

Children and Young People in Armed Forces Families Participation and Engagement Review

Development Plan with key Task and Finish Group Recommendations

This document reports the recommendations of the Task and Finish Group's six-month project to establish, embed and continually enhance throughout the Alliance engagement with Armed Forces children in three areas:

1. SCiP Alliance leadership and management

In the long term, the Alliance may like to consider the employment of a dedicated staff member. In the meantime, the following is recommended:

- Develop the principles that will underpin the Alliance's approach to voice work with children and young people
- Develop mechanisms to access existing youth panels, having explored the potential ethical, safeguarding and diversity implications of working through others in order to be confident that any organisations we work through are working in a truly participatory way that takes complexities and power relations into account.
- Commit to responding to young people who have been involved, creating structures to make sure young people in their diversity are heard and the cycle is completed in terms of feedback to young people wherever they are.
- The Alliance's own evaluation framework will develop measures around the proposed approach of working through the network's existing mechanisms.
- Identify a member of each relevant SCiP Alliance Board, Management Group, and each Hub, who will ensure that the group is trained in participatory approaches and advocacy and that issues relevant to children and young people in Armed Forces families are identified and championed.
- Create a new subgroup dedicated to youth participation and youth voice within the Management Group.

2. The Alliance Community

- Formalise the role of SCiP Alliance members, to clearly set out expectations for how as members they can best support the SCiP Alliance to represent the needs of children and young people in Armed Forces families.
- Consider the potential for a participatory research project establishing what thriving lives looks like for young people.
- Explore the potential and rationale for developing a youth-focused web presence

- Develop mechanisms for a learning community that draws on expertise in the community to equip the community to act with confidence.

3. Wider sector needs and opportunities

- Explore establishing standards for what good practice looks like in order to (1) apply this in selecting who to work through and also (2) promote and support effective practice in the community. A safeguarding culture will be an important part of the expectations and standards.
- Develop expectations around evaluation frameworks in organisations we work through.
- Share practice and enable recognition through tools and resources that we create or promote, including consideration of a badge of recognition linked to the Thriving Lives Toolkit.

Appendix i: Task and Finish Group members

Name	Organisation	
Matt Blyton	Independent consultant	MB
Rob Campbell	RAF Leeming Primary School	RC
Sarah Court	Powys County Council	SC
Phil Dent	SCiP Alliance	PD
Carly Elliott	Forces Children Scotland	CE
Anna Hutchinson	Army Families Federation	AH
Kath Lawrence	SCiP Alliance	KL
Dr Claire Lee	Oxford Brookes University	CL
Rebecca Lovell	Naval Families Federation	RLo
Clare Scherer	Naval Children's Charity	CS
Dr Rebecca Steel	University of Central Lancashire	RS
Alexandra Stokes	RAF Families Federation	AS
Becky Wakefield (Chair)	Head of Community Support - British Army	BW
Joanna Wolfe for Millie Taylor	SSCE Cymru	JW

Appendix ii: Children and Young People in Armed Forces Families Participation and Engagement Review - The seven Future Views recommendations

1. *NEW AFCYP Alliance Staff Member:* A new member of the SCiP Alliance staff with skills and expertise in children and young people's participation should be appointed to support and facilitate the meaningful and safe engagement of children and young people from Armed Forces families in SCiP Alliance activity.
2. *AFCYP representation on Alliance groups:* On each relevant SCiP Alliance Board, Management Group, and each Hub, an individual should be identified and trained to ensure that issues relevant to children and young people in Armed Forces families are identified and championed.
3. *Young people advisory panel:* The SCiP Alliance should develop an advisory panel of children and young people in Armed Forces families. The panel should have representation across the UK from young people aged 11 – 18 years old with a minimum of one representative from each devolved Nation and the Tri-Services. Once the advisory panel is established, consideration should be given to having representation from children and young people in Armed Forces families who are under eleven years of age and those stationed overseas in future years.
4. *Safeguarding review:* A review of safeguarding was outside the scope of this work, but Future Views Today would recommend that with the introduction of an advisory panel and the engagement of children and young people directly in the work of the SCiP Alliance, a detailed review of safeguarding policies and procedures is undertaken to make sure the policies meet the requirements of the SCiP Alliance.
5. *Clear duty on Alliance members:* The SCiP Alliance should formalise the role of SCiP Alliance members, to clearly set out expectations for how as members they can best support the SCiP Alliance to represent the needs of children and young people in Armed Forces families. Having a more formalised and agreed relationship across the UK will see better community sharing of knowledge and understanding of children and young people in Armed Forces families, e.g., – all the SCiP Alliance community having a dedicated page on their website that states their involvement and support for the Alliance.
6. *Evaluation:* The involvement of children and young people in the SCiP Alliance needs to be actively evaluated and the impact of their involvement measured. The SCiP Alliance has a stated intention for involving children and young people in Armed Forces service families in their Theory of Change. Once the recommendations in this report have been put in place, the SCiP Alliance should include aspirations for the involvement of children and young people in Armed Forces families in its strategy and develop related success criteria within its evaluation framework.
7. *Involving younger children:* When evaluating the impact and success of children and young people's involvement from Armed Forces families the SCiP Alliance should consider developing ways to engage and consult with children under eleven years of age.