



SBNI Strategy for Engaging With Children and Young People

September 2021

1 Introduction

In March 2021 Barnardo's NI was commissioned by the Safeguarding Board for Northern Ireland (SBNI) to develop and produce a three-year strategy detailing how the SBNI will engage with children and young people in Northern Ireland. The work was also to identify the best practice methods for capturing these views across a wide and varied audience base.

The purpose of the strategy is to ensure that the views and voices of children and young people are heard and responded to in relation to safeguarding and child protection system in Northern Ireland. The strategy will encompass the strategic aims, intentions and priorities agreed by the SBNI in its Strategic Plan 2018-2022 and beyond.

2 SBNI Statutory Requirements to Engage with Children and Young People

SBNI was set up under the Safeguarding Board Act (NI) 2011 and is the statutory body responsible for co-ordinating and ensuring the effectiveness of its 27 member agencies for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in NI.

SBNI is a partnership organisation consisting of key statutory and voluntary agencies that operate and resource the safeguarding and child protection system in NI. Senior representatives from these organisations are members of the Board of the SBNI. There are a total of 21 member agencies, 5 independent individuals and one SBNI independent chair that comprise the Board. In addition to the Board members there are also organisations that sit on Safeguarding panels but are not member agencies of the SBNI, these are referred to as 'Partner agencies.'

The primary responsibility of the SBNI is to protect children and young people from risk and harm and ensure that effective work to protect children and young people is properly co-ordinated.

To assist this, the SBNI is statutorily required to promote communication between the SBNI Board and children and young people for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

The SBNI must also take into account the views of children and young people on the effectiveness of the arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people.

In doing so, the SBNI must establish a range of methods to promote direct communication and engagement with children and young people.

The fundamental corporate strategic value associated with this intention is that the SBNI will listen to children and young people, their views, feelings and experiences and place them at the heart of what the SBNI does.

The explicit intention of the Strategy is to create a climate of, and opportunities for, communication between the Board and children and young people who may be affected by the work of SBNI. This will then be reflected in the corporate and business plans of the SBNI and the delivery workplans associated with the SBNI statutory and non-statutory committees and sub-groups. Fundamental to this, is securing the engagement of children and young people early in the planning processes to maximise the effectiveness and inclusivity of the work of the SBNI.

The SBNI had previously defined engagement with children and young people, based on ASK FIRST standards as:

“The process by which decision makers directly involve children and young people in the development of policies, strategies and services which impact on their lives”.

3 Development & Production of the Strategy

Barnardo’s NI was commissioned to engage with children and young people, review good practice and develop the 3-year strategy. As a leading provider of children’s services, Barnardo’s works directly with over 18,000 children, young people and families every year. As such, Barnardo’s was well placed to deliver on the project specification, particularly in relation to children and young people who are often under-represented in engagement mechanisms.

The development project commissioned by SBNI requested the following to inform the production of the strategy:

- The representative sample of children and young people to be engaged with must include coverage of Section 75 categories, where applicable
- The above must also include those children and young people who may be difficult to engage due to their vulnerability and / or marginalisation
- Ensure a rural / urban representation of children and young people
- Create a range of opportunities for eliciting their views on how the SBNI should engage with them to realise the purpose of this strategy

4 Direct Engagement with Children and Young People to obtain their views

4.1 Methodology

Children and young people were engaged through a number of Barnardo's NI services. Many services have groups who meet regularly and have friendships within the group and trusting relationships with service staff. This ensured a safe environment for the work to take place. Given the breadth of Barnardo's NI services across NI this also provided geographical spread of participants and diversity across age groups, gender and community background.

Eight focus groups with children and young people across Northern Ireland took place, using interactive ways to elicit children's views on how the SBNI should engage with children and young people to inform the development of the strategy. Services included Disabled Children & Young People Participation Project, Leaving Care, Leading Change and Schools programmes. A total of 70 children and young people took part, 27 male and 43 female. Breakdown of workshops and participants overleaf

Focus Group	Male	Female	Total
Young People from Leaving Care Service in Belfast (17-21 yrs)	0	5	5
Young People from Leaving Care Service in Belfast (17-21 yrs)	1	1	2
Faith-based Youth Group, Lisburn	4	6	10
Primary School, Ballynahinch Primary 5, 8-9 years	9	8	17
Primary School, Ballynahinch Primary 6, 9-10 years	9	4	13
Primary School Ballynahinch Primary 7, 10-11 years	4	9	13
Leading Change Project, North Belfast (17 -18-year-olds)	0	6	6
Disabled Children & Young People Participation Project, Armagh (12-18 year-olds)	0	4	4
Total	27	43	70

Eight focus groups with children and young people took place using interactive ways to gather children's views on how organisations should engage with children and

young people on safeguarding or sensitive issues. Sessions were a mixture of face to face and online. Interactive techniques included the use of Mentimeter, software that creates fun and interactive presentations and picture work with the younger children. Services included Disabled Children & Young People's Participation Project, Leaving Care, Leading Change and Schools programmes. Children and young people were given incentives for their participation.

Children's feedback is split into two age ranges- those children under 11 and those young people over 11. We did not use language of 'child protection' or 'safeguarding' but asked children and young people what worries they had both now and, in the future, what helped them to feel safe and ways in which they liked to receive and to share information about topics relating to their safety and sensitive issues.

4.2 Key messages

Clear themes emerged in both age ranges. In terms of issues that children and young people worried about - for the younger children the top five themes were how they looked, whether they were liked, keeping friendships, exams and family members getting/being sick.

For the young people over 11 the top five themes were self-image, bullying, family history, exams and the future. A clear theme of worrying about not being 'good enough' with friends, family and in schools was apparent in both age ranges.

When asked what helped them feel safe and what would make them feel better in dealing with their worries the answers between the two age groups were similar. From the younger children's feedback, the top responses focused on family with particular reference to parents, siblings, pets and people they trust. The older cohort of responses was similar with top answers centred on family, friends and a familiar face. The most common source of support for both age ranges was family and friends.

This immediately raises the issue of the vulnerability of children and young people who lack supportive family and friends to share their concerns and worries with.

'Don't have high expectations of the young person so that when they admit there is a problem, they don't feel under pressure to be a certain type of person.'

Participants were asked 'how' or in what way they like to hear information and also how they liked to share views or information to adults when talking about sensitive topics or about things that are causing them concern.

For the younger children when receiving information, it was important that this was in a calm, gentle, kind and understanding way, with a number of children expressing their dislike at being 'shouted at'. This association with 'receiving' information and being shouted at suggests the possibility that sometimes adults, out of concern and in an effort to protect children don't always communicate this calmly.

The older children appreciated open, honest and straight dialogue that was 'face to face' or 'in person'. The young people also felt that it depended on the situation but that the relationship with the individual was important.

"We don't want handouts- no handouts, no fliers, no leaflets, no cards for our wallets, have a conversation with us"

'Everyone is different-some like face-to-face others prefer online like the new nurse text service.'

'One conversation may not be enough.'

When 'sharing' information about themselves to adults the younger age groups top answers primarily focused on privacy and confidentiality, writing it down, being able to tell the truth and not get judged for it and being listened too. The older age group felt it was important that the contact was face to face and that it was not a formal situation. Young people recognised that although they preferred face to face contact that some young people might find it easier to communicate online.

Children were asked what makes it difficult to talk about things that are sensitive. Descriptions were given to help children understand what might be classed as sensitive information. Key themes emerging for the younger age group were trusting someone, using age appropriate and 'easy' language, fear of being laughed at, the person being angry and someone getting in trouble because of their disclosure.

Answers varied for the older children but centred on lack of trust, not being listened too, being judged and being embarrassed.

'It is difficult when it's something embarrassing or something that could potentially get someone in trouble.'

'I would need a little bit of time to build up the confidence to talk about it and rehearse what I wanted to say.'

As a follow-on question child were asked what would make it easier when discussing sensitive issues. There were variations in the two sets of responses with the older children reinforcing the importance of feeling valued and the younger children reinforcing the importance of the relationship.

The younger children responses concentrated on the relationship they had with the individual- knowing the person, being family or friends, and having a bond. The older children responses addressed being heard, valued, respected and listened to with a particular emphasis on confidentiality.

'Knowing that the adult is a safe person and that they care about you makes a difference.'

'Other people in the same room or close by would make it uncomfortable to talk openly.'

The following questions were only explored where it was safe and appropriate to do with many being facilitated by Barnardo's practitioners who had established relationships with young people impacted by these issues. Young people were asked what was most important when talking about something difficult. Top answers included not feeling pressured, having a positive outcome or achieving a solution to the problem, having someone let you talk, and knowing you won't get into trouble for being honest. We asked young people to give a 'top tip' on how to support children and young people and it was clear that what was important was follow up. The young people wanted the individual to come back at a later point in time and check on them and also follow through with what they had said they were going to do.

Children and young people did not want to pass their worries on to a stranger - they wanted to share these with a trusted adult that they had a relationship with. When we asked the young people was there anything that could have been done differently answers focused on listening better, having a consistent person to talk to, confidentiality, being valued as a person and being non-judgmental. This highlights the importance of taking into consideration a child's age and stage of development as although there were similar themes with each age range there were differences on what was important to them with regards to the 'how' we communicate. Children did not want to be bombarded with information or with questions but made to feel valued 'like a person'.

Many of the children and young people who participated in this consultation have been involved in similar focus groups before. The good relationships between young people and their Barnardo's worker were frequently highlighted as positive and several shared that they could talk openly with their worker, sometimes in a way they couldn't do with anyone else. However, some of the older young people who had taken part in other consultations and focus groups (mostly external) were clear that on many occasions they did not receive any follow-up or did not feel that anything had changed. This was a key thread in the conversations with the young people had been looked after who had strong views on how their voices had not been heard or listened to.

'Could tell you everything that is wrong with the system, but no one wants to listen'

'Anything we voice our opinion on disappears. We don't hear anything about it again. No follow up'

'No one asks us when it matters'

This reiterates the importance of meaningful and on-going dialogue, when possible, as 'one-off' consultations can be dispiriting for young people, especially those who have had challenging life situations and struggled to receive the support they need from the wider system.

5 Engagement with SBNI Board Members and Safeguarding Panels

In addition to the children and young people’s feedback, a survey was sent to the SBNI Board and Safeguarding Panel members. This survey had 29 responses.

Looking at the returns by organisation we have a return rate of 62%.

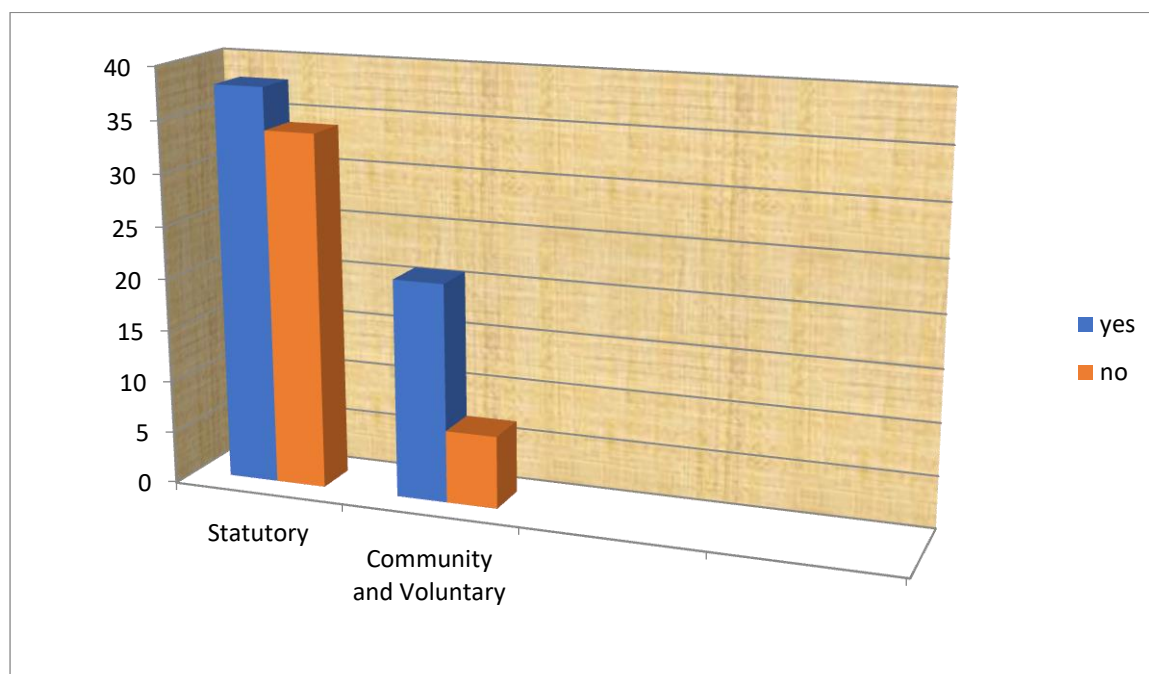
The survey was sent to 15 Statutory organisations, 13 replied. Of these 13, 10 are Board members of SBNI, 3 are panel members. This is a return rate of 87%.

The survey was sent to 12 Voluntary and Community organisations, 5 replied. Of these 5, 3 are Board members of SBNI, 2 are panel members. This is a return rate of 42%.

1. Responses split into Statutory and Voluntary and Community

Statutory	72% (21)
Voluntary and Community	28% (8)

2. Are the views and voices of the children and young people you **work with routinely sought and collated in relation to safeguarding issues?**



Community and voluntary organisations were less likely to say that they did not routinely seek and collate the views of children and young people in relation to

safeguarding issues than statutory agencies. With just over half of all respondents saying that they did (59%).

	Yes	No
Statutory	38%	34%

	Yes	No
Community and Voluntary	21%	7%

3. If you clicked yes on question 2- how do you include the views and voices of children and young people you work with in relation to safeguarding?

Consultation is built into routine service delivery	76%
Voluntary and Community response	32%
Statutory response	44%
Consultation is through a bespoke group of children and/or young people who are part of our organisation	53%
Voluntary and Community response	32%
Statutory response	21%
Consultation is through a bespoke group of children and/or young people who are external to our organisation	24%
Voluntary and Community response	8%
Statutory response	16%
We have dedicated staff for consultation and engagement with children and/or young people	36%
Voluntary and Community response	18%
Statutory response	18%
Consultation and engagement is considered part of front-line staff regular roles	88%
Voluntary and Community response	29%
Statutory response	59%

As can be seen the most used way of including the views and voices of children and young people was through routine service delivery (76%), with consultation and engagement considered part of front-line roles for 88% of responses. Just over one

third of responses said they had dedicated staff responsible for engagement whilst one quarter used a bespoke group which was external to their own organisation.

4. If you clicked no- is this something you would like to be developed?

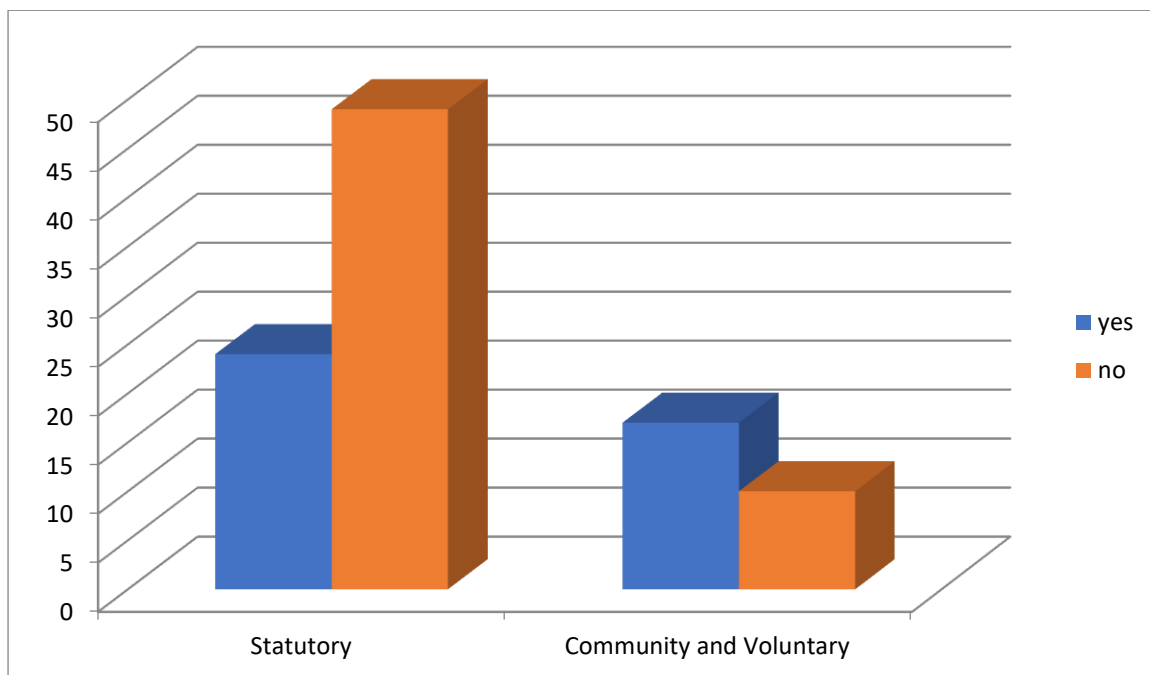
100% of responded clicked yes

5. How do you respond/use children and young people’s views and voices in relation to safeguarding issues?

Used to inform wider service design	59%
Voluntary and Community response	26%
Statutory response	33%
Used in the moment to inform current service delivery and response to service users	69%
Voluntary and Community response	27%
Statutory response	42%
Used to influence organisational policy and strategy	52%
Voluntary and Community response	26%
Statutory response	26%
Used to influence external policy and strategy	38%
Voluntary and Community response	19%
Statutory response	19%
Written up and shared externally through briefings/papers	34%
Voluntary and Community response	19%
Statutory response	15%
We do not do this	24%
Voluntary and Community response	3%
Statutory response	21%
Other	10%
Voluntary and Community response	1%
Statutory	9%

The most common use of children and young people’s views was to inform and shape immediate service delivery and wider service design. This is in line with good participatory practice. The next most popular uses were to inform organisational and / or external policy and strategy.

6. Have you included children and young people in the design or implementation of safeguarding within your organisation?



	Yes	No
Statutory	24%	49%
Community and Voluntary	17%	10%
Total %	41%	59%

With almost 60% of SBNI members answering ‘no’ to this question there is clearly scope for further development in this area. This survey wasn’t commissioned to explore this in greater detail but is clearly an action in taking the strategy forward.

7. If yes- how did you engage children and young people in the design or implementation?

Examples shared from respondents around how they engage children and young people include one to one engagement, focus groups, questionnaires, participation groups and youth forums.

“Young adults delivered some insightful talks to social work staff and attended meetings with management regarding their experience of being in care- this was used as learning for staff around the lived experience of children we work with”

“We have also piloted specific feedback forms for children and young people about child protection and audited leaning from this in respect of the child protection process. However, we need to have more examples like this to engage in a more intense way with young people that can influence practice change. There is room for further development.”

“A recent example is the development and design of online services for children and young people. The whole service was co designed with young people.”

“Programme design with children and young people to ensure that our programmes are relevant and reflect the issues that children and young people are dealing with, concerned about and seeking support with.”

8. If no- is this something you would like developed?

100% of respondents selected yes.

9. Based on your organisations experience what are the most effective strategies and activities to use when engaging children and young people in potentially sensitive safeguarding issues.

Organisations gave a wide range of examples of the strategies they used to engage children and young people when dealing with safeguarding issues. Examples included:

Existing forums - storytelling- film- already established focus groups - engage through diversionary activities - not using a pen and paper - play and creative mediums – art – music – drama - digital technology - age appropriate activities – interactive - comments section - evaluation as part of service delivery, listening - true life stories - talking informally – ask - creating a safe place – discussion – explanation - freedom not to participate – visuals – animation - co design of services – schools - child friendly language - good relationships - young person centred - one to one - attendance at meetings that involve them - small groups of people who are comfortable with one another - using organisations like Barnardo’s to ascertain a more direct voice - bespoke staff to support informed participation – honesty - social media - building in time to ask and listen to

children and young people - surveys if sensitive - established groups with trusted professionals - independent advocate - allow young people to engage anonymously - engagement of parents/carers

This short survey is helpful in identifying that many member organisations are actively engaging with children and young people and taking on board their views in relation to safeguarding issues. This includes day to day service delivery, service design, staff learning and development and internal and external policy influencing. Organisations use a wide range of strategies to do this – dedicated staff, part of front-line delivery role, bespoke groups, youth forums and social media to name a few.

However, a significant number of responses especially from the Statutory sector replied that they are not currently doing this. This survey was an additional strand of work suggested by Barnardo's to seek member feedback in the development of the strategy. Given the wide range of responses and the interest from members to see this area developed further there is potential for SBNI and members to work together to progress this.

When we compare the SBNI member feedback with the feedback from children and young people there is clearly much good practice in place. Members highlighted the importance of confidentially, creating safe spaces, freedom not to participate, building in time to listen to young people and facilitating anonymous engagement. There is a focus on relationships, getting to know young people and using a wide variety of engaging strategies. However, given the high number of member organisations who reported that they did not use engagement or consultation with children and young people in relation to safeguarding it is likely that within the wider NI system only a minority of children are having an opportunity to participate and have their voice heard.

It is positive that all organisations who answered are keen to see this area developed further.

6 Identify Models of good practice

The strategy is also informed by considering existing good practice models and literature. This included:

- Consultation with 'Voice & Influence' colleagues who lead on engagement and participation in Barnardo's
- Contacting Professor Laura Lundy in QUB, a global expert on children's participation and rights
- Reviewing the literature and good practice models

From this the 'Lundy Model' of participation (2007) was clearly identified as model of good practice and has been adopted by agencies with similar statutory responsibility to SBNI.

Figure 1. Lundy Model of Participation (2007)



This model is grounded in Article 12 of the UNCRC – the right of children to have their views heard in decision-making processes, specifically

“State Parties shall assure to the child who is capable of forming his or her own views the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child”.

Lundy’s model of participation encourages practitioners to meaningfully and effectively implement Article 12 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. In addition to this model, Professor Lundy developed a checklist for participation that

“aims to help organisations working with and for children and young people, to comply with article 12 of the UNCRC ensuring that children have the space to express their views; their voice is enabled; they have an audience for their views; and their families will have influence.”

The ‘Lundy Model’ is also compatible with the ASK FIRST standards.

6.1 Key messages around good practice

Meaningful engagement with children and young people is not an added ‘extra’, SBNI is statutorily required to promote communication between the SBNI Board and children and young people for the purposes of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

Children have the right to have their views heard in decision-making processes - this is about more than ‘good practice’ this is ‘safe practice’. Engagement with children

and young people is more meaningful and effective when it happens within a context of participatory practice where children and young people are empowered.

“Empowering children and young people does not just improve their safety and wellbeing, it also promotes a healthy organisational culture that is consultative, collaborative and open to feedback and improvement.”

(2021:3, Commission for Children and Young People).

The challenge for SBNI is developing and maintaining a ‘communication loop’ between SBNI and the member organisations which

- (1) facilitates the active involvement of children and people in participatory practice.
- (2) captures children and young people’s views and experiences at an individual and collective level.
- (3) enables the voices and views of children and young people to be shared in way that informs and influences the work of the SBNI (and wider relevant systems).

1 Key Message – Multi-level Participation

Inclusive participatory dialogue needs to occur throughout the organisation at every level of engagement, and not just during 1-1 direct work or ‘one-off’ consultation sessions. The right to the child to participate should not be limited to circumstances – participation should be a process embedded in participatory practice across organisational culture.

2 Key Message – Capture & Share Views

Every interaction with a child or young person is an opportunity for participatory practice at an individual and a collective level. Participatory practice if implemented well offers opportunity to actively involve children and young people in routine service delivery and assessment and record their views and experiences e.g., as is possible through Signs of Safety and Outcome Star.

3 Key Message – Action & Follow-up

Engagement with children and young people (when appropriate) should also be action-focused and lead to demonstrable change. It should empower young people and hold organisations, services and systems accountable. The Lundy Model highlights that participation is achieved through engagement in dialogue and is an interactive, on-going and inclusive process. True dialogue and change require space, voice, audience and influence

4 Key Message – Equal Access & Opportunity

Even within an organisation with a positive participation culture, particular attention needs to be paid to ensure children and young people can have their voice heard equally. Participation and empowerment approaches must be sensitive to the specific needs and backgrounds of children and young people and tailored to create a safe environment. Some children and young people may need particular support to participate and engage meaningfully. Literature identifies the following children and young people:

- children and young people who have experienced trauma
- children and young people who may be LGBTIQ+
- children and young people with disabilities
- children and young people from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds

The children who have the most to gain from empowering participatory practice are often in situations where accessing this type of provision is challenging. As a result, their voices can be missing from participatory dialogue. This can be due to a wide range of familial, societal or systemic issues.

7 Key Strategic Objectives for Engagement

(See Appendix 1 for more detail)

7.1 Structure & Systems

Support and promote systems to further embed participation and engagement at a systemic and strategic level

7.2 Connection & Communication

Develop and maintain a communication loop between children and young people, member organisations and the SBNI

7.3 Reflect & Share

Create and maintain spaces and opportunity to listen, engage with, consider and act on children and young people's voices

7.4 Action & Influence

Actively listen to and consider views and experiences shared by children and young people. Use this inform decision-making and process and feedback to children and young people (either directly or via member organisations).

8 Conclusion & Recommendations

Good practice guidance highlights the difference between engagement / consultation and participation, emphasising that meaningful engagement is best carried out within a context of participatory practice. An environment of participatory practice empowers and supports children and young people to safely share their views and experiences, free from judgement or blame. Such an environment can also respond effectively when a child or young person shares something concerning and / or needs additional support.

Given the wide range of membership organisations who work with SBNI to support safeguarding work in NI there is great potential to harness the voices of diverse children and young people. However, this is not straightforward and to be done meaningfully and with impact will need to be resourced to develop.

It is clear from the children and young people's responses that their preferred method of engagement in relation 'in person'. This provided a sense of security and an opportunity to build an on-going relationship with someone they could trust.

Young people and children stressed the importance of follow-up to hear how their views were shared and whether they were used. Some young people were frustrated that they were often approached for 'one-off' consultations and then didn't hear anything further.

Responses from membership organisations illustrated varying degrees of routine engagement and service user involvement in safeguarding activity.

Given the wide range of organisations within the membership, this is to be expected and the literature is also clear that there is not a 'one size fits all' approach to this work. Organisations will adopt different strategies and approaches which are proportionate and appropriate to the type of work they do, the level and depth of contact they have with children and young people and the experiences and qualifications of their staff.

Across the SBNI there is a wide spectrum of organisations covering many types of service delivery from mainstream youth work, specialist services, universal school-based interventions and youth justice to name a few. This affords the opportunity to capture rich, in-depth views and experiences from within organisations who see children and young people on a regular basis sometimes over a period of years.

This varying level of engagement was reflected in the responses however a significant proportion of respondents reported that they did not routinely engage with children and young people on safeguarding issues. This will need to be explored further. It is possible that there is a lack of clarity within organisations about the level and type of engagement that takes place, or that the person representing the organisation is not closely involved in the work at this level.

Where consultation or engagement events are being used (in addition to or instead of participatory practice) every effort must be made to ensure this is representative, accessible and use a range of methodologies offering a choice of expression where

possible. Again, feeding back to children and young people how their views have been used is crucial

Organisations make decisions every day which impact on the lives of children and young people. These happen right across organisations, at different times and at different levels. Sometimes children and young people are actively involved in the decisions (e.g., during service delivery) and other times they made without their direct involvement. Understanding is needed within organisations about where and how decisions are made to enable the views of children and young people to be heard and acted upon – and just as importantly fed back to participants.

Recommendations:

8.1 Harness the voices and views from children and young people where possible from organisations gathering such information routinely in the course of participatory practice. This enables children and young people to safely participate, receive support if needed and receive follow up information about how their views have been used.

8.2 Further collation analysis and data sharing within member agencies is required concerning engagement strategies. To facilitate onward sharing with SBNI will require those representing their organisations on the Board or Panels to have access to data / information captured from children and young people.

8.3 Review and clarify expectations with member organisations about the need to facilitate and share views and experiences from children and young people.

8.4 Support member organisations to capture their ongoing engagement with children and young people (where this is happening) in a format that facilitates sharing these views and experiences with SBNI in a consistent and timely format. To effectively influence safeguarding practice, member organisations will need support to capture, collate and share consistent and robust information from their participatory practice and routine assessment and service delivery.

8.5 Explore with member organisations what the barriers are to capturing and sharing feedback from children and young people and whether there are resource and capacity issues which need addressed.

8.6 Work with member organisations to develop and share inclusive participatory and engagement approaches which create and maintain physically, emotionally and culturally safe spaces for children and young people to share their views. Careful

attention must be paid to exploring how representative the voices being heard really are and whose voices are missing.

8.7 SBNI to consider its own decision making systems and operational strategy to identify opportunities to use feedback from children and young people.

8.8 SBNI to explore specific actions needed to capture information on key strategic safeguarding themes. Depending on what information is needed, alternatives to member organisations feedback may be more effective such as commissioning questions in Young Life & Times Survey or working with the education system to build in safeguarding questions to existing pupil surveys.

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APPENDIX 1: Key Strategic Objectives and Actions for SBNI Engagement Strategy

Key Strategic Objectives	Key Actions	'Lundy Model' Checklist
<p>1. Structure & Systems</p> <p>Embed use of children and young people's views and experiences in SBNI structure and wider systems</p>	<p>Year 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish and disseminate strategy • Further consultation with member organisations on existing good practice • Identify gaps in in reach and explore options to address <p>Year 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further develop processes with member organisations to create opportunities to facilitate views • Share good practice and build capacity within sectors 	<p>SPACE:</p> <p>Provide a safe and inclusive space for children to express their views</p> <p>How will we know it's working?</p> <p>Children's views will be sought through participatory practice and engagement</p> <p>There will be safe spaces for children to express themselves freely</p> <p>Steps will be taken to ensure all children can participate</p>

	<p>Year 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular review of effectiveness of processes • Influence decision making in wider system • Greater transparency and relevant prioritising of decisions and activity 	
<p>2.Connection & Communication</p> <p>Establish ongoing communication between SBNI and member organisations to facilitate children and young people’s views</p>	<p>Year 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop further understanding of engagement and participation activity amongst membership • Identify opportunities and challenges to facilitating and sharing children and young people’s views <p>Year 2</p>	<p>VOICE:</p> <p>Provide appropriate information and facilitate the expression of children’s views</p> <p>How will we know it’s working?</p> <p>Children will have the information they need to form a view</p> <p>Children will understand participation is voluntary</p> <p>Children will have a range of options to choose from to</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop materials and processes with partners to facilitate children’s views • Explore need for any additional forums to enable wider range of participation <p>Year 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular review of processes • Children & Young People’s views are used in decision making in wider system 	express themselves
<p>3. Reflect & Share</p> <p>Embed serious, meaningful consideration of children and</p>	<p>Year 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish processes to enable 	<p>AUDIENCE:</p> <p>Ensure that children’s views are communicated to someone with the responsibility to listen</p>

<p>young people's views in decision making across all SBNI activity</p>	<p>member organisations to share children and young people's views</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SBNI to pilot feedback mechanisms sharing how they have used children and young people's views <p>Year 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular sharing of children and young people's views between SBNI and member organisations • Planning with member organisations to achieve consistent mechanisms and ongoing facilitation of views (e.g., agreed quarterly template) • Agreed format and mechanisms to share how C&YP views have been listened and acted upon <p>Year 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular review and analysis of 	<p>There will be a process to communicate children's views</p> <p>Children will know to whom their views are being communicated</p> <p>That person / organisation will have authority to make decisions</p>
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	<p>information shared</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular feedback to C&YP as to how their views have been used 	
<p>4. Action & Influence</p> <p>Use children and young people's views to affect change to improve safeguarding and child protection systems and share feedback with participants</p>	<p>Year 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify opportunities to use children and young people's views within SBNI decision making and operational functions <p>Year 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish procedures within SBNI to use children and young people's views within safeguarding strategy and decision making <p>Year 3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Systems in place to routinely use children and young people's views Demonstrable change is taking place and shared with children and young people 	<p>INFLUENCE:</p> <p>Ensure that children's views are taken seriously and acted upon, where appropriate</p> <p>Children's views will be considered by those in decision - making / change making positions</p> <p>Procedures will be in place to ensure children's views have been taken seriously</p> <p>Children will be provided with feedback explaining the decisions and process</p>

Anticipated High level outcomes from Engagement Strategy

- Children and young people's views and experiences will be used to inform decision making and activity across SBNI
- Greater participation and engagement will lead to improved decision making, improved services and safety
- Knowledge bank of learning and effective approaches to implement participatory practice shared across SBNI and membership organisations