with such responsibilities.

One project we visited was keen to involve young people in financial decision-making but found that the key organisation that funded the project was not keen to involve young people. The young people became angry at the way they were being treated and felt they should know about the budget, how money was spent and have some influence over it. It was resolved by the young people putting together a proposal about how they should be involved and taking it to the management of the funding organisation. Two young people who worked as sessional workers on the project acted as advocates for the other young people. This resulted in the project having a budget for development work with young people as signatories.

If involvement and consultation is to give young people greater control over projects then an important aspect of this is for them to understand the finances and be able to influence decisions about how money is spent. Not many projects have been successful in doing this but some possible ways forward include:

- exploring ways of making the presentation and management of finances and budgets easier for everyone to understand
- paying attention to the use of appropriate language whenever possible
- training sessions for adults and young people from people who are experienced at managing finances and budgets
- adults and young people taking joint responsibilities
- young people being given responsibility for managing specific parts of a budget
- gradually increasing the responsibilities that young people take
- use of accounting computer packages – especially as many young people are more computer-literate than adults.
2H Setting targets and monitoring of consultation and involvement of young people

Note. This section explores setting targets for, and monitoring of, consultation and involvement of young people. It is not about general project aims or evaluation of them.

Setting targets

Setting clear targets and timescales at the initial planning stage will enable you to regularly monitor progress, judge how well your project is doing and make decisions that will help ensure that consultation and involvement of young people is effective.

The targets that you set will be particular to the nature of your project. They may include specific outcomes such as the number of people involved or number of events held, but may also include process indicators such as how people feel about different aspects of the work. When setting targets for the consultation or involvement of young people you might consider the following:

- total number of young people to be consulted or involved
- numbers of young people to be involved in particular roles (see Section 3A on page 39)
- characteristics of young people involved – age, gender, class, race, disability etc. (See Section 3B on page 43)
- recruitment and selection of young people (see Section 3B on page 43)
- recruitment and selection of staff, other adults and ‘outside’ professionals (see Section 2E on page 23)
- effectiveness and confidence of young people in the roles they are to perform (see Section 3A on page 39 and Section 6 if young people are involved as service deliverers or peer educators)
- setting up of decision-making forums with young people (see Section 5)
- completion of stages in a consultation exercise (see Section 5)
- development of key policies – e.g. equal opportunities (see Section 2B on page 16), confidentiality (see Section 3D on page 47)
- development of safe working environments/venues (see Section 3E on page 50)
- training of adults/young people/other professionals (see Section 3G on page 54)
- support for young people in place (see Section 3C on page 46)
- that young people feel positive about their involvement (see Section 2C on page 20) and the way adults are working with them (see Section 2E on page 23)
- that adults feel positive about their own involvement and that of young people (see Section 2D on page 22).

Note. Where appropriate we have cross-referenced to other sections in the pack. Looking at these sections may help you identify more specific targets.
Positive Participation

Monitoring

Monitoring is a continuing process whereby information and evidence is gathered in order to judge whether targets have been met and whether something has been successful or not.

Effective monitoring requires:

- identification of a baseline – where you are beginning from
- identification of agreed, specific and clear targets and times by which they are to be met
- awareness of the targets by adults and, where necessary, young people
- recording of relevant information and records
- identification of how monitoring is to be carried out, by whom and when
- a commitment to share the results of monitoring and to make changes in working practices when they are necessary.

It is recommended that you consider the possibility of having a small monitoring group which includes adults and young people working together.

To find out whether some targets have been met you might only need to refer to records (for example numbers and types of young people involved, whether training took place when planned). However, for other targets you will need to get direct feedback from young people and adults about how they feel things are progressing and their levels of satisfaction. For this purpose you might use questionnaires, interviews or other consultation methods. Section 4 of this pack gives detailed information and guidance about how you might proceed.

The Young People’s Anti-Poverty Project (YAPP) is a consultation project which aims to develop a young people’s focus within the London Borough of Greenwich anti-poverty strategy. YAPP has developed clear and specific targets for its work as well as monitoring methods. These include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Targets</th>
<th>Monitoring method</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A local needs analysis on two estates with target groups of 180 young people per estate such as young refugees and young care leavers.</td>
<td>A report will be produced at the end of this work with the target group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs expressed by young people are included in the Greenwich anti-poverty strategy.</td>
<td>Monitoring changes in the Greenwich anti-poverty strategy on an annual basis.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At least six changes in policy or practice development which take account of the views and needs of young people living in poverty</td>
<td>From quarterly meetings with organisations in Greenwich which are part of the advisory forum for the project.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Getting started

**Targets**

Young people perceive that their views, needs and recommendations have been acted upon by organisations.

The model for the local needs analysis is written up, disseminated and used by other organisations.

**Monitoring method**

Feedback from young people during final phase of the project.

Feedback from other agencies over a three-year period.

Activity: Setting targets and monitoring

1. Think about your own project. What are the key targets concerning the consultation and involvement of young people?

   Look through the list of possible targets on page 33 and at the contents page of this pack. Are there any other targets relevant to your project?

2. Make a list of the key targets for your project. Make each target as clear and specific as possible.

3. For each key target decide:
   - Is it realistic or achievable?
   - When you intend to have met the target. If necessary distinguish between short-, medium- and long-term targets.
   - How you will monitor whether or not it has been achieved.

Note. *Health Promotion with Young People: an Introductory Guide to Evaluation*, (Health Education Authority, 1998) is a very useful resource for considering overall project evaluation.
Positive Participation
3

Key practice issues

3A Clarifying roles and contracting with young people
3B Accessing and recruiting young people
3C Support for young people
3D Confidentiality
3E Work environments and venues
3F Working with 'outside' professionals and in other organisations
3G Training of adults and young people
3H Anticipating, avoiding and dealing with problems
Key practice issues

3A Clarifying roles and contracting with young people

It is important to be clear about the roles and responsibilities of young people in the work of your project. What will they do, what will adults do and who will make decisions about what?

Activity: Clarifying roles

1. What key tasks, roles and decisions are involved in the work of your project? Make three separate lists – one for key tasks, one for key roles and one for key decisions.

2. What relevant skills and abilities do adults working on the project possess? (See Section 2E on page 23.)

3. What relevant skills and abilities do other professionals who maybe involved possess?

4. What relevant skills and abilities do young people bring to the work? (See Section 2F on page 26.)

5. Which tasks, roles and decisions will be performed or made by:
   • paid project staff?
   • adult volunteer project workers or management committee members?
   • 'outside' professionals?
   • young people themselves?
   • anyone else who may be involved?

During our visits to projects we witnessed young people performing very different tasks and roles. Some did not need a high skill or confidence level. Others were much more complicated. Some did not take up much time, but others did.

Look at the possibility of offering young people a wide range of tasks and roles to suit the skills and situations of different young people. Also look for ways that young people might change roles (see 'Changing roles and leaving projects' on page 42) and develop more skills over a period of time so that they feel more confident about taking on more challenging roles.

6. How might the division of tasks, roles and decisions change in future? In particular what tasks, roles and decisions might young people perform or make in the:
   • short term?
   • medium term?
   • longer term?

7. What type of support (see Section 3C on page 46) and training (see Section 3G on page 54) might young people need in the short, medium and longer term?
Positive Participation

8. How might young people feel about the division of tasks, roles and decision-making powers? Are they happy to play the roles envisaged for them? Do they want to do or influence less, more or different things? Can they realistically commit themselves? Are their skills and desire to be involved being under- or over-estimated?

Some adults, in their enthusiasm to involve young people, may take insufficient account of the sometimes changing nature of young people's lives and the fact that they may have many other responsibilities. Take care not to over-estimate the amount of time and ongoing commitment that can be expected of young people. The danger is that some young people may not be able to be as involved as was originally agreed or expected or that overload and burnout will follow.

9. How do adults working on the project feel about the division of tasks, roles and decision-making?

10. Summarise the tasks, roles and decisions that adults and young people will perform or be involved in.

Contracting with young people
To help clarify the roles that young people will perform and their responsibilities and rights it is a often good idea to agree a contract with them. It is best to draw up contracts in consultation with young people who are to be involved. You can do this by discussing with them the responsibilities that they will have and the rights that they feel they should have. Two examples from projects are given below and these might form a basis for discussion with young people.

You will also need to be aware of possible legal implications of employing young people as volunteers, especially if they receive payments. For example, they may lose benefits and/or acquire employment rights if they work more than a certain number of hours each week.

Model rights for peer educators, Tameside Young People's Health Network

- To be respected for their own identity, enabled to express their perspectives and have them reflected in the group's work.
- To be made aware of outside constraints on their work, for example local authority policies, government rulings, health authority regulations and issues like budget cuts.
- To receive initial and ongoing training as relevant for their duration in the project (including core skills training).
- To be included in all decision-making processes that affect their work, for example topics and issues, where to deliver work, support mechanisms for peer educators, style of delivery.
- To be recognised for their achievement and their contribution to the education of others.
- To have adequate support in their work, for example regular meetings, co-supervision).
Key practice issues

- To negotiate as individuals within the group and with other group members and workers.
- To challenge others and be challenged.
- To have their confidentiality respected as appropriate, and to be clear about the boundaries of confidentiality.
- To be able to make mistakes and learn from them.
- To be able to leave the group before the end of the project, if they choose, with access to support if appropriate.
- To be covered by insurance and other legalities/protection in case of accident (Public Liability Cover etc.).
- Not to be out of pocket for their involvement and a user-friendly expenses system to operate.
- To give and receive positive feedback and constructive criticism.
- Right of appeal when decisions are perceived by an individual as unjust.
- To have their health and safety prioritised.
- To be involved in drawing up a group contract for the piece of work, with set restraints made clear, and other items negotiated.
- Not to be set up to work alone in the delivery of peer education.
- To negotiate for the presence or absence of youth workers (or other workers) at delivery.
- To have access to information and suitable resources to support their work or help in getting access to suitable resources.

Volunteer contract, End House, Durham

The following agreement is designed to ensure clear boundaries, responsibilities and working relationships are understood by all workers at End House.

Policies: I am familiar with the End House policies on confidentiality, child protection, drugs and alcohol, equal opportunities and violence and I am committed to working within their guidelines. I am familiar with and committed to the values of End House.

Volunteer meetings: I will attend regular volunteer meetings.

Supervision/support sessions: I will attend regular supervision/support sessions.

Training: I am committed to undertaking the required number of training sessions in accordance with the nature of the work I wish to be involved in.

Work areas: I am committed to undertaking the tasks I agree to in my supervision sessions.

Signed: __________________________Date: __________________________

Changing roles and leaving projects

Young people may wish or need to change their roles over a period of time. Some get bored and wish to do more. Others may feel they cannot commit themselves on a regular basis, particularly if their circumstances change. Some may have been playing a particular role for too long, feel that the project is their life and block other young people's
involvement. Others may have been with the project for so long that they cannot now be regarded as young.

At End House in Durham young people often start as 'shopfront' workers for about six months. They usually begin doing routine tasks such as photocopying, ensuring that there are leaflets in the racks and clerical work for the contraceptive clinic. The staff try to make sure that young people have opportunities to try new things if they are getting bored. After six months most volunteers who want to stay involved want to do more specialist work. This has included getting involved in the management committee, recruiting other young people and working as paid sessional staff.

Many young people had changed their roles in most of the projects we visited. This also included some young people changing from voluntary to paid sessional or full-time staff, either within the same project or with a linked project. These transitions were sometimes difficult for both young people and adults. Support was needed for young people and it was important that they were treated as being as capable as any new member of staff.

Exit strategies were also seen as important to develop, especially but not only, for projects who work with vulnerable young people. Some projects had an upper age limit for young people to be involved but were also aware of the need for young people to develop other support and friendship networks beyond involvement with the project.

You will need to think about how young people can develop and change roles within the project and ways that they can leave the project smoothly and without recrimination.

Activity: Changing roles and leaving projects

1. How can individual young people get regular opportunities to reflect on their role, how they feel they are doing and where they might go next? (See Section 3C on page 46 for more on support for young people.)

2. How can groups of young people get opportunities to discuss these issues together?

3. How can young people be given opportunities to change their roles or smoothly leave the project and what support can they be given to help them do this?

4. What can be done to guard against some young people becoming over involved so that the project takes over their life and they feel it could not exist without them? What can be done to support them?

Regular individual supervision and support and group reflection will help minimise such problems and provide opportunities to find ways to effectively deal with them if they do occur.
Key practice issues

3B Accessing and recruiting young people

Note. Recruitment and selection of adults is considered in on page 26.

It may be that your work will involve or consult particular groups of young people (such as young women or men, young disabled people or those from particular minority ethnic groups) rather than young people in general. Either way, you will need to think clearly about which young people you access and recruit and to take account of equal opportunities – see Section 2B on page 16. It is easier to recruit young people whom you already know, are already involved in groups or organisations and are confident and used to talking to adults about issues. These young people may not be representative of the young people you ideally wish to reach.

The easiest way to access young people is to go through services they already use. Schools, youth clubs and other educational establishments are an obvious route. The advantages of this are that it is quickest and easiest. The disadvantages are that you may not reach some young people whom you ideally wish to consult or involve. For example, if you are targeting under 16-year-olds you may need to consider also accessing young people with special needs, young people who have been excluded from schools, school refusers and young mothers. Many over 16-year-olds do not attend any educational establishments and may be more difficult to access.

You will also depend on the goodwill of staff if you go through existing organisations. Be aware that this can raise problems. For example, if staff from existing organisations are involved in the selection of young people their choices will influence which young people you can access. If staff are present during your initial contact with young people this may influence how the young people respond to being consulted or involved. With younger children you may also have to consider parental consent.

If you want to access young people outside of school, work or other services you need to go to the places they go to at the times they will be there. This may be evenings and weekends. There may be safety issues you need to consider, particularly if you are involved in outreach work on the streets.

You can also ask young people to introduce you to other young people who they think might be interested or have things to say. This is called snowballing.

If you organise a conference or event you are unlikely to recruit well unless you go through organisations or personally meet young people first. You should hold events at times and in places which are acceptable and accessible to all young people. Weekends are often the most popular. You will also need to make arrangements for child-care and transport. If you do not do so young parents and young people who are caring for others may be unable to get involved.
Positive Participation

Also consider whether some young people will need language interpreters, including signers or advocates, if they are to be consulted or involved.

Remember that young people may not be interested in the issues you want to hear their views about or wish to involve them in. You are more likely to get them actively involved if you show an interest in issues which concern them.

Young people involved in the work of the Young People’s Anti-Poverty Project were impressed with the interest workers had for them and how willing they were to support them before they asked them to get involved in the consultation. For example, a local young parents group was keen to set up a nappy-buying service and a refugee group needed funds to develop their music and dance work. In both cases the Young People’s Anti-Poverty Project advised the groups and helped them to get what they needed.

Activity: Accessing and recruiting young people

1. Which group(s) of young people do you want to access? Define their characteristics as clearly as possible.

2. Particular groups of young people are often under-represented in consultation and involvement work. Look through the list of groups in the equal opportunities section of this pack (Section 2B on page 16.) Which of these groups, in particular, do you need to take into account?

3. You may need to recruit young people who already have particular skills or abilities. What skills or abilities will the young people already need to have? (See Section 2F on page 26.) Could these skills and abilities be developed after recruitment by, for example, training?

4. Brainstorm all the places the young people you are targeting might be or go to (mainstream schools, special schools and units, children’s homes, colleges, streets and shopping centres, youth clubs and projects, pubs, clubs, amusement arcades, traditional and other churches, mosques, synagogues, sports facilities, voluntary, self-help and campaigning groups, etc.).

5. From the list identify which would be the best places to access the young people.

6. Consider how you will go about accessing the young people through the environments you have identified.

7. What positive steps can you take to ensure that the young people you recruit are representative of the young people you ideally wish to involve? (See Section 2B on page 16.)

8. How will you actually go about recruiting young people? (Direct verbal invitation, letters, posters, invitation to a meeting, asking young people to bring along other young people, recruiting a group of young people rather than individuals etc.)
Key practice issues

9. If your project involves selecting those young people to be involved how will you go about the selection process and who will do it? Will young people themselves be involved in the selection process and if so how? If you are to interview young people consider how you will go about the interviews (see the example questions below) and selection of young people from the interviews.

For some young people, particularly younger ones aged under 16 years old, you may need to consider informing or involving parents. If this is the case think about how you can best go about this by discussing it with the young people concerned.

Possible questions to ask when interviewing young people who wish to be involved

*Taken from End House (Durham) interview schedule for young service deliverers, aged 14–25 years.*

1. Why have you chosen to work for...? Why do you want to work with young people?
2. Please tell us about any past or present training, work or experience of working with young people that you think might be useful in working here?
3. What do you understand by confidentiality and how do you think it might apply to working here?
4. People whom we work with come from a wide range of backgrounds – black young people, young men and women, young people from different classes, homeless young people, young people who have been in care etc. How do you think we can make sure that people are treated equally?
5. If you work here you may find that some of the ideas you hold will be questioned or challenged. How do you feel about this?
6. Are there any particular areas of our work that you are interested in and why?
7. Can you talk a bit about two issues that you think affect young people today?
8. Initially we ask people to commit themselves to working with us (hours, times of day, for how long, etc.)? How do you feel about this?

Induction programmes

A good way to make sure that young people know exactly what is expected of them and to increase their confidence in performing their roles is to run an induction programme. Induction might cover:

- background to and aims of the project
- staffing
- ways of working
- key policies, for example equal opportunities, confidentiality, etc.
- feeding back to the project management
- rights of young people, including appeals
- access to support and training
- any payment and expenses
- physical environment and where things are kept
- use of equipment.
Consider the possibility of running a mentoring or shadowing system where new recruits work with adults or other young people for a short initial period. The issue of contracts is considered under ‘Contracting with young people’ in Section 3A on page 39.

**3C Support for young people**

If young people are to be consulted or involved effectively in health projects they will need to be supported in a range of ways. Some forms of support can enable a broader range of young people to be involved than might otherwise be the case. For example, one project we visited made child-care provision a priority to make it easier for young mothers to be involved. Many of the projects provided transport and/or travel expenses with one paying for taxis for evening sessions on safety grounds. Training and supervision was a common feature to help young people to understand what was expected of them and to help them become more confident and develop their skills. Training and support also enables young people to take on more challenging roles over a period of time. In addition, rewarding young people with monetary payment or payment in kind may make them feel that their involvement is particularly valued.

**Activity: Support for young people**

1. What exactly are young people being asked to do? (See Section 3A on page 39.)

2. What support might young people need to help them do what you want of them? Consider the situation of the young people whom you intend to involve or consult (in terms of their skills and confidence, language issues, financial situation, home life, mobility, special needs, etc.). Be aware of the difficulty for some young people in making regular time commitments.

Which of these items do you feel would be particularly desirable?

- training
- supervision
- transport/travel
- payment – money
- payment – in kind (record tokens etc.)
- help with access to buildings
- any particular equipment needed
- expenses
- refreshments
- child-care
- peer support networks
- interpreters
- advocates
- support with reading and writing
- information in a form that requires little reading or writing.
Key practice issues

3. What other forms of support, apart from those listed above, might be needed?

4. Compare what support adults think young people will need and what young people say their needs are.

5. Clarify exactly what support you are going to provide for young people.

6. For those forms of support you have listed decide:
   - how that support will be provided
   - who will provide it and how
   - how much it will cost and how it will be funded.

3D Confidentiality

Confidentiality means that when one person receives personal or sensitive information from another person they do not pass this information on to anyone else without the consent of the person they have received it from. It is very important to be clear about confidentiality in work with young people on health-related issues. We know that one of the main reasons young people do not use services is that they feel their confidences will not be respected and that what they say might be passed on to others. We also know that young people who are consulted about health issues may not feel able to be open about their views or behaviours for fear of who may have access to the information they provide.

Confidentiality may arise as an issue when:

- adults receive personal information about young people
- adults receive personal information about other adults
- young people receive personal information about other young people, particularly where young people work together in groups or work as service providers for other young people
- young people receive personal information about adults.

Although respect for confidentiality is essential most organisations do not grant an absolute right to complete confidentiality in all circumstances. The right to confidentiality needs to be balanced against protecting particularly vulnerable people from seriously harming themselves, harming other people or being harmed by other people. In rare circumstances a breach of confidentiality may be justified if a person cannot be persuaded to make a voluntary disclosure. Some staff may be contractually obliged to pass on certain information such as disclosure of sexual or physical abuse of young people or when life is clearly in danger. This may be made more difficult when projects work with other professionals who may have different policies and practices over confidentiality.
When a sexual health clinic initially worked with a young people’s project it became clear that the NHS staff had different ideas about confidentiality from the people working on the project. The NHS staff would talk about users to other people in the project whereas this was considered a breach of confidentiality by people who were involved in the young people’s project. Discussions about confidentiality and boundaries between the youth workers, young people and NHS staff were needed to sort out the issue.

Both adults and young people need to be clear about confidentiality and boundaries. If they are in a position where they may receive confidential information of a sensitive nature it is very important that they have adequate supervision and support.

One of the projects we visited involved young people befriending very vulnerable young people in a secure unit. This is very challenging work that sometimes included verbal and physical aggression and disclosure of abuse. The project ensures that a support worker is on hand at the end of each session to debrief and support the young befriender.

Two of the projects we visited involved young people running peer education sessions in schools in which personal information about drug use and sexual behaviour was sometimes revealed. Whilst most of what they were told remained confidential they received training, guidance and support to help them identify situations where information must be passed on to others and to help them decide who to pass information to and how to do this.

Activity: Clarifying confidentiality issues and developing a confidentiality policy

1. In the work of your project in what circumstances could confidentiality arise as an issue:
   a. For adults from the project?
   b. For adults who may be involved from other agencies?
   c. For young people?

2. In what circumstances (if any) should confidentiality be broken, by whom and why?
   You might consider receiving information from particularly young or vulnerable young people as well as issues such as drug use, sexual behaviour, criminal activity, sexual abuse, physical abuse, violence and intended suicide.

3. If confidentiality should ever be broken who should the information be passed on to?

4. What support should be available for people who may receive confidential information?

5. What, if any, is the current policy and practice over confidentiality for adults and/or young people?

6. Are you intending to record any confidential information? If so what information will be recorded, how will it be collected and who will have access to it? How can you ensure confidential records remain confidential?

7. If a confidentiality policy already exists:
Key practice issues

- How well does it work in practice?
- What, if anything, are its shortcomings?
- Are adults working on the project aware of it?
- Are other professionals who are involved aware of it? Does it cause any problems for them? Is their confidentiality practice different?
- Are young people aware of it and if so how are they made aware of it?
- How confident do people feel about managing confidential information?
- In what ways might it need changing?

8. If no current policy exists or you wish to develop a new policy:
- What circumstances does it need to cover?
- Who will be consulted about it and how?
- What does it need to say? (See the example below.)
- Will it need to take account of staff from different agencies with different ideas and practices about confidentiality?
- How can adults and young people be made aware of it? How can their confidence in managing confidential information be built?

9. How can the policy and practice about confidentiality be best monitored in future?

Example confidentiality policy from End House, Durham

End House, Durham, Young People’s Centre has a strict confidentiality policy. This means that any information a young person gives or receives will not be passed on to other workers, agencies or family members, unless requested by a young person. This includes information on whereabouts, attendance at this Centre or personal address, for example.

The exception to this is if a worker receives information that leads her, or him, to believe a child or young person is at risk of serious harm. In this instance we may inform another person or agency. At all times we would aim to do this with the consent or knowledge of the young person.

Note. Two useful publications on confidentiality are B. Rayment Confidential – Developing Confidentiality Policies in Youth Counselling and Advisory Services (Youth Access, 1994) and Brook Advisory What Should I Do? – Guidance on Confidentiality and Under 16s for Community Nurses, Social Workers, Teachers and Youth Workers (Brook Advisory, 1996).

3E Work environments and venues

Young people need to work in comfortable, welcoming and safe surroundings. Young people will be able to tell you about their concerns and the risks they feel they face, where they like to go and the sort of environments they feel comfortable with.

One of the projects we visited had difficulty in attracting young Asian people because they were afraid to travel to what they experienced as a white area where racist attacks were
Positive Participation

Finding alternative venues, as well as taking steps to ensure the safety of young people travelling to and from venues and within venues, are important to consider if all young people are to have equal access and opportunities.

Consult with young people and hold events at venues which suit them. If you are developing a project base take account of what young people want by asking them and involve them in actually creating the environment. You will need to consider all the following.

Physical environment
Entry points.
Where and how newcomers or visitors are greeted.
Decoration/colour scheme/murals.
Furniture/seating/tables.
Private areas.
Plants.
Toilets – are they clean, do they work, do they offer privacy?
Displays/posters/pictures.
Leaflets/magazines/books.
Music.
Refreshments.
Telephone access.
Work areas/quiet areas.
Waiting areas.
Clear notices explaining where things are.
Smoking areas.
Other purposes the building(s) may be used for and other people who may use it.

Access
How easy it is for young people to get to or find.
Access for disabled young people who have physical or sensory impairments.
Local transport.

Safety
To and from the venue.
Inside the venue.
Consideration for young people who may feel particularly unwelcome (equal opportunities).
Drug and alcohol policy.
Smoking policy.
Exit points.
Health and safety.
Discriminatory and anti-social behaviour.
Ground rules (see below).
Key practice issues

Activity: Environmental audit

Work with young people to get their views about how the work environment should be and what risks they feel they may face getting to and from it and using it. Take account of all the factors listed above and any others that they come up with. If you already have a base or venue discuss the positive and negative aspects of it and how young people think it could be changed and improved. Cost out the suggested changes and then agree what it is practical to change. Many projects have actively involved young people in making the changes themselves. If you do not already have a venue involve young people in choosing one and defining the space.

Activity: Ground rules

Many projects develop ground rules with young people to help contribute to a pleasant and safe working environment and for specific events. One way of doing this is to discuss with young people how people should behave and how they should not behave. Issues such as aggressive or violent behaviour, prejudice and discrimination, alcohol and drug use will need to be considered. Agreed rules can be written up, circulated to young people and possibly displayed on a wall where everyone can see them. Wherever possible try to make the rules positive, rather than just a long list of 'Don'ts', so it is clear what everyone can do to contribute. Agreement can also be reached about steps to be taken if people break the rules. Make sure that adults also contribute to decisions about what the ground rules should be. After all, the ground rules should apply equally to them as to young people.

The New Horizon centre in London has set out to create a safe environment for young people who live most of their lives in unsafe situations including hopelessness and prostitution and experience of alcohol and drug problems. Young people using the project drew up a list of ground rules for everyone, including staff, using the project and agreed sanctions for anyone who breaks the rules.

The ground rules include:

- no racist, sexist or homophobic (anti-lesbian or gay) language
- no slogans on clothes which are offensive
- no bullying or intimidation
- no violent, aggressive or offensive behaviour
- no use of illegal drugs or alcohol
- no stealing from the project, anyone using it or working there
- no selling of anything on the premises
- no stealing from local shops
- keep the centre tidy – use ashtrays and bins, no writing on walls or furniture
- take a shower on your own
- use toilet cubicles on your own
- don't bring in any pets
- no gambling
- turn your mobile phone off
- show respect to local people.
Positive Participation

Seriously breaking the rules can result in people being asked to leave the centre or being barred. The project has produced a leaflet which explains the ground rules as well as what is on offer at the centre under the title ‘Respect: Look after the centre – It’s Yours!’

3F Working with ‘outside’ professionals and in other organisations

Many health-related projects have benefited from the involvement of a range of professionals from different backgrounds. For example a young people’s health clinic based in a youth centre may involve youth workers, nurses, doctors and counsellors working together. In addition some projects based in one sector work in other sectors. For example, a peer education project run by a voluntary organisation might target young people in schools or residential children’s homes. Whilst multi-disciplinary and cross-sector working can be very useful in the way they combine a broad range of professional skills and experiences and break down barriers they can also lead to tensions and problems. To avoid tensions and possible problems you will need to spend time planning with other professionals who come into your project and those who work for sectors you may be working in. It will also be more productive if young people are themselves involved in these discussions.

Good joint working involves:

- understanding each other’s values and ways of working
- influencing each other
- supporting each other
- joint planning and decision-making.

Y Wait (Young Women’s Advice, Information and Time to Talk) is a drop-in service run by and for young women in North Manchester. It includes a sexual health clinic where a doctor and nurses work alongside the young women volunteers and youth workers. The health professionals work for the local health care trust. Before being selected to work with Y Wait they are interviewed by the young women. When the project was first set up the doctor and nurses attended the same training courses as the workers and volunteers from the project. This made sure that commonly held values and ways of working, including confidentiality and equal opportunities, were understood, accepted and used by everyone who contributes towards the service.

As Y Wait has grown, the youth workers still go on the training course with the young women volunteers but it has not been possible for the doctors and nurses to do the whole course. They do, however, attend the annual residential. Working relationships between people from different agencies are good and according to the co-ordinator one reason for this is that the young women are now a lot more confident than in the early days.
Activity: Clarifying working practices with different professionals who may be coming to work in your project

This activity is designed to be used by a group which includes adults and young people from within your project and any outside professionals who may be coming in to work with you.

1. Which profession(s) will be involved?

2. Are they clear about the aims of your project and its working practices? Are you clear about their working practices?

3. Have they experience of work which involves young people?

4. How might they be perceived by young people?

5. What differences in working codes or practices might they have, especially over issues such as confidentiality and equal opportunities?

6. What tensions or differences could arise between them and:
   - adults who work on the project?
   - young people?

7. What can you do to minimise the possibility of any tensions or difficulties?

8. How might outside professionals be involved in joint decision-making and training?

9. How can young people be involved in this?

10. Consider drawing up a contract which says how you will work jointly with other professionals.

Activity: Clarifying working practices with staff from other (host) sectors your project may be working in

This activity has been designed to be used by adults and young people from your project working together with staff (and possibly young people) from the sector(s) your project may be working in.

1. Which sector(s) will you be working in?

2. Are their staff aware of exactly what you are offering?

3. Are you aware of their working codes and practices?

4. How can you best integrate your work within that of the host sector?
5. How might young people from your project be received?

6. How might young people in the host sector perceive your project working with them?

7. What tensions and difficulties could arise between:
   - young people from your project and young people in the host sector?
   - young people from your project and staff in the host sector?
   - adults from your project and young people in the host sector?
   - adults from your project and staff in the host sector?

8. What can you do to minimise the possibility of any tensions or difficulties?

9. How might you go about joint decision-making and training?

10. How can young people be involved in all this?

11. Consider drawing up a contract which says how you will work in particular sectors.

**3G Training of adults and young people**

Both adults and young people who are involved in projects will benefit from training to help them feel confident in the tasks and roles they are being asked to perform. Joint training which involves young people, adults from your project and any other professionals who are to be involved will bring great benefits in clarifying roles, attitudes and approaches as well as increasing understanding of each other and contributing towards a smoothly operating project.

**Activity: Establishing training needs**

To help establish adult training needs see ‘Recruitment and selection of adults’ in Section 2E on page 26. Section 3F on page 52 can also be used to help establish the training needs of outside professionals who may be working with your project.

To help establish the training needs of young people see Section 2F on page 26.

In addition you might:

1. Directly ask both adults and young people what they feel their needs are.

2. Take account of what you may be asking adults and young people to do in their work on the project. Also see ‘Induction programmes’ in Section 3B on page 45.

3. Look through the contents page of this pack for additional ideas about possible training needs.
4. Consider any particular health issues you are focusing on (such as drugs, sexual health, mental health). What are the areas of knowledge, attitudes clarification and skill development that need to be covered in training?

Draw up three lists of training needs: one for adults, one for young people and one for any other professionals who are working with you. Identify needs that they have in common and those that are specific to the different groups.

Now think about how these needs can best be met. This might include:
1. Separate training for adult groups and/or groups of young people.
2. Joint training for adults and young people working together.
3. A mix of 1 and 2.
4. Adults and/or young people attending external training courses.
5. Use of ‘on-the-job’ training or one-to-one support and supervision rather than formal training courses.

Note. Training needs may arise and change over time. Rather than run a ‘one-off’ training programme you may periodically need to review training needs and run different sorts of training as new needs arise. This can be done on a group basis and/or become part of supervision with individuals developing their own training portfolios.

Running a training course – checklist

1. Who is the course for?
2. What are the overall aims?
3. What are the objectives? What do you want participants to learn or be able to do as a consequence of the course.
4. How will participants feel about being involved?
5. Where and when will the course be held? Will it be a day course, series of sessions possibly in the evenings, weekend residential, etc.?
6. Who will lead the training?
7. What topics and issues will it cover?
8. What training methods will be used?
9. Draw up a programme showing aims, objectives, what will be covered, timings, etc.
10. What about room layout?
11. What materials and equipment will be needed?
12. What refreshments will be provided?
13. What information will participants be given beforehand?
14. How will the course be introduced?
15. Will there need to be ground rules?
16. How will the sessions be ended?
17. Will material from the course need recording and typing up?
18. What difficulties could arise and how can they be overcome?
19. How will the course be evaluated?
20. Who will take responsibility for doing what?
21. Is the training to be accredited? (This can be done internally within your own organisation with the issuing of certificates or through local accrediting organisations such as Open College Federations, NVQs, Investors in People, etc.)

Adults and young people training together
Some tips to help adults and young people to work effectively together on training courses.

- Involve young people in as many aspects of the training as possible, including design, delivery and evaluation.
- Be aware of the possibility of adults dominating discussions. Guard against this by establishing ground rules early on, providing regular opportunities for people to say how they think the course is going and by carefully choosing who works together in small groups.
- Explore the possibility of young people working in groups on their own for certain activities. This may empower them and give them more of a collective voice.
- Avoid putting young people on the spot. For example, we have witnessed sessions where adults do all the talking and then suddenly turn on young people and say ‘Well. What do you think?’
- You may need to build the confidence of young people as a course progresses. Start with small group activities which do not ask individuals to speak out to the whole group.
- Make the training fun. Consider the use of ice breakers and games but do not plunge into ones which are silly, embarrassing or overly personal.
- Respect young people’s confidences and do not press them to reveal sensitive information about themselves.

For more information about possible training methods see Section 5D on page 93 which focuses on running successful groups and meetings.

Who is to lead the training?
The Tameside Peer Health Education Project now involves experienced young people training new recruits. In other words the trained have now become the trainers. The training addresses the interests and concerns of all young people and new recruits are encouraged to develop and research their own ideas.
Key practice issues

Consider who will lead the training. This could include:

1. adults taking the lead
2. young people taking the lead
3. young people and adults taking the lead together
4. use of an outside trainer from health promotion, other agencies or a consultant.

Each of these arrangements can have potential advantages and disadvantages. Wherever possible, we would urge you to involve young people in designing and facilitating training. If you do this make sure that young people have sufficient support so that they feel confident in being involved.

If you decide to use an outside trainer make sure they are the right person, understand the issues involved and work in a way that will be supportive of young people. You can do this by:

- checking out how good they are by speaking to other organisations they have worked for
- meet and brief them in detail about your needs
- asking young people and adults from your project to talk to them about what they want
- asking them to draw up a draft programme which can then be amended before a final programme is agreed.

Examples of training packages

A number of training packages have been published which focus on consultation and involvement of young people. They include:

- Phil Treseder *Empowering Children and Young People* (Save the Children, 1997). Includes guidance and activities to use both with professionals and young people.
- I. Clements and M. Buczkiewicz *Approaches to Peer-led Health Education – a Guide for Youth Workers* (Health Education Authority, 1993). Activities for youth workers to train young peer educators.
3H Anticipating, avoiding and dealing with problems

It is normal that during the work of any project all sorts of problems and difficulties will be experienced. If you have already anticipated problems you can devise strategies to minimise the possibility of them occurring in the first place and for dealing with them effectively if they do occur.

What could go wrong?
Our visits to projects which consult and involve young people pointed to many things that could go wrong and many ways that conflict can arise. Problems might include:

**Adults or young people**
- feeling of isolation
- lack of necessary skills to feel confident about carrying out work
- lack of support
- loss of enthusiasm and motivation
- breaking confidences
- lateness/unreliability
- burnout and exhaustion
- lack of enthusiasm/commitment
- lack of respect for other people
- prejudicial or discriminatory behaviour (breaking of equal opportunities policy)
- anti-social behaviour
- breaking of ground rules (for example smoking, alcohol or drugs policy)
- suspicion and mistrust
- unhappy with their role
- feelings of failure
- apathy/boredom.

**Adults working on the project**
- not listening to or respecting young people
- not giving up power and control to young people
- unrealistic expectations of young people.
  (Also see the list of things young people said adults should not do in Section 2E on page 24)

**Young people**
- blocking the involvement of other young people
- unrealistic expectations of adults and the project
- lack of confidence in being able to speak out
- feeling that opinions offered are not taken seriously or acted upon
- feeling patronised by adults.
Key practice issues

For the project as a whole

● conflicting agendas
● disagreement and tensions
● inability to reach consensus over decisions
● power battles
● lack of resources
● lack of funding
● criticism from funders, the media or other organisations
● pressure to produce quick results
● failure to achieve goals on time.

Strategies for dealing with differences and conflict

Preventive measures

Some of the things projects can do to reduce the possibility of problems occurring in the first place are:

1. making sure everyone is clear about the aims of the project and their roles within it
2. set clear timescales
3. contracting with adults and young people
4. working in user-friendly and accessible environments
5. clear working policies especially about equal opportunities and confidentiality
6. negotiation of ground rules
7. provision of continuing support, supervision and training
8. creation of democratic decision-making procedures where everyone is able to have a say and grievances can be addressed at an early stage
9. regular review of progress for individuals, groups and the project as a whole.

Complaints and disciplinary procedures

Despite taking preventive measures, problems and conflict are still sometimes likely to happen. To resolve them you might:

1. have clear procedures for handling complaints and managing conflict
2. have a clear procedure for disciplinary action, making sure that there is a fair appeals procedure
3. negotiate with young people and adults to set up such procedures and make sure they are familiar with them
4. involve young people in managing complaints and disciplinary actions.
Activity: Anticipating, avoiding and dealing with problems

1. What possible problems or difficulties might occur in the work of your project? Make a list by thinking about the work of your project and looking at the above list of things that could go wrong.

2. For each possible problem on the list decide:
   - why and how it might happen
   - how likely it is to occur.

3. For those that are most likely to occur decide:
   - how the possibility of the problem arising could be minimised (see ‘Preventive measures’ on page 59)
   - what could be done to resolve the problem if it still did occur (see ‘Complaints and disciplinary procedures’ on page 59).

4. Summarise by deciding what the project should do as a consequence and how you will go about putting suggested strategies into action.
Involving young people in consultation exercises

4A Key issues

4B Consultation methods

4C Analysing, presenting and feeding back information
Involving young people in consultation exercises

This section gives detailed information about what you will need to do to carry out a successful consultation exercise and guidance about how you might best go about it. You will need to go through the following steps:

1. clarify that a consultation actually needs to be carried out
2. identify what you want to find out about
3. decide on your overall approach to consultation
4. clarify who should be involved in carrying out the consultation
5. identify which group(s) of young people you wish to consult
6. identify how you will access these young people
7. clarify any ethical or confidentiality issues
8. decide which consultation methods to use
9. collect the information
10. process and analyse the information you have collected
11. present your findings in a suitable way for key audiences
12. feed back findings to decision-makers, young people and anyone else you need to.

All of these issues are addressed below. For each stage you will need to establish:

- how long it will take
- how you will go about it
- who will be involved
- what resources you will need.

Consultation should quickly be followed by action. This makes young people who are consulted feel that their contribution was valued. Make sure you have support from decision-makers in the agencies you are hoping to influence before young people are consulted. Feedback to young people who have been consulted is also important and should be planned for from the beginning.

4A Key issues

Is consultation really necessary?

Do not consult if you have already decided what you are going to do. The worst kind of consultation is when people want to rubber stamp what they already intend to do.

*End House, Durham, was approached by someone making a radio programme to discourage young people from taking drugs. She had already decided what approach she was going to use and what she wanted to say. The young people who were consulted felt used, patronised and preached at. Some young people walked out and the staff felt bad too. They reviewed arrangements for outside organisations who wished to consult young people involved in their service. Outside organisations now have to write a leaflet for young people explaining what their work is about, what they want to ask young people and why.*
Positive Participation

Find out what relevant information already exists and how up to date it is. There is no point in doing any consultation unless you can improve on existing information and do something useful with it. It may be worth carrying out a literature search to find out what other people have already done in relation to the issues you are thinking of consulting about. Is there a research department in your own organisation or an organisation you have links with that could advise you?

Activity: Who should be involved in your consultation?

It is recommended that you have a steering or advisory group for your consultation. This should be a small group with representatives from the groups you wish to influence – especially young people themselves and people who you hope will take action in response to the consultation.

Consider:
- professional researchers or consultants
- adults from your project
- decision-makers
- other people who work with young people
- young people themselves
- anyone else who may be relevant.

To what degree and how will you involve these people in:
- a steering or advisory group for the consultation?
- identifying the purpose of the consultation?
- consultation design?
- planning?
- information gathering?
- data analysis?
- presentation of results?
- dissemination of results?
- action to follow the consultation?

What do you want to find out about and why?

'You want to prove the need for a sexual health clinic in the area.'

'Young people have nothing much to do in your area. What would they like to do?'

'You are responsible for commissioning young people's health services and want to know what sort of services they need.'

'You are a personal, social and health education co-ordinator in a school and wish to find out what pupils want to cover in the programme and what they think of the existing programme.'
Involving young people in consultation exercises

Activity: What do you want to find out and why?

It is important to be clear about what you want to find out about and why. Consider the following questions:

1. What do you want to find out about and why?
   - General or particular concerns, needs and wants of young people.
   - Use of facilities in the area.
   - Views about a particular issue or issues.
   - Views about a particular service/services.
   - To improve a particular service.
   - Other.

2. Is consultation really necessary? What other relevant information already exists?

3. What support and advice can you draw on? Consider contacting professionals who have experience in consultation (from your own organisation, universities and other organisations) and involving young people.

4. What do you intend to do with your findings? What impact do you intend them to have and on whom (consider funders, your own project, young people, other people)?

5. Write down exactly what you want to find out about and why. Be as specific as you can.

6. Consult with other people, especially young people, about what you intend to find out about. Your consultation will then include what is being consulted about. For example, you might use focus group discussions or brainstorming sessions to involve young people in identifying the issues and questions your consultation will focus on. Once you have a list of key issues and questions, check these out with other young people and professionals. Piloting questions before you carry out your consultation will help ensure that you are addressing the right issues, using appropriate language and help you to target your consultation so that relevant information is collected.

Choosing your overall approach

Your approach will depend on your purpose. For example you may want to influence decision-makers or want to encourage young people who are involved in your consultation exercise to become active in ongoing work.

Three overall approaches are described below, each of which has advantages and disadvantages and can involve young people to varying degrees.

1. Traditional approach

This is the most common approach. It involves adults from your project, or outside professionals, leading the consultation. A range of consultation methods (see Section 4B
Positive Participation

on page 72) might be used but, in practice, this approach has usually used more formal methods (such as questionnaire-based surveys or interviews) and has led to the writing and dissemination of a report. Young people may not be involved at all (other than being 'researched') or they may be involved in aspects of planning, information gathering, data analysis and/or feeding back of results.

Advantages
1. Can have clearly defined targets.
2. Can be designed to use methods that will be most acceptable to decision-makers.
3. Can be designed to fit in well with decision-making structure of organisations
4. Can be designed to answer concerns of policy and decision-makers which they are then more likely to act on.

Disadvantages
1. May not focus on issues of most concern to young people although involving young people in the initial design may reduce this.
2. Not likely to lead to continuing involvement of young people.
3. Less involvement of young people may lead to less ownership of finding solutions and they may therefore be less likely to work.
4. Not as empowering as participatory approaches.

2. Participatory appraisal
Participatory appraisal involves research, education and collective action. Young people are involved throughout the whole process from initial design to dissemination of the findings but also in action to implement key recommendations. It is a partnership between the researchers and researched and may involve use of a range of formal and informal consultation methods.

More information about this approach can be obtained from:

Hull and East Yorkshire Participatory Appraisal Network
Community Focus
Hull Education Centre
Coronation Road North
Hull HU5 5RL
Tel. 01482 883783
The network includes people who will run training courses in participatory appraisal.

Information on Participatory Approaches
Institute of Development Studies
University of Sussex
Tel. 01273 606261
They have experience of working with young people on health issues.
Involving young people in consultation exercises

International Institute for Environment and Development
3 Endsleigh Street
London WC1 ODD
Tel. 0171 388 2117
They have a resource centre, a list of PRA trainers and produce a range of useful publications including J. Pretty, I. Guijt, J. Thompson and I. Scoones Participatory Learning and Action: A Trainer's Guide (IIED, 1995).

Advantages
1. Makes full use of knowledge, experience, ideas and skills of young people.
2. Opportunity for the development of a more equal relationship between consultor and consulted, where all perspectives are valued and everyone learns together.
3. If young people are involved in developing the solutions to problems they are more likely to own them and they are more likely to work.
4. Because it is developmental, it is more likely young people will stay involved on a continuing basis.
5. Action-orientated.
6. Can be very empowering for young people.
7. The use of a variety of consultation methods with different groups can ensure that the information is cross-checked and is likely to give an accurate picture.

Disadvantages
1. The idea that young people can come up with the answers in their own time may not fit in well with the way decision-making works in organisations.
2. Can create high expectations for young people which might not be met.
3. Time-consuming.
4. Some professionals would feel threatened by this approach, finding a more professionally controlled approach more acceptable.

3. Rapid appraisal
In rapid appraisal, decision-makers themselves gather the information in a short time period, often within a few weeks. It can be used to find out young people's feelings, and especially strong feelings, about particular issues or their priorities in general. It is usually used as a basis on which decision-makers take action, based on the assumption that what young people feel particularly strongly about will lead to action and meet their needs. It is unlikely to have a high degree of involvement of young people in the research process and usually involves more informal consultation methods.

A team of residents, health, youth and community and other local authority workers spent a month on a rapid appraisal consultation project on an estate in Sutton in Surrey. They consulted all age groups, including children and young people. A range of informal research methods was used, including mapping and body mapping. A full report is available from MSW Health Promotion Service, The Wilson, Mitcham, Surrey CR4.
Further information about rapid appraisal can also be found in Bie Nio Ong *Rapid Appraisal and Health Policy* (Chapman & Hall, 1996).

**Advantages**
1. Gathers information quickly.
2. Decision-makers do the research and learn directly from young people.
4. The use of a variety of consultation methods with different groups can ensure that the information is cross-checked and is likely to give an accurate picture.

**Disadvantages**
1. Can create high expectations for young people which may not be met.
2. May draw on young people already involved and easily accessed but ignore those who are more difficult to access.
3. Depends on decision-makers being able to put a lot of time aside over a short period.
4. Organisation and preparation can take a lot of time.
5. Information collected may not be particularly detailed.

**Activity: Which overall approach will you use?**

1. Consider:
   - what you want to find out about
   - who is involved
   - the role of funders and decision-makers
   - the skills and experience of available adults
   - the role(s) that young people might play.

2. Which of the three overall approaches is most relevant to your consultation?
   - traditional approach
   - participatory appraisal
   - rapid appraisal.

**Who should carry out the consultation?**
The overall approach you choose will influence your decision about who you will involve in actually carrying out your consultation. A range of people may be involved and there may be advantages and disadvantages of involving each group.

1. **Young people as consultors**

   **Advantages**
   1. Young people may feel more comfortable relating with people of their own or near their own age.
   2. May have a good understanding of issues of their own or similar age-group.
   3. May feel ownership and commitment to action.
   4. May be more flexible about working weekends or evenings.
Involving young people in consultation exercises

Disadvantages
1. May not have the necessary skills or confidence.
2. May need a lot of support and training.
3. If paid, may not be able to involve unemployed young people because of impact on benefits.
4. May have own fixed agendas which are not shared by other young people.
5. Young people who get involved in the consultation may be different from those who do not get involved, for example more confident, and therefore young people you wish to consult may not be comfortable talking to them.

2. Adults from your project

Advantages
1. Possibly cheap (but it may mean they cannot do other work).
2. The project keeps control of what happens.
3. Offers opportunities for the development of skills, experience and awareness for the people involved.
4. Adults from your project are likely to develop greater ownership of the results and be committed to follow up action.

Disadvantages
1. Time-consuming.
2. May make unnecessary mistakes if they do not have the experience or the skills.
3. May need training and possibly a lot of support if inexperienced in consultation.
4. Are not independent, which may be important to some of the people you wish to influence.

3. Professional researchers or consultants

Advantages
1. Should have experience of consultation.
2. You are buying time, expertise and use of specialist equipment which might be needed.

Disadvantages
1. Adults and young people from your project may have less control and not much involvement in planning and design.
2. They may not be open to the needs of young people and have their own agendas. For example, university staff may be under a lot of pressure to develop research they can write about in academic journals. They may be more interested in testing out their theories than the consultation. Both consultants and academics may need the income.
3. Using professionals may mean that adults and young people will miss out on an opportunity to develop their own skills in conducting consultations.
4. It could be expensive.
Positive Participation

If you are going to use professional researchers or consultants look for people who:

- Have a specialist knowledge of consultation work, preferably with young people.
- Have a very good understanding of the issues involved and the kinds of organisations you wish to influence.
- Would be keen and know how to involve adults and young people from your project in the research process.
- Have a good track record of producing work to agreed deadlines.
- Can present findings in a way that are suitable for your audience (for example funders, young people).

4. Decision-makers

Advantages
1. May develop their awareness of young people's needs.
2. May increase the possibility of the consultation leading to action and change.

Disadvantages
1. May not have the time or commitment.
2. May lack experience and skills in consultation.
3. May not be committed to active involvement of young people.

5. Other adults who work with young people

Advantages
1. Have access to young people.
2. Knowledge of young people and their needs.
3. Should be able to communicate well with young people.
4. May be an opportunity for those involved to gain skills and awareness.

Disadvantages
1. May be in a power relationship with young people which might influence what young people will say to or in front of them, for example teachers.
2. May have a particular interest in the outcomes of the research, for example more money for their service or project.
3. May lack experience of consultation and need training.

You may want to use a combination of the above as in the example below:

The first questionnaire used by the Young People's Anti-Poverty Project was developed by the youth service. They used focus groups and a needs audit to work out the questions. As there was no one involved in the project who had time and research skills, an academic researcher was brought in as a consultant. Her role was to advise about the questionnaire and analyse the results.
Involving young people in consultation exercises

The target group of young people is 8- to 18-year-olds living in poverty. Play workers go through the questionnaire with children aged 8–11, mainly in after-school clubs. Detached youth workers go through the questionnaire with the older age group. The project has employed some young people to work with the detached youth workers. Because it is not full-time or permanent employment, the only young people who could take the jobs were those in education, as unemployed young people would lose their benefits.

Now the project has a worker who has research skills, it no longer needs a consultant. He works with young people to develop the specific questionnaires for each group and does all the analysis, including statistics.

Which young people do you want to reach?

Note. Further information about accessing and recruiting young people is given in Section 3B on page 43. An activity, which enables you to clarify which young people you wish to access and how you might go about doing so, is also included.

You need to be clear about which particular groups of young people you wish to consult. You will also need to make sure that you are not discriminating against, or inadvertently excluding, certain groups of young people who need to be consulted.

It will always be easiest to get the views of more confident young people who already use services or attend school or other organisations regularly. They are already part of the community and have a right to become involved and have their say but they will not always be representative. Make sure that groups of young people who have little opportunity to have their say and whose needs are often greatest will be able to get involved. You will need to give sufficient time, space and resources to support them to get involved and make being consulted a good experience for them.

Also consider the number of young people you are going to consult. Whilst large numbers may give a more balanced idea of what young people think, know or feel it may restrict the depth of information you are able to collect and restrict the type of consultation methods you can use. For example, a large sample size will often result in a questionnaire-based survey being used whilst a smaller sample might allow individual interviews to be used which can go into greater depth.

The Young People’s Anti-Poverty Project is concerned to get the views of young people who live in poverty. The surveys are carried out in geographical areas where there is a high proportion of young people living in poverty. In order to get the views of particular groups of young people who live in poverty, separate surveys are being developed with, and for, groups of young people who are refugees, parents, homeless, excluded from school, disabled and from minority ethnic groups.
Positive Participation

Ethics and confidentiality
When consulting young people they should be guaranteed:

- A clear explanation of the purpose of the consultation.
- A clear choice about whether they want to get involved based on a full knowledge and understanding of what is involved (informed consent). They should be able to decide privately.
- That the information they give will be taken seriously.
- How the information collected will be used.
- Clear information about confidentiality and boundaries (see Section 3D on page 47). Where young people are introduced to consultants through another adult, for example teacher, youth worker, this can raise particular confidentiality issues.
- That their personal views (such as quotes) or work (such as drawings) are only used (anonymously) in reports etc. with their permission.
- Appreciation of their contribution (this may include thank you letters, certificates for records of achievement, payment for time and/or to cover expenses, gift tokens, etc.)
- Feedback of the consultation findings at a level, and in a manner, which they can understand.

Note. If you want to involve health service users in research you will have to get your project agreed by the local ethical committee. Contact your local health authority for details.

More information about research ethics can be found in P. Alderson Listening to Children: Children, Ethics and Social Research (Barnardo's, 1995).

4B Consultation methods
This section describes a range of methods which are suitable for consulting young people and considers possible advantages and disadvantages of each. It is designed to help you choose appropriate methods to use in your consultation work.

Consulting young people – criteria for choosing methods
Good consultors are aware that young people respond positively to consultation methods that are interesting and take account of the way they see issues. Effective consultation:

- involves good two-way communication
- involves participants in interesting activities
- uses methods which take into account the ability of the group to:
  - tell you what you want to know (language skills)
  - listen
  - write and read
- uses the right sort of language for the person/people being consulted
- takes visual and verbal cues into account
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- includes checking that questions and responses have been understood by both the consultor and person consulted.

The choice of consultation method(s) will also depend on:

- the issue that is being addressed and the type of information needed
- time and resources available
- the number of the young people who are to be consulted, where they are to be consulted and their circumstances
- skills and expertise of the consultor(s).

Surveys/questionnaires

Questionnaires are a useful way of getting particular information on a clear issue. They can be used:

- to gather facts or opinions
- to find out what and why people have done things in the past and what might influence their behaviour in the future.

You can use existing questionnaires or design your own. Using an existing questionnaire may save you time. Be aware that a lot of questionnaires used with young people have been designed by adults either for use with adults or without involving young people in their design.

If you are designing a questionnaire, it is a good idea to do some interviews or focus group discussions with young people before writing it to work out which questions should be asked. It is important to try out (pilot) questionnaires before using them to check that young people actually understand the questions and can answer them. Try to avoid asking too many questions. Only ask questions which are relevant and try to keep the wording simple. You will also need to decide whether young people will fill in the questionnaire by themselves or someone else will take them through the questions and fill it in for them. Postal questionnaires (where the questionnaire is posted to people at home for them to fill in and either send back in a pre-paid envelope or have collected) are generally not a good idea with young people and tend to have a low response rate. Also try to make sure that the design of your questionnaire makes it look interesting.

Priority Search is a useful resource. It is a computer package which helps you use information gathered from focus groups to design questionnaires for use with young people. For further information contact Priority Search Limited, The Science Park, Arundel Street, Sheffield S1 2NS. Tel. 0114 270 1006.

You also might consider young people answering a questionnaire on a computer. One example is PEACH which looks at children’s attitudes to health and exercise. For further
Types of questions can include:

- those with yes or no answers
- selection from a list of choices or between two choices
- ranking from a list of choices
- rating scales – where people are given a range of answers and choose the answer which relates most closely to them – for example, five statements from ‘strongly agree’ to ‘strongly disagree’ or ‘always’ to ‘never’
- people answering open-ended questions in their own words.

Take full account of the amount and type of the information you are going to collect. How will it be processed and analysed? Questionnaires may lend themselves to being coded and the data inputted into a computer. Computer programmes like SPSS or Microsoft Access database can then be used to analyse data, present results and create cross-tabulations.

Advantages
1. Can get information from larger numbers of people.
2. The same questions can be asked of large numbers of people.
3. Consultant has control of the questions and therefore should be able to focus on issues they can do something about.
4. Consultants have a lot of control over who is invited to fill in questionnaires and can make sure those invited are representative or include particular groups of young people.

Disadvantages
1. Cannot explore broad issues or vague questions.
2. Cannot get in-depth information.
3. May be difficult to get reliable answers to complicated, personal or sensitive questions.
4. A questionnaire is only as good as the questions asked. Without sufficient piloting you may find you have asked the wrong questions or not asked them in a way young people understand.
5. Some of the young people you want to consult may not have the necessary reading and writing skills to be able to fill in the questionnaire on their own.
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Interviews with individuals
Face-to-face interviews can be very good for obtaining detailed information. They can be:

- structured – where everyone gets asked the same questions
- semi-structured – where a flexible list of questions is used
- open – where the person interviewed has most control over the topics discussed.

It is important to first conduct some pilot interviews to help decide which type of interview to conduct and what questions to ask. Effective interviewing is a highly skilled task and involves developing a rapport with the person who is being interviewed. Interviewers need to be very sensitive and skilled and often require training to be able to be effective.

Some do’s and don’t’s of effective interviewing include:

**Do**
- ask clear questions
- listen carefully
- order questions carefully
- ask for more information when needed
- be tactful
- try to keep it interesting
- allow silence and thinking time
- ask people to explain when needed
- choose a comfortable environment.

**Don’t**
- invite your own answers
- talk too much
- interrupt unnecessarily
- let your own opinions get in the way
- use unsuitable language
- talk about yourself inappropriately
- mumble
- ask more than one question at a time.

You will also need to decide how you will record the information from interviews. Full note-taking can be difficult and may result in important points being left out. It may also slow down the interview or put people off speaking freely. Tape recording or videoing is a possibility and will mean that you have a record of everything that was said. The disadvantage is that it takes a lot of time (and possibly cost) to transcribe the interviews and analyse them. Also some people do not like being taped or videoed and may not agree to being interviewed at all or not speak freely. You might also combine some techniques used in questionnaires (such as simple ranking activities) in an interview as a way of taking away recorded information. Decide how best to record information and work out how it will be analysed, in advance.

**Advantages**
1. Can provide an opportunity for young people to have more influence about how the issues are covered.
2. Can get more detailed information.
3. Usually easier to ask more sensitive questions.
4. People can express themselves using their own words.
5. Literacy skills not necessary for young people being consulted.
6. Can include people who use languages other than English, including sign language, by having consultants who also speak their languages.

Disadvantages
1. Takes a lot time to interview and analyse interviews which makes it expensive. It is thus likely that only a small number of people will be interviewed.
2. Bias can be caused because:
   a. people may give the answers they think the consultants want
   b. consultants offer clues to what answers they want. They may not always be aware that they are doing this
   c. it is hard for interviewer(s) to treat everyone the same
   d. interviewers put their own interpretation on what is said.
3. Effective interviewing involves a lot of skill and experience.

Focus or discussion groups
This is a popular way of consulting young people and often involves interviewing about six to eight people in each group. They discuss particular topics with guidance from the consultant. Similar issues arise as with individual interviews (see above). As well as recording information in similar ways as suggested for interviews, you might consider recording the key points that arise on a board or flipchart as discussion develops and reviewing them with the group on completion of the discussion. You will need to be aware of group dynamics. Are some young people dominating the discussion so that others cannot have their say? It might be difficult to address issues in groups where one or two young people feel different from the rest of the group (for example gender, race, sexuality, abuse).

How many groups should you interview? Researchers advise that all groups should have similar characteristics (for example age) and that more groups should be included until the point where little new information is coming out. However, you may be more concerned to reach different groups and find out about different perspectives.

Focus groups have some of the advantages and disadvantages of interviews. Some other advantages and disadvantages are discussed below.

Advantages
1. Group members can build upon the points made by other people in the group.
2. Informal atmosphere in which young people may feel better able to speak out.

Disadvantages
1. It may be difficult to recruit people unless you use existing groups.
2. People who are willing to get involved may be different from people who do not want to get involved. If you are working with existing groups this will be a problem because people who are part of groups may be different from those who are not. For example a focus group in school or a youth club may exclude disaffected young people.
3. You may hear what young people think other group members would like to hear rather than what individuals really think and feel. Personal and sensitive issues may not be openly discussed, especially if an individual feels different from other group members, for example black, lesbian or gay young people.
4. Some people may talk more than others which can bias the discussion.
5. Although you can ask everyone to keep information discussed at the group confidential, you cannot guarantee confidentiality.

Ranking

Ranking involves people selecting priorities from a list. It can be used with individuals or with groups, as part of other consultation methods or on its own. For example, you can include a ranking exercise as part of a questionnaire or group discussion.

You can get people to move around the room in a ranking exercise. One example is ‘Which is the best contraceptive for young people?’ Each person is given the name of a different contraceptive. They are asked to get in a line with the ‘best’ contraceptive at one end and the ‘worst’ at the other end. When they have negotiated this you can ask them why they have made the ranking as it is and discuss each contraceptive, and attitudes towards them, in detail.

Advantages
1. Quick to do.
2. Easy to analyse.
3. Easy to get a lot of responses cheaply.
4. Can be an interesting and enjoyable activity.

Disadvantages
1. Cannot get detailed information (without follow-up discussion).
2. People may be giving opinions about things they have little knowledge about.
3. Participants may have no influence over lists they are ranking from.

Drama and role play techniques

Drama can be used in a variety of ways in consultation with young people. Examples include using role play in interviews or focus groups, analysing responses to plays and asking groups to devise their own plays around specific themes.

Advantages
1. Good for raising personal and sensitive issues. People do not need to play themselves and can bring issues out that they would find difficult to talk about.
2. Can be great fun and involve young people.
3. Literacy skills not necessary.
Positive Participation

Disadvantages
1. Some young people may not like drama and role play and may find it difficult to express themselves.
2. Consultants/facilitators will need to be very skilled in the techniques.
3. Powerful emotions may be released. Support for young people to come to terms with these should be planned and available.
4. Can be difficult to record or draw conclusions from.

Mapping
There are two main types of mapping: community mapping and body mapping. Community mapping can be used to get young people to show which places they go to, how they feel about them (including areas of risk and danger) or where there are services that they know about or use. After drawing the map, discussion might focus on where existing resources are, how young people feel about them, what gaps there are and how existing resources can be best deployed. Different groups of young people can do different maps. This will highlight the different needs of young people – for example, young men and women, lesbians and gay young people, young people living in poverty or homeless and disabled young people. Maps can be drawn on large sheets of paper or laid out on a large floor area using objects to represent different buildings, streets and areas. The results can be shown to other groups to comment on.

Body mapping can help find out about people’s knowledge and beliefs about their own bodies and/or how different things affect their bodies. An example is where a body outline is drawn and young people then identify different parts of their body, how they feel about them, etc. This may be particularly useful to help improve communication between medical staff and their patients or for health educators to identify the needs of their client groups. It also can be particularly useful to help understand different cultural beliefs. It can be used on an individual or small group basis.

Advantages
1. High level of participation in developing information and young people can be involved in analysis and suggestions of needs.
2. May keep people’s interest for longer than talking.
3. Can be used in groups and one-to-one in interviews.
4. Literacy skills not necessary.

Disadvantages
1. Difficult to involve large numbers of young people.
2. Limited range of issues that it is useful for.

Draw and Write
Draw and Write involves young people drawing pictures in response to specific questions and then possibly writing a description of what is going on in their drawings or labelling them. If writing is difficult for some young people then someone else might write on the
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picture for them under their instruction. Once the drawings are collected in, categories are selected and each drawing is analysed and coded. Sometimes young people are asked to explain their drawings. This technique has been successfully used to understand the perceptions of health, and especially drugs, of primary-aged children but can be used with older age groups. Further details of the Draw and Write technique can be found in T. Williams, N. Wetton and A. Moon *Health for Life: A Teachers’ Planning Guide to Health Education in the Primary School* (Nelson, 1989).

Advantages
1. The consultor has a limited input; the information, thoughts and explanations come from the young people.
2. Some young people may find it easy to express their ideas through drawing.
3. Relatively simple and quick to do.
4. Involves no or few literacy skills.

Disadvantages
1. Some young people may not be confident about what they can draw or write. The material they then contribute may be influenced more by what they feel able to do than what they know, think or feel.
2. Powerful emotions may be released. Support for young people to come to terms with these should be planned and available.
3. It may be difficult to interpret the drawings.

Photography/video making

Here photography or video is used to present the views or feelings of young people about a particular issue. This could be led by adults who have experience of photography or video making or young people could be asked to take their own photographs or make their own video film with little adult involvement.

Advantages
1. Issues can be addressed from young people’s own perspectives.
2. Photographs and/or a video can be shown to decision-makers and other young people.

Disadvantages
1. Young people may not want to participate or may not feel they have the necessary skills.
2. Unlikely that large numbers of young people will be consulted or involved.
3. Some decision-makers may be more responsive to more formal reports and methods.
4. Possibly expensive.
Activity: Which consultation method(s) will you use?

You might decide to use only one consultation method or you may use more than one.

The choice of consultation method(s) will depend on:
- the issue that is being addressed and the type of information needed
- time and resources available
- skills and expertise of the consultor(s)
- the number of young people who are to be consulted
- the nature of the group(s) of young people you wish to consult (especially their reading and writing skills, attitude towards being consulted and where they might feel most comfortable being consulted)
- who you need to present your findings to and the best way in which to do this.

1. Taking these things into account which of the following methods will you use, how and with which young people?
   - surveys/questionnaires
   - interviews with individuals
   - focus or discussion groups
   - ranking
   - drama and role play techniques
   - mapping
   - Draw and Write
   - photography/video making
   - other (please say which).

2. For those methods you will use:
   - Who will use them?
   - What resources will you need?
   - How can you maximise young people's involvement?

4C Analysing, presenting and feeding back information

Before you begin your work it is important to plan and timetable:

- how you will record, process and analyse the information you will collect
- how you will present and use the information
- who you will use the information with
- how you will feed back to young people who have been consulted.
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Recording, processing and analysing data
The following points should be taken into account.

1. Be clear about the type and amount of information you will be collecting. Anticipate the possible work load involved.

2. Think about how the information can best be recorded and analysed. To what extent will you be generating statistics (such as how many people thought different things) and correlations (comparing how different groups thought or acted)? If so think about how you will analyse this information and anticipate whether you need access to a computer package. If your information is more qualitative (such as from open-ended interviews) how will it be analysed?

3. Make sure that you have the necessary time, skills and equipment to process and analyse the information you have collected. Ideally this should not take too long. Information can quickly go out of date.

4. Make sure that you respect what young people have actually told you. Try not to give information the meanings that suit you or your organisation rather than what young people have actually been saying. The best way to do this is to involve young people themselves in processing and analysing the information and checking out with them that their views are correctly represented.

Presenting consultation findings
Information should be presented clearly and attractively in ways that are right for the audience, otherwise it will be ignored or easily forgotten. Lengthy written reports and long report backs at meetings do not get to the top of busy decision-makers' lists of things needing action. They are also a real turn-off for young people. Let people have the information in a form that is right for them. This may mean giving out the information in different ways for different groups, for example a formal report for funders, decision-makers or committees but possibly a leaflet, video, audio presentation or informal talk and discussion for young people.

It is very important to feed back findings to the young people who have been consulted. This is a matter of courtesy and will make them feel that contribution has been valued. It will also provide further opportunities for their own learning and for you to get more information about what they believe and what they want to happen next. It may also be an important way of encouraging young people to become active in pressing for recommendations to be taken on by decision-makers.
Activity: Who to present findings to and how

Think about who you need to report your findings to. This may include:

- funders/decision-makers
- adults and young people from your project
- young people who have been consulted
- the wider local community
- practitioners from other projects elsewhere
- other people (specify who).

For each of the groups you wish to report back to, think about the best way that you can do this. You might consider:

- formal written reports
- reporting back to committees or groups
- production of a leaflet which includes key findings and recommendations
- making a video or audio cassette
- a drama production
- an informal talk and discussion
- organising a meeting or conference
- writing an article in a local newspaper
- writing an article in a specialist journal
- putting an article on the Internet.

Note. Events that involve both young people and decision-makers, especially, where young people are involved in presenting the findings to decision-makers, can be very productive if they are well organised and part of continuing work.

Written reports

One common way of structuring a written report is as follows:

1. summary – a one-page summary at the front so people do not have to read a lengthy report
2. introduction covering the aims of the consultation, why it was done and any relevant background information
3. method – how the consultation was carried out
4. findings – often using tables
5. discussion of the findings
6. conclusions and recommendations.

Some tips for writing reports.

- Consider how the report will be used and with whom.
- Do not make it too long.
- Use plain English. Avoid jargon.
Involving young people in consultation exercises

- Use good design – large enough and attractive typeface, boxes, columns and graphics to divide up the text etc. Think about what it will be like for people to read.
- Present data in simple tables wherever possible.
- Possibly use of quotes to illustrate key points.
- Use photographs and graphics which illustrate key points.
- Ask a range of people, including young people, to comment on a draft before the final report is produced.

Feedback events

Meetings or conferences are a good way of feeding back information. They are also a good way to involve young people in presenting findings to decision-makers. This can increase the possibility of consultation leading to action and of involving young people in follow-up work.

Some tips for running effective feedback events.

- Involve young people in planning the event.
- Present findings in a clear and interesting way.
- Provide opportunities for young people to meet with people who make decisions on their behalf. Encourage decision-makers to listen to young people.
- Involve young people themselves in presenting findings and facilitating the event. If they are to do this with confidence they may need a lot of support.
- Allow people to ask questions, get information and discuss issues.
- Such events can lead to a lot of enthusiasm and commitment which needs to be followed up quickly or it will disappear – plan this in before the event.
- If you want to attract young people who have not already been involved you will need to do a lot of development work to get young people there. Talk to individuals and go to meetings of groups to explain the purpose of the meeting or conference.
- Anticipate any problems that could occur with discussion of more personal or sensitive issues and decide how best to deal with them.
- Choose a place and time which is convenient and accessible for all who are to attend.
- Consider ways you can keep in contact with people who attend after the event and, if appropriate, ways they might keep in contact with each other.

A public meeting was held to feed back some research during the development of End House Young People's Centre in Durham. Before the meeting the project group comprised three professionals. The meeting was advertised by mailing to a range of professionals who work with young people, through going to local schools and by using the local free newspaper. It was attended by 70 young people and led to the setting up of a steering group of over 20 people, half of whom were young people.
Positive Participation
Involving young people in decision-making groups and forums

5A Key issues
5B Different types of decision-making groups and forums
5C Lobbying and campaigning
5D Running successful groups and meetings
**5A Key issues**

**Why do it?**

There are many reasons why involving young people in decision-making groups and forums is important. These include:

- If young people are not able to play their full part as citizens this is a loss to them as individuals and to the community as a whole.
- There is a need to improve representation of young people’s views. They often do not have a voice on bodies that make decisions which affect their lives.
- Young people are given few opportunities to make a positive contribution.
- If young people have a say decisions are more likely to be the right ones and to result in initiatives and services which are more effective.
- Providing opportunities for young people to influence decisions increases the possibility of meaningful action following.
- Giving young people power and responsibility increases their confidence and skills. It can improve their image with other age groups and help prepare them for their future adult roles.
- Young people can help and support each other and share their concerns and experiences.
- Young people bring a willingness to question assumptions and defend what they value.

It is important that you are clear about why you are involving young people in decision-making groups or forums. Section 2A on page 15 will help you do this.

**Why it is difficult**

There are a number of reasons why actively involving young people in decision-making groups and forums does not always work well. These include:

- adults may be unwilling to give up power and control so that young people do not have real influence (see Section 2D on page 22)
- adults may involve young people in decision-making groups and forums but then ignore the views of young people when they do not agree with them. Young people will quickly become cynical about their supposed involvement
- formal meetings can be boring and seem pointless and make it difficult for young people to participate
- young people may feel that the issues addressed are adult ones and have nothing to do with them, they may be unwilling and uninterested in being involved in decision-making opportunities available to them
- young people may feel intimidated by professionals and adults who appear to ‘know it all’, speak in professional clichés and may be patronising
- young people may initially lack confidence in participating and may not be given sufficient time, support or training to be able to do so.
Unless adults are aware of these issues, are committed to young people's involvement, are able and willing to change the way they work and willing to listen to young people and actually act upon young people's views, decision-making groups and forums are unlikely to be successful.

Other possible pitfalls
The experience of decision-making groups and forums has highlighted a number of other possible pitfalls.

- Are sufficient numbers of young people involved? If there are only one or two young people working alongside a lot more adults they may feel isolated and unable to speak out.
- How representative are the young people who are involved and are particular groups excluded from participation? Section 2B on page 16 considers equal opportunity issues in recruiting and selecting young people.
- Are meetings run in a way that encourages young people's active involvement? Section 5D on page 93 focuses on ways this can be done.
- Is everyone clear about the purpose of the group and their role and responsibilities within it? Are they given opportunities to take on responsibilities?
- Is too much time and commitment expected of some young people? Is there a danger of overload or burnout?
- Will some young people become over-involved so that the group becomes their life and they possibly become dictatorial, out of touch with other young people and block new members joining the group?
- Is sufficient and the right sort of support given to young people who are involved? Section 3C on page 46 gives advice about providing relevant support.
- Does the group regularly review its progress and change the way it works when it needs to?

Also see Section 3H on page 58 which focuses on anticipating, avoiding and dealing with pitfalls.

5B Different types of decision-making groups and forums

Management committees
Many organisations and projects have a management committee which involves young people and adults working together. They are often very 'business'-, rather than 'issue'-orientated and can sometimes be boring affairs. It is challenging to make young people feel that they have an important contribution to make at such meetings and to make sure that they feel that they are equally important as the adults present and that their views will be properly considered. Many meetings are dominated by adults and a danger is that a few, sometimes hand-picked, young people will play only a token role. Section 5D on page 93 gives ideas about how to make meetings effective and how to actively involve young people.
The difficulties of involving young people on management committees was recognised by all the projects we visited. Both adults and young people were unhappy with current arrangements and many were seeking better ways of working, often with the young people themselves making particularly positive suggestions for improvements.

The following example is typical of young people's experiences of management committees. The management group initially invited two young people to attend their meetings but four young people decided they wanted to attend together. After the first meeting they decided that they did not like the atmosphere and the way the meetings were run. They felt unable to contribute and were particularly aware of the tensions and competitiveness between the different groups of professionals. Despite this initial bad experience they decided to keep going and worked closely with those adults who they felt would help them change the way the group operated and make sure their voices were heard. Many groups of young people might have decided that it was not worth the effort and the opportunity for them to influence decisions would have been lost.

Some management committees try to reduce possible problems by having a youth sub-group which meets before the main meetings to consider the agenda and work out what they want to say and how. Others have agreed for young people to take on particular responsibilities. Young people may also need adult allies on the management group who they feel will listen to them and support them in presenting their views.

Youth forums and councils

A youth forum or council is a locally based group of young people who meet regularly to discuss issues of concern, identify and publicise the needs of young people in their area and to take action to meet these needs. Local youth councils have an important role to play in representing the views and needs of young people. They can also provide experience of democratic decision-making and provide education and social gatherings for young people. Their success will depend upon:

- how well they represent the views of a wide range of young people
- how well they are linked into the structures of organisations which make decisions which affect the lives of young people
- how well they are able to hold the interest and commitment of other young people who are involved
- effective support from professionals and other adults.

Organisations which make decisions on behalf of young people can link with youth forums or councils in a number of ways including:

- they can ask for issues to be discussed at the youth forum or council and get feedback from them
- they can work with youth forums or councils to identify ways that services can be improved for young people
- they can ask the youth forum or council to nominate representatives to sit on their own decision-making bodies.
Positive Participation

Young people who are involved in youth forums or councils may be used to working in meetings and groups and may be better informed than some other young people. However, they may be constantly asked to represent ‘young people’ on a range of decision-making bodies and a danger is that they will become more and more like adult professionals and become out of touch with the views of other young people. Care should be taken to recognise that young people who are actively involved in youth forums or councils may not be representative of all young people.

Youth forums and councils may work better if they are focused on particular issues or events rather than act as general bodies. It may be easier to actively involve young people in issues which are of particular concern to them.

The London Borough of Waltham Forest has moved away from general local youth councils because it found that this limited the number of young people who could be involved. A relatively small number of young people had access to special attention, funding and other opportunities and they became quite insular. Instead it has set up issue-based groups which involve more young people. More resources are needed than for one youth council and communication with decision-makers is more complicated.

In Manchester over 20 issue-based youth forums have been set up with young people with support from the Youth Service and Save the Children. Open meetings have been organised where young people ‘speak out’ on issues of concern to them such as health issues, drugs, racism and the environment. Panels of councillors, MPs, other decision-makers and topic experts have attended to hear young people’s views.

The Respect project in Surrey holds annual residential for young women on health-related issues. The planning group involves adults and young people and has involved young people from under-represented groups. This has included a young disabled woman and young parents and has involved arranging particular support to enable these young people to participate in the residential.

Some schools have school councils made up of student representatives. Whilst some discuss and can influence school policies and practices others are little more than talk shops and have little or no influence over decision-making. Some have a wide range of student representatives, often chosen by democratic election, whilst others tend to have students hand-picked by teachers. School councils can be used to consider health-related issues and policies as well as wider school issues. Some have also nominated students to represent the school at conferences, on the management committee of local projects and to be involved in local decision-making forums.

Commissioning and strategy groups
Groups which commission services for young people and develop strategies – such as local or health authority committees – are increasingly including young people as members. Young people may be drawn from local youth councils (see above) or other bodies. It can be very difficult for young people to make a meaningful contribution to such groups, especially if there are only one or two young people and the group works in a very
Involving young people in decision-making groups and forums

It is important for such groups to think about how it can include young people so that they feel able to voice their opinions. In addition, commissioning groups could consider having separate meetings with young people and concerns and issues could then be fed into the committee structure. Young people could come to the committee meetings to present their views. For these things to happen adults will need to be aware of the need to include young people and to support them in speaking out.

5C Lobbying and campaigning

Lobbying is expressing your views to decision-makers. Decision-makers whom young people may need to lobby include:

- local councillors and local authority officers
- members and chief executives of health authorities or NHS trusts
- officers and management group members of voluntary organisations
- MPs, MEPs and Members of the House of Lords
- school and college governors
- headteachers and college principals
- local landowners
- magistrates
- senior police officers
- local business people
- local and national media.

Most projects need to lobby at some time for funding but many are also interested in influencing local services and policies. Lobbying is more likely to be successful if:

- the right people are lobbied, for example those who actually have influence and make decisions
- you take account of how these people work and see things and what might appeal to them
- your case is well-prepared and clearly presented
- you have, and can show you have, the support of as many people and other organisations as possible
- you have thought about arguments that may be used against your case
- you have positive proposals rather than merely object
- your proposals are practical and will not cost the earth.

It is important that young people who are involved in lobbying understand the issues and are committed to what the campaign is trying to achieve. Rather than being indoctrinated or manipulated by adults, young people need to be able to speak out freely and to set their own agendas.
Campaigning can be an important part of lobbying. It involves letting as many people as possible know about the changes that you want and getting as much support as you can. Your choice of campaigning methods will depend on your objectives, the people involved in your campaign and the resources you have but might include:

- letters, articles or interviews in local newspapers
- interviews or phone-ins on local radio
- interviews on television
- running stalls in the streets, in public buildings or at local events
- providing speakers and organising debates, workshops or mock parliaments in schools, youth clubs and colleges
- petitions
- surveys (see ‘Surveys/questionnaires’ in Section 4B on page 73)
- demonstrations, marches, sit-ins, rallies or vigils
- festivals, concerts or plays.

A useful resource is *A Young Person’s Guide to Lobbying* (British Youth Council, 1997).

**Activity: Lobbying and campaigning**

This activity is designed to be used by a group of young people by themselves or by a group of adults and young people who are working together in a democratic and participatory manner.

1. What are you trying to achieve?
2. Who do you need to influence to get what you want?
3. What do you know about the people you need to influence?
   - Names?
   - Positions?
   - Where and how you can contact them?
   - How might they feel about what you want them to do?
   - What might influence them to support your case?
4. Who might be able to support your cause? Think about key individuals who might be sympathetic and who may be able to influence decision-makers. Also think about other organisations that might support you.
5. How much do you know about your issue? Some questions to consider include:
   a. What do young people need?
   b. How do you know?
   c. Is there already provision for young people or the particular group?
      - if yes, what is already offered?
      - In what ways is it good?
      - In what ways is it not so good?
Involving young people in decision-making groups and forums

- In what ways does it need improving/changing/replacing?
  d. How much would it cost?
  e. Who might fund it?
  f. What else do you need to find out and how will you go about finding it out?

6. How can you show how much support there is for your cause?

7. Do you need to campaign? If so how?

8. How can you best present your case?

9. Draw up a plan focusing on the actions you need to take in the order you will take them.
   For each action decide:
   - How you will go about it.
   - Who will do what.
   - What resources you will need.
   - Timescale.

5D Running successful groups and meetings

In this section we give a range of tips that can make the running of groups and meetings, which involve young people, more successful. It takes time, patience, commitment and learning from experience to involve everyone fully in groups and meetings. There are a number of publications which discuss successful running of groups. One we can recommend is P. Maskell Working in Groups – a Quick Guide (Daniels, 1995).

Being clear about purpose, roles and responsibilities

Groups work best if everyone is clear about the purpose of the group and their own roles and responsibilities within it.

Activity: Purpose, roles and responsibilities

This activity is designed to be used by a group of adults and young people who intend to work together. It is particularly relevant to new groups or for existing groups that wish to review and change the way they work.

1. Ask participants to form up into small groups, possibly with separate groups of adults and young people.

2. Ask each group to discuss the following questions.
   a. What do you think the purpose of the group is?
   b. Why are you attending it?
   c. How do you feel about adults being involved?
   d. How do you feel about young people being involved?
e. What do you think the meetings will be like?
f. How would you like the meetings to be?
g. What roles and tasks do you think there will be at the meetings?
h. What can you contribute towards the meetings?

3. Take feedback from the groups. For each of the questions discuss the group’s ideas. Record the key points on a flipchart and look for areas that the whole group can agree upon.

4. Summarise the main points that have been agreed.

5. Depending on your group you might then discuss:
   a. Clear objectives for the group.
   b. How adults and young people can best work together (see ‘Ground rules’ on page 96).
   c. What key roles the group has, how these will be performed and by whom. You may want to consider the following roles:
      - chairing and facilitating
      - minute-taking, typing up and circulating
      - setting and circulating agendas
      - booking venues
      - refreshments
      - transport to and from venues
      - support that individuals may need
      - training for group members
      - treasurer/finance person
      - any other important roles.

Many groups find it particularly difficult to involve young people in managing finances. Ideas about how this might be achieved are given in Section 2G on page 29.

Wherever possible consider rotating roles and young people taking on responsibilities. Also consider the support young people may need to develop their skills and feel confident in taking on new roles.

**Time, place and environment**

When and where meetings are held can have a bearing on young people’s involvement. If a meeting is held at a time which is inconvenient for young people, at a venue which is difficult to get to or to access or is unattractive, young people are less likely to attend. Sundays and evenings are often good times for young people to meet. It is important to have a start and finish time for meetings and to try to stick to them. Access for disabled young people who have mobility, sensory or learning impairments need to be considered. Rotating meetings between a number of venues is also sometimes a good idea.
Meetings in formal settings such as board rooms or council chambers can help raise a group's profile but may be intimidating for young people. If formal venues are to be used you might invite young people to come along early so that they can get to know the set-up.

Meetings tend to work better if they are held in more informal settings with chairs in a circle or sitting around a 'square' of tables so that everyone can see everyone else. Refreshments also help and are very much appreciated. It is a good idea to discuss issues of time, place and environment with the group so that they can share their ideas and come to the best arrangement. Section 3E on page 50 contains further guidance about work environments and venues.

Conduct of meetings
Meetings should have purpose and be fun rather than rambling and boring. Although they need structure they should not be too formal. Using a range of group work methods and avoiding over-use of written information can make sure that everyone feels involved and is able to actively participate. Guidance is given below about how this can be done.

One professional we talked to, who was part of a project with a high level of young people's involvement in decision-making, stressed how different the meetings were from what she was used to. They were very informal and sometimes a bit chaotic and this made her feel anxious. The meetings were also often longer than she was used to, partly because this avoided young people having to travel to more frequent meetings.

Introductions and icebreakers
It is important that group members get to know each other and are aware of the organisations and people whom they represent. At the beginning of meetings everyone can be invited, in turn, to introduce themselves. An alternative is for pairs to find out about each other and then to introduce each other.

Icebreakers can also be used as warm-up activities at the beginning of meetings, to get to know other group members better or to liven up meetings if they get boring or become stuck. Group members may have favourite icebreakers and one possibility is for different group members or pairs to take turns to run an icebreaker for the rest of the group. One word of warning. Some icebreakers can put people on the spot or be quite embarrassing for some people. Avoid these types of icebreakers, especially very early on in the life of a group, if they will make some group members uncomfortable.

Agendas, minutes and written information
Agendas and minutes are an important way of keeping groups to task and recording what has been decided and who will be doing what. Ideally they will be sent to participants before meetings take place. They need to be written in plain English and laid out and printed in a way that is easy to read.
At the beginning of a meeting the agenda and minutes can be read aloud. The agenda might also be written up on a large piece of paper or board. At the end of the meeting the minutes of that meeting, and especially who is going to do what, can be read through.

Ideally group members will take it in turn to produce minutes. If young people do not feel confident doing this they might share the task with another young person or adult who is more confident. A good way to produce minutes is to include an action column which makes it clear who has agreed to do what. Rather than recording everything which is said minutes should reflect the main decisions which have been taken.

Meetings can become bogged down in paperwork. Wherever possible, consider alternative ways of presenting information and take account of the fact that some young people may not be strong readers or writers, some may not have English as their first language and that some may have impairments which limit their use of written language. This may mean that some young people will need particular support (someone to explain proceedings to them, interpreters, etc.) to be able to participate actively in meetings.

**Ground rules**

It is worth spending time to develop ground rules for a group. This might be done by pairs or small groups identifying ways they want group members to behave and ways they do not want group members to behave. Their ideas can then be fed back and the whole group can negotiate two lists – one of do’s and one of don’ts. These can be written up on a big piece of paper for all to see. Individuals can be encouraged to use the lists if they feel the meeting is not going as intended, new items can be put on the lists at any time and the lists can be used from time to time to review how well the group is doing and whether it needs to change the way that it is working.

Ground rules also provide an opportunity for groups to follow anti-discriminatory practices and pursue equal opportunities (see Section 2B on page 16) and to deal with issues surrounding confidentiality (see Section 3D on page 47).

**Chairing and facilitation**

Groups work best when they are well-facilitated or chaired. The role of the facilitator or chair is to:

- help the group to achieve its goals
- recognise and use the skills of group members
- help everyone to participate
- keep meetings moving smoothly and to task
- recognise problems and help the group deal with them.
Involving young people in decision-making groups and forums

There are many different arrangements that are possible for chairing or facilitating groups. These include chairing or facilitation by:

- rotation, where everyone has the opportunity to chair in turn
- young people on a rotating basis
- a young person
- co-chairing/facilitation where it is shared between two young people or an adult and a young person
- a senior professional or other adult who has responsibility for making important decisions
- a professional worker who is experienced in directly working with young people
- an 'outsider' who has special skills in group facilitation.

Each of these arrangements has potential advantages and disadvantages. Groups should be given the opportunity to discuss what arrangements will best fit their own needs, whilst recognising that this may change over time. Wherever possible it is best to involve young people in chairing and facilitating as much as possible. It is also important to recognise the support young people may need to be able to confidently and effectively do this.

**Brainstorming**

Brainstorming is a good way of getting as many ideas as possible and encouraging everyone to participate. It can be carried out in a whole group with people saying their ideas out loud or in small groups with each small group reporting back to the whole group. When conducting a brainstorm make sure all ideas are recorded, rather than some people's ideas being rejected. The idea is to generate a list of ideas and to discuss them later.

**Small groups and pairs**

One way of breaking up formal meetings and getting more people to contribute is to break up into smaller groups or pairs who then report back to the whole group. At times it may be best for young people and adults to work in separate small groups. This may help young people speak out and allow a direct comparison of young people's and adults' views. It is also useful to vary who works together in pairs or small groups so that group members have experience of, and confidence in, working with as many other group members as possible. Pairings can also be a useful way of young people sharing responsibilities rather than feeling that they have to always take them on as individuals.

**Young people's sub-groups**

Some groups have young people's sub-groups which meet before the main meetings so that young people can discuss what is to be discussed and plan what they want to say and how they will do it. This can be a useful way of increasing young people's confidence and involvement, particularly if they are working in groups which have more formal ways of working.
Positive Participation

Take a break
Consider having a short break (or breaks) from the meeting so people have an opportunity to stretch their legs, take some fresh air, use the toilet, have some refreshments, talk informally, etc. This will help freshen people up.

Issues and discussions
Many meetings are dominated by 'business' and can become boring. Consider having regular topics for discussion and debate to liven them up.

Debates and voting
Debates and voting can be a useful way of airing views and reaching decisions when there is not complete agreement between group members. However, they need to be structured or they can end up dividing a group.

When the Respect planning group was organizing a residential on sexual health, different members of the group had strong opinions about whether or not a HIV-positive person should be invited to run a workshop about the experience of being HIV-positive. A debate was held with people who had strong views putting their arguments to the group. This was carefully structured so both sides had an equal opportunity to put their views. A vote of the group was then held. Before the debate took place everyone had agreed that they would accept the decision of the meeting.

Ranking
Ranking is useful to help set priorities and can be used by individuals, small groups or the whole group. First the group will have to identify a list of tasks or actions that either need to or could be carried out. They can then be placed on a continuum from most to least important or put into categories such as 'very important', 'quite important', 'not important'. If ranking is used with individuals or small groups it is important that people have an opportunity to explain their choices and a shared group ranking is negotiated.

Rounds
Rounds involve everyone in turn being invited to make a comment, whilst having the right to pass if they wish. Rounds can be very useful for people to introduce themselves, to start meetings, to review how the meeting is going, to quickly get a range of opinions and to end meetings. They encourage everyone to participate.

Endings
Try to end meetings on time rather than have a situation where people are leaving while the meeting is still going on. Also end meetings on a positive note. This might include going over what has been decided, a review of what people felt about the meeting or the most important thing to come from the meeting and date, time and venue for the next meeting.
Involving young people in decision-making groups and forums

Review

It is important that groups regularly review their progress both in terms of what they have achieved and how well group members feel they are working together. This might be done by regularly using rounds and reviewing ground rules (see page 96) and by taking time out to have a more detailed review. Section 2H on page 33 gives more information about setting targets, monitoring and evaluation. The activity about clarifying purpose, roles and responsibilities on page 93 can also be adapted to carry out a review.

Special provision and support

Young people may need particular forms of support if they are to be actively involved in groups. Unless appropriate support is provided some young people will not want to or be unable to attend meetings. This will restrict the type of young people who attend. Further support may be needed to make sure that young people who do attend feel they can actively participate in meetings. Further information and an activity about support are in Section 3C on page 46.
6

Involving young people as service deliverers (including as peer educators)

6A Different ways of involving young people as service deliverers

6B Key issues
6A Different ways of involving young people as service deliverers

In recent years a number of projects have involved young people in delivering health-related services to other young people. This has included:

- peer education in schools, youth projects and the community based on running workshops, education sessions or drama productions
- informal peer education, especially about drug and sexual health issues, with young people providing advice and information and sometimes giving out clean syringes and condoms to other young people on the streets, in clubs, etc., through outreach work
- counselling schemes where trained young people counsel other young people
- mentoring schemes in schools where older students support younger students
- befriending schemes such as those which involve young people who are in care or who have just left care being supported by young people who themselves have experience of being in care
- young people working in a voluntary or paid capacity on projects taking on a range of roles varying from relatively simple administrative tasks to more demanding face-to-face work with other young people
- young people acting as consultors of other young people such as administering questionnaires for surveys and running focus groups
- young people training professionals, such as GPs and nurses, concerning issues to do with young people
- young people organizing and running conferences for other young people.

6B Key issues

Many of the important things to consider when young people act as service deliverers have already been addressed in Sections 2 and 3 of this pack. Below we focus on the some of the pitfalls to avoid if you are to involve young people as effective service deliverers. They can be used as a checklist for planning purposes and to help avoid possible problems. Section 3H on page 58 focuses on anticipating, avoiding and dealing with problems and may also be useful.

Why involve young people as service deliverers?

A number of reasons have been put forward as to why we should involve young people in delivering services to other young people. These include:

- they know what it is like to be young today
- they can understand the difficulties other young people experience
- they can relate to the interests, ambitions and fears of other young people
- they speak the same language
- it is a good way for young people to develop skills, confidence and experience
Positive Participation

- it can give young people a purpose and role in life, particularly those young people who have few other opportunities
- it can enable young people to get qualifications, work experience and be a stepping stone to paid employment or education or training courses
- the skills and confidence young service deliverers develop can be used elsewhere and they will go on to use them in a useful way on other projects and in other areas
- it is a good way of attracting young people to use services because they feel more comfortable with other young people than with adults
- some outreach peer education projects have made access possible for groups of young people who do not use existing services and are particularly hard to reach.

Whilst many of these things may sometimes hold true they will not do so in every case for all young people. Young people are not all alike and can be distinguished on the basis of class, race, gender, age, life experience, opinion, etc. in a similar way to adults (even though young people collectively have few rights compared to adults). If the factors listed above are to apply then young service deliverers will have to be carefully selected so that they actually do relate to, and have credibility with, the young service users that are being targeted.

Over-use of young service deliverers may further alienate young people from adults. It may also mean that professionals will have little incentive to change the way they work so that they are better at meeting the needs of young people. This can sometimes happen when adults have an inability to work together. They might then develop a project using young people as service deliverers feeling that they can then maintain more control over the direction of the project. Similarly a danger is that young people will be used as service deliverers because they are seen as a cheap alternative to professional staff, rather than for the more positive reasons mentioned above.

It is important that you are clear about why you are thinking of involving young people as service deliverers. Section 2A on page 15 contains information and an activity which will help you to do this.

**Where does control of decision-making lie?**

In the past some projects which use young people as service deliverers have given them little or no say about their involvement, what the project does or how it operates. Examples could include:

- a service designed and run by adults where young people are given roles with little responsibility and have little or no say
- peer education projects where adults have recruited young people to give a fixed message (such as 'Say No to Drugs') in the hope that other young people will listen in a way that they would not listen to adults saying the same thing.
Involving young people as service deliverers (including as peer educators)

Many projects now involve young people in many aspects of decision-making so that they are not delivering fixed services or messages in a relatively passive way. Ideally young people will be involved at the early planning stage of a project and have a say in all aspects of the service. The ladder of participation, in Section 1E on page 8, can be adapted to help you think through how young people are to be involved in decision-making. Section 3A on page 39 gives guidance on clarifying roles, including who will make decisions about what.

What is in it for young service deliverers?

It is important to be clear about what young people will get for themselves if they are involved as service deliverers. Rather than exploiting young people as a cheap form of labour, what they get out of their involvement needs to be maximised. In particular you will need to consider:

- development in their knowledge, confidence, skills and abilities
- payment or payment in kind
- expenses
- training opportunities
- opportunities to influence decisions and the nature of local services
- possible accreditation or certification of training, experience and/or achievements
- stepping stones to future jobs or careers.

Section 2C on page 20 provides further information about this and contains an activity which can help you maximise what young people get out of being involved.

Do young people have the necessary skills, knowledge and confidence?

It is important that you are clear about the skills and knowledge young people already have and what they will need to be able to do to be effective service deliverers.

One danger is that adults may set up young people to fail. Some peer education projects have fallen into this trap so that adults have underestimated the skills and knowledge young people will need and/or not provided sufficient support and training. The peer educators have delivered sessions to other young people which have been of poor quality and they have not been seen as credible by other young people. As well as possibly needing knowledge of health issues, service deliverers may need confidence and skills in areas such as interpersonal one-to-one skills, counselling skills, skills to facilitate groups, manage discussions and meetings, handle difficult questions, speak in public, manage finances, etc.

Section 2F on page 26 and Section 3A on page 39 contain activities which will help you address these issues. Also see ‘Is supervision and training adequate?’ on page 107.
Do young people have the necessary commitment and time?

To act as effective service deliverers, young people will need to be committed and to give up a lot of time. As well as time actually delivering the service, this may also mean attending regular supervision, training sessions, and meetings. If young service providers are not able to make a regular commitment, this may affect the quality of the service given. Service users may also find it more difficult to use the service if they do not regularly see the same person.

Problems may occur when enthusiastic adults expect too much commitment and time from young people. This can cause tensions between adults and young people. Adults will need to be realistic about young people's commitment and recognise that young people have other commitments and priorities in their lives and may go through periods of crisis or instability. This will affect continuing commitment over a period of time.

Young people will need various types of support to help them act as service deliverers. Section 3C on page 46 provides more information about providing support for young people.

Recruitment and selection

Service deliverers will need to be carefully recruited and selected. The following factors will need to be taken into account.

- What sort of young people need to be recruited and why (i.e. age, gender, race, background, life experience, etc.)?
- How can you go about accessing and recruiting young people? A danger is that the most confident and easily accessed young people will be recruited rather than a broader, more representative, group.
- How will equal opportunities be taken into account? (See Section 2B on page 16.)
- What levels of knowledge, skills, and commitment are required to do the work effectively?
- What levels of knowledge, skills, and commitment might recruits already have?
- What support and training might they need to develop their knowledge and skills?
- How will you go about selecting young people?
- How can young people themselves be involved in carrying out recruitment and selection?

Further information and guidance about accessing and recruiting young people is given in Section 3B on page 43.

Are roles clear?

Young people need to be clear about what is expected of them and on what terms. Written job descriptions will probably be needed. Both adults and young people also need to be clear about who will have control over which decisions.
Involving young people as service deliverers (including as peer educators)

When involving young people as service deliverers it is important to be prepared for them to change roles or to leave the project altogether as well as to recruit new young people to replace them when they do leave. One particular danger is that some young people become so attached to their roles that they either block new recruits or find moving on very difficult.

Section 3A on page 39 gives more information about clarifying roles, tasks and decision-making and about using contracts with young people and changing roles.

Is supervision and training adequate?
Young service deliverers benefit from supervision so that they can review how they are doing, highlight any problems or concerns and identify how they see their role in future. Supervision can be provided in a variety of ways including:

- adults supervising individual young people
- adults facilitating groups of young people
- co-supervision and support between pairs of young people
- young people facilitating their own supervision and support groups.

It is important that supervision is carried out on a regular basis. One peer education project we visited involved staff supervising young people initially on a weekly basis, later changing to fortnightly.

Young service deliverers will also need access to continuing and appropriate training. Further information about training and ways of identifying needs and meeting them is given in Section 3G on page 54.

What about confidentiality?
Young people who act as service deliverers will need to be clear about confidentiality, especially as they may already know, or at least live in the same area as, young people who use services.

One project we visited, where young people acted as receptionists at a sexual health clinic, decided that only young people who did not live in the immediate area would be able to take on this role. They felt that if service users knew the young people who were on reception they would be less likely to use the service.

Information about confidentiality issues and developing a confidentiality policy are given in Section 3D on page 47.

Consider cost-effectiveness
Some peer education projects have been expensive to run with a lot of adult time devoted to training and supporting a few young people who have even then not delivered the programme or service to the extent or quality originally intended.
Positive Participation

Despite the fact that the young people may have benefited in terms of their own confidence and skill development if has sometimes meant a large input of resources for limited outcome.

It is important to anticipate the inputs and target outputs when involving young people as service deliverers and to make an informed judgement about whether or not it is likely to be cost-effective compared to other ways of delivering services.

Inputs to be considered in accessing, recruiting, selecting, training, supporting and supervising young people include:

- adults' time
- young people's time
- resources and materials.

Outputs to be considered include:

- the roles young people will play and the services they will offer
- the quality of the services they will offer
- the likely impact on other young people of the services they will offer
- the personal development of the young service deliverers.

Setting targets and monitoring

Many of the pitfalls discussed above can be avoided if you set clear targets for the involvement of young people and have effective monitoring procedures in place. Section 2H on page 33 gives information about how to do this.
Appendices

7A The eight projects visited
7B Useful publications
7C Relevant organisations
The eight projects visited

7A The eight projects visited

CAST Befrienders Project (Sheffield)
East Bank Children's Home, East Bank Road, Sheffield S2 3PX. Tel. 0114 279 8889

CAST stands for Caring Around Sheffield Together and is a support and befriending project for young people who are in care and have been in care to help them prepare for, and cope with, independent living. It was started by SOVA (Society of Voluntary Associates), a national organisation working with offenders, ex-offenders and their families. Research was carried out into the needs of young people in care and those leaving the care system by six young people who had themselves been in care. After being trained and supported in research techniques the young researchers conducted interviews with young people in, or who had been in, the care system and concluded that many were inadequately prepared for independent living and felt isolated and vulnerable.

CAST is funded by Joint Finance, Sheffield Social Services and the South Yorkshire Police Community Initiatives Programme and also by SRB and trust monies. It runs a support service from the SOVA office and a twice-weekly drop-in from a youth club close to Sheffield city centre. The drop-in provides an informal and supportive place for young people who are in, or have recently come out of, care. A meal is provided, there is a range of recreational activities and regular theme sessions, including some on health-related issues. A linked project provides befrienders for young people who are in care.

The work has developed to run a weekly support session at a local secure unit for young people. Volunteers who run this project have been selected for their experience of being in care and their ability to work in a difficult environment with young people who have a lot of difficulties. They have a mentor role for young people in the unit and offer a high degree of support.

Although CAST now employs paid staff at the drop-in, it is very much run by young people for young people. The original research group have become the driving force behind the service. Several of the original members are still involved and one now has paid employment on a related project about young people's sexual health and work with school non-attenders. Young people who have been involved in CAST have spoken at national and international conferences about their work and the needs of young people in care. They have also run training sessions for care professionals and have been members of interview panels for selecting staff to work at the secure unit and a children's home, as well as for CAST.
Positive Participation

**End House (Durham)**

92a Claypath Road, Durham DH1 1RG. Tel. 0191 383 1414

End House is a voluntary organisation which provides a range of services for 13- to 25-year olds. These include:

- drop-in information, counselling and advice service
- a sexual health clinic
- a coffee bar
- self-help and campaigning groups such as a youth forum, young women’s group and young men’s group
- a detached youth work project
- a housing project providing short-term emergency accommodation.

Young people are involved in many aspects of the work, including as service deliverers and in all aspects of decision-making. They are widely consulted. Half of the management committee are young people and they are involved in all aspects of recruitment and selection of staff and decisions over services and projects.

End House has had a great influence on local health services for young people. The other young people's sexual health services in the area are based on the End House model and young people from End House have run two accredited training courses for GPs on the needs of young people.

End House is funded through a range of statutory, voluntary and charitable bodies.

**The Life Office, Padgate School (Warrington)**

Padgate High School, Insall Road, Padgate, Warrington WA2 0LN. Tel. 01925 822632

The Life Office is part of a health-promoting school project which consults and involves school students in a range of ways. The Life Office is itself a drop-in facility run by and for young people in the school and offers information and advice on a wide range of health issues. Fourteen students have been trained and are supported to run the service. It is part of a wider programme which includes students being involved in:

- consultations about and influencing the school PSHE curriculum
- training for teachers and governors
- an awareness evening for parents
- peer education on drugs issues
- an anti-bullying project
- a partners project where older students act as mentors for younger students
- volunteers at a local GP-funded Youth Advice Project which includes a sexual health clinic.
The eight projects visited

Young people who are involved have been provided with training from a range of outside professionals and this has included an annual residential training event. Funding has been provided from the health authority, school parent–teachers association and local businesses have donated furniture and a computer.

New Horizon Youth Centre (London)
68 Charlton Street, London NW1 1JR. Tel. 0171 388 5560/5848

New Horizon is a day centre and advice service for homeless and/or vulnerable young people. It is based in London between Euston and New Cross stations in a large building with street-level access. The day centre is open every weekday and provides practical help with finance, benefits, housing and health matters in a relaxed, supportive environment. A mid-day meal and laundry facilities are provided and there is a programme of activities such as drama, crafts and visits. Young people hear about New Horizon mostly through its outreach workers or from other young people.

New Horizon sets out to consult and involve young people in the running of the day centre. A monthly users' meeting plans activities and is an open forum to discuss how the centre runs. Young people have drawn up rules for the centre and sanctions for breach of the rules.

The defining feature of New Horizon is the young people that it targets. They are very vulnerable but very streetwise. Many are involved in heavy drug use, the sex trade and violent situations. Most are transient although a few have been coming for a number of years and find the centre a crucial source of support in their lives. Staff need to be able to develop warm, supportive relationships with young people but also need to challenge unacceptable behaviour and encourage young people to move on.

Continuing participation of young people is difficult because many have chaotic and unpredictable lives. Attending project meetings is not always a top priority. Emphasis is on short sessions and timescales with a lot of support and encouragement from adults. Staff also need to play a 'back-stop' role to ensure that things like arrangements for visits are carried out if young people do not manage to fulfil their commitments.

Separate provision is made in the programme for males and females and for lesbians and gay men. The centre is funded through local authority, NHS, voluntary-sector, charitable and company contributions.
Positive Participation

Respect (Surrey)
Contact: Surrey Youth Service, The Runnymede Centre, Chertsey Road, Addlestone, Surrey KT15. Tel. 01932 561624

Respect is a young women’s health education project. It involves an annual residential for about 100 14- to 25-year-old young women and women youth workers. The 1996 project focused on sexual health and relationships, the 1997 project on drug use and the 1998 project is focusing on mental health, including bullying, body image and eating disorders.

The project was initiated by health promotion and the youth service but now involves a number of statutory and voluntary agencies. Young women are involved in the management group and in planning and running the conferences and facilitating workshops at the conferences. Young women are recruited through a wide range of projects including schools, youth centres, young parents’ groups and homelessness projects.

The project is jointly funded by a number of agencies including the NHS, the local authority youth service, social services and grants from voluntary bodies such as the Prince’s Trust.

Tameside Young People’s Health Clinic and Peer Education Project
Young People’s Centre, Duke Street, Denton, Manchester M34 2AN.
Tel. 0161 320 8918/ 336 6615

This wide-ranging project involves young people in a number of ways including:

- as peer educators on health issues in schools and youth clubs
- staffing the reception desk at the sexual health clinic
- training for health professionals such as GPs on how to make services more young-people-friendly
- an environmental project – planning, designing and developing a community garden
- organising and participating in international exchanges
- a young gay men’s group.

Young people are consulted and involved in many aspects of the work, including staff appointments and some financial decisions. Two of the ten management committee places are taken by young people. Consultations have been carried out using surveys, a suggestion box and informal discussions with young people. Training and continuing support are provided for young people. Young people aged up to 25 are involved and the work is mainly funded by the local authority youth service and health authority.
The eight projects visited

Young People's Anti-Poverty Project (London)
Riverside House, 12th Floor, Woolwich High Street, London SE18 6DN.
Tel. 0181 317 5332

This project involves consultation with young people aged 8 to 18 years old living in areas of the London Borough of Greenwich which experience poverty. It focuses on issues such as education, leisure, employment, training, health, safety and security and is funded by the London Borough of Greenwich and the Children's Society. The action-orientated nature of the research, together with development work with local agencies, had led to changes and improvements in local services for young people.

The project consults young people by using questionnaire-based surveys. Young people are involved in a number of ways including:

- piloting and design of questionnaires
- administering the questionnaires
- feedback to, and discussion of findings and recommendations with, young people who have been consulted.

Youth Awareness Programme (YAP) (London)
Abbey House, 361 Barking Road, Plaistow, London E13 8EE. Tel. 0171 474 2222

YAP runs four peer education projects in different parts of London under the parent organisation, the Network Drugs Advice Project. The project we visited is based in Merton.

YAP's philosophy is that drug services for young people are best provided by young people rather than adults. The work of the project includes drug education sessions in schools, one-to-one drug counselling (mainly in schools), outreach work on the streets and in clubs, diversionary activities for young people and arrest referral schemes.

The age range of the young volunteers is 16 to 30 years old and there is a roughly equal gender mix and a high proportion of young black people involved. They attend an extensive, 26-week accredited training course before being involved in the work. They receive regular supervision but are not represented on the Steering Group. Expenses are given for the school and outreach work.
7B Useful publications

General


Useful publications


Save the Children *All Together Now: Community Participation for Children and Young People*. Save the Children, 1997.


D. Wilcox *The Guide to Effective Participation*. Partnership Books. (No date.)


Consulting young people


Involving young people in decision-making groups and forums

British Youth Council A Young Person’s Guide to Lobbying. (No date.)

British Youth Council Local Action – A Guide to Setting Up a Local Youth Council. (No date.)

British Youth Council Help Yourself: A Pack of Training Exercises and Materials for Youth Council Members. (No date.)

G. Joyce The Youth Clubs Participation Starter Kit. Youth Clubs UK. (No date.)


Involving young people as service deliverers

Alcohol Advisory Service Coventry and Warwickshire Peer Education, Young People and Alcohol: A manual. (No date.)


Useful publications


B. Murtagh *Peer Education: A Manual*. National Youth Federation/Health Promotion Unit, Dublin. (No date.)


7C Relevant organisations

**Article 12**
8 Wakley Street, London EC1V 7QE.
Tel. 020 7843 6026
e-mail: info@article12.UK.com

Article 12 is a unique UK-wide organisation run for children and young people by children and young people. It was launched in November 1996 and takes its name from Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, which states that people under 18 years have the right to express their views on all matters which affect them.

Article 12 is run by a steering group of 24 young people, aged between 10 and 16 years. They recruited and oversee the work of their part-time adult support worker. Article 12 carries out a range of activities to ensure that children and young people are listened to in all areas of life. Membership is open to people under 18 years; adults, and adult organisations, can become-supporters. The organisation receives funding from Comic Relief and is supported by the National Children's Bureau which provides free office space.

**Barnardo's**
Tanners Lane, Ilford, Barkingside, Essex 1G6 1QG.
Tel. 020 8550 8822
Website: http://www.barnardos.org.uk

Barnardo's is a national charity which runs over 250 services in the UK and works with over 30,000 children and young people each year. Their work falls into six areas: disability, education, children needing families, disadvantaged communities, disadvantaged young people and families with young children. Many of their projects aim to give children and young people a voice and to enhance their participation in decision-making.

Barnardo's also produces a number of research reports and good practice guides highlighting the needs of children and young people and particularly disadvantaged groups.
Relevant organisations

**British Youth Council**
2 Plough Yard, Shoreditch High Street, London EC2A 3LP
Tel. 020 7422 8640
Website: http://www.byc.org.uk

The British Youth Council (BYC) is the representative body for young people aged 16–25 in the UK. It is an independent charity, run for and by young people and represents their views to central and local government, political parties, pressure groups and the media. Through its member organisations it represents over 3 million young people in the UK. Young people act as BYC's trustees, responsible for managing BYC, making financial and strategic decisions and implementing the work plan and policies passed at the annual general meeting.

BYC also produces a number of publications and training packs, maintains a database of peer education projects, runs a peer-led citizenship project and offers advice and training about young people's participation.

**The Children's Society**
Edward Rudolf House, 69-85 Margery Street, London WC1X 0JL
Tel. 020 7837 4299
Website: http://www.the-childrens-society.org.uk

The Children's Society is a Christian charity which works to support disadvantaged children and young people regardless of their race, culture or creed:

- to help them grow in their families and communities
- to help them take charge of their own lives
- to help them to change the conditions that stand in their way.

The Children's Society runs a range of projects including work with the young homeless and young people imprisoned on remand and development of play and leisure facilities in communities. The work often involves active participation of young people and also attempts to improve government policies. The Children's Society also produces a range of publications, including reports, briefing papers and educational materials.
Positive Participation

Health Development Agency (Young People's Health Network)
Trevelyan House, 30 Great Peter Street, London SW1P 2HW.
Tel. 020 7222 5300
Website: http://www.hda-online.org.uk

The Young People's Health Network is concerned with the health of young people. It encourages:

- the exchange of information, ideas, research findings and good practice
- the involvement of young people in health promotion initiatives
- links with other networks and organisations including those that may not focus directly on health.

The Network produces a regular newsletter, runs regular conferences and seminars and organises training events.

Healthwise
1st floor, Cavern Court, 8 Mathew Street, Liverpool L2 6RE.
Tel. 0151 227 4150
Website: http://www.healthwise.org.uk
e-mail: info@healthwise.org.uk

Healthwise is a health information and promotion service providing helpline services, training, software development, educational resource development and publishing and support services for schools. It is an independent organisation.

The Health Information Service takes 90,000 telephone calls a year of which almost one-third are from 13- to 24-year-olds. Educational resource development focuses on drug and sex education. The Schools Support Unit runs one of the largest drug and sex education teacher training programmes in the UK. Other projects which have consulted and involved young people include research about young people's drug using and sexual knowledge and behaviour, consulting young people to develop a drug prevention strategy for a local health authority and consulting young people about development of educational and information resources.
Relevant organisations

**National Children's Bureau**
8 Wakley Street, London EC1V 7QE.
Tel. 020 7843 6000
Website: [http://www.ncb.org.uk](http://www.ncb.org.uk)

The National Children's Bureau (NCB) identifies and promotes the interests of children and young people. The NCB works with policymakers and professionals in all sectors – especially education, health and social work – to spread knowledge and good practice in creating child- and young-person-centred services. A wide range of projects is undertaken including ensuring children who are looked after by local authorities have a say in their own lives and preparing young people for parenthood. The NCB also runs many conferences and has a wide range of publications.

The NCB supports a range of specialist organisations focusing on issues such as sex education, drug education, children with disabilities and parenting education and support. The library and information service is very extensive.

**National Youth Agency**
17-23 Albion Street, Leicester LE1 6GD.
Tel. 0116 285 3700
Website: [http://www.nya.org.uk](http://www.nya.org.uk)
e-mail: nyainfo@nya.org.uk

The National Youth Agency (NYA) is the central organisation for youth work in England. It supports all those involved in informal, personal and social education of young people, first and foremost in local authority youth services and national voluntary youth organisations. NYA's work includes:

- specialist youth work advisers who offer consultancy and training
- a comprehensive collection of resources on working with young people
- an enquiry-answering service available to visitors or by telephone or post
- a full range of publications, including a regular magazine
- press and public relations work to raise the profile of work with young people.

**Plain English Campaign**
PO Box 3, New Mills, Derbyshire SK22 4QP.
Tel: 01663 744409
Website: [http://www.plainenglish.co.uk](http://www.plainenglish.co.uk)
e-mail: info@plainenglish.co.uk

The Plain English Campaign gives information and advice about producing documents in a clear and concise way. It also produces a number of useful publications and also runs training courses.
Save the Children
17 Grove Lane, London SE5 8RD
Tel. 020 7703 5400
Website: http://www.oneworld.org/scf/

Save the Children (StC) is the UK’s leading international children's charity and works in over 50 countries supporting children, young people and their families to be self-sufficient. Project work in the UK includes:

- promoting children and young people's participation in decision-making
- support for family and community centres and community-led initiatives
- tackling educational disadvantage including for children with disabilities
- research and initiatives addressing the health needs of ethnic minorities, low-income families, the homeless and travellers
- support for children and young people in local authority care.

StC has also produced a range of practical manuals about involving children and young people in decision-making.

Youth Clubs UK
2nd Floor, Kirby House, 20-24 Kirby Street, London EC1N 8TS
Tel. 020 7242 4045
e-mail: info@youthclubs.org.uk

Youth Clubs UK is a national charity which promotes opportunities for young people to develop skills and interests which help them to become fulfilled adults and effective citizens. It is the largest non-uniformed youth organisation in the UK and supports a network which reaches more than 650,000 young people in youth clubs and projects. It initiates a range of projects including sports and outdoor activities, art, drama and dance, health education, environmental action, community work and international exchanges.

Youth Clubs UK also works with disadvantaged groups such as homeless young people, those involved in crime and who experience drug problems. It has produced a number of guidance and training packs about young people's active participation.
Increasingly the importance and value of consulting with young people in health promotion work is being recognised. This pack helps you to consider the benefits of involving young people in your work and assists you to think through all the different steps and levels involved in this process. Designed to be used with young people it aims to promote more effective consultation and involvement of young people in health-related activities through the provision of resource materials and training.

A range of areas is covered from getting started through to how to consult young people and how to involve them in decision-making groups and as service deliverers. Key issues and principles are highlighted by the use of examples of projects currently consulting with and involving young people. Training activities also assist you to make these issues relevant to your project.

**Positive Participation** is useful for anyone wanting to actively promote the participation and/or consultation of young people in their work. It is ideal for teachers, youth workers and project managers and those in health authorities, local authorities and the voluntary sector involved in health promotion work with young people.