

Global Consultation Facilitator's Overview

This Facilitator's Overview outlines the importance of the questionnaire, how children and young people can participate, and the ethical guidelines for supporting their participation.

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What is the Day of General Discussion (DGD) on Children in Alternative Care?

The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child is a group of 18 experts that check if governments around the world are making sure children and young people experience their human rights. The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child holds Days of General Discussion (DGDs) to gain a deeper understanding of what the CRC means for children and their rights, focusing on specific articles or topics. In September 2021, the Committee DGD will hold the next DGD about 'children in alternative care'.

Alternative care is when children and young people do not live with their parents and are in the care of other adults, who can be relatives or members of the community and the social services.

Children's human rights are enshrined in the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)**. The CRC has been around for 30 years, and is the most signed international treaty in the world. The CRC has 54 articles that cover all aspects of a child's life and set out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights that all children everywhere are entitled to. It also explains how adults and governments must work together to make sure all children can enjoy all their rights. Every child has rights, whatever their ethnicity, gender, religion, language, abilities or any other status. Read about the CRC here.

What is the Questionnaire?

Developing the questionnaire:

- Adult researchers from the International Institute for Child Rights and Development (IICRD) worked together with children and young people from the UN Day of General

Discussion Child Advisory Team and Young People's Advisory Team, who formed the Research Advisory Team. The children and young people are supported by a group of Civil Society Organizations¹.

- Children, young people and adults came together to learn more about children and young people's recommendations for strengthening alternative care globally, and generate ideas for what was most important to be included in the research process.
- The team used a child-rights based and strengths-based approach, recognizing that children and young people are experts in their own lives.

The Questionnaire:

- The questionnaire contains 15 questions and will take children and young people approximately 20-40 minutes to complete.
- There are two sets of the questionnaire: one is aimed at children under the age of 10, the second more detailed version is for older children and young people.
- The questionnaire is available in English, French, and Spanish. We would be delighted to hear from people who speak other languages, but please note that they will be responsible for translating responses.
- The questionnaire can be completed by children and young people individually and online through a link: <https://changemakersforchildren.community/DGDsurvey>.
- Alternatively, it can be administered with the support of adult support workers if children and young people require support or do not have digital access. In these circumstances, adults need to ensure that children and young people are able to answer all questions freely and without adult influence. Please refer to the flow chart.
- For children under the age of 10, it is recommended that adult support workers assist all children in filling out the forms.
- See below for a guide on how to support children and young people's participation, if they are part of a group. Please note that each child or young person needs to fill out a

¹ The group of Civil Society Organizations supporting the CAT and YAT includes: SOS Children's Villages, Family For Every Child, Lumos, Hope & Homes for Children, Save the Children, Consortium for Street Children, Child Rights Connect. The children and young people are each supported by individual organisations including: SOS Children's Villages, Iringa Development Of Youth Disabled And Children Care, Search for Justice, Lumos, Lumen Vitae, Inclusive Early Childhood Service System Project, Voice of Children, WhoCares Scotland, Youth in Care Canada, DONCEL, ENIL, Despiértate ONG, Save the Children, Amnesty International Mali, Edmund Rice/ Youth Plus+, CREATE, Metadrasi, and Railway Children Africa

questionnaire themselves (or with assistance) to have their views included in the research.

Who should use this Facilitator's Overview?

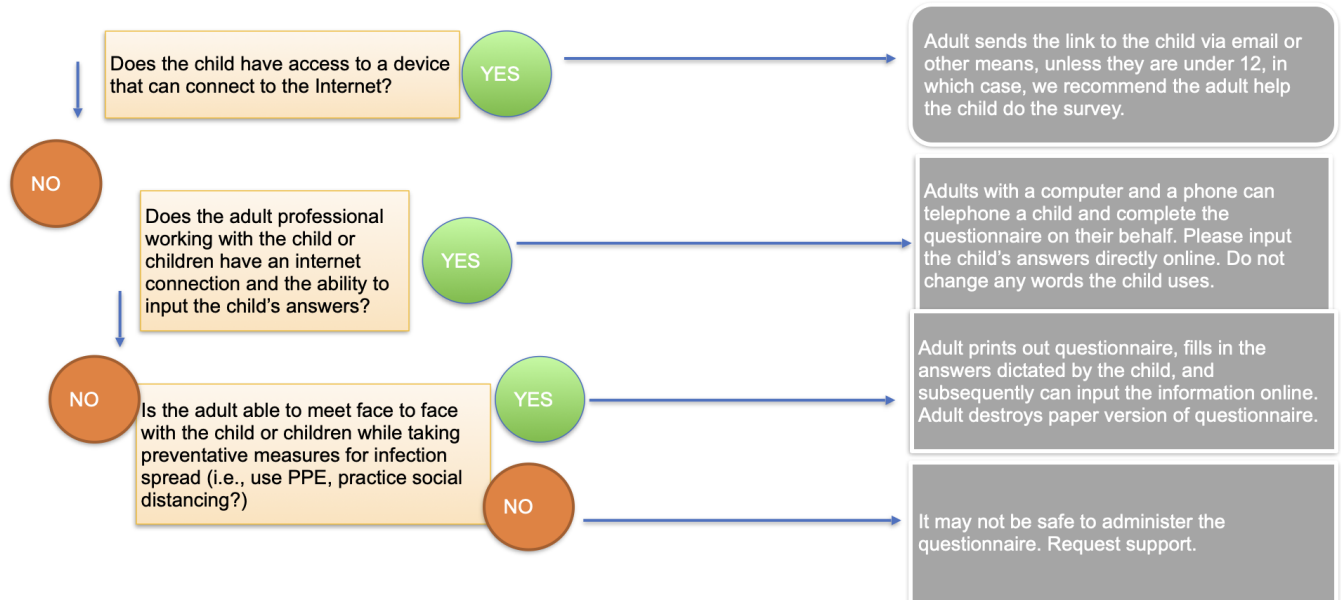
- This facilitator's overview aims to guide adult support workers in administering the questionnaire and, if needed, in assisting children and young people to complete it. It also is useful if you want to hold a group discussion beforehand
- This facilitator's guide is designed to help you prepare for facilitation and to help parents/guardians/carers and/or people who work with children understand what the global consultation is and how the children they care for or work with can be involved.
- There are many ways to support children and young people in accessing the questionnaire (see flowchart on next page).
- No matter which mode is used to bring the information to children and young people (online, paper, phone) all submissions should be inputted online: <https://changemakersforchildren.community/DGDsurvey>.

Group Discussion (Optional)

- If organizations choose, they can have a facilitator first ask the questions to children and young people in a facilitated group discussion. This will allow participants to think about the questions together before they fill in the questionnaire.
- Then, the facilitator will help each participant fill in the questionnaire (or provide them with a hard copy of the questionnaire so each participant can fill it in by themselves, and submit this on behalf of the child).

Flow-Chart: How can the Questionnaire be Completed?

Flowchart: How can adult professionals support children to complete the questionnaire?



Ethical Considerations

What happens with the answers to the questionnaire?

The findings will be written into a report, and shared with the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child for their Day of General Discussion (DGD), taking place in September 2021. The report will be written by a team of researchers with the support of a group of children and young people. The final report will be available on <https://bettercarenetwork.org/>

Voluntary Ongoing and Informed Consent²

- Read the consent statement at the beginning of the questionnaire and ask the child or young people for their consent. If needed, you can give more details or answer any questions.

² **Voluntary Ongoing and Informed Consent:** Consent is a process by which participants gain an understanding of the research and are given opportunities to ask questions. They can withdraw at any point in time. The voluntariness of consent is important because it respects human dignity and means that individuals have chosen to participate in research according to their own values, preferences and wishes.

- Please note that we do ask if they have discussed doing this questionnaire with their parents, legal guardian or carer. We are not collecting identifiable data, but it is still recommended as a good practice to ask this question.
- Emphasize that we do not expect participants to share personal experiences if they are not comfortable.
- It may be helpful to use the following wording to explain what the questionnaire is for: "A group of people from around the world have worked together with children and young people to create a set of questions about alternative care and recommendations you have. It would really helpful if you can share your thoughts and ideas by filling this in. Your responses will help organizations around the world to learn from young people's experiences, to create better alternative care for children and young people in the future."
- Inform children and young people that their views and recommendations will be collected with those of other children and young people, and shared with the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.
- It is important to note that a child/young people can withdraw their participation and stop completing the questionnaire at any stage.

Support & Resources:

- For those supporting adults administering the questionnaire, if you have any questions, please contact: emmanuel.sherwin@hopeandhomes.org or lopa.bhattacharjee@familyforeverychild.org
- For contact details of child helplines in your country, please see here: <https://www.childhelplineinternational.org/child-helplines/child-helpline-network/>
- For resources for child protection professionals, please see here: <https://alliancecpha.org/en/COVID19>

Children and Young People's Confidentiality

- If you are assisting a child or young person to complete the questionnaire, you will be asked at the beginning to confirm that you uphold the respondent's confidentiality: "Please read this statement and click on the box - I agree to assist the respondent with completing this questionnaire. I will uphold the respondent's confidentiality by not discussing their thoughts and answers with anyone else when the questionnaire is complete."

- Remind the child/young person that no personal information is required, the children should not include their name. We ask that no personally identifying information is given in the questionnaire response where possible.
- Inform the child/young person that when the 'submit' button is hit, all the information will go to the Changemakers for Children platform [hosted by Family for Every Child that uses Open Social software] and is stored on their password protected and secure servers. This is all explained in the questionnaire and you can tell children/young people this to reassure them that no one else will see their individual responses.

Safeguarding & Referral

- Do not put any child/young person at risk of harm.
- If you are supporting the child/young person to complete the questionnaire over the phone or face-to-face:
 - Please be aware of the circumstances and any potential risks. (Eg: there may be a risk as a parent or someone else could be listening to the call.) The interview should not go ahead if the child is in a potentially unsafe environment.
 - As well, we ask facilitators to be aware that children and young people may find it upsetting to talk about issues which they have experienced. Facilitators should end the interview or pause the session if the child or young person becomes upset. See the resources above for facilitators if they need assistance.
 - Prepare for the call by making sure that the child/young person has the time needed (approximately 20 minutes) and is in a space where they can speak freely.
 - Be aware if the child's circumstances change (e.g., if you hear additional noise in the background or if the child's tone of voice or language changes)
- If needed, provide follow-up support: the questionnaire provides information for child helplines, but feel free to also make use of your own local resources / referral networks.
- Safeguarding: If any safeguarding issues arise, follow your organisation's safeguarding protocols.

Other entry points into the Day of General Discussion

As part of a public consultation to help feed into and guide the discussions, all interested stakeholders, whether adults or children, are encouraged to send written submissions to the Committee at crc@ohchr.org. The submissions will be posted on the 2021 DGD webpage. Children may also send other forms of submissions, such as video and audio recordings. Written contributions can be submitted in English, French and Spanish, the three working languages of the Committee, in electronic format exclusively. The word limit is **2500 words**. Kindly note that **the deadline for all submissions, including reports from the global consultation with children, is 14th June 2021.**

In the light of the health risks and travel restrictions related to the ongoing coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the Committee decided to postpone the 2020 DGD on "Children's Rights in Alternative Care" to 2021. It will take place over two half days on 16 and 17 September 2021, during the 88th session of the Committee at the United Nations Office in Geneva. More information about the time and the format of the Day of General Discussion (hybrid or fully online) will be provided in due course.

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CRC/Pages/Discussion2020.aspx>