

Service Design

Involving younger care experienced children

“ Children should be involved in making decisions. They should be able to make choices in their day-to-day lives in a way that allows them to feel they have some control over what happens to them and should be included in conversations about things that affect them. ”

Resource: 2

A series of three resources for leaders, managers and senior practitioners

Children’s Parliament, in partnership with **The Promise Scotland**, has created this series to highlight a children’s human rights approach to involving younger **care experienced children**, aged 9 to 14, in service design.

Resource one:

Why a children’s human rights approach is essential to keeping the promise and should underpin service design. This resource provides an overview of relevant legislation, policy and essential skills and knowledge.

Resource two:

How to put children’s human rights into practice by involving children in service design. This resource focuses on the principles of rights and planning for involving younger care experienced children.

Resource three:

What younger care experienced children’s participation in service design looks and feels like in practice. This resource includes practical examples, tools and tips.

These resources will be useful to those with responsibility for designing and implementing service design programmes with and for care experienced children, including senior leadership teams and senior practitioners in government, local authorities, public bodies and third sector organisations.

These resources are rooted in Children’s Parliament’s work with care experienced children aged 9 to 14 and are primarily aimed at this age group. The principles and knowledge can also be applied when planning your work with care experienced children who are younger, although attention should be given to ensuring methods are age and stage appropriate.

For more information about our work with **The Promise Scotland** and to access all of the resources online, scan the QR or visit: www.childrensparliament.org.uk/our-work/the-promise/



How to put children's human rights into practice by involving children in service design

This resource focuses on principles and planning to put rights into practice when you involve younger care experienced children in service design.



A children's human rights approach in practice

A children's human rights approach is about working holistically to implement children's rights as set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). This approach reinforces the concept of respect for human dignity, which is at the heart of every human rights instrument.

These are the key characteristics of a children's human rights in practice based on our experience:

- explores the knowledge, understanding and realisation of children's human rights as laid down in the UNCRC and other international human rights instruments
- uses children's human rights standards and principles to guide relationships, actions, policies and programmes
- builds the capacity of children as rights-holders to claim their rights
- supports children who choose to defend their own rights and those of others
- builds the capacity of adults (who are duty-bearers) to fulfil their obligations to children
- recognises that relationships based in human rights values are a necessary to realising children's rights; includes children's knowledge of what it is like to be a child, their ideas and their opinions
- establishes the kinds of environment and support that enable children to advocate effectively for themselves
- enables adults to benefit from the rich learning intrinsic to these approaches.

Getting started in service design

Think about your motivation or reasons for involving children. Are you hoping to develop a **broadly participative environment**, embedding meaningful and ongoing opportunities, over an extended period of time? For example, **Aberdeenshire Promise Groups** is an example of an ongoing commitment to making a space for care experienced children to come together regularly; a place where they develop relationships, communication skills, confidence and they feel valued and heard. Alternatively, is there a **problem, issue or concern identified by adults, perhaps with children**, which you would like to explore further through a service design approach?

You might also want to reflect on 'modes of participation' (**Lansdown, 2018**). For example, are you considering:

- consultative participation where children's views are sought to build adults' knowledge and understanding?
- collaborative participation which affords a greater degree of partnership, with the opportunity for active engagement?
- child-led participation which takes place when children are enabled to create the space and opportunity to initiate their own agendas?

“ The conversations about care do not make me teary or angry. There were some difficult topics like feeling different, unequal and left out which simply is rubbish. There is equality and there is equity - and it is hard to feel normal when you are living differently from other children. ”

Member of Children's Parliament

When an issue to be addressed has been identified, you will want to ensure you are addressing the 'right' problem. Is this what matters to children? How will you know what a successful outcome looks and feels like? **The Promise Scotland design tools** can assist with these early questions through problem statements, problem reframing and scoping, and empathy maps.

The **What Matters** questions are based on what children and families told the Independent Care Review was important to them. The tool helps root our understanding of what ‘good’ looks like through the experience of what makes a difference. Paired with What Matters statements, questions emerge: What already works? How will we make sure? How will we know? (Build on, Design, Reflect).

The Scottish Approach to Service Design (SAAtSD)

The vision for the **Scottish Approach to Service Design** is that the people of Scotland are supported and empowered to actively participate in the definition, design and delivery of their public services (from policy making to service improvement).

Scottish Approach to Service Design uses the Double Diamond model (developed by the Design Council) positioned within a national framework which sets out seven principles.

- 1 We explore and define the problem before we design the solution.
- 2 We design service journeys around people, and not around how the public sector is organised.
- 3 We seek citizen participation in our projects from day one.
- 4 We use inclusive and accessible research and design methods so citizens can participate fully and meaningfully.
- 5 We use the core set of tools and methods of the Scottish Approach to Service Design.
- 6 We share and reuse user research insights, service patterns, and components wherever possible.
- 7 We contribute to continually building the Scottish Approach to Service Design methods, tools, and community.



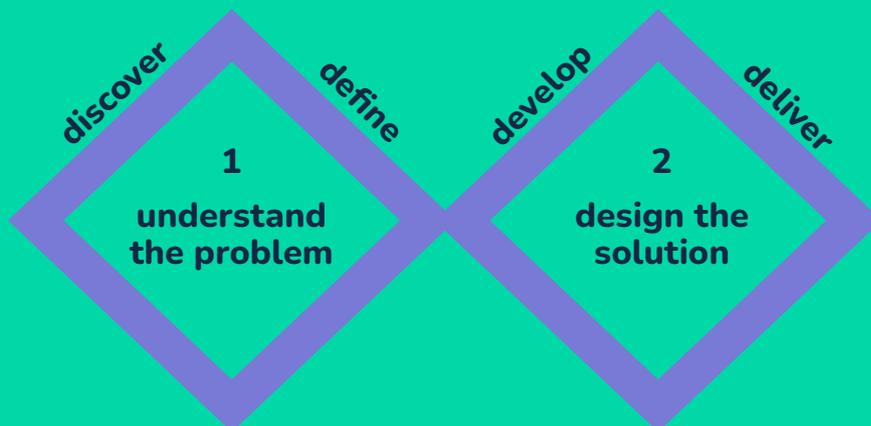
This resource will assist you to implement the **Scottish Approach to Service Design** in meaningful ways with younger care experienced children.



The **Scottish Approach to Service Design** is about getting things right - we don't just design services in the right ways, we design the right services. This means taking time over design processes, understanding the problem we are faced with from a range of perspectives, before designing solutions. It means using methods that are inclusive, ethical and collaborative.

The design tools support the Scottish Approach to Service Design, linking to the Double Diamond – **discover, define, develop, deliver**.

Each diamond illustrates the process of creating or exploring many possible ideas before refining these to the best idea. The first diamond does this to confirm the problem, and the second to design the solution.



The principles of the Scottish Approach to Service Design mean that organisations responsible for services work together in the “problem space” to define the problems and engage fully with users of those services before moving to solutions

The **Promise Design tools** are free to download, for anyone to use. They can be printed off and used in service design sessions. For example, the Knowledge Board tool can be used to explore and make sense of what you know about a problem; the Problem Scope tool to help prioritise and keep focus; the Empathy Map to consider what matters to people and what is needed.

The tools are designed with adults in mind, but could be adapted and made more accessible for working with children.



The **knowledge board design tool** is also a useful way to organise what you know, think you know, or discover gaps in knowledge. This can be helpful at an early stage as well as throughout the Double Diamond design process.



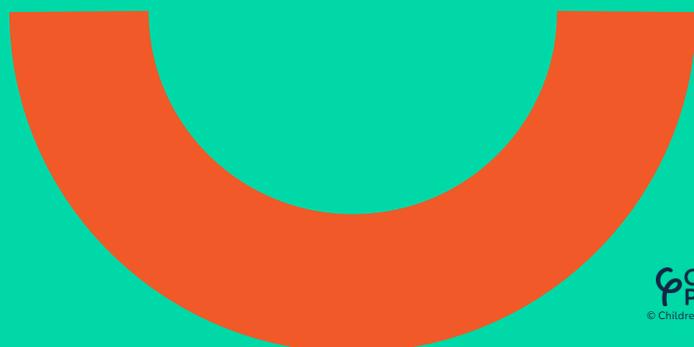
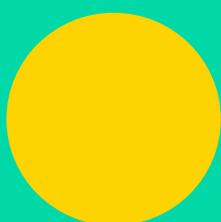
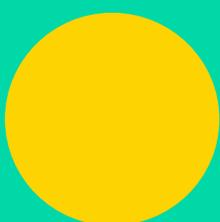
The Promise Scotland also offers a series of “composite stories” which can be used to support discussion and reflection. These short, animated films show what life was like for children and young people before the promise was made, and what their lives would be like when the promise was kept.

Making this safe space means careful planning and preparation for:

- creative, participatory, and play-based processes
- relationships built with kindness, empathy and trust
- trauma informed practice
- plenty of time, energy and resource
- involvement of champions, partners, and people who matter to the child.

A children’s human rights approach is essential to creating the safe, caring, collaborative space that will allow younger care experienced children to participate in the **Scottish Approach to Service Design** processes and enriching it in critical ways with their views, ideas and experience.

Implementing a children’s human rights approach in the practice of service design is essential to the involvement of younger children. Every stage of the Double Diamond – discover, define, develop, deliver - requires a safe space for children to explore their ideas, views and experiences, a space where they are listened to and their views acted upon.



To help design your programme of involving younger care experienced children in service design, Children's Parliament's experience suggests you consider the following questions as part of your initial planning stage:

How will you ensure your programme is supported by influential champions committed to listening to children and acting on what they hear?



Champions are adult stakeholders who are committed to the project aims and agree to take forward the children's ideas and issues into policy and practice for change locally or nationally. For example, they might be heads of service, Chief Executives, councillors, senior staff of public bodies or third sector organisations.

How can you create a caring, safe space in which to work?



Creating a safe space enables children to explore ideas, views and experiences and to share them as they wish. Within this space, relationships are built based on human rights values. The physical environment is important, ideally with indoor and outdoor space, access to nature and some flexibility to create a caring, warm and special atmosphere.

How will you phase the children's engagement from confidence and relationship building to participating in influencing activities?



Phasing the children's engagement respects the need for relationship-based and trauma informed practice. Sufficient time is required for creative, participatory and play-based methods which allow children to feel safe enough to participate fully.





How can you embed children's calls to action into frameworks where adult decision makers are accountable to them?

“ Now I can get on with people, and I can share my opinion. If I don't agree with something, I can put up a debate. I definitely feel I have become more confident. I can actually share my opinion in front of a crowd; I feel I can share my opinion with everyone! ”

Member of Children's Parliament



How will you ensure sufficient time and suitable timing for children's involvement?



Time and timing is a crucial dimension for every stage from planning to delivery and evaluation of your programme. Being clear about the purpose of the engagement helps to set suitable time for children's and adult involvement. Plan for plenty of time to build and nurture relationships with children and people who matter to them. Planning should consider the requirements of adults, as key people need to be available at different stages, have time to listen properly, be able to engage as equals, find ways to take forward what they have learned from the children, to implement changes and to let children know what has – or hasn't - happened.

Links to useful frameworks and resources

- The Scottish Approach to Service Design (SAatSD)
- Children's Rights Skills and Knowledge Framework
- National Trauma Transformation Programme
- Inclusive communication
- UNCRC Implementation Framework
- The Lundy Model of participation
- Our Hearings, Our Voice Guide
- Evaluation Scotland
- Improvement Service
- Wee Book of Promises



'I am more than being in care': a consultation with children with care experience to inform the Independent Care Review (2020).

About Children's Parliament

Established in 1996, **Children's Parliament** is dedicated to the realisation of children's human rights in Scotland. Our dream is that children grow up in a world of love, happiness and understanding. We provide children up to 14 years of age with opportunities to share their views, experience and ideas so that they can influence positive change locally and nationally.

About The Promise Scotland

The Promise Scotland is helping Scotland keep its promise to care experienced people across Scotland through leading projects to drive change and supporting organisations to make the changes they need to keep the promise. This is delivered through the **Plan 24-30** to set out what must change and associated route maps.

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