



**Guideline Introduction Workshop for  
Journalists**

**September 30- October 1, 2004**

# Involving and Hearing the Voices of Children and Interviewing Children

In general:

1. Ensure the child or guardian knows s/he is talking to a reporter. Explain the purpose of the interview and its intended use.
2. No staging
3. Pay attention to where and how the child is interviewed. Limit the number of interviewers
4. Where possible, get the child's opinion.
5. Access children who are often left out.
6. Always consider the best interest of that one child you are interviewing when making ethical decisions about what to report and not to report.

# Involving and Hearing the Voices of Children

**Do not underestimate children's potential.**

Make opportunities available to all children who are able to voice their opinion, who are comfortable to share their opinion and willing to participate.



# Involving and Hearing the Voices of Children

**Give space for children's voices in your articles (not just those about children)**

Get their opinions and ideas.



# Involving and Hearing the Voices of Children

**Let children speak for themselves in their own words in matters that directly concern them, like their education, their daily life, their immediate environment, placement, adoption, family divorce, maintenance, juvenile justice etc.**

**Give all children the chance to participate and be interviewed with out discrimination because of age, gender, abilities, language, social origin, class, ethnicity, geographic location etc.**

# Involving and Hearing the Voices of Children

- Do not only invite representatives or adults but make effort to reach out to children in their local settings.
- Timing: Consult with parents' teachers, guardians or the children themselves according to the case to ensure appropriate participation of children that does not interfere with school activities, play, or expose them to exploitation or abuse or for the respect of family privacy.

# Involving and Hearing the Voices of Children

- Encourage participation of children in production, writing articles and designing programs
- Use different ways like letter art, drama, song and other media to give children the chance to talk and express their views.

# Involving and Hearing the Voices of Children

- Avoid presenting children as victims or weak.
- Avoid gender stereotypes.
- Avoid situations that create stereotypes or bias
- Show positive stories, not just negative ones.
- Confirm the accuracy of what the child has to say
- Do not further stigmatize any child and avoid descriptions that expose a child to more problems.
- When in doubt about the risk to an individual child, write about a group of children instead.

# Interviewing Children

- Prepare the child respondent for the interview and familiarize yourself with the child.
- Children need sufficient and comfortable time, understanding and respect from others and to be listened to. Children might be afraid of you - a new person to them. The camera or the tape might frighten them if they are not acquainted with the machine.
- Explain what the interview is for and what to expect from the session and when you complete the interview leave with a complement.

# Interviewing Children

- Ask for the child respondent's consent before using a tape recorder or camera during the interview.
- Make sure both of you are sitting at the same level so as not to remind the child of the authority that an adult has over children.
- Use open ended questions like what, why, where and how including questions tell me about, tell me what happened afterwards, what happened next and lead the child to respond freely.

# Interviewing Children

- Avoid giving hints on what the child should discuss. Use short sentences and simple words.
- Interview children with the consent of adults—parents, teachers or who is responsible for the child if the matter does not concern the child himself.
- Consider the potential consequences of the child's comments, opinion, interview before release

# Interviewing Children

- Tell children what will be done with what they say and allow them to see the finished product. And send them copy of the finished product with complement
- When interviewing children and translation in to other language is needed, as far as possible use child/ peer translators.
- Avoid asking the child questions that would reactivate his/her grief or trauma.
- Ensure you do not identify the child if it will harm him/her.