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| Ladder of Participation |

Throughout the participation agenda, Roger Hart’s ‘Ladder of Participation’ is often used to explain the different approaches and practices that organisations take in involving children, young people and parents/carers in decision making.   
  
The Ladder of Participation is based on 8 levels. The levels show an incremental increase in active involvement, level 1 being the lowest in terms of children, young people and families having very little influence on decisions to level 8 illustrating true involvement. The ladder will help your organisation determine where you are in terms of participation and help you focus and improve your approach if desired.

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| Degrees of Participation  **8) User-initiated, shared decisions with adults** This happens when projects or programs are initiated by children, young people and families and decision-making is shared between users and adults. These projects empower service users while at the same time enabling them to access and learn from the life experience and expertise of adults.   **7) User-initiated and directed**  This step is when children, young people and parents/carers initiate and direct a project or program. Adults are involved only in a supportive role.   **6) Adult-initiated, shared decisions with users** Occurs when projects or programs are initiated by adults but the decision-making is shared with the children, young people and their families.  **5) Consulted and informed**  Happens when children, young people and parents/carers give advice on projects or programs designed and run by adults. Children, young people and prents/carers are informed about how their input will be used and the outcomes of the decisions made by adults.   **4) Assigned but informed**  This is where users are assigned a specific role and informed about how and why they are being involved.   **3) Tokenism**  When users appear to be given a voice, but in fact have little or no choice about what they do or how they participate.   **2) Decoration**  Happens when children, young people and parents/carers are used to help or "bolster" a cause in a relatively indirect way, although adults do not pretend that the cause is inspired by young people.   **1) Manipulation**  Happens where adults use their service users or children, young people and parents/carers to support causes and pretend that the causes are inspired by young people.   Adapted from Hart, Roger (1992) Children’s participation from tokenism to citizenship |

<http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/Web/corporate/pages.nsf/Links/1DDB2D17FA6BCBE18025720B003328B5>