Focus Group: The Aim

According to the WP 7, the aim is to gain qualitative information:

- about young people online behaviours especially those that lead to taking risks and their possible links with sexual victimisation, while examining the strategies they use to avoid the victimisation itself;

  - How we identify risk taking behaviours? From members experiences, from the research database, from the interviews with victims, other.

- from four target groups: young people in general, and young people who seems to have particular vulnerabilities: GLBT groups, young people with disabilities and young people in institutions.

  - How can we identify these vulnerabilities and explore how they can influence young people online behaviours.

Methodology

According to WP 7: the aim is to identify and standardise a methodology that will ensure meaningful participation on the part of children and young people involved.

Some points to explore:

- the age of young people involved;
- how should we involve (recruit) young people;
- how should we collect the information: questionnaires, interactive sessions, other;
- what does it mean meaningful participation;
- other...

Methodology: meaningful participation

Consultative process: a process of seeking children and young people’s views in order to build knowledge and understanding of their lives and experience.

They are generally characterised by being adult led and managed; lacking any possibility for children and young people to control the process and its outcomes.
How can we involve children in discussions about what adults ought to be doing to make their lives better?

How can we make sure that the children feel that their views and opinions have been listened to and respected?

What can we do to make sure that both the children and the adults are properly prepared for such processes?

What do we have to do to ensure that the children involved are safe and protected at all times?

By adopting and employing practice standards, which ensure effective and high-quality participation by children and young people.

Methodology: meaningful participation

There is an emerging consensus on the standards that are required for effective participation. We suggest the Practice Standards in Children’s Participation of Save the Children Alliance, 2005 (as well the Minimum Standards for Consulting with Children – A Multy-Agency Tool, Inter-Agency Working Group on Children’s Participation, 2005 and the Operations Manual on Children’s Participation in Consultations, Inter-Agency Working Group on Children’s Participation (IAWGC), 2007) as useful guidelines when involving children.

Methodology: practice standards

Practice Standards in Children’s Participation

Standard 1: An Ethical Approach
Standard 2: Children's Participation is Relevant and Voluntary
Standard 3: A Child Friendly, Enabling Environment
Standard 4: Equality of Opportunity
Standard 5: Staff are Effective and Confident
Standard 6: Participation Promotes the Safety and Protection of Children
Standard 7: Ensuring Follow-up and Evaluation
Methodology: practice standards

An Ethical Approach

There are inevitable imbalances in power and status between adults, children and young people. An ethical approach is needed in order for children and young people’s participation to be genuine and meaningful. Adults are committed to ethical participatory practice and to the priority of children and young people’s best interests.

Children’s Participation is Relevant and Voluntary

Children and young people’s participation should be built on their personal knowledge – the information and insights that children and young people have about their own lives and the issues that affect them. Children and young people should have the choice as to whether to participate or not, they should be able to participate on their own terms and for lengths of time chosen by them.

A Child Friendly, Enabling Environment

The quality of children and young people’s participation and their ability to benefit from it is strongly influenced by the efforts made to create a positive environment for their participation. This means that children and young people need to experience a safe, welcoming and encouraging environment in order to effectively participate.

Methodology: practice standards

Equality of Opportunity

Children and young people, like adults, are not a homogeneous group and participation should provide for equality of opportunity for all regardless of age, situation, ethnicity, gender, abilities, class, caste or other factors. Child participation work should challenge and not reinforce patterns of discrimination and exclusion.

Staff are Effective and Confident

Adults can only encourage genuine children and young people’s participation effectively and confidently if they have the necessary understanding and skills. Adult staff and managers involved in work on children and young people’s participation should be trained and supported to do their jobs to a high standard.

Participation Promotes the Safety and Protection of Children

Organizations have a duty of care to children and young people with whom they work and everything should be done to minimize the risks to children and young people of abuse and exploitation or other negative consequences of their participation. Child protection policies and procedures form an essential part of participatory work with children and young people.

Methodology: practice standards

Ensuring Follow-up and Evaluation

It is important that children and young people understand what has been the outcome from their participation and how their contribution has been used. It is also important that, where appropriate, they are given the opportunity to participate in follow-up processes or activities.