

Children as Actors for Transforming Society: CATS Young advocates for change

26th July to 1st August 2014, Caux, Switzerland

Initiatives of Change in partnership with The Child to Child Trust & Universal Education foundation are proposing the second in a series of annual conferences on the important issues of improving and enhancing children's participation

What:

An interactive 6 day conference to learn, explore and share experiences and expertise in promoting responsive, ethical and sustainable participation to:

- Promote the idea of **A world where children and adults are agents of change**, working together in mutual respect towards a society where each and every person feels included, realizes their fundamental human rights and fulfills their unique potential.
- All decision affecting children and young people are made with their participation
- Take stock of gathered practices and deepen our understanding of what works (and what does not) and why
- Achieve a deeper understanding of children's realities, resilience, vulnerability and how to work with them to enhance their strengths and mitigate the circumstances which undermine them
- Create an environment in which open, frank interactions between adults and young people/children lead to a more flexible and sustainable approach to children's participation

Why

Despite many years of promoting children's participation, good practice is fragmented and unsustainable. There is a need to create a community of practice, to consolidate and share what we have learned. We also need to establish effective systems and processes to embed participation. Most of all, we need to learn from children about their experiences and to recognize their unique contribution to this evolving agenda.



How:

Through an exploration, by adults and children, of rights-based participation in all arenas of children's lives The conference format will facilitate the unpacking of crucial concepts, issues, practices and experiences of both children and those working with them. The conference design allows for children and young people to be able to communicate, articulate and exchange their perspectives to enrich, challenge, and extend the adult understandings of their situation. and work collectively to make participation work. Engagement by the young participants will include running some of the dynamic spaces for discussions and meeting themselves as well as downtime for simply having fun. **CATS will provide an opportunity for children* and adults to work together in partnership and create a real experience of living, learning and working together.**

It will enable children to realize their fundamental right to participate and develop their capacities to become agents of change. The space provided by CATS will enable all to feel valued and to better understand their purpose and potential.

Who:

This conference is designed for professionals and others working with and for children up to 18 committed to promoting children's participation. Groups of young people with experience and expertise in participation will be present at the conference to share with the conference participants.

It will be of interest to those working in:

Education, justice, health, child protection, media, intergovernmental organisations, governmental agencies, NGOs, pedagogical movements, teachers, educators, youth leaders, child care specialists and all concerned with the welfare of children. *Children of participants welcome.*



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