

Transforming church cultures
through meaningful
participation with children

Listening, Reflecting, Acting

Rev John Cox and Lynette Drew

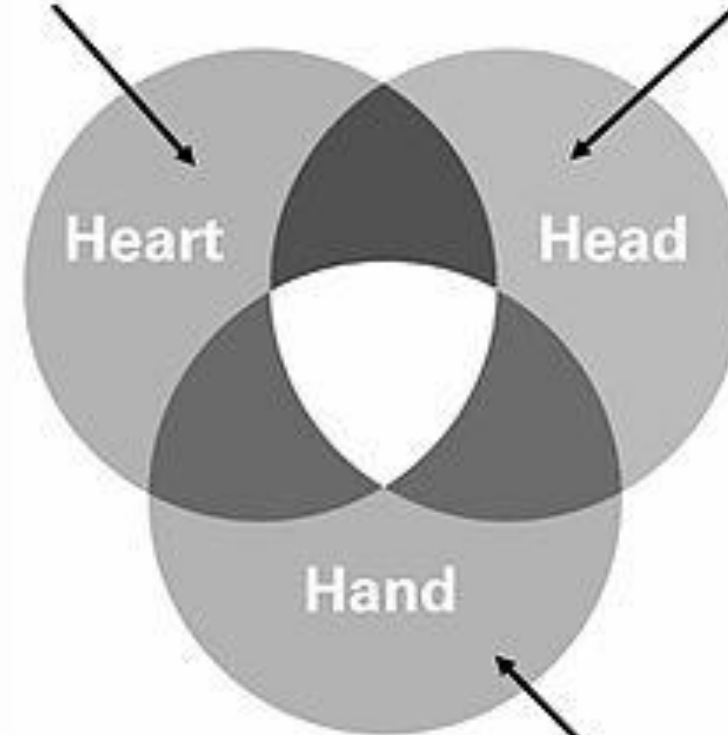
What is the Church doing to meet Principle 2?

Children and young people are informed about their rights, participate in decisions affecting them and are taken seriously.

Unconscious motives
Affective preferences
What we really like

Goals, values
Cognitive preferences
What we find important

- *Head: we understand that we should do it, and the benefits of it*
- *Heart: we connect with the motivation to do it*
- *Hands: we are equipped with tools and ability to do it well*



Skills, abilities
Action-related knowledge

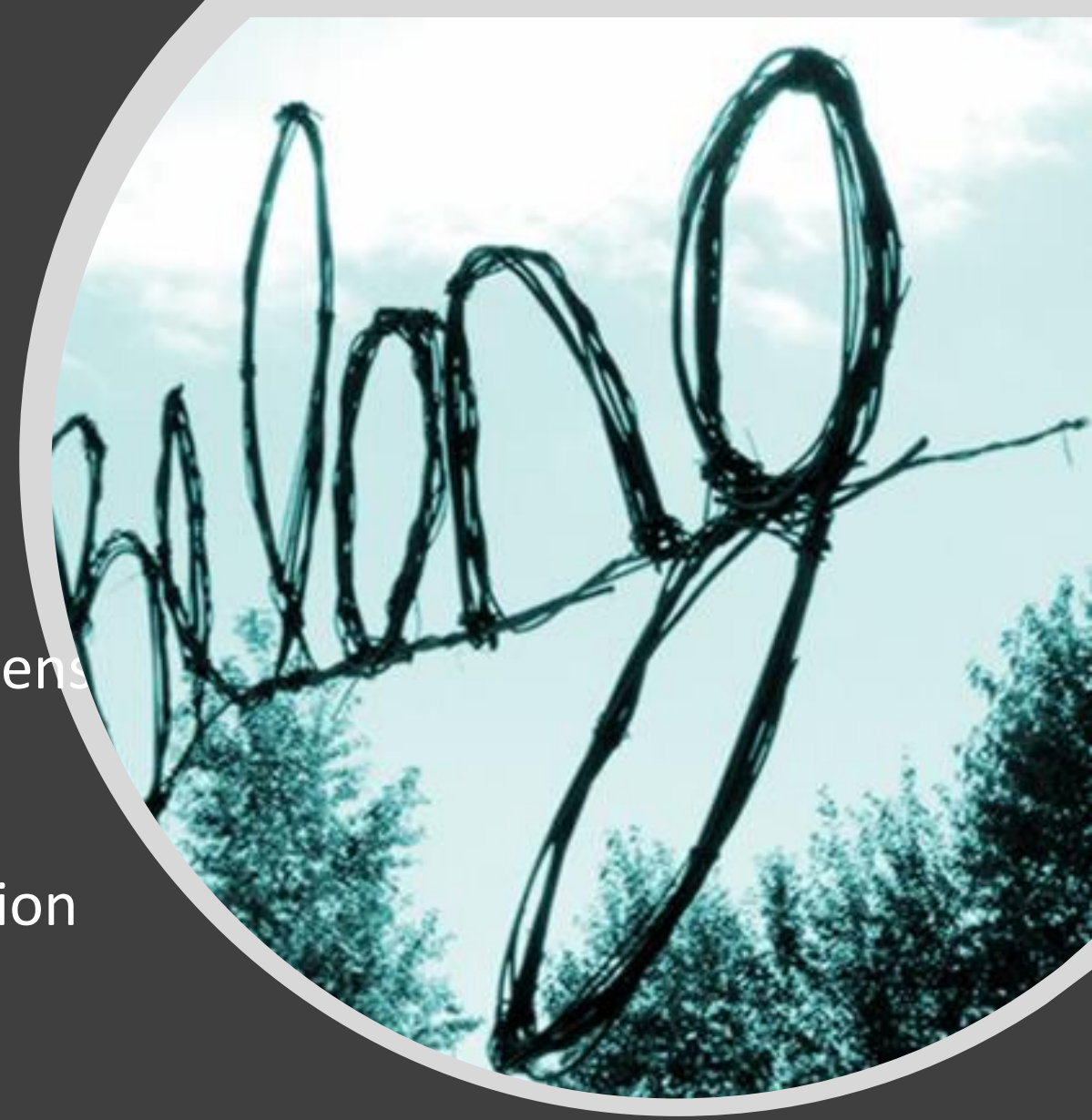


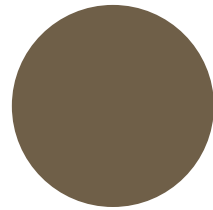
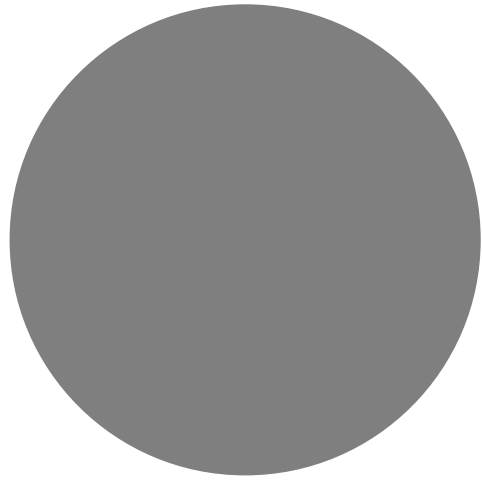
Who's driving and where are we going?

The goal: for children to experience a safe and nurturing church environment to which they feel they belong, are valued and safe

Theoretical underpinnings – building belonging

- Access to resources
- Access to supportive relationships
- Opportunities to experience a powerful sense of identity
- Power and control – experiences of competence, effectiveness and contribution
- Cultural alignment and practice
- Experiences of social justice
- Cohesion





Theological underpinnings

Not just 'the stuff we
do' but 'a statement of
who we are'



How will we know when we're there?

Process Measure

- How has the development process been inclusive of all stakeholders

Impact Measures

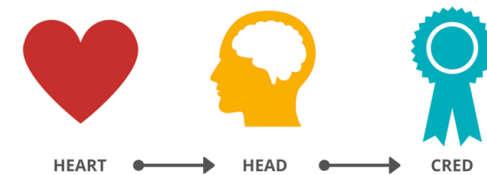
- To what extent is the initiative
 - Consistent with expressed theological underpinnings
 - Reflective of research and literature depictions of good practice

Outcome Measures

- To what extent is the initiative
 - Meeting the operational requirements as a useful tool for genuine engagement
 - Support the achievement of Recommendation 2.2

When it works – what works for you

- **Head?**
 - In what ways did the interaction shape your thinking?
- **Heart?**
 - In what ways did the interaction impact your emotional state or sense of wellbeing?
- **Hands?**
 - In what ways did the interaction have an impact on what you did next?



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The benefits of being asked



The benefits of being asked

- Ownership
- Trust
- Developing healthy relationships
- Ability to participate
- Predictability of being heard and believed
- Contributes to resilience
- Sense of connection
- Sense of belonging



The pitfalls of 'adulthood'

When 'knowing too much'
equals 'not knowing enough'

- 'I know what they want'
- 'I know what works'
- 'I know what's wrong with kids today'

hey introvert

Hi, I finished my free trial of
adulthood & I'm no longer
interested so I wanna cancel my
subscription. Is there a manager
I can speak to?

I can speak to?

★

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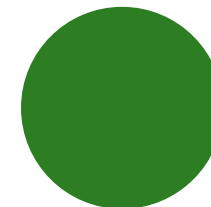
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OPERATOR

EMERGENCY
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- It's not JUST about
 - taking their ideas and ignoring them...
 - Caring for their emotions...
 - Involving them in activities...
- It is about
 - Valued engagement which shapes the program, activity, ministry and culture of the Church...
 - In a way in which the child is not seen as a leader of the future, but....
 - As the partner, NOW



Consider the whole child



Engaging the
resource

**"How much to hire a
church singing
group?"**

"You mean a choir?"

**"Fine, how much to
acquire a church
singing group?"**



Debriefing questions

Debriefing questions

- *How are you? What is happening for you right now?*
- *Would you like to talk about what happened in the meeting?*
- *What worked well?*
- *What was challenging?*
- *Is there anything you might do differently next time?*
- *That you are impacted by this, what does this say about what is important to you?*
- *What would support you right now?*

Diversity is having a seat
at the table, inclusion is
having a voice, and
belonging is having that
voice be heard.

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