

How to involve young people in program design

Why is it important to involve young people?

Young people are the experts in their own lives. Including them in the design of the program respects them and their expertise. It can also offer insight into how young people will respond to program elements which can provide ideas on how to change these elements and improve program effectiveness.

Including young people in designing and reviewing your program also gives them an experience in articulating their ideas, problem-solving and advocacy. In other words, it supports the development of many of the skills that we all need to participate in economic and social life.

How do I involve young people?

There are lots of different ways to involve young people. These don't have to be limited to formal, structured processes or groups. In fact, less formal approaches – activities, projects or programs that are based around interests or hobbies – are sometimes a better way to start. Creating a variety of opportunities for young people to get involved will show how their opinion is valued and builds mutual trust and respect.

Examples could include:

- hiring young people
- requesting input on advisory groups
- collecting feedback from young people on the program and the program staff

Collecting feedback from young people

Collecting feedback from young people is important because it helps you to understand what you are doing well and what you could be doing differently so that your program has a greater impact.

The [Review Surveys](#) have been designed to help you collect feedback from the young people you are working with. The questions in these surveys have been designed to measure the effectiveness of a program with reference to the ten features.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

[A Practical Guide to effective engagement with young people](#)

[Youth participation kit: organisations](#)

[Youth Affairs Council Victoria: Yerp Toolkit](#)

[WACOSS Co-Design Toolkit](#)

[MYAN: Not Just “Ticking a Box” Youth Participation with young people from migrant and refugee backgrounds](#)