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## Overview

The importance of participation and the involvement of young people are some of the values which youth workers are expected to know about and to apply in practice. Encouraging young people to take part and become involved in advocacy supports the development of young people's skills and confidence.

This standard is about supporting young people to develop their communication skills to represent their views and values and those of their peers, to others. It also includes identifying what the needs and interests of individuals or groups of young people are and presenting their needs and interests accurately and fairly.

This standard is for youth workers who communicate and act on behalf of young people, and/or who encourage young people to represent themselves.

This standard is suitable for all youth work practitioners.

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## Performance criteria

- You must be able to:*
1. choose models of advocacy to use with young people
  2. agree with young people the key issues they wish to address through advocacy, the desired outcomes and the information requirements
  3. assist young people to engage with appropriate people, including decision makers
  4. discuss and agree with young people opportunities to participate and to represent themselves
  5. assist young people to collect sufficient and valid information to enable them to support and present their views and interests
  6. agree with young people how to tailor their presentation of their views and interests to different audiences
  7. assist young people with planning what they want to communicate
  8. encourage young people to represent themselves and help them to develop strategies to cope with any constraints or barriers they face in doing this
  9. review available information about the needs of young people and collect additional information so that you can advocate on their behalf where necessary
  10. present the interests of young people to the audience, listen to the response of others and offer constructive feedback
  11. record and maintain records of the information presented and the actions taken
  12. review the outcomes of the representations with young people, and agree appropriate consequent actions
  13. comply with relevant codes of practice, guidelines and ethical requirements and work in line with youth work values

## Knowledge and understanding

*You need to know and understand:*

1. your role and responsibilities within the advocacy of young people's views and interests
2. models, methods and techniques of advocacy
3. typical circumstances where young people may need advocacy
4. factors affecting the ability of young people to participate and represent themselves
5. methods of assessing the maturity, skills and confidence of young people relevant to presenting their views and interests
6. the importance of establishing realistic goals for the outcome of representations
7. how to agree the advocacy needed with and for young people including the goals, information needed and how to present the case
8. the range of situations where representation may take place, and the factors to consider in preparing for these
9. who to contact in order to pursue the interests of young people
10. the type of information needed and how to obtain additional information to ensure accurate and fair advocacy
11. the importance of preparation when presenting views and arguments, the needs and expectations of the audience, and methods of achieving this
12. the difference between decision makers and those who influence the decision-making process, and the importance of each
13. communication skills appropriate to presenting views and interests
14. typical issues and areas of concern raised through advocacy and ways to resolve them
15. how to provide feedback and review the outcomes of advocacy with young people
16. how to take any required action following the advocacy representation
17. legal, organisational and ethical codes of practice, guidelines and requirements relevant to youth work and your own role
18. the values and principles underpinning youth work in relation to the requirements of this standard

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