

HOW TO DO **The** **CRWIAs** **Right** **Way**



A young people's guide to doing
Children's Rights and Wellbeing
Impact Assessments.

The Right Way is a project from SYP to support and challenge
decision makers in Scotland to meaningfully engage young
people in their work.

How to do CRWIAs The Right Way is a young people's guide to
help decision makers create ambitious CRWIAs that champion
and advance young people's rights in Scotland.

Introduction to CRWIAs

What is a CRWIA?

CRWIA stands for Children's Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment. CRWIAs are a proactive tool through which decision makers can assess and predict the potential impacts that a proposed policy, decision or project might have on children and young people's rights.

What is a CRIE?

CRIE stands for Children's Rights Impact Evaluation. CRIEs are an evaluation tool through which decision makers can evaluate the actual impacts and effects that a policy, decision or project had on children and young people's rights in Scotland.

Why are they important?

CRWIAs are a proactive tool that can help identify changes that can be made to improve potential policies, decisions or projects to ensure they better uphold and advance young people's rights. When done correctly, this will lead to better, more ambitious policies, decisions and projects as young people's voices and lived experiences will be present throughout.

Following the passing of the UNCRC (Incorporation) (Scotland) Act 2024, it is now mandatory for the Scottish Ministers to complete CRWIAs. However, it is good practice for organisations and charities to do so too.

How to use this guide?

How to do CRWIAs The Right Way is a guide to support and challenge decision makers completing CRWIAs to do so in a way that advances young people's rights in Scotland. It is not intended to be a practical step-by-step guide to carrying out your CRWIA but rather a tool to support you to make your CRWIA process more ambitious and ensure that young people's voices and lived experiences are heard throughout.

6 STEPS TO DOING CRWIAs

The Right Way

Start your CRWIA process early.

START

NOW

Involve young people in all stages of the CRWIA process.

Consider who is not in the room.

Clearly explain your methodology and findings.

Publish an accessible and youth-friendly CRWIA.

Continue to monitor your CRWIA and involve young people in your CRIE process.

keep it

up!

📍 Start your CRWIA process early

The UN Committee on the Rights of the Child stated in General Comment No. 14 that CRWIAs should be started as “*early as possible*” and result in “*recommendations for amendments, alternatives and improvements.*”

One young person in The Right Way project said that they expect CRWIAs to be “*actively used in the policy making process.*” Starting the CRWIA process early is essential to this as it ensures there is time for critical thinking, reflection and action to enhance the positive impact that the policy, decision or project can have on young people’s rights.

It will actually make your life easier if you do this right.

Young Rights Champion

CRWIAs are often seen as something that has the potential to delay

policy and decision making processes and a potential political barrier to getting a policy passed. However, if the CRWIA process is started early, then it can be a really helpful tool to inform and enhance policy negotiations and development.

📍 Involve young people in all stages of the CRWIA process

One young person told The Right Way project, “*if you want to gather young people’s views as part of a wider meaningful engagement process, then they should be brought in at the very beginning to be part of the CRWIA process too.*”

This means planning participation from the start and actively involving young people in every stage of the CRWIA process from the initial screening assessment to decide if you need to complete a CRWIA through to the review of evidence, assessment of impacts and ongoing monitoring. This will help address the power imbalance that exists between the person completing the CRWIA and the young people that the policy, decision or project will impact.

There is a difference between using consultation as examples in a CRWIA and meaningfully involving children and young people in the specific CRWIA process.

Young Rights Champion

The Children and Young People’s Commissioner for Scotland has produced a helpful guide to meaningfully involving children and young people in the CRWIA process [here](#).

Consider who is not in the room

When asked about potential pitfalls or tokenistic practices that they see in CRWIAs, young people told The Right Way project that often CRWIAs don't recognise that children and young people's experiences are all different.

Completing your CRWIA will require a complex balancing act to recognise that a policy, decision or project may impact UNCRC rights differently for different young people depending on their lived experiences and circumstances.

In order to get this balancing act right, you must consider how young people's views and lived experiences are being heard throughout your CRWIA process and which young people are not being included. This is often particularly the case for seldom-heard groups of young people whose views are not always heard by decision makers or drowned out by the views of other groups. You can read more about barriers to participation experienced by seldom-heard groups in Part 3 of the UNCRC Article 12 training on www.therightway.scot.

Clearly show your methodology and reasoning

Transparency around methodology is essential to highlight any potential biases from decision makers and address power imbalances. Your CRWIA should clearly set out how young people were involved and how the views they shared influenced the CRWIA as *“there is often a false impression that children and young people have been involved in the CRWIA process right the way through, when actually the person writing the CRWIA is just using examples from previous engagements.”*

Young people also want to see decision makers clearly setting out how they arrived at the assessed 'positive, negative, or neutral' impacts including how they considered long-term knock-on impacts and who was involved in deciding this.

We need to strive for more than just 'I am not having an impact on young people's rights' and move towards 'this policy, decision, work will have a positive impact on young people's rights.

Young Rights Champion

Young people were skeptical of 'neutral' impacts, particularly in broad-ranging policy decisions. The CRWIA process, if started early enough, should allow for time to consider how to elevate a 'neutral' impact into a 'positive' impact for children and young people in Scotland.

Publish an accessible, youth-friendly CRWIA

Young people told The Right Way project that “CRWIAs are not accessible for the people” and publishing an accessible, youth-friendly version is “essential for accountability and breaking down the power imbalance that exists between the person completing the CRWIA and the young people the policy or decision is impacting.”

Governments have a responsibility under the UNCRC to actively work to ensure that children and young people know about their rights. Creating youth-friendly CRWIAs is an important way to ensure that young people know about how proposed policies or decisions will impact their rights.

These versions should be published and shared in easily accessible locations.

“CRWIAs are often a process that happens behind closed doors so it is essential that we have accountability measures in place and publication is key for this.”

Young Rights Champion

Continue to monitor your CRWIA and involve young people in your CRIE process.

The European Network of Ombudspersons for Children’s CRWIA guide ([here](#)) makes clear that CRWIAs and CRIEs should be a continuous process of reflection, assessment and evaluation of impacts.

Your CRWIA should be closely monitored throughout the policy or project development process and updated if the potential impacts on young people change. It is essential that young people are involved in this monitoring as they are the ones experiencing the impacts of the policy, decision or project.

“If we carried out our own evaluation, we would probably find a different impact.”

Young Rights Champion

Young people told us that their involvement in the monitoring of the CRWIA and the creation of the CRIE was important as they can highlight where things are working and not working for young people.

Involving young people in this stage will help ensure that future policies, decisions and projects learn from the impacts, can better suit the needs of young people and advance children and young people’s rights in Scotland.

Notes



Visit therightway.scot for more participation resources.

If you would like to find out more, get in touch with SYP at hello@syp.org.uk.

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