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| **Guidance to Ensure The Voice of The Child/Young Person is Heard** |  |

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 **1.** **Introduction**

Engagement and participation with children/young people is essential to good practice in health and social care. The views of children/young people and their families must be sought and considered by all staff in health and social care in all aspects of their work and must take into account age, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or any form of disability of the child/young person. The views of children/young people must inform decision making and be clearly evidenced in relevant reports and records. This is rooted in legislation such as Article 12 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and good practice.

 **2.** **Where to Reflect the Voice of the Child/Young Person**

**The voice of the child/young person should be reflected in:**

* Referrals;
* Assessments;
* Support provision;
* Child In Need, Child Protection and LAC Care Plans;
* Court statements and care plans;
* Supervision records;
* Fostering & adoption records;
* Residential records;
* Family Support records;
* Planning for a review or meeting.
* Records

 **3.** **How to Seek the Views of Children/Young People**

The voice of children/young person must be recorded and taken into account no matter what their age or ability to communicate directly.

This can be done by:

* Direct engagement;
* Observation;
* Discussion with parents, family members, carers or agencies;
* Analysis of information held to consider what the impact might be on the child/young person
* The use of tools to aid communication.
* The use of individuals to support communication such as Interpreter/signers/intermediaries

A good start is to explain your own role, to listen openly and to seek the voice of the child/young person without advising or judging.

Remember to consider explaining to parents and carers in advance and seek consent where necessary.

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**END**