

CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTING CHILDREN'S PARTICIPATION

Tension 1: The child as consumer versus the child as activist
Tension 2: Government agendas versus children's agenda
Tension 3: Consultation versus shared decision making
Tension 4: 'Invited spaces' versus 'popular spaces'
Tension 5: Reactive participation versus pro-active participation
Tension 6: Manipulated voices versus autonomous voices
Shier (2010)

- 1. Tokenism:** Children and young people may be consulted, but their views have no discernible impact on decisions.
- 2. Lack of feedback:** Children and young people are asked to participate, but they do not know what has happened with their contributions.
- 3. Who is included or excluded:** Some children are 'over-consulted', others are never reached by participation activities.
- 4. Consultation not dialogue:** Children and young people are frequently consulted in one-off activities but are not involved over time in ongoing, respectful dialogue.
- 5. Adult processes and structures exclude children and young people:** Children's and young people's participation is frequently not integrated into how policy decisions are made, implemented and evaluated.
- 6. Lack of sustainability:** Funding for children's and young people's participation is frequently short term.

(Tisdall, 2014)



Illustration: The Policy Factory