

Session 2

Who are Your Learners?



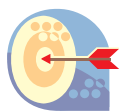
Introduction

Before teachers even begin to think about delivering the curriculum they need to try to make a connection with the people that they are educating. This means they who are in their classroom. Better teachers do not only try to connect with a learner's intellect but with them as a whole person. By understanding who their learners are teachers will be better able to teach, better able to communicate with their students, better able to create a school and classroom environment in which the students feel safe and comfortable enough to access their intellect. For teachers in Junior High School, this means understanding the characteristics of people aged between 12 and 16 or youth.

Youth are a special group in society. They are no longer children and yet they are not yet adults. They are in a period of transition when they are moving towards becoming independent adults and are having to make decisions about their future. Many adults have negative stereotypes of youth because it is young people who seem to be most involved in anti social behaviors. For a long time, youth have been a neglected part of society.

Most youth need guidance and support to become responsible and productive members of society. Because of this particular need of youth in recent years there have been many developments in the theory and practice of the most effective ways of working with youth. International best practice suggests that a positive youth development approach is a powerful method to addressing the special needs of youth. A positive youth development approach is one which sees youth as part of the solution to the problem and tries to ensure they successfully develop the skills and competencies they need to thrive and enter adulthood.

An integral part of a positive youth development approach is to give youth the opportunity to participate in making decisions that affect them. Not only is this a fundamental right of all people (and youth are people) but it is also something that youth want to do, something they can do and something that has great benefits for youth and society as a whole. In terms of schooling for example, every child or young person can tell you what they like or dislike about school and why. Every child or young person has ideas on how to make lessons more interesting. If we listen to children and youth they can support us to achieve what we all want and that is a better quality and relevant education system with better teaching and learning. This session will guide you to becoming a better teacher by helping you consider who your learners are in your classroom and what you can do to better meet their needs.



Objectives and Learning Outcomes

The purpose of this session is to support participants to further develop teachers' core pedagogic competency 1 “*Master the Students' characters from the physical aspect, moral, spiritual, social, cultural, emotional and intellectual aspect*” as relates to background (1.1) and core competency 7 “*communicate effectively, empathetically and in a good manner with the student*”. Participants will consider the general characteristics of young people and some general principles according to international best practice of working with and educating youth. Participants will look in detail at why youth should participate in making decisions that affect them and will consider how youth can participate in school decision making. By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- Identify the general characteristics of youth and how they differ from children and adults
- Describe the positive youth development approach and the key components of quality youth education programs
- Explain the benefits of giving youth some control in making decisions that affect them in school and the consequences of not giving youth the opportunity to participate in decision making
- List some concrete ideas of how they can promote youth participation in making decisions in their school and classroom.



Key Questions

- Why is it important that Junior High School teachers understand the general characteristics of youth?
- What are the main differences between children, youth and adults?
- What is positive youth development and the key aspects of any quality youth education program?
- Why should young people be given the opportunity to participate in making decisions that affect them?
- What can you as teachers in schools do to promote youth participation in school decision making?



Notes for the Facilitator

- There are many new issues introduced in this session. Please ensure that you read all the information included in all facilitator's notes, handouts and additional information carefully

before you deliver this session to participants. You can also read some of the documents listed in the additional reading to improve your knowledge and understanding of these issues.

- This session should be considered as an overview on positive youth development and youth participation in decision making. Ensure participants understand that this is an introduction and will be followed up in later training
- You are required to give a presentation during the Connection section. The information you need for the presentation is included in the Facilitators notes. You will need to use these notes to prepare the presentation prior to the session. You may present the presentation using any method you choose, but the presentation should last no more than 10 minutes
- You will need to photocopy handout 2.1 cut up the boxes into individual cards and place them in envelopes prior to the session. You will need to create as many envelopes as you have groups. The statements for children, youth and adults are in the correct columns on the handout.
- Facilitators Notes 4 integrated into the session notes are quite long and are intended to help you to conclude a discussion. However, you may want to create a series of bullet points on these notes either on flipchart paper, power point or as a handout to reinforce the key ideas to participants



Resources

- Materials for Energizer (optional: see below)
- Flipchart paper, pens, tape
- Handout 2.1 Cut up and put in envelopes
- Handout 2.2:
- Handout 2.3:



Time

This session will need a minimum of 90 minutes to complete



ICT

The use of ICT to support this session is optional and will depend on what equipment you have available. Some possibilities are to use an LCD and Laptop for presentations



Session Summary

Introduction 05 minutes	Connection 35 minutes	Application 40 minutes	Reflection 10 minutes	Extension
Facilitator presents the theme, objectives, learning outcomes and key questions to the participants	Participants work in groups to identify the main differences in characteristics of children, youth and adults and consider the role of a teacher of youth. This is followed by a brief presentation on positive youth development approaches and the participation of youth in school decision making	Participants work in groups to look at some examples of how youth can participate in school decision making and consider some concrete ways to promote youth to participate in decisions that affect them in their schools and classrooms	Participants summarize the learning from the session and write in their learning reflection journal	Participants will complete some additional reading and conduct a small scale research task with youth to give them the opportunity to evaluate their school. Participants will complete an independent assignment on the results of the research and place into their portfolio



Energizer ⁸

The following energizer is linked to the theme of the session. This energizer will make participants consider how young people are viewed in society. You can use it at the beginning of the session if feel that the participants need it and you have time. You will need 3 rocks/stones for each group and 3 Post stick notes for each group Divide participants into groups. Give each group a set of 3 stones or rocks of different sizes. Tell groups to compare the rocks and place

⁸ Adapted from Roehlkepartian (1997) Building Assets Together: Search Institute

them in line to show the order of importance or value. Give them 2 minutes to do this. Ask one or two groups to share their ideas about how they determined which rock was most valuable and why. Now tell the participants that each rock/stone has a gold nugget inside and that each gold nugget is unique. Ask them to put the rocks/stones in order of importance. Give them 2 minutes to do this. **Discuss:** *Was it more difficult to determine the value of the rocks based on what you could see on the outside or what you could not see on the inside?*

Give each group three post stick notes. Instruct them to write the following age groups, one of each post stick note.

- Age 0 – 11 (Children)
- Age 12 – 24 (Youth)
- Age 25 + (Adults)

Instruct groups to place the post stick notes in order showing the value of each age group to the community. Tell them to be as honest as possible.

Discuss: *Which age group was the most valued and why? Which age group was the least valued and why. Overall, how much do we value youth and why? Use the following to give some concluding comments if necessary. Often we judge people for what we see on the outside (what they are now) rather than what they might become (what is the potential on the inside). Many communities do not value youth. Youth and their needs are often the neglected group in society. This is mostly because it is youth who are seen to be outwardly the most difficult members of society. People have negative stereotypes of youth including delinquency, drug abuse and violence and youth being involved in the most risky and anti social behaviors. However, people often forget that youth can also be a positive force for development, peace and democracy. We need to look on the inside and value youth as the nation's most valuable resource. They are the leaders of tomorrow and the core of the society of the future.*



Detailed Steps for Activities

Introduction (5 minutes)

- (1) Use the notes in the introduction to the session above to provide a brief background to the theme and issues being addressed in this session.
- (2) Introduce the objective and learning outcomes of the session and the key questions. Explain to participants that they will need to be able to answer the key questions at the end of the session.
- (3) Ask participants to look at their copies of teacher's core pedagogic competencies and refer to *core competency 1 and 7*. Explain that this session will help them develop some of these competencies



Connection (35 minutes)

- (1) Divide participants into groups of 6. Give each group an envelope containing the statements from handout 2.1. Instruct groups to divide the statements into three categories as follows: statements which describe children (age 0-11), statements which describe youth (age 12-24) and statements which describe adults (age 24+) They should use the blank card to write any more differences they can think of from their own experience. Give groups 10 minutes to complete this.
- (2) Elicit feedback. Write the correct statements on the board or flipchart paper as participants provide them. Discuss the following questions as a whole group. *What can you conclude about youth from looking at these characteristics? Do you think that youth are more like adults or more like children? What implication does this have for a teacher in Junior High School?* Use facilitators notes 1 to provide some input



Facilitators Notes

The age of youth is an interesting time. It is a period between childhood and adulthood the move from being a child to becoming an adult. It is a time of great transition when people move from dependence to independence. It is a time of biological, social and cognitive transitions and of identity formation when young people are beginning to understand themselves as unique. It is a time when people are in the process of completing their compulsory full time education, developing their self concept and self responsibility, thinking about the future, making some decisions and planning for their, future, testing the labor market and establishing strong personal relationships outside of the immediate family. Youth have opinions, feelings, ideas and voices. They need to share these opinions and ideas. Youth have a lot more in common with adults than with children. However, we must remember that although youth are more like adults than children, they are not there yet. They still need support and guidance to become responsible and productive members of society. This gives teachers in Junior High School a special role (which is different to teachers in elementary school). As many youth will end their schooling upon completion of Junior High School and enter the adult world, teachers in Junior High School have the special responsibility to ensure students have the support and guidance they need to become responsible and productive adults on society.

- (3) Give participants a brief presentation (maximum 10 minutes) on Positive Youth Development and Quality Youth Education which are international best practice on how to work with youth to support them to become responsible and productive adults. You must prepare this presentation prior to the session. You can use facilitator's notes 2 below to help you.



Facilitators Notes

2

Education is the single most important factor in contributing towards young people's chances of leading productive and responsible adult lives. Because of this, in recent years, more and more work has been done at looking at how best to work with youth. Positive Youth Development is an approach to developing program of working with youth to try and ensure that they successfully develop the skills and competencies they need to thrive and enter adulthood. Positive youth development focuses on developing in young people a belief and a sense of:

- Competence (being able to do something)
- Usefulness (being able to contribute something)
- Belonging (being part of a community and having relationships with caring adults)
- Empowerment (having control over one's future)

Positive Youth Development has influenced education programs. Quality Youth Education programs are built around the aspects of positive youth development. The characteristics of quality youth education are as follows:

- Assures the acquisition of Life Skills and empowers youth to face the challenges of life and to make informed and healthy decisions about their lives.
- Actively involves learners in the learning process and in making decisions that affect them
- Assures the acquisition of basic academic concepts, such as literacy and numeracy
Is relevant to the immediate and long term needs of youth.
- Provides opportunities for youth to extend learning beyond the immediate school environment.
- Is carried out in safe, healthy and stimulating environments
- Is carried out by caring adults who:
 - Have solid subject-matter competencies.
 - Are able to use multiple teaching and learning strategies.
 - Have effective classroom management techniques.
 - Are skilful and appropriate techniques for assessing learning outcomes.
 - Provide opportunities to all youth to achieve at their potential and create meaningful futures
 - Respect and care for young people
 - Understand that youth are individuals with different assets and needs
 - Try to understand and meet the individual needs of youth in their care

- Builds connections between the different contexts where young people learn. Actively involves families and communities in learning.
- Is well managed by effective leaders.

The results of a quality youth education program is that it sharpens youths' capacity for self-managed and life-long learning, it results in the ability to find, evaluate, manipulate and manage information and knowledge to solve real-world challenges and participate actively in the world around them, including participate in the economy and the community. Effective youth participation is an key integral part of the Positive Youth Development approach. This gives young people opportunities to have greater control over what happens to them through seeking their advise, participation and engagement.

- (4) Reinforce the idea that effective youth participation is one of the key aspects of the positive youth development approach. Discuss with participants *(1) What youth participation means (2) Whether they think it is important to give youth the opportunity to participate in decisions that affect them in schools? Why? (2) Why youth are all too often not allowed to participate in decisions that affect them in schools? (3) What might happen if youth do not participate in making decisions that affect them in schools? Use facilitator's notes 4 below to conclude the discussion.*



Facilitators Notes

Effective participation in decision-making involves creating opportunities for students to increase their influence over what happens to them and around them.

- 3** Youth have a body of experience and knowledge that is unique to their situation. They have views and ideas as a result of that experience. If we want to make the best decisions we need to have the best information. Allowing youth to participate in decision making and listening to their voices is essential for ensuring young people's concerns are taken into account and the decision in truly and informed one. Giving youth the opportunity to participate in decision making offers them the chance to develop new skills, to build their self esteem and empowers them to tackle problems and find solutions. Additionally, youth participation can lead to better outcomes and decisions on what happens in school. Participation can protect youth and participation can give youth a sense of commitment and ownership to their school. The result of participation are empowered young people

Moreover, youth participation in decision making is a fundamental right. Article 12 of the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child (which has been ratified

by Indonesia) requires us to listen to what children and youth have to say and to take them seriously. It requires that we recognize the value of their own experience, views and concerns. (See additional information 3)

Despite the benefits of youth participation, over the World, not many young people are given a voice and a role in making decisions that affect them. For example, most Governments are concerned about improving young people's educational experience, yet few take any measures to find out from students themselves which teaching methods work, whether the curriculum is relevant, what factors contribute to school drop out rates and truancy, how to improve attendance rates, what is needed to promote better inclusion of girls or how to enhance good behavior and promote effective discipline.

The demand for the recognition of the right of young people to be heard to have their views given serious consideration and to play an active role in making decisions is not generally accepted and respected. This is mainly because of the long held attitude that adults must make decisions for youth because they know best (Children should be seen and not heard). Adults think that youth lack the competence and experience to participate and that it will lead to lack of respect for adults.

Allowing youth some control requires a profound challenge to traditional attitudes towards young people in most societies throughout the World. It implies a radical change in adult-youth relationships, which is hard and takes time to achieve.

The result is that many young people feel their views do not matter and that they have no power and can not influence outcomes. Failing to listen can sometimes lead to the wrong decision. Adults do not always make the best decisions for youth which can affect what youth think and do. For example, during the DBE3 Youth Consultations, youth cited as one of the key causes of drop out the fact that they do not participate in developing school rules and regulations and therefore, some of the rules and regulations made for them to stay in school.

If the education service for youth is to be improved and drop out rates from school is to be reduced and universal basic education achieved, educational policy makers and administrators need to learn from young people how learning institutions can become a place where they want to be. If youth are to have a sense of ownership of and commitment to school they need opportunities to be involved in the decisions, policies and structures that affect them on a daily basis. The Education system needs to realize that youth can help them to achieve their goals of quality education

Accepting the necessity of youth participation in schools does not mean that adults no longer have responsibility or that they hand over complete control to youth. On the contrary children and young people should not be left alone to fight the battle by themselves. Young people can not undertake all by themselves. They can not decide curricula content, assessment and so on. Adults in schools need to see it more as they are working in collaboration with youth. Adults can help youth to articulate their needs and take into account what they say to develop an improved and effective education service.



Application (40 minutes)

- (1) Divide participants into groups. Give each group a copy of handout 2.2 and 2.3. Instruct groups to read through the information on handout 2.2 and complete the chart in handout 2.3. Give them 20 minutes
- (2) Ask groups to report the results of their discussion. Request each group to report back on only one of the examples they have discussed until all examples are covered.
- (3) Conclude by asking groups which if any of the examples they think are possible to use in their school and encourage them to be open minded and try them before the next training.



Reflection (10 minutes)

- (1) Look again at the overarching questions introduced at the beginning of the session. Ask the questions one by one and ask the participants to give some answers to the questions using what they learned during the session. Ask if there is anything else that they learned.
- (2) Ask participants to explain what they consider to be the key message of the session to the participants. Write some of their ideas on flipchart/power point or board then provide the key message (see below). Give participants some time to write the key messages in their learning reflection journal.
- (3) Give participants the extension activities



Key Message

Youth are often undervalued in society as they are the age group most likely to be involved in anti social behaviors. Youth are the future core of society and need guidance and support from caring adults to become responsible and productive members of society. Education is a key

part of this process and adopting a positive youth development approach where youth are given the opportunity to participate in decisions which affect them will help to guide youth to get where they need to go. Better teachers need to open their minds to all the different possibilities of collaborating with youth in making decisions about the school and classroom.



Extension

Participants can read some of the additional reading material included in [additional information 1](#) at the end of this session on youth and education in Indonesia. **Portfolio activity:** This activity is an independent unstructured assignment which focuses on class research. Participants can place into their portfolios under category 7 Professional Development. This activity gives some of the youth in your school the opportunity to express their opinions and evaluate their school and say what decisions they would make if they had the opportunity to participate in school decision making. The assignment should take a total of about 4 hours to complete. This is approximately 1 hour to complete the activity with students and 3 hours to write the individual paper. The instructions for this activity are included in [additional information 2](#) at the end of this session



Additional Reading

- World Youth Report 2005 at www.un.org
- The United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child at www.un.org
- UNICEF (2001) Promoting Children's Participation in Democratic Decision Making
- IYF What works in Youth Participation: Case Studies from around the World
- Save the Children (2002) Participation: Spice it Up: Practical Tools for engaging children and young people in planning and consultations



Handout for Participants 2.1

Children, Youth and Adults

CHILDREN	YOUTH	ADULTS
Only just acquiring their basic values, skills and attitudes	Are undergoing rapid physical change and at their prime physically	Are physically fully developed
Are not fully developed physically or mentally	Are in the process of developing their identity to be different and unique	Have developed their self identity
Are starting the process of developing their identity	Are in the formal learning process	Are not in a formal learning process
Learn fast and are open to lots of new ideas	Question ideas and perceptions of others	Not flexible and quick to adjust
Are highly dependent on their parents and others of the same age	Are flexible, open minded and quick to adjust	More Conservative
Need protection	Radical	Make decisions for themselves
In most cases do not decide for themselves	In many cases decide for themselves	Are independent
Live with their parents	Most still live with their parents but becoming more independent	
Often do not contribute to the income of the family	May contribute to the income of the family	Contribute to the income of the family and manage the finances
Start learning interpersonal and academic skills	Solidify interpersonal and academic skills	Well developed interpersonal and academic

CHILDREN	YOUTH	ADULTS
Parental influence is very strong	School, work and family responsibilities increase	Have work and family responsibilities
Busy, active and full of enthusiasm	Peer influence is very strong	
Strongest personal relationships are within the family	Feel a need to conform in order to belong	
	Very concerned about what others say about them	
	Start to establish strong personal relationships outside the family	
	Can take responsibility for planning	



Handout for Participants 2.2

Student Participation in School Decision Making⁹

What is student participation in school decision making?

Effective participation in decision-making involves creating opportunities for students to increase their influence over what happens to them and around them.

Students can participate in school decision-making at different levels, involving different groups of students and facilitated by a wide range of processes, formal and informal. It means involving students not only by asking for their opinions and advice (consultation), but also, with school support, as leaders, advisers and decision-makers.

What are the Benefits of student participation in school decision making?

Providing opportunities for students to participate in school decision-making has immediate and long-term benefits for both students and schools. For students, participation in decision-making at school can:

- Show students their views are valued by school staff. Students are more likely to be motivated if they have an opportunity to participate in decisions that affect them
- Provide opportunities for a wide range of student views within the school to be voiced
- Provide opportunities for greater input into how and what students learn at school and can improve the quality of learning.
- Offers them the opportunity to develop new skills
- Learning is more successful when students are involved in decisions about what to learn and how to learn, in setting learning goals and in setting rules that govern behavior and practice develop interpersonal and practical skills.
- Participating in decision-making can be an empowering experience for students and can assist in building confidence and self esteem
- Participation can develop wider recognition of increasing independence as students move through the education system

For schools, student participation in decision-making can:

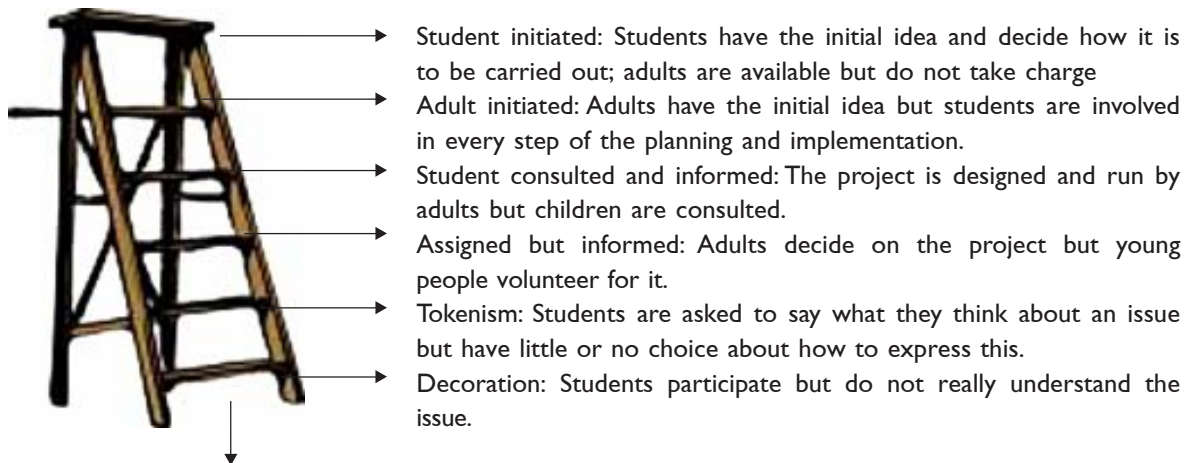
- Lead to improved school policies and practices;
- Support the successful development and implementation of school initiatives;
- Strengthen democratic processes within the school;
- Improve students' behavior within, and contribution to, school and community environments

⁹ Compiled from [Education Review Office](http://www.ero.govt.nz) at www.ero.govt.nz, [International Youth Foundation: What Works in Youth Participation: Case Studies from around the World](#) and [UNICEF: Promoting Children's participation in democratic decision making](#)

- Facilitate better relationships between students, teachers, parents and the wider community and improve understanding of and responsiveness to issues identified by students

Level of student participation in school decision-making

Roger Hart's¹⁰ Ladder of Participation provides a model for considering different levels of student participation in decision-making. It describes five levels for the participation of children in decision making with adults.



Manipulation: Students do or say what adults suggest they do but have no real understanding of the issues, or they are asked what they think but adults do not tell them what influence they have on the final decision

How can students be involved in School Decision Making?

Involvement of individual students or groups of students in decision-making will vary according to the specificity of the issues under consideration. School decisions requiring student participation can hold specific relevancy for:

- Individual students (e.g. the development and monitoring of Individual action plans for learning.
- Identifiable groups of students (e.g. OSIS for organizing fund raising activities)
- Classes of students (e.g. setting and maintaining classroom rules)
- The whole student population of the school, for example designing and implementing a new uniform code for all students.

Students can be involved in school decision-making through a wide variety of processes.

There are formal processes for involving students in school decision making such as student councils. There are also informal mechanisms for ensuring student participation in school decision-making. The quality of informal contact between students and staff is likely to be a

¹⁰ Adapted from Hart, Roger (1992) *Children's Participation: From Tokenism to Citizenship Innocenti Essays Number 4*, UNICEF International Child Development Centre, Italy cited in ero.govt.nz

reflection of school relationships and of the overall culture of the school with regards to student participation.

Processes for engaging students in school decision-making will vary according to the issue under consideration, the relevance of the issue to students (or sub-sets of students), the age and maturity of students, the character of the school and available resources

Examples of Student Participation in School Decision Making: School

I. Student representation:

Student representation at an organizational level in the school occurred through school councils (e.g. OSIS) giving student's leadership roles (e.g. head of class). School councils provide opportunities for students to participate in decision-making at a school wide level through organizing school activities and providing a forum for student opinion and concern.

One primary school has established a Kids' Council to support a range of school activities. Students involved in the Kids' Council undertake responsibilities such as running the end of year school assembly and thanking invited guests. They have also participated in decision-making on issues such as mufti days¹¹, socials and the design of the school uniform. Recently the Kids' Council has branched into obtaining feedback from their peers by conducting a school wide litter survey.

At this intermediate school, proposed uniform changes are discussed and voted on within the student council before being presented to the board of trustees. This process has resulted in a new jacket design and bootleg pants for students.

Schools also involved student leaders in decision-making at an organizational level in matters related to the students' area of leadership. Examples included student class leaders, student cultural leaders and student sports leaders.

Two student representatives from each class at this primary school meet weekly with the class teacher to discuss issues affecting students. A positive approach to student participation in school life is taken at these meetings and students and teachers work together to look for solutions to the problems raised. One example of this was to instigate fortnightly student reports to the school assembly.

¹¹ Days when students pay a small fee and so not have to wear school uniform

The principal of this secondary school meets weekly with head students and students from different year levels to seek feedback on positive and negative aspects of school governance and life. This provides an opportunity for students to voice their likes, dislikes and suggestions for improvement.

2. Peer support initiatives:

Schools frequently mentioned peer and buddy support systems as initiatives that promoted student participation in school decision-making.

The term “peer support system” involves one student assisting another student at a similar level or age, while “buddy support system” usually relates to an older student assisting a younger student. Both peer and buddy support systems provide students, who take the role of helper, with opportunities to participate in decision-making with other students as part of a school-wide intervention, such as peer mediation or reading assistance. Students in this role are entrusted to make appropriate decisions when dealing with other students in need.

This primary school provides a distinctive support system at two levels of the school. In the middle school students are trained as “big buddies” and at the higher levels senior students wear a “senior jacket” which identifies them as students who model good decision-making for younger children. [Medium urban decile 3 full primary school]

3. Student feedback mechanisms:

Nearly half of the schools had some type of mechanism to facilitate student feedback on a range of ongoing school-wide issues. Mechanisms for student feedback included: Suggestion boxes, contact with student representatives, student surveys; informal contact with school staff.

A state integrated school for boys has a prefect system, which also acts as a student representation mechanism. Prefects meet weekly with the senior management team to review events of the previous week and provide ideas and information on matters related to students.

4. Consultation exercises with students:

Schools can conduct school-wide consultation exercises on specific issues with students. Student’s views can be sought on the following:

- Development and implementation of disciplinary procedures: The involvement of students in setting class or school rules, or in deciding appropriate class behaviors and/or consequences for misbehavior.

- Review of curriculum
- Student safety e.g. the level and type of bullying (peer to peer conflict) experienced by students within the school environment
- Development and implementation of school-owned documents and charters e.g. school brochure or web site
- Developing and planning school space and facilities e.g. landscaping, how to use school space and in the design of any new facilities.

Consultation methods included surveys, focus groups, voting on options and meetings.

This school adopted a participatory approach during the development of the school's vision. Teachers discussed the formation of the vision with students and then classes brainstormed about what sort of school they like and what they value about their school. The students' views were presented to the board of trustees.

Examples of Student Participation in School Decision Making: Classroom

At this primary school, promoting student participation in the classroom includes finding out students' ideas, opinions and preferences about classroom dynamics and friendships when arranging movements between classes. Students are also encouraged to participate in building positive classroom environments by developing class treaties and providing buddy support.

Classroom opportunities for student decision-making include: Student involvement in curriculum adaptation; Student feedback on teacher classroom performance; Student involvement in the organization of class activities.

1. Curriculum adaptation:

Students can have some influence over what they were studying. This influence can vary according to teaching philosophy, subject area and class level.

The teaching philosophy of this primary school places an emphasis on student ownership and involvement in learning programs. Ways in which this is promoted include: students selecting their own research topics within units of study; surveying students about which programs they like and dislike; and involving students in organizing the school's mathematics week.

Primary schools can involve their students in setting curriculum themes or directions limited to certain classes or curriculum areas. Secondary schools can seek student input on curriculum options.

This large urban secondary school for girls encourages feedback in relation to classroom programs and assessment. Recent issues surrounding the implementation of the National Examination were fully discussed by the students and the staff followed up the issues raised.

2. Feedback on teacher performance

Schools can provide students with mechanisms to give feedback on the performance of their teachers. These mechanisms can include: Student involvement in the appraisal process of school staff; Student satisfaction surveys; Course evaluation surveys; Informal contact with teachers.

Students at this boys' school are surveyed at the end of each unit of study, with feedback sought on "how the year is going" including teaching styles, enjoyment of learning and the courses that they are keen to take which are not currently offered.

3. Decisions about class activities

Student participation in decisions about class activities is a common way for students' ideas and opinions to be integrated to classroom decisions. Examples include planning camp activities and fundraising activities. Secondary schools can ask senior students to assist in planning junior student activities.

Examples of Student Participation in School Decision Making: Extra Curricular Time.

1. School productions

Schools reported a relatively high level of student decision-making evident in relation to the direction and management of school productions. A number of primary schools noted that they involved all classes in school productions.

Students at this state integrated school are heavily involved in the school production, including making decisions about masks, backdrops, choreography and having input into the alterations of scripts.



Handout for Participants 2.3

How Can Students Participate in Decision Making in your School?

Example	What level on Roger Hart's Ladder is this example?	Do you do something similar in your school or classroom? What do you do?	Could you do something similar in your school? What could you do?
<p>Student Representation (e.g. student councils and student leaders)</p>			
<p>Peer Support Initiatives (e.g. buddy system or peer education)</p>			
<p>Student Feedback(e.g. suggestion boxes or student surveys)</p>			
<p>Student Consultations (e.g. rules, uniforms)</p>			

Example	What level on Roger Hart's Ladder is this example?	Do you do something similar in your school or classroom? What do you do?	Could you do something similar in your school? What could you do?
Student involvement in curriculum (e.g. students choose what to study)			
Student Feedback on Teacher Performance			
Student Decisions about classroom activities			
Student Participation in organizing and managing extra curricular activities			