

Genuine Participation and the Transformational Potential of Health Promotion – Coronavirus Politics

PRE-CONFERENCE co-organized by the UNESCO Chair Global Health & Education and EUPHA Health Promotion section





Introduction
UNESCO Chair

Goof Buijs

Manager UNESCO Chair
Global Health & Education

The world in crisis, time to rethink



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



• UNESCO Chair
• "Global Health and Education"
• University of Clermont Auvergne

The field of health promotion – health education – prevention

Create unique framework for common projects to
contribute to social change and the common good.



- Action on life ecosystems
- Life long learning

Bringing health and education together

- Key role for education and life long learning
- People's health depends for 80% on environmental factors and lifestyle



A focus on the life ecosystem of children and young people



UNESCO Chair vision

- Create conditions for children and young people to take charge of their lives
- As individuals, members of their community and as global citizens
- For all matters related to health

Link UN organisations

UNESCO Chair on Global Health & Education

and

WHO Collaborating Centre on Global Health &
Education

at

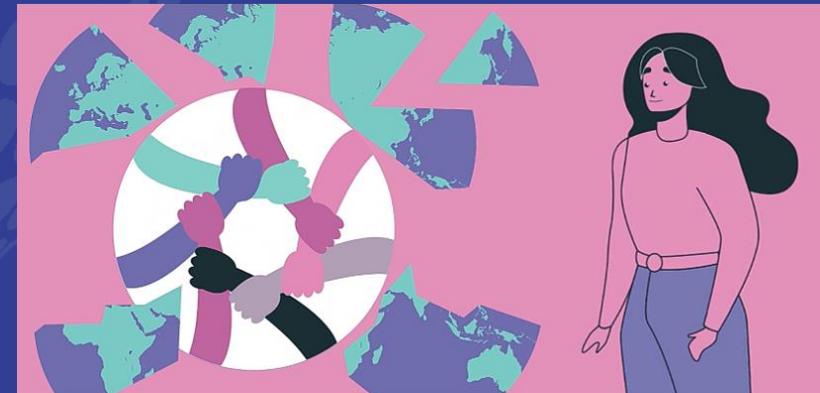
Clermont Auvergne University - France

UNESCO Chair core activities

- Build the global UNITWIN community
- Renew the framework of health promotion and health education
- Survey on the safe reopening of schools
- Build skills of actors in the field
- Produce fact sheets and policy briefs

Community engagement

- Genuine participation
- Empowering communities
- Central role for health promotion
- Sustained investment in health systems



Genuine
Participation –
theoretical
background

Bjarne Bruun Jensen

Professor in Health Promotion

Senior Adviser, Steno Diabetes Center
Copenhagen

Denmark

Theoretical background and roadmap of 'Children's and Young People's Genuine Participation'

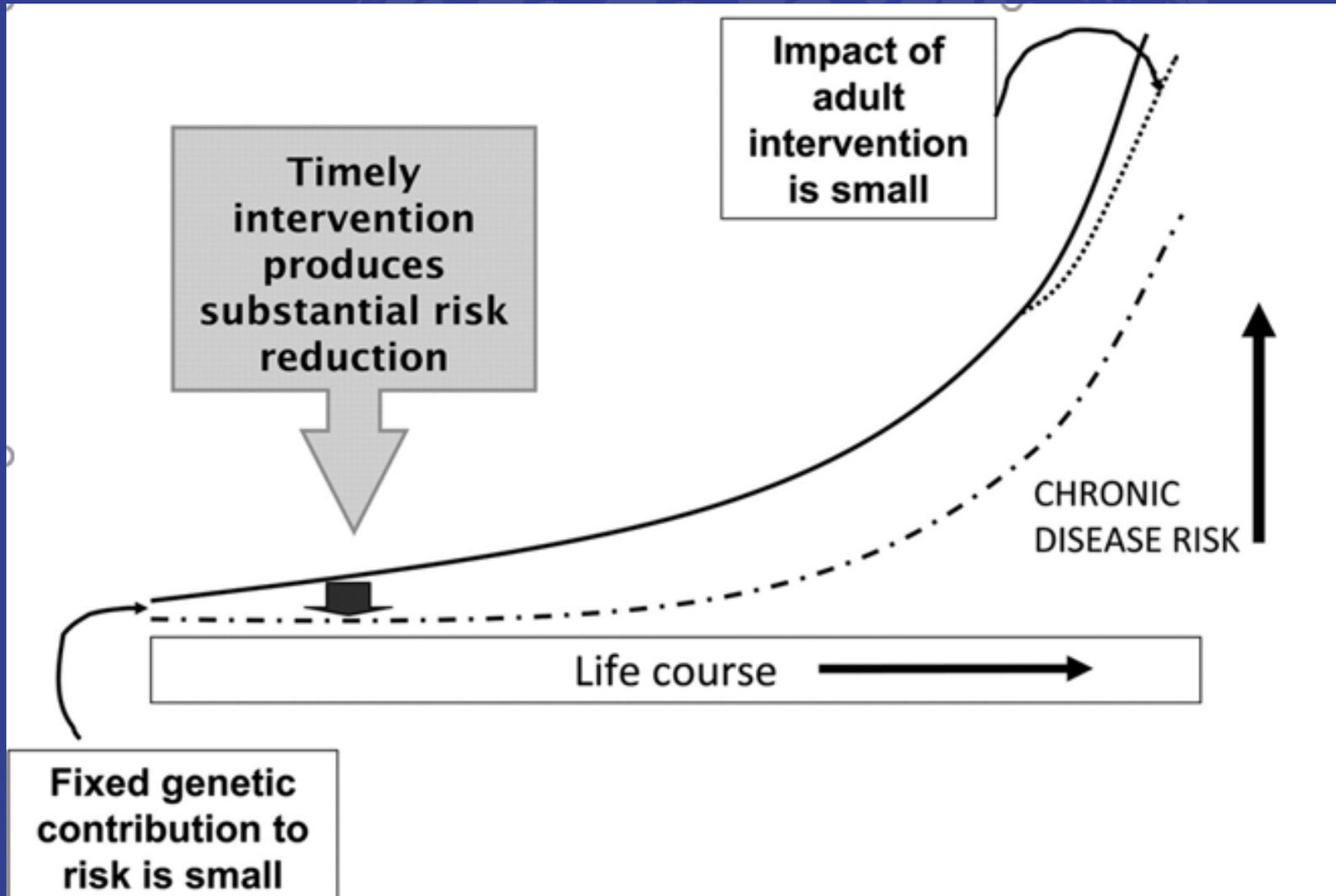
1. Why genuine participation?
2. Why children and young people?
3. Ambition and vision
4. Four overall objectives
5. Time plan for a six-year project
6. Governance

*By Bjarne Bruun Jensen
Professor in health promotion
Steno Diabetes Center Copenhagen
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Why genuine participation?

1. **Pragmatic/effectiveness:** Participation leads to *ownership* which is a fundamental precondition for the sustainable change of practice and behaviour
2. **Normative/ethical:** People have a *fundamental right* to be involved in issues that are central for their own life (e.g. UNICEF: Convention of the Rights of the Child)
3. **WHO's health definition:** Introduces a subjective dimension of health – wellbeing – which implies that the *individual must be involved in defining* her/his health

Why children and young people?



However, capabilities to develop ... (health) literacy start earlier than are often thought, and children can become agents of change in their families and social groups (Hanson & Gluckman 2011)

Mission and vision

Mission:

Produce, share and implement knowledge that contributes to social change

Vision:

Each child and young person receives optimal health, well-being and education for active citizenship

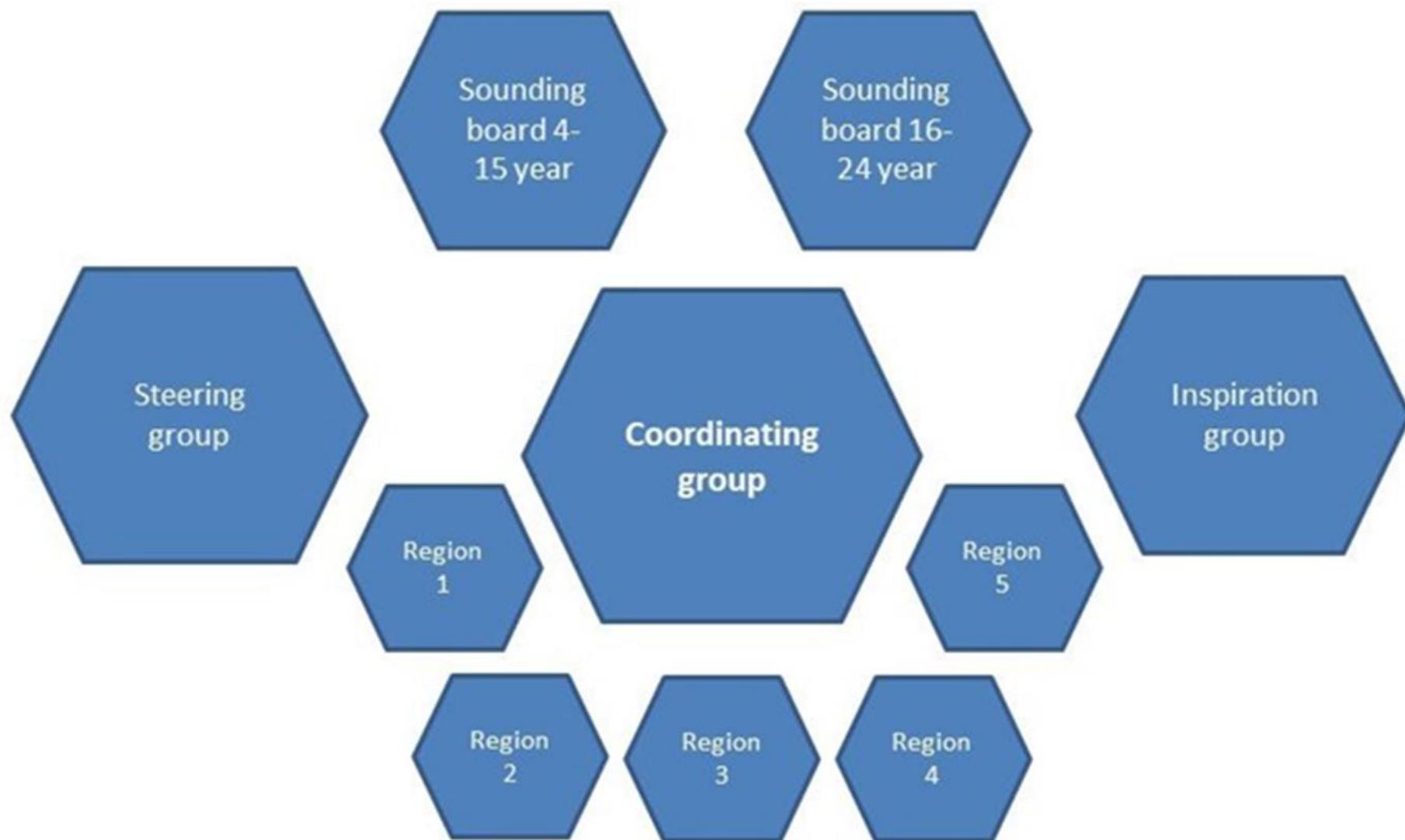
Four overall objectives

- 1. Gathering evidence and synthesis*
 - Literature, case studies, policy documents.....*
- 2. Building consensus*
 - Delphi study with key people...*
- 3. Pilot testing*
 - Research integrated development, toolboxes, training modules...*
- 4. Stakeholder engagement and dissemination*
 - Workshop, conferences, knowledge platform.....*

Timeplan for a six-year project

Objectives	years	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Evidence and synthesis		X	X				
2. Building consensus			X	X			
3. Pilots – filling the gaps				X	X	X	
4. Stakeholder engagement and dissemination		X	X	X	X	X	X

Governance GP



Co-creating a healthy future *for and with* children and young people



Round table

- **Mamdouh Wahba**, Arab Coalition for Adolescent Medicine, Egyptian Society for Adolescent Medicine, Egypt
- **MinChien Tsai**, Affiliated researcher UNESCO Chair, Taipei
- **Nicola Gray**, University of Huddersfield, England
- **Rául Mercer**, FLACSO, Argentina
- **Vanessa Salgado**, Camará Calunga Institute, Brazil
- **Marco Akerman**, University of São Paulo, Brazil

Round table

- From your experience what are the main gaps between theory and practice on genuine participation?
- From your experience how can your practices on genuine participation contribute to the transformational potential of health promotion?
- What are your priorities for moving ahead with genuine participation?



Round table

Mamdouh Wahba

Arab Coalition for Adolescent Medicine

Egyptian Society for Adolescent
Medicine

Egypt

Round table

MinChien Tsai

Affiliated researcher UNESCO Chair
Global Health & Education

Secretary General, Taiwan Health
Promoting School Association (THPSA)

Taipei



THE CANOEING JOURNEY toward GENUINE PARTICIPATION

Take Song-May Elementary School
in Chiayi County, Taipei for example

MinChien Tsai

Affiliated researcher, UNESCO Chair Global Health & Education, Taipei
Secretary General, Taiwan Health Promoting School Association (THPSA)

What are the main gaps between theory and practice on genuine participation?

- ★ There is no consensus on the definition of genuine participation
- ★ Lack of a comprehensive picture from different contexts



Gender

Age

Topic

Culture

How can your practices on genuine participation contribute to the transformational potential of health promotion?

1. Government policies and resources

- There is a grant from the Ministry of Education to support this project

2. School policies and resources

- Canoeing is the school-based curriculum

3. School governance and leadership

- School Principal, Chih-Chiang Huang, holds a canoeing instructor's license.

4. School and community partnerships

- Sharing resources with the community and organizing experiential courses open to the community

My perspective was based on Health Promoting School global standards (WHO, 2020)



How can your practices on genuine participation contribute to the transformational potential of health promotion?

5. School curriculum

- Grade 1/2: Learn about the history and culture of the Bay (Wudawan)
- Grades 3/4: Learn basic paddling
- Grades 5/6: Hands-on canoeing

6. School social-emotional environment

- The teacher and staff also participated in the making of the canoe model

7. School physical environment

- Incorporating canoe features into the design of the school environment

8. School health services

- Aquatic Life Saving Association professionals assist with each course



How can your practices on genuine participation contribute to the transformational potential of health promotion?

The canoeing journey toward genuine participation

Physical health

Emotional health

Social health



Spiritual health

Environmental health

Intellectual health

What are your priorities for moving ahead with genuine participation?

- ★ For Practice: Think more how to be sustainable
- ★ For Research: Explore more cases 
- ★ For myself: Find my own way to be genuine participation

Round table

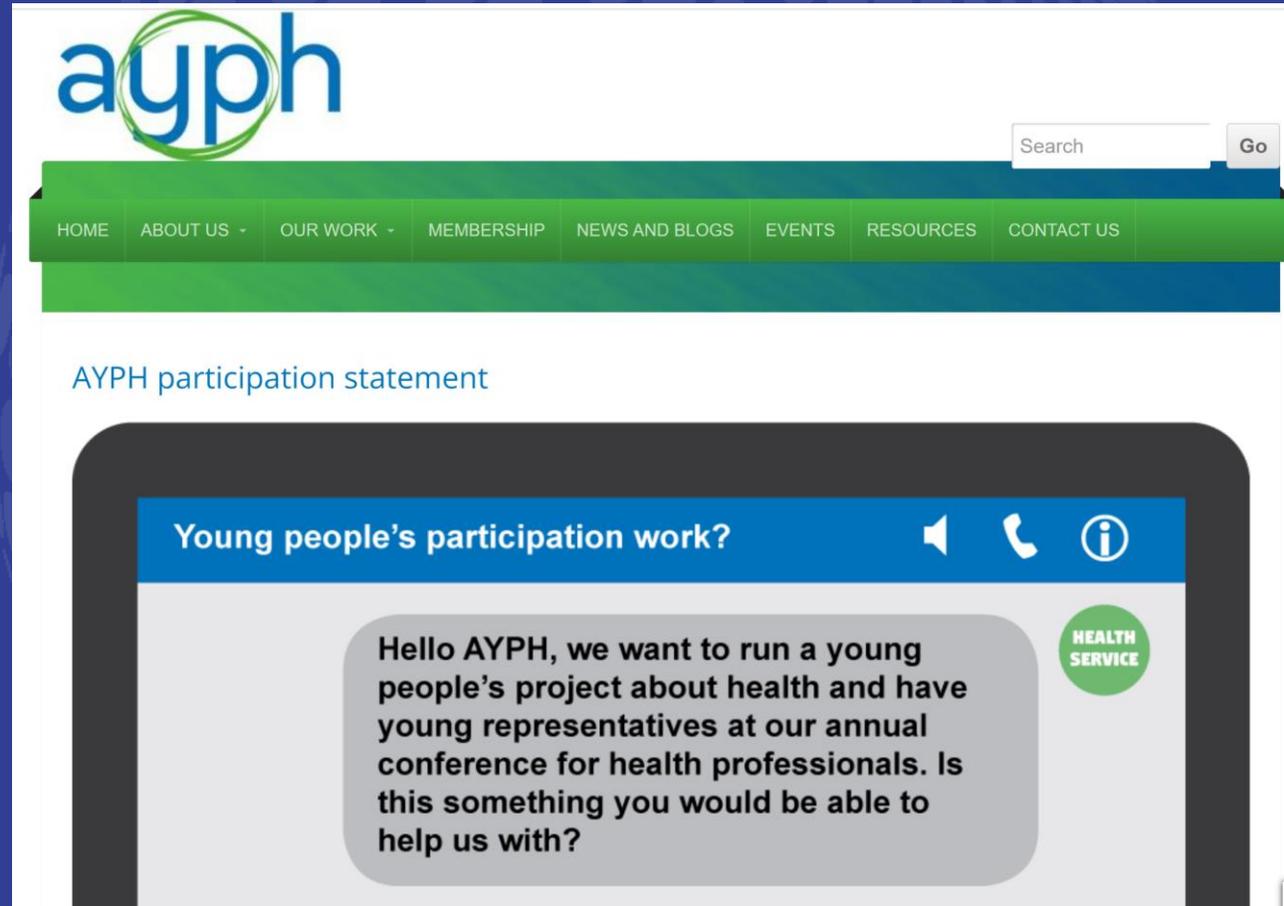
Nicola Gray

Trustee of the UK Association for
Young People's Health

University of Huddersfield

England

Bridging gaps between theory and practice



<https://www.youngpeopleshealth.org.uk/ayph-participation-statement>

Many thanks to the AYPH staff team, partners and young experts

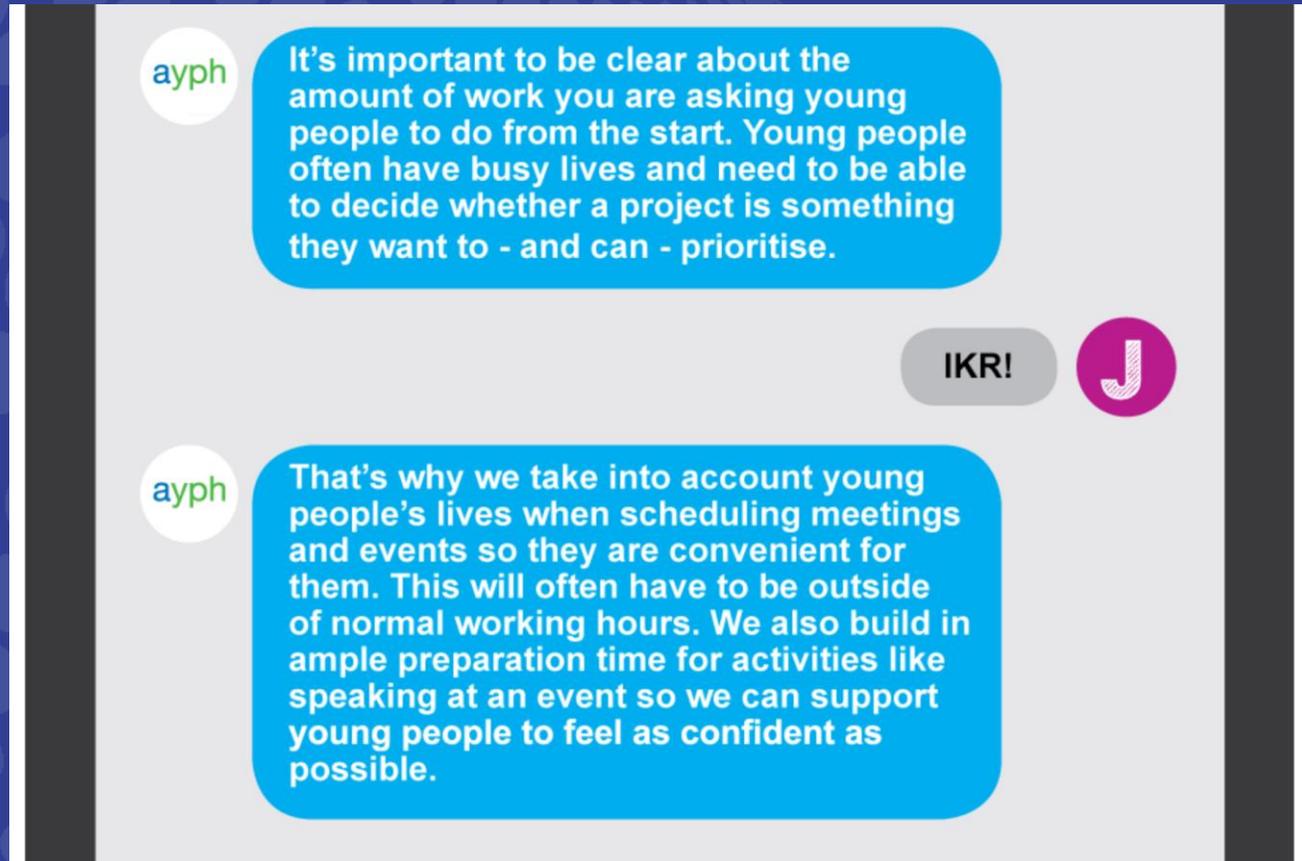
Nicola Gray, Trustee of the
UK Association for Young People's Health

Taking Account of Young People's Lives

Not always taken into account by project funders

Might not fit with traditional notions of developing project timescales

We need different platforms!



Young People as Partners, or Exhibits?

Young people may be asked to reveal very personal details of their lives

Would these adults do it themselves?

Carefully introduce young people as experts in the topic under discussion

The screenshot shows a text-based conversation. At the top right, there is a green circular icon with the text "HEALTH SERVICE". The professional's message is in a grey speech bubble: "Oh, of course. Well we'd like to hear about young people's bad experiences of primary care. We hope they can share these stories to a large group of professionals at our conference. We think this will make a big impression. Can you do this?". The young person's response is in a blue speech bubble, preceded by a white circular icon with the text "ayph": "Adults and professionals sometimes expect young people to talk about very personal things that they would never dream of sharing about themselves in public. We think this replicates the power imbalance between professionals and young people rather than challenging it, which should be the aim of meaningful participation work. We always make this clear to young people as well as the professionals they come into contact with through our work. The young people we work with regularly tell us that they appreciate this approach."

In their words

“...you don’t really want to say no because they’re doing things to benefit you, and I feel like a lot of people understand they’ve helped you out and you’re not going to say no due to you being grateful for things...”

“...Young people who get involved can become like professionals at being young people. They’re trained up and used over and over and that kind of undervalues the opinions of other young people...”

“...As much as I enjoy it, it can kind of get lonely sometimes because people are satisfied with having one person on the group. And I find that tricky because it’s a lot of responsibility...”

“...I feel like recently mental health organisations are just involving people because...funders are starting to favour organisations that do...”

“...taking the time out to send a link to me to show me and explain it to me, and explain how my involvement helped, that feedback was nice...”

COMMON ROOM

@AYPHcharity



Ethical Considerations

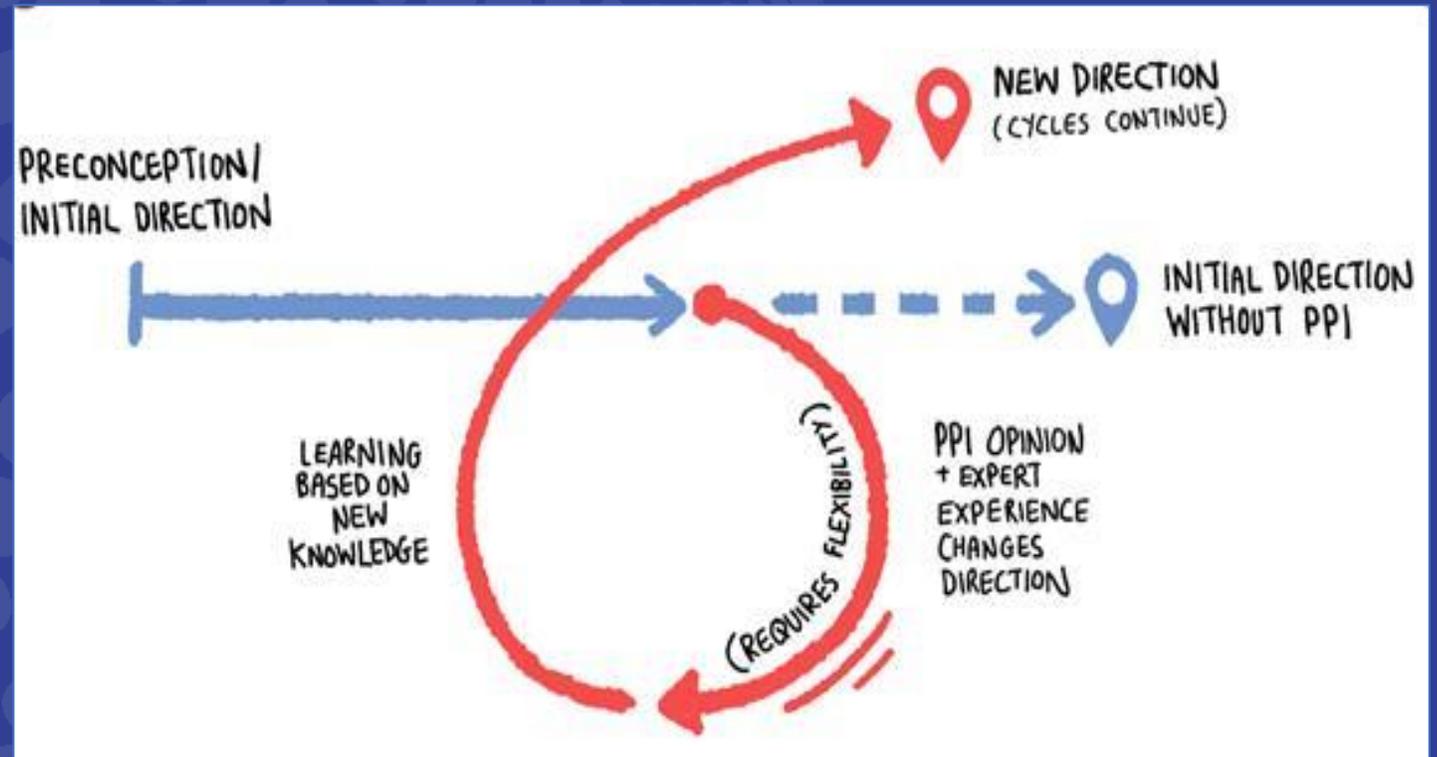
Knowles et al (2021)

Considering ethics as a process rather than an event?

Going beyond consent, to our relationships with young people?

Working out what is appropriate and proportionate at different stages of a project?

Considering the suitability of these issues & principles to other kinds of engagement?



COMMON ROOM

@AYPHcharity

ayph

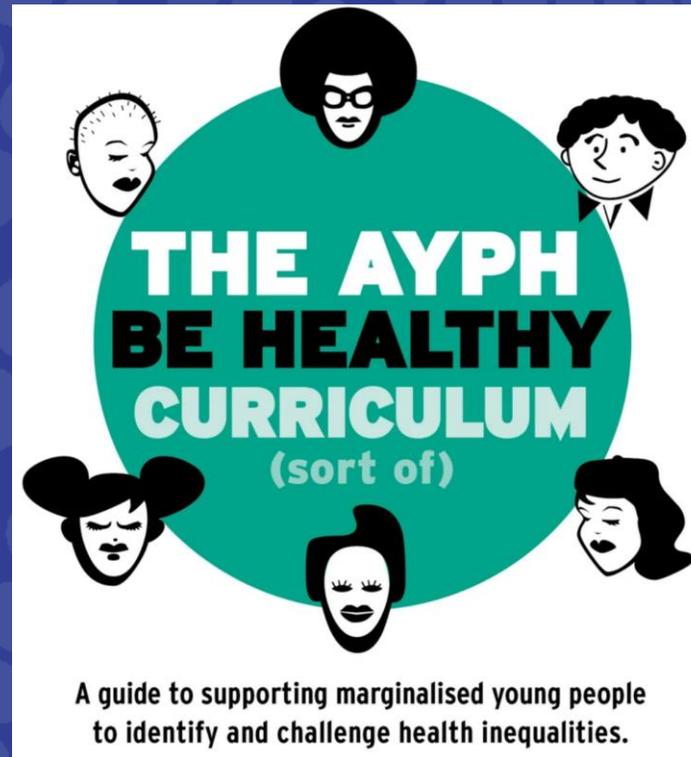
Good news - No situation is too challenging

Consider the 'Be Healthy' project

Exploded some myths e.g. young people affected by CSE cannot do group work

Developed a 'curriculum' for facilitators, based on the popular education approach

Health promotion for young people who need it most



"I feel like my voice is being heard. I was recently involved in recruiting the new participation worker at my project. I worked with professionals on equal terms and felt like my voice was important and informed the final decision." *Lauren, 18*

Summary

There are major issues that have to be addressed to bridge the gap between theory and practice in **genuine participation**

Some of these issues derive from a **mismatch** with existing funding parameters / expectations and ethical structures designed for other purposes

We must also shape the **expectations and behaviours of adult professionals** when young people are asked to participate

We have to advocate for **system change and culture change**

<https://www.youngpeopleshealth.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/AYPH-Code-of-Practice-for-working-with-young-people-.pdf>

<https://www.youngpeopleshealth.org.uk/our-work/young-peoples-participation/good-practice>

@AYPHcharity



Round table

Raúl Mercer MD Msc

Program of Social Sciences and
Health

FLACSO, Buenos Aires

Argentina

From your experience what are the main gaps between theory and experience on genuine participation?

- **Conceptual gaps (paradigm)**
- **Legitimation gaps**
- **Implementation gaps**

Gagged childhood



Masked childhood



Unmasked childhood



Restrictions, disruptions, and regressions imposed by the COVID pandemic on child participation.

From your experience how can your practices on genuine participation contribute to the transformational potential of health promotion?

- Through repositioning the sense of active inclusion of young stakeholders
- Through recognizing genuine participation as a right with all its meanings and components
- Through the inclusion of genuine participation as a visible political platform



The “Green wave”, youth participatory movement in Argentina for reproductive and non-reproductive sexual rights

What are your priorities for moving ahead with genuine participation?

- To generate synergies with ongoing social changing processes that involve children and youth
- To reposition child and youth as a social transformational resource
- To question the traditional models of adult-politic-centered way to manage and concentrate power



Expanding participatory activities in each sector of society.
Experience with LGBTQ+ youth minorities in Argentina



Round table

Vanessa Salgado

Instituto Camara Calunga

Brazil



Round table

Marco Akerman, MD, MSc, PhD

School of Public Health

University of São Paulo, São Paulo

Brazil

From your experience what are the main gaps between theory and experience on genuine participation?

FALSE DILEMMAS

- Micro/macro
- Real/Ideal
- THEORY/PRACTICE
- Concrete/abstract
- Individual/collective
- Good/Correct
- Present/Future



- “Nothing more practical than a good theory”
- Research evidence does not always turn into policy
- Knowledge translation
- Knowledge sharing
- Participatory research

Quadro 2 - As cinco experiências-caso e os princípios identificados

Princípios	Icapuí	Belo Horizonte	São Pedro (Vitória)	Ipatinga	Santos
Empoderamento	x				x
Concepção holística	x	x	x	x	x
Participação social	x	x	x	x	x
Intersetorialidade			x	x	x
Eqüidade			x	x	x
Ações multi-estratégicas	x	x	x	x	x
Sustentabilidade	x	x	x	x	x

From your experience how can your practices on genuine participation contribute to the transformational potential of health promotion?

- **Social Participation** (concrete spaces for participation, for example, “Assemblies”)
- **Equity** (SDH / voice / power)
- **Empowerment** (protagonism, for example, representation in the municipal youth council)
- **Sustainability** (bring the climate crisis into the concrete lives of young people, for example, floods and “shoes dirty with mud”)

