



How Children and Young People Shaped the Children's Rights Animation

NHS Lothian and Palindromicals worked with children and young people across Lothian to create an animated video on children's rights. Children and young people were involved at every stage over a six month period. Over 100 children and young people took part in questionnaires and group discussions, tested ideas, and shared feedback on all drafts of the script, characters and 'styleframes'. Their feedback was used throughout the project and directly influenced the language, design and focus.

1. Choosing the Main Idea

Children and young people asked for an animation rather than a video or written document.

They looked at four different ideas for the animation and clearly preferred the "City of Rights" skateboarding theme. Some of the younger children felt that other ideas, such as a mountain climbing theme, looked unsafe.

They all liked seeing a range of different characters and abilities represented.

As a result, the skateboarding theme was chosen, with a strong focus on inclusion and safety.

2. Creating the Look and Feel

Children and young people said they preferred visuals that were bright, colourful and realistic. They liked clear, outlined images and simplified features.

They also suggested places and landmarks from across Lothian to feature in the animation, that local children would recognise.

The final animation reflects this feedback by using a clear, vibrant visual style and featuring locations suggested by children and young people.

3. Making the Language Easier to Understand

Young people helped make the script clearer and easier to understand. For example, they preferred the phrase 'trusted adult' instead of 'supportive adult'. They also highlighted words and phrases that younger children might

find difficult, such as "physical and mental health".

The script was changed to use simpler language, including phrases such as "healthy body and mind".

The visuals were also designed to help explain children's rights in a clear and straightforward way.

4. Helping Create the Characters

Children and young people shared their views on the characters and how they were represented.

They welcomed characters with visible disabilities, including a prosthetic leg, and suggested other less visible ones such as hearing aids.

They also inspired the creation of an additional character based on artwork and ideas they had produced themselves.

5. Highlighting What Matters Most

Participants said that the right that was most important to them was the right to be listened to and taken seriously (UNCRC Article 12) - in their words, the 'Right to a Voice'.

As a result, the final animation includes a stronger focus on children's voices and participation, featuring it visually, in the voice over and in the finale of the animation.

6. Improving Understanding

Young people identified parts of the animation that were not immediately clear to them. For example, a scene illustrating opportunities for exercise was changed from a physio session to playing outside.

Feedback also led to improvements in scenes about learning, play and health, such as adding clearer visual cues.

These changes made the animation easier to understand while keeping it engaging and child-friendly.

7. Improving Accessibility and Safety

Children and young people also highlighted practical improvements - for example, the wearing of safety gear such as helmets and knee pads.

They continued to encourage better representation of disability and inclusion throughout the animation.

This feedback helped shape decisions about accessibility, safety and representation.

8. Choosing the Title

Children and young people helped choose the title of the animation by voting on a shortlist of options.

The winning title was **NHS Lothian: On Board with Children's Rights.**

9. Recording the Voiceover

Children wanted the animation to be from their point of view, so the script was written in their voice.

This inspired the idea of having multiple children's voices narrate the animation. We were able to include thirty-three children and young people, who joined sessions to record different lines of the script.

They told us that it was exciting to take part in the recordings and that the children's voices help to bring the video to life.

Overall Impact

Children and young people were not just asked for their opinions. Their feedback directly influenced the final animation - essentially co-producing it with us.

They helped shape the main idea, language, characters, children's rights messages, local references, accessibility features and overall design.

They ensured that more children and young people could see themselves and their local area represented in the animation and feel ownership of it.

This resulted in an animation that is more engaging, easier to understand, more inclusive and more relevant to the children and young people it was created for.

