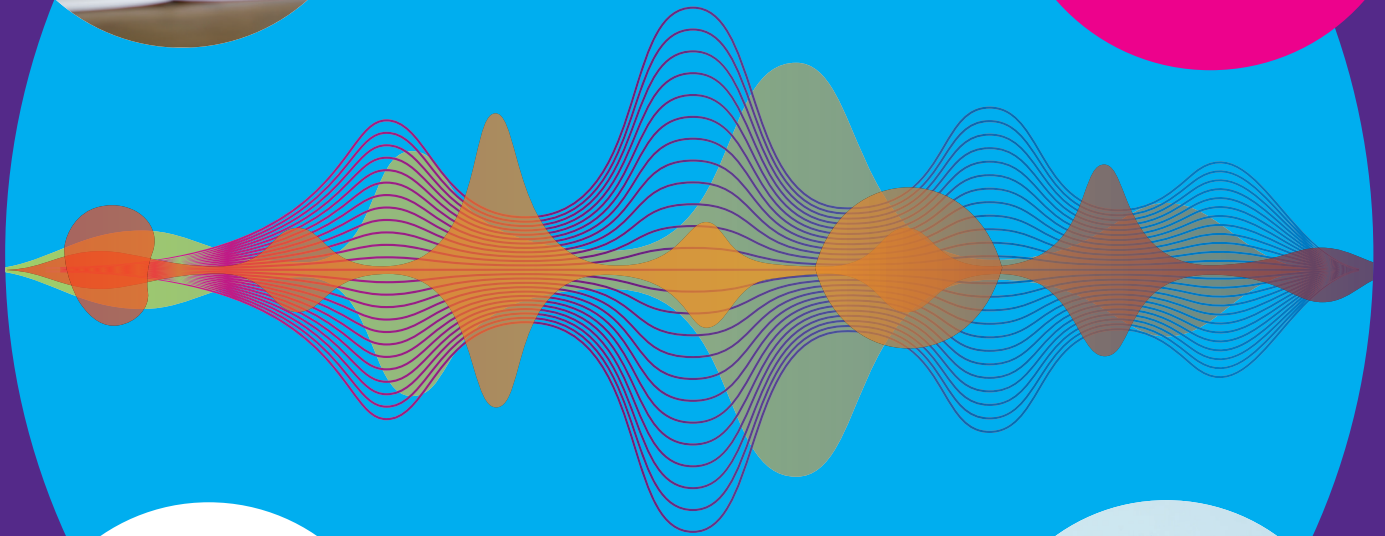




GETTING OUR VOICES HEARD

Identifying the best approaches for people with a learning disability to influence adult safeguarding and associated policy and legislation



SAFEGUARDING YOU, SAFEGUARDING ME



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Identify



Explore

Recommend

Safeguarding You, Safeguarding Me! Executive Summary



An **executive summary** pulls together important information from a report so you can quickly know what it says.



The National Lottery Community Fund and Disability Research on Independent Living & Learning gave money to:

- Queens University
- Association for Real Change Northern Ireland
- and Compass Advocacy Network.



This money was used by us to find out how people with a learning disability and support organisations can affect what safeguarding policies look like in the United Kingdom – England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales



Safeguarding means protecting the health, well-being and human rights of people.

Policies are a set of ideas or plans that are used as a basis for making decisions, especially in politics, economics, or business.

Our aims



The aim of this project was to find the best way to get the voices of people with a learning difficulty heard by people making policies in the United Kingdom.

To do this, we wanted to:



1. Find out what is being done to make sure people with a learning disability have their voices heard.

This included what was being done by:

- people with a learning disability
- support organisations
- people who make policies.



2. Find out what has worked well in different parts of the United Kingdom.



3. Find out what we can learn from what has worked and what has not worked.

Our plan



Our plan of action had five parts:



1. Read about different safeguarding policies and ask questions

What do they say? How they are similar? How they are different? What have other people said about them?



2. Get peer researchers

Peer researchers are people who have lived experience of the issue being studied. Our peer researchers all have a learning disability.

Research is finding facts and having new ideas about what they mean.



We planned that our peer researchers would:

- take part in training to help them understand their role as a peer researcher
- think of interview questions and interview people who make safeguarding policies
- look at what was said in interviews and pick out important information.



3. Interviews

Interview people from England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales who:

- make policies
- speak up for people with a learning disability
- are politicians.



4. Good examples

Find good examples across the United Kingdom where people have changed safeguarding policies by getting their voices heard.



5. Online questionnaire

An online questionnaire was created and shared with lots of different people.

Our team



The organisations that led this project were:

- Queen's University
- Association for Real Change Northern Ireland
- Praxis Care
- Compass Advocacy Network.



Queen's University team:

- Dr. Lorna Montgomery
- Dr. Berni Kelly
- Professor Gavin Davidson



Association for Real Change team:

- Leslie-Anne Newton
- Louise Hughes



Praxis Care:

- Lisamarie Wood



Compass Advocacy Network team:

- Linda McKendry

Our project team



Lorna Montgomery



Berni Kelly



Gavin Davidson



Leslie-Anne
Newton



Louise Hughes

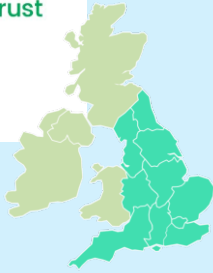


Lisamarie Wood



Linda McKendry

ann craft trust
acting against abuse



We worked with 4 other organisations from the United Kingdom, including:

Ann Craft Trust in England

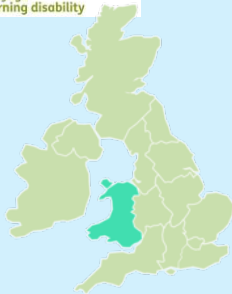


The Richmond Fellowship
Scotland

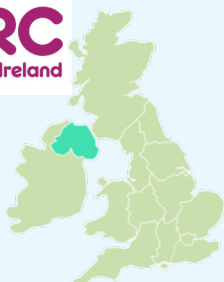


Richmond Fellowship in Scotland

mencap cymru
Llais anabledd dysgu
The voice of learning disability



Mencap Cymru in Wales



Association for Real Change in
Northern Ireland

Our advisory group



Experts from across the United Kingdom were asked to help us by coming together to give us advice.

This included 2 experts by experience who have a learning disability called Catherine and Jonathan.



Professor Jill Manthorpe



Joan Maughan



Joyce McKee



Agnes Lunny



Aine Morrison



Professor John Williams

Peer research group



We wanted to have people with a learning disability helping us throughout the project.

We did this by recruiting six Peer Researchers who have a learning disability.



Joseph



Ursula



Leanne



Alex



Ethan



Jadzia

What we found out



We want to tell you what we found out from our reading, interviews, meetings and questionnaires.



1. Similar problems were found all over the United Kingdom

Safeguarding policies need to:

- balance safeguarding with the rights and independence of people
- give clearer definitions
- look at difficulties using policies
- include support and opportunity for people to have their voice heard.



2. Not many people take part when people making policies ask them for their views and ideas.

When people with a learning disability and the organisations that support them did respond they normally helped to make important changes in the policies.



3. Policy makers want to hear from people with a learning disability

All those interviewed who make policies wanted people with a learning disability to be involved. They found face to face meetings most helpful.



4. Personal stories from people with a learning disability are the best way for people making policies to understand what they need to change or add to their policies.

Bringing together the real stories of people is even more powerful.



5. Through networking and training, organisations can have a stronger voice.



6. People with a learning disability, their families and supporting organisations are powerful. They can make change happen.

Recommendations



Recommendations are ideas about how to make something better.



People making policies should talk and listen to people with a learning disability.

A **policy** is a set of ideas or plans that is used as a basis for making decisions, especially in politics, economics, or business.



People who make policies should take more time to talk with people with a learning disability to make sure their voice is heard.

People need support to get involved. This can take time.

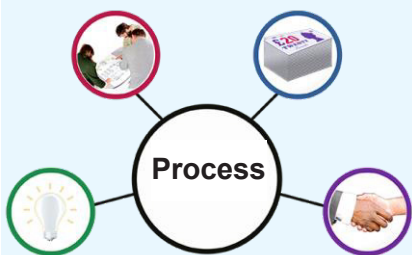


Here are our ideas about how people with a learning disability can get their voices heard by people who make policies.



People who make policies should:

Help people with a learning disability understand the policy issues



Help people with a learning disability understand the political process. This is how things get done.



Have a person in politics to stand up for people with a learning disability.

Include people with a learning disability at all stages



Involve people with a learning disability from the start.

Have regular meetings to keep everyone involved.

Let people with a learning disability know what is going to happen with their views and ideas.

Make sure communication is understood



Make information easy to read.

Make sure the Easy Read document has all the important information in it.



Work with organisations and experts to help people with a learning disability get involved.



Make sure there is enough time.

Face to face meetings work better than written information.

Use different types of evidence



Find out what people with a learning disability think about old policies.

Think about what was good and what could be made better.

Make changes to policies before people with a learning disability get hurt.



People with a learning disability and supporting organisations should:

Build relationships and connect with other people



Organisations and people with a learning disability need to work together to make change happen.

This can take time but we are stronger together.



Think about people with a learning disability who live in the countryside.

Make sure they have the chance to give their ideas.

Small groups should work with bigger groups.

Have a clear message using different types of information



Know what you want to say and say it clearly.



Support people with a learning disability to tell their stories.

Explain how policies and laws will affect the lives of people with a learning disability.

Check that policies are helping to keep people with a learning disability safe.



Use research to add strength to your story.

Use examples of how projects have changed people's lives for the better.

Design messages to get our voices heard for different audiences



Give suggestions to change things.

Explain why they would work.



Make sure information is ready for different audiences.

For example, policy makers may need more detailed information.

Think of what you want to say and who you are saying it to.

Get involved at different stages of policy making



Join in campaigns and try to take part in the activity.

Try to sit on advisory groups.



Use news stories to make people listen more.

For example when someone has been hurt and not kept safe.



Talk to lots of different people and keep trying different ways to be heard.

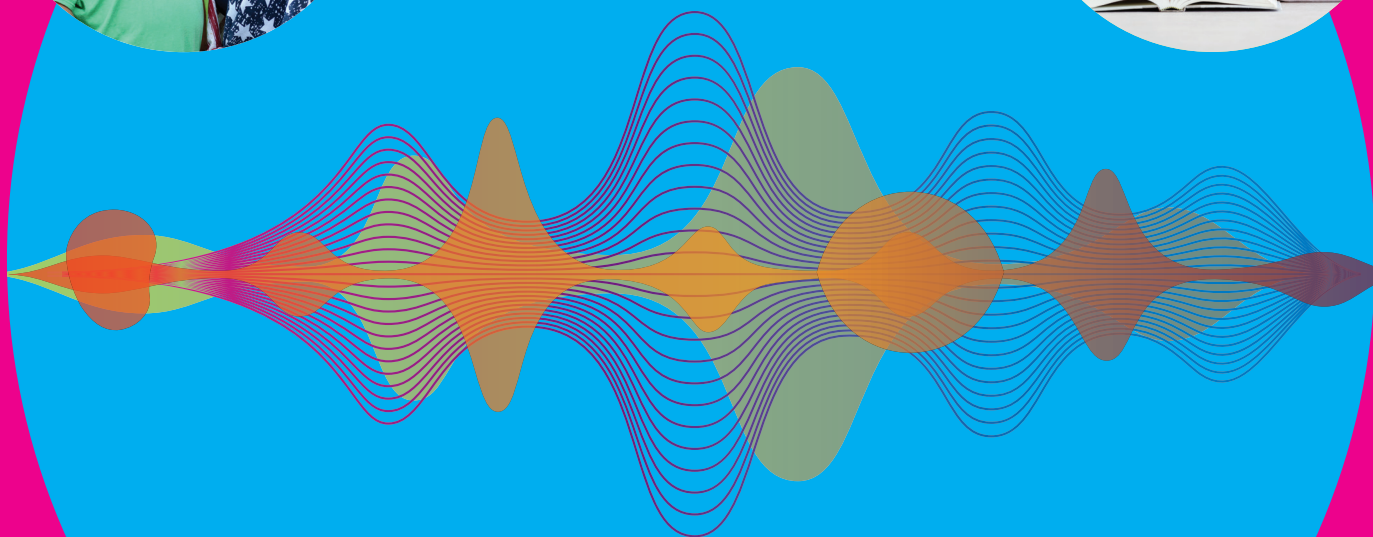
Support people with a learning disability to join in



Help people with a learning disability to learn skills so that they can get involved in making policies.



CONTACT US



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