

Hart's Ladder

Key Questions

Which level of Hart's Ladder is our project on?

Which level of Hart's Ladder should our project be on?

What do we need to do to move to the right level on the ladder for our project?

NON-PARTICIPATION

It is important to remember that tokenism, decoration and manipulation are not examples of youth participation. You do have the choice to move away from these methods towards more meaningful participation.

QUALITY OF PARTICIPATION

Young people and adults share decision-making

Young people lead and initiate action

Adult-initiated, shared decisions with young people

Young people are consulted and informed

Young people assigned but informed

Tokenism

Decoration

Manipulation

EXAMPLES

Young people have the ideas, set up the project and invite adults to join them in making decisions throughout the project. They are equal partners.

Young people decide they need a one-stop shop in their community. They partner with adults in different youth organisations and together lobby the government for resources.

Young people have the initial idea and decide how the project is to be carried out. Adults are available and trust in the leadership of young people.

A group of students get permission from their principal to run an environmental day. The students make the decisions, and the school provides support.

Adults have the initial idea, and young people are involved in making decisions, planning and implementing the project.

A community co-ordinator asks young people for event ideas for 'Youth Week'. The young people suggest having a skating event. The co-ordinator and young people work together to make decisions and apply for funding.

Adults design and facilitate the project, and young people's opinions are given weight in decision-making. Young people receive feedback about their opinions.

A local council runs several consultations to get young people's input about a recreation park. Young people tell the council about features in the park they want changed. The council provides feedback to the young people about how their views affected decision-making.

Adults decide on the project and young people volunteer for it. Young people understand the project and adults respect their views.

A conference creates positions for two young people on a panel of speakers. Young people decide how to select their representatives and work with adults to understand their role.

Young people are given a limited voice and little choice about what they can say and how they can communicate.

A young person is asked by adults to be on a panel and represent 'youth'. The young person is not given the opportunity to consult with peers or understand the role.

Young people take part in an event in a very limited capacity and have no role in decision-making.

A group of young people are given a script by adults about 'youth problems' to present to adults attending a youth conference.

Adults have complete and unchallenged authority and abuse their power. They use young people's ideas and voices for their own gain.

A publication uses young people's cartoons; however, the publication is written by adults.