



CASE STUDIES

CHILDREN'S ENGAGEMENT IN CRC REPORTING

My Pocket Guide to CRC reporting - A companion guide for children and adolescents willing to tell the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child about how children's rights are respected in their country
First Edition, 2011, NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child

INVOLVE OTHER CHILDREN IN REPORTING

Making sure children with disabilities have their say, England

Children from all backgrounds, including children with disabilities, helped to lead the Get ready for Geneva project from the start. We asked children with disabilities the same questions that we asked all other children. We also had extra questions because we thought their rights might be more likely to be ignored – like the right to have a say, the right to an education, and the right to play. Experts helped us design pictures for mute children to show us what they thought about different issues. We used a sign language interpreter in our interviews. The Committee really listened to what children with disabilities had to say and made good recommendations about what must be done.

Children's Rights Alliance for England

Supporting children to report, Mongolia

Children in Mongolia sent a report to the Committee and made 2 films, one about their project and another to highlight child protection concerns of children in their country. Nearly 30 children worked together in the summer of 2007 to do this. Sometimes the children were stressed because they were dealing with difficult topics, so they had support from social workers. They also had fun activities. Children organised their own budget, and used lots of different methods to do their research. Nearly 200 children took part – they were aged 8 to 18. They concentrated on poor areas, care centres, markets, rubbish sites, homeless shelters and police units. A professional researcher helped them. They presented their report to their families, and launched it at an event with 120 representatives from the government, parliament, NGOs, media and youth organisations. Their films were shown on 3 TV channels in Mongolia.

See C.Willow (2010), Children's right to be heard and effective child protection

Save the Children Southeast Asia and the Pacific

Writing a report for the United Nations, Scotland

In 2008, children presented a report to the Committee. They used "peer education" meaning that children supported other children to learn about the Convention on the Rights of the Child. An information pack called UNCRC for Beginners was used as a basis for children to talk about times when they felt their rights had been ignored. Their views were included in the report, as well as those of youth workers. In total, 1,325 children aged 4 to 25 and 56 youth workers used UNCRC for Beginners. It took 18 months for children to gather the information they needed and to write their report for the Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Article 12 in Scotland

CHILDREN'S DELEGATION: Choosing a delegation to meet with the Committee

ENGLAND: Children managing the Get ready for Geneva project ran a competition called Get yourself to Geneva. To enter, children had to be under 18 and living in England. They were asked what Article 12 (the right to have a say) meant to them – by writing a newspaper story, essay, letter or diary entry; sending in a podcast or short film; composing a song; drawing a comic strip; or sending in a photograph or drawing – with a caption – that showed Article 12 in practice. They also had to finish a sentence starting 'I want to visit the UN Committee so that I can...'. The entries were judged by children and by the Get ready project team. 12 children aged 9 to 17 were chosen. Extra money was given by other charities to support another 2 children to go to the Government examination in Geneva 3 months later and report back to children in England.

Children's Rights Alliance for England

HONG KONG: 2 delegates aged 15 and 19 were chosen to meet with the Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2005. The delegates were chosen by the children that had prepared the report for the Committee. A meeting was held to discuss the election rules, and to come up with criteria for the delegation members such as commitment to children's rights, being actively involved in preparing the report, feeling comfortable talking in English, and being willing to talk in public. A ballot paper was designed and sent out to all the voting children. The 2 elected children joined the NGO delegation that travelled to Geneva and took part in all the events relating to the CRC reporting process in Hong Kong and in Geneva.

Hong Kong Committee on Children's Rights

KENYA: Choosing children to meet with the Committee began 6 months before the report was written. NGOs divided Kenya into 10 regions. Workshops were organised for collecting information from children, and about 50 children took part in each. At the end of each workshop, the children were asked to choose 2 children to represent their views at a national event. The national event brought together 107 children. During this event, children were asked to choose 9 children to meet with government decision-makers and to agree on 4 issues that they thought were most important. They then chose 4 of their group to talk about these issues with the Committee on the Rights of the Child in Geneva. 2 boys and 2 girls with some personal experience on the issues.

Kenyan Alliance for the Advancement of Children - KAAACR

WALES: Funky Dragon, the children and young people's assembly for Wales, sent 3 children to Geneva to present 2 reports to the Committee – Our rights, our story, which set out the findings from research with 11 to 19 year-olds, and Why do people's ages go up and not down?, research with 7 to 10 year-olds. A steering group of 20 Funky Dragon members was set up to manage the research with children. The steering group's job included recruiting staff; writing research questions and designing research activities; coming up with logos and promotional materials – including 2 films; collecting and analysing data; discussing the research findings with all the members of Funky Dragon; and writing the final reports for the Committee. The steering group had enough money to send 3 children to Geneva. The steering group held a vote to decide who would go because more than 3 children volunteered for this job.

Funky Dragon

WHAT HAPPENS IN THE PRE-SESSION WORKING GROUP?

Meeting with the Committee; England

12 children from England met with the Committee in 2008. 10 of these children met with the Committee in a children-only meeting (see below), but 2 took part in the pre-session as part of the NGO delegation. To prepare, these children took part in a weekend residential in England with 10 adult members of the delegation. They learned more about the child's rights issues that affect children in England (based on the findings of research carried out with over 1,700 children) and received training in public speaking. At the pre-session Nathan (age 12) and Imogen (age 17) gave presentations and answered. One adult helped to explain difficult terms and what different laws and policies meant when they were referred to by the Committee or by NGOs.

Children's Rights Alliance for England

PLAN A RAPPORTEUR VISIT

Planning a Rapporteur visit, Peru

To make sure that the visit of Rosa Maria Ortiz (a member of the Committee on the Rights of the Child) was successful, child-led organisations in Peru had to work together really well to design a programme for the visit. The programme included meetings with people who work for the government, politicians as well as NGOs and the media. These meetings – especially the meetings with the media – helped to make sure that there was lots of information available to the general public about children’s rights in Peru. Rosa Maria also took part in an event for government officials who make decisions affecting children; a national event in Peru’s Congress; and a conference for NGOs. The aim of these events was to raise awareness about the concluding observations (recommendations) of the Committee, and to show government officials what had to be done to make sure children’s rights are a reality for all children in Peru.

Save the Children Sweden: Latin America and the Caribbean

SHOULD YOU SEND THE CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS OUT?

Sending out the concluding observations, England

The Committee’s concluding observations recommendations for the UK Government were published on 3 October 2008. On the same day, the Children’s Rights Alliance for England wrote a version of the concluding observations for children. This was so that all the children that had been involved in the CRC reporting process could see the impact of their views. They were able to see that the 14 recommendations they had made to the Committee had been included in its final concluding observations. The children’s version of the concluding observations was sent out by e-mail and post to children, NGOs, local councils, schools, the government, and the Children’s Commissioner, and was also posted online on the Get ready for Geneva website. Children have continued to work to monitor (to check) the government’s progress towards putting the concluding observations into practice, especially in relation to the recommendations children made about their rights. It has published these reports on the Get ready website.

Children’s Rights Alliance for England