

Feedback

Hello, I'm Ross Gibson, I'm from the Children's and Young People's Centre for Justice (CYCJ). What a great morning here at the Participation Network talking about what The Promise means for participation and what participation means for The Promise. For me at CYCJ, what we're looking forward to is making sure that children who are in conflict with the law have greater opportunities to shape the world around them and the organisations and services that are seeking to support them. For me, within the youth justice sector, that means a lot less gatekeeping a lot less of people shutting that door and saying the young people who are in conflict with the law in secure care or experiencing difficulties and vulnerabilities and traumas aren't ready to participate. What we've heard from the input so far is that children from all backgrounds are ready to do so, they just need the opportunity to do so. So that would be my urge to people working in the sector to help us achieve The Promise by creating these opportunities for children to engage in Youth Justice Voices, Our Hearings Our Voice and all the other projects that we've heard about this morning.

At our table, we were discussing what it means to ensure strategic impact. And some of the points that came up in discussion were, first of all, who's measuring and defining what impact is because it can mean different things to different people. Success and impact can mean something completely different to a young person, or staff worker like me, or a member of the government. And we need to be mindful as well, that not all impact is quantifiable, and relationships, experiences, providing a welcoming space, letting your young person be listened to and having their contributions valued, are all important things. And that's impactful as well. It's not always measurable, though. And that can be an issue with things like justifying budgets. When we're trying to ensure strategic impact, we need to have our vision at the forefront of our minds, and factor in regular opportunities for reflection. And for discussions around whether or not we're still on track to realising our vision. We need to talk to the young people about that and consider whether or not they think that we are on track to doing that as well. Sometimes success goes sideways rather than up the way. Sometimes it's about conversations, or it's about meeting a young person for lunch, building trust, we need to put the stepping stones in place and provide a foundation before we start building up the way and realising our broader use.

Hi, I'm Bethany from The Fostering Network. I work on a project called Moving On, which is looking to support transitions for young people through and out of foster care. And I've really enjoyed today because I think participation has been quite tricky for me. So it's a two year project. I'm halfway through and I haven't really done any participation yet. So today was actually a great sharing time, inspiring time, but also quite reassuring that these things do take time to think about and really deeply ensure that the participation that we're doing that the things that young people are telling us have a place they have somewhere to go, they have some changed impact. So yeah, I'm excited to go and reflect and plan how I can do that in the next year of my project.

Hi, I'm Ruth Forster, I have been facilitating a co-production initiative to improve transitions for children, young people who use Crossreach's residential services. And so this year my role has, I guess,

incorporated a lot of participation. It's been like at the heart of what I've been doing, listening and hearing to children's and young people's wants, desires and aspirations. And do you know what to do has been super useful, not just in terms of actually meeting people and making connections, but also just the learning from it as well. I think for me, there was some massive lightbulb moments just in terms of like my own practice, and things that I haven't done, which need to be done. And I think the biggest one for me was feedback. And I guess, obviously listening to children, young people is massive, but then also providing them with feedback with like, what you're actually going to do with their views. And I've just loved being with people, I think, being in a room with people who are, I guess, involved in a lot of similar work. It's just really great having that shared experience, having that safe space to kind of go, I think I'm doing it right, but I also think that there's probably aspects of my work that I'm probably not doing great either. Like what do you find? So yeah, so just being in that in the room in the same space has been super beneficial today as well.

So our table discussion was around some of the challenges and opportunities that come with partnership working. We had loads, loads of really interesting conversations. And it really came down to the challenges and the opportunities of everything to do with participation working was people. And we spoke about the real importance of having relationships, both as individuals with different members of internal teams having a really good understanding of what each of our organisations offer, so that we know who is best placed to support that person, that child that family, and when actually it's best to refer onto another organisation, or work alongside a family or a child with somebody else as well. And we spoke about the importance of just having that knowledge and having that awareness of what else is out there, locally, but also nationally, so that we can make sure that everything that we do puts the child and that family at the centre of the support we're offering. And that was the real ethos and value base that all of our conversations kind of boiled down to, was making sure that the people that we are supporting are at the centre of that, and working in partnership with others to make sure that that's what we achieve.

It's been a fantastic afternoon, at this Participation Network has been great to be back with everyone in the same space. And just having the chance to share learning, share practice sometimes share challenges and inspiration as well. So the topic that we were discussing in our group was around, rewarding and recognising impact from participants directly. So some of the ways we talked about doing that was to think about the real, immediate change that we can help people make. So if they're in residential care, what's the change that they can make to the children's home, for example? If they are working within a service, what's the changes we can make within that service? How can we measure that and show the impact of that to the each individual participant taking part? We also spoke about supporting skills development for people taking part as well. So we thought about Saltire Awards, Community Achievement Awards, Volunteering Awards, as well as shadowing opportunities that we could have for people as well, within an organisation or thinking about signposting to other organisations who might be able to support people in their journey, in their career, or even just in their other participation interest as well. So we covered a lot in this small group, we didn't get the chance to talk about absolutely everything, but there were some good ideas from people as well and some people spoke about challenges as well of trying to get that immediate change within complex organisations as well. And I think that is where spaces like the network can really contribute to that as well because we're learning from each other. We're talking about what's worked and we're also talking about maybe

opportunities where we can work and challenge existing power structures as well. So yeah, really points of discussion in some good ideas from everyone today.