

How to Evaluate Activities with Children and Youth

Do you stop every now and then and think about the purpose of your activity? What you do well and why? Or what you do not do well and what you can change about it? This article is a brief summary of the roundtable held on 24 November 2021. 14 representatives of leading Czech youth organisations and evaluators discussed how to evaluate and plan activities with children and youth. Participants experienced the principles of participatory evaluation first-hand, reflected on examples of use, the benefits of participatory approaches and how to apply or reinforce these principles in their organisations.

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Evaluation is the systematic examination of the quality or value of a programme or its individual parts. Participatory evaluation implies the full and active involvement of stakeholders throughout the evaluation process. Stakeholders are thus directly involved in setting up the evaluation, collecting data, analysing the outputs, communicating key messages and/or further decision-making. The focus is not only on evaluation, but also on improving stakeholders' understanding of evaluation principles, improving their involvement in evaluation processes and increasing the use of the results. Evaluation thus becomes an integral part of the organisation – motivating those involved to develop joint activities and contributing to new skills and changes in thinking.

In the framework of the roundtable, the following examples of participatory / emancipatory involvement of children and youth were mentioned, among others:

- Children themselves determine the evaluation criteria, i.e. what they want to learn.
- After training, children themselves conduct interviews with different actors and evaluate these interviews together (e.g. in the framework of the Most Significant Change technique).
- Children are involved with other key actors in an evaluation workshop where the main questions and/or preliminary conclusions from the evaluation and/or recommendations are discussed. They thus have the opportunity to directly influence and also understand the consequent steps.

During the roundtable, participants suggested a number of innovations. In conclusion, they underlined the importance of more evaluation within the organisation and more communication of its impact externally.

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For further information and invitations, please visit www.youth-impact.eu.

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Inka Bartošová (Píbilová) www.evaluate.com – concept, theoretical background

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