

Youth participation - trainers' pack



Introduction

Youth participation is at the heart of everything we do in guiding so it must be at the heart of training too. Youth participation is nothing new; the first example was in 1909 when girls joined the Crystal Palace Scout Rally.

Trainers need to keep the focus of all leaders on this, to enable youth participation to be our way of working. This pack is full of ideas to help trainers bring youth participation to life. As you plan every session please think how you will promote youth participation.



Key youth participation messages

Each of the following key youth participation messages has been developed in Girlguiding's youth participation strategy, and [trainers](#) need to deliver them to participants at every possible occasion, whether it is a formal training session or a fireside opportunity.

Message 1

There are many examples of good youth participation at every level of the organisation which are to be built on and learned from.

Encourage participants to share examples of and understand how they already embrace youth participation.

Message 2

Skills development is important as it enables girls and young women to get involved, starting from Rainbows to adults.

Help participants to pass on skills to young women through programme activities for all sections.

Message 3

Youth participation isn't just about democratic decision making. It's about being able to take part in events and other opportunities too.

Help participants understand that youth participation is total involvement, not just letting them choose an activity or game.

Message 4

Girls and young women want to know who 'runs' the organisation and how they can get in touch and get involved.

Volunteers need to encourage girls to get involved, be seen, be heard - from Rainbows to Rangers.

Activities to help deliver the key messages

There are two types of activities in this section - activities for trainers to engage the participants with the idea of youth participation and activities for volunteers to take back to their units to help empower the girls themselves to make their own decisions. In each case, the link with the key message highlighted below.

Activities for use in training sessions - Ice-breakers and short introductory activities

Who is a young person?

Key messages - All

Objective

To help participants recognise and dispel preconceptions about young people, starting with their age.

Running time

10 minutes

Equipment

- prints of photos from the website (click [here](#)) and the answers
- pens
- paper

What to do

Print and label the photos from A to L and display them around the room. Ask the participants to guess the age of each person shown.

Discussion points

How many answers were right? How many were wrong?

How much were the participants influenced by what the girls in the photos were wearing or doing?

Old enough?

Key message - 3

Objective

To help participants recognise what major decisions young people can make at an early age.

Running time

15 minutes

Equipment

- the table of questions and answers in Appendix A put into a suitable display format, eg wall-mounted cards or quiz sheets
- pens
- paper

What to do

Ask the participants to match the age of the people on the cards to the given activities.

Discussion points

How many answers were right? How many were wrong?

Do the participants feel comfortable with the ages at which young people can do the activities?

On a scale of 1 to 10

Key message - 1

Objective

To help participants recognise their own good practice.

Running time

15 minutes

Equipment

- two signs saying 'GREAT' and 'MORE TO DO' on walls on opposite sides of the room
- a sheet of statements from Appendix B

What to do

Ask the participants to imagine a scale of 1 (GREAT) to 10 (MORE TO DO) between the signs. You could put marks on the floor to help with this. Read each statement in turn and ask the participants to move to the point on the imaginary scale at which they feel the example lies. After reading the statements given, ask if any participant wants to suggest an example.

Discussion points

Did the trainees realise how much good practice they are already doing?

Were they influenced by what others did?

Activities for use in training sessions - Longer activities to deliver key messages

Barriers

Key messages - All

Objective

To help participants recognise and break down barriers to youth participation.

Running time

30 minutes

Equipment

- a picture of a wall or a piece of flipchart paper with a wall drawn on it
- copies of the hammer and star symbols (Appendix C)
- pens
- Blu-Tack

What to do

Allocate each participant a 'brick' in the wall on which she should write what prevents her from involving girls and young women (extra bricks can be added if needed). Once the wall is complete, give each participant a 'hammer' on which they write ways of overcoming any of these barriers. Each participant should write what encourages her to involve young people on a 'star' and stick it on the wall.

Discussion points

How can leaders ensure that they are tackling both their own barriers to putting girls in the lead and those barriers affecting the girls and young women in general.

Note

Appendix D has a table of points you can use to promote the discussion.

We can do it!

Key message - 4

Objective

To inform participants what involvement girls can have in the running of Girlguiding.

Running time

30 minutes

Equipment

Copies of the information from Appendix E on cards, with one set per group.

What to do

The participants should match each activity with its correct description. When they have done this and you have checked that they are all right, ask the participants to discuss the points below.

Discussion points

Did they know about all of the opportunities?

Do their girls or young women know of them?

Are they prepared to go back and tell the girls and young women about them?

One step more

Key messages - 1, 2, 3

Objective

To help participants expand their own concepts of youth participation.

Running time

30 minutes

Equipment

- sticky notes
- one large sheet of paper per group
- pens

What to do

Divide the participants into small groups. Ask everyone to write on a sticky note one way in which they practice youth participation in their unit. Stick the notes on the large piece of paper, leaving space around each one. The group now discusses each in turn, agreeing how youth participation can be increased and writing the ideas around each sticky note. Below is an example you can show them of how this works.

The Brownies
could plan the
programme for
their holiday

The Brownies
choose the theme
for their holiday

The Brownies
could choose
camp, holiday or
another adventure

Discussion points

Were the participants comfortable with expanding their ideas of youth participation?

How will they achieve the next level of involvement?

Are they prepared to go back and put it into practice?

Activities for leaders to take away

These activities can be set up in a training session to help leaders understand how to use them with the girls. They may need to be adapted for different sections.

Floor game

Key messages - 1, 2

Objective

A fun way for leaders to give their girls tasters of something different.

Running time

30 minutes in a training session; as long as it takes in the unit

Equipment

- a set of number cards (for example 1 to 40) with board game instructions on some cards (miss a go, throw a six to continue)
- 1 dice per team
- activity bases (ie activities from a resource that are set up) - two more than the number of teams

What to do

Set up the activities resources such as Unit Meeting Activity cards. Lay the cards out in a snaking line around the floor. Each team must choose a token then the teams throw the dice and move their token to the correct square. When they land on an activity card, they go to one of the bases. The game continues until all teams have completed all activities or a predetermined time limit is reached.

Discussion points for leaders to use with girls

Did the girls enjoy the activities? How do they know?

Do the girls want to do more from the resource?

Diamonds

Key message - 2

Objective

A tool for leaders to help girls learn to negotiate.

Running time

20 minutes

Equipment

A set of nine diamond-shaped cards of identical size which fit together to make one large diamond. Write the questions you've chosen for negotiating (or pictures for younger girls) on the cards, with one set per group. One example of such questions is nine things they would like to do in Brownies.

What to do

Each group has to build the big diamond from the small ones, with the most important or desirable at the top and the least at the bottom. The group must agree on the formation. The least popular choices can be discarded and the most popular started first.

Discussion points for leaders

Did the girls find a way to agree? Was it difficult?

Were girls prepared to bargain with each other?

Did leaders or young leaders need to intervene?

Charades

Key messages - 2, 3

Objective

A tool for leaders to hear the girls' views in a different way.

Running time

20 minutes

Equipment

None

What to do

The girls can work individually or in small groups. Ask them to mime what they would like to do next week, what adventure they dream of and so on, using charade clues like 'three words', and everyone has to guess. The leaders can draw up a list of all the ideas.

Discussion points for leaders

Did new ideas come out this way and were some ideas duplicated?

There are many more ideas in the following resources.

- *Decision Making 4 Trainers* - www.girlguiding.org.uk/pdf/DecisionMaking4Trainers.pdf
- *Participation On A Plate* - www.girlguiding.org.uk/pdf/1631_ParticipationOnAPlate.pdf

Frequently asked questions

Below are questions about youth participation that you might get asked in your training. They could also be used as discussion questions or as the basis for case studies.

Question	Answer
If it is all about youth participation and the girls choosing, what is the point in trainers giving leaders activities to do with their girls?	Trainers need to help participants to understand that participation doesn't mean free reign. Young people would never hear about anything new if leaders didn't introduce them to resources and initiatives. They need to be involved in choosing how and if to take things further. Activities need to be viewed as a sort of conduit.
Won't leaders get bored with hearing about youth participation all the time?	Yes, if all we do is talk about it. Trainers must help leaders put the ideas into practice with activities so that they too become excited by allowing girls to fully participate.
Girls have to make a lot of choices in school, college and other areas of their lives. Surely they want guiding to be different - a place where they don't have to make so many choices?	The research found that young women want to be involved and have their views heard. Leaders need to increase the level of participation with the help of trainers. If the young people have a sudden change from no choices to choosing everything, it will confuse them. Leaders must take things a step at a time, which is why the youth participation message must be included in every training and leaders keep moving towards this goal.
Whenever I give the girls a choice, they just argue and cannot agree. How do I deal with this?	The girls need to learn to negotiate. Try the negotiation activities in <i>Youth Participation: decision-making activities for Trainers</i> . See Members' area > Resource library > Trainers' resources > Training resources. Try the Diamonds activity in this pack.
I have tried getting the girls more involved but they get silly and suggest ridiculous things. What can I do?	Ask yourself first, honestly, if the activities are ridiculous or if your boundaries are too narrow. If you genuinely still believe they're being silly, a good first step is to limit the choices available. When the girls have coped sensibly with that, move on. For example, you could ask the girls to rate the 1st, 2nd and 3rd options for a trip or choose no trip rather than ask: 'Where do you want to go?'.
It's all very well letting the girls have free choice but I dislike doing some of these things. What should I do?	As a volunteer you must enjoy what you do. If there are things you don't like doing, don't do them but try to find a way for the girls to access these activities in a different way. This could mean a joint activity with a nearby unit or you could organise the activity and get parents to participate with the girls instead.

Typical trainings

Below are some things to include in specific types of training.

New Leader training

- The Five Essentials of the Guiding Method, particularly decision-making and self-governance.
- 'Good guiding is...', particularly the section 'Girls being involved in decision-making'. Visit www.girlguiding.org.uk/pdf/GoodGuidingIsdoc.pdf.
- Girl-led guiding and practical examples of how to enable girls to choose, from *Participation on a Plate* at Members' area > Resource library > Unit leaders resources.
- Examples of the choices that young members should have an opportunity to contribute to, eg the programme, activities inside and outside the meeting place, residential visits, the start and finish of meetings.
- Case studies showing how leaders and other adults in guiding put their girls in the lead.

Experienced leader training

- A reminder of the guiding essentials now and again. Go back to basics (the Five Essentials, 'Good guiding is...', case studies) and focus on the youth participation aspects.
- Allow leaders to learn from each other by asking them to share their own ideas and experiences of putting girls in the lead.

Activity training (adventure or residential event)

- Make it clear that whatever great ideas the leaders are picking up at the training, the girls should have a say in their programme. Suggest that leaders give the girls a few examples of new activities but if they like all the ideas let them do all of them.
- Suggest leaders show the girls examples of what they themselves have achieved during the training in order to aid their choices - for example photographs of adventure ideas or samples of items they have made.
- Include some examples of how to help girls and young women have a say in their adventure and consider the different sections.

Training about a new resource

- Encourage participants to think about how the new resource offers opportunities for girls to be involved in the planning, delivery and evaluation of the activities.
- Include guidance notes for leaders on how to give girls and young women a say in how the resource is used. (Remember to highlight these for the leaders.)
- Help leaders consider other resources that they have used with an element of girls' choice (eg enabling girls to select their own badges or using the Adventure 100 map) and share these resources with their peers.
- Provide trainees with a sample resource so they can consider ways in which it could be used by girls and young women to make choices about the activities, topics and themes they would like to cover in the resource.

Sample training plan for a whole session

The plan below uses the activities in the pack to form a complete session to promote youth participation.

- | | |
|----------------|---|
| 15mins | Icebreaker - Old enough? activity |
| 15mins | Introductory activity - What is youth participation?

PowerPoint presentation of the key messages in a form that the leaders can identify with (download here) |
| 30mins | Engaging the participants - Barriers activity |
| 30mins | Activity to take away - Floor game

Set up the floor game with activities that are relevant to the leaders, eg:
<i>Unit Meeting Activities or Skills Builder cards</i>

Let the activity run long enough for the leaders to give the girls tasters of activities but do not expect the leaders to do all the activities. |
| 15 mins | Action planning - What will the leaders commit to doing in their units? Ask them to write their answers on a stamped, self-addressed postcard and tell them you will post it in three months to see how they are getting on. |
| 15 mins | Questions and evaluation - Use an evaluation technique that you feel comfortable with. |

Summary

This pack is to help trainers build ideas for youth participation into every session so that it is not an add-on but the first objective set down in the training plan.

Appendix A - 'Old enough?' cards

ACTIVITY CARDS

HAVE THEIR OWN PASSPORT

LEAVE SCHOOL

USE CONTRACEPTION

OPEN A BANK ACCOUNT

GET MARRIED

LEARN TO DRIVE A CAR

DO JURY SERVICE

DRINK ALCOHOL

GET A JOB

WATCH A PG FILM

MINIMUM AGE CARDS

The first adult passport is at age 16 but minors can have a child passport from birth.

The current school leaving age is 16 years.

Without parental consent, the age is generally 16 years (there are exceptions on medical grounds).

The minimum age for credit is 18 but most banks offer young people accounts, often from 11 years.

The minimum age to marry in the UK is 16 years.

The minimum age for a provisional driving licence is 17 years, which is for public roads.

The minimum age to be called for Jury Service in the UK is 18 years.

Between 5 and 17 alcohol may be consumed with parental permission; minimum purchase age is 18.

The minimum age to get a paper round is 13 and job hour limits apply until 16.

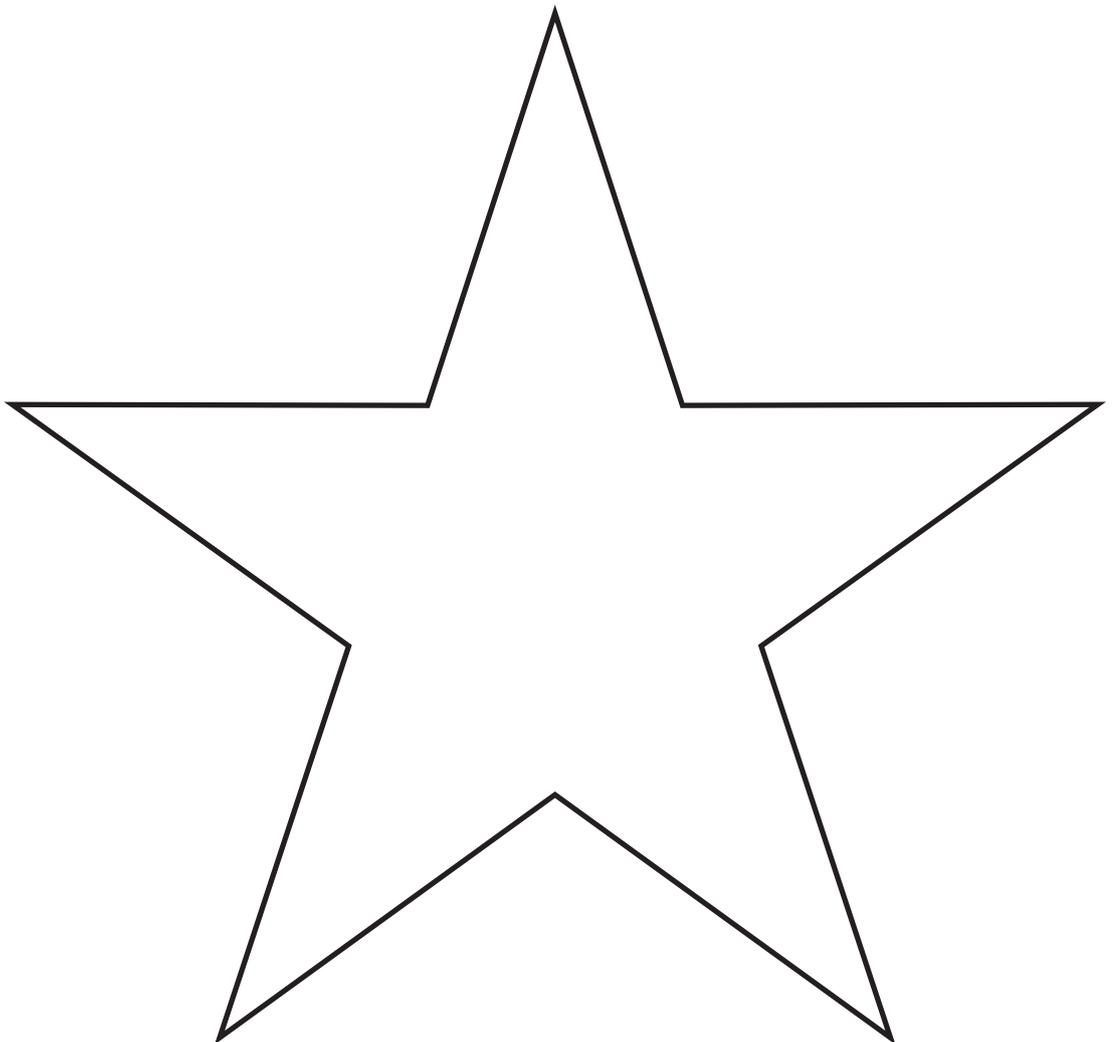
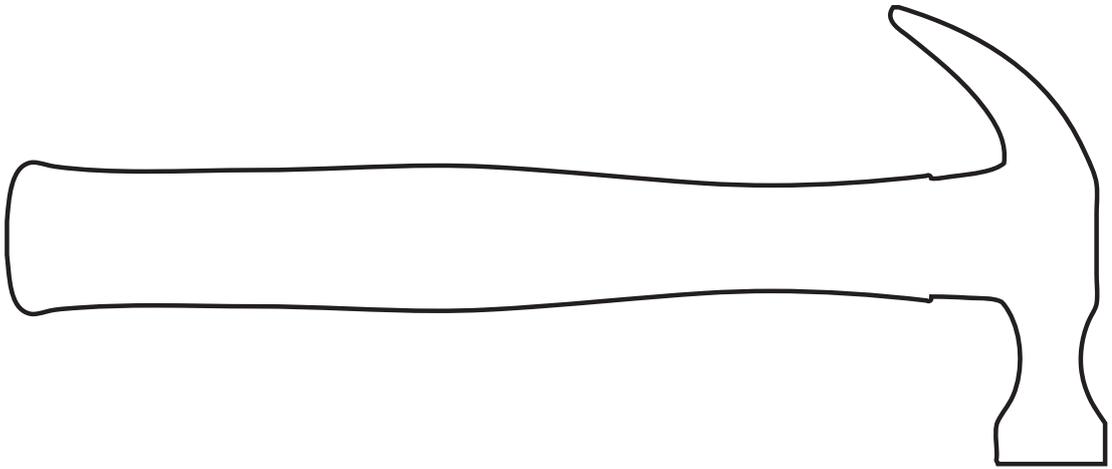
All ages will be admitted to the cinema (PG is to indicate to parents that the film is not U).

Note: These ages are correct at 1 April 2012, however, you might want to check that no changes have occurred when using this activity.

Appendix B - Statements for 'On a scale of 1 to 10'

- Guides planning and running an evening for their unit as part of their Baden-Powell Challenge.
- Peer Educators Rangers members who plan and deliver peer education sessions to Brownies, Guides, Rangers and leaders) running a session on decision-making for Brownies.
- The district commissioner and the district team planning a Guide camp.
- Young leaders attending district/division meetings.
- A youth representative being included on the County Executive Committee.
- Young leaders attending and contributing to district meetings.
- Rangers planning and running their own programme.
- A unit leadership team planning the term's Brownie programme.
- A Guide leader choosing and running a badge for the unit.
- A Rainbow leader asking her young leader to choose and run a game for the Rainbows.

Appendix C - Hammer and star for 'Barriers'



Appendix D - Starters for 'Barriers'

Barriers	Possible solutions
A Young leader cannot get to the district meeting as it is in the next town.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Help her to get a lift with another leader. ● Ask if the meeting venues can be rotated.
Rangers do not want to organise their own programme.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Introduce planning templates where they all sign up for small tasks. ● Arrange a joint activity with another unit where self-governance works really well.
A Rainbow leader says five-year-olds are too young to make decisions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Offer Rainbows simple decision-making tools such as those contained in the decision-making activities. Available as a download from Members' area > Resource library > Trainers' resources > Youth Participation resources. ● Ask the leader to allow a young leader to help the Rainbows make their decisions.
Girls say the leaders do not listen to what they want.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Suggest that the girls write down their ideas in Patrols or Sixes. Pass them around for comments then give them to their leaders. ● Arrange a district/division forum for young people with unit representatives to plan events.
It takes too long to get any information from the girls in meetings and they become bored.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use fun decision-making activities. ● Use the young leaders to act as go-betweens with the girls.
Girls don't know what choices, opportunities or activities are available to them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Make sure they all see the e-newsletters. ● Include a taster activity so the girls can assess the options.
There is a lack of money in the unit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ask the girls how they will fundraise to support the activities they want. ● Visit the fundraising section of the Girlguiding website with the girls: Members' area > Running your unit.

Appendix E - Cards for 'We can do it!'

THE BIG GIG	A concert for girls aged ten years or more at a national venue, featuring their favourite acts.
ACTIVE KIDS	Girls of all ages can collect these vouchers to help fund equipment for their unit.
INNOVATE	A fun-filled weekend that allows members of Rangers aged 16 and older to meet and discuss guiding.
25th BIRTHDAY COMPETITION	A special online competition for Rainbows to celebrate this important anniversary.
FUN POLL	A chance for Brownies to share their favourite websites through the Brownie section of the Girlguiding website.
ADVOCATE!	A panel that provides opportunities for Rangers members to get involved in Girlguiding's public affairs and advocacy work.
ADVENTURES	There are more than 60 exciting adventures to take part in throughout 2012 at our four training and activity centres. From Rainbows Round the World to Brownie badge days to adult training days, there's something for everyone and every group.
GUIDING CONVERSATIONS	Giving Girls a Voice is one of a series of documents intended to be used to facilitate discussions at district/division meetings. Anyone can lead the conversation; it does not need to be a commissioner.
WEB USER PANEL	A chance for Rangers members to get their opinions and ideas heard on how to improve their website.
ONLINE GAMES	Games appropriate to the age group are available on all the sections' websites.
GIRLS SHOUT OUT	As a truly girl-led organisation, we've always sought and acted upon the views of girls. To help make sure girls' voices are heard outside guiding we've conducted an extensive survey of girls' and young women's views and represented their opinions to decision-makers and the public in a series of landmark reports. Our series of reports helps 500,000 girls express their views.
GIRLS' ATTITUDE SURVEY	A comprehensive study of the views and opinions of girls aged 7 to 21 across the UK. The survey looks at girls' attitudes on five themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● family and relationships ● society, culture and community ● health and wellbeing ● education, training, skills and careers ● the environment.