

Basic requirements for implementation of article 12 rights

Table I. Basic requirements for the implementation of the right of the child to be heard (excerpts taken from [UN, 2009](#), section D, para 132: 26–27).

Requirement	Implementation in practice
Transparent and informative	Children must be provided with full, accessible, diversity-sensitive and age-appropriate information about their right to express their views freely and their views to be given due weight, and how this participation will take place, its scope, purpose and potential impact.
Voluntary	Children should never be coerced into expressing views against their wishes and they should be informed that they can cease involvement at any stage.
Respectful	Children's views have to be treated with respect and they should be provided with opportunities to initiate ideas and activities. Adults working with children [...] need an understanding of the socio-economic, environmental and cultural context of children's lives. Persons and organizations working for and with children should also respect children's views with regard to participation in public events.
Relevant	The issues on which children have the right to express their views must be of real relevance to their lives and enable them to draw on their knowledge, skills and abilities. In addition, space needs to be created to enable children to highlight and address the issues they themselves identify as relevant and important.
Child-friendly	Environments and working methods should be adapted to children's capacities. Adequate time and resources should be made available to ensure that children are adequately prepared and have the confidence and opportunity to contribute their views. Consideration needs to be given to the fact that children will need differing levels of support and forms of involvement according to their age and evolving capacities.
Inclusive	Participation must be inclusive, avoid existing patterns of discrimination, and encourage opportunities for marginalized children, including both girls and boys, to be involved (see also para. 88 above). Children are not a homogenous group and participation needs to provide for equality of opportunity for all, without discrimination on any grounds. Programmes also need to ensure that they are culturally sensitive to children from all communities.
Supported by training	Adults need preparation, skills and support to facilitate children's participation effectively, to provide them, for example, with skills in listening, working jointly with children and engaging children effectively in accordance with their evolving capacities. Children themselves can be involved as trainers and facilitators on how to promote effective participation; they require capacity-building to strengthen their skills [...].
Safe, sensitive to risk	In certain situations, expression of views may involve risks. Adults have a responsibility towards the children with whom they work and must take every precaution to minimize the risk to children of violence, exploitation or any other negative consequence of their participation [...].

Requirement	Implementation in practice
Accountable	<p>A commitment to follow-up and evaluation is essential. For example, in any research or consultative process, children must be informed as to how their views have been interpreted and used and, where necessary, provided with the opportunity to challenge and influence the analysis of the findings. Children are also entitled to be provided with clear feedback on how their participation has influenced any outcomes. Wherever appropriate, children should be given the opportunity to participate in follow-up processes or activities. Monitoring and evaluation of children's participation needs to be undertaken, where possible, with children themselves.</p>
