

TIP SHEET FOR ADULTS ON ADOLESCENT AND YOUTH* PARTICIPATION IN CAMPAIGNS

*Note: Tips below refer to adolescents but are intended to cover both adolescent and youth participation.



Introduction: This tip sheet provides suggestions for adults to support safe and meaningful participation of adolescents and youth in campaigns, focusing on what staff should do before, during and after the campaign. A complementary tip sheet for adolescents and youth participating in campaigns is available.

These tip sheets are part of a series designed in collaboration with adolescents and youth to support their meaningful participation in specific activities. The tip sheets build upon UNICEF's 'Engaged and Heard!' guidelines for adolescent participation and civic engagement to ensure adolescents have space

(opportunity and information) to freely voice their opinions to relevant adults (audience) who seriously consider and act upon their views (influence) [Lundy's model].

Suggestions are guided by nine basic requirements developed by the Committee on the Rights of the Child (2009) to ensure ethical and effective participation of adolescents that is: i) transparent and informative, ii) voluntary, iii) respectful, iv) relevant, v) adolescent-friendly, vi) inclusive, vii) supported by training, viii) safe and sensitive to risk, and iv) accountable.

BEFORE a campaign is launched

✓ Identify safe ways to engage adolescents from the start!

- Ensure participation is safe and sensitive to risk (*see safeguarding considerations below*).
- Include adolescents on the planning committee to influence the agenda and campaign design to be more relevant, maximizing opportunities for adolescent participation through online and/or offline engagement.

✓ Partner with adolescents as campaign organizers, activists, journalists, influencers, designers, etc.

✓ Assign a liaison to connect with adolescent participants and provide regular communication and coordination.

✓ Ensure inclusive, equitable selection processes that enable voluntary participation of adolescents who are most affected by the campaign issue(s).

- Support representation and participation of adolescents of different genders, ages, abilities, ethnicities and backgrounds, with proactive efforts to include adolescents from marginalized groups.
- Encourage adolescents to nominate and elect representatives from their networks, if appropriate.

✓ Adequately budget for adolescent participation and representation, including but not limited to costs of preparatory and follow-up meetings, information-sharing, translation costs, in-person transport or chaperone-related costs, accommodation, and support costs (e.g., for additional needs of adolescents, such as those with disabilities and/or children, and costs of mobile airtime and internet data for adolescents). Ensure provisions for expenses/funds to be paid upfront to adolescents.

✓ Plan sufficient time for preparations with adolescent representatives. International conferences will require planning at least six months in advance to ensure transparent selection of adolescents, consultation and preparations with the constituency they represent, and sufficient time to secure passports, visas, flights, etc.

✓ Develop and share information in a transparent manner with adolescents about the background of the campaign, its purpose and timing, the intended role of adolescent representatives, the intended audience, and potential benefits for adolescents, as well as how information will be used and how relevant costs will be covered (e.g., adolescents' transport, food, refreshment, phone and internet access costs, and compensation).

✓ Share information in clear, accessible formats and local languages that participating adolescents and their parents/guardians can understand.

✓ Respect adolescents' own time commitments to study, work, leisure, etc., and plan preparatory meetings and campaign activities at times that suit them. Ensure clear communication about timelines of agreed-upon tasks.

✓ Provide training and/or support for adolescents' preparation as campaigners, organizers, activists, advocates, etc. Give adolescents space and time to come together with their peers to develop and share their own ideas and experiences to inform and influence the campaign goal, slogan(s), campaign activities, and adaptation of messages to specific audiences they intend to influence (*see tip sheet for adolescents*).

✓ Ensure participation is safe and sensitive to risk. In collaboration with adolescents, assess and minimize risks and ensure child safeguarding policies and procedures are systematically applied. This includes:

- Ensuring voluntary participation, with informed assent from adolescents and informed consent from parents/guardians, and ensuring individuals are aware they can opt out if they change their mind.
- Collecting necessary medical information about adolescents (e.g., about asthma, EpiPen needs, or COVID needs/expectations) if relevant, and ensuring protection of personal information.
- Assessing risks associated with all potential campaign activities (e.g., rally, petition, boycott, theatre or radio programme) and planning ways to reduce risks. If a campaign activity is considered harmful for adolescents, identify ways to minimise harm or consider an alternative safer activity.
- Considering adolescents' physical and emotional needs.
- Setting realistic expectations and ensuring adolescents are prepared for some disappointment if the planned changes are not gained within expected time frames.
- Allocating a child safeguarding focal point and preparing with adult chaperones.
- Providing logistics and reimbursement for safe travel and accessible and safe venue arrangements.
- Planning for emergencies: lost person, health emergency, natural disaster, etc.
- ✓ Identifying campaign venues that are accessible to adolescents with disabilities (e.g., ramps, handrails, accessible toilets).
- ✓ Ensuring adolescents know their rights and know who to report to if they feel uncomfortable, unsafe or unwell. Provide them with a list of key contact numbers in case of emergency.
- ✓ Help participants feel more comfortable. Wherever possible, help adolescent campaigners visit and get familiar with the campaign event's venue or online platform (*see tip sheet on online engagement*).

DURING the campaign

- ✓ **Ensure sufficient logistic and administrative support** for safe travel and access to facilities during campaign activities. Ensure adolescents know who their liaison is for any queries, and make sure adolescents reach home safely at the end of any campaign activities.
- ✓ **Help adolescents implement campaign activities in creative ways** that suit them (e.g., using creative arts, drama or digital media).
- ✓ **Support adolescents in expressing their views, stories and priority messages** as organizers, speakers, journalists, members of task groups, etc.
- ✓ **Ensure respect for the diversity of adolescents' experiences and perspectives** that may differ based on gender, race, ethnicity, disability, age, sexual identity or other factors.
- ✓ **Ensure accountable participation:**
 - Create and support opportunities for adolescent representatives to meet and converse with influential people during the campaign.
 - Create space and modalities for adults to respond to adolescents' messages and requests.
 - Articulate next steps. Make sure all parties agree on next steps and have mutual expectations.
- ✓ **Leverage the media** to amplify adolescent perspectives and messages. Support voluntary and safe participation of adolescents in press conferences, interviews, and use of social media and messaging apps (e.g., blogs, Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, or U-Report). Develop hashtags for social media and encourage their consistent use.
- ✓ **Prioritize safeguarding and decision-making** that are informed by the views and best interests of adolescents (*see previous considerations to ensure participation is safe and sensitive to risk*).

AFTER the campaign to enhance accountable participation

- ✓ **Reflect and learn** with adolescents about their participation in the campaign and its impact. What was successful? What was unsuccessful? What could be done differently next time? Why?
- ✓ **Ensure policymakers/practitioners share feedback with adolescents** about the extent to which they have acted upon their messages. This may require follow-up calls, meetings or emails.
- ✓ **Ensure dissemination of campaign reports to adolescents** in accessible formats. Use visual images and concise, easy-to-understand language. Wherever possible, ensure that adolescent representatives can contribute to and/or review the report(s) to ensure their perspectives receive due attention.
- ✓ **Encourage adolescent representatives to share reports and feedback with peers** in their constituency and other allies about the campaign, its results and next steps.
- ✓ **Support follow-up action.** Wherever possible, explore opportunities for longer-term follow-up and investment in collaborative and adolescent-led campaigns.

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