



WHEN KIDS DECIDE



Realising the Right to Play on the Lower Shankill



Human Rights Indicators and Benchmarks From the Lower Shankill Residents' Voice



Drawing by Aimee McKee, age 10

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All drawings in the booklet are by children from Malvern Primary School and ArtAbility participating in the '2009 Right to Play Art and Writing Competition'.

‘Indicators’ – What are they?

Shankill Ward is one of the most deprived areas in Northern Ireland. Out of 582 Wards in Northern Ireland here’s how the area fares:

Category	Rank out of 582 areas in Northern Ireland (#582 = <i>Most Well Off</i> #1 = <i>Worst Off</i>)
EDUCATION	1
HEALTH	1
EMPLOYMENT	3
HOUSING	32
OVERALL DEPRIVATION	1

Government has a responsibility to address these issues. This is a responsibility not only under national laws, but also because the British Government has signed International Human Rights legislation which requires them to take steps to continuously improve the situation in our communities.

But how can you make sure this is being done? And as importantly, how can we prove if things are getting better or worse?

Human Rights Indicators and Benchmarks are a way to measure change in the community.

When residents and children from the Lower Shankill came together, they made a long list of social and economic issues in the community. The list was then

shortened to reflect specific issues which were covered under international and local standards.

The group turned these issues into human rights indicators for the right to play – specific issues in the community that affect children’s play and that we want to see change on from government. All of the issues chosen are supported by international human rights standards and can be measured.

The residents carried out surveys, focus groups, and other research to set a baseline picture of how these issues currently affect the community.

They then set benchmarks, or specific targets, about what improvements should be made over the one-to-two year period.

These indicators will be measured by residents at certain times over this period.


Usually it is government themselves who set indicators and benchmarks to monitor their own performance. However, the approach we’re taking is about local people – people affected by the issues on a daily basis – setting their own indicators and timetable for change around modest but important issues in their community.

This approach is about making real the human right to participate in decisions affecting our lives.

In the following pages you will find the indicators and benchmarks set by children and residents in the Lower Shankill about the Right to Play.

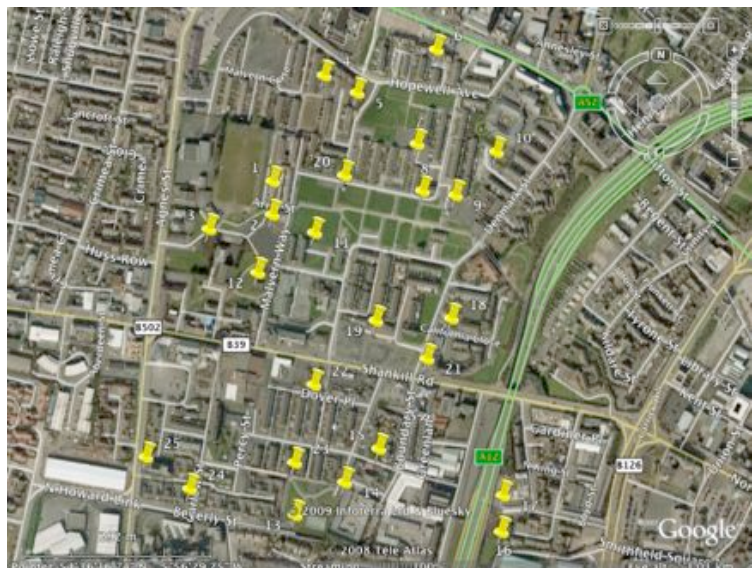
Indicator #1: Glass in the Estate

A major issue for children and residents in the Lower Shankill estate is the widespread presence of broken glass around play areas and in other open spaces. When not adequately cleaned, this presents a serious health and safety issue, especially for young children in their play environment.

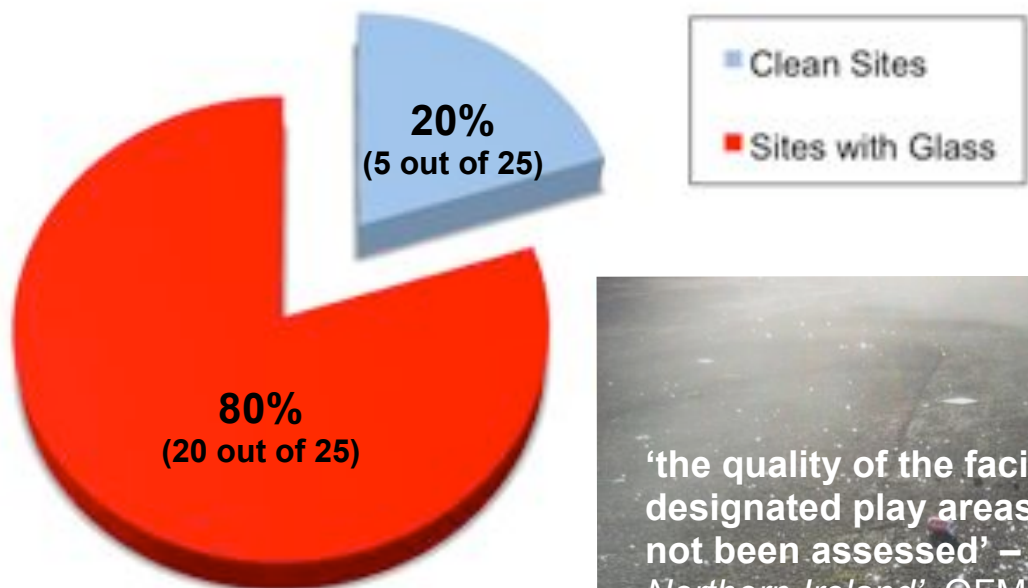


“Child’s right to play space is especially at risk in many urban environments, where...noise, pollution and all manner of dangers [combine] to create a hazardous environment for young children.”
UN CRC General Comment No. 7

To **MONITOR** this indicator, residents and children will photograph 25 sites in the Lower Shankill every month for a period of twelve months. They will track which sites have glass and which do not. At six months a questionnaire will be carried out to measure community satisfaction.



BASELINE measurements taken in January 2009 showed that 80% of the 25 sites monitored in the Lower Shankill had broken glass.



The group set **BENCHMARKS** (specific targets for change) in order to track this human rights indicator over the next 12 months. The benchmarks are:

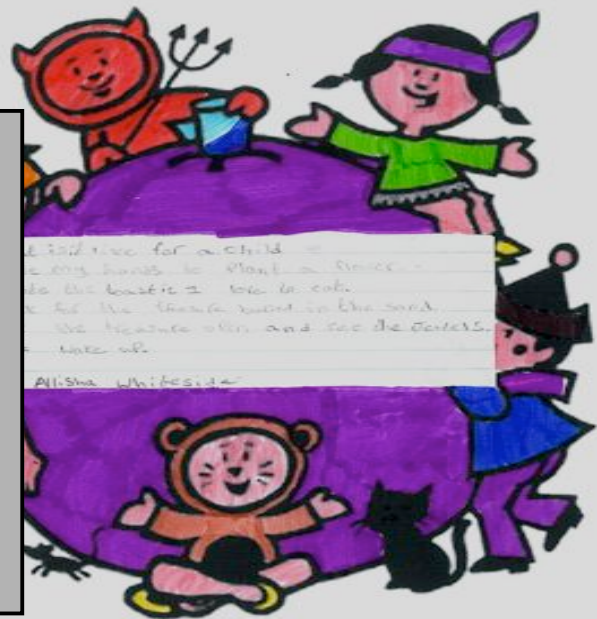
Date	Benchmark / Target
Baseline (January 2009)	80% sites with glass
April 2009	20% sites with glass
July 2009	10% sites with glass
October 2009	10% sites with glass
January 2010	10% sites with glass

Indicator #2: Lights Working in Parks & Playgrounds

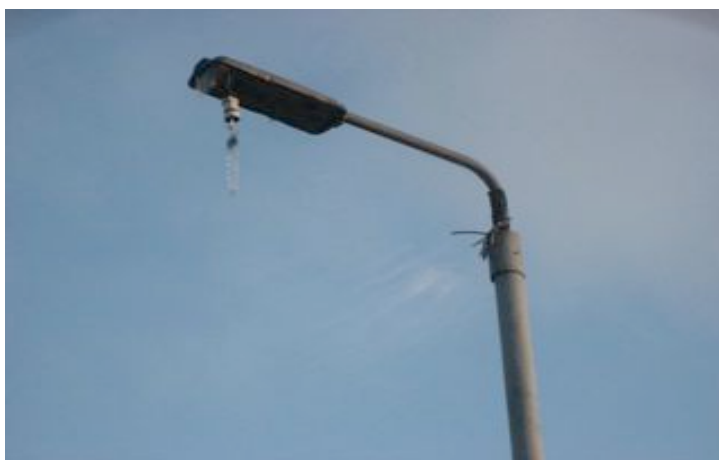
Children cannot enjoy play if the lighting for their areas is damaged or not working appropriately. Furthermore it is more difficult for parents to supervise their children in these conditions.¹

“Lighting in certain areas of a park is essential for safety, especially of children at nighttime: whilst the application of lighting also plays a major role in helping to deter many forms of anti-social behaviour in outdoor locations.”

–CIBSE Lighting Guide



To **MONITOR** this indicator, residents and children will photograph

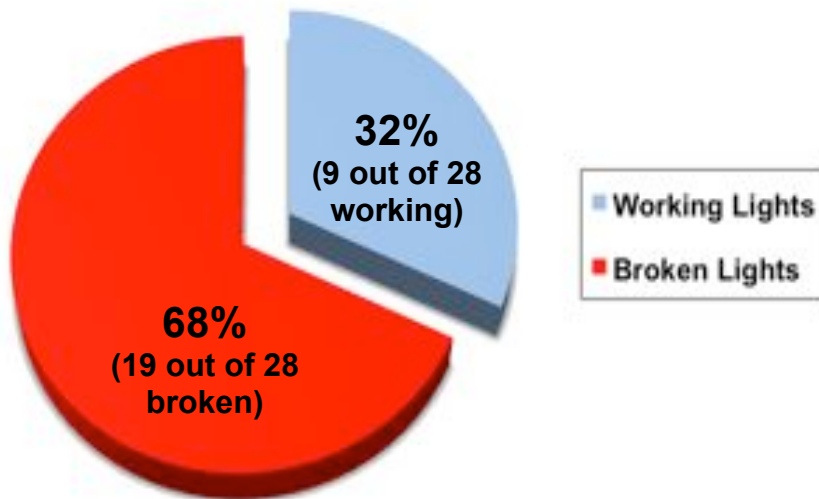


lighting over parks & play areas in the Lower Shankill every month for a period of twelve months. They will track which play areas have working lights. At six months a questionnaire will be carried

¹ “Child’s right to play space is especially at risk in many urban environments, where...noise, pollution and all manner of dangers [combine] to create a hazardous environment for young children.” –UN CRC General Comment No. 7

out to measure how effective the lighting is.

BASELINE measurements taken in January 2009 showed that 32% of the lights over play areas and parks in the Lower Shankill were working.



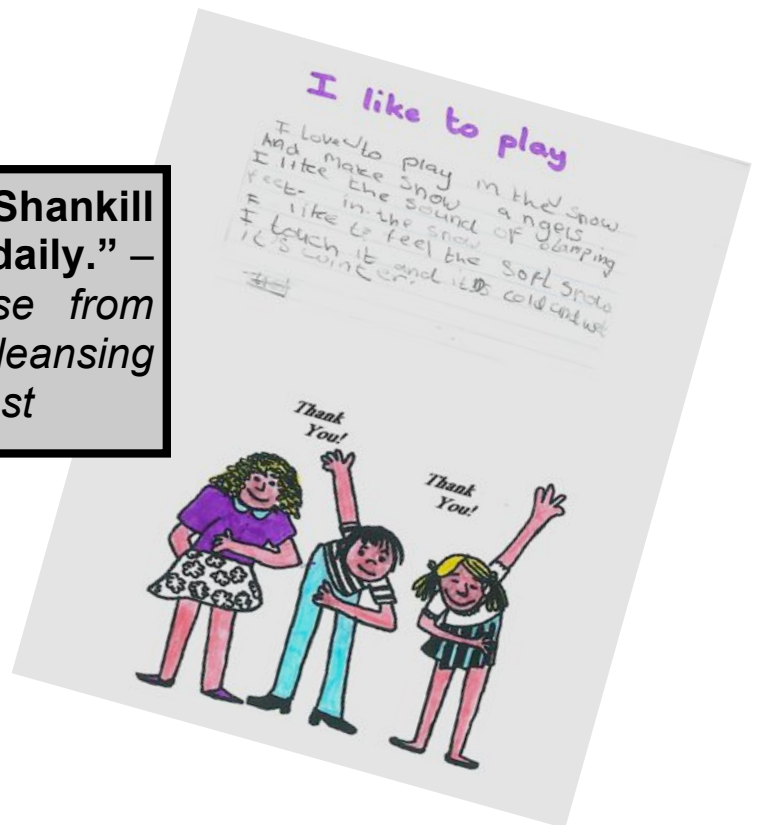
The group set **BENCHMARKS** (specific targets for change) in order to track this human rights indicator over the next 12 months. The benchmarks are:

Date	Benchmark / Target
Baseline (January 2009)	32% lights working
April 2009	80% lights working
July 2009	90% lights working
October 2009	90% lights working
January 2010	90% lights working

Indicator #3: Cleanliness of Play Areas

Cleanliness of play areas relates directly to the accessibility of these facilities for children. If an area is unclean, it is not only unattractive, but it creates physical barriers and potential risks to children attempting to exercise their right to play.²

“Play areas in the Lower Shankill area of Belfast are cleaned daily.” – 5th January 2009, Response from Belfast City Council Cleansing Services to group’s FOI request



To **MONITOR** this indicator, residents and children will carry out checks in play areas in the Lower Shankill every month for a period of twelve months. They will monitor whether the play areas are clean or not. They will take photographic evidence when they are not clean. At six and twelve months a questionnaire will be carried out amongst children



² “Child’s right to play space is especially at risk in many urban environments, where...noise, pollution and all manner of dangers [combine] to create a hazardous environment for young children.” –UN CRC General Comment No. 7

and parents to measure community satisfaction.

In January 2009 surveys were carried out among adults and children to see if they thought the play areas were being cleaned properly. As could be expected, there were differences between the responses of adults and children, with parents reporting much higher levels of dissatisfaction.

BASELINE measurements below are the combined results of parents and children in the play areas:

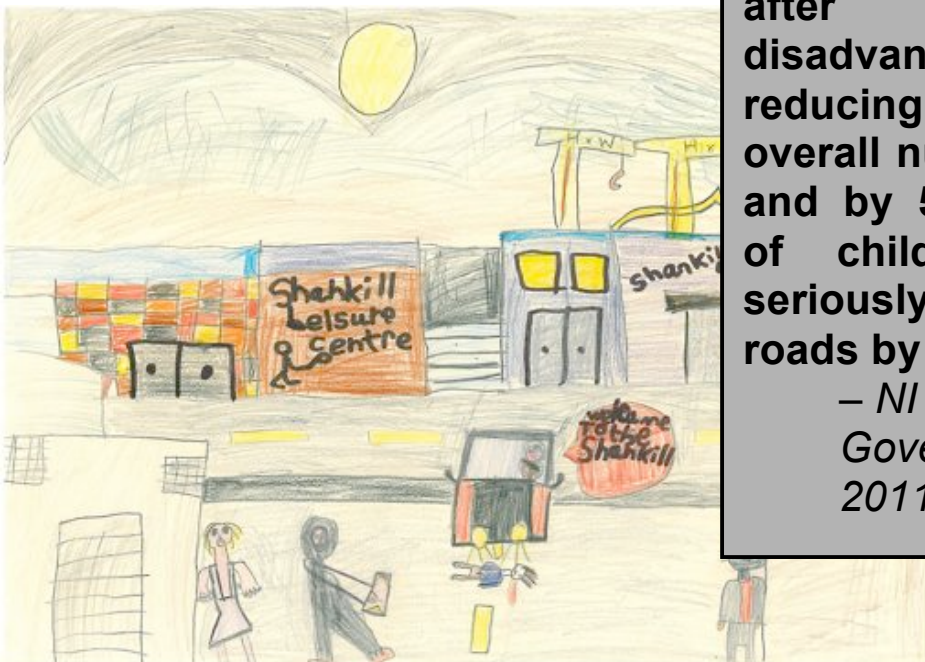
Hammer Play Area	Dover Street Play Area	Brown Square Park
34% <i>consider clean</i>	32% <i>consider clean</i>	62% <i>consider clean</i>

The group set **BENCHMARKS** (specific targets for change) in order to track this human rights indicator over the next 12 months. The benchmarks are:

Date	Benchmark / Target
Baseline (January 2009)	<i>Hammer</i> 34% consider clean <i>Dover</i> 32% consider clean <i>Brown Sq</i> 62% consider clean
July 2009	75% consider clean in each park
January 2010	90% consider clean in each park

Indicator #4: Speed of Traffic

The speed of traffic in the Lower Shankill estate, particularly close to play areas, has been a long standing issue among the community. There are currently plans to build traffic calming humps in part of the estate which will hopefully address some of these concerns.³



“We will work to create a fairer society and look after our most disadvantaged by... reducing by 33% the overall number of people, and by 50% the number of children, killed or seriously injured on our roads by 2012.”

– NI Programme for Government 2008-2011

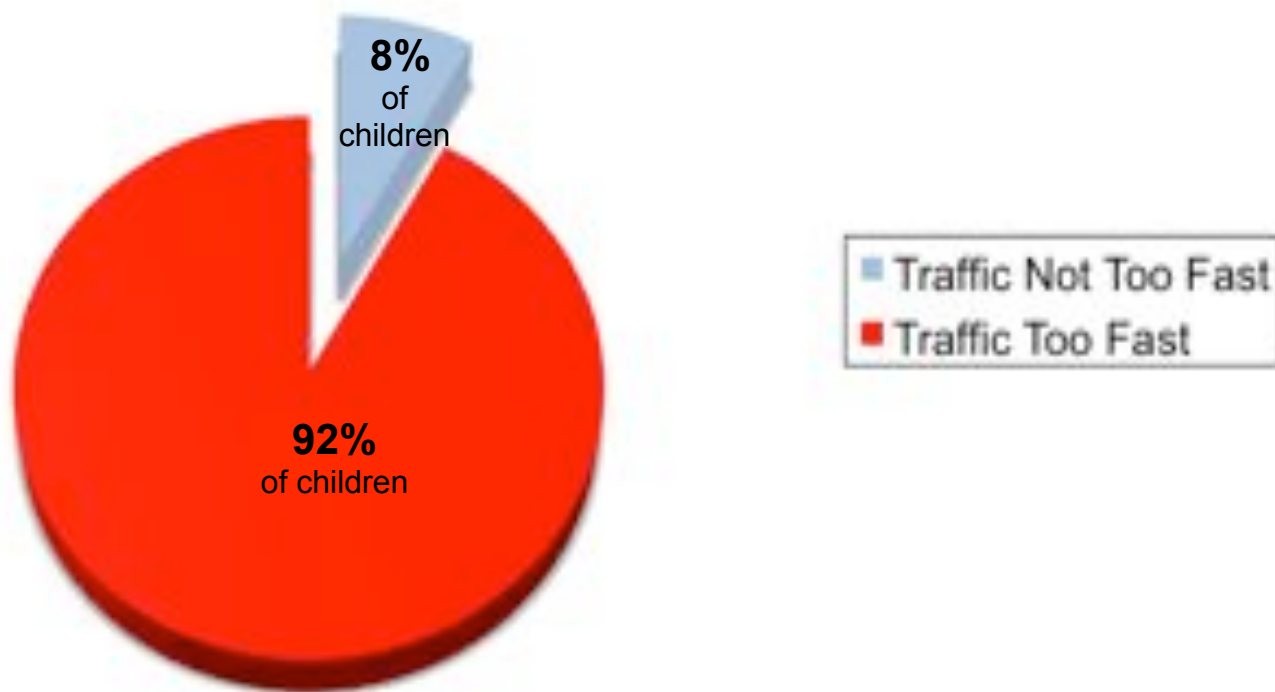
To **MONITOR** this indicator, questionnaires will be carried out twice



during the year to measure residents' experience on the effectiveness of the road traffic calming humps. Additionally information will be sought from the PSNI and Department for Regional Development on their records of speed measurements in the area.

³ “Child’s right to play space is especially at risk in many urban environments, where...noise, pollution and all manner of dangers [combine] to create a hazardous environment for young children.” –UN CRC General Comment No. 7

BASELINE measurements taken in January 2009 showed that 92% of children in the Lower Shankill reporting that traffic goes “too fast” in the estate



The group set **BENCHMARKS** (specific targets for change) in order to track this human rights indicator over the next 12 months. The benchmarks are:

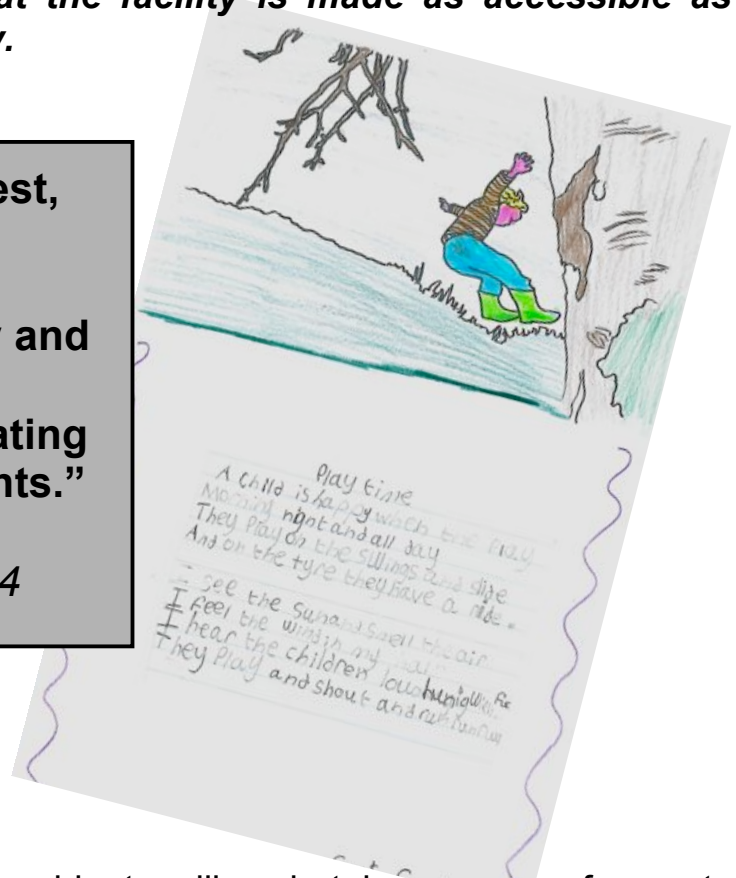
Date	Benchmark / Target
Baseline (January 2009)	92% reporting traffic as ‘too fast’
July 2009	50% reporting traffic as ‘too fast’
January 2010	25% reporting traffic as ‘too fast’

Indicator #5: Teen/Young Adult Access to Hammer Resource Centre

The Hammer Resource Centre is the only free, public youth facility in the Lower Shankill. As such, it plays a pivotal role in ensuring local children gain access to recreation and play in a structured and organised environment. It is essential that the facility is made as accessible as possible to the local community.

Yet, realising the right to rest, leisure and play is often hindered by a shortage of opportunities to meet, play and interact in child-centred, secure, supportive, stimulating and stress free environments.”

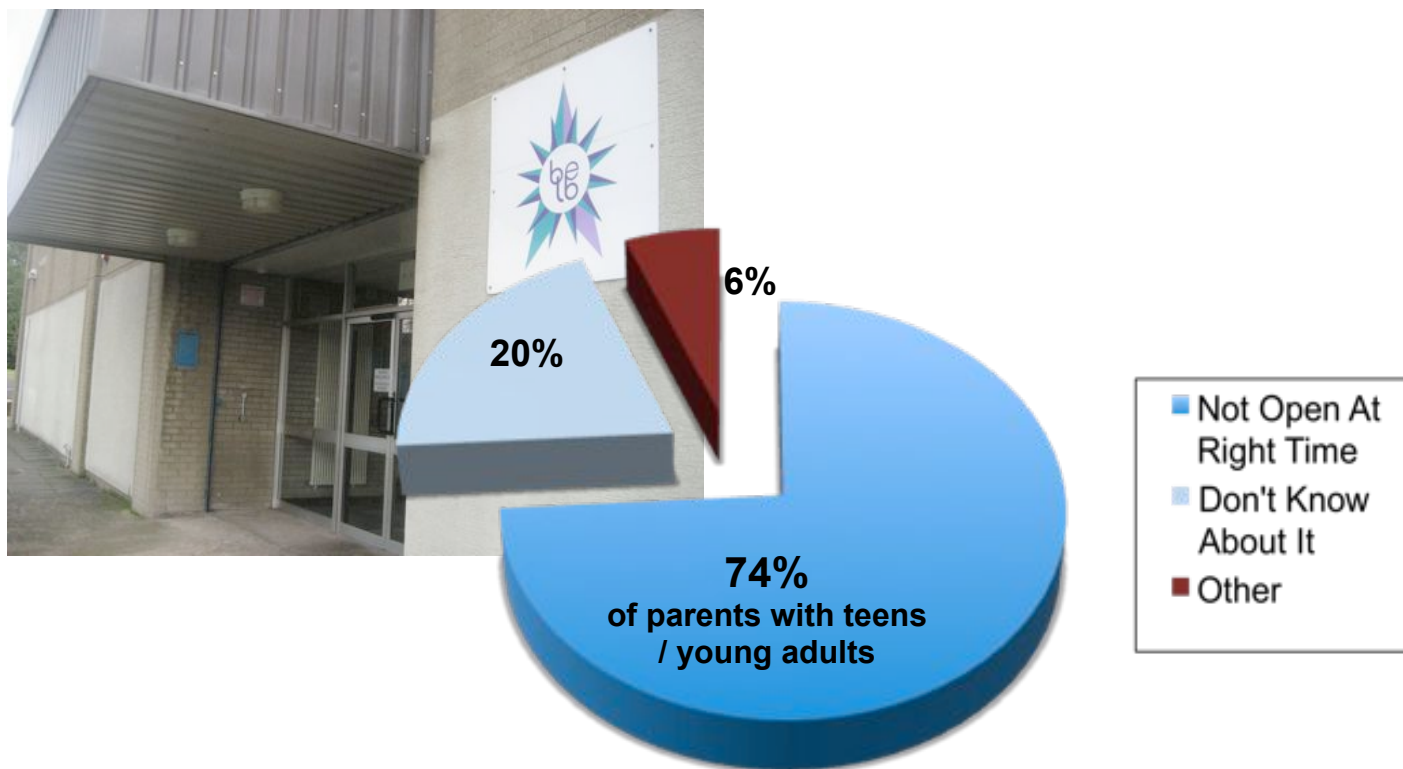
– UN CRC General Comment No. 7, para 34



To **MONITOR** this indicator, residents will undertake surveys of parents with teenagers to determine whether the Hammer Resource Centre is being made accessible through its opening hours to teens and young adults. This survey will take place at the six month stage and at the twelve month stage.



BASELINE measurements taken in January 2009 showed that 74% of parents with teenagers said they do not use the Hammer Resource Centre because it is not open at the right times.



The group set **BENCHMARKS** (specific targets for change) in order to track this human rights indicator over the next 12 months. The benchmarks are:

Date	Benchmark / Target
Baseline (January 2009)	74% saying not open at right times
July 2009	60% saying not open at right times
January 2010	30% saying not open at right times

Indicator #6: Play Access for Children with Special Needs

Designated play areas should be sites which all children in the community can access equally. Additionally, play areas provide a social, as well as recreational function and can fulfil an important role in ensuring the full integration of children with disabilities and special needs into the life of the community.



Play
I go to the Park to Play -
Chasles and hide and seek
Open my eyes and have a P
Touch you you are on
ChloeB.
I smell the flowers in grass
I hear my friends having a la
I see the swings and slide
I love to Play. do you?

“The attainment of full inclusion of children with disabilities in the society is realised when children are given the opportunity, places and time to play with each other (children with disabilities and no disabilities).”
- UN CRC General Comment 9, para 70

To **MONITOR** this indicator, residents will undertake surveys twice a year for parents of children with special needs to determine if the play areas are meeting the needs of their children. Additionally, focus groups with parents and children will be held to discuss what should be provided to meet these needs.

BASELINE measurements taken in January 2009 showed that **0%** of parents of children with special needs said that play areas in their community meet their child’s needs.



In their recent Concluding Observations on the CRC for the United Kingdom (3 October 2008), the committee noted that the United Kingdom needed to:

“strengthen its efforts to guarantee the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child...[with] particular attention to provide children, including those with disabilities with adequate and accessible playground spaces to exercise their play and leisure activities.”

The group set **BENCHMARKS** (specific targets for change) in order to track this human rights indicator over the next 2 years. The benchmarks are:

Date	Benchmark / Target
Baseline (January 2009)	0% stating meets needs
July 2009	5% stating meets needs
January 2010	15% stating meets needs
July 2010	40% stating meets needs
January 2011	85% stating meets needs

Indicator #7: Participation

Playing an active and meaningful role in decisions made about your life is a necessary part of human rights. This applies equally to the right to play, as it does to other human rights such as housing, work, etc. Children and parents from the Lower Shankill should be able to actively participate in designing, developing, and evaluating decisions about play in their community. This is much more than ‘consultation’, but is about active citizenship.

“If consultation is to be meaningful, documents as well as processes need to be made accessible. But appearing to “listen” to children is relatively unchallenging: giving due weight to their views requires a real change.”

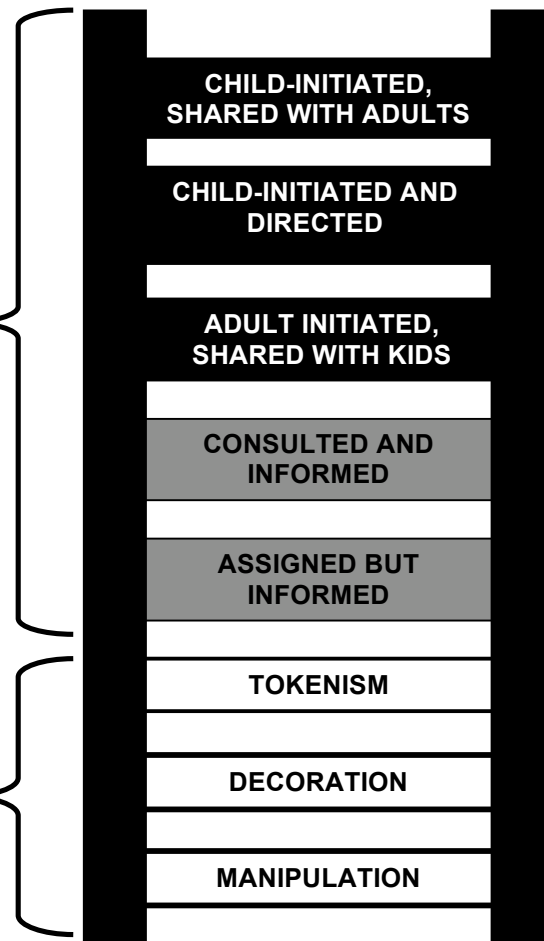
– UN CRC General Comment No. 5, para 12

CHILDREN'S 'LADDER OF PARTICIPATION'



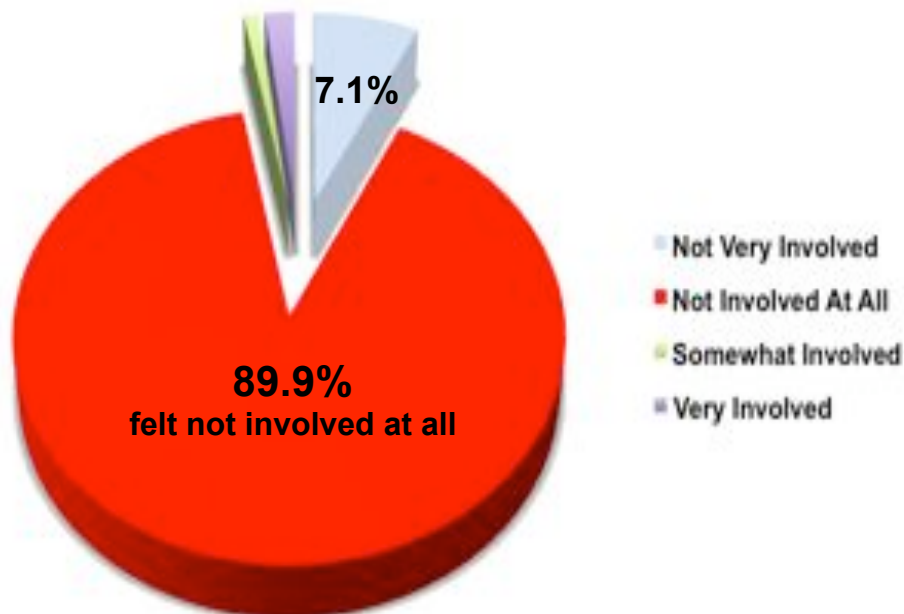
Degrees of Participation

Non-Participation

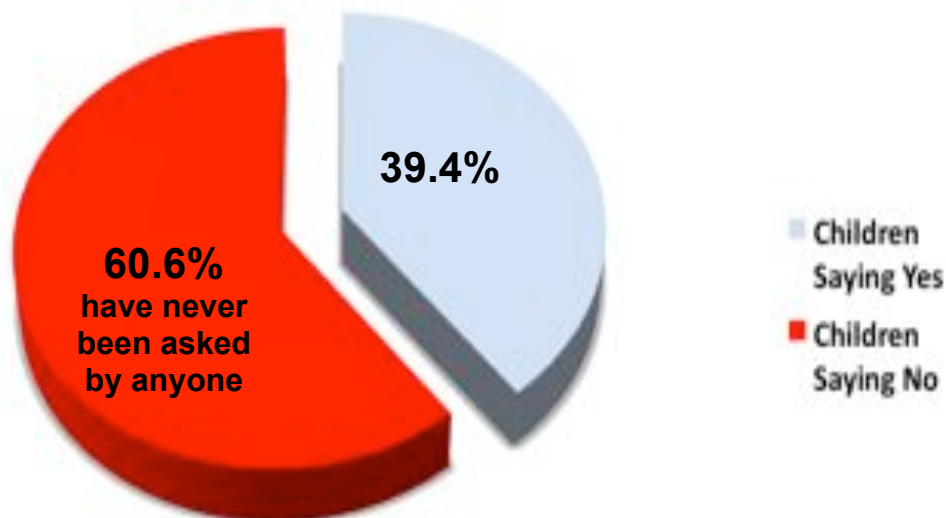


BASELINE measurements taken in January 2009 showed the following results when it came to participation of parents and children in decisions about play in the Lower Shankill:

HOW INVOLVED DO ADULTS FEEL IN DECISIONS MADE ABOUT PLAY?



HAS ANYBODY EVER ASKED YOU HOW TO MAKE PLAY BETTER FOR KIDS?



The **HUMAN RIGHTS INDICATORS AND BENCHMARKS** and the method of **MONITORING** on participation will be decided following the **Right to Play** event on 12th February 2009, after hearing from international and national experts on play.

The group will consider both who should be involved and the way they are involved to make sure genuine participation takes place when drawing up these indicators. These will be compiled, published and presented to OFMDFM to influence the implementation plan of the Play Policy for Northern Ireland.

The Participation and the Practice of Rights Project exists to promote awareness of international human rights instruments and standards and support marginalised communities and groups to use them in accessing services and achieving equality.

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