

Participation and Voices  
 "Having a voice"

For Young People in Care or who have left care up to the age of 25

**Participation is asking children and young people in care what works, what doesn't work and what could work better in the way they are looked after. Involving them in decisions affecting them. Making a contribution and making a difference...**

"I get to meet other people in care and people who can help us, like managers and Politian's"

# What is Participation?

"It's a way of being able to do different projects in a fun but serious way"

## What is participation?

As it says on the cover participation is about asking children and young people in care their views on the way they are looked after:

- what works for you
- what doesn't work for you
- what could be better
- involving you in decisions affecting you
- making a contribution
- making a difference

So if you have got something to say about the way you are cared for and want to get involved in expressing your views and making changes then have a look inside at the information and list of activities. Contact us to talk about how you would like to be involved or share your own ideas about other activities and participating (see the back page for contact details)

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**What's in it for you?**

- Positive experience
- Have your say about what it's like being in care
- Make decisions and changes about the care system
- Gain confidence and skills
- Paid in vouchers or cash if you are aged 16 and over for taking part in some activities

**What can you offer?**

- Looking at everything from a young person in care or left care point of view
- Use your own experiences to show what it is like being in care or leaving care
- Make a difference for you and others in care

**Activities**

- ✓ Join the Voices in Participation Council—VIP
- ✓ Take part in discussions; give your views, decision making and planning.
- ✓ Design and help with the Participation and Voices website.
- ✓ Design and help with making newsletters to send out to everyone in care.
- ✓ Help with making a DVD about the VIP Council and other activities.
- ✓ Help with one-off projects (e.g. Designing posters for competition for the name of the Council).
- ✓ Take part in and help plan and hold event days with other young people in care to get their views.

**Other Opportunities**

- Be a representative of the Voices in Participation Council - VIP and go to different forums/meetings (e.g. Corporate Parenting Group, meeting with the Director).
- Become a trainer for the Voices and Participation Training Programme.
- Be a member of interview panels for groups of staff and managers in Social Services and agencies.
- Be part of inspection teams that inspect residential homes for young people in care.

"I like doing the activities because I get to make decisions and talk about things about being in care, its good because there is more than one of you asking for the changes."  
 Jenny, In care now

**VOICES IN PARTICIPATION COUNCIL (VIP)**

"I get paid for the work I do at the VIP Council"

"I have my own say in things that happen"

"It's a chance to hear what other people have to say"