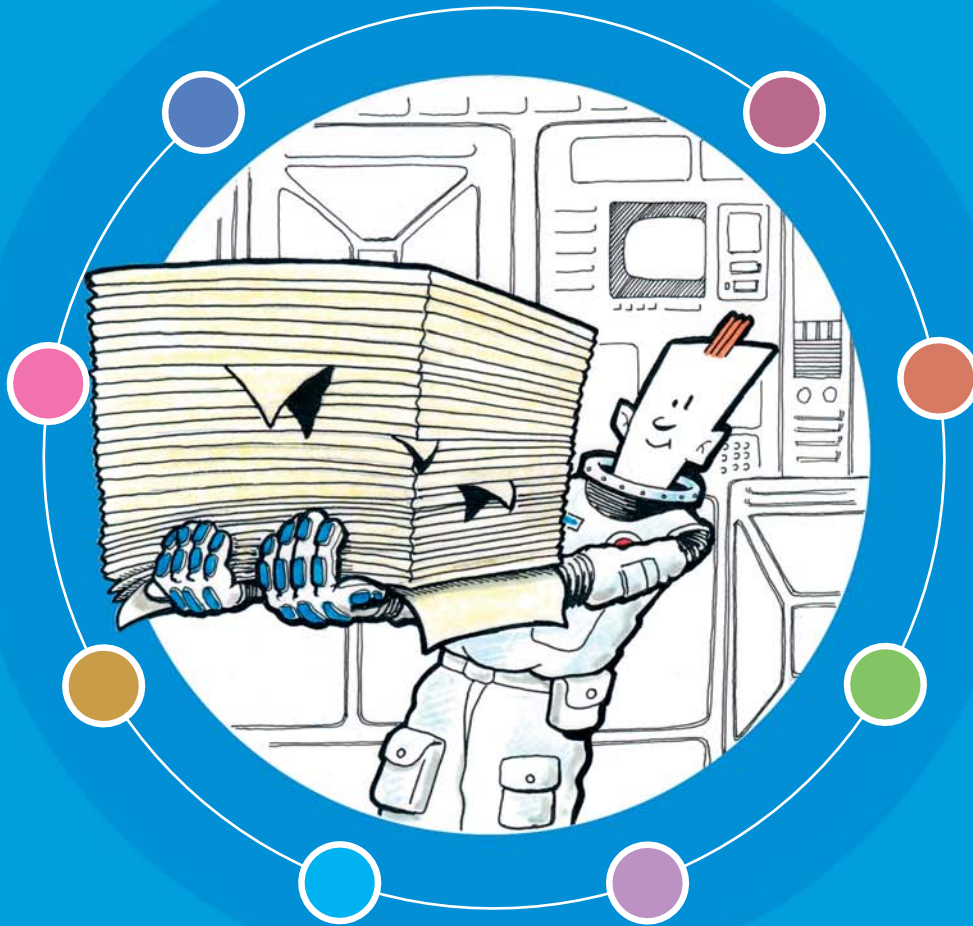
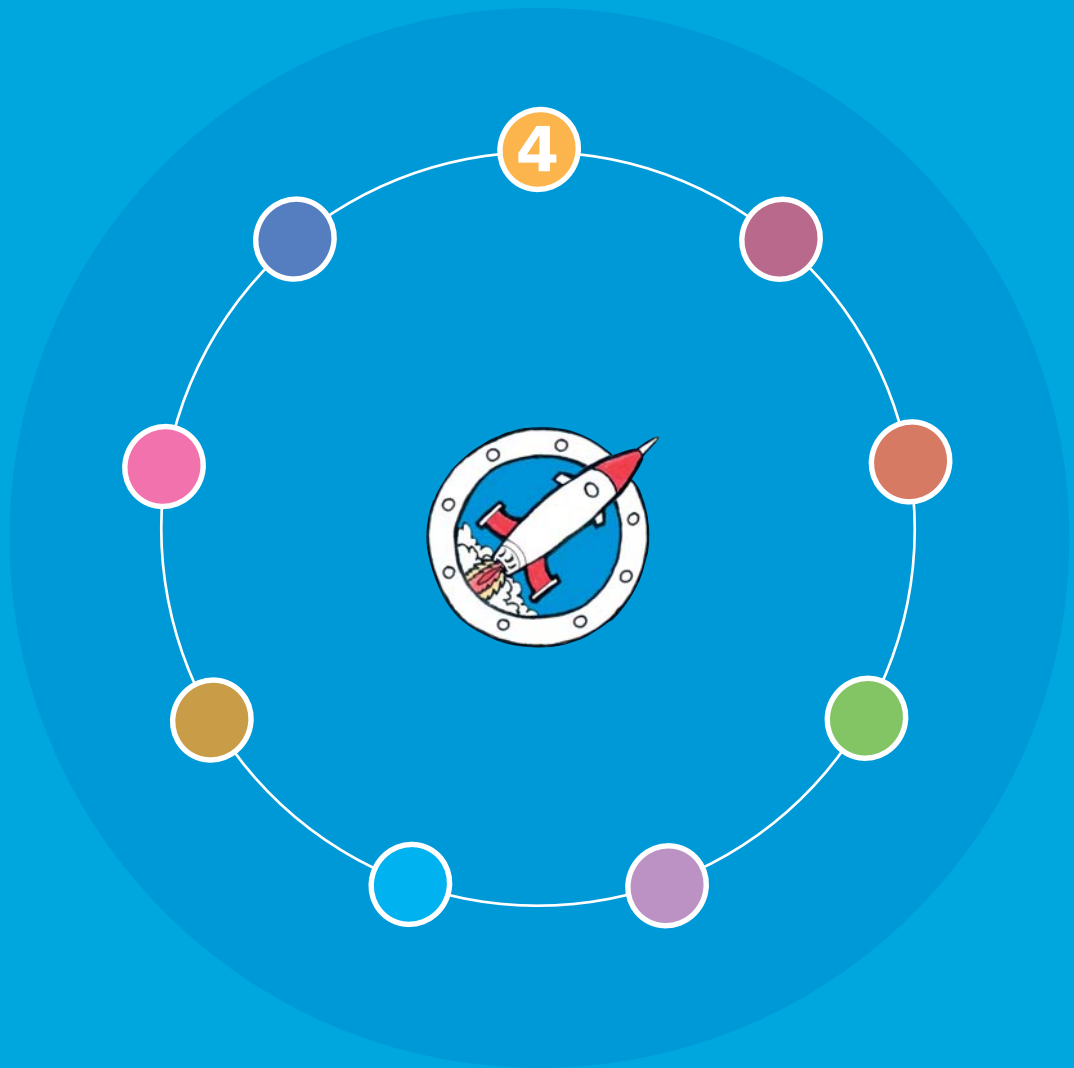


**GUIDES TO INCREASING PARTICIPATION  
OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

**4**

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE  
FRIENDLY DOCUMENTS**





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## ? What will this guide tell me?

This guide explains children and young people friendly documents and considers why they should be created. It describes the stages of their production as well as highlighting some key questions to consider.

## ? What is a children and young people friendly document?

It is usually:

*either* a version of another document that is specifically tailored to the needs of children and/or young people

*or* a document specifically produced for a target audience of children and/or young people.

## ? Why make a 'children and young people friendly document'?

To increase participation in policy and decision-making, children and young people need access to relevant information to gain understanding of the issues involved. As part of this, they may need to read documents such as policies and strategies. Therefore, it is important that these are produced and provided in a user-friendly style. The National Children and Young People's Participation Standards for Wales include a Standard on Information and making it accessible for children and young people (see **Guide 8: Monitoring, Evaluation and Audit**).

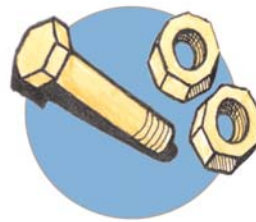
There are alternative formats such as posters, comic books, websites or DVDs (see **Guide 5: Alternatives to Children and Young people Friendly Documents**), but documents such as leaflets or booklets are the most commonly used formats, and can be cheap and cost effective.



## Who should write it?

One option is to train a group of children or young people in creating children and young people friendly documents and then support them to carry out the task. In other cases it will be an adult who will be doing most of the work, but they can involve children or young people in the process, preferably from an early stage. Children and young people can, and should ideally be, involved in planning, drafting, piloting and production. This can be through the whole range of methods including workshops, focus groups as well as in the drafting process.

## Nuts & Bolts: Main stages of the process



### STAGE 1: Pre-Production Process

- Look at other children and young people friendly documents including leaflets, booklets and websites.
- Include time in your process for consultation/involvement of/piloting with children and young people. Remember that arranging and managing this can take weeks if not months.
- If children and young people are to write the document you need to provide a clear brief outlining the task and key areas of importance. If you are going to be creating a lot of documents, consider training a group of children and young people, or work with other organisations in your area to do this.

### STAGE 2: Production Process

- Develop the text and pilot. Make the text as jargon-free as possible and use words and language that are easily understandable.
- Create or obtain graphics/photographs. Check you have appropriate consent.
- Consider style and layout; including varying font size, use of colour. Do you need to use text boxes, speech bubbles, columns (e.g. newspaper style) or cartoons?
- Share early drafts with a few people to get constructive criticism.



- Revise draft in light of any feedback.
- Pilot a final draft with a group of children and/or young people and, if appropriate, some interested adults.

### STAGE 3: Post-Production Evaluation

Whether or not this is your first attempt at creating a high quality and effective children and young people friendly document, it is worth considering:

- Have you reviewed the process? What worked? What didn't?
- Are there skills gaps to fill?
- Was it possible to do effectively in the time frame and with the resources available?
- Did you get the balance right between time spent on getting the text right and time/resources getting the format/graphics etc right?
- Have you got feedback from people on how easy your documents are to read?

It may not be necessary to make two or more separate versions of documents for adults and children and young people (See Table 1 to guide you).

Relevant graphics and photographs can make documents more accessible and engaging for the general reader and help make documents easier to understand for those with poor reading skills or learning difficulties.

There is no good substitute for testing out (piloting) a document with the intended target audience.

Some of the most successful children and young people friendly documents are those produced by organisations with a culture that takes into account the views and ideas of children and young people. Look at examples from other organisations and consider joining a network and/or 'buddying up' with others. A Participation Practitioners Network for Wales has recently been launched by Children in Wales on behalf of the Children and Young People's Participation Consortium for Wales (See Guide 9: Resources and Support).



## Nuts & Bolts: All Documents



Documents may be short leaflets created by children or longer consultation documents adapted from an original version. Whatever the type of document you are designing, there are some key areas to think about.

<b>Target audience</b>	Identify your target audience including their age group.
<b>Developing the text</b>	Use a straight talking approach. Build on what your audience knows. They are the experts on their experience.
<b>Clarity of message</b>	Is the text clear? Use short sentences. One idea - one sentence. One argument - one paragraph. Don't use abbreviations/acronyms unless they are explained. Don't try to use 'street language' - keep it clear and simple.
<b>Examples</b>	Consider if age relevant examples or case studies would be useful.
<b>Quotations</b>	Consider including quotations from the relevant age group.
<b>Diversity; culture</b>	Ensure diversity, culture and language issues are sensitively considered.
<b>Jargon</b>	Explain any unusual words or those with a special meaning in the context. If necessary, include a Jargon buster/glossary, though this is not a substitute for clear writing.
<b>Images</b>	Mix text and designs/images as far as possible to provide variety.



**Table 1: Do you need more than one version?**

	Yes	No	Don't know
Q1. Can you make one clear easily readable document?	Pilot one version	Go to Q2	Ensure you know who the target audience is. Return to Q1.
Q2. Is it for a specific age group of children or young people?	Pilot one version	Consider one main document with sub sections targeted at different age groups with age appropriate information OR Go to Q3	Divide your target audience into age groups Return to Q2.
Q3. Are parts of the material too complex for specific ages?	Consider separate documents.	Go to Q4	Pilot one version with different age groups.
Q4. Is it aimed at adults and children and young people e.g. parents and child?	Can you use subsections for the different groups? Or use a twist and turn model (Note 1).	Go to Q5	Ensure you know who it is for. Return to Q4
Q5. Are readers likely to be looking for a range of information from the document?	Consider a tiered approach to documents. (Note 2).	Pilot one version.	Pilot one version. OR consider a tiered approach

**Notes:**

**1: Twist and turn model**

A document readable from one direction and can be twisted and read from opposite direction. However, it must be noted that both English and Welsh must be incorporated.

**2. The tiered approach**

A tiered approach is to create different documents for different needs; rather than one large document for everything and everybody. For example,

- leaflet A1: for all visitors to the organisation;
- leaflet B1: for over 16s and leaflet B2: for under 16s and
- leaflet C1: for over 16s interested in training courses and C2: for under 16s interested in one off events.

This can be a cost effective solution as leaflet A1 will be taken/used by more people, but can be much briefer and so cheaper to produce. Alternatively, leaflet A1 could be in colour (as for a larger audience) and the others in black and white to keep the costs down.



## Nuts & Bolts: Special types of documents



For some particular types of documents, in addition to the above considerations, there are a number of other points to think about:

### Information documents

Consider signposting to other documents rather than including too many details. Include details of contact numbers and/or websites where more information can be found.

### Consultation documents

Include a clear set of appropriate questions.

### Strategy and policy documents

Though it may be useful to give special emphasis to any parts of particular relevance to children and young people, ensure the version includes the document as a whole and not just the executive summary. Do not change the overall meaning of the document. Ensure any words or phrases with a unusual or special meaning are explained.

### Guidance documents

Clearly link the guidance to the relevant part of the form or document to which it refers.

### Documents covering wide reading/comprehension ability

Consider using some sub-sections for different age groups. Or use different size font and text boxes to cater for different readers.

### Parent and child documents

Consider using some sub-sections for parents/child. Or a *twist and turn* model.

If in doubt, look at other similar documents and analyse why some are easier to use than others.





## FAQs



### **What different age groups may I need to consider?**

The main age groups usually considered, taking into account language comprehension, child development and educational stage are:

0 to 4 yrs (Pre-school/Early Years); 5 to 10 yrs (Key Stages 1-2); 11 to 15 yrs (Key Stage 3 and GCSE); 16 to 17 yrs and 18 to 25 yrs.

Note that children's reading and comprehension ability may vary from their chronological age.



### **I want to use photographs of young people. What consents do I need?**

Consent in writing from child/young person and their parent, if they are under 18. (For example, see Big Lottery site for their guidance and sample consent form [http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/assets/recipe\\_bigbreak\\_new.pdf](http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/assets/recipe_bigbreak_new.pdf) Appendix 3).



### **Can I use children's own drawings? Should I acknowledge the artist? Can or should I pay them?**

Good practice would be to obtain consent as for photographs, from child and parent, in writing and retain this securely. An acknowledgement is good practice; ask if the child wants to use their name or a pseudonym. There is a range of alternatives to 'cash' payments; for example, vouchers, a certificate, payment in kind, or a written reference. (See forthcoming **Guide 10: Rewards, Accreditation and Remuneration**).



### **I don't have the resources to produce two versions – is there anything else I can do?**

Make the one version that is clearly written and include examples relevant to different age groups. Consider a tiered approach to your documents and create a number of shorter and more focused documents. Include photographs of people of a wide range of ages to increase its relevance to different age groups.



### **Can I use extracts of other organisations' documents or copy items from web sites?**

Short extracts *can* be acceptable if acknowledged. If in doubt contact the owner of the copyright. Special arrangements are in place for some government documents – contact The Office of Public Sector Information: <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/about/faqs.htm> In all other cases, ensure that you are aware of copyright law.



## Checklist: Children and young people friendly documents



### Process...

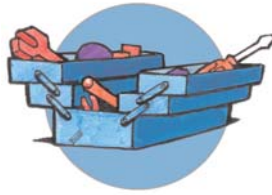
- Do you definitely need a *separate* version for children and young people?
- Are you clear who the target audience is?
- Have you built in time to effectively pilot it?
- Have children and young people been trained to write/review/assess documents?

### The document...

- Is the text clear with good use of graphics or photographs?
- Is it aimed at specific age ranges? If so, are there suitable examples or quotations?
- Has it included all the key points from the original version, if one is available?
- Is the right level of detail in the document? Could some be signposted to?
- Has the document been piloted with a range of likely users?
- Have equal opportunities and diversity issues been addressed? (This is especially important in any graphics or photographs that are used eg font size and colour contrast).
- Has the document been revised, following piloting?

### Evaluation and post production...

- Have you included an evaluation of the process?
- Have you planned a review date for document?



## RESOURCES

SCOVO 2000, *Too Many Pages*  
[www.scovo.org.uk](http://www.scovo.org.uk)

### Examples of documents aimed at Children and Young People

Children and Maternity Services *NSF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE VERSION* <http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sites/page.cfm?orgid=441&pid=6031>

*Extending Entitlement Children and Young People's Evaluation*, available from [yalo@wales.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:yalo@wales.gsi.gov.uk)

*Your Say! Your Day! Children and Young People Consultation on Environment Strategy*  
[www.new.wales.gov.uk](http://www.new.wales.gov.uk)

### Selected examples of Websites aimed at Children and Young People

British Youth Council (BYC), the national youth council for young people aged under 26 in the UK. BYC aims to advance young people's participation in society [www.byc.org.uk](http://www.byc.org.uk)

CAFCASS England - for children, for young people and for families  
[www.cafcass.gov.uk](http://www.cafcass.gov.uk)

Caerphilly Youth website at [www.caerphilly.gov.uk/youth/index.htm](http://www.caerphilly.gov.uk/youth/index.htm)

Careers Wales for education and training information as well as careers  
[www.careerswales.com](http://www.careerswales.com)

Funky Dragon - the Children and Young People's Assembly for Wales - is a peer-led organisation to give 0–25 year olds the opportunity to get their voices heard on issues that affect them [www.funkydragon.org](http://www.funkydragon.org)



South Wales Police CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE section includes interactive games  
[www.south-wales.police.uk/fe/young\\_people.asp](http://www.south-wales.police.uk/fe/young_people.asp)

Headspace has developed a self-advocacy and rights toolkit for young people in adolescent psychiatric units [www.headspacetoolkit.org](http://www.headspacetoolkit.org)

Working with Words – information on skills for people with learning difficulties and making information easy [www.workingwithwords.org](http://www.workingwithwords.org)

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