



OUR HEARINGS, OUR VOICE EVALUATION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

OHoV



Children's Hearings
Improvement Partnership

Background

Our Hearings, Our Voice (OHOV) are a Board of nine care-experienced young people aged 15 to 20 years old. OHOV was set up in 2018 so that young people who had been to Children's Hearings could have a say in how the Children's Hearings System works.

We are researchers who work in the Hearings System. We were asked to find out:

- What OHOV has achieved so far?
- Has what OHOV has done been useful for people and organisations working in the Hearings System?
- What has helped OHOV to work well and what might have got in the way of them being able to do what they needed to do?
- To think about the future of OHOV.

To do this we spoke to the young people who are the OHOV Board Members, senior staff from the Scottish Children's Reporter Administration (SCRA) and Children's Hearings Scotland (CHS) and OHOV project staff. We also sent a survey to people in other organisations who work with the Hearings System and looked at the evaluation forms that the members of OHOV fill in after their Board meetings.



The story so far

OHOV have been involved in lots of projects and have created a Zine and 40 Calls to Action – what they think needs to change and get better within the Hearings System. Seventy-five people replied to our survey, and people who had worked with OHOV or had seen what they had done were really positive about how good the work was and how useful they had found it. The young people had also benefited from being part of OHOV and spoke about how it had helped with their confidence and team-working skills.

Learning From Phase 1 of OHOV

Things that have helped OHOV to be successful:

***"The young people involved. SCRA & CHS commitment.
All those supporting the young people."
(Survey Respondent – CELCIS)***

- The project staff, and all the volunteers at the Board meetings, who were really enthusiastic and supported the project and the young people.



- Organisations, like SCRA and CHS, as they supported OHOV, and so did other places OHOV worked with on specific pieces of work like Napier and Edinburgh Universities and the Verbatim Formula.
- Relationships mattered, between the young people and the OHOV staff and also between the young people and each other.
- The fact that OHOV are independent.
- The fact that the OHOV Board meetings are fun and that the young people know when they will happen and what they will involve.
- The young people's commitment to OHOV, especially during Covid 19.

What didn't work so well:

- There were things that stopped the OHOV Project Lead being able to do the job they needed to.
- There were some problems with relationships between staff in some of the organisations involved in the Hearings System.
- Some people thought certain organisations didn't support OHOV as much as they needed to.
- Some people weren't clear about how they could work with OHOV which caused problems.
- Covid 19 made it more difficult for the young people to meet each other and the people who wanted to work with them.



Phase 2 of OHOV – It's Future Direction

Lots of the people we spoke to were really positive about the future of OHOV, though they said that we needed to think about what this would look like.

Thirty-five people replied to the part of the survey about the future of OHOV and 69% of them said they would ask OHOV to do work for them. Though some organisations also wanted to find out more about OHOV as they didn't think people were as aware of them and their work as they should be.

***"Just not clear what the specific aims of OHOV are."
(Survey Respondent – CHS)***

***"I'd like to hear more. On the ground we are not that aware of OHOV and would like to learn more."
(Survey Respondent - SCRA)***

The Promise is a really important part of changing and making the Hearings System better for children and young people and a lot of people thought OHOV could be part of this. Thirty-one people replied to the part of the survey about The Promise and 74% of them thought that OHOV



had a part to play in making sure changes happened in the Children's Hearings System so that it could Keep The Promise. Only about half of them (52%) thought OHOV could help the organisation they worked for Keep The Promise though. People who said it could help their organisation said:

"By sense checking our work - helping us be better corporate parents." (Survey Respondent – Education Scotland)

"Linking in with third sector organisations would help us regarding The Promise." (Survey Respondent – East Ayrshire Advocacy Services)

People thought that some changes would be needed for OHOV to achieve more in the future.

Some of the things people thought we needed to think about were:

- How many staff worked with OHOV and what skills they needed to have
- How more young people could take part in OHOV
- How OHOV works and what it does



- How OHOV works with different people that are part of the Hearings System
- How OHOV could be part of all the work that will be happening because of The Promise

Conclusion

OHOV and the people they work with are ready to think about what they can do next. They might need more support to do this and be as good as they can be.

OHOV has made a difference through their 40 Calls to Action, which was written by young people who had been to Hearings, and SCRA and CHS have listened and made changes because of this.

"They should be incredibly proud of the work they have done, particularly the Zine and the Quacks to Action. They have had an impact at that level and they should be rightly proud of that."

(Interview – CHS)



Lots of things have changed since OHOV began in 2018. Now we have The Promise and this means things are changing in the Children's Hearings System and the people who work in it are thinking about what this means for what they do. OHOV could have an important part to play in this work but we need to think about how they can do this.

We need to think about what OHOV are going to do and why, what they want to achieve, and then make sure that they get the support to do this.

Next Steps...

To help all the people involved in the Children's Hearings System, as well as the young people and staff who are part of OHOV, think about what OHOV needs to do now we have a list of questions that we think need to be answered:

Questions for the Children's Hearing Improvement Partnership (CHIP) to think about:

- How should the work of OHOV fit in with The Promise?
- What model is right for OHOV to be able to do this work?



What else do we need to think about?

- How do we support OHOV to take on their role within The Promise?
- How can OHOV and organisations in the Hearings System work with each other so that OHOV can make sure people do what they say they are going to and they can then let OHOV know how they are doing?
- Do OHOV have to prioritise who they work with and how do they do that?
- What staff do the OHOV project team need to have?
- Do OHOV need to find new Board members?
- What could an OHOV advisor role look like?
- Could there be the chance of some paid work with OHOV when Board members are too old to be part of OHOV anymore?
- How will OHOV meetings take place in future? Will they all be in person, online, or a mix of the two?

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If you would like more information about the evaluation please contact Kirsty.Deacon@scra.gov.uk



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