



ENSURING CHILD SAFEGUARDING

& GUIDANCE FOR KIDS TAKEOVERS

DECIDING TO DO A KIDS TAKEOVER

It is essential that the kids takeover initiative contributes positively to the realization of children's rights, that it is fun, and that it does not have any unintended negative consequences for children or adults who are directly involved or who are impacted in some other way. With this in mind, the initiative should be based on a child rights approach and comply with international good practice requirements for child participation.

Before committing to a kids takeover (and to avoid it backfiring with negative consequences), first consider whether this initiative can be implemented in your particular context in a way that is consistent with a child rights approach. You may find it useful to think through these guiding questions:

- Does this initiative proactively further the realization of children's rights as set out in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international human rights instruments?
- Does this initiative help build the capacity of duty-bearers to fulfil their obligations?
- Does this initiative help build the capacity of children as rights-holders to claim their rights?
- Does this initiative contribute positively to – and avoid harming – children's right to life, survival and development?
- Is this initiative discriminating against any individual or groups of children?
- Is this initiative in children's best interests?
- Are family and community stakeholders involved?
- Are all children able to participate in an ethical and meaningful way?
- Is the initiative being adequately, sustainably and ethically resourced by those responsible?

See the [UNICEF Child Rights Education Toolkit](#), Chapter 2, for more details on each of these guiding questions.

If you decide that your local context is not yet ready for a kids takeover initiative, possibly for political, social or cultural reasons, then it may be worth discussing with colleagues what longer-term preparation would be needed for this to take place next year.

YOU'VE DECIDED ON A KIDS TAKEOVER

If you decide a kids takeover can be implemented in your context with a child rights approach, then it also needs to comply with the more specific international good practice requirements for child participation. In other words, child participation must be:

- Transparent and informative
- Respectful
- Inclusive
- Safe and sensitive to risk
- Accountable
- Voluntary
- Relevant
- Supported by training
- Facilitated with child-friendly environments & working methods

In order to ensure that children are listened to in the kids takeover initiative, action will be needed to ensure that they have the following:

- **Space:** They must be given a safe and inclusive space in which to form and express their views. Efforts must be made to reach out to all children, including the most marginalized.
- **Voice:** Children must be supported and helped to express their views. They need the opportunity, time and information with which help them form views. They are entitled to express views not just on the obvious issues of childcare, child protection, school, play and health, but also, for example, public planning, transport, social protection, justice, environmental health, housing, and social inclusion.
- **Audience:** When children express views, they must be listened to respectfully. They need to be confident that the relevant adults are prepared to take them seriously.
- **Influence:** Children's views must be acted on. This does not mean that everything they propose must happen, but it must be given proper consideration.

See the [UNICEF Child Friendly Cities and Communities Initiative Toolkit for National Committees](#), Chapter 5 and Tool 13, for more details on each of these aspects of ethical, safe and meaningful child participation.

YOU'VE DECIDED ON A KIDS TAKEOVER

Kids takeovers are fun, but it must leave children feeling empowered and motivated to engage further with UNICEF and child rights, not feeling that they have been used for a publicity stunt and that their views will be ignored after the stroke of midnight on 20 November. Likewise, adults need to be fully prepared so they are able to: listen to, and seriously consider, children's views as expressed during the takeover; experience children's participation as a positive, non-threatening partnership resulting in useful outcomes; and consider ways to expand opportunities for children's participation on an ongoing basis, beyond the 24 hours of World Children's Day...because if we get this right, every day will be World Children's Day.



QUESTIONS TO HELP PLAN A TAKEOVER

1. How can children themselves be ethically, safely and meaningfully involved in the planning?
2. What kind of roles or institutions would it be appropriate for children to 'takeover' for the day, and how many?
3. How can this initiative build on, and strengthen, existing communication and advocacy initiatives, programmes or platform initiatives like Rights Respecting Schools, Child Friendly Schools and Child Friendly Cities and Communities?
4. Who will provide the main support for the schools and institutions – UNICEF directly, or via NGO or other partner(s)?
5. What preparation and support is needed for the child and adult stakeholders involved?
6. What kind of activities will the takeover involve?
7. What are the potential risks (to children, adults and UNICEF) and how can these be minimized and prepared for?
8. What will happen to the ideas and suggestions raised by children during the takeover?
9. How can this initiative lead to the development and strengthening of ongoing, sustainable structures and mechanisms for rights-based child participation in schools and institutions in the medium and longer term?
10. How can lessons learned be captured and shared for next year?

SAFEGUARDING
CONSIDERATIONS FOR
WORLD CHILDREN'S DAY

SAFEGUARDING CONSIDERATIONS

World Children's Day offers an opportunity to engage children in meaningful and empowering activities. In order for these experiences to be positive for children the following safeguarding issues should be considered.

Please note any assessment of risk needs to take into account additional vulnerabilities that children may have. For example, where children are not fluent in the main spoken language of the activity; where children have disabilities; where children have suffered trauma; or where children are in the process of confirming their refugee status.

Activities

- Think about the kind of activities you would like to engage children in for WCD.
- Are there risks inherent in the activity itself? We often instinctively think about physical risks but do not consider potential emotional harm to children. It is imperative that we try to think about the process from the child's point of view.
- Could children be intimidated or overwhelmed by what we are inviting them to take part in?
- What kind of additional support might they need to engage in the activity safely?
- What preparation do they need to feel safe and empowered to take part?
- What information has been shared with them about the activities?
- How will they let supervising adults know if they want to stop participating at any stage?
- What length of time is appropriate for the age of the children involved and therefore what breaks should children have?
- How will break or unstructured times be managed and supervised?

SAFEGUARDING CONSIDERATIONS

People

All of the people involved in the activity need to be considered in planning:

Who will supervise the children throughout the activity? – In particular will this be the child's usual carers (e.g. parents, teachers) or will adults from host organisations take full responsibility for them during the activity? In these circumstances adults should not be left alone with children at any point and activities should take place in settings where people's actions can be seen and heard. It is also important that any adults involved understand this experience needs to be positive and affirming for the children and their own conduct and behaviour should promote this throughout.

When does your duty of care start and end for the day? - Be clear about where children are handed over by their usual carers so that there is no risk of children being left unsupervised at any point.

What safeguarding checks have they undertaken? – If, as part of the activity, adults are taking responsibility for children without their usual parent or carer present you may have specific background checks that you are required or able to carry out. They may not be eligible for police checks as the event is a one-off event but they could still sign up to safeguarding expectations.

What safeguarding standards have they signed up to? – Some partner organisations will have their own safeguarding policies (for example schools) and it is often more appropriate to ask to see this and confirm that everyone involved has signed up to it rather than imposing your own UNICEF office version.

What role will parents/carers/chaperones have? – Be clear about their role during activities and ensure they do not end up being given responsibility for other people's children where this has not been pre-arranged. If they are expected to be present during the activity, ensure they are aware of this and remain throughout.

What do you need to know about the children in advance including medical, allergy and disabilities information, special requirements to facilitate participation, consent, contact details? – It is imperative that this information is gathered and available on a need-to-know basis should it be required to support a child, particularly if the parent/carer will not be present throughout. It must also be stored securely.

What will be the process for managing any concerns? – In any engagement with children an issue could arise that needs an immediate or follow-up response, and adults responsible for children during activities must know who to tell if they have any safeguarding concerns about a child during the activity.

Who will act in the role of designated safeguarding person for the day? - In order to ensure any issues are dealt with appropriately one person needs to be identified as the safeguarding point of contact for the duration of the activity. This could be a UNICEF staff member or volunteer or someone from the host organisation.

How will everyone know, including the children and their carers, who the Designated Safeguarding Person is? – Ensure everyone involved is aware of who to go to if they need support at any time.

SAFEGUARDING CONSIDERATIONS

Places

- **Is there anything inherent within the venue that could present a risk to children?** This could include the general layout of the building or where building work is going on that needs to be avoided. This is something that host organisations should be able to confirm.
- **Are there any accessibility issues particularly for children with disabilities?** This needs to be considered in advance. In particular consider whether there are adequate facilities for disabled children to have support with personal care if they need it, in a dignified context.
- **Do the general public have access to the activity?** – Be aware of any access the general public may have to children involved in the activity whilst it is taking place and how this will be managed.
- **Will children need to move between venues during the activity?** If so, what arrangements are in place for transportation? Children should never be sent in taxis unaccompanied. What information do parents/carers need to have in order to chaperone children safely?
- **Do you have a lost child policy?** What are the steps that need to be taken if a child goes missing?
- **Who else in the building needs to be aware that children will be present?** – Other adults present in the organisation hosting the activity need to be reminded that their general conduct should take into account the presence of children, who the Designated Safeguarding Person is and how to contact them should they have any concerns.

SAFEGUARDING CONSIDERATIONS

Data (Including Images and Contact Information)

Who has what information on the children? – Any information that can identify a child needs to be handled in a way that respects a child’s right to privacy. Any personal information about children should only be collected for the specific purpose for which it is required; should be limited to the adults that need to have access to it; should be stored securely; and should be deleted after its purpose has ended.

What consent do you have around use of images and stories?

What do children understand about this consent? – How can you explain in child-friendly language how their data will be used?

What has been agreed with third parties involved about ownership and use of these images? – It needs to be clear with photographers, videographers and media companies how children’s images will be used after the activity has finished.

How will children’s assets be stored safely? – This should form part of general safeguarding policies but also needs to be considered by third parties who may be hosting activities or involved in collecting assets.

What social media involvement is there? – Where children’s images will be shared across social media this is likely to involve them having huge exposure. Children and their carers must be aware of this prior to the activity taking place and no other identifying details should accompany these images.

How will you protect children’s personal social media account details? - All social media contact should be managed through professional accounts where adults’ behaviour is transparent and open to at least one other colleague. Personal social media details should not be shared, and one-to-one contact between UNICEF personnel and children should not take place.