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THE VOICE OF YOUNG PEOPLE: AN ENGINE FOR IMPROVEMENT? SCOPING THE EVIDENCE

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Executive Summary

1   Introduction

Recent years have witnessed a growing commitment to including young people's voice in research, evaluation and consultation (e.g. the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Children, in England, *Every Child Matters*, the National Youth Agency's *Hear By Right* standards, the appointment of national children's commissioners, and numerous tools and partnerships for involving young people).

The CfBT Education Trust commissioned the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) to undertake a review of the literature on the *impact* of the voice of young people on policy and practice, and on young people themselves. Literature databases and websites were searched for relevant work, and a request was sent to organisations to help identify current and unpublished work in this area.

2   Impact of young people's voice on policy and practice

2.1   Impact categories

Of the 26 pieces of literature reviewed, 22 identified impacts on policy and practice. Five main impact areas were identified. These are presented in order of frequency with which they can be found in the reviewed literature:

- changes in organisational practices, services and facilities
- strategy and policy development
- impact on budgetary decision-making
- impact on recruitment practices
- the production of materials and information resources.

2.2   Changes in organisational practices, services and facilities

Changes in organisational practices, services and facilities are the most common type of impact reported around young people's voice. The references to changes in **organisational practices** primarily relate to the development of defined and permanent mechanisms within the structure of an organisation. For example, the **establishment of youth forums** or youth task groups. The involvement of young people is also influencing the **design and delivery of services and facilities** making them, in some instances, more **youth-friendly**.

Young people's voice is also influencing the design and negotiation of **school practices** and the **curriculum**. For example, student participation in **curriculum evaluation and review** is detailed in one article which outlines a school where the PSHE course has been re-written in conjunction with teams of pupils following an evaluation and review.

2.3 Strategy and policy development

The voice of young people is becoming central to the development of **local, regional and national policies and strategies.** This is evident across a variety of different sectors such as health, education, social services and issues associated with community and regeneration. Examples include at local level, individual school policies; at regional level, the policy development of local authorities, e.g. Safer Routes to School; and at national level, the Department of Health's Teenage Pregnancy policy, or those developed by the Department for Education and Skills' Children and Youth Board.

2.4 Impact on budgetary decision-making

Young people's voice is actively being included in budgetary decision-making. Young people are given more **responsibility** and **decision-making powers** regarding budgetary issues. This ranges from funding **facilities** such as local drop-in centres to funding specific **community-based projects**. The examples of this kind of impact collected in the review are chiefly around youth and community. For example, The Community Chest Project, funded by Oxfordshire Children's Fund, allows children and young people to grant funding for other youngsters wanting monies for a specific activity.

The extent to which this type of impact also extends to schools, health and other settings and services might warrant further exploration.

2.5 Impact on recruitment practices

The impact of young people's voice on recruitment practices is also found in the literature, although to a lesser extent than the impact areas outlined above. Where it is documented, the nature and impact of this involvement is at a practical level and generally relates to the actual **recruitment process**. This includes the **presence and active role** of children and young people **in interviews** and the inclusion of their views during the **selection process**. This seems to be happening across a range of sectors, including schools. The review indicates an example from a school in which pupils are involved in interviews for new teachers and have a role in deciding the continued employment of probationary staff. This is thought to result in the school making '*better*' appointments. Despite this evidence, however, the **longer-term or wider benefits** to services of young people's involvement in recruitment are not generally documented. More evaluative work might be

needed in this area to establish the wider benefits of such recruitment practices (e.g. who is recruited, what impact does that have on the organisations, on young people, etc?)

2.6   Production of materials and information resources

Of the 26 articles reviewed, only a small number document that, as a result of their involvement in various consultations, children and young people have produced a range of materials and information resources. These materials are developed for two main purposes: to provide organisations with further information on a particular issue from a **young person's perspective**; or the production of **policy/strategy documents** made '**young-person friendly**'. Examples include the production of an information pack for young people on social services and child protection issues and the design and publication of a children's leaflet to accompany a National Play Policy.

Whilst the 'youth-friendly' documents themselves are overtly reported as outcomes of youth involvement, other impacts of the young people's involvement in the production of materials and resources are not heavily documented. This area may require further research attention.

2.7   Summary of impacts on policy and practice

When compared with the literature on the processes of involving young people's voice in research, evaluation and consultation, the impact of young people's voice on policy and practice is an area that has received comparatively less evaluative attention to date.

The literature suggests that organisations are in the process of becoming much more **proactive** in their involvement of young people. Some have **embedded structures and organisational practices** to involve young people. In addition, the evidence indicates that young people are influencing the development of a number of **local and national policies and strategies** and are also **actively** being included in budgetary decision-making.

Less information has been recorded about the wider impact of young people's involvement in the **recruitment process** and the **production of materials and resources**. However, where it has been documented, there is evidence to suggest that young people could have a successful role to play in the recruitment practices of an organisation. There are also potential opportunities for children and young people's voices to be heard by them producing materials and resources. More evaluative work may be needed in these two particular impact areas. Organisations, professionals and practitioners should consider and evaluate the impact of involving young people and record it accordingly.

More broadly, organisations might consider the following key questions when undertaking consultation work with children and young people:

- what tangible/specific effect has the consultation work had on policy and practice?
- have the effects been recorded/documented?
- what other benefits and impacts has the consultation work had?

Only with further consideration of these types of questions will the true impact of young people's voice be really known and good practice be disseminated and learnt from.

3 Impact of young people's voice on the young people themselves

3.1 Impact categories

Of the 26 pieces of literature reviewed, 24 of these identified impacts on young people, though to varying degrees. The impacts have been broadly categorised into nine areas of positive impact and one theme of negative impact, although the different categories are often interrelated:

- confidence and self esteem
- social, personal and emotional competence
- sense of responsibility, efficacy and autonomy
- new knowledge and skills
- communication and collaborative skills
- civic and political competence
- attendance
- achievement
- behaviour
- negative impacts – disillusionment and conflict with other priorities

3.2 Some examples of impacts

Examples of the impacts in each of the categories are given here. Some of the literature sought young people's **own views** about the impacts of increased participation. There appeared to be little difference in the types of impacts reported by young people themselves and those predicted by adults.

The first collection of outcomes are of various impacts on young people's personal development and were commonly cited in between half and the majority of the literature, providing strong evidence of such impacts:

Confidence and self esteem

Positive impacts on young people's confidence and self-esteem can be generated from their involvement in voice and consultation activities. Young people's wellbeing can be enhanced as a result of raised self-esteem.

Social, personal and emotional competence

This category includes improved peer relationships; enhanced student-teacher, adult/community-youth and home-school relationships; increased sense of commitment and connectedness to their school or community; sense of belonging.

Sense of responsibility, efficacy and autonomy

This includes young people's own sense of maturity and accountability.

New knowledge and skills

New knowledge and skills for young people include career relevant skills, preparation for adult and working life, and new knowledge about a topic or skill. Where young people use various mediums to convey their voice and perspectives, they can also gain increased knowledge of that media (e.g. an art form, etc).

The subsequent two areas of impact would appear to be distinctive outcomes of the participation process and were both frequently cited, appearing in half of the literature:

Communication and collaborative skills

Impacts on young people's communication and collaborative skills include skills around debating, negotiating, compromising, speaking (including increased classroom participation), listening (to others views), decision making, problem solving, critical and thinking skills and team work.

Civic and political competence

Developments in young people's civic and political competence include their political awareness, understanding the democratic process, and increased participation in and motivation towards active citizenship, civic and political activity.

The following collection of impacts found in a fifth of the literature exemplify 'hard' and more measurable impacts of participation on young people. Identifying a causal relationship between participation activity and such outcomes is, however, problematic.

Attendance

Impacts on attendance are possibly a sequential outcome from a number of the aforementioned impacts. I.e. enhanced self-esteem, improved personal and social skills or an enhanced sense of ownership and responsibility might lead to young people being more motivated to attend. Impacts on attendance were documented across a range of sectors, for example, school, community and regeneration and across service development in a range of sectors.

Achievement

There is perhaps some evidence that in schools with high levels of student participation attainment in GCSEs is enhanced. Again, other impacts, such as increased motivation towards school, might be associated with this. However, to establish a strong connection here might need further research.

Behaviour

Impacts in this category include improvements to young people's school behaviour, reduced violent behaviour, and reduced criminal behaviour, drug use and teenage pregnancy. These impacts would seem to stem from previously mentioned impacts in other areas. I.e. increased motivation and confidence, the capacity and responsibility to contribute and succeed, enhanced skills of communication and feeling more mature and trusted are all likely to correspond with improved behaviour.

Finally, a minority of literature documented the negative impacts of youth participation on the young people themselves. The evidence may suggest there is a relationship between impact on policy and practice as a result of youth voice and positive outcomes for young people.

Negative impacts

Negative impacts from young people's involvement include their disillusionment where they perceive tokenistic involvement and a lack of impact on policy and practice. Negative impacts also include conflict with other priorities, e.g. through extra commitment and time pressures placed on young people involved in giving their voice.

3.3   Impacts on key groups

Twelve of the reviewed sources referenced impacts on key groups of young people as a result of increased involvement. The key groups included Looked After Children, disabled young people, children with mental health issues and vulnerable (including those living in conflict in Northern Ireland) and homeless young people.

In the reviewed literature, impacts on young people's sense of responsibility, efficacy and autonomy, new knowledge and skills, and behaviour, as well as negative impacts, seemed slightly more likely to be mentioned in relation to these key groups when compared with literature referring to young people in general.

3.4   Summary of impacts on young people

The literature suggests the engagement of the voice of young people can have **diverse impacts** on the young people involved. The range of impacts found in the reviewed literature includes those at a **personal, school and wider community and societal level**.

Importantly, there may be an **intertwined relationship between the impact on policy and practice and impact on young people** as a result of young people's voice. There is some evidence to suggest that where there has been limited impact on policy and practice from the voice of young people there are likely to be fewer, or even negative, impacts on the young people themselves.

Organisations might consider **developing a more systematic approach** to evaluating the impacts on young people when furthering their practice around involving young people's voice. Given that only a third of the literature reviewed drew on young people's own perceptions of the impacts of greater involvement, greater inclusion of the young people's own voice in the evaluation of impacts might also be sought.

A number of questions are also raised by the review that might warrant further research in order to explore the area further. These include:

- to what extent are these impacts **distinctive** to the processes of involving young people and young people's voice?
- the review suggests that the impacts on young people may vary according to the type of participatory activity, but w**hich participatory activities and approaches** elicit the greatest and most desirable impacts on young people? likewise, do impacts vary according to sector (e.g. education, community, health, etc)?
- to what extent are the impacts short or long term? What is the **longevity of impacts** on young people?

4   Current activities involving the voice of young people

A postal request was sent to relevant organisations asking if they could provide details of current work in this area. The activities highlighted do not necessarily represent a complete audit of all that is being undertaken in this particular field. Rather, they are illustrative of the kinds of work that are

currently underway in 2006 and therefore signal the present day climate in relation to children's participation.

4.1 Current research

In terms of current **research**, the degree to which young people are involved in research is seen to vary. Whilst some projects merely seek to canvass the views of the young through discussion groups and questionnaires, other projects place young people at the heart of the research, in such a way as to influence its direction and approach. For example, young people may be enlisted as data collectors, leading consultations with other young people or as members of advisory groups. In this way the pupil voice features in both the planning phases and the subsequent data collection.

4.2 Participation activities

In public life, children and young people appear to have many different avenues for **registering their ideas and views** on a range of topics. Panels, forums, consultations and networks exist which actively seek to capture the voices of young people.

4.3 Support for professionals

Alongside these opportunities, is a wealth of material aimed at **supporting professionals** who work with young people in a participatory context. Support is given in the form of training manuals, handbooks, guidance booklets and online resources. The majority of this material concentrates on the **process** of participation – ensuring that professionals are equipped with the appropriate skills and knowledge for consultation activities. In comparison, a much **smaller subset** of material focuses on capturing the **impact** of dialogue with young people. In particular, the 'What's changed' tool (National Youth Agency, 2005) provides a template for organisations to collate evidence on impact from different sources. This resource represents an important advancement as it recognises the need to document impacts and for that impact to be widely disseminated for the benefit of others working in the field.

5 Concluding comment and points for action

As a concluding comment, we note three areas that have provided a thread throughout the review:

i)   there is **a growing culture of participation**, with insights and ideas from the younger generation recognised as valuable in potentially shaping services and policies which affect their lives and others in the community

ii) in **moving beyond participation as a process**, organisations and individuals involved with young people's voice might direct their attention to the outcomes stemming from this activity

iii) there is a relative 'gap' in any **routine evaluation and documentation of impact** – whilst the literature review did indeed uncover documentation of impact, the evaluation of that impact was rarely done in a systematic way, nor did it always go far enough.

In light of the observations made above, the following recommendations are offered:

- Where young people are involved, organisations should ensure that the outcomes of their involvement are properly evaluated and recorded.

- This evaluation should be comprehensive, inviting contributions from the young people themselves (about the impact on them personally and the advantages of their involvement).

- The impacts arising from young people's input should be tracked in the longer term in order to gauge a fuller picture of their contribution.

Young people's voice is seen as an engine for improvement. But what those improvements are and how they come about as a result of the young people's voice requires more overt evaluation and documentation.

6 About the project

The Centre for British Teachers Education Trust (CfBT) commissioned the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) to undertake a review of the impact of the voice of young people. In particular, the extent to which young people's voice is an engine for improvement. The project sought to address the following key questions.

- What research on the impact of young people's voice/involvement has been carried out since 2000?

- What are the most compelling findings on the impact of young people's voice, based on the best evidence available?

- What is the evidence for young people's voice having an impact on policy-making and practice? (For example, what are organisations and services doing as a result of such insights?)

- Has any work explored the impact of the voice of vulnerable young people or other key groups?

- What gaps are their in the research or evidence base?

Evidence for the review was obtained through searches of library databases and websites; and an email/postal request to relevant organisations for details of recently published or current work (including 'grey' literature). The

literature was scoped for the most relevant findings[1]. The criteria for inclusion in the review could be summarised as follows:

- evidence from literature published from 2000 onwards
- evidence from research literature and evaluation
- evidence about the impact of the young people's voice
- evidence about young people aged 11–16 (including 11–19 where appropriate)
- a focus on UK-based sources, as well some key international evidence
- the inclusion of evidence from a range of sectors (e.g. health, community, education, youth work, etc).

A total of 52 sources were considered for inclusion in the review. Of these, 26 of the most relevant were summarised for inclusion in the review.

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[1] The research design allowed for up to 25 of the most relevant sources to be fully summarised for inclusion in the review.

1   Introduction

1.1   Background

Recent years have witnessed a growing commitment to including young people's voice in research, evaluation and consultation. A desire to promote the participation of children has been fuelled by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. More specifically, Article 12 of the convention asserts a child's right:

> *to express an opinion and to have that opinion taken into account, in any matter or procedures that affect the child, in accordance with his or her age and maturity* [http://www.ohchr.org/english/law/crc.htm].

This statement has paved the way for national legislation and policy guidance that now requires young people to have a say about their communities, their education, health and social services, as well as many other aspects of society.

Aside from meeting their rights as individuals though, why else should children be consulted and what can we learn from their input? Sinclair (2000) summarised a number of arguments for ensuring that young people have opportunities to participate and be heard. It was proposed that seeking the views of children helps to:

- improve services
- improve decision making
- enhance the democratic process
- fulfil legal responsibilities
- promote children's protection
- enhance children's skills
- empower and enhance self-esteem (Sinclair and Franklin, 2000).

The inclusion of children's viewpoints therefore would appear to offer many potential benefits and indeed, there are signs that government and other organisations are actively pursuing ways to ensure the increased participation of young people in shaping decisions about the services that affect them. For instance, the Every Child Matters Outcomes Framework (DfES, 2005) includes the outcome 'making a positive contribution' and here, the engagement of young people in decision making is a key element. Similarly, in 2005 England's first Children's Commissioner was appointed and it is their stated vision that '*all children and young people have their views actively sought, listened to and acted upon, have their rights upheld and are truly at the centre of policy and practice*' (Office of the Children's Commissioner, 2006). Meanwhile, the Children and Young Peoples Participation Partnership (CHYPP) consists of six voluntary agencies partners who came together in

2004 to help develop and implement a more strategic and long term approach to participation. In particular, they aim to make sure that participation is more effective and ensure that children and young people have more say over matters that affect them.

To satisfy the desire for greater consultation and participation, various toolkits and guidelines have now been published for capturing the voice of young people. For example, *Hear by Right* (developed by the National Youth Agency (NYA)) offers tried and tested standards for organisations to map and improve practice and policy on the active involvement of children and young people, and to encourage continual improvement in an organisation's activities. Scanning the literature on participation, there appear to be many different channels by which the opinions and ideas of young people have been obtained. Examples include:

- group discussions
- questionnaires
- online methods
- youth forums and councils
- school councils
- one-off events e.g. youth conferences
- direct contact with politicians.

In terms of the consultation process, there is a considerable body of literature which examines/advises how best to go about eliciting the views of young people (Larney, 2003; Thomas and O'Kane, 2000; Cashmore, 2001; Sinclair, 2004; Thomas, 2005). What is less certain is the effectiveness of the process in terms of outcomes. Whilst there appears to have been substantial investment in the consultation process, it is unlikely to be a meaningful activity if the views of young people have not then acted upon or allowed to influence future policies and practices. Participation without positive outcomes may even be potentially damaging. Stafford *et al*. (2003) carried out research which sought to determine what young people and children think about being consulted. The study found that children can be left disappointed and disillusioned with consultation. The author explained that '*they expect to see something happen as a result. They want their views taken into account when policies are planned and when decisions are made*' (ibid, p.80).

In 2004, Sinclair reported that despite the growth in participation activity, there is a lack of evaluation, in particular studies that address the outcomes of participation, whether for children, adults, services and organisations. This review aims to examine the present day situation to see whether there have been moves to document the outcomes of young people's consultation and specifically, whether their involvement has a subsequent impact on policy and practice.

1.2 Focus of this review

The CfBT Education Trust commissioned the NFER to undertake a review of the impact of the voice of young people. In particular, the extent to which young people's voice is an engine for improvement.

The project sought to address the following key questions.

- What research on the impact of young people's voice/involvement has been carried out since 2000?
- What are the most compelling findings on the impact of young people's voice, based on the best evidence available?
- What is the evidence for young people's voice having an impact on policy-making and practice? (For example, what are organisations and services doing as a result of such insights?)
- Has any work explored the impact of the voice of vulnerable young people or other key groups?
- What gaps are their in the research or evidence base?

1.3 Methodology in brief

This section will now briefly describe the methodology used for the review (a more detailed account can be read in Appendix I).

Evidence for the review was obtained through two different avenues:

- searches of library databases
- an email/postal request to relevant organisations for details of any relevant, recently published or current work.

Library database searches

The literature search considered sources published from 2000 onwards. Sources were identified from a range of educational, sociological and psychological databases. Selection of the most relevant pieces was achieved through a three-step process.

- Firstly, databases search results were scanned for possible items for consideration, and full sources of possible relevant items were ordered for further inspection.
- Secondly, once received, the ordered items were logged for possible inclusion in the review against specific criteria. These included their pertinence to the review in terms of: UK/international literature; 11–16/16–19 literature; sector (e.g. health, community, education, youth work, etc); impact on policy/practice; and/or impact on young people.

- Thirdly, the 25 most pertinent sources for full review were selected. The chief criteria were that the literature: presented compelling/concrete evidence of impact on policy/practice *and* on young people; included some sources of international literature; included a range of sectors; included a range of authors.

The criteria for inclusion in the review could be summarised as follows:

- evidence from literature published from 2000 onwards
- evidence from research literature and evaluation
- evidence about the impact of the young people's voice
- evidence about young people aged 11–16 (including 11–19 where appropriate)
- a focus on UK-based sources, as well some key international evidence
- the inclusion of evidence from a range of sectors (e.g. health, community, education, youth work, etc).

Request to relevant organisations

In an attempt to capture unpublished, ongoing or current work which utilised the voice of young people, a second strand of data collection was undertaken. This entailed contacting 54 organisations inviting them to notify us of any relevant activity. A letter was sent with a proforma for organisations to provide this information. Replies were received from 13 organisations uncovering:

- 2 pieces of literature for the main body of the review (others were noted but not selected for the final review)
- 5 pieces of ongoing research activity
- 3 examples of current participation activities
- 4 examples of current support to professionals re: participation and consultation.

1.4 Structure of this report

Findings from the review are presented under the following chapter headings:

Chapter 2: Impact of young people's voice on policy and practice
Chapter 3: Impact on young people themselves
Chapter 4: Current activities involving the voice of young people.

In addition, Appendix I contains details of the review methodology; Appendix II presents a description of the key pieces used (e.g. in terms of publication dates, country in which the work was undertaken, age of young people

involved, etc); and Appendix III presents the summaries completed for each of the 26 sources included in the review.

2   Impact of young people's voice on policy and practice

2.1   Introduction

As discussed in Chapter 1, there is an increasing commitment to involving young people's voice in research, evaluation and consultation. However, it has been noted by a number of researchers in the field that there appears to be comparatively less evidence which specifically and adequately addresses and evaluates the impact and outcomes of their involvement (e.g. Kirby and Bryson, 2002; Kirby *et al.*, 2003; Oldfield and Fowler, 2004). Not only 'less' in terms of volume, but perhaps also 'less' in terms of rigour (this was also noted by Kirby *et al.*, 2003, who reported that '*few case study organisations could provide rigorous evaluation or other empirical evidence to demonstrate the relationship between participation and the assumed and promoted benefits, although many could illustrate these with anecdotal evidence*'). Indeed, researchers have highlighted this potential lack of documented impact at political and practical levels. For example, Carr (2004) stated that '*evidence from the few evaluations that exist suggest that the participation of children and young people is having little impact on decisions made in relation to agency policy and practice*' (p.13). In addition, she purported that '*the direct influence of user participation on transforming services has not been the subject of any major UK research studies*' (p.7).

However, from the current literature review there is rich evidence to suggest that evaluation work in this field is a growing area and that organisations and projects are starting to strategically document work around the impacts of involving young people. As such, the current review has sought to analyse the most compelling and current evidence that has documented impacts at a policy and practice level. Of the 26 pieces of literature reviewed, 22 identified impacts on policy and practice. Analysis has enabled five main impact areas to be defined, which are (in order of frequency that they can be found in the reviewed literature):

- changes in organisational practices, services and facilities
- strategy and policy development
- impact on budgetary decision-making
- impact on recruitment practices
- the production of materials and information resources.

Within this section of the report, each type of impact is discussed, with examples used to illustrate further.

2.2 Changes in organisational practices, services and facilities

Changes in organisational practices, services and facilities were the most common type of impact reported around young people's voice. Indeed, 15 of the 26 articles included in this literature review documented outcomes and impacts regarding these types of outcomes.

Is young people's voice making a difference?

In relation to the impact on organisational practices, services and facilities the literature suggested that young people's voice was playing an active and positive role. Indeed, Oldfield and Fowler (2004) in their survey of statutory and voluntary sector organisations found that over four-fifths of respondents felt that their services had improved as a result of involving young people in the decision-making process.

What is young people's voice making a difference to?

The references to changes in **organisational practices** primarily related to the development of defined and permanent mechanisms within the structure of an organisation. Chiefly, these related to the **establishment of youth forums** or youth task groups (Kirby, 2003) which enabled young people to be included in the consultation process. Some examples are outlined in the box below.

Box 1

The establishment of youth forums: Examples

Geddes and Rust (2000) outlined Wolverhampton local authority's organisational changes aimed at embedding young people's voice in their practices. Changes included: a **Youth Affairs Subcommittee**; area-wide **youth forums**; **youth conferences**; and a **multi-agency youth issues partnership group**.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (DfES, 2001) developed a number of **junior neighbourhood warden programmes** alongside the neighbourhood warden schemes to show their commitment and prioritisation to work with young people.

Save the Children's 'Children and young people's participation project' in Shoreditch introduced '**policy proofing**' (Kirby, 2003). All reports submitted to the Board needed to indicate the extent to which the proposed projects would impact on children and young people.

Further changes in organisational practices included the **re-arrangement of more suitable times for meetings** held between adults and young people (Willow, 2002), the involvement of young people in **service reviews and evaluations** (The National Children's Office, *et al*., 2005) and changes in the allocation of **staffing resources**. For example, Cambridgeshire social services

employed more designated nurses to bring a more sensitive approach to health assessments following consultation with a group of young people in care (Lewis, 2001).

In relation to the impact on **services and facilities** specifically (areas categorised as service development and client support in Kirby *et al*., 2003), the literature suggested that young people's voice was playing an active role – as in the health service examples below.

Box 2

Changes to health services and facilities: Examples

In their postal survey of all health authorities and Primary Care Trusts in England, Sloper and Lightfoot (2003) reported that consultation with chronically ill and disabled children and young people had resulted in service change. Specifically, changes in service provision were noted by seventeen authorities/Trusts. This included **changes to hospital décor, food, clinic times and ward routines**. In addition, there were changes in service commissioning such as **a home care programme for intravenous administration of antibiotics for young people with cystic fibrosis**.

Young people in Ballybay, County Monaghan, Cootehill and County Caven **helped design an adolescent-friendly health service** (The National Children's Office, *et al.*, 2005). They helped to design the service which included a peer education programme and a website for GP practices.

A number of articles specifically focused on the changes occurring within **schools** and the **curriculum** that allow young peopled to have a stronger voice. **School councils** were the predominant way in which children and young people were influencing schools practices. In their article, Taylor and Johnson (2002) reported that teachers considered the School council to have resulted in some of the following changes: new equipment, improvements to the organisation of break-times and improvements to toilet and cloakroom areas. There were also reported changes in curriculum design. For example, student participation in **curriculum evaluation and review** was detailed in Hannam's (2001) article which outlined one school where the PSHE course had been re-written in conjunction with teams of pupils following an evaluation and review.

Changes in organisational practices, services and facilities: key findings

- Changes in organisational practices, services and facilities were the most common type of impact around young people's voice.

- Overall, the literature suggests that organisations are becoming more proactive in their involvement of young people, with many now having embedded structures and organisational practices.

- The involvement of young people is also influencing the design and delivery of services and facilities making them, in some instances, more youth-friendly.

- The literature also suggests that young people's voice is becoming more involved in designing and negotiating school practices and the curriculum.

2.3   Strategy and policy development

The involvement of young people's voice in strategy and policy development was referenced in 11 of the 26 articles reviewed. This involvement ranged from local strategy development through to national policy development. It was also common across a variety of different sectors such as health, education, social services and issues associated with community and regeneration.

At the **local and regional level**, examples of young people's involvement in strategy and policy level were rich in detail.

Box 3

Local and regional strategy and policy development: Examples

The Investing in Children Initiative in County Durham, where the young people involved in the initiative managed to successfully change a policy to one in which bus fares were only paid by young people over the age of 16 (DfES, 2001).

The views of children aged between two and four years, on issues such as traffic, litter, noise, were used to develop the **Greater London Authority** strategy (DfES, 2001).

Kirby (2003), in her evaluation of the **Save the Children's 'Children and Young People's Participation Project' in Shoreditch**, noted that children and young people had been involved in the development of the local authority's Safer Routes Strategy. Here, information was gathered from 28 primary school children on the local areas perceived to be dangerous and where they crossed roads, which was then used to help inform and devise the strategy.

A number of reviewed articles also documented the changes that young people were having on their **school policies**. One example was an international piece of literature from the US which provided details of an American States' school

policy panel. Both students and adults sat on the panel, which had the purpose of guiding the integration of service-learning in the States' schools. The young people were perceived as being equal members with equal contributory rights to the policy development (Fredericks *et al.*, 2001). Further examples included the involvement of pupils in the target setting policy within a school and the involvement of children and young people as regards to policies related to rewards, bullying and behaviour (Davies *et al.*, 2006).

In relation to the development of **national strategies and policies**, once again, there were a variety of examples in the reviewed literature. Some of the most pertinent examples relevant to this research are outlined below.

Box 4

National strategy and policy development: Examples

The **DfES Children and Youth Board** (Neary and Drake, 2006) – this project had the primary aim of involving children and young people 'at the heart of government' and involved children and young people attending residentials, ministerial meetings and advising departmental officials. They played an active role in a range of policy developments, specifically 'Youth Matters- Next Steps' in which they were involved in consultation and the final editing of the document. Policy leads involved in the project reported that the children and young people had provided a much needed backdrop of contextual information from the viewpoint of a young person.

Children and young people were involved in a consultation project looking at the teenage pregnancy policy for the **Department of Health** (DfES, 2001).

Two young participation workers aged 16 to 21 years were recruited to help establish priorities for the **Children's Commissioner for Scotland** (Brownlie *et al.,* 2006).

Strategy and policy development: key findings

- The voice of young people is becoming central to the development of local, regional and national policies and strategies. Some organisations include the voice of young people as standard practice.
- There is also growing literature to suggest that young people are influencing their school policies.

2.4 Impact on budgetary decision-making

In reviewing the literature, evidence suggested that one way in which young people's voice was influencing policy and practice was through them being given more **responsibility and decision-making powers regarding budgetary issues** (seven articles). The type of budgetary decision-making powers the young people were reported to have, ranged from funding facilities, such as a local drop-in centre in Bury (Geddes and Rust, 2000), to

funding specific community-based projects (DfES, 2001; Checkoway et al., 2005; Partridge, 2005). Two examples uncovered in this literature review are presented below.

Box 5

Budgetary decision-making: Examples

The Community Chest Project, funded by Oxfordshire Children's Fund (Partridge, 2005). The project was established in response to a consultation which revealed that children and young people wished to be more involved in decision-making and have easier access to play, leisure and social activities outside of school. Consequently, the Children's Fund introduced new practices and initiated the project to allow children and young people to grant funding for other children and young people wanting monies for a specific activity. A funding panel of between eight to 12 children and young people decided on the funding applications put to them.

South Norfolk Youth Action group (Cleaver and Kerr, 2006) was established by the local authority as a result of a direct request from young people who wanted to be more involved in the decision-making process of the council. The local authority consulted annually with the group regarding the council budget. The group then discussed the budget with the Head of Finance before it went to the Cabinet. The local authority reported that, as a result of involving children and young people in the budgetary process, the budget information was more accessible and clearer.

Impact on budgetary decision-making: key findings

- Overall, it appears that young people's voice is actively being included in decision-making regarding funding at a real and practical level. Young people's voice is influencing policy and practice through them being given more responsibility and decision-making powers regarding budgetary issues.

- There is evidence that some organisations have changed some of their practices to enable young people to have such budgetary decision-making powers.

- The type of budgetary decision-making powers the young people were reported to have, ranged from funding facilities to funding specific community-based projects.

2.5 Impact on recruitment practices

The involvement of children and young people's voice in relation to organisational recruitment practices was cited in five of the 26 articles reviewed.

The literature, which included articles from across the health, education and community arenas, all suggested that young people were generally becoming more involved in the recruitment of staff (Chamberlain, 2004). The nature and

impact of this involvement was at a practical level and generally related to the actual **recruitment process**. This included the **presence and active role** of children and young people **in interviews** and the inclusion of their views during the **selection process**. However, the actual result and impact of the young people's involvement appears to be less documented. Indeed, only one of the articles reviewed indicated that young people's involvement in interviews for new teachers and their role in deciding the continued employment of probationary staff, resulted in the school making '*better*' appointments (Davies *et al.*, 2006). This lack of evaluative evidence is not to say that the reviewed articles have not found a range of positive outcomes as a result of their changed practices; it is not documented.

Box 6

Involvement in recruitment practices: Examples

The National Children's Office, The Children's Rights Alliance and The National Youth Council of Ireland (2005) in their guidance on how to involve children and young people, discussed that the Irish Health Executive had developed a protocol on how best to involve children and young people on an interview panel. This protocol was devised following the successful participation of two young people during the recruitment of a Health service executive.

Cleaver and Kerr (2006) outlined an example in which young people from a local forum were involved in recruiting a **Young People's Voice and Influence Worker for Telford and Wrekin local authority**. The young people from the forum all had direct input into the personal characteristics they thought the candidate should possess and were then heavily involved in the interviewing and final selection process.

The literature also appeared to indicate that young people were involved in the recruitment of **staff at all levels of seniority**, ranging from the practice-based officers through to director-level positions. An apt illustration of this is provided in the DfES Learning to Listen document 'Core principles for the involvement of children and young people' (2001), in which Coventry and Warwickshire Connexions involved young people in the recruitment of the Connexions Executive Director, local service manager and over 35 personal advisers.

Impact on recruitment practices: key findings

- The nature and impact of young people's voice in relation to organisational recruitment practices is at a practical level and generally related to the actual interview and selection process.

- However, the longer-term or wider benefits to services of young people's involvement in recruitment, was not generally documented.

- Although the wider benefits of involving young people in the recruitment process is not generally documented, there is evidence to suggest that young people could have a successful role to play in the recruitment practices of an organisation. More evaluative work might be needed in this area to establish the longer-term benefits of such recruitment practices (e.g. who is recruited, what impact that has on the organisations, on young people etc?)

2.6 Production of materials and information resources

Of the 26 articles reviewed, five documented that, as a result of their involvement in various consultations, children and young people had produced a range of materials and information resources. These materials were developed for two main purposes:

- the **production of policy/strategy documents made 'young-person friendly'** in their voice, with some examples of results and products documented

- to **provide organisations** with further information on a particular issue from a **young person's perspective**, although not often/less well evaluated in terms of impacts. For example, one author noted that it was not known how the material produced by the young people could, or would, be used (Kirby, 2003).

The production of information and materials that had been tailored specifically by and for young people was found across a range of sectors including social services, education and health. The types of information produced were also wide in variety. Examples included the production of an information pack for young people on social services and child protection issues (Willow, 2002), the production of a young people's version of the Children and Young People's Plan which was distributed to all 11–19 year olds in a local authority (Cleaver and Kerr, 2006) and the design and publication of a children's leaflet to accompany a National Play Policy (The National Children's Office *et al.*, 2005). The resulting outcome and impact of the youth produced materials is also documented by a number of authors.

Box 7

Youth produced materials: Examples

The National Children's Office, The Children's Rights Alliance and The National Youth Council of Ireland (2005), in their guidance on how to involve children and young people outlined two examples; the production of a school journal and CluedUP.ie.

A **school journal** was produced as a mental health promotion initiative targeting young people in the North West of Ireland. This was positively received by students who used it because it was written by other students, in a common language.

CluedUP.ie, was a health service initiated website providing dedicated sexual health information. Young people were involved in the development of the website, which was perceived to result in a more accessible, friendly and non-judgemental information.

As previously mentioned, the documented impact and outcomes of young people producing materials in order to represent their views was limited in the reviewed literature. The articles discussed what the young people had produced but had less detail on how the material had been used and what impact it had had. To illustrate, the Learning to Listen document 'Core principles for the involvement of children and young people' (2001), outlined work undertaken by Connexions and The National Youth Agency which looked at ensuring children and young people had a voice in the future development of the youth service. A website was constructed and the views that were gathered formed a significant element of a submission to Ministers regarding the future of the Youth Service. No further information was documented on the impact of this information. Similarly, in her evaluation of the Save the Children's 'Children and Young People's Participation Project' in Shoreditch, Kirby (2003) stated that children and young people produced a video consultation involving young people on local housing estates being regenerated. The video was to be shown at a tenant's conference yet it was unclear how the views portrayed in the video would influence decisions.

Production of materials and information resources: key findings

- As a result of their involvement in various consultations, young people have produced a range of materials and information resources.

- These materials were developed for two main purposes: to provide organisations with further information on a particular issue from a young person's perspective; or the production of policy/strategy documents made 'young-person friendly'.

- The outcome and impact of the young people's involvement in the production of materials and resources was not heavily documented. However, it was more overtly recorded when young people produced 'youth-friendly' documents.

- Overall, evidence suggests that there are potential opportunities for the production of materials and resources to be a useful medium for young people's voice. To date, however, information and resources produced by young people are not necessarily evaluated in terms of subsequent impact. This area may require further research attention.

2.7 Summary and key findings

When compared with the literature on the processes of involving young people's voice in research, evaluation and consultation, the impact of young people's voice on policy and practice is an area that has received comparatively less evaluative attention to date. However, this current literature review has established that young people's voice can and is **impacting on five main policy and practice areas**:

- changes in organisational practices, services and facilities
- strategy and policy development
- impact on budgetary decision-making
- impact on recruitment practices
- the production of materials and information resources.

The literature suggests that organisations are in the process of becoming much more **proactive** in their involvement of young people. Some organisations appear to have **embedded structures and organisational practices** to involve young people. In addition, the evidence indicates that young people are influencing the development of a number of **local and national policies and strategies** and are also **actively** being included in budgetary decision-making.

Less information has been recorded about the wider impact of young people's involvement in the **recruitment process** and the **production of materials and resources**. However, where it has been documented, there is evidence to suggest that young people could have a successful role to play in the recruitment practices of an organisation. There are also potential opportunities

for young people's voices to be heard by them producing materials and resources. **More evaluative work is needed in these two particular impact areas**. Organisations, professionals and practitioners should consider and evaluate the impact of involving young people and record it accordingly. (This was also noted by Kirby *et al*., 2003 – '*Future development in the practice of participation must include appropriate evaluation, and further research in this area is needed*', p. 10).

More broadly, organisations might consider the following key questions when undertaking consultation work with young people:

- what tangible/specific effect has the consultation work had on policy and practice?
- have the effects been recorded/documented?
- what other benefits and impacts has the consultation work had?

Only with further consideration of these types of questions will the true impact of young people's voice be really known and good practice be disseminated and learnt from.

3   Impact of young people's voice on the young people themselves

3.1   Introduction

This chapter aims to identify the evidence of impact from seeking the voice of children and young people on the young people themselves. It presents the findings from a detailed review of 26 pieces of literature. Literature was selected according to the extent to which it evaluated or documented the impacts of young people's voice.

3.2   Impacts on young people

Overall, the voice of young people is regarded as having impact on young people themselves and there are many illustrations of positive impacts to be found in the literature. Of the 26 pieces of literature reviewed, 24 of these identified impacts on young people, though to varying degrees. The impacts (from the 24 pieces of literature addressing impact on young people) have been broadly categorised into nine areas of positive impact and one theme of negative impact, although the different categories are often interrelated and some impacts are sequential. (Indeed, other research often groups and interrelates such impacts, e.g. in Kirby *et al*., 2003, impacts around personal development include confidence, self-esteem, communication skills, group work and practical skills.)

In order of the frequency they were referred to in the literature, the ten areas of impact are listed below:

- Confidence and self esteem
- Social, personal and emotional competence
- Sense of responsibility, efficacy and autonomy
- Communication and collaborative skills
- Civic and political competence
- New knowledge and skills
- Attendance
- Achievement
- Behaviour
- Negative impacts – disillusionment and conflict with other priorities.

Each impact will now be discussed in turn, with illustrative examples from the literature search.

3.2.1 Confidence and self esteem

The majority (20 sources) of the literature included in the review indicated that giving a voice to young people had positive impacts on the young people's **confidence and self esteem**. Increased confidence was often documented as the bi-product of the participatory activity and process. For instance, confidence is generated from learning new skills and the opportunity for young people to demonstrate capabilities less often required of them in the main curriculum. Young people's **wellbeing** was cited as being enhanced as a result of raised self-esteem.

Box 8

Confidence and self esteem: Examples

A Pilot Study to evaluate the impact of the student participation aspects of the citizenship order on standards of education in secondary schools (Hannam, 2001)
The report investigated whether schools with high rates of student participation had enhanced performance. Twelve schools identified as having good practice in student participation were identified. Participatory activity in the schools ranged from school councils to 'students as researchers' programmes. Senior managers, teachers and students were surveyed and interviewed.

Eleven schools indicated that increased participation led to improved self esteem. Young people's own perceptions reinforced this finding - 97 per cent of students reported a sense of pride in their role and achievements, and resulting improved self confidence. One young person commented, '[The] *project showed off some of the skill I couldn't show off in school subjects*'.

Measure the Magic? Evaluating and researching young people's participation in public decision making (Kirby and Bryson, 2002)
The literature review examines research evidence of the effectiveness of involving young people in decision making. The report concluded that, '*There is substantial evidence that good participatory work benefits the participating young people, but that token involvement may not. This includes confidences, self-belief, knowledge, understanding and changed attitudes, skills and education attainment. Young people also benefit from have fun and making friends*'.

3.2.2 Social, personal and emotional competence

Nineteen of the sources of literature documented impacts on young people's social, personal and emotional skills as a result of increased involvement. The literature suggested that with developed skills young people were able to create more positive relationships.

In particular, young people experienced **improved peer relationships**, enabled by improved understanding, awareness, trust and attitude towards others. Similarly, **enhanced student-teacher relationships**, **adult/community-youth relationships** and home-school relationships were noted as impacts of youth participation activities. Young people themselves

alluded to an increased sense of **commitment and connectedness** to their school or community as a consequence of greater investment in its future direction. In turn, this enhanced **sense of belonging** was found to augment young people's resilience and emotional competence.

Box 9

Social, personal and emotional competence: Examples

Participation in Practice: Children and Young people as partners in change (Willow, 2002)
The book contains a number of case studies of participatory projects operated in conjunction with The Children's Society. One such project was a school walk-in help line where young people could go to discuss problems (e.g. bullying). Reflecting on the impacts of the project, one young person identifies his improved relationship with teachers; '*We learned that everyone needs to work together. Before you couldn't trust a teacher, but now I know they will listen to you properly*'.

A Pilot Study to evaluate the impact of the student participation aspects of the citizenship order on standards of education in secondary schools (Hannam, 2001)
[An empirical report – detail outlined in Box 1] One student at risk of exclusion describes the impact of being able to have a voice via the school council; '*I have changed completely since I came on the School Council. It has changed my attitude to everything, especially teachers. I just didn't know how to communicate*'.

Integrating Youth Voice in Service-Learning (Fredericks, Kapland and Zeisler, 2001)
This American paper examines the rationale for the implementation of youth voice in service-learning initiatives. It presents a series of good practice case study programmes in which youth voice has been included. Service-learning programmes are identified as providing protective factors from harmful abuse, neglect, and poverty as a result of establishing caring relationships and opportunities for meaningful participation.

3.2.3 Sense of responsibility, efficacy and autonomy

Impact on young people's sense of responsibility, efficacy and autonomy was referenced in 13 of the reviewed sources. Opportunities for young people to give their voice were felt to draw on young people's **maturity** and responsibility in making a **valuable contribution**. For example, designated young people may be responsible for seeking and reflecting the views of their peers. The literature also suggested that participating young people were encouraged to be more **accountable** as they had a greater hand in developing the future.

Box 10

Sense of responsibility, efficacy and autonomy: Examples

Inspiring Schools: Impact and Outcomes – taking up the challenge of pupil participation (Davies *et al.*, date)
The study aimed to search for evidence of the impact of student participation (involvement in decision-making) in schools and colleges. Seventy-five studies, mainly in the UK, were scrutinised. Enhanced agency and efficacy was one impact identified by the review; '*students felt they could influence events and school structure and had a greater sense of direction of their own lives*'.

Engaging Young People in Local Democracy (Cleaver and Kerr, 2006)
The research is a qualitative study of good practice at local authority level in engaging children and young people in democracy. Five case studies explored the impacts of youth engagement that is built into LA practice. In one case study as a result of increased involvement there is a growing sense that young people can make a positive difference and that they have a responsibility in the democratic process.

3.2.4 Communication and collaborative skills

In 12 of the reviewed sources, references were made to impacts on young people's collaborative and communicative skills. A range of skills were felt to be developed as a result of increased participation and voice, including: **communication skills**, debating, negotiating, compromising, speaking (including increased classroom participation), listening (to others views), **decision making**, problem solving, critical and **thinking skills** and **team work**.

Box 11

Collaborative skills: Examples

Young Voices: guidelines on how to involve children and young people in your work (The National Children's Office, The Children's Rights Alliance, The National Youth Council of Ireland, 2005)
A set of guidelines are presented, backed by case study evidence, in order to encourage agencies and organisations to explore ways of developing participatory cultures. The report suggests, '*involvement in decision-making brings direct benefits to children and young people themselves. They gain by learning skills such as teamwork, negotiating, problem solving and influencing. They obtain knowledge of how policy is made and how organisations work. They learn to engage with adults as partners and their confidence and self-esteem may be enhanced through participation*'.

A Pilot Study to evaluate the impact of the student participation aspects of the citizenship order on standards of education in secondary schools (Hannam, 2001)
[An empirical report – details outlined in Box 1] A young person purports, '*It has helped me learn to listen to different points of view, negotiate and make compromises*'.

3.2.5 Civic and political competence

A further common impact (cited in 12 of the 24 sources here) was the development of young people's civic and political competence. Through various participatory activities young people were able to build citizenship and community skills and values and develop their political awareness and **understanding of the democratic process**. Having experienced a role in decision making and voicing their perspectives, young people were also more likely to participate in future civic and political activity and become **more active citizens**. As has already been mentioned, the sense that young people felt empowered to contribute, motivated this long term commitment, as youth voice becomes purposeful and meaningful. (Many of these impacts are noted in a 'typology' of impacts in Kirby *et al*., 2003.)

Box 12

Civic and political competence: Examples

Integrating Youth Voice in Service-Learning (Fredericks *et al*., 2001)
This American paper examines the rationale for the implementation of youth voice in service-learning initiatives. It presents a series of good practice case study programmes in which youth voice has been included. The paper draws on other authors (Lesko and Tsourounis, 1998) to advocate that '*Studies in the field of service-learning indicate that youth are more likely to benefit from and remain engaged in community activities if they are involved prior to their teenage years'* .

Young people as competent citizens (Checkoway et al., 2003)
The research documents the interim findings from a series of case studies of projects aiming to increase youth participation in community based organisations in the US. The authors conclude that young people can and have created community change. Impacts on young people's civic and social development were also identified; '*Youth participation is strengthening their social development, by increasing their substantive knowledge, practical skills, civic competencies and sense of social responsibility'*.

Inspiring Schools: Impact and Outcomes – taking up the challenge of pupil participation (Davies *et al*., date)
The study aimed to search for evidence of the impact of student participation (involvement in decision-making) in schools and colleges. Seventy-five studies were scrutinised. The authors found young people's interpersonal and political skills were enhanced through increased voice; '*Participation in school and outside school was an apprenticeship in democracy, where skills of speaking, listening to the views of others, advocacy, argument, negotiation, compromise and team work could be practised*'. The review reported findings that students became more active citizens and that they were more likely to vote in the future.

Young people's own voices in the reports of Hannam (2001) and Cleaver and Kerr (2006) respectively, also speak of the impacts on their civic and political competence and motivation:

'*… now I'm on the school council I have become really interested in politics and how you get things done..*' (Young person).

> *'Politics isn't compulsory, you learn a bit about it in Citizenship, but through Youth Parliament you are going to, without realising it, learn about the things that are going to help you when you are able to vote'* (Young person).

3.2.6 New knowledge and skills

In addition to the development of collaborative and civic skills, ten sources identified that engaging the voice of young people had other impacts on their knowledge and skills. Specifically, the literature alluded to the development of **career-relevant skills** and preparation for adult and working life as a positive impact of involving young people's voice.

In a smaller number of the documents impacts of young people's participation were identified in terms of gathering **new knowledge about a topic** or skill, for example, young researchers. Other new knowledge and skills were derived from the process and activity of increased youth participation, such as **increased knowledge of an art form or media**, where young people were using various mediums to convey their voice and perspectives.

Box 13

New knowledge and skills: Examples

Building resilience in young people through meaningful participation (Oliver, Colin, Burns and Nicholas, 2006)
The paper describes the 'Reach Out' online mental health support site and how it has engaged the voice and partnership of young people experiencing mental health problems in developing the site and supporting others. The youth ambassadors work collaboratively with staff to develop the content of the 'Reach Out' site. This regularly involves the young people researching and collating information on a range of mental health, social and health issues. The youth ambassadors are also able to identify areas in which they would like more training to develop their skills, which may include presentation skills, media campaigning and interpersonal skills.

Children and young people's inclusion in public decision-making (Partridge, 2005)
The article compares two examples of projects developing the participation and inclusion of children and young people in decision making. One of the projects enables young people to manage a small pot of funds designated for improving children and young people's access to play, leisure and social activities out of school. The findings from an impact survey of all Children's Panel members showed that there were significant changes in young people's confidence, knowledge and skills. Young people learned about the value of money and developed the skills of planning and allotting the funds. They were also found to experience an enhanced sense of importance and developed their ability to make friends more easily.

3.2.7 Attendance

Six of the reviewed sources identified that involving children and young people had positive impacts on school attendance and **reducing the rates of exclusion**. The literature suggests that improved attendance appears to be a sequential outcome from a number of the aforementioned impacts. For instance, if young people have raised self-esteem, improved personal and social skills or an enhanced sense of ownership and responsibility for the school they are likely to be more **motivated to attend**. Impacts on attendance were documented across a range of sectors, for example, education, community and regeneration and across service development in a range of sectors. This suggests that positive impacts on school attendance can be generated by increased voice and participation outside of school.

Box 14

Attendance: Examples

A Pilot Study to evaluate the impact of the student participation aspects of the citizenship order on standards of education in secondary schools (Hannam, 2001)
The study reported that the overall rate of permanent exclusions from the 12 'student participative' schools is significantly lower than for otherwise 'similar' schools. Student survey results found 84% of students feel significantly more motivated or interested in school through their participation. One young person's comment hints at the underlying reason for this improved motivation; '..Being a Year 9 council rep and going to school council meetings makes me feel like a person and not just a tick on the register'.

Participation in Practice: Children and Young people as partners in change (Willow, 2002)
The book contains a number of case studies of participatory projects operated in conjunction with The Children's Society. One such project was a school walk-in help line where young people could go to discuss problems (e.g. bullying). Reflecting on the impacts of the project, one young person comments '*The Children's Society helps children stay in school. They show them that education is important in life and also that children are more free. They can achieve something, a goal. They have people to listen to their problems and have someone who is going to be there*'.

3.2.8 Achievement

In just under a fifth of the literature impacts from the increased involvement of young people's voice were identified on the young people's achievement and motivation to achieve. There is some evidence that in schools with high levels of student participation **attainment in GCSEs** is **enhanced**. Other literature noted young people's increased motivation towards school as a result of having opportunities to give their voice. Hannam (2001) found young people attributed their increased motivation for learning and school to a growing sense of involvement, investment and **control over their education**. Ultimately, increased participation opportunities would seem to render

learning and education **more purposeful and meaningful** for the young people.

Box 15

Achievement: Examples

A Pilot Study to evaluate the impact of the student participation aspects of the citizenship order on standards of education in secondary schools (Hannam, 2001)
[An empirical report – details outlined in Box 1] The 12 'student participative' schools have collectively and consistently shown attainment at 5 A*-C Grades at GCSE that is significantly better than would be expected in otherwise 'similar schools'.

Inspiring Schools: Impact and Outcomes – taking up the challenge of pupil participation (Davies *et al.*, date)
This review of the evidence of the impact of student participation (involvement in decision-making) found qualitative teacher-evidence of increased academic motivation as a result of increased participatory activity. One teacher commented that students were '*more focused children who settled into lessons more happily*'.

3.2.9 Behaviour

Positive impacts on young people's behaviour as a result of increased involvement were reported in five of the reviewed pieces of the literature. The literature evidenced improvements to young people's school behaviour, for example, **reduced violent behaviour**, as a result of increased participation. Impacts were also identified in terms of **reductions to young people's risk behaviour**, such as criminal behaviour, drug use and teenage pregnancy. This impact would seem to stem from previously mentioned impacts in other areas. Increased motivation and confidence, the capacity and responsibility to contribute and succeed, enhanced skills of communication and feeling more mature and trusted are all likely to correspond with improved behaviour. Young people themselves recognise such impacts, as is outlined in the exemplars in Box 16 below.

Box 16

Behaviour: Examples

Involving Children and Young People in Regeneration: Learning from Young Voices (Kirby, 2001)
This report is an evaluation of an initiative involving children and young people in regeneration decision making over three years. The evaluation considers the outcomes achieved. One outcome on children and young people, reported by support workers, was reduced involvement in crime. Some young people themselves felt that the project kept them off the streets and kept them out of trouble with the police and other adults.

Inspiring Schools: Impact and Outcomes – taking up the challenge of pupil participation (Davies *et al.*, date)
In this literature review of the evidence of impacts from student participation in schools and colleges, volunteering activity was found to be associated with reduced risk behaviours such as, teenage pregnancy and drug use. The authors suggest volunteering and participation activity offers young people a more constructive avenue to direct their energy. The review found successful participation activity was typified by a school ethos of care and treating young people as responsible, mature and active agents, to which they were felt to responded positively.

A Pilot Study to evaluate the impact of the student participation aspects of the citizenship order on standards of education in secondary schools (Hannam, 2001)
In Hannam's study the voice of young people themselves confirms a positive impact on behaviour from participatory activity; '*A lot has come out of the school council. I used to have problems interacting with other students, many fights, I didn't think I'd make it through school. The school council has helped me to lean to talk to people, made me see I could do things, do stuff in my life which gave me the conviction to try in class*' (Year 11 boy, school councillor).

3.2.10 Negative impacts

A minority of the literature documented negative impacts of youth participation on the young people themselves (i.e. five sources). Young people were found to experience **disillusionment and disempowerment** from tokenistic involvement and a lack of real impact on policy and practice. In addition, one piece of literature noted the **extra commitment and time pressures** placed on young people involved in giving their voice, and suggested this may impact negatively on individuals' other priorities.

Box 17

Negative impacts: Examples

Has service user participation made a difference to social care services (Carr, 2004)
This summary brings together the key themes and findings from a synthesis of six literature reviews on the impact of user-participation on change and improvement in social care services. The review claimed the evidence suggested little impact on decision making as a result of children and young people's voice. Indeed the review found negative impacts on young people - '*When little or nothing is communicated back to participants, this can have a negative effect on their motivation, trust and confidence*'.

Children as researchers (Brownlie *et al.*, 2006)
The aim of this project was to explore the problems and possibilities of incorporating a 'children as researchers' perspective into the agenda of government social research in Scotland. The authors suggested that the project raised concerns that the involvement of children and young people may be disempowering because of the less than direct relationship between research and policy.

3.2.11 Impacts on young people: key findings

The voice of young people is regarded as having impact on young people themselves and there are **many illustrations of positive impacts** to be found in the literature. Of the 26 pieces of literature reviewed, 23 of these identified impacts on young people in some way.

From the literature reviewed the **impacts on young people** would seem to be **diverse**. Young people are reported to experience the impacts of having increased voice at a **personal, school and wider community and societal level.**

A third of the literature sought young people's own views about the impacts of increased participation. There appeared to be little difference in the types of impacts reported by young people themselves and those predicted by adults, thus giving weight to the diversity of impacts identified in this review.

3.3 Impacts for key groups

Just under half of the reviewed literature (i.e. 12 sources) referenced impacts on key groups of young people as a result of increased involvement. Such key groups included, Looked After Children, disabled young people, children with mental health issues and vulnerable (including those living in conflict in Northern Ireland) and homeless young people.

Little difference was found in the literature between the impacts on all young people and those on key groups as a result of increased participation and voice. However, impacts on young people's sense of responsibility, efficacy and autonomy, new knowledge and skills, and behaviour, as well as negative impacts, seemed slightly more likely to be mentioned in relation to key groups (i.e. in the reviewed literature these were all mentioned in a larger number of sources looking at key groups than for literature looking at all young people). There are no impacts that are the sole realm of key groups.

Box 18

Impact on key groups: Examples

Youth participation in public policy at municipal level (Checkoway *et al.,* 2005)
The paper examines the San Francisco Youth Commission as an example of youth participation. In documenting the effects of the commission on the young people involved the author writes; *'It enabled a homeless youth to address homelessness and commit to a public service carer. It provided marginal students with new knowledge and skills, and motivated them to attend college. It provided organisational and community experiences that are unavailable in the school curriculum. It offered opportunities for youth to develop new relationships and collaborate across class and cultural boundaries'.*

3.4 Discussion

A number of key findings, issues and questions were raised by this review.

Key findings

- The literature suggests the engagement of the voice of young people can have **diverse impacts** on the young people involved. The range of impacts found in the reviewed literature includes those at a **personal, school and wider community and societal level**.

- A question is raised, is it possible that these impacts **might be distinctive** to the processes of involving young people and young people's voice. The literature review would suggest there is a need for **more opportunities for youth participation** in order to achieve these kinds of positive impacts on young people.

- The literature from this current review suggests that the **impacts on young people may vary according to the type of participatory activity**. Thus, it is suggested there is a need for further exploration of what participatory activities and approaches elicit the greatest and most desirable impacts on young people. Further knowledge about this relationship is particularly important given that at least some of the impacts identified here seem to be sequential. Positive impact from young people's voice would seem to require a genuine valuing of young people's contribution, supported by an understanding of *how* to involve young people.

- There may be an **intertwined relationship between the impact on policy and practice and impact on young people** as a result of young people's voice. There is some evidence to suggest that where there has been limited impact on policy and practice from the voice of young people there is more likely to be fewer, or even negative, impacts on the young people themselves. As Bryson (2003, p.225) argues, '*participation is not an outcome in itself*'. Impact on policy and practice as a result of youth-voice may be a requirement in order to impact on young people themselves. The majority of literature identifying positive impacts on young people also cited impact on policy and practice as a result of young people's voice.

Methodological issues with youth-impact evaluation

- There are a number of methodological issues surrounding evaluation of the impact on young people. Firstly, identifying young people's voice as the **direct cause of impact is problematic,** as impact is often based on perceptual reports.

- Secondly, there appears to be **no systematic approach to evaluating the impacts on young people**.

- Thirdly, given that only a third of the literature reviewed drew on young people's own perceptions of the impacts of greater involvement, there would seem to be a relative **lack of youth voice in evaluating the impact**.

Future research questions

- Although many areas of impact on young people were highlighted in the literature there was little evaluation of the **longevity of impacts**, suggesting a crucial area of future research.

- Although tentative, there was some evidence from this review that the impacts on young people vary according to the **sector** where participation takes place. For example, slightly more impacts on young people were identified by literature concerned with the Education and Community/regeneration sector than service development across all sectors and health and social care. Perhaps this variation is related to a difference in the type of activity and process used in the respective sectors, calling again for the need for further research into the activity/process-impact relationship.

4 Current activities involving the voice of young people

4.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to present a snap shot of current activities (such as research, projects and initiatives) that in different ways capture, utilise or promote the voices of young people. A postal request was sent to relevant organisations (see Appendix 1) asking if they could direct us towards work in this area. As well as highlighting published work, which was referenced in earlier chapters, the postal request also generated information on research/projects that were about to start or were ongoing endeavours. In addition to the sources identified by the postal request, the research team also uncovered other activities via searches of relevant websites.

The chapter begins by providing details of current research activity. This is followed by a presentation of various initiatives which seek to highlight the voices of young people, either by supporting young people is this process (e.g. through youth panels, forums, etc) or by providing professionals with the necessary skills and knowledge to embark on successful consultation with children and young people.

It is important to note that the activities listed here are not intended to represent a complete audit of all that is being undertaken in this particular field. Rather, they are illustrative of the kinds of work that are currently underway in 2006 and therefore signal the present day climate in relation to children's participation.

4.2 Current research

The postal request highlighted a small number of research projects with a participatory element, drawing on the voices of young people. Table 4.1 provides details, with website addresses for further information. Undoubtedly there will be many other research projects underway which aim to gather the opinions of young people. However, the degree to which young people are involved in research is seen to vary. Whilst some projects merely seek to canvass the views of the young through discussion groups and questionnaires, other projects place young people at the heart of the research, in such a way as to influence its direction and approach. For example, young people may be enlisted as data collectors, leading consultations with other young people or as members of advisory groups (see the Reaction project and Respect? The Voice behind the hood).

One topical piece of research is currently being administered by Directgov (the online government website). The United Nations Convention on the

Rights of the Child did much to stimulate the recent wave of participatory activity and a survey is being run to find out whether young people actually feel that their views are being taken into consideration in the UK (in line with the requirements of the Convention).

Table 4.1   Current research activity

Organisation/s involved	About the research	How the pupils voice is obtained	Publication details	Further information
Directgov	**Title:** Have your say on your rights **Purpose**: An online survey to find how whether the rights of young people are being taken into consideration in the UK. Responses will be used in a report about the UKs commitment to promoting the rights of children and in the future will influence decision making that affects the lives of children. **Age range:** under 18 years	An online survey	July 2007	http://www.direct.gov.uk/YoungPeople/YoungPeopleArticles/fs/en?CONTENT_ID=10040835&chk=e9yUtX
The British Youth Council in partnership with Youth Net	**Title of project:** Respect?: The voice behind the hood: Young people's views on anti-social behaviour, the media and older people. **Purpose**: To give young people a voice on issues which they say affect them and to ascertain their views on the above. **Age range:** 12-25 years.	Survey of 747 young people. Young people involved in the Respect? advisory group presented the research findings and recommendations to MPs and decision-makers.	A report was published in July 2006 and the British Council are currently working on taking the recommendations forward.	http://www.byc.org.uk/submenu.asp?id=3&menuid=12&subid=7
Youth Action Network	**Title of project:** The Reaction project **Purpose:** Project is looking at the effect of volunteering on young people and the community **Age range:** 16-24 years	This is a youth led, participative piece of research using focus group and national survey.	Not known	www.projectreaction.org.uk
National centre for Social Research	**Title of project:** Children's participation in survey research **Purpose:** Project is looking at the extent to which children and young people have different views about how survey research should be conducted with them. The NCSR will use the findings to consider whether they should change their approaches and good practice guidelines. **Age range:** 7-14 years	Eight group discussions with children and young people.	Spring 2007	www.natcen.ac.uk

Institute of Education (supported by Geographical Association)	**Title:** Young people's Geographies **Purpose:** Aims to involve students in the process of curriculum making. The project will begin to consider how to utilise students' lived geographies to give them access to a relevant and more 'owned' experience in school geography **Age range**: 11-18	Specific details not provided although the project aims to 'establish conversations between young people, academic geographers, geography teachers and geography teacher educators that will inform a dynamic process of curriculum construction in schools'	Not known (project has just started)	
Campaign for learning	**Title of project:** Learning to learn in school action research project **Purpose**: To help support schools support their pupils to become committed successful lifelong learners. The learning to learn is a major action research project which is exploring the impact of teaching pupils how they learn. **Age range**: primary and secondary	Action research includes the use of pupil view templates, pupil attitudinal questionnaires, pupils as researchers.	6 year project, launched in 2000. Findings from phases 1 and 2 available online.	www.campaignforlearning.org.uk

4.3 Current participation activities

Earlier in the report it was noted that many organisations now have embedded structures and practices to ensure that children and youth people can have their say. Indeed, at both national and local level there now appears to be an accepted ethos of participation and consultation, with the existence of posts such as 'participation officers', 'youth empowerment officers' and units dedicated to securing the involvement of young people in decision making.

Table 4.2 documents some of the different ways for young people to register their views. Typically, this entails membership of panels or networks which meet on a regular basis to discuss issues that matter to young people, giving them a chance to express their views. Amongst these activities are well established structures such as the UK Youth Parliament and shorter term initiatives such as a series of consultations with children on the proposed alterations to the London Plan. In terms of age range, participation spans from young people aged 8 to 21. At the heart of all these activities is a commitment to:

> *Bringing the voice of young people to a wider audience.*
>
> Children's Express

> *Allowing young people to influence policies that affect them.*
>
> Lambeth Youth Council

As well as providing the means to register a viewpoint, several of the organisations/activities also recognise that young people need to receive the appropriate support and training to facilitate their involvement. For instance, the British Youth Council includes a strand of work which focuses on young people's skill development to build their confidence for playing a leading role in their organisations work (e.g. a youth forum). They offer a national programme of courses, as well as recruiting and supporting young people to assist in the delivery of the training. Similarly, Youth Bank, a grantmaking initiative run 'by young people for young people' also offers a range of development opportunities– 'to learn about and participate in their own community, to develop new skills'.

It should be noted that in addition to the broader process of canvassing the opinions of young people, panels, forums and networks are also involved in specific projects and campaigns.   The British council has involved young people in campaigns on lowering the voting age to 16, the Anti-Social Behaviour Bill and the National Union of Students Funding the Future campaign, which calls for an end to tuition fees. Meanwhile, through the UK Youth Parliament, young people have been working with the Metropolitan Police Service to alter their Standard Operating Procedure on Stop and Search to ensure young people are treated with respect on the streets. At a more local

level, peer inspectors from Lambeths Youth Council visited youth centres to see if they were being run the way young people wanted them to be.

For further information on these initiatives, website links are provided in Table 4.2

Table 4.2   Current participation activities

Organisation/s involved	About the project	How the pupils voice is involved/promoted	Further information
National Children's Bureau	**Title:** Young people plan for climate change **Purpose:** A new project from the Greater London Authority and NCB aims to gather children's and young people's views on climate change. **Age range** : 9-18 years	NCB's Participation Unit will facilitate and deliver five consultations with children and young people on proposed alterations to the London Plan – the Mayor's spatial development strategy for the capital. The project aims to give children and young people from a wide range of backgrounds a clear understanding of the London Plan and the opportunity to feed in their views on proposed alterations.	http://www.ncb.org.uk/Page.asp?originx_7166uz_65053258113675j7r_200611153623k Following the five workshops, children and young people will present their findings at an event in December 2006 at City Hall. Learning materials and a teaching plan will also be produced and posted on the Greater London Authority website.
National Children's Bureau	**Title**:Young NCB **Purpose**: A free membership network for all children and young people supported by the National Children's Bureau. **Age range:** 17 years and under	Young NCB is run by an Advisory Group of young people and gives its members the chance to speak out and take action on issues such as safety, sex and relationships, schools and education, bullying	http://www.ncb.org.uk/Page.asp?sve=786
Children's Rights Alliance for England	**Title:** CRAE's Young People's Panel **Purpose:** Panel advises the policy and change officer and helps to decide CRAE's advocacy priorities. The Panel currently has 25 members **Age range:** 10-17 years	Panel members are invited to attend regular meetings and residentials. They will also be called upon to represent CRAE e.g. being consulted on Government documents and helping to interview new team members.	http://www.crae.org.uk/cms/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=200&Itemid=139

British Youth Council	**Title**: The British Youth Council (BYC) **Purpose:** Promotes the active citizenship of young people, working with them to develop their skills and abilities to participate in decision-making and encouraging young people to work together towards collective action. **Age range:** not specific	The BYC provide young people from all over the UK with support, training and advice to equip them with the skills they need to play an active part in campaigning and lobbying at all levels. Website includes a section 'Get Active' which provides information on how young people can get involved e.g. joining a campaign, setting up a youth council.	http://www.byc.org.uk/mainbyc.asp?id=3
Learning and Teaching Scotland	**Title:** Education for Citizenship Young People's Advisory Group (YPAG) **Purpose:** Aim of the group is to comment on and influence work on education for citizenship. **Age range:** 14-18 years	The group meets three times a year and has direct input to the work of the education for citizenship team and decision making on national curriculum initiatives.	www.ltscotland.org.uk/citizenship/about/participation/youngpeopleadvisory group.asp
YouthBank (supported by British Youth Council, Changemakers, Community Foundation Network , National Youth Agency, Princes Trust)	**Title:** YouthBank **Purpose:** A grant making initiative run by young people for young people. *'YouthBank is unique in that it is young people themselves who make decisions about how local Youth Banks are managed and run through a board of young people, also direct the UK wide programme'.*	'*From the beginning, young people have been heavily involved in the decision making and delivery of Youth Bank UK. Some young people are managing Youth Bank UK now and we are all working hard towards independence when young people alone will manage the work of YouthBank UK*'	www.youthbank.org.uk
The UK Youth Parliament	**Title:** UK Youth Parliament **Purpose:** Aims to give young people a voice, which will be heard and listened to by local and national government, providers of services for young people and other agencies who have an interest in the views and needs of young people. **Age range:** 11-18 years	The UKYP has a rolling programme - meet on an annual basis, and give the young people of the UK a chance to express their views and concerns at the highest levels. Currently have over 300 elected MYPs. MYPs represent both young men and women, including young people from a variety of ethnic backgrounds, and with physical and learning disabilities.	http://www.ukyouthparliament.org.uk/

Children's Express	**Title:** Children's Express **Purpose:** UK-wide news agency producing news, features and comment by young people for everyone. **Age range:** 8-19 years	Young people research and write stories on issues that are important to them for publication in national and local newspapers, magazines, television and radio. The aim of Children's Express, a registered charity, is to bring the voice of young people to a wide audience. Children's Express is a place where young people: make the decisions and take responsibility; influence adult opinion; discover new opportunities. More than 500 young people in six UK cities participated in Children's Express projects last year.	http://www.childrens-express.org/aboutus/index.htm
Lambeth Council	**Title:** Lambeth Youth Council **Purpose**: The Lambeth Youth Council is run by young people for young people and exists to: highlight issues of concern to young people; allow young people to influence policies that affect them; make a difference by initiating special projects; train young people to make a positive effect in their communities **Age range:** 13 to 21 years	Youth Council meetings are held once a week. In addition members take part in projects such as: designing lesson plans from a young person's perspective to best convey the appropriate messages to reduce teenage pregnancy rates; developing materials and workshops to train police officers how to talk to young people properly when conducting stops and searches; and leading or taking part in a wide range of consultations on youth issues and developing links with many local policy bodies	http://www.lambeth.gov.uk/Services/CouncilDemocracy/YouthCouncil/
Young Minds	**Title:** Thoughts allowed **Purpose**: The project uses drama-based workshops to share information and raise awareness of mental health with young people from black and minority ethnic groups. Young people have been involved in the development of the workshops and accompanying materials. They also decided on the project name – 'thoughts allowed'.	A full weekend of training involving young people took place in Feb 2006. As a result, the idea of producing some form of poster was agreed. It was proposed that this will provide a 'prop' around which role play and information sharing can take place. The poster and some new information cards about mental health are currently being worked on by the young people with assistance of a designer.	www.youngminds.org.uk/thoughtsallowed/new.php

4.4 Support for professionals

Given the recent surge in youth participation, it is not surprising that a series of resources have emerged that seek to support professionals working in this arena. The vast majority appear to concentrate of the process of participation – e.g. how to involve children and best practice in eliciting their views. Less common are materials concerned with measuring the impact of their unique contribution and involvement.

Starting first with resources which focus mainly on the participation process, Ready Steady Change is a set of training materials and tools to increase childrens' and young people's effective participation in decision making. In this particular instance, there are materials (e.g. handbooks, newspapers) for use by both children and adults which aim to increase the skills, knowledge and confidence of all those involved in participation. The 'Building a culture of participation' handbook arose from a piece of research looking at the practices of 29 organisations in seeking the views of young people. The handbook and accompanying research report aim to stimulate thinking and provide useful ideas about how to actively involve children and young people within services and policy making. Young Minds and Save the Children have both produced materials relevant to their respective fields which deal with participation issues. For example, in the Young Minds publication, 'Putting Participation into Practice' readers are presented with a checklist of issues to consider in developing user participation in mental health services. Save the Children offers several resources/guides covering topics such as interviewing children, equipping young children to make choices and an activity pack 'Participation – spice it up'.

On a broader level, Participation Works is an online gateway which deals with all aspects of the participation agenda.   It is part of a programme of work driven by the Children and Young People's Participation Partnership (comprised of six leading agencies in children and young people's participation). Amongst other things, the gateway provides access to training resources, opportunities to connect with networks of practitioners and a forum for finding out about new thinking and ideas. Launched in 2005 this online resource aims to bring together the participation community and ensure that experiences and knowledge are shared. No doubt this important development will contribute to the effectiveness of future participatory work.

As mentioned earlier, attention has only recently turned towards measuring and documenting the impact of involving young people in decision making and consultation. Whilst there is a substantial body of literature on developing good practice in participation activities, there are far fewer tools for calibrating impact. However, the arrival of What's changed? (a tool for mapping the impact of participation activity) may go some way to addressing this imbalance. The tool provides a template for organisations to record evidence of listening, planning and change resulting from young people's participation.

Evidence is invited from three sources – from the organisation, from young people involved and from other young people in the community. In order to disseminate the benefits of participation, organisations are invited to submit their completed templates and these can be viewed online under the Every Child Matters outcomes. The best examples are also showcased in the Young People Now magazine.

Table 4.4   Support for professionals

Organisation/s involved	About the project	How the pupils voice is involved/promoted	Further information
The Children and Young Peoples Participation Partnership (includes British Youth Council, Carnegie Young Peoples Initiative, the Childrens Rights Alliance for England, the National Children's Bureau, the National Youth Agency and Save the Children)	**Title**: Participation Works **Purpose**: "*Participation Works is an online gateway to the world of children and young people's participation*" The gateway was launched in October 2005 to improve the way practitioners, organisations, policy maker and young people access and share information about involving children and young people in decision making	The site offers a series of resources participation which enable users to: 1) connect with networks of practitioners; 2) learn about policy and rights; 3) access training resources for children, 4) young people and adults; 5) find out about new thinking and ideas; 6) map and plan for organisational change; find out about impacts of participation	www.participation.works.org.uk
Children's Rights Alliance for England	**Title:** Ready steady change **Purpose:** The Department for Education and Skills funded CRAE to develop a comprehensive set of training and tools to increase children's and young people's effective participation in decision-making. "*Ready Steady Change offers training and tools to put children's and young people's wishes, feelings and ideas at the centre of public services*". The materials are aimed at both children and those working with children.	The materials are: 1) Two participation training handbooks: one to increase the skills, knowledge and confidence of children and young people (aged 17 and under); the other to increase the skills, knowledge and confidence of all those working with children and young people. 2) Look what's changing DVD – participation in practice. 3) Ready Steady Change newspapers (one for children and young people; the other for adults) – to get participants thinking about children's rights before they come on the Ready Steady Change course. Children and young people were involved in all aspects of developing the Ready Steady Change programme.	http://www.crae.org.uk/cms/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=202&Itemid=146

National Youth Agency	**Title:** Hear by Right **Purpose**: Hear by Right is a tried and tested standards framework for organisations across all sectors to assess and improve practice and policy on the active involvement of children and young people. The webpage provides case studies of the ways in which different organisations have made use of Hear by Right.	The standards framework in Hear by Right is based on the 'Seven S' model of organisational change: Shared values; Strategy; Structures; Systems; Staff, elected members or trustees; Skills and knowledge and Style of leadership. It relies on self-assessment, divided into three levels of 'emerging', 'established' and 'advanced', with each level building on the last. This ensures that young people's involvement is built in and not just bolted on. Hear by Right has been designed as a practical and flexible toolkit, and comes supplied with a CD-Rom and a pre-prepared PowerPoint presentation to help explain its function.	http://www.nya.org.uk/Templates/internal.asp?NodeID=90031&ParentNodeID=89141
National Youth Agency	**Title:** What's changed tool **Purpose:** What's Changed provides a tool for mapping the impact of participation activity	The What's changed tool seeks evidence of listening, planning and change resulting from children and young people's participation. It can be used to plan participation activity and supervision, as well as to record successful outcomes. Every other week best examples of What's Changed showcased in the *Young People Now* magazine. The website presents examples of completed What changed template under the Every Child Matters outcomes.	http://www.nya.org.uk/Templates/internal.asp?NodeID=92145&ParentNodeID=89141
PK Research consultancy and National Children's Bureau	**Title:** Building a Culture of Participation handbook **Purpose:** Handbook which provides ideas about how to involve children and young people within services and policy making, sets out all the benefits of participation, and guides organisations so that they deliver real, sustainable change that benefits children and young people.	This Handbook draws on the findings of a research study that explored the experiences of 29 organisations in seeking to listen to young people and to take action on what they said. The handbook focuses on how to listen to children and young people so that their views bring about change. It aims specifically to: 1) identify and illustrate the benefits of child and youth participation; 2) guide organisations in thinking about how to create appropriate environments in which children and young people can be involved in meaningful ways, so that their views are listened to and acted upon; 3) help organisations explore how they can develop cultures and infrastructures which sustain and embed participation throughout all their activity	http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/participation/buildingaculture/

Save the Children	**Title:** Various publications on participation (see opposite) **Purpose:** Save the Children promotes children's rights to participate, and tries to fully involve young people in the projects it funds, from design through to implementation. Examples of their work include: 1) enabling children to take part, in UN summits and other major conferences, where they can speak out and influence world leaders 2) funding citizenship education, that helps young people acquire the skills and confidence to play an active part in their community, as well as develop a sense of rights and responsibilities 3) make sure that vulnerable groups such as disabled children and child refugees get an equal chance to participate.	On their website page 'participation and citizenship'; various publications and projects are listed. e.g.: The Good Council Guide Practical guidance on setting up or improving a school council so that students are involved. Starting With Choice Clear guidance on equipping young children, including those with disabilities, to make choices. Children are Service Users Too A practical guide for consulting with children and young people. Never Too Young An information pack for early years workers on participation amongst young children	http://www.savethechildren.org.uk/scuk/jsp/whatwedo/subtheme.jsp?section=equalityrights&subsection=participationcitizenship
Carnegie Trust	**Title:** Carnegie Young People initiative **Purpose:** A programme set up to increase the influence children and young people have over decisions that affect them.	Runs networks for practitioners seeking to improve the way they support young people in influencing decision making Developing impact assessment tools to identify the impact of young peoples participation.	www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk
Consortium of Institutions for Development and Research in Education (CIDREE)	**Title:** Including the student voice in curriculum development and review **Purpose:** An international panel was set up to explore examples of where students have been /are consulted on the curriculum/education policy and the extent to which student opinions are represented in reform proposals or policy statements.	Two forum meetings were held (in 2005-6) where panel members devised a framework for capturing details about involving students in curriculum development e.g. Why listen to and involve young people/How do we listen/ Who do we listen to?	www.cidree.org It is intended that the CIDREE work will produce a protocol for including students in the curriculum review process, which can be accessed via the CIDREE website.

Young Minds	**Title:** Putting Participation into Practice **Purpose:** A guide for practitioners working in services to promote the mental health and well-being of children and young people	It provides three concise sections covering: the policy context of participation, the different models and benefits of participation, and a checklist of issues staff need to consider in developing user participation in their service. The guide also contains a range of case studies of different ways in which young people have already been involved in service development and decision making, with contact details for those who want to find out more.	http://www.youngminds.org.uk/publications/other/participation.php
Youth and Adult learning opportunities, DELLS, Welsh Assembly government	**Title:** Welsh Assembly Government School Council Project **Purpose:** To support schools in developing effective school councils and to promote pupil participation	The website provides information and support materials for adults who are involved in helping to set up and develop a school council.	http://www.schoolcouncilswales.org.uk/en/index_at.asp

4.5 Key findings

- In terms of current research, the degree to which young people are involved in research is seen to vary. Whilst some projects merely seek to canvass the views of the young through discussion groups and questionnaires, other projects place young people at the heart of the research, in such a way as to influence its direction and approach. For example, young people may be enlisted as data collectors, leading consultations with other young people or as members of advisory groups. In this way the pupil voice features in both the planning phases and the subsequent data collection.

- In public life, children and young people appear to have many different avenues for registering their ideas and views on a range of topics. Panels, forums, consultations and networks exist which actively seek to capture the voices of young people.

- Alongside these opportunities, is a wealth of material aimed at supporting professionals who work with young people in a participatory context. Support is given in the form of training manuals, handbooks, guidance booklets and online resources. The majority of this material concentrates on the process of participation – ensuring that professionals are equipped with the appropriate skills and knowledge for consultation activities.   A much smaller subset of material focuses on capturing the impact of dialogue with young people. In particular, the 'What's changed' tool provides a template for organisations to collate evidence on impact from different sources. This resource represents an important advancement as it recognises the need to document impacts and for that impact to be widely disseminated for the benefit of others working in the field.

5 Concluding comments and points for action

In addition to the key findings presented throughout the report, this final section draws out the main messages that have emerged from the literature review.

A growing culture of participation

This research has been undertaken at a time when consultation with the younger generation is generally viewed as a worthy, and indeed necessary process. Their insights and ideas are recognised as valuable and can be used to shape services and policies which affect their lives and others in the community. As a result, organisations have invested considerable energy in making sure that there are systems and structures in place, which give young people a chance to air their views. Similarly, research programmes will often include a strand which collates the perspectives of young people.

Moving beyond participation as a process

It is fair to say that much of the literature has focused on the 'how to' aspect of participation – where the emphasis is on discussing participation as a process. In comparison, much less attention has been paid to the outcomes stemming from this activity. This may have consequences for both the young people involved and for the health of youth participation generally. Whilst the review revealed many ways in which young people can benefit from consultation and participatory activity, it also pointed to negative repercussions where their involvement is viewed as tokenistic, or where they cannot see the tangible results of their input. In these circumstances, there is a risk that young people will become increasingly disillusioned and less willing to take part in the future. At the same time, if the advantages of including young people's voice are not clearly evidenced, then organisations may fail to appreciate the added value it brings and be less inclined to incorporate it into their practices. There is a strong case, therefore, for ensuring that the outcomes of young people's participation are evaluated and recorded, as a matter of course.

Routine evaluation and documentation of impact

The recent creation of the 'What's Changed?' tool [http://www.nya.org.uk] for mapping impact now provides a means by which organisations can review and log the outcomes of participation. It is possible that, over the years, the benefits of involving young people may have been obvious to those involved that they were not routinely reported. However, it is important that this final

stage of the participation process is not overlooked for the reasons outlined above. Only by recording and disseminating the impacts will the practice of consultation and participation evolve further. Whilst the literature review did indeed uncover documentation of impact, the evaluation of that impact was rarely done in a systematic way, nor did it always go far enough (e.g. looking at the wider benefits of young people's involvement in staff recruitment).

Recommendations and points for action

In light of the observations made above, the following recommendations are offered:

- Where young people are involved, organisations should ensure that the outcomes of their involvement are properly evaluated and recorded.
- This evaluation should be comprehensive, inviting contributions from the young people themselves (about the impact on them personally and the advantages of their involvement).
- The impacts arising from young people's input should be tracked in the longer term in order to gauge a fuller picture of their contribution.

Young people's voice is seen as an engine for improvement. But what those improvements are and how they come about as a result of the young people's voice requires more overt evaluation and documentation.

Appendix I – The methodology for the review

i.i   Search strategies

Databases
In order to identify relevant UK and international sources, a range of databases were searched, in the fields of education, sociology, psychology, social care and health. Relevant internet subject gateways and websites were also searched. In addition, other available literature known to the research team was also considered.

The databases searched were:

- Applied Social Sciences Index and Abstracts (ASSIA)
- British Education Index (BEI)
- CERUK (Current Educational Research in the United Kingdom)
- ChildData
- Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)
- International Bibliography of the Social Sciences
- PsycInfo
- Social Care Online
- Social Policy and Practice.

Search terms
Search terms were developed for all databases by using the controlled vocabulary pertinent to each database. **Key words** and search terms were developed to cover the broad headings of: *voice/involvement/participation*, *the 11–16 age range*, *impact/policy/practice*, and *key groups* of young people (see Table A below)[2]. These key words and search terms were **matched to the databases** under consideration, and were employed so as to cover all possible combinations. Where no thesauri were available, or the controlled vocabulary included no appropriate keywords, free-text searching was undertaken.

The searches identified literature published from **2000 onwards**.

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[2] Note that the set of key words and search terms was developed by the NFER librarians and the NFER research team in collaboration with CfBT.

Table A   The key words and search terms used in combination to search each database

Voice / involvement / participation terms	The 11–16 age group terms	Impact / policy / practice terms	Key group terms
Children's Voice	Adolescents	Impact Factors	'asylum seekers' (ft) / Refugees
Pupil Voice	Early Adolescents	'impact' (free text)	Bisexuality / Homosexuality / Lesbianism
Student Voice	Late Adolescents		Black Pupils / Black Students / Black Youth
Youth Voice	Youth	Policy	Boys / Males / Females / Girls
	'young people' (free text)	Policy Development	Caregivers / 'children as carers' (ft)
Student Engagement		Policy Formation	Child Welfare
	Secondary School Pupils	Education Policy	Delinquency
Involvement	Secondary School Students	Government Policy	Early Parenthood
Pupil Involvement		LEA Policy / LA Policy	Ethnic Groups
Student Involvement	'key stage three' (ft)	Public Policy	Gifted and Talented
	'key stage four' (ft)	Social Policy	Gypsies
Participation	'post sixteen' (ft)	Local authority	'homeless children' (ft) / Homeless People
Pupil Participation		Children's Service(s)	Learning Problems
Student Participation	High School Students		'looked after children' (ft)
Youth Participation	Junior High School Students	Classroom Practice	'low income families' (ft) / Low Income Groups
		Educational Practices	Migrant Children / Migrant Youth
Youth Council		School Practices	Mobility / Pupil Mobility / Student Mobility
School Council		Good Practice	Moderate Learning Difficulties
			'NEET' (ft)
'consultation' (ft)			Poverty
		Change	School Phobia / 'school refusal' (ft)
		Educational Change	'sick children' (ft)
		Improvement	Special Education / Special Educational Needs
		Educational Improvement	Special Needs Students
		School Improvement	'teenage mothers' (ft) / 'teenage parents' (ft)
		School Evaluation(s)	Transient Children
		Self-evaluation(s) / Self evaluation(s)	Travellers-Itinerants / 'travellers' (ft)
			Truancy
			'vulnerable children' (ft)
			Young Offender

A postal request to relevant organisations

In addition, in order to obtain as full a picture as possible of the work in this field, further identification of sources was sought via a postal request to relevant individuals, organisations and major funders working in this field.

Organisations were telephoned in order to find out the most relevant named addressee. Requests were sent out to a total of 58 different recipients. In addition, e-mail requests were also sent to other individuals/colleagues known to the research team.

The postal request included a letter, an information sheet about the project, a reply form (see Table Y) and a reply paid envelope.

A total of 12 replies were received from the postal request.

Table Y   The reply form sent out in the postal request

The Voice of Young People: an engine for improvement?

Name of Organisation: **Contact name:** **Telephone:** **E-mail:**	
Title of work/project/study/research:	
Purpose What are the main aims of the work?	
Participants Number of young people, age, gender, ethnicity, etc.	
Geographical region or area (e.g. UK-wide, North East)	
Duration of project Timescale, ongoing, etc	
Method(s) Data collection methods; involving the young people	
Key findings from project (this might include impact on policy; impact on practice; impact on young people)	
Details of any publications from the study, websites or other available information	

Please return using the reply paid envelope to: XYZ

i.ii   Identifying the most relevant sources

Selection process

A three-step selection process was applied to the identified literature, in order to help identify the most relevant sources and findings.

- The first step was applied to the references and abstracts identified from the database search results and postal request replies. These were explored for their pertinence to the review. At this stage, in order to be considered for inclusion, abstracts should highlight at least three of the following areas: the involvement of young people, young people aged 11–16, the impact of young people's voice e.g. on policy or practice, the impact on young people themselves, any key groups. The full sources of items for possible inclusion were then requested from the library or downloaded from the web as appropriate.

- Once obtained, the second step involved considering these sources for their relevance to the review. Information and findings from these publications were briefly summarised onto an Excel spreadsheet against the following headings: UK/international literature, and 11–16/16–19 literature, and sector (e.g. health, community, education, youth work, etc), and impact on policy/practice, and/or impact on young people. In addition, the type of literature was considered. Evidence from research and evaluation was sought, rather than 'anecdotal' or very small scale work. An additional category for other useful information was also completed. Where sources did not fulfill entries into these headings, they were rejected from the review. Reasons for rejection were logged.[3]

- The third step then involved identifying the 24 most pertinent sources[4] – with the chief criteria that the literature to be fully reviewed: presented compelling/concrete evidence of impact on policy/practice *and* on young people; included some sources of international literature; included a range of sectors; included a range of authors. This process identified 12 key sources. Literature with compelling evidence of impact on policy/practice *or* on young people was then also considered. This process identified a further 14 key sources. The sources identified in this third step were then summarised more fully (bibliographies of these works are presented in Appendix III).

Criteria for inclusion in the review

The criteria for inclusion in the review could be summarised as follows:

- evidence from literature published from 2000 onwards

- evidence from research literature and evaluation

- evidence about the impact of the young people's voice

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[3] Note that evidence from a total of 116 sources was logged in step two. Of these, 64 were rejected from further consideration in the review. 52 were further considered. Of these, it was indicated on 11 sources that the full literature was currently unpublished or unobtainable.

[4] Note that the review was designed and costed so as to include up to 24 of the most relevant sources. In the event, 26 sources have been included.

- evidence about young people aged 11–16 (including 11–19 where appropriate)
- a focus on UK-based sources, as well some key international evidence
- the inclusion of evidence from a range of sectors (e.g. health, community, education, youth work, etc).

i.iii   Reviewing the evidence

After the sources had been scoped as described above, the 26 most pertinent to the research objectives were summarised for full review (i.e. those identified by the end of step three as described in Section i.ii above).

A standard template was devised in order to capture relevant information from each source (see Table Z below). The template was filled in for each of the 26 sources. It captured detail about: the evidence, e.g. the project/literature focus, impact on policy, impact on practice, impact on young people, other key findings/recommendations; and the source, e.g. sector, country, participants (age, sample size), methods, timescales, etc.

The template also allowed researchers to review the evidence in terms of: the appropriateness of the analysis that was reported, any author interpretations, any biases/caveats to be aware of, and any corroboration or triangulation of sources.

Once the templates had been completed for each source, a coding system regarding the range of research, findings and impacts was developed and applied to each of the summaries. This process enabled the research team to account for the range of evidence on impact, to locate the evidence in context, and to draw out key themes across the different sources.

i.iv   Reporting the evidence

In order to provide as full a picture of the evidence as possible, the report for the review includes references to publications found in the initial scoping of sources (i.e. steps one and two in Section i.ii above) (i.e. a broad picture) *and* detail from the sources that were fully summarised for the review (i.e. those identified in step three in Section i.ii above) (i.e. detail and examples).

In addition, the postal request revealed a broad range of work being undertaken. Where publications were identified, these were obtained and included in the review if relevant. However, many of the identified 'sources' from the postal request also included websites, internet portals, and information (rather than 'research' literature). These websites have provided useful background information to the review, and where possible, are also referred to in the report.

Table Z   Summary template for reviewing sources

Title: **Author(s):** **Date:** **Publisher:**	
REVIEW OF SOURCE	
Purpose/focus of literature (e.g. as stated in abstract)	
Impact on policy	
Impact on practice	
Impact on young people	
Any other key findings, **conclusions, recommendations** (related to impact on policy/practice)	
DESCRIPTION OF SOURCE	
Sector (e.g. education, health, etc)	
Country/area	
Participants (e.g. sample size, age, ethnicity, key characteristics, etc)	
Method(s) (data collection methods, instruments, etc)	
When data collected (also duration)	
Source/document type (e.g. journal article, website, etc)	
Key references	
REVIEW OF EVIDENCE	
Reviewer's comments • Is the reported analysis adequate and correct? • Are the author's interpretation supported by the evidence? • Are there any biases/caveats raised or to be aware of? • Is there corroboration or triangulation of sources?	
Relevance to review	
Date of review:	**Reviewed by:**

Appendix II – A description of the literature identified in the review

This section describes the literature identified in the review. This includes a brief description of the literature identified in the scoping exercise (i.e. steps one and two in Appendix I, Section i.ii). This is followed by detail from the literature summarised for the review (i.e. the 26 most relevant sources).

ii.i The literature identified in the scoping exercise

In response to Aim a) of the research, we present here a broad view of the literature identified in the scoping exercise.

Aim a) What research on the impact of young people's voice/involvement has been carried out since 2000?

A total of 52 sources were considered for full inclusion in the review (after rejecting 64 sources via the first and second steps of the selection process identified in Section i.ii of Appendix I). This literature covered:

- a range of sectors (e.g. education, social care, community, health, political, etc), although education provided the most common categorization here
- mainly UK-based work
- mainly unspecified age ranges.

ii.ii The literature summarised for the review

In response to Aim b) of the research, we present here some detail from the 26 most relevant sources summarised for the review.

Aim b) In what ways can the research be categorised so as to gain an overview of project focus, participants (e.g. which young people? whose voice, e.g. individual, representative?), age, sample size, methodology (how are the young people listened to?) and substantive area (e.g. education, health, community, etc)?

The 26 most relevant sources that were summarised for the review are described in this section, in terms of:
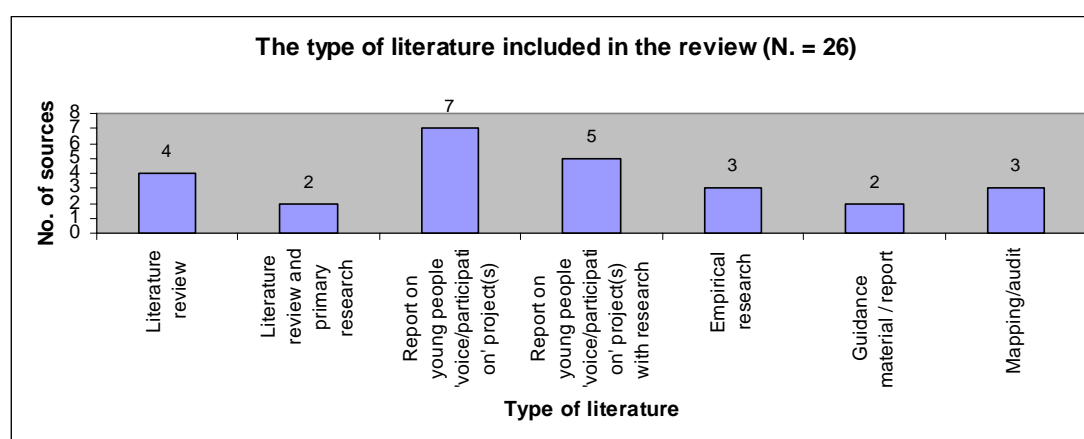
- type of literature
- sector (e.g. education, health, community, youth work, etc)
- date of publication
- country in which the work was undertaken
- duration/timescale of the work

- reference to young people (e.g. age, ethnicity, key groups)
- methods of data collection (e.g. methods, participant numbers, other participants).

a.   Type of literature

Figure A shows the type of literature identified and included in the review. Each classification describes the whole source (i.e. N. = 26).

Figure A   *The type of literature included in the review*

Source: NFER review of the literature into the impact of children and young people's voice, 2006.

The types of literature shown in Figure A are outline below.

- **Literature reviews** (e.g. Davies *et al.*'s review of the evidence of the impact of student participation in schools and colleges; and Kirby and Bryson's, 2002, review of the evaluation and research evidence relating to involving young people in public decision making).

- **Literature reviews with primary research** (e.g. Brownlie *et al.*'s recent, 2006, study on children as researchers as part of the Scottish Parliament's programme of social research. This study had three strands: a mapping of recent projects in Scotland and the rest of the UK; a review of literature relating to children as researchers; and qualitative interviews with researchers, policy makers and young researchers).

- **Descriptions** of young people 'voice/participation' programme(s) and project(s). This is the most common classification of the literature included in the review, with author-inferences and reflections on the project processes and outcomes, but little or no primary research data being explicitly reported. (E.g. Bryson's, 2003, reflections on a two-year youth participation project involving young people in Northern Ireland; and Oliver *et al.*'s, 2006, paper describing the Australian Inspire Foundation's 'Reach Out' programme which aims to enhance young people's resilience and mental wellbeing.)

- **Descriptions** of young people 'voice/participation' programme(s) and project(s) with research. (E.g. Kirby, 2001, who describes Groundwork UK and Save the Children's *Young Voices in Regeneration* initiative and evaluation. The *initiative* involved 500 young people in four areas of the UK over a three-year period; the *evaluation* of the initiative involved over

100 young people, as well as a range of staff in interviews, focus groups and questionnaires).

- **Empirical research** into the impact of young people's 'voice/participation'. This differs from the above classification, as this research is not necessarily linked to a *particular* programme, project or initiative. Instead, studies investigate the impact of young people's voice more broadly. (E.g. Taylor and Johnson, 2002, on the extent to which school councils give students a voice in school matters and bring about change; Hannam's, 2001, investigation into whether high rates of student participation in schools has an effect on school and pupil performance.)

- **Guidance material / report** (e.g. from the UK, the DFES, 2001, core principles for the involvement of children and young people; and from Ireland, The National Children's Office/Children's Rights Alliance/and National Youth Council's, 2005, guidelines on how to involve children and young people in your work).

- **Mapping/audits** of 'participation' (e.g. Oldfield and Fowler's, 2004, mapping of children and young people's participation in England, through a survey of statutory and voluntary sector organisations to establish the levels and ways in which they involve children and young people in public decision making).

b. Sector

The literature included in the review covered a range of sectors, as shown in Figure B. The most common classification covered a range of sectors/across sectors (e.g. children and young people's involvement in 'service' development, in Cavet and Sloper, 2004). Other sectors included:

- **education** (e.g. in-school research and literature, e.g. into school councils, Taylor and Johnson, 2002; citizenship education in secondary schools, Hannam, 2001)

- **health** (e.g. an investigation into the extent and nature of involvement of physically disabled or chronically ill children and young people in local health service development, Sloper and Lightfoot, 2003)

- **social care** (e.g. a literature review by Carr, 2004; and specifically relating to young people in care, in Chamberlain, 2004 and Lewis, 2001)

- **community** (e.g. young people's involvement in community projects and public decision making, Partridge, 2005)

- **youth commission/boards** (e.g. young people's direct involvement in advisory boards, Ambassador programmes, and as commissioners themselves, Oliver *et al*., 2006, Checkoway *et al*., 2005).

Other studies cover a number of overlapping areas, such as education, youth and community (e.g. Fredericks *et al*., 2001); community and regeneration (e.g. Kirby, 2001 and 2003); and 'political' arenas such as local government and local democracy (e.g. Geddes and Rust, 2000) and around 'conflict' (e.g. Bryson, 2003, in Northern Ireland).
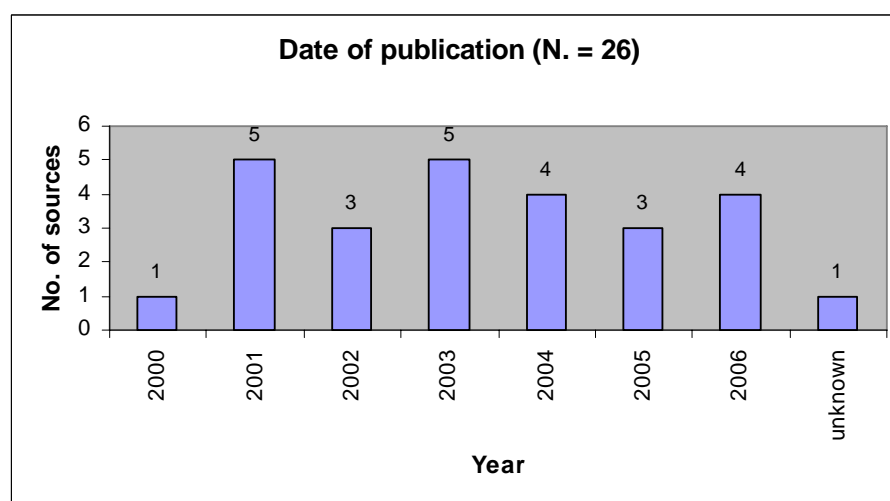
Figure B   The sector to which the literature refers
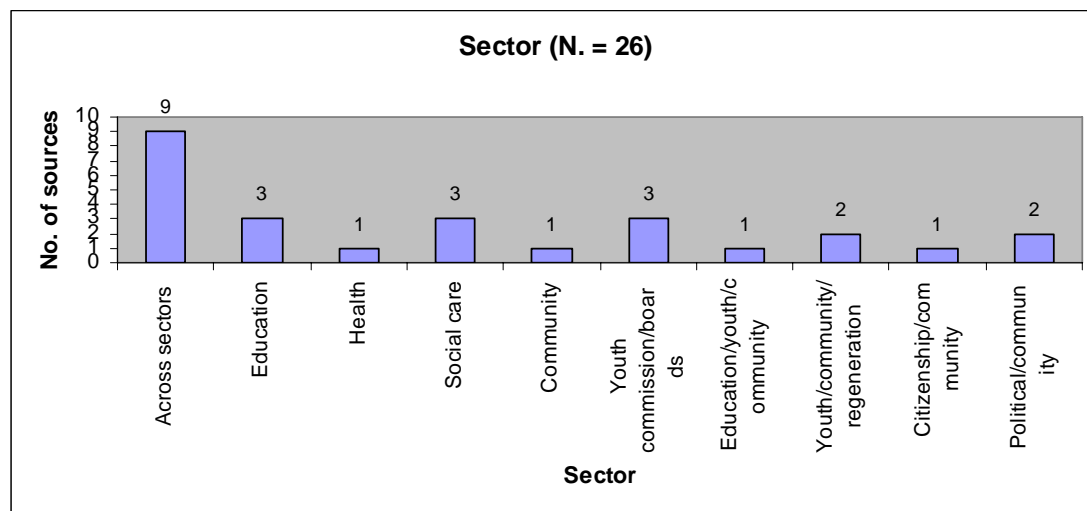
Source: NFER review of the literature into the impact of children and young people's voice, 2006.

c.   Date of publication

The literature searches covered the publication dates 2000–2006. Figure C shows the number of sources of literature included in the review published in each year within this time-period.

The chart shows a fairly even spread of literature per publication year, including very recently published work in this field (i.e. published in 2006). There would seem to be no apparent trends in the type of literature that has been published per year/over time (according to the 26 sources considered here). However, it is perhaps worth noting that the most recent literature included here (e.g. published in 2005 and 2006) has a focus on youth commissioning/youth boards, as well as community and across sectors.

Figure C   The number of reviewed sources published per year

Source: NFER review of the literature into the impact of children and young people's voice, 2006.

d. Country in which the work has been undertaken

Most of the literature included in the review refers to work that has been undertaken in the UK or England specifically. However, there are single sources that refer specifically to Scotland (e.g. Brownlie *et al*., 2006), Northern Ireland (e.g. Bryson, 2003), England and Wales (e.g. Taylor and Johnson, 2002) and Ireland (e.g. The National Children's Office/Children's Rights Alliance/and National Youth Council's, 2005).

The review also includes three sources from the US (e.g. Checkoway *et al*., 2003 and 2005; and Fredericks *et al*., 2006); and one from Australia (Oliver *et al*., 2006).

Where specified, the geographical areas covered in the UK by the work included: London boroughs (e.g. Hackney, Kensington and Chelsea), the Midlands (e.g. Wolverhampton, and Telford and Wrekin), the North West (e.g. Manchester, Liverpool and Bury), the North (e.g. Wakefield), the North East (e.g. Durham and Gateshead), East Anglia (e.g. Norfolk and Cambridgeshire) and the South West (e.g. Devon). Note that these were all indicated by individual sources.

e. Duration/timescale of the work

The duration/timescale of the work was reported in 15 of the 26 sources – as shown in Figure D. Where specified, most of this literature referred to reasonably 'short-term' projects/programmes, e.g. 1–6 months (e.g. Cleaver and Kerr, 2006, Hannam, 2001). Other work was undertaken over a period of one year (or just under a year, i.e. one academic year) (e.g. Kirby, 2003; Neary and Drake, 2006).

The two somewhat longer-term projects both involved children and young people in initiatives to develop their voice to impact on pertinent local and national issues (e.g. conflict in Northern Ireland, in Bryson, 2003, and regeneration in deprived areas in Kirby, 2001).

The four sources classified as work spanning ten years or more refer to literature reviews, considering bodies of evidence from ten or more publication years (e.g. Cavet and Sloper, 2004 refers to literature from 1989–2002).

Figure D   Duration / timescale of the work
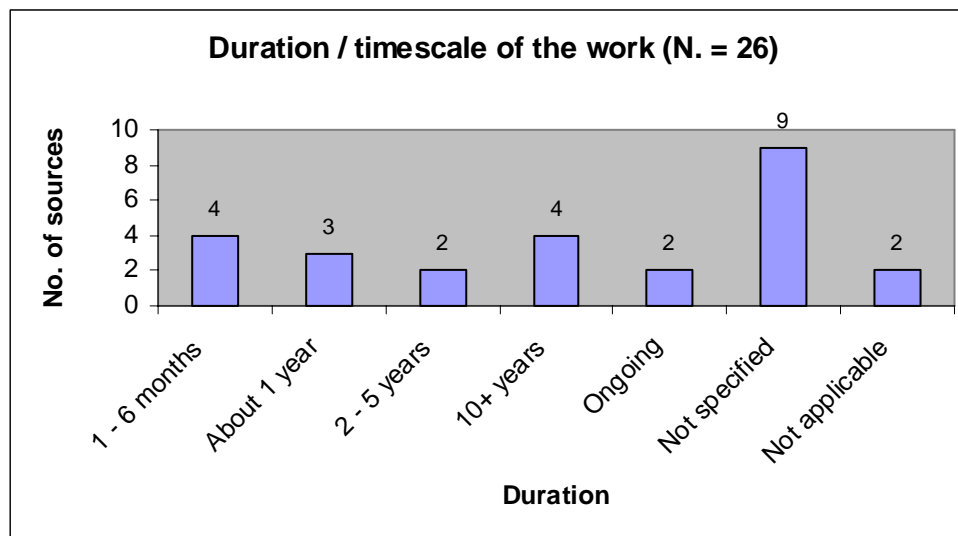
Source: NFER review of the literature into the impact of children and young people's voice, 2006.

f.   Reference to young people in the literature

References to the age range, ethnicity and key groups of young people in the literature were recorded and categorised. However, overall, there was surprisingly little specific reference to any of these arenas (e.g. 17 of the 26 sources were not specific about the age of the 'young people' involved, and 16[5] did not specify any particular key groups of young people to which the work referred).

Young people's age

Where reported, the age range of the young people involved could be specific (e.g. 'secondary schools', such as in Hannam, 2001), or broad (e.g. 5–19, 5–25). There were some variations in the lower and/or upper age limits involved in the projects and research (e.g. 14–23 in Bryson, 2003, 15–21 in Checkoway *et al.*, 2003, 12–23 in Checkoway *et al.*, 2005). Explanations for specific age ranges were not cited.

Ethnicity

The work included in the review rarely reported the young people's ethnicity. Four of the 26 sources did report ethnicity. Two of these sources specified the importance of involving a range of representative ethnic groups. For example, Bryson's (2003) study in Northern Ireland ensured that members of the 'Youth for Youth' group were drawn from urban and rural communities, and mixed in terms of background, religion, gender and ethnicity.

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[5] Note that these 16 sources were not necessarily the same 16 sources as those with non-specific age ranges.

A further source reported a project that was targeted to a particular group, e.g. Checkoway *et al.*, (2003) considered the work of an education and training organisation developing leadership in African-American communities.

And Kirby's (2001) study in areas of local deprivation included young people from different ethnic backgrounds, e.g. black and Asian young people in Hackney, mainly white young people in Wakefield, etc.

Key groups
The literature review includes some examples of work with specific key groups. These include: young people from low income/deprived areas (e.g. Checkoway *et al.*, 2003; Kirby 2001 and 2003), a range of specified vulnerable groups (e.g. those from areas of economic disadvantage, those with additional needs, and young people from rural areas, all in Partridge, 2005), Looked After Children (e.g. Lewis, 2001), physically disabled or chronically ill children (e.g. Sloper and Lightfoot, 2003) and young people from areas/localities of conflict (e.g. Bryson, 2003).
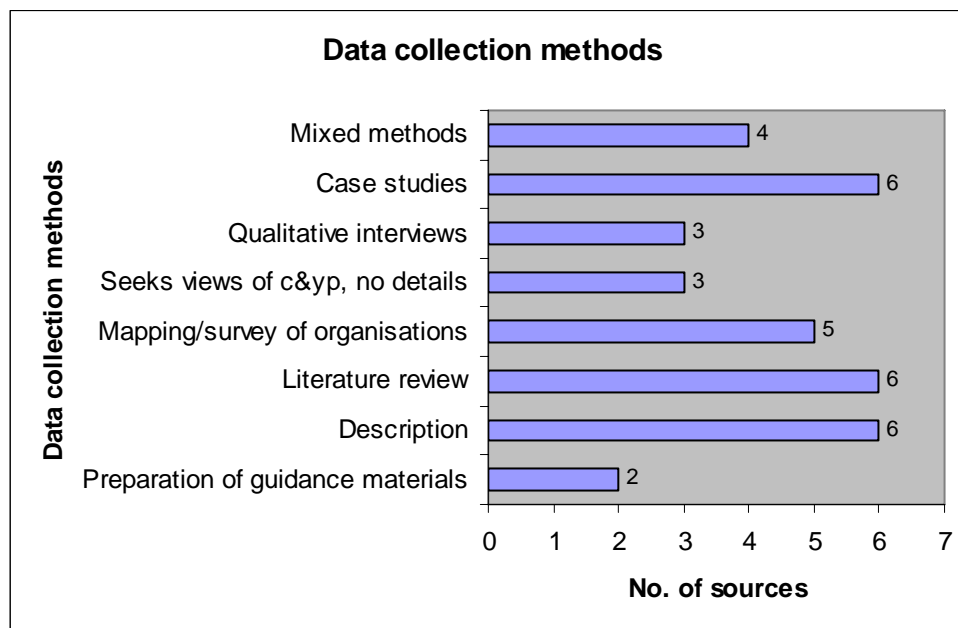
g. Methods of data collection

It was possible to classify the range of data collection methods reported in the literature, and details about the number of young people involved and other participants.

Data collection
Figure E shows the methods of data collection referred to in the literature included in the review. Each source might refer to more than one method, hence the numbers add to more than 26. Overall:

- qualitative approaches are more common than quantitative
- young people's views on impacts are directly gathered through interviews and in mixed method designs involving for example, focus groups, postcard self-complete questionnaires and individual interviews (e.g. Kirby, 2003)
- case studies here describe 'whole cases'/projects, including the views of a range of participants and stakeholders – e.g. case studies of five Local Authorities in England (Cleaver and Kerr, 2006) and case studies of six community-based organisations (Checkoway *et al.*, 2003)
- some of the literature refers to the mapping of services or of 'participation', generally via relatively 'larger'-scale survey of relevant organizations (although not the young people's views themselves) (e.g. Oldfield and Fowler's (2004) survey to over 1,000 statutory and voluntary sector organisations).

Figure E   Data collection methods

Data collection methods

NB: Each source might refer to more than one method of data collection. Hence, the numbers sum to more than 26.
Source: NFER review of the literature into the impact of children and young people's voice, 2006.

The number of young people involved
The number of young people involved in the projects and programmes included in the review was rarely identified. However, for seven of the sources, where empirical or primary research was undertaken, sample sizes were reported.

Overall, the research seemed to involve reasonably small numbers of young people. Four sources involved 11–25 young people in the research (e.g. Neary and Drake, 2006; Lewis, 2001). One study involved fewer than 10 young people, and another 26–50. One study involved over 100 young people in the research, and over 500 in the initiative (Kirby, 2001).

Other participants
Eight of the 26 sources reported a range of other participants involved in the research. These included programme workers, community residents, consultants, parents, carers, support workers, teachers, headteachers, and other stakeholder representatives e.g. from youth organizations, health sector, criminal justice, Local Authorities, and those from the voluntary sector.

Participant numbers varied, depending on the type of research being carried out. For example, mapping of 100+ organisations, through surveys to relevant representatives (e.g. Sloper and Lightfoot, 2003); or individual interviews with community residents (e.g. Kirby, 2001).

2.3   Summary: a description of the literature

A total of 52 sources were scoped for full inclusion in the review (after rejecting 64 other sources). This literature covered:

- a range of sectors (e.g. education, social care, community, health, political, etc), although education provided the most common categorization here
- mainly UK-based work
- mainly unspecified age ranges.

The 26 sources that were summarised and included for full review could be summarised as follows.

- The type of literature included, in rank order, descriptions of programmes and projects, descriptions of programmes with primary research, literature reviews, empirical research, mapping/audits, literature reviews with primary research, and guidance material.

- The literature most commonly referred to a range of sectors/across sectors, followed by education, social care and youth commissioning/boards. There were also references to regeneration, the political arena, health, community and citizenship.

- There was an even spread of literature per publication year (i.e. 2000 – 2006). The most recent literature (i.e. published in 2005 and 2006) had a focus on youth commissioning/youth boards.

- Most of the literature referred to work undertaken in the UK or England specifically. The review also includes examples of work carried out in Ireland, the US and Australia.

- Where specified, most of the literature refers to reasonably short-term projects/programmes (e.g. 1–6 months). Longer-term initiatives seem less common.

- Reference to the young people's age and ethnicity is not common. Where these are reported, references to age can be quite broad, e.g. 'secondary' age range. Ethnicity, where reported, is cited in one of two ways – to ensure a representative 'sample', or targeted to a particular group.

- Specific key groups in the review include young people from low income/deprived areas, vulnerable groups, Looked After Children, physically disabled or chronically ill children, and young people from areas/localities of conflict.

- Data has been collected chiefly through qualitative approaches, using interviews and case studies. A number of projects with young people and other participants have used a mixed methods design. The number of young people involved in such research has generally been reasonably small (although the numbers involved in actual initiatives might be much larger).

- Other research has involved the mapping of services or of participation via 'user' or stakeholder surveys. This includes some large-scale work (e.g. to 1,000+ organisations).

Appendix III – Bibliographies of the sources summarised for the review

This section includes the bibliographies of the 26 sources summarised for the review. These are presented in author alphabetical order by author.

Title: Children as researchers
Author(s): Brownlie, J., Ormston, R., and Anderson, S.
Date: 2006
Publisher: Scottish Executive

REVIEW OF SOURCE	
Purpose/focus of literature	*'The principle aim of this project was…to explore the problems and possibilities of incorporating a 'children as researchers' perspective into the agenda of government social research in Scotland'* (p1).
Impact on policy	The authors postulate that local research, as opposed to national research, might provide better opportunities for young people to inform policy because it might be perceived to be more relevant to young people themselves. In terms of the impact on decision-makers, some respondents both inside and outside of the Scottish Executive argued that '*the most significant way children and young people could impact on policy through government-funded research is less through the doing of the research than through young people becoming involved in shaping the research agenda*' (p56). <u>Recent projects involving children as researchers:</u> A strategy for participation: involving children and young people in the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health: NCB trained four young people to conduct interviews with other young people and to help draft a strategy for involving children in the work of the Royal College. Barnardo's Policy and Research Unit Young People's Research Group: The group carries out research on issues such as bullying. Two of the young people sit on the steering group for the government department. Children's Commissioner for Scotland consultation on priorities: The Children's Commissioner for Scotland recruited two young participation workers aged 16-21 to establish priorities for the Children's Commissioner.
Impact on practice	
Impact on young people	One rationale for involving children and young people in the doing of research is that it gives them a voice and empowers them. <u>Negative impact:</u> There is a concern that the involvement of children and young people may be disempowering because of the less than direct relationship between research and policy.
Any other key findings, conclusions, recommendations	'*For some, the fact that policy making in general still has a 'haphazard' approach to the involvement of young people leads them to be sceptical about the potential influence of young people's research*' (p49).

DESCRIPTION OF SOURCE	
Sector	Across sectors
Country/area	Scotland and UK generally.
Participants (e.g. sample size, age, ethnicity, key characteristics, etc)	
Method(s)	The research had three strands: a mapping of recent projects in Scotland and UK generally, a review of literature relating to children doing research, series of qualitative interviews with researchers (11), policy makers (5), research managers (3) and young researchers themselves (6).
When data collected	
Source/document type	Report incorporating literature review and mapping and research

Title: 'Whatever you say…say nothing'. Youth for youth, reflections on a 2-year youth participation project **Author(s):** Bryson, P. **Date:** 2003 **Publisher:** Child Care in Practice (Carfax Publishing: Taylor & Francis Group)	

REVIEW OF SOURCE	
Purpose/focus of literature	*'From January 2000 to December 2002 Save the Children worked in partnership with a group of young people, concerning their experience of the conflict and their invisibility within the new political context in Northern Ireland. This paper will consider the learning realised through this partnership with children and young people, reflecting first on the difficulties in working directly with the issues of experience and identity within the context of ongoing conflict, second on the expectations of young people and organisations working for change within this problematic and sensitive context, and finally on the barriers young people experience working for change within a fluctuating political environment'* (p217). Save the Children's Northern Ireland Country Strategy focused on '*addressing the invisibility of children and young people within the political process'* (p218). They went about addressing this invisibility by listening to children and young people's stories and giving them a platform from which they could be heard with respect.
Impact on policy	The groups set the agenda for two conferences: 'Building the Future' (aimed at politicians and policy-makers); and 'Access all Areas' (purely young-person led conference focused on the issue of differences such as race, culture etc). In the latter conference the group also provided training and consultation for some of the children and young people attending. Lobbying local and hosting international politicians and policy-makers: *'The group held three events at Stormont. First, to discuss a young person's agenda with local politicians. Second, to host presentations by other young peoples groups to local politicians with regard to highlighting good practice in peace-building work. And finally, to host the visit of Olara Otunnu the UN Nations Special Raporteur on Children and Armed Conflict'* (p221). Involvement in key consultations: Attended consultations on Human Rights and Equality issues and also the Civic Forum working group on children and young people. They were also invited to take part in the non-governmental organisation reporting on the UNCRC.
Impact on practice	**SEE ABOVE [Impact on policy]**
Impact on young people	The Youth for Youth group developed personally (i.e. the group itself becoming a 'safe space' with the children and young people focusing on issues of power, trust, choice, friendship, space and challenge).
Any other key findings,	The author believes that the Youth for Youth group failed to

conclusions, recommendations	achieve any real engagement with contentious, political or topical issues. It is argued that the lack of impact was partly due to the group focusing on internal issues, for example, the group itself becoming a 'safe space' with the children and young people focusing on issues of power, trust, choice, friendship, space and challenge.
	'Over this 2-year experience it was clear that although we assume young people's participation to be valuable, we have yet clearly to define the structural and attitudinal implications of inclusion…much work still needs to be done to negotiate how children and young people can participate equally' (p225). *'Participation is not an outcome in itself'* (225).

DESCRIPTION OF SOURCE	
Sector	Political/community
Country/area	Northern Ireland
Participants	*'Youth for Youth is a group of 20 young people who work in partnership with Save the Children in Northern Ireland. The members of the group are drawn from urban and rural communities. They are mixed in terms of background, religion, gender and ethnicity, ranging in age between 14 and 23 years old. There are three facilitators who work with the group, which meets once a month. The group meets mainly in a residential centre, in a rural location easily accessible to all members who travel from various community areas throughout Northern Ireland'* (p217). The young people broadly had four types of experiences: 1. individuals who had suffered the worst effects of the conflict through loss or imprisonment of family members 2. individuals whose relatives had been directly involved within political organisations or as combatants within the conflict or other 'severe' experiences 3. young people attached to community groupings living within areas with a high incidence of violence, where the conflict has a 'direct' effect on their day-to-day lives 4. young people interested in advocacy and lobbying but with no direct experience of conflict in their lives, but with 'common' experiences such as not feeling safe in particular areas or being stopped and searched by security forces.
Method(s)	
When data collected	Youth for Youth ran from January 2000 to December 2002.
Source/document type	Journal article. Report on youth participation programme/project

Title: Has service user participation made a difference to social care services?
Author(s): Carr, S.
Date: March 2004
Publisher: The Policy Press

REVIEW OF SOURCE

Purpose/focus of literature	'*This summary brings together the key themes and findings from the synthesis of six literature reviews on the impact of user participation on change and improvement in social care services*' (pV). Literature reviews included focusing on: children and young people; older people; people with learning difficulties; disabled people; people with mental health issues; and a general review of user participation.
Impact on policy	'*The evidence from the few evaluations that exist suggests that the participation of children and young people is having little impact on decision made in relation to agency policy and practice'* (p13).
Impact on practice	SEE ABOVE [Impact on policy]
Impact on young people	Negative impacts on children and young people: '*When little or nothing is communicated back to participants, this can have a negative effect on their motivation, trust and confidence*' (pVI). Positive impacts on children and young people: Reviewed evidence suggests that they gain self-confidence, self-belief, knowledge and skills, education and employment. Also, have improved peer relations, development of group skills and the erosion of gender divisions between participating young people.
Any other key findings, conclusions, recommendations	'*Efforts to involve people in planning and development of the services they use are taking place across the UK. However, the impact of that participation on the change and improvement of social care services is yet to be properly monitored and evaluated*' (pV). '*Very little seems to be formally recorded at local, regional or national levels and the direct influence of user participation on transforming services has not been the subject of any major UK research studies to date'* (p7).

DESCRIPTION OF SOURCE

Sector	Social care
Country/area	United Kingdom
Participants	Range of ages
Method(s)	Literature review
When data collected	Literature from 1992 to 2002
Source/document type	Report - literature review

Title: The participation of children and young people in decisions about UK service development
Author(s): Cavet, J. and Sloper, P.
Date: 2004
Publisher: Blackwell publishing Ltd.

REVIEW OF SOURCE

Purpose/focus of literature	A literature review of the evidence of children and young people's participation in decisions about UK service development.
Impact on policy	
Impact on practice	'*Treseder and Crowley (n.d) reported that very few organisations involve young people in their governance'* (p616). *'…evidence of development of more appropriate services rarely emerges as a clear, prominent message, but rather requires careful sifting of literature with different emphases and preoccupations'* (p618).
Impact on young people	'*However, the literature does indicate that benefits accrue to young people who participate in relevant initiatives in terms of their personal and skill development, plus increased confidence'* (p618). *'Matthews (2001) found that over 70% of respondents who had participated in youth councils reported enjoyment and a positive experience'* (p618).
Any other key findings, conclusions, recommendations	Independent evaluations on the positive impact that involving children and young people has made, is lacking.

DESCRIPTION OF SOURCE

Sector	Service development
Country/area	UK
Participants	
Method(s)	Systematic literature review which included search terms: 'participation'; 'involvement'; 'consultation'; 'communication'; and 'decision-making' combined with children or young people or adolescents.
When data collected	Carried out in 2002 and limited work in English published since 1989. In order to obtain 'grey' literature, contact was also made with key organisations.
Source/document type	Journal article – literature review.

Title: Centres of attention
Author(s): Chamberlain, C.
Date: 2004
Publisher: Community Care; (1510) 19 Feb 2004-25 Feb 2004, pp.36-37

REVIEW OF SOURCE	
Purpose/focus of literature	Focuses on Blueprint: an 18 month investigation on making the care system more child-centred. It consists of a small team within Voice for Children in Care, supported by the National Children's Bureau. In the 12 months since its creation, the team has sought the opinions of young people who are looked after and of the adults who work with them.
Impact on policy	
Impact on practice	The Blueprint team asked children and young people in care about what was going right or wrong for them. They trained young people to interview other children and worked directly with young people in local authorities. The author comments that, in general, young people are becoming more involved in the recruitment of staff or meetings with councillors. The report (Start with the child, stay with the child) suggests alternative ways such as employing teams of young people who have left care to work in child care agencies –helping to resolve complaints, helping in foster care assessments or taking on a mentoring role.
Impact on young people	
Any other key findings, conclusions, recommendations	The report (Start with the child, stay with the child) recommends that children and young people should be more involved in decisions about their lives.
DESCRIPTION OF SOURCE	
Sector	Social care (Children in care)
Country/area	
Participants (e.g. sample size, age, ethnicity, key characteristics, etc)	
Method(s)	
When data collected	
Source/document type	Journal article – report on youth participation programme/project

Title: Young people as competent citizens
Author(s): Checkoway, B., Richards-Schuster, K., Abdullah, S., Aragon, M., Facio, E., Figueroa, L., Reddy, E., Welsh, M. and White, A.
Date: 2003
Publisher: Oxford University Press

REVIEW OF SOURCE	
Purpose/focus of literature	*'Young people are competent citizens who can create community change. This paper reports on a national project to increase youth participation in community based organisations in the US'* (p298). It provides insights into the impacts of youth participation on community organisations and community change. Authors conclude that young people can and have created community change.
Impact on policy	The research documents a series of case studies of young people having impact on various aspects of community change. '*Our studies show that young people are competent citizens who can create community change. In some of the nation's lowest-income areas, youth are solving problems, organizing action groups, planning local programmes and developing new services. Despite obstacles, they are bringing people together, making decisions, formulating action plans and building support for implementation*'. Impact on school policy: An education and training organisation working to develop grass-roots leadership in African-American communities formed an intergenerational team to engage youth in organising schools and communities. An example is provided of how young people questioned a school policy on tardiness and suspension by arranging to arrive late. The action resulted in the whole school being suspended but later school officials revoked the policy. An organisation that stands for social and political justice in low income families of colour formed a students and parents take action group to work on improving the quality of education in schools. In a series of multi-lingual mass meetings with the school superintendent young people requested more edible food in the cafeteria, bathrooms with running water and toilet paper, and up to date books for their classes. The young people received training in community organisation and went on to successfully cut police funds from the school budget, following complaints about the effects of policing presence in the school. Impact on community policy: An activist organisation against economic injustice organised a group of young people to challenge discrimination in schools and communities. Some youths were arrested by security guards and banned from a shopping mall because of a policy preventing them from public assembly without a guardian. The youths campaigned against the mall and took legal action against the mall owners for infringement of their rights.
Impact on practice	
Impact on young people	Social development

	Youth participation is strengthening their social development, by increasing their substantive knowledge, practical skills, civic competencies and sense of social responsibility, increasing social interaction and connectedness. Organisational development Aiding young people's ability to organise themselves, formulate plans and implement programmes. Opportunity to participate and impact community change.
Any other key findings, conclusions, recommendations	The report suggests that the impact of young people's participation is facilitated by: The type of young people involved (e.g. awareness of community issues, active, leadership, responsibility). The adult-youth relationship (adults who can engage with youth, recognise and respect them, and have high expectations of them) Barriers to youth participation: Viewing young people as victims/ people unable to create change. The introduction and background to the project discusses at length perceptions of youth as problematic and aims to overcome this by enabling young people to organise themselves and become more central to planning and decision making.

DESCRIPTION OF SOURCE

Sector	Community
Country/area	America
Participants	15-21 year olds, involving ethnic minority groups/people of colour and low income area. The report is a preliminary evaluation of the Lifting New Voice project which aims to raise the participation of young people in creating community change. 6 case study examples of such participation are included.
Method(s)	Case studies. The evaluation involved a participatory process where youth and adults documented their activities and assessed their experiences. Six community-based organisations in low-income areas were selected for participation in the project. Each organisation formulated a plan, formed a steering committee, hired a youth organiser and established a structure for implementation (to change some aspect of the community).
When data collected	No information given
Source/document type	Journal article. Report on youth participation programme/project including research/programme evaluation.

Title: Youth participation in public policy at the municipal level
Title: Youth participation in public policy at the municipal level **Author(s):** Checkoway, B., Allison, T. and Montoya, C. **Date:** 2005 **Publisher:** Children and Youth Services Review

REVIEW OF SOURCE	
Purpose/focus of literature	*'This paper examines the San Francisco Youth Commission as an example of youth participation, including its origins, objectives, activities, facilitating and limiting forces, multilevel effects, and lessons learned from empirically-based practice'* (p1149).
Impact on policy	The San Francisco Youth Commission was conceived when youth advocated approached elected officials with the idea, and mounted a community campaign. The Commission advises the Mayor and Board of Supervisors on issues relating to children and young and on the effects of legislative policies, needs, assessments, priorities, programmes, and budgets concerning children and youth. Youth commissioners react to matters that are referred to them by the major, supervisors and department heads. For example, they respond to proposals about juvenile justice, crime prevention and recreational activities. They have pushed the Board to expand the transitional housing for foster youth and requested that traffic officials add crosswalk lights in front of a local high school. *Task force members have helped establish shelters for homeless youth and queer youth, and produced legislation requiring that City employees receive sensitivity training to create a safer environment for the youth'* (p1153). *'…youth commissioners recently were asked by the San Francisco Police Commission to provide input on a new agreement between police and school officials'* (p1154). *'…youth commissioners passed a resolution urging the Board of Supervisors to create a Skate Boarding Task Force to take action on the issues, and today the facility is included in the city development plans. In doing so, commissioners responded to a community need, increased public participation and influenced institutional decisions'* (p1155).
Impact on practice	[SEE ABOVE]
Impact on young people	Involvement in public policy can affect the social development of young people by strengthening their knowledge, practical skills, social values and civic competencies. Effects of the Commission of the young people involved: *'It enabled a homeless youth to address homelessness and commit to a public service carer. It provided marginal students with new knowledge and skills, and motivated them to attend college. It provided organisational and community experiences that are unavailable in the school curriculum. It offered opportunities for youth to develop new relationships and collaborate across class and cultural boundaries. Membership also causes difficulties for a few commissioners who struggle with conflicted roles in policy and those in their school and social life. There have been*

	commissioners who were so engaged that they lacked time for their school classmates and so politicised that they were distances from both peers and adults, despite substantial support given by staff members' (p1157).
Any other key findings, conclusions, recommendations	
DESCRIPTION OF SOURCE	
Sector	Public policy
Country/area	America (San Francisco)
Participants	The San Francisco Youth Commission was conceived when the youth advocate approached elected officials with the idea, and mounted a community campaign. The Commission advises the Mayor and Board of Supervisors on issues relating to children and young and on the effects of legislative policies, needs, assessments, priorities, programmes, and budgets concerning children and youth. 17 commissioners aged between 12 and 23 serve for one year.
Method(s)	
When data collected	
Source/document type	Journal article. Report on youth participation programme/project.

Title: Engaging Young People in Local Democracy
Author(s): Cleaver, E. and Kerr, D.
Date: 2006
Publisher: Web based (available online at: www.nfer.ac.uk/research-areas/projects/ldw/)

REVIEW OF SOURCE	
Purpose/focus of literature	A qualitative study of good practice at the local authority level in engaging children and young people in democracy. There are five case study LAs involved. One of the aims of the study was to identify 'what's worked' – how far the activities and processes have resulted in the genuine engagement of young people which is build into LA practice at a range of levels and is not just tokenistic. The report study uses the 'What's Changed: Participation Outcomes Tool' (NYA – Hear By Rights) to map impact of participation activity.
Impact on policy	Telford and Wrekin: • The development of the Children and Young People's Plan: Children and young people have been involved in this plan from the outset. The young people's forum, with the assistance of AIS has produced a young people's version of this document which has been distributed to all 11-19 year olds. • Involvement of young people in a discussion of how the LA will look in 2026. • The Young People's Forum (a forum that is attended by councils when they wish to consult with young people) was involved in devising joint goals with the children and young people. Strategic partnership board on the subject of healthy eating. • Impact on services and facilities: Young people made an impact on Council policies when the council suggested a multi-use games area for young people. The forum felt it wasn't what young people in the LA wanted, the plans were changed to incorporate other facilities. • Impact on recruitment: The young people's forum have recently been involved in the whole process of recruitment for a Young People's Voice and Influence Worker. The young people attending the forum all had an input into what they would like the person in this new post to provide for them. The young people were heavily involved in the interview and selection process. South Norfolk Council: • Young people voice instigated youth participatory groups: South Norfolk Youth Action (SNYA) group resulted from a direct request from young people during Local Democracy Week 2003. They wished to be more involved in the decision making processes of the council. • Impact on budgeting: SNYA are consulted annually about the LA budget. Relevant papers are circulated to the group and they have the opportunity to see them and discuss them with the Head of Finance before they go to Cabinet.

	• Impact on public perception of young people: The young people are involved in promoting a positive image of young people by producing press releases that they write themselves, in doing this, they learn about the language of communication and how to present key messages, and aim information at a target audience. Young people have also been involved as peer reporters. • The young people have produced a directory of information/council services for other young people to use. Kensington and Chelsea: • Young people have both participated in and given training. Young people trained directors of business groups at a lunchtime seminar on the implementation of the Hear by Rights agenda. Gateshead: • The Gateshead Youth Assembly (GYA) decided their messages weren't getting through to the 'bigwigs'. So they now have quarterly meetings with the Chief Exec of Gateshead council. • GYA have led the development of an anti-bullying video and packs are being distributed in schools in Gates head.
Impact on practice	South Norfolk Council: • From increased contact, council members now find it easier to consult young people directly. • Processes for young people to feedback and give their views have been developed in line with young people's needs/voice to be flexible (e.g. open hours) and some web based. • As a result of involving young people the budget information is now more accessible and clearer, benefiting other young people as well as the council as a whole. Kensington and Chelsea: • One library in the LA found that young people were reluctant to use it other than as a meeting place. In order to improve their services the library consulted with the youth forum and since improved its building and thus the take up by young people. • Young people from the youth forum became mystery shoppers to evaluate services for young people in the borough. There has been a project on mystery shopping sexual health services for young people and as a result of consultation, the services are now better targeted. Devon: • There is evidence to suggest that there has been a shift from a reactive involvement of young people in local democracy to a much more proactive and embedded approach. • Through involvement in various youth groups young people are provided with opportunities to give advice and share good practice, e.g. in providing advice on reforming school councils and guidance to schools on how to consult with young people. • Young people have had an impact on the healthy eating agenda in local schools through campaign work and dialogue within the local community.

Impact on young people	South Norfolk Council: • As a result of young people increased involved there is now a more positive perception of young people in the locality, and a growing sense that they can make a positive difference. The young people themselves were found to have new confidence in their abilities through opportunities to communicate with policy makers/senior staff and felt they had a place in the democratic process. Devon: • Young people more aware of their place in society and the wider community and awareness that their actions have consequences and effect others. Young people are aware if they want to raise an issue now they have some where to go and take it to get heard. • Increased political awareness: '*One of the most important things is that politics isn't compulsory, you learn a bit about it in Citizenship but through Youth Parliament you are going to, without realising it, learn about the things that are going to help you when you are able to vote*'.
Any other key findings, conclusions, recommendations	

DESCRIPTION OF SOURCE	
Sector	All sectors
Country/area	UK
Participants (e.g. sample size, age, ethnicity, key characteristics, etc)	Age of young people none specific. Five LA case studies
Method(s)	Case studies (involving interviews with LA personnel as well as young people?)
When data collected	2006 (Aug –Oct)
Source/document young people	Web-based – empirical research.

Title: Inspiring Schools: Impact and Outcomes – Taking up the Challenge of Pupil Participation
Author(s): Davies, L., Williams, C. and Yamashita, H. with Aubrey, K.
Date: 2005/06
Publisher: CarnegieUK Trust and Esmee Fairbairn Foundation
(Available at: http://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/files/InspiringSchools_P1.pdf)

REVIEW OF SOURCE	
Purpose/focus of literature	The purpose of this study was to search for evidence of the impact of student participation in schools and colleges. It considers participation as participation in decision making. Seventy five studies (various participatory activities), mainly from UK, were scrutinised. The review identified outcomes of participation in three categories: personal, school and outside school.
Impact on policy	Some instances of pupils influencing national educational policy in Europe and Australia. [Some of the changed practices mentioned below will have involved changes to policy]. '*Many studies mention involvement of pupils in various aspects of school policy – usually rewards, bullying and behaviour. One study reported in Flutter and Ruddock was of pupils involved in the policy of target setting – they found a need for a school wide approach, giving a more active role to Year 10 and 11 in deciding their targets and offering clear guidance on how to achieve them. The key finding from the pupils data was that pupils felt they needed to know how to improve their work as well as what required improvement*' (p27). The synthesis found generally that '*participation in decision-making starts a process going which starts to generate a chain of benefits*'. '*Student involvement in planning of the curriculum and teaching methods again helped in the development of the curriculum, assessment and pedagogy*' (p4).
Impact on practice	Outcomes for school and classroom: • Better student-teacher relationships (as students were listened to, and teachers felt students understood their role). • Improved trust between staff and students in the schools, with a lessoned wall between the two and a sense of them and us – improved school ethos (that the school is the young people's as well). • Students participating in interviews for new staff and decisions about whether probationary staff should remain in school resulted in making better appointments. (e.g. a student working group devised questionnaires for other students on the teachers performance in the classroom, collated the results and presented their findings to the committee. Their views counted as one-third in the final decision). • School organisation/facilities were enhanced. E.g. The young people were found to impact on such things as installing

	lockers. The headteacher installed lockers against his initial feelings on the matter but admitted after installation they had been a success. • 'School councils were able to influence directly the running of the school, with more informed decision making'. • 'Studies reported a range of governance issues that students were involved in: the school mission statement, school development plan, departmental reviews, school facilities, new buildings and safety'. • 'Students were involved in programmes of change, engaging with contractors or meal providers'. • Improving teacher's practice (pg 25), When young people are able to give feedback about the teaching they receive and it is incorporated into practice there may be positive benefits on practice. (E.g. young people had fed back to teachers regarding how they take the lead from subtle signals from their teachers about how 'important' work tasks are and they respond accordingly). Students were found to be contributing to decisions about teaching and learning. • Improvement of school governance and infrastructure: Throughout the studies were examples of pupils being consulted about the school development plan, building design, the school day, and the curriculum. Some studies reported that young people were directly involved in school development planning and departmental reviews. There is the assumption and agreement that actual decisions made are better, there are improved school facilities as a result and an improved ethos.
Impact on young people	Personal and learning outcomes: • Students in more democratic schools were happier and felt more in control of their learning. • If students gave feedback on teaching, this had the twin effect of teachers' practice improving and students gaining in awareness of the learning process. • Participation enhanced skills of communication and competence as a learner. • Skills in specific curriculum areas such as citizenship improved, as well as in other curriculum areas. Opportunities for young people to have a voice and learn to communicate effectively meant young people had raised aspirations of their achievement as they realised they had capabilities and qualities in this area – i.e. multiple intelligences. • Greater self esteem and confidence – deriving from increased responsibility and ownership over school life (e.g. particularly those in public roles such as school councillors and also special needs students). Opportunities to speak out in front of others was also found to stimulate confidences. • Interpersonal and political skills were enhanced, particularly through community and voluntary work. '*Participation in school and outside school was an apprenticeship in democracy, where skills of speaking, listening to the views of others, advocacy, argument, negotiation, compromise and team work could be practised*'. Young person, 'we learn a lot of people skills … it teaches you how to talk things out'. Development of critical/thinking and decision making skills (pg 18, pg 22 – an apprenticeship in democracy). Students in schools with more participation were more confident about a range of topics including government policy. • Agency and efficacy – '*students felt they could influence events and school structure and had a greater sense of*

	direction of their own lives'.
	• Improvements in behaviour: generated from a growing ethos of care through bullying and peer support policies, and because students were treated more as adults. Volunteering activity was also associated with reduced risk behaviours, such as teenage pregnancy, drug use, as they have more constructive avenues to direct their energy.
	• There were a few mentions of beneficial impact on families and on home-school relationships.
	• Students reported being more active citizens, e.g. said they were more likely to vote in the future. Schools that were democratic are able to link knowledge about being a citizen (e.g. through curriculum) with active citizenship behaviour (e.g. in participation/voice activities).
	Academic achievement: there is some qualitative teacher evidence (though it is difficult to identify increased participation as a direct cause) of increased academic achievement as a result of increased participatory activity. One teacher commented, 'more focused children who settled into lessons more happily' (pg 16). Participation in activities such as community service and volunteering activity is associated with improved school performance.
	Young people's wellbeing/motivation: students happier and more in control.
	A sense of agency and efficacy: enabled the development of a sense of feeling more effective in different areas of one's life.
Any other key findings, conclusions, recommendations	• The review notes problems with the evidence base – being mostly perceptual and that direct causation is problematic.
	• Discusses some key themes around features of effective participation: e.g. the need for whole school structures, rather than elite groups, time and cost issues, teacher attitudes, the nature of consultation, the motives for introducing partipatory activity. [Discussed on pg 32 onwards if more information needed].
	• A very useful table of participation input/activity with its related outcomes and benefits – may be useful for a comparative discussion on the different types of outcomes from different types of activity. [pg 36].

DESCRIPTION OF SOURCE

Sector	Education
Country/area	Mainly UK, some international literature on the impacts of involving young people in decision making was also looked at.

Participants (e.g. sample size, age, ethnicity, key characteristics, etc)	A literature review of 75 studies
Method(s)	Literature review
When data collected	Not known
Source/document type	Report – literature review.

Title: Learning to Listen: Core principles for the involvement of children and young people; and Learning to Listen Report

Author(s): DfES

Date: 2001

Publisher: DfES

REVIEW OF SOURCE	
Purpose/focus of literature	Core principles guidance document: *The Government wants children and young people to have more opportunities to get involved in the design, provision and evaluation of policies and services that affect them or which they use….The core purpose of this guidance is to:* • *Introduce the core principles on which this work should be based;* • *Provide departments with some early advice and background and with signposts to additional help, so that departments can develop effective plans* • *Let departments know the broad timetable for action'* (p2) Learning to listen report: Following on from the published core principles document, ten departments published action plans in July 2003, reporting how they are adopting the principles. This report: • *'Captures progress across Government since November 2001* • *Explains how participation can help improve decision-making, service delivery and policy evaluation* • *Makes recommendations on further steps to take to include younger views in Government policy and service delivery'* (p6).
Impact on policy	Core principles guidance document: [Case study]The Investing in Children Initiative – County Durham and Darlington: research and representations from a group of young people involved in the initiative led to a change in policy which saw bus fares only paid by young people over 16 years. The initiative also resulted in policing of a particular estate being changed to take account of young people's views which lead to a reduction in tensions between the police, older community and young people. [Case study] Connexions and The National Youth Agency – NYA was commissioned to work with a group of young people to look at the ways of ensuring that children and young people have a voice in its development. They young people constructed a website and the views gathered form a significant element of a submission to Ministers on the future of the Youth service. [Case study] The Children and Young People's Unit has set up a Young People's Advisory Forum to advise the Minister for Young People and the Unit in their work. The young people have helped to assess proposals from partnerships such as Children's Fund; and have developed consultation booklets and child-friendly versions of the adult consultation document.

	[Case study] Cambridge Young Citizen's Jury – they have recently won an award for a public involvement of young people in policy making. The young people discussed that they find it very expensive to access many of the recreational facilities. As a result a new youth discount card has been issued to 10-18 year olds to allow them concessional ticket prices for the cinema, leisure centres and the activities in and around Cambridge. [Case study] Save the Children and The Children's Society undertook some consultation work with children aged 2-4 for the GLA. The children's views (i.e. on traffic, litter, noise, etc) are being fed unto the GLA strategy. [Case study] Youthbank – grant making initiative run by young people which provides small grants to other young people for projects of community benefit. Learning to listen report: DoH – the Department fund the National Children's Bureau to run the Young People in consultation project, aimed at involving young people in teenage pregnancy policy. DEFRA – the department has consulted children and young people on the review of the Rural White paper to help determine cross-governmental priorities like improved housing, transport and local services in rural areas. These views will be fed into the wider White Paper Review. DfES – Through London Challenge, young people in 5 Connexions groups in London are helping to shape the strategy for London schools, 36 teenagers met Ministers at the House of Commons in February 2003 when they raised issues including bullying, drugs, and the quality of teaching. Their views influenced the department's action plan for supporting London schools. DoH – A National Voice was a project which looked at the subject of children and young people in care. Result will inform and help future care policy development.
Impact on practice	Core principles guidance document: [Case study] Coventry and Warwickshire Connexions – young people have been involved in the recruitment of the Connexions Executive Director, local service manager and over 35 personal advisers. [Case study] Tell the police how to do their job – event for young people aged 6-16 in April 2001 where young people suggested ways in which the police could develop better relationships with young people locally. They suggested police officers to take part in regular sports and arts activities at a local youth club and, as a result, police have assisted in organisation a day trip for 50 to the police recreation ground in Chigwell and a disco. [Case study] Young people were involved in the planning and piloting of the DfES Citizenship website. Representatives from a secondary school came to the DfES to talk about their experiences and help to inform the website; two workshops were held with young people; and focus groups were run after the website had been developed to gauge the user-friendliness of the site. As a

	result of the children and young people's comments resulted in changes to the website (i.e. added new graphics, an audio facility, rearranged and reduced the amount of text).
	<u>Learning to listen report:</u> The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODP) – Number of neighbourhood warden schemes have Junior warden programmes, showing the prioritisation to work with young people. DfES – received responses from children and young people which were taken into account during the development of the Green Paper: Every Child Matters. DoH – Voices and Choices is a project which supported young people with direct experience of care to work alongside voluntary sector agencies and the social services inspectorate in nine children's services inspections.
Impact on young people	<u>Core principles guidance document:</u> *'Good participation opportunities produce more confident and resilient young people'* (p6). <u>Learning to listen report:</u> *'Acting on children and young people's views has real benefits. It can improve service development, children and young people's personal support, increased citizenship and social inclusion, as well as children and young people's wider personal development'* (p20).
Any other key findings, conclusions, recommendations	

DESCRIPTION OF SOURCE	
Sector	Across sectors
Country/area	UK
Participants	
Method(s)	
When data collected	
Source/document type	Reports – guidance material.

Title: Integrating Youth Voice in Service-Learning
Author(s): Fredericks, L., Kaplan, E. and Zeisler, J.
Date: 2001
Publisher: Learning In Deed Issue Paper (online)
(Available at: http:www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/23/67/2367.htm)

REVIEW OF SOURCE	
Purpose/focus of literature	This American Learning In Deed issue paper '*examines the rationale for the implementation of youth voice in service-learning initiatives, examines challenges practitioners may face and offers strategies for success*' (pp1). It presents a series of good practice case study programmes in which youth voice has been included in service-learning initiatives and outlines a range of opinions and perspectives from young people and key stakeholders (school staff through to state policymakers).
Impact on policy	Impact on a US state's school policy: The paper outlines one case study in which high school student's serve alongside adults on the state policy panel, Learning Result Team. The panel guides the integration of service-learning in the state's school districts. The young people are seen as equal members. '*Panel members are currently planning state policy around the issue of school wide service-learning and next year will be speaking with state legislators about implementation*' (pp9)
Impact on practice	Report outlines one case study – Grand Junction High School in Colorado: As a result of increased service learning there is now a '*Youth on Board program in which students serve as board members in agencies funded by United Way and the 'Teen Court' collaboration with the City Attorney's office in which students charged with a crime can be judged by their peers instead of receiving formal charges*' (pp3). Other groups are also being developed by students.
Impact on young people	Academic achievement Participation in service-learning was linked to higher scores on the state test of basic skills (Anderson, Kinslet, Negroni and Price, 1991); improved grades and increased attendance (Follman, 1998); increased classroom participation (Loesch-Griffin, Petrides and Pratt, 1995); and improved problem-solving skills (Stephens, 1995). Changes in behaviour Service-learning participants have more positive and respectful relationships with their peers and teachers (Weiler, LaGoy, Crance and Rovner, 1998) and have fewer behavioural problems (Stephens, 1995). They have been shown to also have a greater acceptance of cultural differences (Melchior, 1999) and showed greater empathy and cognitive complexity (Courneya, 1994). '*Studies in the field of service-learning indicate that youth are more likely to benefit from and remain engaged in community activities if they are involved prior to their teenage years*' (Lesko and Tsourounis, 1998 – pp3). They are also more likely to vote and be politically active (Margan and Streb, 1999). Resiliency factors Service-learning programmes are seen to provide a number of

	'protective' factors which help to protect youth from harmful impact of abuse, neglect, poverty etc. Specifically, resiliency research has shown that service-learning programmes bring about caring relationships, high expectations and opportunities for meaningful participation. Authors note, '…*youth voice is not only an essential component of high-quality service-learning programmes but also helps to magnify positive results*' (pp2).
Any other key findings, conclusions, recommendations	'*Researchers have found that high-quality service-learning programmes are rich with benefits for schools, communities and most of all students*' (pp2). '…*organisations gain the energy, perspective, commitment and skills of the young people whom they involve'* (pp11). Barriers to the impact of service-learning programmes include, '*when service is imposed from above without youth input and without adequate structure and support, young people may view their service experiences with indifference, suspicion or even hostility*' (p6). Other key challenges to involving young people in service-learning include: 1. Not everyone shares the same definition of youth voice 2. Adults and young people have preconceived notions about one another's understanding of and capacity for a truly successful youth voice component 3. Not everyone in the organisation buys into the concept or practice of youth voice or wants it incorporated into the organisations structure 4. Youth voice often becomes merely the 'tokenizing' of young people 5. The teacher, educator or other adult has difficulty relinquishing decision-making responsibilities to young people.

DESCRIPTION OF SOURCE

Sector	Community
Country/area	America
Participants (e.g. sample size, age, ethnicity, key characteristics, etc)	Range of ages.
Method(s)	Review of literature and presentation of case studies whereby service-learning has had a positive impact.
When data collected	Literature included in the review range from 1991-2001
Source/document type	Learning In Deed Issue paper (online). Literature review and descriptions of case studies.

Title: Catching them young? **Author(s):** Geddes, M. and Rust, M. **Date:** 2000 **Publisher:** Youth and Policy Issue: No: 69	

REVIEW OF SOURCE	
Purpose/focus of literature	'*This paper discusses the involvement of young people in local government and local democracy, drawing on research on initiatives to increase participation in three localities in the UK, where the alienation of young people is part of a wider 'local democratic deficit'* (p42).
Impact on policy	Bury: Developed a strategy-led approach and have developed a corporate Young People's Strategy, establishment of a Youth Issues Subcommittee of the Council and a Youth Initiatives budget. In relation to the Subcommittee, young people are involved in a wide range of decision about service provision and specific facilities (i.e. have funded a local drop-in centre, kick about areas, and improved access for disabled young people). Manchester City Council's Young People's Council: Is a forum of elected representatives from Manchester secondary and special schools, which meets three times a year. The MYPC is linked directly to the Council's decision-making process. Issues acted upon have included: action for the homeless, public transport concessions and the development of a system of peer counselling for young people, enabling them to go to a contemporary rather than a teacher on issues like bullying. Wolverhampton: Have a Council's Youth Affairs Subcommittee; area Youth forums; Youth conferences held every two years; multi-agency Youth Issues partnership group; and a Best Value project – young people to be one main user group to which the 'best value' approach is to be piloted. Issues that have been impacted on as a result of the Youth subcommittee include: facilities for skateboarding in public spaces.
Impact on practice	SEE ABOVE [Policy impact]
Impact on young people	
Any other key findings, conclusions, recommendations	
DESCRIPTION OF SOURCE	
Sector	Political participation
Country/area	England: Bury, Manchester and Wolverhampton
Participants	The initiatives in Bury, Manchester and Wolverhampton are characteristics of wider developments in the UK and illustrate the approaches being taken to involve young people at a local level.

Method(s)	The evaluations of the three initiatives in Bury, Manchester and Wolverhampton were based on both analysis of secondary material, especially local authority policy and committee papers, and interviews with a range of individuals, including local authority officers and councillors, young people involved in the initiatives and representatives from other relevant organisations.
When data collected	
Source/document type	Journal article. Report on youth participation programme and research.

Title: A Pilot study to evaluate the impact of the student participation aspects of the citizenship order on standards of education in secondary schools
Author(s): Hannam, D.
Date: April 2001
Publisher: Report to the DfEE

REVIEW OF SOURCE

Purpose/focus of literature	The aim of the report is to investigate whether in schools with high rates of student participation there is a positive effect on performance. 12 schools identified as having good practice in student participation were involved in the study. Headteacher/senior manager, teacher and student views of the impacts of participation were surveyed and interviewed.
Impact on policy	Curriculum design • 9 out of the 12 schools reported student participation in curriculum evaluation and review (often PSHE curriculum) – in one school the pshe course had been entirely re-written in conjunction with teams of students.
Impact on practice	• Changed teaching practice to include student evaluation: In one school one teacher had volunteered for student researchers to evaluate his teaching, he now carried out the process as a matter of course with all his classes. • Changes to services/facilities: e.g. toilets, cafeteria.
Impact on young people	Self-esteem/motivation/engagement: • Headteachers views – self esteem/motivation/engagement with learning – 11 of the 12 schools responded that yes, the learning of the skills of participation and responsible action leads to enhanced self-esteem, motivation and engagement with learning and attainment. Though many felt there was no hard evidence, but believed participation was the connection and certainly none believed there were any negative impacts of increased participation. • Teachers gave anecdotal evidence in interviews of individual students transformation in attitude to school as a result of increased involvement in such activities. Collaborative skills: • Students own views: 98% of surveyed yp (approx 250) felt 'quite a lot' or 'a lot more' 'able to work with others', 'more independent, trusted and responsible' as a result of their increased participation. • 91% felt their communication skills had improved and that they could 'express themselves more clearly'. • 'It has helped me learn to listen to different points of view, negotiate and make compromises'. Pride in achievements – resulting in self esteem: • Students own views: 97% of students reported experiencing increased 'pride in their achievements' through the participatory activities.

	• 'Peer-led teaching has definitely made me more confident and willing to go out of my way to get chances to broaden my experience' (young person).
	• 'Sometimes people come up to me and I feel I can do something about the problem .., the money for the skate park was partly raised by young people and now it is treated with respect' (young person).
	• Capacity to show competences: 'Project showed off some of the skill I couldn't show off in school subjects' (young person).
	Relationships (student-teacher relationships):
	• 'It changed the whole attitude of the tutor group towards each other and to me. They made and stick to the class rules..' (Active Citizenship tutor).
	Political awareness:
	• '… now I'm on the school council I have become really interested in politics and how you get things done..'
	The young people did not see any negative consequences of being involved.
	Exclusion and attendance:
	• There is quantitative evidence that schools with higher participatory activity have lower rates of exclusion than other schools.
	• The overall rate of permanent exclusions from the 12 'student participative' schools is significantly lower than for otherwise 'similar schools'.
	• This finding is supported by anecdotal evidence about how participatory activity have saved some students, usually less academic boys from exclusion. '*I have changed completely since I came on the School Council. It has changed my attitude to everything, especially teachers. I just didn't know how to communicate*'.
	• [lots more quotes on impact on attendance]
	GCSE attainment:
	• The 12 'student participative' schools have collectively consistently shown attainment at 5 A*-C Grades at GCSE that is significantly better than would be expected in otherwise 'similar schools'.
Any other key findings, conclusions, recommendations	The report discusses the spread of the impact from different participatory activities, with some examples cited of where activities have impacted whole school, e.g. tutor group discussions feed into school councils and students as researcher programmes.

DESCRIPTION OF SOURCE

Sector	Education
Country/area	UK

Participants	12 schools (sent returns survey data and agreed to participate in follow up visits). The data they provided included GCSE, attendance and exclusion as well as additional information e.g. regarding the schools ethos to student participation, how this was operationalised, what evidence the school had of the impacts of participatory experiences.
Method(s)	A database of 50 schools meeting the criteria for 'good practice in student participation and for 'schools that are becoming significantly student participative' were drawn up. 12 of the best-case schools who agreed to take part where selected. Ofsted provided data on achievements, attendance and exclusions that enabled comparisons to be made with national levels.
When data collected	2001 (Feb-March)
Source/document type	Report – empirical research.

Title: Measure the Magic? Evaluating and researching young people's participation in public decision making
Author(s): Kirby, P. and Bryson, S.
Date: 2002
Publisher: Carnegie Young People Initiative

REVIEW OF SOURCE	
Purpose/focus of literature	*"This report examines the evaluation and other research evidence on involving young people in public decision making to identify how much we know about what works and what more we need to find out"*
Impact on policy	Chapter 2, section: 2.1 Do young people influence public decisions? Chapter sums up the evidence as follows: "*Whilst young people are increasingly being involved in participatory projects, the evidence from existing evaluations is that they are still having little impact on public decision making, although this varies across contexts and between different types of organisations. The small size of this section relative to others in the report illustrates how few impacts have been demonstrated. To date evaluations have focused more on the process, or on impacts for young people, than on how much young people have influences public decisions*" When examining different areas the authors conclude that: *"The most frequently evaluated type of youth involvement is within area-wide strategic planning of services and policies, although young people seem to be having least impact on decisions in these environments"* *"When young people undertake their own community or issue based projects they usually make many decisions about the direction of their own projects. Often they appear to achieve some small gains, although not always"* *"The evidence from evaluations within schools suggests that the extent to which young people influence decision within this setting varies widely between the different schools"* This chapter gives lot of examples where the young people's voice has or has not made an impact on decisions – the excerpts above have been included as a summary of the evidence.
Impact on practice	"*Several studies have found that those undertaking participatory work develop an increased commitment to undertaking further similar work*". e.g. "*Several health organisations expressed a greater commitment to empowering children, both at the individual level (by providing more and better information) and through extending opportunities for childrens participation in decision making about service development*"
Impact on young people	In executive summary: *"There is substantial evidence that good participatory work benefits the participating young people, but that token involvement may not. This includes confidences, self-belief, knowledge, understanding and changed attitudes, skills and education attainment. Young people also benefit from have fun and making friends."* In the main report, evidence of the above outcomes is presented and discussed in further detail. Summary produced below (Please refer to full report for specific examples (Chapter 2) Confidence: e.g. confidence to participate in a group, talk to others,

| | confidence to approach people, assert their views, change and ask questions   (This is listed first in the range of impacts and is therefore likely to be the most prevalent)

Knowledge, understanding, attitudes: e.g. greater understanding of equality and discrimination issues and change negative attitudes towards other members of the community, informed of local issues, understanding of barriers to change.

Skills: learning to make decisions, group skills, group facilitation, communication skills

Education and employment: education achievement, school attendance, skills can help gain future employment

Aspirations and plans: desire to participate in the future

Fun: enjoyment, develop friendships |
|---|---|
| **Any other key findings, conclusions, recommendations** | Identifies key gaps in evaluation and research including: *"The effectiveness of different participatory methods for influencing decisions How young people's views can be used to inform decision makers The extent to which youth participation affects adults attitudes What outcomes are specific to involving young people in public decision making compared with other types of initiatives"* |

DESCRIPTION OF SOURCE	
Sector	Various sectors
Country/area	UK
Participants	Range of ages
Method(s)	Literature review
When data collected	Sources included in review range from 1993-2002
Source/document type	Report on literature review (27 sources included)

Title: Involving Children and Young People in Regeneration: Learning from Young Voices
Author(s): Kirby, P.
Date: 2001
Publisher: Groundwork UK and Save the Children

REVIEW OF SOURCE

Purpose/focus of literature	'*This evaluation report examines three years work of Young Voices in Regeneration (YV), a national initiative undertaken by Groundwork UK and Save the Children, which involved children and young people in regeneration decision making*' (pp6). The report looks at the processes by which the children and young people were involved, the outcomes achieved and the barriers and challenges involved in the four deprived areas of Liverpool, Hackney, the Wakefield District and County Durham. A series of good practice examples are peppered throughout the report.
Impact on policy	Young people from the YV youth forum attended several meetings with influential adults in which they participated in a debate about local regeneration. As a result, there is the possibility of a young person sitting on the board permanently. Examples: '*…a leading local housing association developed a Youth Strategy for involving young people in future work as a result of their experiences of working with YV*' (pp43). '*It proved difficult to involve young people in strategic decision making, largely because this was not their agenda or their primary concern and many lacked the skills or confidence to meet strategic decision makers. Secondly, and as importantly, there was little work with those adults who are in positions of power to influence changes locally*' (pp73).
Impact on practice	Young people's own projects Children and young people successfully made decisions related to their own projects such as deciding the project's objectives, delegating who did what, making funding applications, working out the budget etc. Influencing local organisations to involve young people The children and young people worked with local organisations in trying to encourage them to work in a more participative way, thereby changing their practices. Examples: '*In one area the Youth service felt that YV was helping them to develop a more coordinated approach to developing environmental issues with young people, an area seen as important because young people themselves place these issues high on their own agenda. The Youth service valued YV workers' skills in community work and saw it as a major benefit to the partnership*' (pp43).
Impact on young people	Personal development '*The youth workers – and some community residents – emphasised the increased personal development of the participating young people*' (pp37) The children and young people themselves also thought that they have personally developed through their involvement with the project. These included: gains in confidence (particularly in talking to people and performing in public); learnt new skills (i.e. drama,

	dance, video, photography etc); gained experience of working in a group; changes in personal attitudes and beliefs (i.e. improved commitment to their area, less cheeky to adult residents and a better attitude towards each other); learnt about how to influence the implementation of projects (i.e. knowledge of local groups that influence whether ideas are implemented). Changes in behaviour Some workers thought that by providing activities for children and young people over the Summer and Easter holidays this reduced their involvement in crime. Some young people said that the project kept them off the streets and kept them out of trouble with the Police and other adults.
Any other key findings, conclusions, recommendations	'*Whilst there is often the expectation, and increasingly the will, to involve children and young people in local decision making there is often a lack of knowledge about how best to do so in a way that is meaningful rather than tokenistic*' (pp7).

DESCRIPTION OF SOURCE

Sector	Regeneration
Country/area	England: Hackney, Liverpool, the Wakefield District and County Durham
Participants (e.g. sample size, age, ethnicity, key characteristics, etc)	YV Initiative In total, approximately 500 children and young people were involved in YV projects over three years. County Durham: 75 young people; aged from 10-18 (target age 14-16); equal split of male and female; white; varied according to type of project involvement (half were regular long-term basis, a quarter occasional and short-term users and a quarter frequently but irregular users). Wakefield: 100 young people; aged from 16-25; white; most were involved in one off or short term consultations and some were involved in on-going work. Liverpool: 179 young people; aged 5-18 (majority were under 14 years); majority involved over a period of months for more than a year in small group work. Hackney: 150 young people; aged 12-16; slightly more females than males; majority were Black or Asian; majority were involved on a regular long-term basis. Evaluation of YV Initiative - Interviews with 26 workers from YV (manager and development workers). Many were interviewed twice. Those workers responsible for most of YV in an area were interviewed every three months throughout the two years of the evaluation. - Visits were made to each YV area. - Sessions with young people were observed. - Adult steering group meetings were observed. - Eight interviews were conducted with community residents involved in local decision making. - Interviews with 99 young people in focus groups, one-to-one's and informal chats. - 101 young completed short self-completion questionnaires and colour postcards.

Method(s)	[AS OUTLINED PERVIOUSLY IN PARTICIPANTS SECTION] <u>Evaluation of YV Initiative</u> - Interviews with 26 workers from YV (manager and development workers). Many were interviewed twice. Those workers responsible for most of YV in an area were interviewed every three months throughout the two years of the evaluation. - Visits were made to each YV area. - Sessions with young people were observed. - Adult steering group meetings were observed. - Eight interviews were conducted with community residents involved in local decision making. - Interviews with 99 young people in focus groups, one-to-one's and informal chats. - 101 young completed short self-completion questionnaires and colour postcards.
When data collected	YV Initiative: April 1998 – July 2001. Evaluation of YV Initiative: April 1999-July 2001.
Source/document type	Report on youth voice programme and research.

Title: Children and Young People's Participation Project
Author(s): Kirby, P.
Date: 2003
Publisher: Save the Children

REVIEW OF SOURCE	
Purpose/focus of literature	It is the second year interim report for the evaluation of Save the Children's *Children and Young People's Participation Project* within the New Deal for Communities regeneration scheme in Shoreditch (Shoreditch Our Way –shOW). It examines the work undertaken in the past 21 months by including an overview of the work done in the first year of the project and then more detailed information about the work done during the nine months of the second year.
Impact on policy	Structures for involving young people *First year of the project*- shOW has two youth members of the board, a Youth Task Group was set up to oversee the development of youth projects and young people were included in the Housing Strategy and Tenants Charter. *Second year of the project* – a young person has an 18-month trainee work placement with shOW, set up a youth forum. Second year of the project Save the Children has also introduced 'policy proofing' to shOW whereby all reports submitted to the board have to indicate the extent to which proposed projects impact on young people. Children and young people have also been involved in developing the Safer Routes Strategy (28 primary school children were used to provide information about how children avoid areas perceived to be dangerous, where they cross roads and concerns about dangerous play facilities. This was then used to devise the strategy). Video voices – video consultation with up to ten groups of young people on different local housing estates, currently being regenerated. To be shown at a tenant's conference in March 2003, although, it is not clear how the views expressed in the video will influence decisions.
Impact on practice	Through the project, the involvement of children and young people has '*influenced some decision in shOW, including helping to prioritise which projects should be developed and how…*' (pp4) [AS OUTLINED IN POLICY] Structures for involving young people *First year of the project*- shOW has two youth members of the board, a Youth Task Group was set up to oversee the development of youth projects and young people were included in the Housing Strategy and Tenants Charter. *Second year of the project* – a young person has an 18-month trainee work placement with shOW, set up a youth forum. Second year of the project Save the Children has also introduced 'policy proofing' to shOW whereby all reports submitted to the board have to indicate the

	extent to which proposed projects impact on young people. Children and young people have also been involved in developing the Safer Routes Strategy (28 primary school children were used to provide information about how children avoid areas perceived to be dangerous, where they cross roads and concerns about dangerous play facilities. This was then used to devise the strategy).
Impact on young people	Children and young people's views on the benefits of being involved *The Activ8 Award Holder and the young people involved in the youth forum also feel they personally benefit by being involved with shOW. They are learning new skills, gaining confidence and valuable experience, which will help them gain respect and advance their careers'* (pp25). Staff's views on the benefits on involving children and young people Improved understanding between generations, improved services and increasing young people's confidence and skills.
Any other key findings, conclusions, recommendations	'*Other research has found that it takes time for organisations to change, and this required sufficient on-going support and focus on youth participation, to ensure a shift in attitudes, knowledge and practice*' (pp5). Board members of shOW said that by *'having more exposure to young people and being told about their concerns, they felt they had learned more about young people's capabilities and their level of interest in Shoreditch'* (pp11). Organisations felt it was important to involve young people more in certain aspects of their organisation than in others. Many felt they should be involved in developing new and existing services, and improving the organisational environment. Far fewer felt young people should be involved in appointing or evaluating staff and in managing budgets.

DESCRIPTION OF SOURCE

Sector	Regeneration
Country/area	England, Shoreditch
Participants (e.g. sample size, age, ethnicity, key characteristics, etc)	This second-year evaluation report included information from: children and young people (34), Save the Children staff (3), shOW board members (12), shOW staff team (10), those working in local youth organisations (23) and external consultants working with shOW (2). Article does not specify the ages of the children and young people.
Method(s)	Adults were given self-evaluation forms and interviewed (some on several occasions). Children and young people's views were gained in self-completion postcard questionnaires, interviews and focus group interview with the youth forum. Evaluation specifically sought information about: Safer Route Strategy, Activ8 and the youth forum.

When data collected	May 2002 – January 2003
Source/document type	Report on youth voice/participation programme and research.

Title: Peer Group power **Author(s):** Lewis, C. **Date:** 8th January 2001 **Publisher:** Community Care; 4 Jan 2001, p.22-3.	

REVIEW OF SOURCE	
Purpose/focus of literature	To review the role and impact of a group of young people in care ('Just Us') who provide recommendations as to how the service should operate which are listened to and impact policy and practice.
Impact on policy	[see below as these included impacts on policy]
Impact on practice	The group of young people has evolved as a forum for young people to air their views on the service they receive and for staff to be better aware of whether they were meeting young people's needs. The members meet and talk about their shared experiences and from that recommendations evolve on how they would like to see services improved. The group makes recommendations for consideration. Some of which have already been acted upon and changed practice. For example, designated nurses are being employed to bring a more sensitive approach to health assessments, following the young people's request and recommendation for this. The head of care reviews met with the young people to hear their views on the review process. *As a direct result of this meeting, review managers are now visiting children, where possible, before reviews and the consultation papers are being redesigned.* As a result of a conference where young people met with social workers and associated professionals to engage in discussion. Young people were able to challenge aspects of the service they were not happy with. As a result the assistant social services director identified a key area to be addressed was the young people's desire for a more proactive and positive service (rather than reactionary and negative). Listening to the views of young people had impacted on one practitioner and had rekindled their philosophy about helping children being at the centre of social work – '*this has brought me right back to why I want into social work – to help children*'.
Impact on young people	The young people gained experience (work related, responsibilities), confidence and personal skills. They appreciated the opportunity to improve the quality of care they receive. The group was also a source of support for the young people and a chance for them to '*discuss topics that we want to challenge*' and they were connected together by the sharing of similar experiences both of the care system and their lives more generally.
Any other key findings,	

conclusions, recommendations	
DESCRIPTION OF SOURCE	
Sector	Social services (looked after children)
Country/area	UK - Cambridgeshire
Participants	A group of 25 looked after young people aged between 12 and 19.

Title: DfES Children and Youth Board 2005-2006: Independent Evaluation Report
Author(s): Neary, S. and Drake, K.
Date: 2006
Publisher: DfES

REVIEW OF SOURCE	
Purpose/focus of literature	Evaluation aimed to assess the effectiveness of the DfES Children and Youth Board including: • To assess the impact of the Board on the development of policy and practice • To assess the personal development of Board members (i.e. impact on young people) (The primary aim of the project was to support children and young people's involvement 'at the heart of government'. As member of the board young people attended residentials (for members to learn about their roles and responsibilities, understand the DFES, carry out planning for regional work and develop skills to fulfil their board membership), ministerial meetings (to advice the minister for children, as well as department officials on issues that affect young people) and took part in regional work (focusing on areas such as improving schools behaviour, youth offending)
Impact on policy	*"All DfES officials reported that the board has had had a very positive impact on the internal policy making and practices of the department. Policy leads and officials see real benefits of the CYBs input to their work and want to strengthen connections between CYBs work, policy making and implementation in the DfES and wider government"* *"Overall, policy leads felt that responses from the CYB had helped them improve policy content and provide a 'backdrop of contextual information' from a children and young persons perspective"* *"There is no doubt that the Board have fed into an impressive range of policy areas, many of which have been high profile. This is evidenced, in particular by the input to the Respect Action Plan and the Youth Green Paper, which provided an ongoing opportunity for the Board to effect policy and practice"* Some examples of impact: *The Boards views played a fundamental role in the 'respect action plan' publication. The Board consulted with other children and young people on the Youth Green Paper and helped to edit the "Youth Matters – next steps" document. Their responses on the EC Directive were included in the DfES report on behalf of the UK government regarding its implementation of the OMC (Open Method of Communication).*
Impact on practice	
Impact on young people	*"Membership of the board has been a life changing experiences for the majority of children and young people this year"* The report contains individual case studies of young people. The range of impacts expressed by young people include:

	• Confidence • Time management • Organisational skills • Higher aspirations for the future • New knowledge re: Government policy, consulting with others Report sums up the impact as: *"They have all had a challenging experience that has left them feeling pleased, positive, confident, listened to, that they have made a different, skilled and with a huge sense of personal achievement"*
Any other key findings, conclusions, recommendations	• *"Tracking mechanisms need to be created to enable longitudinal studies of the impact of the Board on policy and practice"* • *"In terms of children and young people's participation, a balance is still needed around how much of the agenda is defined by adults and how much board members are involved in setting the agenda and areas of policy themselves. ….. needs to be based on children and young people truly understanding the policy to make an informed choice and this needs to be balanced against DfES priorities, which in turn will make for greater impact"*

DESCRIPTION OF SOURCE

Sector	Youth commission/boards
Country/area	UK
Participants	25 children and young people on the CYB, staff from partner organisations, DfES staff, parents, carers and support workers.
Method(s)	A range of methods used to assess the effectiveness of the board including: • Collection and review of documentation • Interview with key stakeholders • Qualitative questions • Creative evaluation activities • Toolkits for board members (to measure impact on young people)
When data collected	September 2005-March 2006
Source/document type	Report on youth voice programme and research.

Title: Mapping Children and Young People's Participation in England	
Author(s): Oldfield, C.(The National Youth Agency) and Fowler, C. (British Youth Council).	
Date: 2004	
Publisher: National Youth Agency	

REVIEW OF SOURCE	
Purpose/focus of literature	• Survey of statutory and voluntary sector organisation in England to establish a systematic picture of the levels and ways in which they involve children and young people in public decision making. Aims: • Measure levels and forms of participation being used • Identify the types of children being involved • Establish different supporting/barrier factors to participation
Impact on policy	• Impact on policies and services: Children and yp were most likely to be involved in decision making at the level of generating ideas about existing and new policies or services (they were less likely to be involved in service delivery and monitoring and evaluation). • YP were most likely to be involved in decision making about issues which have clear or immediate impact on their lives, e.g. leisure services, youth services, community, education, health. And less involved in broader issues, transport, housing or environment.
Impact on practice	• Yp's (perceived) level of influence on decision making: (Varies according to organisation/sector) • 7/10 statutory sector respondents and 6/10 voluntary sector respondents thought that children ad young people had some influence in particular areas within the organisation. • 1/10 statutory sector respondents and 3/10 voluntary sector respondents felt young people had a great deal of influence. • '*Within the Statutory sector, two-fifths of Connexions Services (40%) and just under a quarter of Children's Fund Partnerships (23%) considered that children and young people had a great deal of influence on the decisions made by their organisations. Respondents from criminal justice, health, national and regional government organisations were most likely to say that children and young people have very little influence*'. Organisations that had the most contact with young people tended to consider they had a bigger impact on decision making. • [more examples of how the impact is felt to vary across different organisations if we're interested]. • Improvement to services: four-fifths of statutory and voluntary sector respondents felt their services had improved as a result of involving yp in decision making.
Impact on young people	• A minority of respondents sighted examples of where yp had been consulted and their views had been ignored or over-ruled by decision makers, and the consequent disillusionment of yp.

Any other key findings, conclusions, recommendations	- The points is made that there is a need to assessment the impact of participation from the perspective of the young people themselves. [this survey sought the views of staff in the organisations]. - Impact may depend upon the activity used to involve yp – some may illicit greater impacts than others (e.g. councils and forums for involving yp were found to be effective). - There was a general lack of follow up undertaken by the organisations to inform yp of the impacts of their involvement/or even evaluate the impact of their involvement on the service/organisation – lack of understanding of the implications of involving yp. - Where organisations had key support mechanisms in place (e.g. written policies/strategies, formal evaluation, dedicated participation staff, budget controlled by yp, identification of a senior responsible individual, training and support for yp, recognition/incentives for yp involved in decision making) they were most likely to perceive yp had a great deal of influence on decision making. - Other key factors (i.e. that correlated positively with greater perceived impact of involving yp) include: a belief that yp have a right to participate, a belief that yp are capable of making decisions in all areas, senior managers who valued the right of yps voice and understood the practicalities involved. - Interestingly, where organisations felt yp had little impact on decision making they still valued yp's voice, though they were more likely to perceive practical difficulties in involving yp – e.g. their capacity to make decisions, engaging children under 8 years etc. - There is an interesting list of things that are needed to successfully engage yp voice – e.g. resources.

DESCRIPTION OF SOURCE	
Sector	Surveys youth participation in decision making across a range of statutory and voluntary organisations.
Country/area	England
Participants	Survey responses were received from 849 statutory respondents (inc. national and regional bodies, LAs, organisations in criminal justice and health sectors) and 160 voluntary organisations specifically working with yp.
Method(s)	Survey
When data collected	Nov 2003 – Jan 2004
Source/document type	Report – research and mapping.

Title: Building resilience in young people through meaningful participation
Author(s): Oliver, K., Collin, P., Burns, J. and Nicholas, J.
Date: 2006
Publisher: Australian e-Journal for the Advancement of mental health

REVIEW OF SOURCE

Purpose/focus of literature	The paper describes the Inspire Foundations 'Reach Out' programme which has been devised according to theoretical understandings of the positive benefits of youth participation on young people's resilience and mental wellbeing. '*Meaningful participation can itself enhance a young person's sense of connectedness, belonging and valued participation and thereby impact on mental health and wellbeing*'.
Impact on policy	
Impact on practice	Impact on service development: Young people have a key role in developing and steering the development of the Reach Out service (an online support site for young people with mental health). They are involved on a Youth Advisory Board and in a Youth Ambassadors programme to give their views on the development of the site, they goal set and plan future support for other young people through the site, write articles for the site and plan promotion of the site in their own communities. Thus there is continuous impact on the development of this service according to young people's input.
Impact on young people	In the paper the programme itself is described and it is explained how it has been devised in order to include what have been previously researched/identified key features of participation. The Reach Out Youth Participation model has been established to ensure that yp can contribute to the development and delivery of Reach Out. Reach Out is an online service connecting yp and providing them with info, referrals to help, and stories about others with mental health problems. There are two tiers to the Reach Out Youth Participation programme: 1) Youth Advisory Board (different groups of 18 yp meet online 3 times a year for a period of 12 wks to develop ideas for service development, marketing, promotion and develop stories for the site). 2) Youth Ambassador Programme (at the end of their 3 month term on the YAB members are invited to continue volunteering for reach out and help other young people through the reach out service). The above model is based on the tenets that involving young people in decision making/participation has the following impacts on them: • '*Research has shown that young people have a greater sense of control, meaning and connectedness when they are involved in the decisions affecting them*'. • 'Strengthen positive mental health and wellbeing of participants by promoting self worth, responsibility, autonomy,

	accountability, self awareness, emotional competencies, membership and belonging and civic and social competence'. • Youth participation also: supports identify formation, the development of initiative, emotional regulation, and social skills. • Social competency: skills that help young people integrate thoughts, feelings, and actions which lead to the achievement of social or personal goals. • Knowledge development: Youth Ambassadors work collaboratively with staff to develop the content for the 'Reach Out' site and are engaged in the improvement and promotion of the service. This regularly involves the young people research and collating information on a range of mental health, social and health issues, which seeks to increase their capacity to understand and manager their own mental health needs and those of others. • Skills Development: Youth Ambassadors are able to identify areas where they would like more training and support. These might include, training in presentation skills, media campaigning and interpersonal skills. Skills development also enables the development of self confidence, esteem and efficacy. • Cognitive competency: yp develop skills such as, problem solving, decision making, planning and goal-setting. • Social connectedness and participation: through having support from caring adults (outside of the family), the capacity to draw on their own experiences in order to help others (improve self-concept) and community values.
Any other key findings, conclusions, recommendations	

DESCRIPTION OF SOURCE	
Sector	Youth Work/mental health
Country/area	Australia
Participants	The Reach Out participation programme involves 330 young people from a variety of backgrounds, aged between 16 and 25.
Method(s)	Data not collected specifically for the paper – the article is demonstrating how the programme Reach Out is underpinned by activities and processes that result in resilience building in yp by ensuring opportunities for yp to participate in the development of the site.
When data collected	The Reach Out website was first established in 1998.
Source/document type	Journal article – reports on youth participation programme.

Title: Children and young people's inclusion in public decision-making
Author(s): Partridge, A.
Date: 2005
Publisher: Support for Learning, Volume 20, Number 4, 2005.

REVIEW OF SOURCE	
Purpose/focus of literature	The article '*considers two examples of developing the participation and inclusion of children and young people in public decision-making in Oxfordshire* [Children's Fund programme]. *The projects are compared with research findings focusing on the impact of participation on children, young people, adults and organisations*' (p181).
Impact on policy	SEE BELOW [practice section]
Impact on practice	Impact of The Community Chest Project: The project was established in response to Children's Fund consultation that shows children and young people wanted to be more involved in making decision, and have easier access to play, leisure and social activities out of schools. There is a pot of funds available to children and young people who may have difficulties due to economic disadvantage, additional needs, rurality or any other circumstances, to access play, social and leisure opportunities. The money is allocated to children and young people aged 5-13 by other children and young people. It is entirely designed, developed, managed, monitored and evaluated by children and young people with the support of a Children's Fund participation worker. Children and young people apply for funding for a specific activity. A Children's Panel, comprised of between eight to 12 children and young people, decide on the funding applications put to them. Project 2: The Sounding Board – Was developed to establish a way to involve children and young people in a joint Best Value Review of Children's services for vulnerable children and young people in Oxfordshire. The initial needs assessment and consultation resulted in six key areas for improvement: disability services, children and adolescent mental health, teenage pregnancy, educational achievement of vulnerable children, support for LAC and support for vulnerable families. Six task groups were set up to consider each area and two Sounding Boards were established (one for parents/carers and the other for children and young people). The children and young people's Sounding Board was comprised of about 20 children and young people aged 8-19, drawn from diverse backgrounds. The Sounding Board was involved in meetings with the BVR team.
Impact on young people	Positive impacts on children and young people: Article outlines that the benefits to children and young people of participating in decision-making are comprehensively evidenced and include: increased confidence and self-esteem; new knowledge and skills; improved achievement at school and lower rates of exclusion, raised aspirations and fun (p182).

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<td><u>Negative impacts on children and young people:</u>
Article states that when involvement is tokenistic there are negative impact on children and young people: sense of disillusionment and subsequent 'opt-out' (RBA Research, 2002) (p182).

<u>Impact of The Community Chest Project:</u>
Panel member views:
Findings from an Impact survey from all 31 Children's panel members showed that there were significant changes in confidence, knowledge and skills (i.e. their realisation that they could make really important decisions, especially about money; their understanding of the value of money; their sense of feeling more important and their ability to make friends more easily).
Independent adults views:
The majority of the adults involved in the project thought that there had been positive impacts on the children and young people involved. These included: learnt how to be in a formal meeting, how to listen to others and became more confident.

<u>Impact of The Sounding Board Project:</u>
Panel member views:
The panel members valued: learning a lot about other people, issues and problems; making new friends; talking about difficult issues; being listened to and respected and a belief that something would happen next; treats/trips/fun; positive views about improving the process and the next stage.
BVR team views:
There was a clear attitudinal shift in BVR team thinking: impressed by how sensible the children and young people were; and added richness to the meetings.</td>
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<td>**Any other key findings, conclusions, recommendations**</td>
<td>The article details three broadly accepted reasons for involving children and young people in decision-making activity (CYPU, 2001): to improve services; to promote citizenship and social inclusion at an early stage; and for children and young people's personal and social education and development (p182).

States that there is a considerable body of literature advocating the involvement of children and young people in public decision-making, however, *'there is considerably less on the impact or outcomes of their involvement, what works, what difference it makes to whom, and the quality of participation (Kirby and Bryson, 2002)'* (p181).

Impact on adults and organisations:
Research suggests that '*there can be some attitudinal changes, with adults commenting on being 'surprised; or 'impresses' by children and young people's views/ideas*' (p182).</td>
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<tr>
<td colspan="2">**DESCRIPTION OF SOURCE**</td>
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<tr>
<td>**Sector**</td>
<td>Community (projects)</td>
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<tr>
<td>**Country/area**</td>
<td>England: Oxfordshire</td>
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<tr>
<td>**Participants**</td>
<td>Project 1: The Community Chest Project – a pot of funds available to children and young people who may have difficulties due to economic disadvantage, additional needs, rurality or any other</td>
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	circumstances, to access play, social and leisure opportunities. The money is allocated to children and young people aged 5-13 by other children and young people. It is entirely designed, developed, managed, monitored and evaluated by children and young people with the support of a Children's Fund participation worker. Children and young people apply for funding for a specific activity. A Children's Panel, comprised of between eight to 12 children and young people, decide on the funding applications put to them. Project 2: The Sounding Board – Was developed to establish a way to involve children and young people in a joint Best Value Review of Children's services for vulnerable children and young people in Oxfordshire. The initial needs assessment and consultation resulted in six key areas for improvement: disability services, children and adolescent mental health, teenage pregnancy, educational achievement of vulnerable children, support for LAC and support for vulnerable families. Six task groups were set up to consider each area and two Sounding Boards were established (one for parents/carers and the other for children and young people). The children and young people's Sounding Board was comprised of about 20 children and young people aged 8-19, drawn from diverse backgrounds. The Sounding Board was involved in meetings with the BVR team.
Method(s)	A review of two Children's Fund Programme projects. Uses evidence sourced from independent evaluations of the projects.
When data collected	
Source/document type	Journal article – reports on children and young people's voice programme.

Title: Involving disabled and chronically ill children and young people in health service development
Author(s): Sloper, P. and Lightfoot, J.
Date: 2003
Publisher: Blackwell publishing Ltd, *Child: Care, Health and Development,* **29**, 1, 15-20

REVIEW OF SOURCE

Purpose/focus of literature	*'To investigate the extent and nature of involvement of physically disabled or chronically ill children and young people in local health service development'* (pp15)
Impact on policy	
Impact on practice	Seventeen initiatives reported changes in services as a result of consultation. These changes mainly involved service provision: changes to the hospital décor (7), food (4), clinic times (2) and ward routines (4).
	'*The involvement process itself was said to have changed services in four cases by providing increased social contact and peer support for children, and ongoing mechanisms for listening to young patients'* (pp18).
	There were also changes in service commissioning which included: commissioning a home care programme for intravenous administration of antibiotics for young people with cystic fibrosis; prioritisation of relevant areas in a Trust's annual plan; and increasing the input of young people in major service development in Trusts.
	Seventeen initiatives sought children's views to inform developments in hospital in-patient services; one focused on out-patient services; three on community services; and six had a broad focus (such as the transition from child to adult services).
	In five initiatives, children had direct involvement in decision making– four through participation in established decision making bodies and one via a committee that was set up as part of the initiative.
	Other changes included: better provision of information for children; achieving a permanent commitment to involving children's views; and setting up a youth club for children with autistic spectrum disorders.
Impact on young people	'*…that involvement produces benefits for children, such as developing confidence and having an opportunity to express their feelings*' (pp18).
Any other key findings, conclusions, recommendations	'*The initiatives identified provide evidence that children's involvement is possible and can produce benefits both directly and for the children concerned and in informing more appropriate service provision for children*' (pp19).

DESCRIPTION OF SOURCE

Sector	Health
Country/area	England

Participants (e.g. sample size, age, ethnicity, key characteristics, etc)	75 health authorities and 243 Trusts responded to the screening questionnaire. 46 second questionnaires were received but due to criteria issues, 27 responses were analysed.

Method(s)	Postal survey of all health authorities (99) and NHS Trusts (410) in England. This took two phases:
	   - a screening questionnaire sent to Directors of Public Health and Chief Executives of Trusts asking if the organisation had undertaken any initiatives within the last 12 months involving consultation with chronically ill or physically disabled children and young people aged under 21;
	   - second questionnaire to gather further information about: the characteristics of the children and young people involved; aims; funding; partner agencies; levels of children's participation; methods of consultation; support for children and staff; and effects on services.

When data collected	November 1999 to January 2000
Source/document type	Journal article – mapping/survey.

Title: School Councils: Their role in citizenship and personal and social education
Author(s): Taylor, M.,and Johnson, R.
Date: 2002
Publisher: The National Foundation for Educational Research, Slough

REVIEW OF SOURCE	
Purpose/focus of literature	The research sought to investigate and provide evidence of: • how primary and secondary schools see school councils as contributing to their provision for citizenship education, the life of the school as a whole and to the personal and social development of students • to what extent school councils give students a voice in school matters and bring about change; facilitate their political literacy (awareness of democratic processes); and encourage them to participate in civic activities in and around their school community.
Impact on policy	Teachers reported a number of tangible changes as a result of the school council. These were mainly in correspondence with the issue discussed at the meeting (included: new equipment/facilities, improvements to the organisation of break-times and systems/procedures, improvements to toilets/cloakroom, improved uniform, improved catering arrangements/menus and introduction of a tuck-shop, new ideas for fundraising whole-school events, change in recycling procedures, steps to combat bullying, more benches outside and new playground markings, greater links with the local community and changes to the school image).
Impact on practice	[AS OUTLINED IN IMPACT ON POLICY] Students in one case study school detail how a student nominated for good punctuality, attendance and good behaviour was able to choose how some money that was left by a benefactor to the school should be spent.
Impact on young people	Teachers' views Teachers considered that those students who were members of the school council benefited more than those who were not members. *Benefits to councillor*s – skills of communication (speaking, discussion, articulation and/or debating); experience of meetings; political grounding; gaining responsibility and maturity. Also, included, to a lesser extent: listening skills; increased self-confidence; representing others' views; citizenship skills; problem-solving and decision-making; organisational skills; independence and being discerning. *Benefits to non-councillors* - Comments included: students '*gained an insight into the democratic process*' and communication skills. It was also seen to encourage students, to a lesser extent, to have realistic expectations, and students have '*more knowledge of what's going on in school'*. (pp98) Some teachers, however, were unsure of the benefits Councillors' views They described their learning in relation to two main areas: Personal, social and problem-solving skills (i.e. working as a team, being responsible, negotiating, listening, working out what to do and how to discuss things); and developing awareness and understanding of democratic procedures and practices (i.e.

	learning to ask other people's views, being a representative, arguing a point of view, being accountable). A few young people also stated that they had improved self-esteem, confidence and character development.
Any other key findings, conclusions, recommendations	Researchers noted that '*in our observations, the school council was not usually the place where votes were cast or decisions actually made by students; rather it was forum for discussion and recommendation or request by the students to the headteacher, senior managers or governors, from whom a response was later received*' (pp96). Issues related to teaching and learning and the curriculum was less likely to have occurred in the school councils. Most teachers interviewed had encountered some difficulties of having a school council, mainly pressure of time, student disillusionment about the pace of change and keeping the momentum going. '*…to flourish and success in achieving their own goals, school councils must be embedded in school-wide relationships, structures and actions which are disposed towards consultation, respect for the views of students and staff, participation in the school as a community, respect for reason, democracy and the possibility of change. It is not enough for the school council itself to be the only marker of such attitudes and behaviour. The school council needs to be one of many ,albeit one of the most potentially fair and equal, opportunities for the exercise of student's rights and responsibilities within the experience of social and academic learning*' (pp126).

DESCRIPTION OF SOURCE

Sector	Education
Country/area	England and Wales
Participants	<u>Telephone interviews</u> In 1997, the project, Values Education in Primary and Secondary Schools provided some coincidental information on school councils from a quantitative survey. At the time, respondents in 169 schools said that they had experienced some form of staff development on school councils. In July 2000, this number was checked and had fallen to 154. From this, 25 primary and 25 secondary schools in England and Wales were selected. A telephone interview with a member of staff responsible for the school council was interviewed. <u>Case studies</u> There were three primary and four secondary schools with apparently flourishing school councils were chosen as case studies. Visits included looking at school documents, observing school council meetings, group interviews with school councillors and group interviews with non-councillors (all students).
Method(s)	Telephone interviews with 50 schools and then case study visits to seven schools. '*Qualitative case study methodology grounded in a quantitative telephone survey of a nationally representative sample of schools*' (pp16).
When data collected	Conducted over three school terms in the academic year of 2000-

	2001
Source/document type	Book – empirical research.

Title: Young Voices: guidelines on how to involve children and young people in your work	
Author(s): The National Children's Office, The Children's Rights Alliance, The National Youth Council of Ireland	
Date: 2005 (June)	
Publisher: The Stationary office, Dublin	

REVIEW OF SOURCE	
Purpose/focus of literature	'*Young Voices: Guidelines on how to involve children and young people in your work has been prepared with the aim of encouraging agencies and organisations in both the statutory and non-statutory sectors in Ireland to explore ways in which they can develop a culture of participation by children and young people*' (p8).
Impact on policy	SEE BELOW [Impact on practice]
Impact on practice	Oldfield and Fowler (2004) – survey of statutory and voluntary sector organisation in England. Found that over 80 per cent of respondents agreed that their services had improved as a result of involving children and young people in decision-making. Case study examples presented: *Service design* – 1. Young people helped design an adolescent-friendly health service in Ballybay, County Monaghan and Cootehill, County Caven. Their involvement includes: involvement in training workshops with health professionals, peer education programmes, developing a website for GP practices and having youth delegates on planning committees within the health service executive. 2. The Youth health service in Cork City – a series of focus groups were held with young people to inform the services. They were consulted on the preferred location of the premises, the design and layout the name, opening hours and the services to have. 3. Refugee and asylum seeker project (Letterkenny) – A needs assessment was undertaken to look at the quality of life issues for refugee and asylum-seeking families living in the area (involved children and young people). As a result of the consultation, they developed an arts-based community programme for children who are foreign nationals and the young people have formed a sub-group to assist in the development of a drop-in centre. *Production of materials/resources* – 1. The school journal is a mental health promotion initiative targeting young people in the North West of Ireland. Evolved from consultation with young people where they said they needed well presented information on mental health. An evaluation of the first school journal in 2001 showed that the journal was received very positively by students who use it and that the journal strengths are 'drawn from the language that it uses to communicate to students –language that it theirs-written by their peers'. 2. CluedUP.ie – Health service executive (Republic of Ireland): the only dedicated sexual health information website in Ireland. Been in operation since 2001 as an action research project. The site was developed based on the demands of young people for

	accessible, friendly and non-judgemental information. Young people are involved in the development of the site. 3. The NCO conducted a small but focused consultation with children aged eight and twelve years from Dublin City on the design and content of a children's leaflet to accompany the publication: National Play-Policy, Ready, Steady, Play. They discussed and fed into the information that should be in the leaflet and the shape, colours and cartoons used in the leaflet. *Evaluations and reviews* - Viewpoint is an internal evaluation of ISPCC services, seeking to obtain children's and young people's views of the ISPCC services. The purpose is to help the organisation plan, priorities and deliver better services for children and young people. *Recruitment practices*- Health services executive- two young people were involved in an interview panel. The Executive developed a protocol on how best to involve young people on interview panel.
Impact on young people	'Involvement in decision-making brings direct benefits to children and young people themselves. They gain by learning skills such as teamwork, negotiating, problem solving and influencing. They obtain knowledge of how policy is made and how organisations work. They learn to engage with adults as partners and their confidence and self-esteem may be enhanced through participation' (p13). In DfES report, Building a Culture of Participation (2003) – research shows that participation was very beneficial to specific groups of more disadvantaged young people.
Any other key findings, conclusions, recommendations	

DESCRIPTION OF SOURCE	
Sector	Across sectors (health, education etc)
Country/area	Ireland
Participants	Used case study examples. Range of ages and participants cited.
Method(s)	
When data collected	
Source/document type	Guidelines

Title: Participation in Practice: Children and Young People as partners in change
Author(s): Willow, C.
Date: 2002
Publisher: The Children's Society

REVIEW OF SOURCE	
Purpose/focus of literature	Chapter 1: Policy context for children's and young people's participation • Chronology and critique of the developments of policy and legislation on the rights of young people, including developments of their rights to be involved and heard – useful for background information. Critique includes of the emphasis placed on SEN and LAC children's right to be involved in decisions that affect their lives, with negation to apply this right to all children. Chapter 2: Respecting the whole child: the genesis school inclusion project • This chapter describes a project set up (in partnership with the Children's Society) to try and address social exclusion issues (e.g. bullying) in a struggling school. The project involves a walk in help line where yp can go to discuss any problems they are having. The project ran support groups, gave young people advice on their rights and the law. Changing the child protection system: the UCAN advocacy project • A group was established within social services to enable adults to support young people's voice and participation in contact with the social services. For example, they give support with procedures that effect the young persons life, child protection investigations, meetings and court hearings, they support yp in influencing local policy and service development and support yp's participation in national development. Ask Us! Young Disabled People get active • The Children's Society set up a club for young disabled people to share their experiences. They undertook different activities, including making videos to try and convey this experience to other people and thus promote social integration – designed to influence policy.
Impact on policy	The UCAN advocacy project: • As a result of the project and listening to the voice of yp, the perspective of the young person is now considered in issues regarding where and who they want to live with, and a yp can initiate court proceedings, for example, to revoke their care orders. Young Disabled People Get Active: • The group was set up in order to share their ideas and inform the development of the Governments Quality Protects

	programme and provide their views on how the programme can support them and their families. It was an England wide consultation with 4-24 year olds.
Impact on practice	Genesis: • The nature and configuration of the groups has grown from young people's own needs and wants. For example, in one school there are more boys than girls and boys were dominating class discussions, so the group now has a girl only group so they can talk more freely about their school experiences. • Changes to services/facilities: within the group the issue of the state of the school toilets was recurring. As a result, students fro Years 7 and 8 prepared a proposal for the redecoration of the toilets. The headteacher accepted the students suggestions and the toilets were improved. • Another example is young people (year 11's) took responsibility for organising an end of school trip. They made all the travel and hotel arrangements and ran a stall to raise money for the trip. The UCAN advocacy project: • The yp voice has had an impact on when child protection meetings are held – so they are now re-arranged according to times when the yp themselves can attend. • '*In one local authority covered by UCAN, children's and young people's participation in child protection meetings has progressed considerably over the last two years. It is now common practice for children and young people to be present in these meetings, or to be represented by an advocate if they feel unable to express their views personally*'. • Subsequently the project has evolved to have an advocacy advisory group of about 15 children and yp, aged 7-16. The advocacy advisory group has achieved such things as, produced an information pack for c&yp on social services and child protection. • The advocacy advisory group redrafted a standard letter from social services inviting c&yp to attend child protection case conferences – previously a formal, unfriendly letter, transformed into more positive communication in the hope that more c&yp would be encouraged to take part in the meetings. • The advocacy advisory group gave a make over to the rooms used for child protection conferences (e.g. pictures on the wall, designed to be less frightening to non-professionals). • There have been formal meetings between the advisory group and police and social services to share views and ideas on how child protection services can become more sensitive to children's needs and rights. These interactions have helped professionals to understand the impact on c&yp of social services and police intervention. • The group has also produced posters and promotional materials and been on the local radio to advocate the importance of listening to the voice of c&yp. • *The project has also successfully promoted children's and yp's ideas and experiences at a national level. Its project report, the last run of the ladder has been widely used by practitioners across England and Wales. Extracts from the report were included in a training pack on looked after children and young people's participation.* • The group designed audio tapes describing their experiences

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of abuse and have been disseminated.
- The project has also contributed to national public policy – by ensuring the views of c&yp involved in child protection were reflected in the CS's response to the DoH's consultation onf parental physical punishment.

Ask Us!
- Transformed one individual involved in the group from a shy boy and lacking in confidence, to one who realised he had talents and felt he could change disabled yp's experiences positively by making people more aware.
- The group had to challenge some practices in the school directly. For example, the group had done a play and the teacher reporting the play got the date, time and title of the play wrong – they wrote a letter of complaint and had a meeting with the headteacher. Another instance, was when the headteacher asked the group to choose plants for the school garden – the group felt they were trying to get away from this kind of patronising, tokenistic inclusion. The group challenged the attitudes and practices of the school through plays in order to work towards a more integrated school and beyond simple inclusion.
- Impacts on the nature and configuration of the group – the group wanted more social time together so they extended the session and decided not to always work on activities.

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Impact on young people

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The Genesis School Inclusion Project:
- Impacts behaviour and retention, and wellbeing: '*The Children's Society helps children stay in school. They show them that education is important in life and also that children are more free. They can achieve something, a goal. They have people to listen to their problems and have someone who is going to be there*'.
- '*I actually think that if the project staff weren't there that kids would have more anger in them and there'd be more fights. Because if people feel that they really hate someone and want to punch them they go and talk to Genesis*'.
- Impacts on assertiveness and confidence.
- Impacts on decision making (pg 62)
- Impacts on sense of responsibility/positive contribution (pg 62) – '*the project engenders responsibility and positive participation in school life in other ways*'.
- Pride and sense of importance from being able to take responsibility to organise an event/trip (pg 62) – '*We had a file that thick. We learned that we could actually organise stuff*'.
- Student-teacher relationship improved – increased trust (pg 62) – '*We also learned that everyone needs to work together to make it happen. Before you couldn't trust a teacher but now I know they will listen to you properly*'.

The UCAN advocacy project:
- Confidence: '*I was about ten years old when* [my advocate] *went I got a piece of paper and a pen and wrote down some paragraphs on what* [the advocate] *could say for me, and she read it out.* [the advocate] *spoke up for me because I was quite shy then, she's built up my confidence now*'.

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Any other key findings, conclusions, recommendations	• A critical factor on whether such participatory activities had impact seemed to rely on a whole school ethos/approach and support from senior management.

DESCRIPTION OF SOURCE

Sector	Education, social services
Country/area	UK
Participants (e.g. sample size, age, ethnicity, key characteristics, etc)	Case studies (of The Children's Society projects) (various case studies, including a group in a deprived school, a group for LAC and a group for disabled young people).
Method(s)	Case studies
When data collected	2002
Source/document type	Book – reports on children and young people's participation programmes.

References

References of literature summarised for the review

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